



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

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The latest Association Implementation Report on Georgia embraces successful fulfillment of obligations set forth in the EU-Georgia Association Agreement in the fields of environment, agriculture and rural development



as approximation process with the respective EU acquis.

The Implementation Report has positively evaluated the meaningful steps taken by the Government of Georgia towards approximation of Georgian legislation with the EU acquis. As a result, new Forest Code of Georgia was adopted, which provides a legal framework for sustainable forest management; the draft Law “On Environmental Liability” is submitted to the Parliament; the Parliament adopted amendments to the law “On Ambient Air Protection”, based on which Georgia will fully switch to the European ambient air quality management system in line with appropriate EU directives.

The European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy welcome the gradual implementation of the concept of Extended Producer Responsibility, as well as updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and creation of the Climate Change Council, which has institutionally strengthened decision-making process related to climate change. The report also highlights the adoption of the law “On Aquaculture”, which defines aquaculture zones allocations in the coastal areas and in inland waters and establishes conditions for the issuance of permits. The report positively evaluates the progress made in fisheries sector with regard to legislation and its implementation, as well as that Georgia adheres to the plan of approximation of veterinary, phytosanitary and food safety regulations with the EU legislation on SPS measures.

The report also emphasizes that in November 2020, the European Commission granted the authorisation of animal by-products for pet food produced in Georgia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20226/>

The European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy have released an Association Agreement (AA) Implementation report on Georgia for the year of 2020. The report pointed out that Georgia, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, has ensured an undisturbed implementation of the AA, including in the areas of environmental protection, climate change and agriculture, as well

Minister Davitashvili meets with Peter Wiebler, Mission Director of USAID/Georgia



Wiebler, Mission Director of USAID/Georgia. Minister Davitashvili emphasized on the economic shortcomings in the country amid the pandemic turmoil and importance of programs deployed in the agricultural sector.

“The projections of 2020 have set forth that added value of rural, forestry and fishing industries has boosted in 14 %, compared with 2019 data. Export value of hazelnut exported has increased in 44 %, while the quality itself is much higher and which has become possible through an outstanding assistance of the USAID for fighting the marmorated stink bug” - Minister Davitashvili stated.

Mission Director Wiebler informed Minister about the new strategic plan of the USAID, which has set forth matters touching upon the climate change as the priority areas. Wiebler also stated that USAID continues supporting Georgia within agricultural and environmental sectors.

The meeting enjoyed presence of the Deputy Minister of MEPA, Ms Nino Tandilashvili and Ms Marika Olson, Economic Growth Office Director, USAID/Georgia.

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Matters dwelling on agricultural and environmental matters have been discussed at the meeting between Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Levan Davitashvili and Mr Peter

Levan Davitashvili: “700 million GEL has been invested into agriculture within the last 8 years by the State, thus, resulting into accumulation of an additional 4 billion GEL from private sector”



The Parliament of Georgia has hosted hearing of the state program presented by the candidate for Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili.

“We have fundamentally transformed approach to the agriculture throughout 2012 – 2020, as there was an absence of the State policy tailored to agricultural development of Georgia. The State has joined forces with the international and donor organizations and enjoyed meaningful engagement of private sector. We have harvested positive outcomes of the agricultural production industry. Throughout the last

three years, Georgia has been leading a constantly increasing statistics. Amid the pandemic turmoil of 2020, Georgia demonstrated an unprecedented success in agricultural and rural activities.

During the first two quarters of 2020, agricultural production has exceeded 6 billion GEL; economic value added has increased in 12 %, which has resulted from a consistent and strategy-tailored policy. 700 million GEL has been invested into agriculture within the last 8 years by the State, thus, resulting into an additional 4 billion GEL from private sector.

The State-deployed programs span across each and every chain of agriculture, which entails primary production, as well as processing activities; it covers both, credit, as well guarantee components and ensures accumulation for an increased private investment. Since 2015, modern intensive gardens of 11, 421 hectares have been planted in frames of the State-deployed program “Plan the Future” aiming at complementing perennial crops; the State-provided investment has exceeded 80 million GEL, which comprises only 1/3 to the total investment of more than 140 million GEL.

There have been highly important actions conducted for product safety, veterinary and plant protection. We will proceed with investments for enhancing amelioration system. Frankly speaking, the new legislation has resulted into establishment of the National Sustainable Land Management and Land Use Monitoring Agency, which will make a profound impact on agricultural-rural land use” – Mr Davitashvili stated

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20232/>

Candidate for Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili briefs MPs at the Parliamentary session



“We have deployed numerous reforms toward environmental protection, within the recent period; we have expanded the protected territories from 288 539.5 throughout 2012 – 2020; the forestry sector code has been implemented and translated into a new Forest Code of Georgia; the Green Climate Fund (GCF) has made an unprecedented contribution to the respective reform process, through assigning 33 million euros as an international assistance.

As an effective effort to decrease air pollution – we have deployed high standard on fuel in 2017 and we have ensured an oversight ever since. The Parliament of Georgia has commenced two successful hearings on the package of amendments drafted in compliance with the EU’s Emissions Trading System, which aims to reduce the industry’s carbon emissions by industrial enterprises. An action plan on improving atmospheric air in the city of Rustavi for the period of 2020 – 2022 has been adopted, resulting into deploying 60 million GEL for improving Rustavi’s ecological environment.

We have deployed a fundamental reform within an environmental responsibility. The Parliament has commenced two hearings on the draft law on environmental responsibility, which has been harmonized with the European requirements. We have fully transformed the State oversight system, which will entail a focus on prevention from harmful effect on an environment. A modern system of waste management has been elaborated, whose legislative base harmonizes with the European standards; moreover, the new regulations have been drafted for cultivating an extended consumer responsibility. Frankly speaking, throughout the next 4 years – we will deploy important reforms” – Mr Davitashvili stated.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20231/>

Deputy Minister Giorgi Khanishvili: “A vital study commenced will complement effective development of tea sector in Georgia”



The first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Giorgi Khanishvili scrutinized a new study “Tea sector review in Georgia” and the respective report in a remote meeting. “The document aspires to become an integral roadmap for tea sector

development in Georgia. The report has been tailored based on economic estimates, constructive analyses and aspirations of the best expertise worldwide, which can respond to the needs of both spectrum of stakeholders – the State institutions and farmers. The report can be scrutinized by the stakeholders to set long-term and strategic goals complementing effective enhancement of tea sector” – Deputy Minister Khanishvili stated.

Last year, experts deployed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) carried out studies on tea sector review in Georgia. International experts and economic scholars have worked on the study, which has been translated into the relevant recommendations.

Throughout the remote meeting, attendees scrutinized findings of the study and challenges/opportunities of the tea sector, which requires conduct of an extended conference to enable sector-based stakeholders, manufacturers, scholars, international experts and state interlocutors to get on board. Apart from the MEPA, the meeting enjoyed presence of the representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20227/>

Minister Levan Davitashvili attends steering committee of the CENN-implemented “Embrace Tsalka” project



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Levan Davitashvili attended the second steering committee meeting of the advisory council of the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN), which implements “Embrace Tsalka” project with the support of the European Neighborhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD). The aim of the project is to improve social integration, access to basic social services and economic opportunities for households in Tsalka municipality.

“Tsalka possesses an immense potential with an aspiring agricultural

importance. Frankly speaking, we will surely foster local initiatives that empower enhancement of rural development. The Government, through EU assistance, aspires to maximize support to local initiatives of the project” - Minister Davitashvili stated.

Executive Director of the CENN, Ms Nana Janashia dwelled on the importance of knowledge, access to contemporary technologies, establishment of business linkages and creation of employment opportunities; the project will strengthen households, entrepreneurs, women, youth and other local stakeholders.

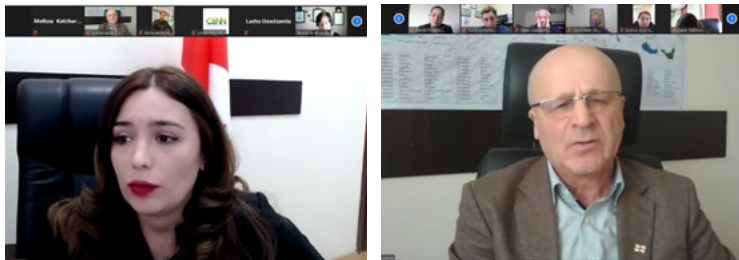
The meeting enjoyed the presence of Mr Ilia Sabadze, Tsalka municipality Mayor, as well as representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Georgia, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Georgia, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Tsalka Local Action Group (LAG).

The EU-supported ENPARD project “Embrace Tsalka” is implemented by CENN in partnership with , in partnership with the Georgian Farmers’ Association (GFA) and German partner organization – Institute for Rural Development Research (IfRS).



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20227/>

Discussion on the future progress of the National Forestry Agency



The fourth consecutive meeting of the “Institutional reform” working group of the National Forestry Program scrutinized development strategy of the National Forestry Agency, as well as an entailing working plan (2021 – 2026) for brainstorming on matters related to the Agency’s future progress and development. Deputy Ministers of the Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Ms Nino Tandilashvili and Mr Iuri Nozadze attended the meeting, which also enjoyed presence of non-governmental and international organizations, scholars and other respective stakeholders.

“In 2020, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the Forest Code, which has been cultivated on sustainable management principles of forest and which aspires to fundamentally transform an incumbent management system of forests. Re-

forming the National Forestry Agency and cultivation of the new management model is vital for enforcing the code, thus, it will be followed with gradually transforming the Agency into a multispectral entity; therefore, the Agency will become authorized to manage forest and generate income from the latter for reinvesting it back to recovering the forest, wildfire prevention, arrangement of infrastructure and other elements of forest management” – Deputy Minister Tandilashvili mentioned.

Deputy Minister Nozadze stressed out importance of entailing every single factor, which will complement effective elaboration of the strategic planning process.

“Action plan and development strategy for the period of 2021-2016 of the National Forest Agency has defined key programming, which will be implemented throughout the next 5 years. It is crucial to embrace development of the new model, which will complement ensuring effective forest utilization” – Deputy Minister Nozadze stated.

Attendees to the meeting embraced meaningful contribution of the donor organizations toward development of the forest sector. The National Forest Program (NFP) is implemented upon assistance of the Caucasus Environment NGO Network (CENN) and the German Agency for International Cooperation or (GIZ). [🌐 https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20220/](https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20220/)

A working meeting on advancing waste management



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr Solomon Pavliashvili joined an online meeting for scrutinizing implementation assessment of the waste management national plan (2016 – 2020) and setting perspectives for effectively undertaking the new national plan (2020 – 2025).

The meeting was also attended by Mr Alexandre Darras, Team Leader on Connectivity,

Energy, Environment & Climate Change at the EU Delegation to Georgia.

Deputy Pavliashvili briefed on priorities and needs of the project; he also embraced that the project aspires to implement national strategy of waste management as a joined effort with the State agencies, municipalities, private sector and upon consultations with the stakeholders.

The project has been funded by the European Union for Environment (EU4Environment) with the following implementing partners: The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World bank. The project is implemented by the United Nations’ environmental program and the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus). [🌐 https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20233/](https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20233/)

Deputy Minister Khanishvili: “We aspire to boost local agricultural production, as well as export projections”



Mr Giorgi Khanishvili, the first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia has hosted a meeting with Mr Zviad Shalamberidze, the State Trustee in the Imereti region to discuss planned

and incumbent activities within the rural-agricultural sector and environmental protection. Attendees professed high interest on incumbent resources in the region and development of priority programming. Large-scale actions deployed against the marmorated stink bug will proceed in 2021 though a meaningful engagement of the local self-government authorities.

“In 2020, similarly to other regions, Imereti had a successful year in agricultural sector. Nevertheless, we aim to boost local agricultural production, as well as export projections” – Deputy Minister Khanishvili stated.

Mr Shalamberidze emphasized on engagement of local self-government authorities in fighting against marmorated stink bug. The State Trustee stressed out how vital the State-deployed programs for the regional agricultural development are.

The meeting was also attended by Mr Zurab Chekurashvili, head of the National Food Agency, who briefed on preparatory works deployed in the Imereti region for fighting marmorated stink bug.

[🌐 https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20230/](https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20230/)