

2/27/18

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia

and

The United States Agency for International Development

ARTICLE 1. PURPOSE

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (Ministry), collectively referred to as the Participants, intend to cooperate in Georgia's nation-wide response to the invasion of the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB), an invasive pest causing significant harm to Georgian agriculture. To achieve this goal, in the spirit of bilateral cooperation, the Participants have concluded this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which reflects the intentions and expectations of each Participant relative to the continued support of USAID in the Ministry's effort to combat the BMSB.

The purpose of this MOU is to set forth the understanding and intentions of the Participants. The Participants are entering into this MOU while wishing to maintain their own separate competences, and their own accountabilities. Nothing in this MOU is to be construed as superseding or interfering in any way with other agreements or contracts entered into by the Participants, either prior to or subsequent to the signing of this MOU. The Participants further specifically acknowledge that this MOU is not an obligation of funds, nor does it constitute a legally binding commitment by either Participant, including under international law. Any funds that may be committed, obligated and/or expended, and any operations that may be carried out, pursuant to this MOU by USAID or by the Ministry are subject to the availability of funds to USAID and to the Ministry, respectively, for such purposes, and are intended to be in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of the United States and of Georgia.

ARTICLE 2. BACKGROUND

The BMSB was first identified in Georgia in the summer of 2015, at which time BMSB populations were at low, acceptable levels and did not cause noticeable economic damage to crops. Due to ideal breeding conditions, however, the BMSB populations in western Georgia increased dramatically between 2015 and 2017 and inflicted significant damage, mostly to Georgia's hazelnuts, an important export commodity and cash crop for Georgia's smallholder farmers. In addition to hazelnuts, the rapid spread of the BMSB has begun to damage other crops important to livelihoods, including citrus, grapes, corn, peaches, apples and vegetables.

In the spring of 2017, USAID, through its project Restoring Efficiency to Agriculture Production (REAP), provided \$3,000,000 in assistance to mitigate the damage caused by the BMSB. This assistance included the procurement of equipment, expert technical assistance, public outreach efforts, and training for the Ministry staff. However, ideal weather conditions and limited on-farm knowledge of and resources for pest control have meant that the BMSB

has continued to spread in western Georgia and, in certain localities, has destroyed entire hazelnut and corn crops. If not contained, the BMSB has the potential to negate significant investments made in Georgia's agriculture sector and reverse important gains made in rural poverty reduction.

ARTICLE 3. DESCRIPTION OF COOPERATION

Under this MOU, USAID and the Ministry intend to further enhance their cooperation to respond to the threat posed by the BMSB to Georgia's agriculture sector. With USAID support, the Ministry has developed an Action Plan designed to mitigate the damage caused by the BMSB and to control the BMSB population in Georgia. The Action Plan includes intensive public outreach, monitoring of BMSB populations, and where necessary spraying of the BMSB. USAID intends to support the Ministry to implement this Action Plan. Support may include, but not be limited to, technical assistance, training, consultations, and the provision of equipment and supplies.

The Ministry intends to take all reasonable steps to ensure the sustainability of any assistance provided by USAID, including ensuring that any equipment or supplies USAID may provide are not damaged, lost, stolen or misused, and are properly maintained; maintaining records adequate to show receipt, location, condition, maintenance and use of any equipment provided; and following USAID branding and marking regulations by ensuring any supplies/equipment preserve the USAID logo.

ARTICLE 4. GENERAL PROVISIONS

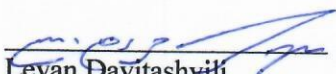
This MOU may be amended or modified in writing by the authorized representatives of each Participant (USAID and Ministry). Either Participant may discontinue its participation in this MOU at any time, but should endeavor to provide at least thirty (30) days' written notice to the other Participant.


This MOU comes into operation on the day it is signed by both Participants and remains in operation until March 4, 2019 or until discontinued, whichever is earlier.

The MOU is signed in the city of Tbilisi, Georgia on March 5, 2018, in two original copies in the English language.

**Ministry of Environmental Protection and
Agriculture of Georgia**

USAID


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