



# Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

JULY 2023

## Within the frames of the visit to Rome, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Otar Shamugia met with the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty, and Forests of the Republic of Italy, Mr. Francesco Lollobrigida



As part of the UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment in Rome, Italy, the counterpart Ministers discussed the importance of sustainable food systems.

During the meeting with his Italian counterpart, Mr. Shamugia emphasized the support of the Republic of Italy on the path of Georgia's European integration.

The parties discussed the possibilities of strengthening collaboration between the two countries' Agencies in the scientific-research field and enhancing trade in agro-food products.

Mr. Shamugia provided his Italian colleague with thorough information on the state support programs, noting that the state is taking effective initiatives to ensure the quality of Georgian agro-food products, including wine and hazelnuts.

Minister Shamugia stated that Georgian wine is of outstanding quality and has good export potential. Mr. Francesco Lollobrigida expressed hope that Georgia will soon receive the candidate status and become a member of the European Union.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Republic of Italy, Resident Representative of Georgia to UN International Organizations in Rome, Mr. Konstantine Surguladze, accompanied the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia.



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## Otar Shamugia participates in the UN Food Systems Summit+2 Stocktaking Moment in Rome, Italy



During his visit to Rome, the capital city of the Republic of Italy, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, participated in the UN Food Systems Summit+2 Stocktaking Moment.

1,200 delegates and high-rank officials, including Heads of 19 countries and Ministers of 65 countries attended the event hosted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.



UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, Prime Minister of Italy, Mr. Giorgia Meloni, Presidents and Heads of Government of various countries delivered remarks at the high-ranking session within the Summit.

The participants discussed the progress and results of the commitments made at the 2021 Food Systems Summit. As mentioned, sharing concrete examples and advocating for urgent actions and large-scale initiatives for building sustainable food systems will further contribute to achieving better results.

According to the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, the negative impact of climate change on agriculture is still a concern. Against this backdrop, the coordinated efforts of states are crucial to producing healthy food with a lower environmental impact and being accessible to everyone. Moreover, the states should systematically implement international obligations and make sustainable food systems a global reality by 2030.

The Minister emphasized that the Government of Georgia is carrying out significant programs promoting each stage of the value chain for ensuring the sustainability and stability of food systems, including promoting farmers' access to preferential financial resources, supporting food production/processing field, agro-insurance program, and many other initiatives.

With the support of the state policy, the export of Georgian agro-food products has increased by over 147% in the last 10 years, resulting from the development of the private sector in line with the current needs and requirements.

“Georgia actively continues the approximation of its food safety, veterinary, and plant protection legislation with the EU legal acts, as stipulated by the Association Agreement with the European Union.

Since 2015, the requirements of 190 European regulations and directives have been transposed into the National legislation of Georgia. This process has become even more intense since the

European Union awarded Georgia a European perspective, and we expect to receive the status of a candidate country by the end of the year.

Within the scope of the UN Food Systems Summit, Georgia successfully convened national dialogues aiming to analyze the current situation and plan relevant measures.

The prepared report was submitted to the Summit Secretariat. It should be mentioned that Georgia was the first country in the region to send the finished document to the Summit in advance”, said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Republic of Italy, Resident Representative of Georgia to UN International Organizations in Rome, Mr. Konstantine Surguladze, accompanied the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia at the UN Food Systems Summit in Rome.

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## Otar Shamugia and Kelly Degnan visited the genetic laboratory created at the State Laboratory of Agriculture



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, together with the Ambassador of the United States of America, Mrs. Kelly Degnan, inspected the genetic laboratory created at the State Laboratory of Agriculture.

The visitors inspected the equipment and got familiar with the capabilities of the animal disease diagnostic department.

Mr. Shamugia stressed the importance of laboratory research, emphasizing the State Laboratory of Agriculture's role in diagnosing particularly severe diseases.

The Minister thanked the US Ambassador and the representatives of partner organizations for their support.

“The laboratory capacity is annually increasing, with the support of the state and our international partners. Moreover, we enjoy long-standing cooperation with

the US National Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the US Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), and with their assistance, the laboratory has been equipped with modern laboratory equipment this year, allowing us to diagnose diseases based on genetic studies,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

According to the US Ambassador, the United States is happy and proud to assist Georgia in developing the agricultural laboratory component.

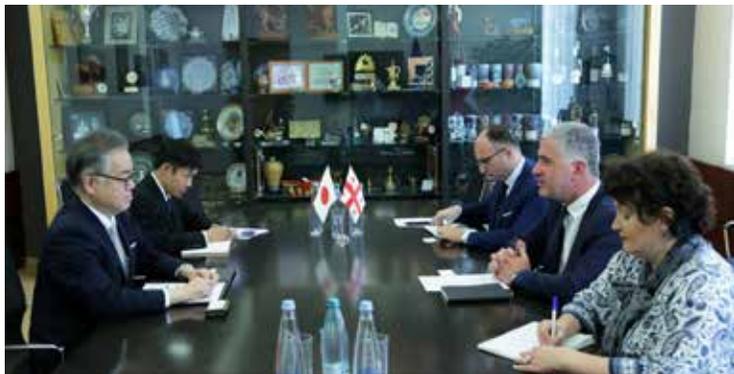
“ Today is a wonderful example of the long-standing collaboration between the State Laboratory of Agriculture, the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health, and the United States Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). The important genetic sequencing equipment was donated to Georgia's state Laboratory of Agriculture. The United States is very pleased and proud to be able to support it through the important equipment donation made today” stated Mrs. Kelly Degnan.

The representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the US Embassy, the US Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), the US National Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the State Agricultural Laboratory attended the meeting.



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## Georgia and Japan further enhance cooperation in the agricultural and environmental fields



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Georgia, Mr. Ishizuka Hideki. During the introductory meeting, the parties discussed issues of further cooperation. Mr. Otar Shamugia congratulated the Japanese Ambassador on the start of the diplomatic mission in Georgia and wished him success in his future endeavors. The Minister thanked the Japanese side for their long-standing support for Georgia's agricultural development and environmental protection fields.

“The deepening cooperation with the Japanese side and support in implementing reforms and projects in our country is crucial for us. Japan has outstanding experience; Therefore, sharing knowledge, and adopting modern technologies in the country is especially valuable for us, as it will allow our farmers and producers to increase production and improve the quality of their products, reduce costs, and become competitive and export-oriented”, said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

According to the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Japan to Georgia, Mr. Ishizuka Hideki, the cooperation between Japan and Georgia is active and successful.

The Japanese side appreciates the expansion of environmental cooperation with Georgia and expresses readiness to support it.

“Japan has several mechanisms and schemes for supporting Georgia in addressing existing challenges in priority areas, specifically environmental protection, forest, water resource management, and air quality improvement. We are ready to share our experience with the Georgian side and provide technical and financial support. It is worth mentioning that Georgian agricultural products have outstanding opportunities in the global market, including the Japanese market. I believe that by strengthening our cooperation, we will be able to achieve excellent outcomes in all areas.” said Mr. Ishizuka Hideki.

As mentioned, enhancing cooperation with the Japanese side will be crucial in the following areas: sustainable forest management, emissions trading, water resources management, air quality improvement, protected areas, and tourism development, including increasing the export of Georgian agricultural products and wine.



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## Otar Shamugia: “We are implementing several important projects jointly with the Austrian side; I am confident that our cooperation will be fruitful in the future as well”



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, met with the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Austria to Georgia, Mr. Thomas Mühlmann, and the New Attache for Agriculture, Food-Industry, Forestry, Water-Management, Mrs. Karin Doppelbauer. The Minister congratulated Mrs. Doppelbauer on the start of her job and wished her success in future endeavors. As mentioned, the Attache will work in the following countries – Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan.

During the meeting, the parties discussed issues of future cooperation. Mr. Otar Shamugia commended Austria for its long-standing, close collaboration and unwavering support for Georgia.

“We are implementing several important projects jointly with the Austrian side. I am confident that our cooperation will be fruitful in the future as well. We are striving to carry out reforms in the agricultural and environmental protection sectors as soon as possible, especially given that we are on the path to European integration and waiting for candidate status. Therefore, sharing Austria's experience is very valuable and important for us”, said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

During the meeting, the conversation touched upon the increased production and export indicators in the agricultural sector over the last decade, the ways to develop the cattle breeding sector, the measures taken to diversify the wine market, and the reforms implemented in the forestry sector, including the new forest code.

The parties discussed the challenges in the agricultural field. The Austrian side expressed its readiness to share an experience with the Georgian side.



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## Otar Shamugia meets the Head of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Erik Illes



During the meeting, the parties addressed current projects and priority areas for future cooperation.

The Minister thanked SIDA, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Sweden, and the Government of Sweden for supporting Georgia, emphasizing collaboration in waste management and the progress made by Georgia in the mentioned area.

“Reforming waste management is a challenging and complex task. Our objective is to make this journey as painless and easy as possible. Implementing environmental reforms, on the one hand, is a part of our obligation under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, and on the other, it is essential for our country and people. It should be mentioned that much has been done with the support of our international partners, including Sweden, and the active work of our government and parliament; however, we still face challenges, and support from donors and coordinated work is particularly important to overcome these challenges”, said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

According to the Head of SIDA, the Swedish side positively evaluates the efforts of Georgia and the steps taken to implement reforms toward the environmental protection area.

“Georgia has already made some progress in waste management; new rules and regulations have been adopted, and work is underway to implement international standards. Sweden is eager to share its own experience with Georgia and the practices of other European countries that have gone through a similar transitional stage. It should be mentioned that some of our projects are nearing completion in Georgia, and we are working on a new strategy. Accordingly, our goal is to learn more about the current needs and demands in Georgia”, stated Mr. Erik Illes.

As mentioned, the cooperation and dialogue between the parties will continue in waste management, biodiversity, extended producer responsibility, institutional development, and other areas.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, the Head of the Agency of Nuclear and Radiation Safety, Mr. Vasil Gedevanishvili, the Head of the Environmental Program of the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, Mrs. Khatuna Zaldastanishvili and the representatives of the relevant departments of the Ministry attended the meeting.



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## Georgia becomes a member of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Council for the first time



Georgia was elected as a member of the Council of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for two years (from July 7, 2023 to June 30, 2025). Regarding Georgia, the decision was made during the 43rd FAO conference. The Conference was held in Rome on July 1-7, 2023.

The Council of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) consists of 49 member nations elected once in two years during the Conference.

The Council acts as an executive organ within the power delegated to it by the Conference. In particular, it exercises functions dealing with the world food and agriculture situation and related matters, current and prospective activities of the Organization, including its Programme of Work and Budget, administrative matters, financial management of the Organization, and constitutional matters.

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## Tbilisi will host the thirty-seventh meeting of the GCF Board

The 36th meeting of the Board of the Green Climate Fund was held in Songdo, Republic of Korea.

According to the decision made at the Board meeting, the Council will hold the next meeting at the end of October 2023 in Tbilisi, Georgia.

All members of the Council unanimously supported the decision.

The Green Climate Fund is the world's largest fund supporting developing countries in achieving climate change goals.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia attended the 36th meeting of the Council in Songdo.

Mrs. Tandilashvili is a member of the mentioned Council, representing the countries of the Eastern European region.

Notably, during the meeting, the Board adopted the Fund's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, thus supporting developing countries in implementing their national priorities towards climate change.

Within the framework of the Council meeting, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili chaired the meetings of the Accreditation Committee of the GCF.

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## Public Discussion on Georgia's First Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy 2050



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, along with the European Union Representation in Georgia and the United Nations Development Program representatives, presented Georgia's First Long-term Low-emission Development Strategy 2050 for public discussion.

The document formally adopted by the Government of Georgia on April 24, 2023, advocates for updating the National Climate Action Plan for 2023-2025.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, made opening remarks at the event. The Minister thanked the European Union representative in Georgia



and the United Nations Development Program representatives for their support.

"Climate change is a global challenge. Developed countries have taken several significant steps to address this challenge during the previous decade. We should mention that small countries joined this process as well. To achieve this goal, we have elaborated a long-term low-emission development concept that incorporates many sectors of the economy, such as construction, industry, transportation, energy, agriculture, and waste management, following extensive work with the cooperation of our partners and various agencies.

**The main goal of the concept is to make Georgia carbon neutral by 2050. The concept completely echoes the approach of the European Union in the climate policy and is one of the main directions within the framework of the Association Agreement," said Mr. Otar Shamugia.**

The Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, Mr. Pawel Herczynski emphasized the importance of the low-emission development strategy.

**"The Government of Georgia received a very important document resulting from the close cooperation with representatives of the European Union, the United Nations Development Program, and other partners. I am pleased that the European Union is assisting Georgia in its decarbonization efforts," stated Mr. Pawel Herczynski.**

The low-emission development strategy identifies opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It describes priority steps to be taken in various sectors of the economy (energy, construction, transportation, industry, agriculture, waste management, land use, and forest management).

The policy completely conforms with the Paris Agreement and is tailored to Georgia's needs.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia developed the Low-emission Development Strategy, with the support of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), with the involvement of the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) in close cooperation with various public agencies, civil society, and international partners.

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## Georgia joins the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol "On Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer"

"Georgia has joined the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which is an international effort to reduce the consumption of substances with a high global warming potential - hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). These substances, like ozone-depleting substances, are mainly used as refrigerants in the air conditioning and refrigeration sector.

On the initiative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the relevant resolution on May 2, 2023, and the corresponding note was handed over to the United Nations on July 11.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia developed a package of legislative amendments, which were adopted by the Parliament of Georgia on June 16. The mentioned amendments aimed at improving the national refrigerant management system, increasing the quality of service in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector, and imple-

menting the commitments made within the framework of the Kigali Amendment.

The updated legislation sets requirements for refrigerant leakage monitoring, collection, recovery, recycling, and disposal; It also regulates transboundary shipments of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

In addition, to improve the management and supervision of refrigerants, it is planned to create an electronic system for refrigerant management and improve the existing certification system in the refrigeration sector and improve environmental standards, including the raising qualifications of technicians in charge of handling refrigerants or servicing a refrigeration system, and the capacity building of state executive agencies.

The mentioned activities will be financially supported by the Multilateral Fund for implementing the Montreal Protocol.

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## The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Nino Tandilashvili, participated in Hungary's 7th Ministerial Conference of Environment and Health



During the Ministerial Conference, the high-level representatives of Environmental and Health Agencies from 53 countries included in the World Health Organization in the European region highlighted solutions, achievements, and challenges in the European region's environmental protection field and health policy.

The First Deputy Minister participated in a panel discussion together with the high-level representatives of the European Commission and officials of different countries.

Mrs. Tandilashvili discussed the measures taken by the Government of Georgia and important achievements in preventing environmental pollution.

"In recent years, we have taken active steps to improve air quality in the country. Based on the legislative amendments of 2020, Georgia moves forward to fully transitioning to the European air quality management system. 7 stationary and 2 mobile stations were added to the ambient air quality monitoring network and with the support of the donor organizations this number will be doubled this year. The National air quality standards and monitoring criteria are har-

monized with EU legislation", said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The First Deputy Minister noted that reducing air pollution from the transport sector is a priority for Georgia; In recent years, fuel quality has improved significantly - the national standards for the quality of gasoline and diesel correspond to Euro 5 standards. At the same time, state control of fuel quality and corresponding sanctions were significantly tightened.

The First Deputy Minister spoke about the issues regarding the Euro 5 standard imposed by the Government of Georgia on the import of cars from January 1, 2024, the ban on the export of catalysts, and the control of vehicles with visible emissions on the roads by the Department of Environmental Supervision.

The steps taken by Georgia in regulating industrial enterprises were also emphasized. According to the First Deputy Minister, industrial enterprises were obliged to conduct continuous monitoring of emissions in the air online, and sanctions were increased for violating the requirements of the air protection legislation.

Mrs. Tandilashvili called attention to the recently passed Law "On Industrial Emissions", emphasizing that the mentioned law will significantly help to prevent environmental pollution from the industrial sector.

At the conference, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, the First Deputy Minister of IDPs from the Occupied Territories of Georgia, Mrs. Tamar Gabunia, the Minister of Environmental Protection of Germany, Mrs. Steffi Lemke and Mr. Hans Kluge, Regional Director for Europe at the World Health Organization (WHO) signed the Declaration of Cooperation initiated within the framework of the World Health Organization Environment and Health Europe process towards human biomonitoring.

The seventh conference of the Ministers of Environment and Health was held in Budapest under the patronage of the Hungarian President, H.E. Katalin Novák.

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## Marco Kainer, Director of the Environmental Division of the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe (UNECE): "I have rarely seen such rapid progress in different areas of environmental protection that Georgia has demonstrated"

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, met with Mr. Marco Kainer, Director of the Environmental Division of the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe (UNECE) in Budapest. During the meeting, the parties discussed the progress achieved by Georgia in the environmental protection field.

Mrs. Tandilashvili thanked the Director of the Environmental Division UNECE for the support.

"Georgia is actively involved in the environmental processes and agreements of the UN Economic Commission for Europe and is actively working on implementing recommendations. We have made significant progress towards the environmental protection area," stated Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The First Deputy Minister briefed Mr. Kainer about environmental measures the Government of Georgia had implemented in the country.

Mrs. Tandilashvili stated that the government had installed air quality monitoring systems; reforms are being launched to reduce industrial emissions, including implementing control mechanisms and managing water resources.

During the meeting, the conversation touched upon the adopted laws on "Water Resources Management" and "On Industrial Emissions." According to the First Deputy, both laws fully comply with European requirements, and their implementation in practice ensures the reduction of environmental pollution and sustainable management of natural resources.

According to the Director of the environmental division of the UN Economic Commission for Europe, Georgia has made significant progress in fulfilling its obligations in the environmental protection area.

"The reforms and initiatives carried out by Georgia in the environmental protection area are impressive. During my 15 years at the UN Economic Commission for Europe, I have rarely seen such rapid progress in different areas of environmental protection that Georgia has demonstrated," stated Mr. Marco Kainer.

The Director of the Environmental Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) expressed his full support for Georgia in implementing future recommendations.

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## Nino Tandilashvili participates in the OSCE High-Level Conference on Climate Change



Austria, Vienna hosted the high-level conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, together with the Secretary General of the OSCE, Mrs. Helga Maria Schmid, the Minis-

ter of Foreign Affairs of Germany, Mrs. Annalena Baerbock, and the first Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the United States of America, Mr. John Kerry participated in the panel discussion within the framework of the high-level conference.

The panel discussion was dedicated to the importance of regional cooperation in combating climate change.

“Regional collaboration becomes even more critical since climate change has no boundaries. OSCE plays a vital role in the mentioned processes. Georgia is a long-standing partner of the OSCE in tackling climate change challenges. The ongoing regional project aiming to increase resilience in the South Caucasus region by reducing fire risks caused by climate change is a vivid example of the OSCE’s support for cross-border cooperation.

The project will help Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to provide better coordination between forestry, emergency, and border security services, which will strengthen the capabilities of local communities in the prevention, management, and response to fires”, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili noted.

Within the conference, the parties discussed the challenges posed by the Russia-Ukraine war regarding climate and environmental security.

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## UNEP expresses its full support for Georgia

During the visit to Hungary, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, met with the newly appointed Regional Director of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Mr. Arnold Kreilhuber, in Budapest.

At the introductory meeting, the parties discussed current and future projects launched under the cooperation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and UNEP and emphasized priority directions. The regional director of UNEP expressed his full

support to the Georgian side in implementing the recommendations.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili underlined the importance of the active involvement of international and donor organizations in mitigating climate change in Georgia and supporting the Georgian side in adopting environmental standards.

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## Nino Tandilashvili: “Germany supports our country in strengthening the environmental protection areas, which is crucial on the path of Georgia’s European integration”



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, met with the Minister of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mrs. Steffi Lemke, in Budapest.

During the meeting, the parties addressed Georgia-Germany relations and opportunities for future cooperation, emphasizing the strong and reliable alliance that binds the two countries, and the importance of Germany’s support in the process of Georgia’s integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

According to the First Deputy Minister, integration into the European Union is an irreversible process and the main priority of the Georgian Government.

“Germany, as a strategic partner country of Georgia, has constantly supported and continues to support our country in strengthening the environmental protection areas, which is crucial on the path of Georgia’s European integration,” stated Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

During the meeting, the First Deputy Minister discussed the environmental protection policy of Georgia and the progress made in developing protected areas, forestry, and waste management, including adopting environmental standards.

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## Solomon Pavliashvili meets the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, met with Mrs. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

The Deputy Minister thanked the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe for the support, noting that Georgia has achieved significant progress toward environmental protection by following Commission's recommendations.

“During the meeting, we discussed the country’s progress towards environmental protection and highlighted current challenges. Georgia is actively involved in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe’s environmental processes and agreements and takes active strides toward implementing recommendations. Moreover, Georgia has made significant progress in preventing atmospheric air pollution, strengthening monitoring systems, and reducing and controlling industrial emissions,” stated Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

Mrs. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), emphasized Georgia’s progress towards environmental protection, noting that the Commission has a long-standing and fruitful cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

“Georgia has made significant progress in fulfilling its environmental commitments. We will continue to collaborate in this direction, and we will discuss our current progress and challenges. The Ministry expressed its readiness to implement future recommendations. We support the Government of Georgia in taking positive steps,” Mrs. Olga Algayerova remarked.

The discussion touched upon the measures conducted throughout the country to avoid atmospheric air pollution: installation of monitoring systems, control of harmful emissions from road transport, and the industrial sector.

As mentioned, the Ministry is actively working on the implementation of the principles of the Aarhus Convention. The parties also highlighted the Water Convention (Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes).

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## The parties discussed the ways to promote inclusive and sustainable growth in rural areas within the ENPARD project



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili participated in the working meeting, where the parties highlighted issues for promoting inclusive and sustainable growth in rural areas, and the results achieved in rural development within the European Neighborhood Program for Rural and Agricultural Development (ENPARD).

Mr. Pavliashvili thanked the European Union and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for long-standing support to Georgia.

“For over a decade, several important projects have been implemented in Georgia with the support of the European Union and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the positive results achieved in rural and agricultural development in the country are a reflection of this support. The Ministry works actively and collaboratively with donors to overcome the challenges we still face in

rural and agricultural fields, climate change, air quality, waste management, and other environmental areas,” Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili stated.

According to the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Georgia, Mrs. Anna Chernyshova, the Ministry, international partners, and local organizations should work together to overcome the existing challenges.

“Together with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, international partners, and local organizations, we are discussing future ways of how we can support Georgia in the European integration process and how to make rural development more inclusive and sustainable,” said Mrs. Anna Chernyshova.

According to Mrs. Ketevan Khutsishvili, Programme Manager of the EU Delegation to Georgia, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture is the primary coordinator of the activities carried out by the European Union in Georgia in rural and agricultural development.

Programs implemented over the years, including ENPARD, support such directions as rural development and improvement of living conditions in rural areas, population involvement in the decision-making process, and promoting agricultural development.

During the working meeting, the results achieved in rural areas within the ENPARD were discussed in such areas as entrepreneurship support and job creation (co-financing and grant programs, state services in rural areas, promotion of traditional crafts, support of female entrepreneurs living in rural areas); Use of digital technologies and capacity building skills (digital transformation of small and medium enterprises, development of digital skills, development of youth in rural areas); Green economy (climate-smart agriculture, access to renewable technologies, green economy in rural areas).

The stakeholders promoting inclusive and sustainable growth in rural areas attended the meeting.

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## Yuri Nozadze attended the International Conference on Grape and Wine Industries (ICGWI) and the third international exhibition of wine culture and tourism in China



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, attended the International Conference on Grape and Wine Industries (ICGWI) and the Third International Exhibition of Wine Culture and Tourism. Moreover, the Deputy participated in forums held in line with the conferences.

The Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Industry and Information Technology, Culture, and Tourism, as well as the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), and the Government of Ningxia-Hui Autonomous Region, hosted the conference and expo among other high-ranking officials; The International Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV) was the co-host of mentioned events.

Yinchuan International Convention and Exhibition Center embraced the conferences and forums. The representatives from 42 countries, including 1500 dealers and more than 500 guests - politicians and representatives of academic and business circles attended the third international exhibition of wine culture and tourism: "Nature, innovation, culture, and Ecology".

The Deputy Minister, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, delivered remarks at the high-level dialogue session, emphasizing trade and economic ties between China and Georgia, the growing export of Georgian products to the Chinese market, including Georgian wine, and scientific-research cooperation in the agricultural field.

The Deputy Minister expressed hope to further extend the bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the wine industry.

Mr. Nozadze was invited as the guest of honor and the main speaker at the forum. The Deputy discussed the characteristics of natural terroir, Georgia's viticulture zones, the 8000-year history of winemaking, the grape varieties, and the process of making Qvevri wine.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia thanked China's National Research Institute of Food and Fermentation Industry for its remarkable contribution to promoting Georgian wine on the Chinese market.

During the visit, Mr. Yuri Nozadze met with Monsieur Baudouin Havaux, Président du "Concours Mondial de Bruxelles"; he also gave an interview to the CCTV publishing house, visited the Georgian grape variety nursery founded in 2015, Longjing and Seeger wineries and the Georgian corner presented at the third international exhibition of wine culture and tourism in China.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21324>

## The French-Georgian agro-industrial group plans to make additional investments in the livestock sector in Georgia



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, met with the representative of the French-Georgian agro-industrial group, Mr. Jacques Fleury, and the co-founder of MG Law Office, a partner company of the group, Mr. Archil Giorgadze.

Mr. Jacques Fleury briefed the First Deputy Minister on the activities of the agro-industrial group and highlighted plans for the future.

During the meeting, the parties discussed issues regarding the farm expansion opened by Dmanisi Livestock LLC, a member of the French-Georgian agro-industrial group, in the village of Kharabulakhi, Dmanisi Municipality.

**"French-Georgian agro-industrial group is planning to make additional investments in the livestock sector in Georgia, including expanding the existing farm in Dmanisi municipality and using climate-friendly technologies. All the above mentioned is crucial for promoting modern approaches in the cattle breeding sector",** said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

It should be mentioned that the LTD „Dmanisi Livestock“ is a joint effort of Georgian and French investments and is equipped with modern appliances.

The mentioned farm opened in 2021 in the Dmanisi municipality, the village of Zemo Kharabulakhi.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the French joint-stock company "Le Sommet de l'Élevage" signed a Memorandum of Cooperation the same year.

The Memorandum aimed to study and analyze small cattle breeding farms in Georgia and prepare recommendations, which is being carried out as part of the project "Small scale livestock farming in Georgia" funded by the French Ministry of Finance and Economy, the results of which are scheduled to be presented in September 2023.

In addition, in October 2023, a large-scale livestock exhibition is planned in France, where Georgia is invited as an honorary guest.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/21326/>

## The dynamic of trade in agricultural products is increasing between Georgia and Armenia.



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to Georgia, Mr. Ashot Smbatyan.

The parties discussed the current dynamics of trade relations between the countries and existing trade potential.

According to Mr. Shamugia, the indicators of trade in agricultural products are annually increasing between the two countries; At the same time, all conditions have been created to maintain the growing dynamics and further deepen trade and economic relations.

Along with the trade and economic issues between the countries, the parties addressed cooperation in the environmental area and the Minister's visit to Armenia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21341>

## Solomon Pavliashvili attends the presentation of the “Georgian Food/Agri Laboratory Development Concept”



“The development of the mentioned concept document will help in strengthening the laboratories in the food safety and agricultural fields. The Ministry is ready to support the development of the respective tools and planning activities to overcome the existing challenges” said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

The Head of the Czech Development Agency (CzDA) Office in Tbilisi, Mr. Jan Cernik thanked the parties for their active involvement in the project.

“The creation of a similar concept is particularly important for Georgia. Today, we can discuss the steps we have taken in developing this document. With the support of partner organizations, a very important document is being elaborated, and I am glad that we will get significant results with our active and fruitful cooperation,” said Mr. Jan Chernik.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, attended the presentation of the “Georgian Food/Agri Laboratory Development Concept”.

The document was developed by the working group created under the decree of the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, in partnership with the Association of Laboratories of Georgia, with the support of the Czech Development Agency (CzDA), and within the framework of the European Union-funded project “Support to the Food Safety and SPS Sector in Georgia under ENPARD IV”.

The Embassy of Sweden, the Czech Development Agency (CzDA), and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) co-financed the mentioned project.

The concept document will contribute to increasing the capacities of laboratories in food safety, animal and aquaculture health, and plant protection fields.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, thanked the Czech Development Agency (CzDA) for their support.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21352/>



GREEN CLIMATE FUND



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## ENABLING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GEORGIA'S FOREST SECTOR REFORM - ECO.Georgia



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“What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another.” - Mahatma Gandhi

### PROJECT BRIEF

The project “Enabling the implementation of Georgia’s forest sector reform - ECO.Georgia” is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture together with the National Forestry Agency, Rural Development Agency, Environmental Information and Education Centre, Department of Environmental Supervision; by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The project aims to mitigate GHG emissions through the nature-based management of the country’s forests and the improvement of energy efficiency to reduce the demand for fuelwood. It also envisages the strengthening of local self-governance and diversifying livelihood opportunities in the forest adjoining rural communities to benefit from diversified income opportunities through improved forestry value chains and better access to forestry knowledge and skills. The project focuses on three target regions (Guria, Kakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti) and eight municipalities: Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri, Lanchkhuti, Telavi, Kvareli, Akhmeta, Dedoplistskaro and Tianeti. The Project is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Government of Georgia (GoG) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).



### Component 1: Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)

**Activity 1.1:** Development and implementation of SFM plans

**Activity 1.2:** Strengthening of forest supervision

**Activity 1.3:** Provision of sustainably produced fuelwood by NFA

**Activity 1.4:** Enhancement of enabling environment for the nation-wide implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM)

**Activity 1.5:** Improvement of monitoring and measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems for the forest sector



### Component 2: Market Development for Energy Efficiency (EE) and Alternative Fuels (AF)

**Activity 2.1:** EE-AF supply chain development

**Activity 2.2:** Implementing consumer financing instruments for EE-AF solutions

**Activity 2.3:** Creating consumer awareness and provision of technical advisory services for fuelwood users

**Activity 2.4:** Enabling policies and regulations



### Component 3: Livelihood opportunities and local self-governance in forest management

**Activity 3.1:** Development and introduction of municipal-level tools, practices, plans and necessary capacities for participatory SFM and conservation

**Activity 3.2:** Development, testing and promotion of mechanisms at the local level to better protect interests of adversely affected stakeholders

**Activity 3.3:** Development of professional skills and knowledge relevant to SFM and conservation through vocational education and international partnerships with centers of knowledge

**Activity 3.4:** Strengthening of selected value chains (e.g., timber, NTFP, parts of eco-tourism)

■ Activity in 3 target regions only

■ Nation-wide activity

□ Nation-wide activity with focus on 3 target regions

## Meeting with fuelwood consumers from the Guria region

The fuelwood consumers from the villages of Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri, and Lanchkhuti municipalities gathered in Ozurgeti Dramatic Theatre on 21st July to learn about the benefits and privileges they can enjoy while purchasing and using energy-efficient stoves and alternative fuels and get ready for the upcoming heating season.

The event “**დაბნობა მყვინ**/Save the Forest” was organized by the Ecovision – the ECO. Georgia partner environmental non-governmental organization, which is contributing to the promotion and development of an energy-efficient and alternative fuel market in the country, through awareness creation and communication with local beneficiaries, especially in the ECO.Georgia target regions.

In total, the event was attended by up to 250 people from different parts of Guria (including

remote villages). During the event, they conversed with the stove producers, checked, and observed the stoves and alternative fuel products, and talked directly to the producers and the project representatives to fully understand the advantages, prices, and financial affordability mechanisms of the energy-efficient products.

The representatives of the Rural Development Agency, GIZ, and Ecovision informed the audience about the ongoing processes in the Forest Sector Reform – respectively in the ECO. Georgia project, about the benefits and expected results that the project will create in the region through the envisaged activities in cooperation with local municipalities and the central and local representation of project Executive Entities.



© Ecovision: Meeting with fuelwood consumers in the Guria region



© Ecovision: Observing the EE stoves together with producers

## School teachers involved in the campaign of “Save the Forest”

Within the campaign “**დაბნობა მყვინ** - Save the Forest” that is being conducted by Ecovision – ECO.Georgia partner non-governmental organization, a workshop was organized with the schoolteachers of Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri and Lanchkhuti municipalities.

The goal of the meeting was to increase the level of awareness on energy efficiency and inform the schoolteachers about the co-financing programs the project offers to the beneficiaries - be it stove consumers or the producers of stoves and alternative fuel, as well as about the economic and ecological advantages of EE stoves.

At the meeting, the role of teachers in promoting green projects was emphasized. The participants planned further cooperation and agreed to activate “Eco Clubs” in the schools to work intensively together with students, teachers, and parents, which will contribute to increasing awareness and ultimately reducing pressure on forests in the country. Another event within the campaign “Save the Forest” was organized for the kids in Ozurgeti “Naples Yard”. The event provided educational, sports, and entertainment activities for youth. Young participants were presented with solar- and wind-powered devices and energy-efficient house models.

On the 19th of July, within the frames of ECO.Georgia project, a workshop was organized for the media representatives in the Guria region. The objective of the workshop was to strengthen media representatives in creating news on climate-related topics and generally on environmental topics.

The workshop was interactive, and the 15 participants from print TV and digital media received theoretical knowledge and practical advice, and examples of how to create and promote this sort of content in regional media.



© Ecovision: Meeting with the schoolteachers



© Ecovision: Educational activities for kids in Ozurgeti

## Workshop for local media representatives in Guria



© Ecovision: Media workshop in Guria

On the 19th of July, within the frames of ECO.Georgia project, a workshop was organized for the media representatives in the Guria region. The objective of the workshop was to strengthen media representatives in media approaches for covering environmental issues and informing the public.



© Ecovision: Media workshop in Guria

Media specialist Nino Samadashvili joined the workshop in discussing the unique features, challenges, and opportunities related to media coverage in Guria.

The workshop was interactive, and the 15 participants from print TV and digital media received theoretical knowledge and practical advice and examples of how to create and promote this sort of content in regional media.