



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

NOVEMBER/2022

George Khanishvili attends the Presentation of the New, Georgia -USAID “Resilient Communities Program”

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. George Khanishvili attended the presentation of the new program “Resilient Communities Program” implemented by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The five-year project amounting to USD 24 million aims to create jobs and improve economic well-being for more than 90 communities living along the occupation line.

Mr. Khanishvili expressed his gratitude to the United States government for long-term and close cooperation and emphasized the importance of the new program.

“The development of the villages near the occupation line and the creation of more opportunities for the local population is of the utmost importance. I believe that the new project jointly with the state rural development programs, will make a significant contribution to the economic development of the villages located near the occupation line and will improve the social well-being of the local residents”- said Mr. George Khanishvili.

“I am delighted to participate in this important event. Within the framework of the Georgia -USAID “Resilient Communities Program” we aim to promote the development of safe, secure, and progressive local communities in the villages located along the occupation line in response to Russian aggression,” said Mrs. Erin Elizabeth McKee, Assistant Administrator in the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia (E&E) at USAID.

The Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development Mrs. Mariam Kvrivishvili, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure Mrs. Mzia Giorgobiani, State Representative of Shida Kartli Mr. Mikheil Shakulashvili, representatives of regional self-government, entrepreneurs, private sector representatives, and other stakeholders attended the event.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21076/>

Otar Shamugia meets the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sylvain Roy and Vice President of the International Organization “Setting New Frontiers in Agriculture” (CNFA) Sheryl Cowan



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Otar Shamugia held a meeting with the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr. Sylvain Roy and Vice President of the International Organization “Setting New Frontiers in Agriculture” (CNFA) Mrs. Sheryl Cowan.

Mr. Otar Shamugia expressed his gratitude to the president of CNFA for his active support and spoke extensively about the agricultural support programs carried out in Georgia. The Minister focused on the new program of CNFA United States Agency for International Development (USAID) “Resilient Communities Program”, which aims to develop the villages located along the occupation line and improve the social well-being of the local population.

USAID “Resilient Communities Program is designed to support households and increase socio-economic activities in the regions of Georgia, support the establishment of connections on regional and national markets, ensure gender equality, and empower women and youth.

During the meeting, the Minister emphasized the priority production areas, with the main focus on the production of quality wheat products and the promotion of Georgian wine in the American market. According to the Minister, sharing knowledge as well as adopting modern technologies are crucial to producing high-quality and competitive products in the country.

Mr. Sylvain Roy stated, that CNFA will support the diversification of Georgian wine in the American market, moreover, the support for internationally recognized food safety certification will be further continued, and support will be provided to increase production capacity and efficiency in the country, also for the adoption and implementation of high-quality international standards.

USAID’s support will enable producers and processors to use modern techniques for the production, processing, warehousing, and distribution of their products, also to increase added value and establish local and international market linkages.

During the meeting, the parties underlined the importance of the support of international and donor organizations, setting the main focus on sharing global experiences to promote agricultural development in the country.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, Head of USAID Agriculture Program Mrs. Luiza Namicheishvili, Head of Technical Assistance of USAID Agriculture Program Mr. Davit Shervashidze and representatives of relevant agencies within the system of the Ministry attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21078/>

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia participated in the high-level meeting organized by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27)

Within the framework of the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27), Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia participated in the high-level meeting organized by the Convention.

The 27th Conference is held in the coastal city of Sharm el-Sheikh.

The meeting was held within the framework of the “Needs Based Finance” program, which is implemented by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with the objective of facilitating access and mobilization of climate finance for the implementation of priority mitigation and adaptation projects to address the needs identified by developing countries.

It should be mentioned, that Georgia is a part of the Caucasus and Central Asian countries program and a leader country, which ensures meaningful and effective participation in the region.

Ministers from the leading countries participating in the program took part in the conference. The importance of access to climate financing, the need for strengthening cooperation between the countries of the region, and the need for capacity-building were emphasized by Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili during the meeting.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21084/>

Within the framework of the high-level conference, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili held a meeting with Mr. Sameh Wahba, Regional Director for Sustainable Development at the World Bank’s Europe and Central Asia region.

Within the framework of the 27th Conference the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili held a meeting with the Head of the Adaptation Fund, Mr. Mikko Ollikainen.



During the meeting, the parties discussed ongoing and planned projects supported by the World Bank in Georgia. The conversation touched upon the irrigation system, hydrometeorology, green economy strategy development, and climate change mitigation-adaptation-related issues.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21082/>



It should be mentioned, that the Adaptation Fund is an important partner for Georgia. Over the years, important projects have already been implemented in our country and several projects are still underway with the financial support of the Adaptation Fund.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili emphasized the importance of the project implemented in the river Rioni basin - “Developing Climate-Resilient Flood and Flash Flood Management Practices to protect the Vulnerable Communities of Georgia”, with its final outcomes to reducing the risk of disasters.

Considering the aforementioned project, Georgia has ultimately developed a large-scale project in the same area, which is currently being launched through the financial assistance of the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

During the meeting, the parties also discussed the project implemented in pasture management through the financial assistance of the Adaptation Fund, future opportunities, and innovative projects.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21085/>

Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Otar Shamugia and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) representative in Georgia, Raimund Jehle sign the Agreement



The Agreement signed within the framework of the European Neighborhood Program for Agriculture and Rural Development - ENPARD IV envisages financial assistance of USD 3.4 million, which will be provided by the Swedish Development Agency to take support measures in the food safety, sanitary and phytosanitary fields.

Mr. Otar Shamugia emphasized the importance of increasing the production of quality products in the country and the need for international support in adopting and utilizing modern technologies and improving knowledge.

The Minister expressed his gratitude to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organi-

zation and the Swedish government for long-standing effective cooperation, he emphasized the importance of Georgia's rapprochement with the European Union, also the simplification of access to European markets, and underlined the role of ENPARD IV program in the respective process.

“All steps taken towards EU Integration are successful, and proceeding smoothly. The Ministry fulfills its commitments in a clear and precise manner. As we are all aware, the support of international partners is crucial in this process, and I would like to express my gratitude for your efforts” stated Mr. Shamugia.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) representative in Georgia, Mr. Raimund Jehle spoke extensively about the successful implementation of ENPARD III and expressed his desire to achieve tangible results in the food safety, sanitary and phytosanitary fields of the country during the implementation of the Project ENPARD IV.

“This agreement is another milestone towards successful cooperation between the Ministry and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. It is important to mention, that we are launching a new project, where experts from FAO, the Czech Republic, the European Union, and the Kingdom of Sweden will be equally involved. The effective implementation of the aforementioned project will be another step forward on the path of Georgia's integration into the European Union”, said Mr. Raimund Jehle.

According to the Deputy Head of the Mission, Mr. Erik Illes, Georgia is a reliable partner for the Swedish government, noting, that he is delighted to have an opportunity to cooperate with the Georgian side within the framework of the project, specifically in the sanitary and phytosanitary fields.

The First Deputy Minister Mr. George Khanishvili, the representatives of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and the Heads of relevant departments of the Ministry attended the meeting

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21083/>

Otar Shamugia attends the Conference “LEADER: A European approach to better Rural Lives “



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, and the Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia Mr. Pawel Herczynski delivered opening remarks at the Conference “LEADER: A European Approach to Better Rural Lives “.

During the conference, the parties summed up the results of the EU-funded Program “ENPARD-Georgia”, which serves to introduce European rural development models in Georgia, reduce poverty in rural areas and

ensure a sustainable future for Georgian farmers and rural communities.

The sides also reviewed achievements, and challenges and brought forward future steps and activities for rural development in Georgia.

“The European Union has been assisting us for many years and is our active supporter in the rural-agricultural development, as well as environmental protection fields. Within the framework of the respective project, several important events were financed with the involvement of international organizations. Support was provided to more than 1900 farmers in different areas, and several strategies and legislations were developed. The institutional reform of the Ministry is underway, as well as the process of reforming the Rural Development Agency into a paying agency, etc. I am confident, that the fourth phase of the program will be equally successful. This support is crucial for our country”, said Mr. Otar Shamugia, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

According to the Minister, the Government of Georgia has been taking significant steps over the years to promote the sustainable development of rural areas. This critical work is

in line with Georgia's national priorities on the path to European integration.

“Rural development is an important cooperation area between the European Union and Georgia. Sustainable, inclusive, and green rural economies push people out of poverty, create employment, and set out a pathway to sustainable growth benefitting people and the environment. Georgia has achieved steady progress in the last ten years in modernizing its rural development through policies and practical initiatives. The European Union salutes these achievements and remains committed to supporting new opportunities for rural communities,” stated Mr. Pawel Herczynski, Ambassador of the European Union in Georgia, during his opening remarks.

Within the framework of the conference, an exhibition of Georgian agro-food products was held.

The fourth phase of ENPARD funded by the EU with EURO 55 million will be implemented in 2021-2025. The main focus of the program will be set on the development and implementation of rural development policies, moreover, the respective program will ensure farmers' and entrepreneurs' access to the European market.

The conference ‘LEADER: A European Approach to Better Rural Lives’ was organized with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Action Against Hunger (AAH), CARE Caucasus, CENN, and People in Need.

The Representatives of the Austrian Development Agency and the Embassy of the Czech Republic, the Government of Georgia, the Parliament and local self-government, non-governmental organizations, companies working in rural areas, local development groups (LAGs), and international partners participated in the conference.

It should be mentioned, that the “ENPARD - Georgia” program has been running for ten years in the country. The EU has supported Georgia through the ENPARD program and assisted to align the country's institutional, legal and administrative systems with EU standards, including sharing the best practices of the EU member states with the Georgian partners.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21086/>

Minister of Environmental and Agriculture Otar Shamugia meets Sameh Wahba, Regional Director for Sustainable Development at the World Bank's Europe and Central Asia region



During the meeting, the parties discussed current projects and prospects for future cooperation. The conversation touched upon issues of deepening cooperation in sustainable land management, the development of irrigation systems, also climate change mitigation efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Shamugia expressed his gratitude and showed sincere appreciation to the World Bank team for close and effective cooperation throughout the years.

According to Mr. Wahba, Georgia is a reliable partner for the World Bank, and active cooperation with the Georgian side will be further continued.

The World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus, Mr. Sebastian Molyneus, the First Deputy Minister, Mr. George Khanishvili, and the Heads of relevant departments and agencies within the system of the Ministry attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21071/>

George Khanishvili hosted the representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and experts from Kansas State University



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. George Khanishvili held a meeting with the representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and experts from Kansas State University.

The participants discussed the initial results of the research, which was conducted by American experts to reveal challenges in the wheat sector and increase the sustainability of the wheat supply chain for Georgia. It was mentioned, that the group of experts will develop

relevant recommendations on the basis of the final results of the research.

According to Mr. Khanishvili, the increase in quality, as well as quantity of local wheat production, replacing dependence on international markets, and encouraging domestic industry by limiting imports of manufactured goods is crucial for Georgia.

“I would like to express my gratitude for your efforts. With the adoption of competent final recommendations, a new stage will begin in the wheat sector, which will be related to the wheat, seed, and grain crop production in the country. I believe, that we will be able to achieve the desired goal with effective teamwork”, said Mr. George Khanishvili.

According to the Head of the expert group, Mr. Allen Featherstone, the primary research conducted in the wheat sector showed, that Georgia has real potential to increase production and improve the quality of wheat products.

“The project will be successful when Georgia achieves its main goal - increases the yield of wheat and satisfies the local market demand with its own manufacturing capabilities,” said Mr. Allen Featherstone.

During the meeting, the parties brought forward wheat diseases, as one of the main factors affecting the yield of crops.

It is worth mentioning, that American experts studied the wheat production-supply chain during a week, they held meetings with the specialists of the relevant services of the Agricultural Scientific Research Center, farmers, and representatives of the flour mill companies.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21079/>

Nino Tandilashvili participates in the Japanese Business Forum

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili delivered a speech at the Japanese business forum, which was held in Georgia in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Georgia.

The respective forum aims to further deepen Japan-Georgia relations and establish a connection between the business representatives of the two countries participating in the forum.

Mrs. Tandilashvili expressed her gratitude to the Embassy of Japan for deepening the cooperation between the countries and noted, that the Japanese government has been supporting Georgia in various environmental fields throughout the years.

“Georgia and Japan signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to establish the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM). Under the respective Agreement, Japan will cooperate with Georgia towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Georgia aims to access new technologies and implement activities to achieve its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Moreover, Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) should ensure the deepening of cooperation between the private sectors of our countries and bring solutions to various environmental issues”, stated Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.



The participants spoke about a wide range of issues, including the sustainable business environment and trade potential of the region, energy, and climate-related issues.

The business forum was jointly organized by the Japanese Embassy in Georgia and the Georgian Business Association.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21073/>

Otar Shamugia paid a visit to the “Rustavi Azot” chemical plant in the town of Rustavi



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Otar Shamugia attended the signing of the Memorandum between the “Rustavi Azot” chemical plant and the official representative of the Nitric Acid Climate Change Action Group - Nacag - the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) in the town of Rustavi.

The Memorandum aims to provide the nitric acid producers from the member countries with the Carbon dioxide (CO₂) capture technology to reduce emissions of hazardous air pollutants. The German government provides financial and technical support to the countries participating in the project.

“One of the main priorities for our government is taking care of the environment. In recent years, we have implemented several important reforms in this direction and we are actively continuing this process. We have both financial and technical support from our international partners, which is crucial. Moreover, an important project will be launched in the “Rustavi Azot” chemical plant with the support of German partners. The German government will help “Rustavi Azot” in the adoption of modern technologies, which, in turn, will give us the opportunity to fulfil our obligations taken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and improve the air quality in Rustavi, in the vicinity of the industrial zone,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the Chairman of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Mrs. Maya Bitadze, the Mayor of Rustavi, Mrs. Nino Latsabidze, and the State Representative in Kvemo Kartli region, Mr. Giorgi Dokhturishvili attended the signing ceremony of the Grant Agreement.

“The agreement signed between the parties is a step forward, considering that activities of the company “Rustavi Azot” might have a critical impact on air quality, air pollution and climate change.

The project envisages the use of the best environmental technologies and the replacement of the full production cycle, which is unprecedented in the Georgian reality. I believe, that this will be a clear example for all companies to see, that in cooperation with the state, they can receive appropriate funding from donors if they embrace the modern performance management cycle and if their activities are under the scope of the proper environmental management system,” said Mrs. Maia Bitadze.

The German government will provide the Rustavi nitrogen plant with Euro 2 million grant funding to support the re-equipment of the company and reduce emissions of hazardous



air pollutants. According to the Agreement, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection will finance up to 50% of the cost of the project, and the rest will be financed by the “Rustavi Azot” chemical plant itself.

It should be mentioned, that the “Rustavi Azot” plant has deployed an automatic self-monitoring system for the emission of harmful substances into the ambient air and continuously provides the monitoring results to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

According to the Mayor of Rustavi, Mrs. Nino Latsabidze, any step taken to improve the production process in the enterprises in the town of Rustavi including new investments serves the interest of the town. The main demand of the local residents is to improve the ecological condition of the town as soon as possible.

German specialists conducted monitoring in the nitric acid plant to determine the amount of nitrogen oxide (NO₂) emissions. As a result, the plant has received a feasibility study on the emission reduction project, whereupon, the Carbon dioxide (CO₂) capture technology-related issues and details were determined.



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Kakha Kakabadze, together with the representatives of the central apparatus of the Ministry and relevant structural units are paying a working visit to Vienna, the capital of Austria.



Within the framework of the official visit to Austria, the Georgian Delegation held a meeting with Mrs. Maria Patek, Deputy Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions, and Water Management of Austria. The parties discussed the Austrian business model for forest management, integrated disaster risk management, and climate change-related issues.

As stated by the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, the establishment of a sustainable forest management system is crucial for the ecological, economic and social well-being of the country, and it plays an outstanding role in the climate change adaptation and mitigation process as well. Accordingly, our primary task is to manage the forests by taking into account the principles of sustainable forest management, as well as national interests.

“Austria is one of the important partners of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia. For many years, the Ministry had been in close cooperation with the Austrian Development Agency

(ADC), as the latter supports the development of the agriculture and forestry sector in Georgia as priority areas. Moreover, several projects have already been carried out and are planned to be implemented in the country through the financial support of the Austrian Development Agency (ADC)”- said the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze.

During the meeting, Mrs. Maria Patek focused on bilateral cooperation in the agricultural development and environmental protection fields.

“The sustainable use of forests is crucial to mitigate climate change and protect biodiversity. Georgia is one of our important partners in this regard”, said Mrs. Maria Patek, Deputy Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management of Austria.

Mrs. Maia Bitadze, Chair of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee, of the Parliament of Georgia, Mrs. Khatia Tsilosani, the Deputy Chairperson, as well as representatives of the Emergency Management Service and the National Security Council attended the meeting.

Within the framework of the official visit to Austria, the members of the Georgian delegation will meet representatives of the Austrian University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), the Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape (BFW), the Natural Disasters Research Institute and the Geopark Karawanken. The visit to Austria was planned within the framework of the Project “Sustainable Forest Management for Rural Development”. The project is implemented by the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN), with the financial support of the Austrian Development Agency.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21081/>

The Agreement on the implementation of the project “Institutional Capacity Building for Chemical Safety and Security in Georgia” was signed at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the United States Office of Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism (WMDT), the Science and Technology Center in Ukraine (STCU), and the Regional Environmental Center for the Caucasus (RECC) signed the Agreement on the implementation of the three-year project “Strengthening the Institutional Capacities of Chemical Safety and Security in Georgia”.

The project envisages the strengthening of the legal framework and institutional capacity in

the fields of chemical security, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), counter-terrorism, human health, and environmental protection to ultimately reach national and international goals. The budget of the new project is USD 1,500,000.

As stated by the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, the project will support the adoption of international approaches in the field of chemical safety by sharing the experience of the US and EU countries, with the active involvement of international and local experts.

“We have developed a 2021-2030 National Strategy and Action Plan for reducing chemical, biological, radiation, and nuclear threats, based on which we have to implement specific obligations, taking into consideration the modern requirements and approaches.

The new project envisages the strengthening of the chemical laboratory monitoring and control system, the creation of a database for chemical substances and mixtures, and also taking measures for enhancing institutional capacities and raising public awareness. I hope that with joint efforts and active cooperation with our partners, we will be able to achieve significant progress in chemical safety and security management “ said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

According to the representative of the United States Office of Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism (WMDT), Mr. David Schnaars, upon the initiative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, an extremely important Agreement was signed to strengthen the management and security of chemical substances in Georgia.

“We are delighted to participate in this partnership, which requires a lot of effort in the aforementioned areas with the involvement of all participating parties,” said Mr. David Schnaars.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21080/>

Green Economy and Sustainable Public Procurement-related issues to discuss at the meeting



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili held a meeting with the Director of Procurement Group, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Mrs. Annie Claire Howard.

Mr. Pavliashvili briefed the participants on the current state of the green economy and sustainable public procurement in Georgia, he also spoke about the fulfillment of obligations taken within the EU-Georgian Association Agreement.

It should be mentioned, that the Association Agreement with the European Union envisages the adoption of a sustainable public procurement approach, and encourages eco-labeling and eco-innovations.

The representatives of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) positively evaluated the activities carried out in Georgia towards sustainable public procurement, which will consequently contribute to the introduction of the aforementioned approach in the country.

As part of the EU-funded EU4Environment program, the United Nations Environment Program UNEP cooperates with the Environmental Information and Education Centre and the State Procurement Agency to actively introduce and promote sustainable public procurement in Georgia. The measures taken in the respective area aim to improve legislation for sustainable public procurement provisions. EU4Environment will assist the State Procurement Agency in drafting concrete legal provisions/articles, by-laws, and guidelines on sustainable public procurement (SPP), which will be further reviewed by the Parliament of Georgia.

The Director of the Environmental Information and Education Center Mrs. Tamar Aladashvili and the Deputy Chairman of the State Procurement Agency Mr. Kakha Demetrashevili attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21072/>

Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Solomon Pavliashvili made opening remarks at the national meeting dedicated to the mapping of circularity level in Georgia



Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili expressed his gratitude to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency for its financial support and emphasized the importance of the circularity assessment report of Georgia prepared within the framework of the project.

“The circularity assessment report is a guiding document elaborated for the development of the circular economy in the country. The circular economy is a high standard of waste management. Our goal is to promote the sustainable management of waste in the country and thereby mitigate climate change,” said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

The Deputy Head of the Swedish Embassy, Mr. Erik Illes emphasized the importance of the circularity assessment report for the country and highlighted opportunities for sustainable

development of waste management in Georgia.

“The development of the circular economy has great potential in Georgia. Two years of intensive work resulted in the elaboration of an important document for circular economy development. By developing the aforementioned report, the country has taken another step closer to European standards,” said Mr. Erik Illes.

It should be mentioned, that 13 highly qualified experts from different sectors of the economy have been working on the circularity assessment report of Georgia for two years. Fourteen sectors were evaluated in the assessment report, which includes a description of material flows, losses, waste, and the share of recycled waste, also an assessment of the possibility of recycling waste.

Within the framework of the Interagency Commission of the Government of Georgia, the experts working in relevant Ministries and Government agencies participated in the development /elaboration of the circularity assessment report.

The meeting was organized by the Georgian Society of Nature Explorers “Orchis” (GSNE “Orchis) in close cooperation with the Ministries of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Economy and Sustainable Development, Regional Development and Infrastructure, Education and Science, and with the financial support of the Swedish Government.

The representatives of the Parliament of Georgia, relevant Ministries, private and non-governmental sectors, and different stakeholders attended the session.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21070/>

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture hosts the first Steering Committee meeting of the Project “Save Nature-Georgia”

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili attended the event.

The preparation of the action plan and the renewal of the project budget have been discussed by the parties, who also touched upon the project implementing agencies operating within the system of the Ministry, and corresponding enforcement bodies dealing with the management-related issues.

It should be mentioned, that the project “Save Nature-Georgia” funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) aims to develop the institutional capacity of the National Environmental Agency, the Wildlife Agency, and the Protected Areas Agency, with the main purpose to improve the efficiency of management and promote the sustainable management of Georgia’s natural resources.

The total budget of the three-year project is SEK 56,500,000. The project implementation covers the period from December 2021 to December 2024.

The Chair of the Georgian Society of Nature Explorers “Orchis”, Mrs. Mariam Kimeridze, an international expert in sustainable financing, environmental protection, social, governance and circular economy issues, member of the UN Advisory Board on circular economy issues Mr. Dariusz Prasek, committee members attended the meeting at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, furthermore, the Head of Development Cooperation, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Sweden to Georgia Mr. Erik Illes, and the Head of the Environmental Program of the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, Mrs. Khatuna Zaldastanishvili joined the meeting virtually.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21077/>



GREEN CLIMATE FUND



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development

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



ISSUE#2 / November 2022

“The Earth is a fine place and worth fighting for.” —Ernest Hemingway

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

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Otar Shamugia attended the international conference on the First National Forest Inventory results



An international conference on the results of the first National Forest Inventory in Georgia took place in the beginning of November. The event was attended by the representatives of the legislative and executive authorities, the US Ambassador to Georgia Mrs Kelly Degnan, and the Head of the Cooperation Development Division of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the South Caucasus, Mrs Lydia Christmann.

“The main goal of the National Forest Inventory is to obtain accurate information on the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of forests in a short period. We would like to remind you that approximately 44% of the territory of our country is covered by forests, and with these figures, we are among the most forested countries around the world. Therefore, ensuring the implementation of sustainable forest management principles in the country is crucial for us. I would like to express my gratitude once again to all involved parties and thank the international partners, the German Government, and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), for their technical and financial support in the implementation of the National Forest Inventory” - said Mr Otar Shamugia.

The first National Forest Inventory of Georgian was implemented with the financial support of the German Government and the technical assistance of the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ).

“The updated data provides the opportunity to make correct political decisions in the future. I want to thank all Georgian experts and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture for their active involvement,” said Mrs Lydia Christmann, Head of the Cooperation Development Division of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the South Caucasus.

“The National Forest Inventory programme will protect the forests of Georgia even more efficiently. The United States Forestry Department, along with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and Georgia, have been working for many years on natural resource conservation management to preserve Georgia’s unique biodiversity and, at the same time, create employment opportunities in the sector. Ultimately, after the implementation of the programme, correct decisions will be made regarding forest management and land management in general. Our efforts in this direction will be further continued”- US Ambassador to Georgia Mrs Kelly Degnan stated.

The National Forest Inventory was launched in 2015 with the financial support of the German Government. In 2017, a working group was set up consisting of specialists from the Ministry and GIZ.

For the implementation of the inventory works more than EUROS 5 million was allocated. The conference was attended by Ms Sandra Schenke - GIZ Office South Caucasus Country Director,

Ms Ketevan Khutsishvili - EU Delegation representative, Programme Manager for Rural Development, Civil Protection, and Crisis Management, Mr. Alexander Karner - Head of the Technical Cooperation Coordination Bureau of the Austrian Embassy, environmental non-governmental organizations and invited experts.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21075/>

National forest inventory was carried out throughout the country

The works of the National Forest Inventory (NFI), the Statistical Inventory of the Forest Management Plan (FMI) and the Forest Management Plan (Information about FMP) were introduced to the representatives of the partner international organizations - the World Bank, the American, Polish, and Swedish Forestry Services, as well as the United Nations Food Organization, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The representatives of the National Forest Inventory working group and the National Forestry Agency presented the different stages of the fieldwork of inventories, including the equipment and modern technologies used for the data collection and processing.

The National Forest Inventory is a crucial process of reforming the forestry sector, jointly implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ).

“Unprecedented forest inventory works were carried out throughout the country. For this type of inventory, a special methodology was designed based on which the mechanism of statistical inventory of forests was introduced.” - said the Head of the Department of Biodiversity and Forestry, Karlo Amirgulashvili.

The National Forest Inventory methodology was developed with the involvement of Georgian and international experts within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Governments of Georgia and Germany. The methodology was designed with consideration of the practices of different countries. The NFI fieldwork and data collection started in 2018. Collected data were processed and analysed and the report



was prepared. The obtained information plays an essential role in strategic decision making in the forestry sector and ensures sustainable management and use of forest resources.

<https://forestry.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/169>

The meeting was held regarding the results of the First National Forest Inventory in Georgia

The workshop on the results of the first National Forest Inventory was held. Within the framework of the meeting, local and international experts shared their best experience on the example of their own countries dealing with topics such as sustainable forest management, the strategic decision-making process, the importance of forest inventory, and the usage of modern technologies in the forest sector.

The National Forest Inventory has been carried out for the first time in Georgia as well as the South Caucasus region. The qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the forests of Georgia were assessed, which is important data for determining the forestry policy.

The National Forest Inventory was implemented jointly by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) with the financial support of the German Government.

The meeting was the concluding part of the international conference on the results of the National Forest Inventory, which was held within the framework of the project - Enabling the Implementation of Georgia's forest sector reform - ECO.Georgia. The project is financed by the Green Climate Fund and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Swiss Confederation.



<https://eiec.gov.ge/En/News/details/1983>

The meeting on forestry education was held



Tamar Aladashvili - the Director of EIEC and the Director of the ECO.Georgia project Lutz Jarczyński attended the meeting.

The meeting was held within the framework of the National Forestry Program, organized by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia with the support of the German International Cooperation Society (GIZ).

Enabling the implementation of Georgia's Forest Sector Reform - ECO. Georgia - is funded by the Green Climate Fund and the Governments of Georgia, Germany, and Switzerland. The goal of the project is to reduce forest loss and pressure on forests in Georgia through Sustainable Forest Management and conservation, promotion of the development of the market for energy-efficient and alternative fuel technologies and strengthening the capacities of local governments and the rural communities near forests.

At the meeting, the parties discussed the improvement of the higher education quality in forestry and deepening cooperation and communication in the scientific field. The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia - Solomon Pavliashvili and the Deputy Minister of Education and Science - Nunu Mitkevich opened the meeting.

“The forest of Georgia is a special national value and represents a continuous source of direct and indirect benefits and resources of vital importance to the population. Accordingly, we must establish a sustainable forest management system that ensures the maintenance of social, ecological, and economic balance and the rational distribution of resources. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to have highly qualified, knowledgeable staff and to conduct large-scale scientific research”, Deputy Minister - Solomon Pavliashvili stated.

<https://eiec.gov.ge/En/News/details/1983>

Information meetings in the regions about the new Forest Code and Sustainable Forest Management

The Environmental Information and Education Centre of the Ministry of Environment and Agriculture organized information meetings on the new Forest Code, Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and financial opportunities for funding the production of energy-efficient stoves and alternative fuel solutions. The meetings with the representatives of local self-government, educational institutions, NGOs, and CBOs took place in Kakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti regions.

The purpose of the information meetings was to introduce the possible benefits gained from SFM and to provide information about the need for the involvement of stakeholders in this process.

The Deputy Director of the Environmental Information and Education Center, Ekaterine Bendeliani, opened the information meetings.

The participants learned about the Forest Code of Georgia, its challenges as well as the possibility of applying the principles of SFM in the region. They received information about energy efficiency and alternative fuel and improving state supervision over forests.

The meetings were held within the framework of the “ECO.Georgia” project. The goal of the project is to reduce pressure on forests and forest loss in Georgia through sustainable forest management and conservation; At the same time, the project aims to

promote the development of the market for energy-efficient and alternative fuels and to strengthen the capabilities of communities near the forest and local governments. The ECO.Georgia project is co-financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Government of Georgia, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The project is implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Agriculture and its agencies and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ).

A webinar on forest supervision approaches in European countries

To support the strengthening of the Department of Environmental Supervision of Georgia, a webinar on forest supervision approaches in European countries was organised within the frames of ECO.Georgia project.

Participants of the webinar had an opportunity to learn about the experience based on the examples of Romania and Bulgaria, as illegal logging is radically reduced in those countries, unlike Georgia, where this remains one of the main challenges.

The webinar was attended by the representatives of the agencies under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, as well as the representatives of Ilia State University and environmental non-governmental organizations.

Discussion on eco-labeling and sustainable public procurement in Georgia

Environmental Information and Education Center of MEPA (EIEC) and the State Procurement Agency (SPA), in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Program organized a high-level dialogue on eco-labeling and sustainable public procurement in Georgia. The dialogue aimed to support the activities carried out in the direction of sustainable public procurement and eco-labelling, as well as to raise awareness about the benefits of sustainable public procurement and the importance of the eco-labelling system.

The meeting was attended by the high-ranking representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, the Cooperation of the European Union Representation in Georgia, and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

The ECO.Georgia project supports the State Procurement Agency in implementing the energy-efficient public procurement practice (as part of sustainable public procurement), which envisages the development of a national guideline on energy efficient public procurement (EEPP) by international experts.