



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

MARCH/2021

The Parliament of Georgia adopts draft law on „Environmental Liability“



The Parliament of Georgia has adopted the draft law on “Environmental Liability” at the Parliamentary hearing. The draft law has been drafted by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and aims at setting forth legislative remedies for damage prevention, softening or eradication. As a core objective of the law, damage caused to the envi-

ronment will be followed with significant economic consequences.

The Law on “Environmental Liability” has been elaborated upon the principle of “the polluter pays”; in a scenario when significant damage is caused to an environment, the respective enterprise will be imposed with an obligation to deploy remediation actions to restore environment to the primary or original state. Each of the required actions will be indicated in the plan, which will be scrutinized as guidelines for companies.

Prior to launching actions, enterprises will accumulate financial guarantees/resources for remediating damage to an environment, thus possessing sufficient financial means for undertaking actions in the nearest period of time.

Funds accumulated after monetary remediation will be deployed to the “Environmental Damage Fund”. The similar Funds have been successfully operating in the European Union; however, Georgia will be the first country among the Eastern Partnership framework to establish such Fund. Deployed funds will be generated and applied to planning-implementing activities for remediation of damaged territories and enhancing environment.

Part of the legislative amendments to the Law on Environmental Liability, including to the Law on Georgia on Ambient Air Protection will be enacted in 2021. The remaining articles of the Law on Environmental Liability will be enacted on July 1, 2022.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20243/>

European Investment Bank’s (EIB) President Werner Hoyer: “I have been profoundly impressed by Georgia’s agriculture”

On his visit to Georgia, Mr Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) joined Mr Levan Davitashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) and Mr Javier Sanz Alvarez, Coordinator of Policy Projects in Agriculture and Rural Development for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Georgia to visit Jighaura Agricultural Scientific Research Center.

The MEPA’s Agricultural Scientific Research Center in Jighaura is among the beneficiaries of the European Union-supported project with a budget amounting to 5,2 million Euros. The project is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

President Hoyer observed a collection of vine types at Jighaura and met with local farmers and beneficiaries supported by the EU. He also visited the project-supported modern greenhouses, which complement efforts that sustain unique Georgian vine types and their genetic authenticity.

“I have been profoundly impressed with Georgia’s agriculture and creative approach that has harvested success in Georgian, as well as European markets. The European Union and the European Investment Bank supports development of agriculture in Georgia; through deploying assistance to various medium and small enterprises, which are funded by Georgia through an engagement of partner banks” – President Hoyer stated.

“We cherish our cooperation with the European Union, which has been



translated into various projects and reforms. We have tangible progress and advancement toward agricultural and environmental programming, which will complement Georgia's integration into the European family. Georgian-produced agricultural production has been gradually attaining positions at the European markets. We cultivate international standards and establish competitive production. Our legislative base and various important actions toward environmental protection complement harmonization efforts with the European standards” – Minister Davitashvili stated.

“Screen houses complement actions safeguarding authentic Georgian vine types. Georgia has a diverse spectrum of vines and an accurate programming of private vine nurseries will translate into production of certified varieties. Eventually, the Georgian farmers will be empowered with an improved quality of planting material and phytosanitary environment, which will open up possibilities for an export in the nearest future” - Mr Javier Sanz Alvarez, Coordinator of Policy Projects in Agriculture and Rural Development for the FAO in Georgia stated.

Ms Tea Kutateladze, one of the owners of a private planting nurseries and beneficiaries of the project stressed out how vital high-quality plants for a successful farming is.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20240/>

Minister Davitashvili met with Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Republic of France, H.E. Diego Colas



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili met with Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Republic of France, Mr Diego Colas to discuss bilateral relations and areas for future cooperation with regard to the following matters: amelioration and land management, capacity building of the National Agency for Sustainable Land Management and Land Use through initiating a new project.

Minister expressed gratitude to Ambassador Colas for a continues support to targeted projects; Minister Davitashvili also briefed on those actions, which are deployed by the Government for prompt and effective development.

Ambassador Colas stressed out that Georgia is a very important partner for France and will support enhancement of bilateral relations between the countries.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20266/>

Meeting between Minister Levan Davitashvili and H.E. Hubert Knirsch, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Georgia

Mr Levan Davitashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) met with H.E. Hubert Knirsch, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Georgia to discuss ongoing projects and perspectives of future cooperation. Minister and Ambassador reviewed matters of potential cooperation related to protected territories, food safety, reshuffle/equipment and capacity building of laboratories. Minister Davitashvili thanked H.E. Hubert Knirsch for supporting targeted projects and stressed out importance of bilateral relations between the two countries.

H.E. Hubert Knirsch stressed out that Georgia is an important partner for the Federal Republic of Germany and expressed willingness to complement enhancement of bilateral relations.

The meeting took place at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and was attended by Deputy Minister, Ms Nino Tandilashvili

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20244/>



Meeting between Mr Levan Davitashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) and H.E. Dr. Viktória Horváth, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary to Georgia



Mr Levan Davitashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) met with H.E. Dr. Viktória Horváth Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary to Georgia to discuss prospects for future cooperation between the countries on the following areas and not limited to: hunting industry, enhancement of aquaculture, educational and scientific denominations of agrarian sphere. Minister Davitashvili thanked H.E. Dr. Viktória Horváth for cooperation and stressed out importance of complementing friendly relations between the two countries. H.E. Dr. Viktória Horváth stated how important Georgia, as a partner, is for Hungary and she aspires to maximize her support to enhancing bilateral relations.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20259/>

Minister Levan Davitashvili met with Louisa Vinton, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Georgia



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili hosted Ms Louisa Vinton, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Georgia, as she commences her mission in Georgia. Minister thanked Ms Vinton for meaningful and effective assistance in agricultural and environmental programming.

In the course of the meeting, Ms Vinton stressed out how outstanding the cooperation with the Ministry has been, upon the latter institution holding an effective and successful strategy on agricultural and environmental policies. Ms Vinton also demonstrated willingness to continue cooperation between UNDP and the Ministry. Among the topics discussed at the meeting had been and not limited to development of protected territories, sustainable develop-



ment of natural resources, remediating air pollution, waste management and enhancing cooperation in agriculture.

The meeting at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia was also attended by Deputy Minister Nino Tandilashvili.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20287/>

The „STIPENDIUM HUNGARICUM“ empowers applicants to enroll to agrarian professions



The Hungarian Government's scholarship program „STIPENDIUM HUNGARICUM“ opens up possibilities for applicants to enroll to agrarian professions. Mr Levan Davitashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) and H.E. Dr. Viktória

Horváth, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary to Georgia spoke about the importance of the „STIPENDIUM HUNGARICUM“, which opens up the leading universities in Hungary for applicants willing to enroll to various professions in agriculture.

The program „STIPENDIUM HUNGARICUM“ has been established in 2013 for internationalization of the Hungarian education space, which is open to applicants at bachelor, master and PhD programs. Each year, the program is open to nearly 5000 international students in 70 countries. Further information on the program can be accessed at: <https://stipendiumhungaricum.hu/>

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20260/>

Minister Davitashvili: „Georgia considers transition to green economy as one of the core endeavors for country’s development“

Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili attended the international conference „Making Global Goals Local Business Georgia“ organized by the United Nations Global Compact. In his speech, Minister Davitashvili briefed attendees on climate change strategy of Georgia (2030), as well as core objectives set forth within the plan and stressed out importance of sustainable development of climate smart agriculture.

„Georgia considers transition to green economy as one of the core endeavors for country’s development. Georgia is in an active phase of decreasing greenhouse emissions at a national level for softening climate change. The State-elaborated and accurate strategy ensures effective outcomes upon joining forces with Georgia’s private sector, as well as fostering partnerships with other countries“ – Minister Davitashvili stated at the conference.

In the course of the conference, MP Khatia Tsilosani, the first Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee highlighted importance of legislative application of sustainable development goals as one of the core objectives for the respective committee.



The conference scrutinized importance of requirements set forth within the „Paris Agreement“ and enjoyed attendance of business sector, international organizations and Government officials of the Central and Eastern European countries.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20284/>

The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) and the U.S. Embassy provide personal protective equipment and laboratory testing supplies to the State Laboratory of Agriculture



The U.S. Embassy’s Defense Threat Reduction Office (DTRA) delivered personal protective equipment and laboratory testing supplies to the State Laboratory of Agriculture. Deputy Chief of Mission, Rian Harris, Senior Defense Official Colonel Stephanie Bagley and Deputy Chief of the DTRA Major Margo Shields joined the First Deputy Minister Giorgi Khanishvili of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and Head of the State Laboratory of Agriculture, Mr Irakli Guledani at the handover event.

At the State Laboratory of Agriculture, stakeholders assessed efforts, which had been deployed jointly with the Lugar Laboratory during the pandemic. The First Deputy Minister Giorgi Khanishvili thanked U.S. Government for continues and outstanding assistance and stressed out importance of support provided amid the pandemic.

“Aspirations of the Euro-Atlantic integration path of Georgia, it is of utmost importance to have support from such an outstanding partner, as the

U.S. The U.S. supports Georgia in strengthening industrial and laboratory potential, as well as developing agriculture in order to timely address economic challenges of the country. In early 2020, Georgia, as well as the whole world, had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, which posed numerous challenges to the country. U.S. Government instantly allocated laboratory capacity. Together with the National Center for Disease Control & Public Health, the State Laboratory of Agriculture is an important resource, which is deployed for covid-19 diagnostic” – the first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Giorgi Khanishvili stated.

Deputy Chief of Mission, Rian Harris positively assessed timely and effective preventive methods deployed by the Georgia’s Government against spread of Covid-19; he also stressed out the role of the State Laboratory of Agriculture in the respective process. Mr Harris also expressed willingness for future cooperation.

Head of the State Laboratory of Agriculture, Mr Irakli Guledani stressed out how vital the U.S.-provided personal protective equipment and laboratory testing supplies will be for veterinary, especially for a timely diagnostic of harmful diseases, apart from fighting the pandemic.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20249/>

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) commences the Agriculture Modernization, Market Access and Resilience Project (AMMAR)



The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) commences the Agriculture Modernization, Market Access and Resilience Project (AMMAR). The Deputy Ministers of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Giorgi Khanishvili and Mr Otar Shamugia joined a remote meeting upon commencing the project.

“I would like to express my gratitude to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for multi-year and successful cooperation on implementing projects in Georgia. The AMMAR is the 5th consecutive project. As total efforts, the IFAD has attracted more than 65 million

GEL and invested into Georgia’s agriculture” – the first Deputy Minister Khanishvili stated.

The “Agriculture Modernization, Market Access and Resilience” project was launched in 2016 and commenced in the beginning of 2021. In frames of irrigation and infrastructure enhancement component, 8 irrigation systems have been rehabilitated, which has resulted into advancing supply of water to 6486 hectares, thus, improving wellbeing of around 4500 families. Construction efforts have been deployed on 9 infrastructural locations, as well as improving/building village roads and bridges. 3000 families are beneficiaries of an improved infrastructure.

Landscape restoration works have resulted into construction of two embankments in Kakheti region, which will safeguard 320 hectares of rural-agricultural land from flooding. Construction of 26 kilometers of a wind break belt in Kakheti and Kartli regions will safeguard 1410 hectares of land from wind erosion.

Throughout grant components, 591 grants were issued on primary production, 13 on processing industries. 241 young people were funded in frames of the “Young Entrepreneurs Program”.

17 demonstration plots have been arranged in frames of the training component, resulting into 2470 persons being trained. For perfecting legislative framework, national adaptation plan for climate change for agriculture has been drafted; as well as evaluation of Impact Assessment of the Draft Law of Georgia on Soil Protection.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20247/>

Deputy Minister Nino Tandilashvili attended thematic session of the OSCE’s economic and environmental committee

Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA), Ms Nino Tandilashvili attended a thematic session of economic and environmental committee of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Topic of the thematic session has been “climate and security – role of climate change in environmental challenges”. In her opening remarks, Ms Tandilashvili briefed on climate change and acknowledged challenges in Georgia. Deputy Minister also stressed out importance of deployed state policy on climate change in Georgia - “I would like to thank the OSCE for the work undertaken on climate change work, therefore, I believe that joining forces will result into identifying effective remedies for climate change solutions”.

Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stated that in the framework of the Paris Agreement, Georgia undertakes intensive efforts for decreasing greenhouse emissions. She also briefed committee members on the core denominations of the nationally determined contributions (NDC).



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20257/>

Doha Hosts the Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition 2021 and features 15 Georgian companies

On March 23, Doha hosted AGRITEQ - Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition 2021. As a joint effort of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and Embassy of Georgia in Qatar – the following 15 Georgian companies have been featured at the exhibi-

tion: Gurieli, Nutsge, Chikori, Geo Natural, Agritouch, Rukhi 2, Elexir Georgia, Nugbari, Magritto, Campa, Manna, Borjomi, Kula, Georgia’s Natural and Kind & Noble. Due to the restrictions imposed amid the Covid-19 pandemic, the respective companies have been

represented by the Embassy of Georgia at the AGRITEQ in Doha.

The AGRITEQ is among the largest international exhibitions, which attracts thousands of visitors annually. In 2021, 42 countries have joined the event, along with 208 local and international companies from agriculture sector. Participation in the event is a meaningful effort toward promoting Georgian production in Gulf countries and boosting export capacities.

The exhibition will commence on March 27, 2021 at the DECC - Doha Exhibition and Convention Center.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20282/>



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia hosts a remote session with stakeholders on biodiversity and forestry



Deputy Minister, Mr Iuri Nozadze of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) delivered opening remarks at a remote meeting with stakeholders on biodiversity and forestry. Deputy Minister expressed gratitude to the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) for their support, as well as hosting an incumbent meeting. In his speech, Deputy Minister Nozadze stressed out importance of complementing climate-smart agriculture and sustainable development of the latter.

“Biological diversity, forestry and wildlife, as well as sustainable development of agriculture serves as core priorities for the State. For us, it is of utmost importance to decrease climate change and effective remedies for diminishing excessive usage of resources; the latter objective especially requires engagement of donor and partner organizations. We believe that joining forces on these matters will translate into an outstanding cooperation” – Deputy Minister Nozadze stated.

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In the course of the meeting, MP Maia Bitadze, chairperson of the Parliamentary Environmental Protection and Natural Recourses Committee stressed out importance of cultivating new technologies for energy-effectiveness and sustainable management of wildlife. In her remarks, Ms Bitadze stressed out effective management of green plantations at municipalities, sustainable urban planning and unified strategy for urban diversity of cities.

Ms Louisa Vinton, Resident Representative of the UNDP stressed out the trends for development of environmental and climate-smart agricultural measures. Ms Vinton also expressed willingness for future cooperation.

In the course of the meeting, the MEPA’s respective representatives presented 10 project proposals for future cooperation and financial assistance. The respective proposals have been designed on protected territories, energy-effective infrastructure of public sector, forestry sector, ecotourism, development and agricultural and agrarian matters.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20261/>

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) hosts the Asian Development Bank (ADB)

The MEPA hosted Director of the ADB at a remote meeting. Deputy Minister of MEPA, Mr Otar Shamugia and Mr Shane Rosenthal, Director of ADB discussed investment prospects deployed to rehabilitation-modernization of irrigation systems. One of the target projects anticipated within the cooperation are Lower Samgori (left) magistral and internal channels, as well as rehabilitation of the Tbilisi-Kumisi irrigation system in accordance with the modern standards. Also, capacity building of institutional and management mechanisms of the MEPA and LTD “Georgian Amelioration”.

The meeting enjoyed presence of the representatives of MEPA’s agencies; LTD “Georgian Amelioration”; Jasmin Siddick, head department of the agriculture and natural resources of the ADB; Frank Dadkeste, head of water resources development program in Georgia and Avtandil Tskhvitava, project manager at the ADB, as well as experts of the British consultation firm “Landell Mills”.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20256/>