



# Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

NOVEMBER 2023

## Nino Tandilashvili meets the Members of the EU Delegation



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, and the members of the European Union delegation discussed the project “Improving Air Quality Improves People’s Health and Productivity” - related issues at the working meeting.

The new project envisages the purchase of nine air quality monitoring stations, the establishment of a National reference laboratory, the enhancement of modeling and forecasting capabilities, the promotion of best available practices in the field of industrial emissions, and targeted training.

During the meeting, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili thanked the members of the EU delegation for their support.

“Over the next five years, this project will assist the Government of Georgia in taking important steps towards improving air quality. Georgia will receive an additional nine new monitoring stations as part of the project. As a result, the air quality monitoring system will be improved and, the requirements set forth by the European Union legislation will be fulfilled. Furthermore, the mentioned project will contribute to the implementation of the new law on “Industrial Emissions”, as well as assist the country in addressing current challenges in terms of improving air quality and planning and implementing future actions” said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The representatives of relevant services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and project implementing organizations (United Nations Development Program (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and United Bank for Africa (UBA) attended the meeting.

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## The Delegation of the Republic of Korea visited Georgia as part of the first international summit of protected areas.



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, and the Chairwoman of the Protected Areas Agency, Mr. Davit Iosebashvili, held a working meeting with the delegation of the Republic of Korea.

The parties discussed current and future cooperation opportunities between the two countries.

Mr. Yuri Nozadze expressed gratitude to the Korean guests for their support in the environmental area and for visiting Georgia to participate in the summit.

The Agency of Protected Areas of Georgia has a long-standing and successful cooperation with the Republic of Korea and the Korean National Park Service. The parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which included several fundamentally significant actions that have had a positive effect on the functioning of the protected area system



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## Representatives of Kansas State University (USA) conducted the research “Evaluation of the Wheat Sector in Georgia”



At the initiative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, and with the support of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the representatives of Kansas State University (USA) conducted the research “Evaluation of the Wheat Sector in Georgia”.

The study aimed to identify measures for ensuring the sustainability of the wheat supply chain. The final recommendations will be based on the wheat yield analysis, mill efficiency evaluation, and wheat supply chain analysis, which will contribute to the development of wheat production and provide food security in Georgia.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze, attended the presentation of the research “Evaluation of the Wheat Sector in Georgia”.

The Deputy Minister thanked the American side for assisting and conducting the large-scale work.

“Promoting the development of wheat and grain crops is one of our top priorities. Therefore, we have made several efforts to improve access to financial resources and promote the sale of locally-grown wheat. At the same time, for the sustainability of the field, it is crucial to address the need for comprehensive research and recommendations. Moreover, the research on the evaluation of the wheat sector in Georgia conducted by the USA experts during the last year served this purpose. Based on the mentioned research, we will get an “important picture” for actions to perform for the development of the wheat sector. Together with our American partners, we are going to develop an action plan that will help to boost the quality and yield of wheat in the country,” said Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze.

Dr. Marty Draper, a representative of Kansas State University (USA), focused on ways to improve wheat production, such as fertilizer quality, irrigation system development, and disease control.

The evaluation document on the wheat sector in Georgia was prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the National Statistics Service of Georgia, and the sector platform “Future Farmer

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## Otar Shamugia participates in the opening of the Largest International Import Exhibition in Shanghai



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, participated in the opening of the Sixth China International Import Expo (CIIE), the largest international import exhibition in Shanghai- People’s Republic of China. Within the exhibition, the Agency “Produce in Georgia” has organized and supported Georgia to be represented in several pavilions.

“The People’s Republic of China and Georgia have a very close and fruitful cooperation. We should emphasize that the strategic partnership initiative announced during our Prime Minister’s visit to China this summer will hopefully raise the two countries’ relations to an even higher level. Moreover, the efforts taken by the governments of both countries to deepen cooperation are crucial, however, the activities and initiatives of private companies play an important role in the mentioned process,” stated Mr. Otar Shamugia.

At the Georgian Pavilion, Mr. Otar Shamugia hosted the Deputy Minister of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China, Mr. Ling Ji, who stated that the visit of the Georgian Delegation to the exhibition, at such a high level confirms the strategic partnership and lays the foundation for closer and stronger collaboration.

According to the Deputy Minister, the Chinese side is eager to support the expansion of trade relations, particularly to promote the export of Georgian wine to the Chinese market.

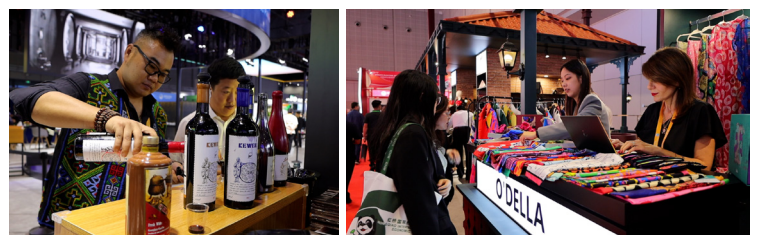
About 40 Georgian companies participated in the China International Import Expo (CIIE) organized by the Agency of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia - “Produce in Georgia”.

The beneficiaries of the Agency showcased their export products to international visitors. The expo provides Georgian entrepreneurs with an excellent opportunity to establish connections with large International companies. Moreover, the expo features Georgian wine, alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks, agricultural products, leather items and accessories, and children’s clothes.

The national pavilion presents information from several state Agencies, such as the Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency, the National Tourism Administration, the National Wine Agency, the Mountain Tracks Agency, and the Georgian Railways, aiming to raise awareness of Georgia. The visitors at the National Pavilion will get familiar with Georgia’s tourism, investment, and transport potential through videos and information pamphlets.

The Georgian Delegation included the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, the Deputies of the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Mr. Genadi Arveladze and Mr. Irakli Nadareishvili, the Georgian Parliamentary delegation comprising Mr. Gela Samkharauli and Mr. Zaal Dugladze; Mr. Mikheil Khidureli, Director of the Agency “Produce in Georgia”; and Mr. Archil Kalandia, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to China.

Government and business delegations from over 150 countries participated in the largest International Import Exhibition in Shanghai. The exhibition attracts around 700,000 people.



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## Otar Shamugia met with the President of the Chamber of Commerce for Imp. & Exp. of Foodstuffs, Native Produce, and Animal By-Products of the People's Republic of China during his working visit to Shanghai



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, met with Mr. Cao Derong, President of the China Chamber of Commerce for Imp. and Exp. of Foodstuffs, Native Produce, and Animal By-Products in Shanghai.

As mentioned, the People's Republic of China and Georgia have established a close and fruitful cooperation.

China is one of the main strategic export markets for Georgian wine. Since 2013, Georgia has implemented a targeted marketing campaign and systematically participates in international exhibitions and other marketing events, which has led to an unprecedented increase in the export of Georgian wine to the Chinese market.

*"We have quite ambitious plans, given that the People's Republic of China is a strategic and reliable partner of Georgia, and we hope that Georgian wine, which has an 8000-year history of development, will establish itself in the market as a competitive, premium segment category."*

*Moreover, wine is an integral part of our culture, as well as tea in China. We know best how important a sector is to a country, which has a centuries-old history, particularly when a certain product is regarded not only as an export commodity but also as a part of the country's identity,"* said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Minister stressed the importance of active cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce for Imp. & Exp. of Foodstuffs, Native Produce, and Animal By-Products of the People's Republic of China in expanding Georgian wine exports to the Chinese market.

According to the President of the Chamber of Commerce for Imp. & Exp. of Foodstuffs, Native Produce, and Animal By-Products of the People's Republic of China, the Chamber's activities include international trade regulation and services involving following products such as grain, food, live animals, animal products, vegetables, wine, and other beverages.

"Among Central Asian countries, Georgia exports the greatest amount of wine to China. The Georgian wine worth more than \$10 million was imported to China, from January to September 2023. The Minister gave me Georgian wine as a gift, which is a special product. I believe that by showcasing Georgian wine at the exhibition and through various promotional activities and planned cooperation with our Georgian counterparts, Georgian wine, and other agricultural products will gain popularity among Chinese consumers, which will ultimately increase the number of Georgian products in the Chinese market. I wish the Georgian delegation a successful visit to Shanghai and Georgian products more popularity in China," said Mr. Cao Dezhong.

As stated by the parties, considering the free trade relations and joint efforts, there is an opportunity to deepen the trade relations between the two countries.

The meeting with the President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce was held in the framework of the opening of the largest International Import Exhibition - China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai.

The Deputies of the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Mr. Gennadi Arveladze and Mr. Irakli Nadareishvili, Director of the Agency "Produce in Georgia" Mr. Mikheil Khidureli, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the People's Republic of China Mr. Archil Kalandia accompanied the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia at the exhibition.

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## Georgian wine is showcased at the largest international import exhibition in Shanghai



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, visited the Georgian exhibition wine stand at the largest international import exhibition in Shanghai, People's Republic of China.

On November 5-10, 2023, Georgian companies participated in one of the largest international exhibitions, the China International Import Expo (CIIE), in Shanghai, through the support of the "Produce in Georgia" of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia.

The pavilions for food products and the consumer goods industry represented Georgia.

The National Wine Agency organized a Georgian wine corner at the exhibition stand of Georgian export products, where about 15 wine and alcoholic beverage-producing companies display their products.

*"We appreciate and welcome local wine professionals and wine enthusiasts which are paying much attention to the centuries-old history of Georgian wine. We witnessed this with our own eyes. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the National Wine Agency have launched active marketing campaigns in the Chinese market since 2013. Currently, there are about 40 Georgian wine houses, shops, and salons operating in China, and about 90 Georgian wine companies are exporting wine,"* said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

Georgia is represented in two locations: the Exhibition Stand for export products and the Country Pavilion, where several agencies, including the National Wine Agency, offer visitors all products within their scope of competence.



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## The South East Europe (SEE) annual working meeting reviews reforms and achievements in the agricultural and rural development areas in the process of Georgia's rapprochement with the EU



At the 17th annual working meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of Southeast Europe (SEE), Georgia was given a unique opportunity, together with the Ministers of Agriculture of EU member states and candidate countries, to discuss the reforms and achievements in the agricultural and rural development area in the process of rapprochement with the European Union.

On November 6, 2023, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, participated in the 17th annual working meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of Southeast Europe (SEE) at Jahorina, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Ministerial meeting was held under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG RRD) in South-Eastern Europe.

**“We are making progress towards membership in the European Union. Our achievements, including the Association Agreement with the European Union, the Free Trade Agreement with the European Union, the visa-free travel regime, and the European perspective recognized in June 2022 confirm our geopolitical priority of becoming a member state of the European Union.**

**The progress we have made, particularly in agriculture and rural development, environmental protection, and climate change areas, is outstanding. Our achievements were clearly outlined in the European Commission's analytical report on Georgia's compliance with EU legislation. It should be emphasized that we strive to comply with the principles of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EU, and we are optimistic that the European Commission's scheduled assessment of Georgia's progress at the end of this year will pave the road for a positive decision on the candidate status.”** Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili stated.

Since 2015, within the scope of the EU Association Agreement, Georgia has approximated its legislation with more than 130 EU legal acts in the food safety, veterinary protection, and plant protection areas. The quality of locally produced products has been improved in compliance with EU standards, contributing to agricultural product exports to the EU countries.

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## Tbilisi hosted the Conference “Will Resource Efficiency be at the Core of Business Success in Georgia?”



On November 7-8, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) organized a Conference in Tbilisi: “Will Resource Efficiency be at the Core of Business Success in Georgia ?”.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, the Chair of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Mrs. Maya Bitadze, the First Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Mr. Romeo Mikautadze, and Mr. Nicholas Sendrovich, Deputy Head of the European Commission's Directorate General for Good Neighborliness and Negotiations on EU Enlargement made opening remarks at the conference.

**“We are taking significant steps toward developing the energy efficiency and the circular economy, which is a prerequisite for sustainable development. The rules and regulations that Georgia has already adopted lay the foundation for the rapid development of the green economy in Georgia. We are actively working on the development of a national roadmap for the transition to the circular economy, which will be followed by the elaboration of a strategy, programs, and measures that will fully cover all directions required for the development of the circular economy in the country, first of all, the reuse of waste. I would point out that public awareness in this direction has increased significantly. There is already a readiness on the part of both businesses and people to actively participate in the processes that will lead to real results,”** Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili noted.

The event included reports on the development of national capabilities of industrial enterprises in Georgia, saving resources and using greener production methods in business, the promotion of eco-innovation and eco-labels, extended producer responsibility, waste management, and many other issues.

All stakeholders involved in the development of the green economy in Georgia, including representatives of state agencies, industrial enterprises, and business and scientific circles, attended the conference.

The conference was held within the EU4 Environment program funded by the European Union (EU). The purpose of the mentioned program is to help the countries of the Eastern Partnership of the European Union preserve their natural capital and improve the environmental well-being of people.

Five partner organizations: the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Bank implement the program EU4Environment. Implementation period: 2019-2024, budget: 20 million euros.

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## Otar Shamugia: “International exhibits are the most interesting for diversifying Georgian wine export markets since they attract top wine professionals, importers, and media representatives.”



“ProWine Shanghai”, one of the most prestigious and important exhibits in the field of wine, is held in Shanghai, People’s Republic of China, from November 8 to 10.

The National Wine Agency supported 27 Georgian wine-producing companies to participate in the expo.

During his working visit to Shanghai, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, visited the Georgian exhibition stand at the “ProWine Shanghai” expo and met with the representatives of Georgian companies.

“International exhibitions are the most appealing for diversifying Georgian wine export markets since they attract top wine specialists, importers, and media representatives worldwide.

**Over 100,000 visitors, including distributors, importers, and wine experts, traditionally attend ProWine Shanghai. China is one of the most intriguing, promising, and important markets for Georgian wine exports. For the past few years, the National Wine Agency has been actively carrying out various types of marketing campaigns in the mentioned market as part of the Georgian wine promotion program. As a result, Georgian wine exports to the Chinese market have increased since 2013.”** said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

It should be mentioned that, during 2023, Georgian wine producers participated in the largest exhibition in China, “The 108th China Food & Drinks Fair,” with the support of the National Wine Agency. Moreover, Hong Kong hosted the large-scale seminar/tasting of Georgian wine and the Master of Wine, Mrs. Debra Meiburg, headed the Georgian wine educational program training;

Georgian wine was showcased at the “China Food & Drinks Fair 109” in Shenzhen. Georgian wine producers will participate in a Georgian wine master class in Shanghai by the end of the year, and Georgian wine will be displayed at a tasting in Hainan province.

The National Wine Agency cooperates with the marketing companies Meiburg Wine Media and the Georgian Wine Promotion Center (China National Research Institute of Food and Fermentation Industries Corporation Limited) to run the Georgian wine marketing campaign on the Chinese market.

Along with the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the People’s Republic of China, Mr. Archil Kalandia, and the Head of the National Wine Agency, Mr. Levan Mekhuzla attended the exhibition.

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## Shanghai hosts the “International Amber Wine Conference”



The National Wine Agency and its contractor company “Meiburg Wine Media” organized the “International Amber Wine Conference” in Shanghai, People’s Republic of China. Leading Chinese media representatives, sommeliers, importers, and distributors attended the event.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, made remarks at the conference.

“I hope this event will further promote Georgian wine in the People’s Republic of China and position Georgia as a country with 8000 years of continuous wine-making tradition.

In addition, the event is significant in establishing a place in the premium category, which is one of the main orientations of the Georgian wine marketing strategy.

Along with Georgia, amber wine-producing countries such as Italy, Slovenia, and Austria are represented at the conference, which emphasizes once again the importance of the traditional Georgian winemaking method and its international acceptance,” stated Mr. Otar Shamugia in his remarks.

The event aimed to popularize Georgian wine in the People’s Republic of China and to portray Georgia as a country with an 8000-year winemaking history.

Furthermore, the event is significant in terms of the acceptance and establishment of Georgian wine in the premium market.

The Master of Wine, Mrs. Debra Meyburg, and Amber Wine Expert, Mr. Simon Jay Wolfe, headed the event, providing guests with information on the history of Amber Wine.

Georgian winemakers delivered an informative technical seminar on the technology for producing Georgian amber wine. “Teliani Veli”, “Khareba Winery”, “Shukhmani Wines” and “Iago Wine” (Iago Bitarishvili) companies participated in the event.

The event also included panel discussions on strategies for entering and establishing a place in the wine market in the People’s Republic of China. In addition to the above-mentioned presenters, master of wine Julien Boulard, wine professional Xiao Pi Xu, and top sommelier Fei Fei Lu spoke about Georgian wine and Georgia.

The Deputies of the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Mr. Genadi Arveladze and Mr. Irakli Nadareishvili, as well as the Georgian parliamentary delegation consisting of Mr. Gela Samkharauli and Mr. Irakli Kirtskhalia; Chairman of the National Wine Agency, Mr. Levan Mekhuzla and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the People’s Republic of China, Mr. Archil Kalandia, attended the international conference in Shanghai along with the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia Mr. Otar Shamugia.

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## The Georgian exhibition stand was displayed for the first time at the largest exhibition in the United States “U.S. Private Label Trade Show”



With the support of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the Georgian exhibition stand was displayed for the first time at the largest exhibition in the United States “U.S. Private Label Trade Show”.

On November 12-14, in the city of Chicago, at one of the largest exhibitions in the “U.S. Private Label Trade Show”, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze, visited the Georgian exhibition stand and met with the representatives of Georgian companies.

“It is essential to mention that Georgian producers have an opportunity to showcase their agro-food products at the largest exhibition in the United States of America. Georgian entrepreneurs participate in the “U.S. Private Label Trade Show” for the first time this year.

**Our goal is to maximize the awareness of quality Georgian agricultural products on the global market so that entrepreneurs benefiting from state support in all components of the value chain can position themselves in diversified markets”,** said the Deputy Minister.

During the exhibition, Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze met with Mr. Anthony Aloia, Vice President of the Private Label Manufacturers Association (PLMA). The parties addressed the mechanisms of support for Georgian companies.

With the support of the Rural Development Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the USAID AGRICULTURE PROGRAM, the Georgian companies: “NUTSGE” LTD, “Farconi” LTD, “Geoflower” Ltd, “Batono” LTD, “Caesar” LTD, “May 2020” LTD, showcased their products at the Georgian exhibition stand. The majority of Georgian companies participating in the expo are recipients of state programs.

More than 1500 companies from 55 countries worldwide displayed their products in 25 pavilions in the “U.S. Private Label Trade Exhibition”. The mentioned exhibition allows interested parties to access the private trade industries of the United States and Canada. Within the exhibition, manufacturers have an opportunity to run negotiations with the world brands on the unification of products under one umbrella brand, which significantly reduces the marketing costs of manufacturers.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze, the Director of Rural Development Agency, Mr. Davit Tsididze, the Economic Counselor at the Embassy of Georgia in the United States, Mr. Tornike Nikvashvili, and the Chief of Party at the USAID AGRICULTURE PROGRAM, Mrs. Louisa Namicheishvili attended the meeting.



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## Another New Automatic Station was added to the Air Quality Monitoring Network in Tbilisi



A new automatic station was added to the National Environmental Agency’s air quality monitoring network in Tbilisi as part of the “Save Nature - Georgia” project -implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the International Development Cooperation Agency of the Kingdom of Sweden (Sida). The air quality monitoring network of the National Environmental Agency will be expanded by eight automatic and one mobile station by the end of 2023.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, the First Deputy Minister, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, the Head of Development Cooperation and Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Sweden in Georgia, Mr. Erik Illes, as well as representatives of the Ministry, National Environmental Agency, international organizations, governmental and non-governmental sector, attended the event.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, addressed the participants, noting that the support of partner organizations is invaluable in expanding the atmospheric air monitoring network in the country.

“Improving air quality is one of the priority directions. This year, we had several important initiatives at the legislative level specifically, we have adopted different regulations in the industrial sector and road transport, as the latter is a significant polluter in large cities.

**We opened another modern ambient air quality monitoring station in Tbilisi with the support of the Swedish government, by the end of the year, with their assistance, we will have eight more stations across the country. The mentioned project is progressing, and with the support of the European Union, the entire country will be covered by monitoring stations next year. We will open twenty-seven similar stations across the country to ensure that we have reliable information on ambient air quality. I would thank our partners for their support and reiterate that we will continue to adopt appropriate measures to improve the air quality in the country”,** said the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia.

“Today is a significant day regarding the air quality management in Georgia. Another automatic station was installed in Tbilisi, enabling the improvement of the air quality monitoring system. It should be mentioned that the Government of Georgia has taken crucial steps to reduce air pollution in the transportation, construction, and agriculture sectors, which have been positively reflected in the EU report.

It is also worth mentioning that the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the National Environmental Agency made significant contributions to improving the monitoring system. For its part, the Swedish government will continue supporting Georgia in ensuring an appropriate monitoring system”, said the Head of Development Cooperation and Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Sweden in Georgia, Mr. Erik Illes.

The information received from the modern ambient air quality monitoring station allows us to plan new events and projects, which will contribute to further improvement of air quality. The mentioned data will be posted on the Agency’s portal [www.air.gov.ge](http://www.air.gov.ge).

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## The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Otar Shamugia: "Today we celebrate Farmer's Day!" Congratulations, farmers!"

"Thanks to our farmers and entrepreneurs, our country's potential for agricultural production is being used more and more. As a result, indicators of the quality of Georgian production have improved, the demand for Georgian products has grown, and exports are constantly increasing.

The efforts of our entrepreneurs and farmers have contributed to the country's strong economy. For more than ten years, the state has been implementing programs to achieve this result and assist farmers and entrepreneurs in gaining access to financial and technical resources, contemporary education, and international markets.

The total investment in the agricultural sector amounted to GEL 6.8 billion, out of which the state co-financing is GEL 1.9 billion. As a result of state assistance, robust farms, and

modern production, the added value generated in the field has increased by 96% to GEL 4.4 billion over the last ten years, and Georgian agro-food exports have increased by over 145%. Moreover, we will witness a historic decision regarding the EU candidate status soon, which will be another step towards reuniting our country with the European family. Apart from all other good things, our Georgian products, produced by our farmers, will become increasingly recognizable and in demand on the European market, not only in Europe.

Best of luck to farmers! You create wealth that strengthens the state! Considering your needs, the state has initiated new programs focused on developing the agro-food sector, and we will embrace this approach throughout. The state will assist you in expanding and enhancing Georgian production."

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## The 5th International Conference was held as part of the "FinExCoop Georgia" Project



During the 5th International Conference: "Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Georgia in EU Accession Perspective", the parties discussed the current state of the agricultural cooperatives development in Georgia, prospects, and the ways to approach the international cooperative society.

The conference was held under the project "Finance, Extension and Cooperative Development for Georgian Farmers" (FinExCoop Georgia).

The European Union is funding the project "FinExCoop Georgia" through the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD), with support from the French Development Agency (AFD).

The project is jointly implemented by the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, MERCY CORPS, Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG), and Chambre Agriculture de Loiret.

As mentioned, the conference is an important step forward in strengthening long-term agricultural cooperation in Georgia, aiming to develop specific institutional and technical proposals to establish European Union-similar types of cooperatives in Georgia.

The "FinExCoop Georgia" project is implemented within the scope of the ENPARD program, which promotes the strengthening of cooperatives in the country, access to financing, and the sharing of European Union best practices.

The Chair of the Agrarian Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Mrs.Nino Tsilosani, emphasized the amendments made in the Law of Georgia on "Agricultural Cooperatives" within the project, noting that the mentioned amendments were positively assessed in the EU report.

The closing ceremony of the "FinExCoop Georgia" project, embracing the discussion on achieved outcomes, followed the International Conference "Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Georgia in EU Accession Perspective".

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## Tbilisi is hosting the International Exhibition Agro/Food/Drink/Tech/Expo 2023



The 21st International Agro/Food/Drink/Tech/Expo-2023 of Agriculture, Food Industry, Food Processing, and Packaging Technology, opens on November 17 at the exhibition center "Expo Georgia".

Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Resan Kikava, Director of ExpoGeorgia Exhibition Center, and Mr. Kazim Kartali, Deputy Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, made opening remarks at the expo.

"With a 21-year history, this exhibition is the best platform for manufacturers to make business contacts and showcase their products to the target audience. Every year, the expo hosts more and more visitors and participants. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture is the permanent supporter and partner of the exhibition. I would also emphasize that we continue to support any event that promotes Georgian products and assist our entrepreneurs and farmers in increasing production and export potential", Mr. Kakha Kakabadze noted.

This year, 70 companies from 8 countries (Georgia, Italy, Poland, Turkey, Ukraine, India, China, Belarus) are participating in the Agro/Food/Drink/Tech/Expo exhibition. The exhibition showcases agricultural techniques, machinery, containers and packaging materials, greenhouse technologies and equipment, irrigation systems, laboratory equipment, planting and seeding materials, fertilizers and pesticides, and many more.

Visitors will have an opportunity to attend the exhibition on November 17-19, from 11:00 to 18:00. Agro/Food/Drink/Tech/Expo 2023 takes place in Pavilion 11 and the surrounding outdoor space.

In addition to the exhibition, "ExpoGeorgia" hosts various events. Within the exhibition, the international agricultural and food industry conference "Plans and Possibilities of Agriculture and Food Industry" was conducted.

Furthermore, on November 17-18, an "agricultural market" will be held in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), where visitors will be able to taste and purchase high-quality authentic Georgian products (dairy products, ham, honey, dried fruit, churchkhela, jam, adjika, tea, and others).

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## “I congratulate farmers on Farmers’ Day and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors” -- Nino Tandilashvili attended the event dedicated to “Farmers’ Day”



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, made opening remarks at the Farmers’ Day event.

“Farmers’ Day” was held by the joint initiative of the Ministry and the Georgian Farmers’ Association.

“First and foremost, I want to congratulate the farmers on today’s event and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors. Farmers create wealth for our country. Agriculture is a priority direction for our Government. Every year, we strengthen support mechanisms in several areas. In recent years, the figures in agriculture have been spectacular, in terms of output growth and the opening of new processing factories. There are priority sectors in which the Government assists farmers in increasing their export potential on international markets and diversifying markets. We will continue assisting farmers in the coming years based on their needs.

In the process of European integration, special importance is attached to the development of the agricultural sector to produce more quality Georgian products, which will naturally compete and be desirable and attractive in the European Union markets, which is our main priority. Our farmers produce this product. Farmers, I once again congratulate you on today’s event”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The awarding ceremony honored the winning farmers in nine nominations.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, with the Georgian Farmers’ Association, has celebrated “Farmer’s Day” since 2015.

More than 200 guests, representatives of the Government, legislative body, diplomatic corps, local self-governments, non-governmental organizations, and sectoral associations attended the farmer’s award ceremony.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21485>

## Nino Tandilashvili meets with the Deputy Minister of Regional Development of the Czech Republic

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, and the Deputy Minister for Regional Development Mr. Radim Srše, reviewed rural development policy-related issues, the methods of operation of Local Action Groups (LAGs) in compliance with the European LEADER approach, the importance of youth engagement in rural development, and capacity building for local farmers.

The First Deputy Minister thanked the Czech partners for their support.

“Successful cooperation with the Czech government links us in the environmental protection and agricultural fields. We are intensively cooperating with the Czech Development Agency to expand protected areas and establish a new management system. Moreover, the Agency is our active partner under the EU Neighborhood Program for Rural and Agricultural Development (ENPARD).

Today, we are facing a historic moment, the European Commission has given a positive recommendation regarding the granting of EU candidate status to Georgia, and we are expecting a positive decision in December, thus, the support of our partners, including the Czech Republic, is crucial in this process”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The Deputy Minister of Regional Development emphasized the opportunities to further strengthen the support of local farmers in the municipalities.

During the meeting, the parties also addressed the prospects of future cooperation.

Mrs. Jana Zelingerova, the Head of Development Cooperation of the Czech Embassy in Georgia, attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21483>

## Otar Shamugia participated in the “Economic Forum”



During the “Economic Forum”, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, discussed the implemented and ongoing agricultural programs, emphasizing field-related achievements and challenges.

The Manager of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Mr. Nodar Kereselidze, Director General of the Bank of Georgia, Mr. Archil Gachechiladze, representatives of state agencies, business sector, industry associations participated in the discussion held within the framework of the “Economic Forum”.

Mr. Giorgi Abashishvili, the Founder and Head of “Business Insider Georgia” moderated the discussion.

In his remarks, Minister Shamugia declared that the state will continue to support agricultural development to create more high-quality agricultural products that will be competitive on the European market, noting that all mentioned above is essential in today’s reality when Georgia is awaiting the EU candidate status.

“It is important to mention that all 15 programs being implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture to support all links in the value chain of the agricultural sector are currently underway. We will have novelties / fresh initiatives in the various components of the programs;

This is a natural process since we make changes in different projects through cooperation with farmers, associations, and field representatives based on current needs. We will have novelties next year as well.

The state will continue to actively support the further development of the agricultural sector, including the provision of equipment and further expansion of processing and storage enterprises. The support will continue in marketing, specifically, diversifying and promoting our products on global markets.” Mr. Otar Shamugia said.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21491>



## The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture hosted the Ambassador of South Korea



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture representatives met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Lee Yun-young, and the Director of South Korean Trade and Investment Promotion Agency KOTRA, Mr. YU Jeoung Yeol.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the Free Trade Agreement with South Korea, the export of agri-food products, ways of sharing experiences for adopting modern technologies in the agricultural sector, and the prospects of cooperation with the South Korean Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA).

According to the parties, the Free Trade Agreement with South Korea will contribute to the deepening of trade relations between the countries. While discussing the export of agro-food products, special emphasis was placed on the growing indications of wine export.

The conversation touched upon the export of mineral water and hazelnuts. As mentioned, Georgia is among the top five exporters of hazelnuts.

The parties addressed the cooperation in the environmental area and the ways of adopting modern technologies in the agricultural sector, noting that sharing South Korea's experience in the mentioned direction is crucial for Georgia.

Within the framework of the First International Conference of Protected Areas, the special purpose fire trucks were provided to Georgia by the Korean National Parks Administration. The mentioned trucks are equipped with the latest firefighting system, which is crucial for ensuring safety.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the issues of cooperation between the relevant services of the Ministry and the Korea Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA).

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21482>

## The Delegation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture paid a working visit to Sweden as part of the “Save the Nature-Georgia” project



The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency hosted workshops where the parties shared experiences in different areas, specifically modern approaches to air quality monitoring, biodiversity monitoring and conservation, ecotourism activities and statistical data analysis. The parties also discussed the possibilities of future cooperation.

The Head of the Environmental Program of the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, Mrs. Khatuna Zaldastanishvili, and CPIU Head, Project “Save the Nature - Georgia” Manager, Mrs. Natia Beridze, attended the meeting.

During the visit, the delegation visited the most popular national parks in Sweden, Färnebofjärden and Tyresta, and learned about the specifics and best practices of Swedish national park management.

During the visit, the Delegation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia met with the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Georgia to Sweden, Mr. Irakli Khutsurauli. The conversation touched upon the successful cooperation between Georgia and Sweden in the environmental area.

According to Mr. Khutsurauli, the Swedish government attaches great importance to the protection and preservation of Georgia's natural heritage and supports the implementation of various environmental projects. One of the best examples of this support is the “Save Nature-Georgia” project.

It should be mentioned that the ongoing project “Save the Nature - Georgia” has been effectively implemented since 2021 as part of the grant agreement signed between the Governments of Georgia and Sweden. The project aims to expand the atmospheric air quality monitoring network in Georgia and improve air quality, improve the sustainable management of natural resources, promote the protection and restoration of biodiversity, and strengthen the institutional capacities of the Ministry and its Agencies.

Within the framework of the project, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, with the support of the International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) of the Swedish Government, is carrying out several important activities, including opening two new, modern air quality monitoring stations. By the end of 2023, the air quality monitoring network will be expanded with a total of eight automatic and one mobile station.

It is important to mention that the mentioned activities carried out by the Government of Georgia in the environmental area were positively evaluated in the European Union report.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21495>

## Nino Tandilashvili meets USAID representatives

The First Deputy Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, and the Director of the USAID Economic Growth Office, Mr. Michelle Koscielski, discussed current joint projects and prospects for future cooperation.

“We carry out several agricultural development initiatives with USAID to assist local farmers and develop agriculture. We also collaborate in the field of environmental protection, particularly in the management of water resources and work intensively, at the sectoral level, in fulfilling the obligations taken under the Association Agreement”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

During the meeting, the Director of the USAID Economic Growth Office, Mr. Michelle Koscielski, focused on regional tourism and Regional Water projects, noting that USAID is actively working in the mentioned direction. As mentioned, the Regional Water project will contribute to effective cross-border cooperation and management of water resources in the South Caucasus region.

Mrs. Nino Tkhilava, Head of the Department of Environment and Climate Change of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, representatives of relevant services of the Ministry, Mr. David Tsiklauri, Senior Adviser for Private Sector Development from USAID, Mr. Jordi Arimany, Regional Water Program Manager, and Mr. Gocha Lobzhanidze, Environmental Officer attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21494>



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



## Model areas for showcasing Sustainable Forest Management practices have been selected



© GIZ: Chokhatauri Forest District

The primary objective of the “ECO.Georgia” project lies in promoting Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) practices across the country. In steadfast pursuit of this goal the National Forestry Agency, in collaboration with the Biodiversity and Forestry Department of the Ministry and GIZ, has identified two pilot areas in the Akhmeta and Chokhatauri forest districts. These areas will serve as a testing ground for implementing and showcasing sustainable forest management practices.

As part of the commitment to strengthening SFM practices various workshops and exercises have either been completed or are in the planning stages. In addition to the abovementioned activities, in the course towards fortifying SFM practices, an international tender has been announced for the backstopping of SFM and consultants will be hired in the upcoming month.

## Akhmeta Forest Management Plan up for public hearing

In the pursuit of a nationwide commitment to sustainable forest management, the development and implementation of Forest Management Plans are key milestones. ECO.Georgia project envisages the development of forest management plans for the target municipality forest districts. One of them is Akhmeta forest district where the management plan has already been developed.

In the spirit of transparency and community involvement, the management plan for Akhmeta is ready for a public hearing! The Environment Information and Education Centre of MEPA has already uploaded the plan online for commenting and on December 11th a public hearing will be held in Akhmeta municipality, providing an opportunity for locals to voice their thoughts and concerns.

The Biodiversity and Forestry Department of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture will facilitate the event, with support from CENN under the agreement with GIZ. This collaborative effort aims to ensure that the Akhmeta Forest Management Plan reflects the perspectives of the community.

Akhmeta forest management plan is based on taxation data, complemented by statistical forest management inventory (FMI) data and a gender-sensitive business plan. This holistic approach not only addresses environmental concerns but also emphasizes inclusivity and gender sensitivity in forest management.

After the public hearing, the Akhmeta FMP will be approved by the government, which will be followed by the execution of the plan.

## MSE Development Support for Sustainable Forest Management

A significant event took place on November 28, bringing together small and medium entrepreneurs from the ECO.Georgia target regions, engaged or interested in the forest-related value chains. This gathering served as a platform for collaboration between these entrepreneurs, prominent companies, and representatives from donor, state, and environmental NGOs. The event not only facilitated the exchange of valuable information but also marked the culmination of training and business training and individual coaching sessions delivered through the collaborative efforts of Sparkasse Stiftung Georgia and GIZ.

The training modules were financially supported by the Government of the Swiss Confederation as part of the Strengthening Livelihoods and Social Inclusion in Georgia's Forest Sector Reform. Entrepreneurs from three target regions benefited from these sessions, equipping them with essential skills and knowledge crucial for success in the dynamic field of timber/non-timber forest products and eco-tourism.

The event unfolded in an interactive manner, fostering a conducive environment for participants of the training modules to engage with representatives from state and commercial institutions. This exchange allowed for valuable networking opportunities and a deeper exploration of shared interests.

In parallel to the discussions, entrepreneurs from the regions had an expo of their products, providing a platform to present and sell their creations. This dynamic showcase not only highlighted the entrepreneurial spirit within the community but also served as a tangible demonstration of the results of the training sessions and the potential of diverse products from the forest-related value chains.

Representatives from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, GIZ, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, as well as its agencies, and organizations such as GITA and Entrepreneur with Georgia under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, played a role in guiding entrepreneurs. The event served as a comprehensive information hub, with insights into potential financial sources, access to funds, permissions for forest resource utilization, upcoming contests, and strategies for business growth.

The overarching success of the 5-month training on entrepreneurial skills and business coaching was evident in the positive evaluations received from participants.

In conclusion, the collaborative efforts of Sparkasse Stiftung Georgia, GIZ, and the Swiss government have not only empowered small and medium-sized entrepreneurs but have also played a role in safeguarding the implementation of Georgia's forest sector reform – the overarching goal of the ECO.Georgia project. Each contribution can be likened to a brick, fortifying the foundation of positive change within the region.'



© GIZ: Panel discussion at the event



© GIZ: Expo of small entrepreneurs from the regions

## The Campaign “Save the Forest” demonstrated in Tianeti Municipality

On Sunday, November 12, Ecovision organised an open demonstration space to present an energy-efficient stove to the local population as part of the “Save the Forest” campaign.

The event provided an opportunity for the attending public to witness firsthand the benefits of energy-efficient technologies. Information about the possibility of 30% co-financing was shared, encouraging locals to explore sustainable alternatives to the traditional stoves. As an additional incentive, Ecovision distributed 5% discount vouchers to those in attendance.

The event took place during the town market hours and in total, up to 250 locals visited the demonstration space. The event served to raise awareness about the importance of saving forests, making environmentally conscious choices in daily lives, the benefits of energy-efficient solutions and their affordability.



© Ecovision: Demonstration space in Tianeti