



# Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

JUNE 2025

## *David Songulashvili participated in the United Nations High-Level Conference held in the city of Nice, France*



The conference focused on issues such as reducing the impact of climate change, protecting biodiversity, preventing plastic pollution, and adopting unified approaches to marine environment and resource protection. The conference was opened by the UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres. The participants were also addressed by the President of

France, Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the European Council, Mr. António Costa, and President of the European Commission, Ms. Ursula von der Leyen.

The conference was attended by leaders, ministers of environment, and other high-ranking officials from over 100 countries.

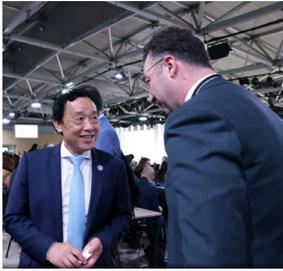


Mr. David Songulashvili addressed the conference and spoke about Georgia's sustainable development agenda. He highlighted the steps the country has taken to protect the Black Sea and its ecosystem:

“Environmental protection has been declared one of the top priorities of the Government of Georgia. We are implementing environmental policies and continuing to harmonize our legislation with the best practices of the European Union, as outlined in the EU Association Agreement and Association Agenda.

Georgia is actively taking measures to protect its rich marine ecosystem; 155 square kilometers of marine territory have been designated as protected areas. Georgia's unique biodiversity is safeguarded through protected areas and the Emerald Network, covering more than 23% of the country's territory. The Government of Georgia is actively working to increase this indicator to 30% by 2030, thereby fulfilling its international obligations,” stated Mr. David Songulashvili during his speech at the conference.





Within the framework of the conference, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, held meetings with high-ranking officials from participating countries, including: the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Andrej Plenković, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Green Transition of Croatia, Ms. Marija Vučković, the Minister of Climate and En-

vironment of Finland, Ms. Sari Multala, the Minister of Environment, Energy, and Climate of Iceland, Mr. Jóhan Páll Jóhannsson, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Mr. Qu Dongyu, the Mayor of Paris, Ms. Anne Hidalgo, and the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly, Mr. Bruno Fuchs.



As part of the event, Minister Songulashvili met with Her Excellency Anna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates. The parties focused on key environmental challenges, including climate change mitigation, while exploring ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation.



Mr. David Songulashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, also held a meeting with Mrs. Mafalda Duarte, Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The parties discussed ongoing and planned initiatives aimed at reducing the negative impact of climate change in Georgia.

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## Georgia and Hungary Forge Strategic Partnership in Agriculture and Environmental Protection



During an official visit to Hungary, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, signed two landmark Memorandum of Understanding with the Hungarian Ministers of Agriculture and Energy. These agreements mark a new chapter in bilateral relations, focusing on sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, and circular economy development.

At a bilateral meeting with Mr. István Nagy, Hungary's Minister of Agriculture, the two sides agreed to deepen cooperation in areas including forest management, agricultural education, seed production, and the recognition and promotion of traditional products such as Designations of Origin (DOs) and Geographical Indications (GIs). "Today's meeting reaffirms the strategic partnership between our countries

and strengthens our friendship. The Memorandum we signed marks a new stage in Georgian-Hungarian cooperation,” said Mr. Songulashvili. Mr. Songulashvili also emphasized the importance of knowledge exchange and academic collaboration:

“Strengthening the expertise of Georgian professionals will be crucial for our sector. We hope to facilitate access for Georgian students and experts to Hungarian agricultural education programs.”

A separate Memorandum signed with Mr. Csaba Lantos, Hungary’s Minister of Energy, focuses on integrated water resource management, circular economy practices, and climate change mitigation. The agreement aims to promote joint efforts on waste management and exchange of best practices in environmental policy.

“This Memorandum marks a significant milestone in our partnership

with Hungary’s Ministry of Energy. It provides a solid framework for effective and targeted cooperation,” stated Mr. Songulashvili, highlighting Hungary’s experience in public awareness and sustainability.

During his participation in the Georgia-Hungary Intergovernmental Commission co-chaired by the countries’ Prime Ministers, Mr. Songulashvili reiterated the shared commitment to closer ties and EU integration.

“Hungary’s support in aligning our agricultural standards with European regulations is invaluable. We welcome the allocation of a sectoral expert to assist Georgia on this path,” he said.

Mr. Songulashvili expressed gratitude to the Hungarian government and underscored the growing collaboration in agriculture, environment, and education-sectors pivotal to Georgia’s sustainable development and European aspirations.

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## *David Songulashvili: “I always emphasize that our top priority is direct communication with those involved in agricultural production”*

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Songulashvili, visited the Imereti region.

“I always emphasize that our top priority is direct communication with individuals involved in agricultural production, including beneficiaries of state programs. Today, we were in the Imereti region, where we met with farmers and entrepreneurs at one of the largest blueberry-producing companies, “Agrolane”. The success story of blueberry cultivation in Georgia is a clear example of how ambitious plans can be set and, within just a few years, lead to the country becoming one of the top 20 exporters on the global market. Years ago, the idea of cultivating blueberries on such a scale in Georgia seemed unimaginable. Due to the active support of the state, including access to financing, knowledge, technology, markets-blueberry or-

chards in Georgia now cover more than 2,700 hectares. At the meeting with producers, we listened to their needs and the challenges they are facing. We reaffirmed the government’s continued support,” said Mr. Songulashvili.

In addition to his meetings with farmers, the Minister held discussions with staff from regional departments of the Agencies under the Ministry, working in areas such as food safety, environmental supervision, forestry, laboratory services, and protected areas.

The Minister received updates on key developments and operational needs. “Strengthening the institutional capacity of our agencies-particularly regional branches-through skilled personnel, modern infrastructure, and proper equipment is essential for the effective implementation of our agricultural and environmental policies,” concluded Mr Songulashvili.



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## Nino Tandilashvili Delivers Remarks at International Panel Held as Part of UN High-Level Conference



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, delivered a keynote speech at an international panel held as part of the UN High-Level Conference in Nice, France. The theme of the global panel was “Fostering sustainable fisheries management”.

In her address, Deputy Minister Tandilashvili underscored Georgia’s progress as a Black Sea nation in advancing sustainable fisheries policy.

“Our goal is to ensure a balanced approach that integrates economic, social, tourism, and biodiversity interests throughout every stage—from policy planning to implementation.

Commercial fishing in Georgia is regulated by a rigorous licensing system, with annual fishing quotas determined through a science-based methodology developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which involves both national and international experts,” stated the First Deputy Minister.

The First Deputy Minister highlighted Georgia’s efforts to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including the adoption of advanced monitoring technologies.

“The major milestone is the European Union’s recognition of catch certifications issued by Georgian state agencies, which not only facilitates greater participation in international trade but also reinforces the nation’s commitment to the principles of sustainability,” said Mrs Tandilashvili.

The First Deputy Minister expressed gratitude to the FAO for its continued support in developing Georgia’s aquaculture sector, emphasizing the designation of aquaculture development zones that meet international standards and the issuance of Georgia’s first aquaculture license—an important step in creating a regulated and sustainable industry, which contributes to the socio-economic empowerment of coastal communities.

Mrs. Tandilashvili also highlighted Georgia’s active cooperation with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), particularly in strengthening the small-scale fisheries sector.

“Supporting small-scale fisheries is not only an environmental imperative but also a vital social and economic responsibility. It is essential to recognize, preserve, and integrate the knowledge and traditional practices of those engaged in the sector into policymaking.” stated the First Deputy.

The panel was convened as part of the lead-up to the UN 2025 Ocean Conference, dedicated to Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water – aimed at conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, and marine resources.

The high-level officials, including the FAO Secretary-General, the European Commissioner for Fisheries, Ministers from various countries, representatives from international organizations and the scientific community, attended the event.

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## Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture David Songulashvili Meets with Japanese Ambassador Ishizuka Hideki



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, held a meeting with the Ambassador of Japan to Georgia, H.E. Ishizuka Hideki.

During the meeting, the parties discussed current and future cooperation in the fields of agriculture and environmental protection.

Minister Songulashvili highlighted the successful joint projects between Georgia and Japan, emphasizing the crucial role of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in supporting these initiatives.

Mr. Songulashvili expressed his gratitude to Ambassador Ishizuka for Japan’s long-standing support and underscored the importance of sharing Jap-

anese expertise and adopting advanced technologies to enhance Georgia’s agricultural and environmental sectors.

The parties focused on the development of Georgia’s tea industry, noting that Japanese support in the mentioned area would contribute significantly to improving both the quality and volume of local tea production, thereby strengthening the competitiveness of Georgian farmers and producers.

Additionally, Minister Songulashvili addressed the growing interest in Georgian wine in the Japanese market, underlining the importance of further efforts to increase its visibility and demand among Japanese consumers.

The conversation touched upon the bilateral cooperation within the frame-

work of the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM). Georgia is actively collaborating with Japan on the implementation of this emissions trading scheme, which facilitates the adoption of advanced decarbonization technologies, systems, services, and infrastructure.

Ambassador Ishizuka reaffirmed the strong and successful partnership between the two countries, expressing the Japanese side’s continued commitment to sharing knowledge and providing technical and financial support across various sectors.

The Deputy Minister, Mr. Lasha Dolidze, and the Heads of relevant Departments attended the meeting.

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### *Nino Tandilashvili: “Georgia, as a Black Sea country, fully understands the importance of regional cooperation in overcoming common challenges and ensuring sustainable development”*



Mrs Nino Tandilashvili, First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia participated in a high-level panel discussion held as part of the “UN 2025 Ocean Conference”; the session focused on “Promoting and supporting all forms of cooperation, especially at the regional and subregional levels”.

In her address, the First Deputy Minister noted that Georgia, as a Black Sea country, fully understands the importance of regional cooperation in overcoming shared challenges and ensuring sustainable development.

“Marine ecosystems are not subject to state borders. Pollution, overfishing, habitat destruction, and climate change are transboundary challenges directly affecting the entire region. The mentioned problems might be addressed only through regional cooperation based on solidarity, partnership, and joint action,” stated Mrs. Tandilashvili.

Mrs. Tandilashvili highlighted Georgia’s ongoing efforts toward European integration, particularly under the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area Agreement (DCFTA) with the European Union. She noted that this process has significantly advanced the country’s alignment with EU standards in areas such as environmental protection, maritime governance, and sustainable economic development, contributing to greater regional stability.



The First Deputy Minister also underscored Georgia’s active role in international and regional initiatives, with particular reference to its cooperation with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM); she emphasized joint efforts in data sharing, capacity building, and the promotion of sustainable fisheries, noting that regional fisheries management organizations play a crucial role in the science-based and inclusive governance of marine resources.

In addition to environmental collaboration, Mrs Tandilashvili spoke on the strategic economic and infrastructural importance of regional cooperation, highlighting the Black Sea Submarine Cable Project—a transformative initiative aimed at connecting Georgia to the European energy grid.

“The Black Sea Submarine Cable Project represents a global investment in strategic infrastructure, supporting national and regional interests, strengthening connectivity, accelerating the green transition, and driving to economic development,” the First Deputy said.

In her concluding remarks, Mrs. Tandilashvili called on the international community to scale up financial and technical support aimed at enhancing regional capacity in crucial areas, such as monitoring, enforcement, scientific research, and infrastructure development.

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## David Songulashvili Meets with Tadaharu Uehara, President of the Japan-Georgia Chamber of Commerce and Industry



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, hosted Mr. Tadaharu Uehara, President of the Japan-Georgia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JGCCCI).

During the meeting, the parties discussed avenues for deepening bilateral cooperation, with a particular focus on enhancing Georgian wine exports to the Japanese market.

“It is always a pleasure to meet with a long-standing, good friend of our country. I would like to thank you for your efforts in raising awareness of Georgia in Japan during your time as Ambassador. We deeply value your continued support, and I am confident that our partnership will remain mutually beneficial and productive,” stated the Minister.

The JGCCCI plays a vital role in strengthening diplomatic and economic ties between Japan and Georgia, focusing on investment promotion, knowledge exchange, and improved market access for businesses from both countries. Mr. Uehara expressed his enduring affection for Georgia.

“I have many fond memories of Georgia-of genuine friendship and warm relations. I hope that the Japan-Georgia Chamber of Commerce and Industry will serve as a bridge that fosters closer economic relations between our countries,” noted Mr. Uehara.

Mr. Levan Mekhuzla, Chairman of the National Wine Agency, along with senior officials from the Ministry, attended the meeting.

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## Solomon Pavliashvili Participates in International Conference in Tajikistan



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, participated in the International Conference at the Government Residence in Dushanbe, the capital of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The parties focused on the urgent need to prioritize halting glacier melting and integrating these efforts into the global climate change agenda.

In his remarks, Deputy Minister Pavliashvili highlighted the importance of Georgia’s involvement in addressing the global problem of glacier melting while emphasizing the role of glaciers in shaping the country’s landscapes, ecosystems, and water resources.

According to the Deputy Minister, scientific research, along with traditional field observations, has confirmed the trend that over the past decade, the rate of glacier zone reduction has exceeded the total decline observed in the previous fifty years. This process increases the frequency and intensity of glacier-related hazards, including ice and rock avalanches, glacial lake floods, and cascade-type disasters.

Mr. Pavliashvili outlined the measures implemented by the Georgian Government and emphasized the identification of critical points related to glaciers, which includes enhanced monitoring, the creation of risk maps, and the installation of early warning systems.

Moreover, the Deputy Minister stressed the importance of implementing preventive measures in high-risk areas, strengthening partnerships with scientific institutions, and raising public awareness.

Notably, glacier-related issues and the necessity of their preservation have long been at the forefront of global attention. Therefore, based on United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/77/158 of December 14, 2022, the year 2025 has been declared the International Year of Glacier Preservation.

The conference in Dushanbe brought together over 2,500 participants from approximately 90 countries, including Senior Government Officials, representatives of regional and international organizations, scientists, researchers, and partner institutions.

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## David Songulashvili Meets with Representatives of the French Wine and Livestock Sectors



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, held a meeting with the representatives of leading French companies in the wine and livestock industries.

The parties focused on strengthening the strategic partnership between Georgia and France in the agricultural sector and identifying new avenues for cooperation.

The sides highlighted the importance of adopting modern technologies, enhancing production standards, and promoting the export of Georgian agricultural products with a main focus on the exchange of expertise and the implementation of joint projects in the wine and livestock sectors.

“Georgian wine stands out for its unique taste and character, making it worthy of special recognition on the international stage. The growing interest from French winemakers and distributors provides strong motivation for Georgian entrepreneurs and further encourages the export of Georgian wine to the French market.

As for the livestock sector, the meeting was attended by organizers of one of Europe’s largest livestock exhibitions, who expressed a keen interest in Georgia’s livestock industry. This is particularly significant, as livestock development remains a key priority for our Ministry.” noted Mr. Songulashvili.

The parties discussed bilateral cooperation, including sharing experience and launching specific investment and educational initiatives that will help modernize the agricultural sector in Georgia and facilitate its integration into European markets.

Mr. Pierre Desprat, Managing Director of Desprat Saint Verny, and other representatives of the mentioned company were among the notable attendees.

It is worth mentioning that the company Desprat Saint Verny has been a family business since 1885 and is currently the fourth-largest wine producer

and distributor in France.

“I have always dreamed of visiting Georgia and experiencing the authentic taste of its wine. This visit has three main goals: to learn about the unique Qvevri winemaking tradition and try producing wine in Qvevri myself; to introduce Georgian wine to the French public, who are still largely unfamiliar with its exceptional quality; and to personally contribute to the development of Georgian winemaking,” stated Mr. Desprat.

The livestock sector meeting was attended by Mr. Jacques Chazalet, President of the Livestock Summit-one of Europe’s largest and most influential agricultural exhibitions-and Mr. Bruno Dufayette, CEO of Race Sales Viande.

It is worth mentioning that the Livestock Summit attracts nearly 11 million visitors annually and serves as a platform for sharing knowledge and best practices in the fields of livestock, agricultural technology, and education.

“Georgia was honored as the guest country at the 2023 Livestock Summit, one of the most prestigious events in our sector, which brings together professionals in the fields of animal husbandry, agricultural technology, and education and is a platform for sharing experiences in the sector. We want to expand our contacts with Georgian farmers, who can become our partners and important players in this field,” said Mr. Jacques Chazalet.

During their visit, the French delegation toured the Wine Museum of the National Wine Agency, where they tasted wines made from rare Georgian grape varieties.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Lasha Dolidze, Chairman of the National Wine Agency, Mr. Levan Mekhuzla, and Director of the Agricultural Scientific Research Center, Mr. Levan Ujmajuridze, also attended the meeting.

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*Implementation of the Rustavi Floodplain Forest Restoration-Development Project Begins*



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, delivered remarks at the presentation of the Rustavi floodplain forest restoration-development project.

“The Rustavi floodplain forest restoration-development project is a vivid example of successful cooperation between the central government and the municipality. Through joint efforts, we have developed a comprehensive restoration plan supported by GEL 900,000 GEL allocated from the Environmental Fund. The project envisions not only the rehabilitation of a unique ecosystem but also the creation of recreational infrastructure for public benefit,” said Mrs. Tandilashvili.

According to Mrs. Tandilashvili, restoring the floodplain forest will be a significant step toward improving air quality in Rustavi.

Rustavi Mayor Mrs. Nino Latsabidze led the presentation, while Mrs. Maia Bitadze, Chair of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, MP Mr. Irakli Shatakishvili, representative of Rustavi and Gardabani communities; and Mr. Levan Kharabadze, State Representative of Kvemo Kartli region delivered the opening remarks. The Deputies of the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze and Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, also attended the event.

Mrs. Maia Bitadze underlined the importance of the Environmental Fund in financing ecological initiatives:

“The Rustavi Floodplain Forest Project is the first to be implemented through the Environmental Fund. We created this fund to implement eco-

logical initiatives by using funds collected as compensation for environmental damage,” Mrs. Bitadze stated.

According to Rustavi Mayor Mrs. Nino Latsabidze, public engagement played a crucial role in shaping the project.

“The floodplain forest is one of Rustavi’s most valuable natural assets-an essential ecological resource. That’s why it is vital for all of us to take part in its restoration and sustainable development,” Mrs. Latsabidze said.

Currently, around 900 saplings have been planted as part of the initial phase. The project aims to rehabilitate a 320-hectare area of floodplain forest, including the planting of 20,000 endemic species such as oak, elm, and silverberry. Additionally, the plan includes:

- Establishment of tourist and educational infrastructure
- Installation of photo traps to monitor wildlife
- Construction of water filtration barriers to prevent solid waste from polluting the Mtkvari River

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia prepared the Rustavi Floodplain Forest Restoration and Development Document in collaboration with Rustavi City Hall under the “Save Nature – Georgia” initiative. The project is fully financed by the Environmental Fund.

The targeted area includes both banks of the Mtkvari River within Rustavi’s city limits, between the Old and New Bridges-a zone that suffered severe ecological damage during the energy crisis of the 1990s.

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*David Songulashvili: “Our Long-Term Goal Is to Produce High-Quality, Premium Segment Wine”*



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, met with Sarah Abbott, British Master of Wine, to discuss strategies for enhancing the presence of Georgian wine in the UK market and boosting exports.

During the meeting, the importance of positioning Georgian wine as a high-quality and authentic product in the UK wine markets was emphasized by the parties.

“The UK is a strategic market for us, and we are striving to support Georgian winemakers in gaining greater market access. Our long-term objective is to produce premium-quality wine and firmly establish Georgia as a trusted name on the global stage. Due to limited natural resources, Georgia cannot compete in the low-cost, high-volume segment, which is why our

focus is on quality and authenticity,” noted Minister Songulashvili.

Discussions centered around reinforcing the market positioning of Georgian wine producers in the UK, increasing export volumes, and leveraging quality as the cornerstone of the country’s wine strategy.

Mrs. Sarah Abbott praised recent progress, highlighting 2024 as a successful year for Georgian wine in the UK, marked by strong consumer feedback and notable sales growth.

“One of our key goals for 2025 is to boost visibility for Georgian wine producers on online sales platforms, which are especially influential in the UK. Moreover, Wine quality begins in the vineyard, so any effort to expand exports and enter the premium market must be rooted in vineyard care and quality control,” Mrs. Abbott said.

The UK, one of the world’s leading wine importers and consumers, has been considered a strategic export destination for Georgian wine since 2014. Since 2015, the

National Wine Agency of Georgia has partnered with Mrs. Sarah Abbott’s company, Swirl Wine Group Ltd, to promote Georgian wine in the UK.

This collaboration has yielded tangible results. In 2024, approximately 426,000 liters of Georgian wine were exported to the UK, a 72% increase compared to the previous year.

Looking ahead to 2025, Swirl Wine Group will continue to represent Georgian wine in the UK, with support from the National Wine Agency. Planned activities include tasting seminars across multiple UK cities, participation in international wine exhibitions, and targeted advertising and media campaigns. These efforts aim to elevate the profile of Georgian wine, boost sales, and solidify its reputation in the premium segment of the UK market.

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*Nino Tandilashvili Submits Amendments to the Environmental Assessment Code at the Committee Hearing*



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, presented proposed amendments to the “Environmental Assessment Code” and the related draft laws during the third hearing of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee, held in the city of Poti.

According to Mrs. Tandilashvili, the primary goal of the draft amendments

is to improve the environmental assessment procedures established by the Code and to correct the shortcomings identified in practice.

The First Deputy Minister noted that since the Code came into force, its application has revealed “certain” issues that require clarification, refinement, and adjustment.

“The proposed amendments aim to establish an environmental impact assessment system that aligns with high environmental standards, will be adapted to the current economic processes, and simplify relevant business operations. It is crucial to note that the amendment establishes a more flexible decision-making procedure,” said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

As discussed during the committee session, the adoption of the draft law is expected to improve, streamline, and enhance the effectiveness of the screening, scoping, and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures outlined in the Code. The mentioned amendments will support the smooth implementation of economic activities while maintaining environmental safeguards.

It is worth noting that the “Environmental Assessment Code,” in effect since 2018, was one of the first pieces of national legislation to fully align with the EU Directives on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

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*David Songulashvili: “The State Agricultural Laboratory is Constantly Introducing Valid Research Methods That Align with International Standards”*



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili, visited the newly opened Facility of the State Agricultural Laboratory in Tbilisi.

The Director of the laboratory, Mr. Irakli Guledani, briefed the Minister on the enhanced workflow made possible by recent infrastructure upgrades and modernization of technical equipment.

Minister Songulashvili highlighted the strategic importance of strengthening the national laboratory network, emphasizing that it remains a continuous and multifaceted effort.

“Strengthening the laboratory system encompasses various critical components, including modern infrastructure, cutting-edge technology, and up-to-date technical equipment. New research methods that are internationally recognized and scientifically valid are being regularly adopted. Our laboratory specialists also undergo ongoing training in partnership with leading international laboratories,” stated Minister Songulashvili.

The Minister emphasized that timely and accurate diagnostics are essential across all stages of agricultural production, noting that the additional workspaces provided in the new laboratory building significantly expanded research capacity in the field of food safety.

“I want to stress that timely and precise diagnostics are decisive factors in every phase of agricultural production. Our primary goal is to ensure the supply of local market with safe and healthy products while also promoting high-quality Georgian goods in international markets,” the Minister added. According to Mr. Guledani, Director of the State Agricultural Laboratory, the expanded capacities of the laboratory will contribute to more efficient, high-quality research, supporting the smooth operation of the agricultural sector in Georgia. The Director also emphasized the laboratory’s recent initiation of biodegradation quality testing for polyethylene bags, a significant step toward aligning with national environmental policies and implementing practical green standards.

The State Laboratory of Agriculture network includes the central laboratory in Tbilisi, two zonal laboratories (located in Kutaisi and Akhaltsikhe), and 10 regional laboratories. These facilities conduct a wide range of research, including food safety, drinking water analysis, and diagnostics of plant and animal diseases.

Notably, the State Agricultural Laboratory holds the status of a National Reference Laboratory, authorizing it to conduct definitive testing in cases of disputed research samples.

The laboratory operates in full compliance with ISO/IEC 17025:2017 standards, ensuring that all research procedures meet the highest International Standards. The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili accompanied the Minister at the newly opened Facility of the State Agricultural Laboratory.

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*Nino Tandilashvili Submits the 2024 Report and 2025 Action Plan on the Implementation of the Obligations Taken by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture under the Association Agreement*



At a joint field session of the Committees on Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Agrarian Issues, and European Integration of the Parliament of Georgia, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs Nino Tandilashvili, presented the Ministry’s 2024 report and 2025 action plan for the implementation of obligations under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

In her address, Mrs. Tandilashvili emphasized the critical role of legislative approximation in the field of environmental protection, as outlined in the Association Agreement. She highlighted key components of the 2025 Environmental Action Plan, including recent amendments to the Law of Georgia on Environmental Protection aimed at establishing a comprehensive monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) system.

According to the First Deputy Minister, legislative approximation has already been achieved with 21 out of the 27 environmental directives stipulated in the Agreement, with two additional legal acts currently under parliamentary review.

Tandilashvili provided a detailed overview of progress across several priority areas, including:

- Protection of atmospheric air and biodiversity
- Management of water resources, waste, chemicals, and protected areas
- Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction
- Nuclear and radiation safety
- Fisheries and maritime governance
- Institutional capacity building, control, and enforcement mechanisms

A substantial part of her presentation was dedicated to achievements in aligning trade-related legislation with EU standards under the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Mrs Tandilashvili noted that significant progress has been made in the fields of food safety, veterinary medicine, and plant protection, with legislative approximation ongoing for 200 EU legal acts targeted for completion by 2028. Since 2014, 146 of these acts have already been aligned.

Mrs. Tandilashvili also addressed the importance of introducing advanced

laboratory diagnostic methods, expanding accreditation frameworks, and strengthening the capabilities of the National Food Agency. These efforts, she said, are directly linked to enhancing food safety and ensuring seamless access to the EU market.

“The European Union Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) conducted an audit of Georgia’s hazelnut sector. The European Commission confirmed that the state control measures implemented in the sector are satisfactory, and as a result, trade is proceeding smoothly. Two priority products have been identified: aquaculture products and queen bees. The completed documentation required to open the EU market for these products has been submitted to the European Commission, where the review process is currently underway,” said Nino Tandilashvili.

A joint field session of the Parliamentary Committees on Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Agrarian Issues, and European Integration was held in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara at the Batumi City Council building.

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## *David Songulashvili meets with the Masters of Wine from Well-known Consulting Company Operating Within the Global Wine Industry*



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili, recently met with leading Masters of Wine, Fogyee Walker, and Edward Ragg, from the internationally renowned consulting firm Dragon Phoenix Wine Consulting.

“I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your invaluable contribution to the promotion of Georgian wine in China. Raising awareness of Georgian wine in the Chinese market is crucial for us, and I am confident that through coordinated efforts, we will achieve the desired results,” said Minister Songulashvili.

“Emotion and sincere words are essential for a Master of Wine. I am looking forward to visiting the Kakheti wine region, which I believe will deepen my understanding and enable more genuine conversations about Georgian wine,” noted Fogyee Walker.

Notably, the Wine Masters work in the Chinese market and have long-standing experience in expert market analysis.



Mr. Levan Mekhuzla, Chairman of the National Wine Agency, also attended the meeting.

As mentioned, China remains a key strategic market for Georgian wine, with targeted marketing efforts underway since 2013 to boost awareness and exports. China ranks consistently among the top five importers of Georgian wine. From January to May of this year, exports to China reached 1.4 million liters—an increase of 65% compared to the same period last year.

Currently, approximately 40 Georgian wine houses, shops, and salons operate in China, while about 100 Georgian wine companies actively export their products to this vital market.

Supported by the National Wine Agency, Georgian wines have been prominently showcased at top events in China this year, including the “Fine Wine Hotel Exhibition”, “The China Food & Drinks Fair”, “RAW Wine Shanghai” and “Interwine China 2025”.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24022>

## Georgian Wine Celebrated at Large-Scale Events During “Georgian Culture Days” in Yerevan



On June 5–7, the Armenian capital of Yerevan is hosting the “Georgian Culture Days”, a vibrant series of events organized and supported by the Government of Georgia, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, the National Wine Agency, and the Embassy of Georgia in the Republic of Armenia.

As part of the “Georgian Culture Days”, on June 6, large-scale events dedi-

cated to the promotion of Georgian history, culture, and especially Georgian wine were held in Missak Manouchyan Park. The event was attended by Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, and Mr. Levan Mekhuzla, Chairman of the National Wine Agency of Georgia.

“The Georgian Culture Days in Yerevan play a vital role in promoting our nation’s rich history, culture, and traditions. A key component of this celebration is Georgian wine - a cornerstone of our heritage. Georgia is the birthplace of wine, with over 8,000 years of winemaking history and more than 500 endemic grape varieties. Thanks to the Government’s effective policies, the Georgian wine industry continues to grow each year. This exhibition in Yerevan will further boost awareness, export potential, and market diversification for Georgian wine.” Stated Mr. Pavliashvili.

The event featured a Georgian wine tasting, showcasing the products of 15 distinguished Georgian wine producers. To emphasize the deep historical roots and uniqueness of Georgian winemaking, the event space included artistic installations of traditional Georgian tableware and clay pitchers. An exhibition of replicas of rare and historical wine artefacts from Georgia was also on display, drawing significant interest from visitors.

Deputy Minister Pavliashvili also welcomed the Deputies of the Ministers of Environment and Agriculture of Armenia to the Georgian stand, strengthening cross-border cultural and agricultural ties.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/23994>

## The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, David Songulashvili, visited the Kvemo Kartli region



“We continue our visits to the regions, where we meet with the representatives of various Agencies within the Ministry system; moreover, we visited agri-food processing enterprises that are our beneficiaries and met with farmers. I would willingly emphasize our visit to the Azot plant in the Kvemo Kartli region. As we are aware, this enterprise is a key player in agricultural development, specifically in fertilizer production. The environmental measures implemented by the Azot plant stand as exemplary and commendable practices. Ultimately, it is essential to highlight and recognize when major companies in the country address environmental issues with great responsibility,” stated the Minister.

The Minister also toured the rehabilitation works on the Khrami Canal Irrigation System in the Kvemo Kartli region and met with employees of LTD Georgian Amelioration as well as residents.

In the Kvemo Kartli region, Mr. David Songulashvili visited the dairy pro-

cessing plant “Teleti Dairy Products,” where he heard directly from farmers about the challenges in the sector.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture also visited the regional offices of Agencies within the Ministry system - including the Environmental Supervision Department, the National Food Agency, and the National Forestry Agency - where he reviewed their activities and met with staff.

“Visits to the regions are crucial to directly understand the interests of farmers, identify the challenges they face, and respond accordingly through direct communication with them. It is also essential to see firsthand how agro-processing enterprises established with Government support are developing. In the end, statistics reflect everything. The data shows the production growth, which is a significant and noteworthy achievement that once again confirms the country’s sound and consistent economic policy,” stated the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24024>  
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24025>  
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24026>  
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24027>  
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24028>

### *Solomon Pavliashvili: “With an 8,000-year history, winemaking remains one of the leading sectors of our country’s economy”*



During his working visit to the Republic of Korea, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, met with Ms. Micky Choi, CEO of Wine21, a contractor company of the National Wine Agency of Georgia.

The Deputy Minister is attending the “Seoul Wine and Spirits Expo 2025” in the capital of Seoul, where he is also holding meetings with representatives of the winemaking industry and the commercial sector. Discussions focused on expanding the export potential of Georgian wine in the Korean market, as well as launching new joint projects to strengthen trade relations. Mr. Zurab Vacharadze, Deputy Chairman of the National Wine Agency of Georgia, also attended the meeting with Ms. Micky Choi.

During the meeting, the parties discussed opportunities for promoting Georgian wine on the South Korean market, as well as organizational issues related to a professional Georgian wine masterclass and tasting event scheduled to take place in Seoul in September 2025.

“With an 8,000-year legacy, the winemaking industry remains one of the

key sectors of our country’s economy. Together with our partner marketing company, we reviewed ongoing marketing efforts and discussed plans for the future. The meeting with our partners gives us strong expectations that Georgian wine will further strengthen its position in the South Korean market - a market known for its refined wine culture, where consumers value the quality of Georgian wine and its 8,000-year-old heritage,” said Mr. Pavliashvili.

The Republic of Korea is one of the strategic markets for Georgian wine. Since 2022, the National Wine Agency of Georgia has been cooperating with Wine 21 to enhance awareness and promote the popularity of Georgian wine in the Korean market.

Founded in 1998, Wine 21 ([www.wine21.com](http://www.wine21.com)) is the largest online wine portal in South Korea. Created by wine professionals, it aims to share knowledge with everyday consumers. Through this platform, Korean users can quickly and easily access comprehensive information about the Korean wine market - including distributors and importers, wine varieties and pricing, retail locations, promotional activities, wine-related events, tastings, masterclasses, and seminars.

The platform also provides information about wines produced in various countries, their history, and the cultural traditions associated with them. Wine 21 has a loyal user base of about 300,000 monthly visitors, with over 1 million page views per month. Its informational newsletter has more than 60,000 subscribers.

In addition to being a leading digital resource, the company is actively engaged in PR and marketing activities. It organizes various exhibitions and facilitates the planning of B2B meetings, playing a key role in connecting industry stakeholders.

In September 2025, an educational seminar and a professional wine masterclass dedicated to Georgian wine will be held at a local wine bar for representatives of the local wine industry and media.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24033>

## *The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, David Songulashvili, gets familiar with the ongoing infrastructure works in the Birtvisi Canyon area*



The infrastructure development project for eco-tourism in Birtvisi Canyon aims to streamline travel for visitors to the protected area while also ensuring a safe and welcoming environment.

The project is designed to accommodate visitors of various ages and interests. Given Birtvisi's historical and cultural significance, the infrastructure development is being carried out with minimal impact on the natural environment.

“Establishing and expanding protected areas is a strong guarantee for preserving our environment and unique biodiversity. Against the backdrop of the global challenge of climate change, determining and implementing the

right policies for nature conservation is becoming increasingly important. For us, it is crucial to protect nature and the environment on the one hand and make these areas attractive and economically active on the other. Numerous large-scale projects aimed at developing eco-tourism serve this purpose, strengthening local community involvement in providing tourism services and contributing to increased employment and income,” stated Mr. David Songulashvili.

As part of the eco-tourism infrastructure development project in Birtvisi Canyon, a visitor center will be constructed near the village of Amlevi, along with a viewing platform, three suspension bridges, a swing, cottages, and a zipline. A particularly notable innovation is the installation of the first via Ferrata in the protected areas - a route equipped on the rocky terrain designed for lovers of extreme and active recreation.

Birtvisi Canyon is part of the territorial administration of Algeti National Park. Algeti National Park is located in the Kvemo Kartli region, just an hour's drive from Tbilisi. With renewed infrastructure, Birtvisi Canyon, alongside Tsalka Canyon, will become one of the key tourist attractions nationwide.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, the Governor of Kvemo Kartli region, Mr. Levan Kharabadze, the Mayor of Tetrtskaro Municipality, Mr. Giorgi Tsiklauri, the Chairman of the Tetrtskaro Municipal Assembly, Mr. Gocha Tedoradze, and the Chairman of the Protected Areas Agency, Mr. Besik Kusidi, accompanied the Minister.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24032>

## *Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Solomon Pavliashvili Meets with the Chair of the Republic of Korea Importers Association in Seoul*



The Deputy Minister, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, held a meeting in Seoul with Youn Young Mi, Chair of the Republic of Korea Importers Association.

The Republic of Korea Importers Association is the largest organization in the country, representing 8,000 importing companies nationwide.

During the meeting, the parties discussed deepening trade and economic relations between the Republic of Korea and Georgia.

According to the Chairwoman of the Association, Georgia has significant potential for increasing exports, and awareness of Georgia has notably grown in recent times.

“The discussion focused on expanding the export of Georgian wine and supporting the export of other Georgian products, as well as the process of signing the Free Trade Agreement between the two countries and the current situation in the country. This agreement will play a crucial role in strengthening trade and economic relations between Georgia and the Republic of Korea,” stated Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

Mr. Tarash Papisashvili, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Republic of Korea, and Mr. Zurab Vacharadze, Deputy Chairman of the National Wine Agency, attended the meeting.

Deputy Minister Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili is attending the “Seoul Wine and Spirits Expo 2025” in Seoul, where he is also holding meetings with representatives from the commercial sector and the winemaking industry. The discussions focus on expanding the export potential of Georgian agricultural products, including Georgian wine, in the Korean market.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24036>