



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

DECEMBER 2021

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) sign a Grant Agreement



ture. The aforementioned grant agreement steps up the cooperation between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, moreover, it is the first precedent of direct cooperation, thereupon, the grant agreement is particularly important for us.

It should be noted, that project is in full compliance with the priorities of Georgia in the integration process with the E U, therefore, implementation of the project will bring Georgia closer to the European Union” - said the Minister.

The program “Save the Nature - Georgia 2021-2024” has been developed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture on the basis of policy dialogue on thematic areas with the Embassy of Sweden. The program embraces specific actions envisaged under the strategies and action plans of the Government of Georgia in the biodiversity and air quality monitoring fields.

“The respective program will support the biodiversity protection and recovery actions. Furthermore, it will enable the Government to purchase new automated air quality monitoring stations to improve the monitoring of air quality” said Mr. Eric Illes, Head of Development Cooperation and Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Sweden to Georgia.

The project will span over the years 2021-2024, with an overall budget of 56 500 000 Swedish krona.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, LEPL Agency of Protected Areas, LEPL National Environment Agency and LEPL National Wildlife Agency are direct implementers of the project.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20540/>

The respective agreement will be implemented within the framework of the programme “Save the Nature - Georgia” and will support the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture in strengthening institutional capacity, improving management efficiency and promoting sustainable management of natural resources in Georgia .

As Mr. Levan Davitashvili stated, under the respective programme, the flood-plain reforestation project will be prepared for the town of Rustavi.

“Krtsanisi forest-park space will be arranged in a manner, that will enable us to preserve the existing ecosystem and develop basic ecological infrastruc-

Memorandum of Understanding signed on the implementation of the program “Sustainable Development of the Area of Aragvi Protected Landscape and Local Community”

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Levan Davitashvili, Mayor of Dusheti Manana Narimanidze, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Georgia Petr Mikyska, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to Georgia Pavel Wizdal and the Head of the office at Austrian Development Agency Alexander Karner signed the Memorandum of Understanding.

The programme will span over the years 2018-2023, with an overall budget of 2.3 Million Euros, out of which 61% will be financed by the Czech Development Agency, 30% by the Austrian Development Agency, 9% by the Slovak Republic. On the Georgian side, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and Dusheti City Hall will ensure the technical and infrastructural support of the programme.

“Expansion of protected areas is our priority. The territory of protected areas has significantly expanded over the last few years, currently it makes up 12 percent of the country’s territory. 100 thousand hectares have been added to the protected areas in Dusheti Municipality, part of which is represented as a protected landscape. The municipality undertakes the management of protected areas by taking into account the interests of the local community,



entailing development of local economy and traditional activities in rural areas. I firmly believe, that aforementioned support will enable Dusheti Municipality to ensure a successful management of protected areas” said Minister Davitashvili. Mayor of Dusheti Municipality, Manana Narimanidze noted, that MoU aims to improve the economic conditions and livelihoods of local communities, ensure sustainable development of tourism, agriculture, education, furthermore, it will contribute into good governance, social care services, environment-friendly management of the region, including sustainable forest management. The program intending to protect the Aragvi protected landscape meets the interests of local community.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20627>

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture opens the international competition “Future Agro Challenge” at the Technopark



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Levan Davitashvili opened the largest international competition “Future Agro Challenge”, which brings together ecosystem stakeholders from different countries of the world to encourage global collaboration.

The importance of using new technologies and innovations in the agricultural sector, as well as youth engagement and participation in the entire process was underlined by Mr. Davitashvili while delivering his opening remarks.

“The engagement of youth in the agricultural activities is one of the crucial issues. Innovation is a way to get young people interested in the agricultural sector. We have already embraced this practice, namely: there are many start-ups, some of them even very successful.”

It’s worth mentioning, that we face a worst impact of climate change. Moreover, climate change related issues were actively discussed at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties, which was held in Glasgow, U.K, where all participant states have made obvious statements, set ambitious goals

and brought forward commitments to mitigate climate change. However, we can not reduce climate change, without introduction of modern technology and innovations, especially when we are focusing on increasing efficiency in the food sector. The agro-food sector has a crucial impact on nature and environment;

All of the aforementioned can be solved through introduction of innovations, also by conducting researches, making discoveries or adopting the accurate and precise findings. I wish you all the best of luck; We are your supporters and we must continue to work together, meanwhile, we will confirm those important findings, which will be presented and will be put into effect, as soon as they are reasonably practicable, furthermore, we would like our entrepreneurs and farmers to adopt these innovations rapidly on the one hand, and on the other hand to present them on the international arena”- said Minister Levan Davitashvili.

According to Mrs. Nino Zambakhidze, President of the Georgian Farmers’ Association, modern agriculture needs state-of-the-art technologies, as well as innovative vision. Similar events will increase motivation of young people and promote their participation, which will bring a great boon to the agricultural sector.

On December 5, the national winner of the competition - “Agripreneur of the Year” - will be announced and Georgian Farmers’ Association will grant the winner a cash prize of GEL 2000. The international competition “Future Agro Challenge” organized by Startup Bureau and Agro Solutions has been held for the third year in Georgia.

The general partners of the event are the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and Liberty Bank, supporters - Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA), Georgian Farmers Association, USAID Agriculture Program, DataFest Tbilisi, Israel International Development Cooperation Agency (MASHAV) and UNDP Accelerator Labs.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20610>

Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr Levan Davitashvili hosted the representatives of American companies: “Silk Road Wines” and “Emerald Vines Media”



In the course of the meeting, the participants discussed export potential and prospects to boost popularization of Georgian wine to the United States market.

The Chairman of the National Wine Agency, Levan Mekhuzla and the Founder of the American company “Silk Road Wines” Yanik Arakelov attended the meeting.

The President of the American company “Emerald Vines Media” Esmeralda Struyk delivered a presentation, where she underlined current challenges facing the wine sector in Georgia and presented goals on how to raise awareness of Georgian wine in the American market.

Mr. Davitashvili expressed gratitude to the representatives of the company for their interest in Georgian wine and noted, that

the Ministry, through joint efforts with the National Wine Agency and Georgian wine producers initiated to increase export potential, competitiveness and awareness of Georgian wine into the international markets.

“Georgian wine is one of the top export products of our country. The National Wine Agency organizes tasting events, competitions, international wine conferences, exhibitions and media tours to promote the development of the wine sector. Georgian wine export is growing and overall demand for Georgian

wine is gradually increasing. The United States is a strategic market for Georgian wine, therefore, it is crucial to increase awareness and maximize our wine presence into the international markets” - said Levan Davitashvili.

At the meeting, the parties agreed to continue communication and cooperation on Georgian wine export related issues, including promotion of Georgian wine into the American market, which will ultimately contribute to the deepening of trade and economic relations between the two countries.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20612>

Levan Davitashvili hosted the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Hungary to Georgia, Mrs. Anna Maria Siko



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20597>

Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Levan Davitashvili met with the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Hungary to Georgia, Anna Maria Siko. In the course of the meeting, the sides discussed future cooperation issues between the two countries.

The Minister stressed the importance of bilateral cooperation between Georgia and the Republic of Hungary in a number of areas.

Mrs. Anna Siko noted, that she will actively work to further deepen cooperation between the two countries.

The participants noted, that the visit of the delegation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia to Hungary is scheduled in December 2021.

The project “Dialogues in Evidence - Based between Civil Society and Parliament on Agriculture, Environment and Infrastructure related issues (EUGA-2020)” to discuss at the meeting.



Caucasus Open Space (COS) supported by the Embassy of the Netherlands held a three-day workshop under the framework of the project “Dialogues in Evidence-Based between Civil Society and Parliament on Agriculture,

Environment and Infrastructure related issues (EUGA-2020)”.

The meeting enjoyed the presence of the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Mr. Loes Lammerts, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Agrarian Affairs, Mrs. Nino Tsilosani and Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia Mrs. Mzia Giorgobiani.

The respective project aims to create a research-based guide for Members of Parliament to ensure compliance of Georgia’s Agriculture, Environment and Infrastructure Projects with the EU best practices and harmonize Georgia’s legislation with the European Legislation in the respective area, in accordance with the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

“The project will seek to strengthen efficiency of Parliament in the legal approximation process within the Association Agreement and increase awareness in civil society” - said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

Presentation of the electronic timber resource management system program held in Tbilisi

The importance of introducing an electronic timber management system has been discussed at the meeting held within the project “Strengthening the Sustainable Forestry Practices in Georgia” - Implementation of Timber’s Innovative Timber Measurement Technology”.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Iuri Nozadze and Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia to Georgia, Mrs. Riina Kaljurand attended the meeting.

The project was implemented by the Estonian Company “Timbeter”,

through financial assistance of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and technical support of the Georgian Environmental Organization, “Geo”. Under the framework of the project, experimental activities were carried out by representatives of the Ministry, staff of the National Forest Agency and the Department of Environmental Supervision in the log sort yards and state-owned forest area.

“Collecting accurate information about forest and put it in a unified system is essential for us. An Estonian electronic system



model for the wood and forest registry will help the forest management and supervision bodies to take an effective oversight” said Mr. Yuri Nozadze, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

“I would like to express my gratitude to Georgian side, especially to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture for its openness, and for choosing Estonian technologies in the development of Georgian forests. We have made a good start and we are looking forward to a successful cooperation in the future as well” Mrs. Riina Kaliorand said.

The representatives of the Embassy of Estonia, the Company “Timbeter”, the National Forestry Agency, the Department of Environmental Supervision and the Agency of Protected Areas attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20613>

Carl Amirgulashvili elected as Vice-Chairman of the Bureau of Standing Committee of the Bern Convention

At the 41st session of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, Mr. Carl Amirgulashvili was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Bureau of Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

The 41st meeting of the Standing Committee of the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Conservation of Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Berne Convention) was held in Strasbourg, France, which lasted from 29 November to 3 December, 2021.. Within the session, Mr. Carl Amirgulashvili, Head of the Biodiversity and Forestry Department of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Bureau for one year.

The appointment of a representative of Georgia to this position will promote active representation and positioning of our country in the structures of the Council of Europe on the one hand, and on the other hand, it will foster more effective implementation of environmental policy in Georgia.

The Berne Convention is one of the most important international treaties in the environmental protection field. The emerald network has been established and is being developed in Georgia for implementation of the Convention and fulfillment of obligations undertaken under the Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union.

Currently, emerald network is consisted of 66 sites, while total area comprises 1,307,501 hectares. At this stage, management plans for emerald network are being developed.



It’s worth mentioning, that through financial support of the German Government bilateral biogeographical seminar of the Berne Convention is planned to conduct specifically for Georgia in December 15-16, 2021, where conservation status of species and habitats protected by the Convention will be updated for each biogeographical region of Georgia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20609>

Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili met with the Deputy Head of Mission of Norway’s Embassy to Georgia, Mr Marko Soldik.



In the course of the meeting, the parties discussed the resolution on plastic pollution, as one of the most pressing environmental issues, which was adopted at the UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA 5.2). This draft reso-

lution aims to establish an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) with a mandate to negotiate a legally binding global agreement to address plastic pollution with the objective of reducing discharge of plastics into the environment by covering all stages of the plastic life cycle and by adopting a circular economy approach to plastics.

The parties agreed to schedule a working meeting for experts of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environmental Protection. At the working meeting both sides will hold a thorough discussion upon the resolution, which will be submitted to the Environmental Assembly (UNEA), the sides will also highlight issues, regarding Georgia’s Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and it’s commitments to the negotiation process

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20608>

George Khanishvili meets representatives of global company “John Deere”, American corporation manufacturing agricultural machinery



First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. George Khanishvili met with the representatives of global company “John Deere”, American corporation, which manufactures agricultural machinery and establishes network of international facilities.

New Director of the company “John Deere” in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Mr. Alexei Kuznetsov and Deputy Chairman of the Rural Development Agency Mr. Giorgi Jibladze attended the meeting.

The First Deputy Minister provided representatives of the company with the detailed information on the state co-financing program for agricultural mechanization. The respective program enables farmers to have an access to financial resources, thus supporting them to purchase necessary agricultural equipment.

Mr. Khanishvili noted, that he is delighted, that one of the best manufacturers of agricultural machinery -the American brand “John Deere” enters Georgian market.

“I believe American company “John Deere” will enable small and medium-scale farmers to have more access to necessary agricultural equipment, which will result into high quality cultivated land areas, embracing large agricultural land plots.

The sides expressed readiness for future cooperation.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20618>

Meeting with the representatives of the World Bank Mission

Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Otar Shamugia held a working meeting with the representatives of the World Bank Mission.

Within the support of the World Bank Mission, two important projects are submitted in Georgia: Georgia’s Irrigation and Land Market Development Project (GILMDP), which has already been implementing and Georgia’s Rural Agricultural Irrigation and Land, Project (GRAIL), which has been planned to be executed in the country.

During the workshop, the sides discussed action plans of the GILMDP and GRAIL projects.

In the course of the meeting, Mr. Shamugia noted, that proper assessment of the ongoing rehabilitation works of the irrigation system, as well as comprehensive and objective analysis of project related activities and measures are crucial for implementation of the GILMDP project.

With regard to the GRAIL project, the representatives of the World Bank Mission reaffirmed their readiness to support Georgian Government’s efforts in developing integrated approaches to investing in the fields of agriculture,



irrigation, land for the welfare of farmers and in general, economic benefits and growth to achieve in the country. Moreover, the participants also noted, that support will be provided to build climate resilience, which will ultimately foster implementation of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of Georgia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20621>

Noe Megrelishvili elected as the Co - Chair of the Bureau of Executive Body for Air Convention



At the 41st session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention), Mr. Noe Megrelishvili, Head of Ambient Air Division, Department of Environment and Climate Change under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia,

was elected to a two-year term as the Co-Chair of the Bureau.

The representative of Sweden has been elected as a Chairman of the Bureau, while representatives of the United States and the Kingdom of the Netherlands appointed as Co-Chair.

It’s worth mentioning, that Georgia is one of the outstanding countries in terms of the number of voluntary commitments taken under the Air Convention, as well as the degree of fulfillment of those obligations within the respective Agreements. Over the last few years, the most important steps have been taken at the international level towards monitoring and protection of ambient air quality, which raises our country’s reputation and increases support from donor organizations.

By appointing a representative of Georgia to the high position of the Executive Body of the Convention will help to get closer to the European best practices with regard to the air quality management in Georgia.

On December 6-8 , 2021, the 41st session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention) was held in Geneva, Switzerland.