



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

SEPTEMBER 2025

David Songulashvili: “Today is a significant and historic day. Cognac production is launching in Georgia.”



Mr. David Songulashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, together with the Prime Minister Mr. Irakli Kobakhidze and Parliament Speaker Mr. Shalva Papuashvili, visited the “Kachreti Winemaking” enterprise.

The company is launching the production of the French cognac brand “NAPOLEON” in Georgia.

“Today marks a significant and historic day, as for the first time, cognac production is beginning in Georgia. This is a remarkable event for our country and the first occasion that a cognac brand is being produced outside of France. This achievement is the result of a strong relationship and friendship between France and Georgia. As you know, the history of cognac in Georgia dates back to the 19th century. In 1888, Davit Sarajishvili was the first to produce branded cognac in Georgia.

After completing a three-year study in France, Sarajishvili returned and laid the foundation for cognac’s history in Georgia; later, the tradition extended to Armenia and Azerbaijan. This tradition, which has spanned over a century and a half, has been revived today. This success is the result of hard work and great trust - primarily trust in partnership, in the country, and in the growth of the national economy.

Georgia is practically a peaceful island in the region, and it is precisely this fact that facilitates important decisions such as launching cognac production outside of France. Of course, this is your achievement, Mr. Prime Minister, and I would like to sincerely thank you for this. Peace provides opportunities for investors to enter Georgia, and decisions that were practically impossible for businesses until now have become achievable today. I would like to thank the Karichashvili family and the Kachreti winery for this important project. Today’s event is a powerful example of what peace brings to a country - stable economic growth and an investment climate that ‘Georgian Dream’ is fostering in this country;” said Mr. David Songulashvili.

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David Songulashvili: “The success of the VINE ERA winery vividly illustrates how private initiative and investment thrive when supported by targeted government programs



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili, alongside Prime Minister Mr. Irakli Kobakhidze, Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Shalva Papuashvili, and Members of the Government and Parliament, attended the event.

During the official opening ceremony, the Minister highlighted the tangible outcomes of state-supported wine production, a key export sector. Mr. Songulashvili emphasized the importance of high-quality production and reaffirmed the government’s

promise: quality and labor will be increasingly valued.

Today, wine stands among the country’s leading export products. We have made deliberate and consistent progress toward this goal. During our administration, the area under vineyards has expanded severalfold.

Exports of wine and spirits to target markets have increased at least fivefold, and in 2024, export revenues reached a record high, surpassing half a billion US dollars. These figures are expected to grow even further with the full implementation of support programs.

We are gathered in the heart of Georgian viticulture and winemaking - in Kakheti, in the historic village of Vachnadziani, Gurjaani. The founders of this estate are people deeply devoted to Georgian vines and wine, which is why they named their winery VINE ERA - an era of wine, a new epoch, a chapter for Georgian winemaking.

The winery’s success exemplifies how private initiative and investment thrive when supported by targeted government programs. Our aim is to make the Ministry’s and Rural Development Agency’s programs even more flexible and responsive to the needs of farmers and vintners.

Everyone can now clearly see how the state is adapting to the evolving demands and needs of the country, offering improved models for progress and development.

This year’s harvest is fully focused on grape growers and individual farmers. Yes, we now have a better understanding of public demand - and we are responding more effectively to every challenge.

The subsidy program entirely aims at encouraging the production of high-quality products. And what will the outcome be? We will see better vineyards, higher-quality grapes, and premium wines that proudly earn their place on the shelves of Europe and other international markets.



I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze for his initiative and for placing full trust in us to prepare and implement these reforms in such a short time. Our promise remains: quality and labor will be valued even more,” stated Mr. David Songulashvili.



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David Songulashvili: “Regular Regional Engagement Is a Key Component of Our Work”

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, paid a working visit to the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region.

“Regular engagement in the regions is a crucial component of our work,” stated Minister Songulashvili. “These visits allow us to assess the working conditions of our staff in regional offices and maintain direct dialogue with local entrepreneurs. It is essential to understand the challenges they face, gather all relevant information, and implement practical, timely solutions to support and advance the sector.”

The Minister emphasized that improving the working environment within the Ministry’s regional agencies is already underway. Infrastructure upgrades are being carried out to ensure employees operate in a supportive and functional environment, equipping them to better meet both sectoral demands and the needs of the communities they serve.

“Agriculture is a vital pillar of our national economy, while environmental protection remains a top priority for the Ministry. That’s why we are actively exploring

conditions on the ground in different regions and working collaboratively to identify effective solutions across both areas,” Songulashvili added.

As part of his visit, the Minister met with local entrepreneurs and staff from the Ministry’s structural units in Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

Meetings were held at the newly established regional office of the National Food Agency, the Tsilkani base of the Agricultural Scientific-Research Center, the regional office of the National Forestry Agency, and the Mtskheta-Mtianeti office of the Environmental Supervision Department. Minister Songulashvili highlighted the importance of modern infrastructure and proper working conditions for the efficiency of regional operations.

In addition, the Minister visited several local businesses, including the peach orchard operated by LTD “Kanda Agriculture,” the fruit processing company “Caucasus Organic Fruits,” and the bakery and pastry enterprise “Food Alliance.”



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Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Introduces Two New Deputies of the Minister



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili, introduced two new Deputies of the Minister: Mr. Lasha Avaliani and Mr. Zurab Ezugbaia, to the Ministry's staff. The Minister wished them success and emphasized that their experience and vision will further strengthen and energize the Ministry's activities.

Mr. Lasha Avaliani holds a Doctorate in Parasitology and graduated from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the Agricultural University of Georgia. Mr. Avaliani brings extensive experience from the public, private, and international sectors. From 2015 to 2019, he headed the Veterinary Department at the National Food Agency under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture. Later, he served as Deputy Chief of Party in the USDA-funded project "Investing in Safe and Quality Livestock." Mr. Avaliani will assume his new role as Deputy Minister on September 22, 2025.

Mr. Zurab Ezugbaia graduated from the Faculty of Law at Ivane Javakhsishvili Tbilisi State University and has long-standing experience in both the public and private sectors. He has worked at the State Chancellery of Georgia, the Parliament of Georgia, the Georgian State Electrosystem, and the Oil and Gas Corporation. He also held various senior positions at the Ministry of Justice, including serving as Deputy Minister of Justice from 2001 to 2003. Mr. Ezugbaia began his duties as Deputy Minister on September 3, 2025.

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Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, David Songulashvili, held a meeting with Rolande Pryce, the World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus, and environmental experts



During the meeting, the parties discussed the summary report of the study "Reducing Plastic Pollution in the Black Sea of Georgia", conducted within the World Bank's "Blueing the Black Sea" (BBSEA) program.

According to Minister Songulashvili, significant efforts have been made in recent years to enhance environmental policy and ensure its effective implementation.

The report presented research findings across four key areas: diagnosis of the extent of marine plastic pollution; assessment of technologies for removing plastic waste from rivers; evaluation of state policies, investment priorities, and institutional capacities related to plastics; and assessment of microplastic pollution levels in the Black Sea.

The parties also discussed specific recommendations necessary to address the issue of plastic pollution.

The mentioned recommendations are fully aligned with the implementation of the "National Waste Management Strategy of Georgia 2016–2030" and the "Circularity Roadmap 2024."

"The situation and overall picture caused by plastic pollution is quite serious. Immediate action is essential. In the near future, we will begin consultations with the private sector to jointly explore ways to restrict and significantly reduce plastic consumption. A working group will be established to develop an effective action plan aimed at mitigating-and ultimately eliminating-the problem in the shortest possible timeframe," said Mr. David Songulashvili.

Mrs. Rolande Pryce expressed full support for the Minister, while emphasizing that the Government has clearly committed to managing Black Sea pollution, which is a commendable and welcome step.

"To assess the scale of the challenges and the problem, we worked jointly on an analytical document. There is strong cooperation between us and the Ministry," said Mrs. Rolande Pryce.

It is worth mentioning that the World Bank's "Blueing the Black Sea" (BBSEA) program aims to support the creation of a shared regional framework for sustainable management of the Black Sea. The initiative focuses on strengthening the economy, reducing marine pollution, restoring ecosystems, promoting sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, creating 'blue jobs', and enhancing regional cooperation and capacity building.

The program is implemented in close collaboration with the Governments of Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Türkiye, and Ukraine, and with the active involvement of the Black Sea Commission (BSC), the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Common Maritime Agenda (CMA) for the Black Sea, and the European Commission (EC).

The Deputies of the Minister, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili and Mr. Zurab Ezugbaia, also attended the meeting.



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Informational Meeting Held in Batumi Under World Bank’s “Bluening the Black Sea” (BBSEA) Program to Address Marine Pollution



As part of the World Bank’s “Bluening the Black Sea” (BBSEA) program, an informational meeting was held in Batumi through the partnership between Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the Regional Environmental Center for the Caucasus (RECC). The meeting focused on the challenges of marine pollution in the Black Sea and strategies for its reduction.

The main objective of the meeting was to present the findings of the study “Reducing Marine Plastic Pollution in Georgia”, conducted under the BBSEA program. The session also aimed to share knowledge, identify municipal priorities and challenges, and outline plans for the future.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, expressed his gratitude to the World Bank for its support

and the RECC for organizing the event. He emphasized the importance of effective plastic waste management in the country.

“The Government of Georgia, together with its partners, is actively engaged in addressing the issue of plastic pollution. The study clearly revealed that plastic waste pollution along the Black Sea coast, as well as in the country’s rivers, is significantly high. We are ready to initiate discussions with the private sector to reduce plastic consumption. At the same time, we aim to offer the public environmentally friendly alternatives to replace plastic products. We must make every effort to clean up our environment from plastic waste and promote recycling — a key element of Georgia’s National Waste Management Plan and Circular Economy Strategy,” said Mr. Pavliashvili.

Mr. Klaus Sattler, Environmental Specialist at the World Bank, commended the Government of Georgia for its clear and proactive stance on the issue, calling it essential for reducing plastic pollution in the Black Sea.

“Protecting the Black Sea is a priority for Georgia. Meetings like this enable governments, international partners, and municipalities to develop actionable joint steps to reduce plastic pollution significantly,” stated Mr. Mirian Katamadze, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara.

During the meeting, research findings were presented, highlighting plastic pollution “hotspots” across Georgia, as well as trends and dynamics in waste-related contamination.

The event in Batumi was attended by representatives of Georgian municipalities, the non-governmental sector, international and local experts, and other stakeholders.

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Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture David Songulashvili Observes Harvest Progress in the Kakheti region



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, visited the Kakheti region to observe the ongoing grape harvest process.

The Minister thanked the Harvest Coordination Headquarters and regional service representatives for their efforts. Their work ensured the organized collection and storage of the grape harvest. He also expressed hope that this year’s crop will be successful and Georgian wine will gain stronger international export positions.

A meeting held at the Harvest Coordination Headquarters in Gurjaani was attended by the Chairman of the National Wine Agency, Mr. Levan Mekhuzla; the State Representative in the Kakheti region, Mr. Giorgi Aladashvili; Members of Parliament; and Mayors of Kakheti municipalities.

Mr. Mekhuzla provided participants with up-to-date information on the volume of grapes processed, including the logistics of harvest collection.

Approximately 300 wine companies are registered at the Coordination Headquarters. These companies are gradually joining the grape reception and processing stages.

For any information related to the harvest, citizens can contact the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture hotline at 1501 or the Harvest Coordination Headquarters at 0322 193 283.

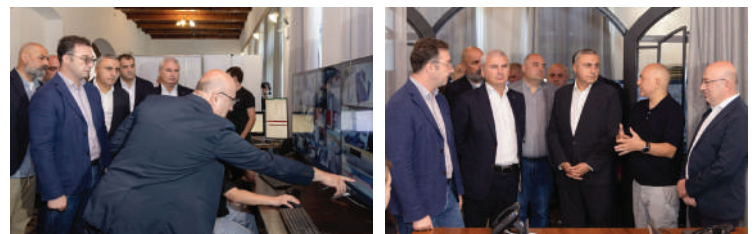
According to a decision by the Government of Georgia, this year, surplus grapes will be purchased by the state-owned Harvest Management Company LLC at differentiated prices based on quality:

Saperavi variety grapes grown in the Kakheti region – GEL 1.50 per kg.

Other permitted wine grape varieties – GEL 1.20 per kg.

Non-standard, damaged, or diseased grapes – GEL 1.00 per kg.

This year, no subsidies will be provided to private wine companies involved in the harvest process in the Kakheti region.



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The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture reviewed regulatory measures on plastic materials intended for contact with food



Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, held a working meeting with the Deputies of the Minister, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, and Mr. Zurab Ezugbaia, including the Heads of the relevant Agencies and Departments of the Ministry.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the regulation of plastics intended for contact with food. Special attention was given to reviewing the results of the proj-

ect implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), titled “Transitioning from Single-Use Plastics to Environmentally and Financially Viable Alternatives in Georgia.” The discussion focused on the negative impacts of single-use plastics on human health and living organisms.

“Numerous studies and reports clearly demonstrate the harmful effects of plastic use on human health and environmental pollution. The state, private sector, and donor organizations must work in maximum coordination to find solutions to effectively regulate the use of plastics in food products and replace them with alternatives that are safe for human health and the environment,” stated Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

It is worth mentioning that with active involvement and support from the state, the World Bank presented a report titled “Reducing Marine Plastic Pollution in Georgia” as part of the Black Sea Blueing (BBSEA) program.

The study encompassed four key areas: diagnostics of marine plastic pollution levels, assessment of technologies for removing plastic waste from rivers, evaluation of state policies, investment priorities, and institutional capacities related to plastics, and assessment of microplastic pollution in the Black Sea.

Active collaboration with the business sector is planned to facilitate the regulation of plastic materials that come into contact with food.

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David Songulashvili Hosted Avi Dichter, Israeli Minister of Agriculture and Food Security



During the bilateral meeting, the discussion focused on strengthening agricultural cooperation between the two countries. The parties agreed to establish a working group dedicated to agriculture and trade, and to draft a Memorandum of Cooperation.

Minister Songulashvili expressed his appreciation to the Israeli delegation, highlighting the longstanding and productive agricultural partnership between the two nations.

“Significant opportunities exist for both countries in agricultural trade and knowledge sharing. These opportunities formed the core of our conversation, and we resolved to create a working group to establish shared priorities. The upcoming Memorandum will underpin future cooperation between our countries,” said Mr. David Songulashvili.

The parties also emphasized the importance of developing agricultural product exports and imports. As mentioned, Georgia can become competitive in the Israeli market with products such as wine, honey, and dried fruits, while imports of modern



agro-technologies and irrigation systems from Israel to Georgia are expected to increase. It was further emphasized that strengthening trade dynamics will significantly contribute to economic development and expand opportunities for businesses and farmers in both countries.

“This is my first visit to Georgia, and I had a very productive meeting with the Minister and the entire Ministry team. We plan to establish a group that will focus on further developing relations between Georgia and Israel, aiming to advance to the next level. We are very optimistic and recognize that there is still much to learn from each other,” said Mr. Avi Dichter, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security of Israel. The Deputies of the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Lasha Dolidze, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, Mr. Zurab Ezugbaia, Heads of Agencies under the Ministry, Israel’s newly appointed Ambassador to Georgia, Mr. Walid Abu-Haya, and representatives of the Georgia-Israel Chamber of Commerce, attended the meeting.

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During His Visit to Georgia, the Minister of Agriculture of Israel Visited a Modern Greenhouse in the Village of Tsilkani and Fish Farming Enterprise



At the Tsilkani experimental-demonstration base of annual crops, Georgian officials introduced the delegation to the country's progress in adopting hydroponic technology. Established in 2023 with the support of the Israeli Embassy, the greenhouse has already become an important hub for training farmers and students.

"We focus on deepening international cooperation and sharing experience to provide farmers with current knowledge and increase competitiveness. Trainings in hydroponic greenhouses allow farmers and students to learn innovative technologies and benefit from best practices," said Deputy Minister, Mr. Lasha Dolidze.

Mr. Levan Ujmajuridze, Director of the Scientific-Research Center of Agriculture, emphasized that the Center is actively working on the introduction of hydroponic methods. "The modern greenhouse established with the support of the Israeli Embassy has become an important training and demonstration space. The experimental base hosts sessions aimed at promoting innovative methods and sharing practical knowledge," he noted.



The delegation also visited the Shida Kartli region, where Deputy Minister Dolidze presented the activities of LLC DS Fish Group, a state-supported aquaculture enterprise. The company, a beneficiary of the Agricultural Development Agency and the "Preferential Agrocredit" program, produces around 250 tonnes of various fish species annually, provides employment for more than 100 people, and supplies both fresh and processed fish products to the Georgian market through its branded stores and restaurants.

"The Government of Georgia attaches great importance to the development of fisheries and aquaculture. Our state programs support the entire production chain in this sector, ensuring both sustainability and competitiveness," Mr. Dolidze underlined.

The visit was also joined by Mr. Giorgi Avaliani, Acting Director of the Agricultural Development Agency, Israel's newly appointed Ambassador to Georgia, Mr. Walid Abu Haia, and representatives of the Georgia-Israel Chamber of Commerce.

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David Songulashvili: "Nut crops represent one of the priority directions in agriculture and have great export potential."



Mr. David Songulashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, visited a modern almond orchard of the company "Farmway Technologies In" in Bodbe, Kakheti region.

According to the Minister, investments put in almond orchards play a significant role in the modernization of Georgia's agricultural sector, which is crucial for the country's sustainable development.

"Nut crops are one of the priority directions in agriculture and hold substantial export potential. We visited a 220-hectare almond orchard established through private investment. It is important to emphasize that state support played a decisive role

in implementing this initiative. The Government is creating a favorable investment environment in agriculture, which greatly contributes to strengthening the national economy and developing the agro-sector according to modern standards," stated Mr. David Songulashvili.

"Farmway Technologies Inc." has already invested USD 20 million in Georgia, and the next phase plans to increase investments up to USD 100 million. Currently, almond orchards cover 220 hectares in the municipalities of Signagi and Dedoplistskaro. Under new projects, the area of almond orchards will expand to 500 hectares. Additionally, the company plans to establish an almond processing plant (producing almond milk powder, oil, and extracts), as well as develop cold storage facilities and logistics infrastructure. The company is actively cooperating with the Agricultural Development Agency.

"Farmway Technologies Inc." is a US-based fintech company that operates agricultural farms in several countries worldwide—including the USA, India, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka. The company ensures sustainable agricultural development by applying modern technologies, such as Web3, Blockchain, AI, tokenization, and other innovative approaches.

Mr. Giorgi Aladashvili, State Representative of the Kakheti region, members of the Parliament of Georgia, Mayors of local municipalities, Heads of the Agricultural Development Agency, and investors of "Farmway Technologies Inc." from Italy, France, and India, accompanied the Minister.

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David Songulashvili Participated in the Grape Harvest Alongside Diplomats



The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Maka Bochorishvili, and the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili, hosted members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Georgia at the “Diplomatic Harvest” event.

The harvest took place in the Gurjaani municipality at the “Chateau Zegaani,” where diplomats participated in grape picking and joined in the grape-crushing process at the wine press. The guests also toured the vineyard on the winery’s grounds, exploring unique grape varieties and learning about modern winemaking technologies. The event featured a Georgian wine tasting and culinary masterclasses.

“Kakheti is currently in the midst of the harvest season, which is one of the most distinctive and important periods for Georgia. The visit of the Ambassadors to Kakheti is of great significance. They experienced first-hand not only the harvesting process but also the ancient tradition that dates back 8,000 years - a tradition that is not simply about gathering crops, but a vital part of Georgian culture and identity,” said Mr. David Songulashvili.

The “Diplomatic Harvest” also included the Governor of the Kakheti Region, Mr. Giorgi Aladashvili, and the Chairman of the National Wine Agency, Mr. Levan Mekhuzia.

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David Songulashvili Meets with the Ambassador of Hungary



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, hosted the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary to Georgia, Mrs. Petra Ponevác-Pana.

During the meeting, the parties discussed bilateral relations and opportunities to deepen cooperation.

Mr. David Songulashvili thanked Mrs. Anna Maria Sikó, the former Ambassador of Hungary, for her role in strengthening the Georgia-Hungary partnership. He also stressed the importance of continuing this collaboration.

We are ready to deepen cooperation and build a more effective partnership. As you know, we closely cooperate with Hungary's Ministries of Agriculture and Energy. We recently signed Memorandums of Understanding with these ministries. This partnership creates new opportunities and calls for meaningful joint efforts. We can further develop trade, tourism, and investment between our countries. We can also collaborate more in the agricultural sector. Additionally, we expect the arrival of experts who will assist us in the EU integration process. They will help us effectively fulfill our commitments under the Association Agreement," said Mr. David Songulashvili.

It is noteworthy that in 2025, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia signed two Memorandums of Understanding with Hungary's Ministries of Agriculture and Energy. These documents aim to strengthen strategic partnerships. They also promote practical cooperation between the two countries in agriculture and environmental protection.

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The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia hosted a Working Meeting to discuss Issues Related to the Development of a Sustainable Sludge Management Strategy.



During a working meeting hosted by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, participants discussed issues regarding the development of a sustainable sludge management strategy in the country.

The project, implemented with financial support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), aims to develop legislation, regulations, and supporting guidelines for sludge management in Georgia, including the preparation of a pilot project to assess the benefits of sludge reuse. The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, expressed gratitude to the Asian Development Bank for its financial support, emphasizing the importance of the issue related to sludge management.

"According to the 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, published by the European Commission, one of the key recommendations for Georgia, as a candidate country, is the regulation of sewage sludge resulting from wastewater treatment. At the same time, the development of a circular economy is a national priority. Therefore, this issue carries particular significance and complexity. The working process is ongoing, and while there are many challenges, I believe that with the active involvement of the Government, international partners, and the private sector, we will be able to establish an effective legislative framework in the form of a technical regulation," stated Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

During the presentation, an assessment of the current state of sludge management in Georgia was presented, based on examples from Gardabani, Ureki, Zugdidi, Abastumani, Kobuleti, Adlia (Batumi), Anaklia, Tskaltubo, and Telavi.

It is worth mentioning that currently, there are no proper sludge management measures in Georgia, except for storing sludge on the premises of wastewater treatment plants, which is not a good practice in the long term. Therefore, it is necessary to promote sludge reuse (in the agricultural sector, energy production) or other appropriate disposal options. This process will require strengthening laboratory capacities in Georgia to establish a solid foundation for the safe reuse of sludge and support for comprehensive monitoring.

The project regarding the sustainable management and reuse of sewage sludge in Georgia is being implemented by experienced Italian engineering companies IDROSTUDI SRL, E.T.C. ENGINEERING S.R.L., and the Georgian company GERGILI LLC.

The Representatives of the relevant Departments of the Ministry and interested stakeholders attended the meeting.

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The Regulation of Single-Use Plastics Intended for Food Contact was discussed at the Working Meeting



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, along with Deputies of the Minister, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili and Mr. Zurab Ezugbaia, hosted the representatives of the business sector, including hypermarket chains and the hospitality industry.

The parties focused on the development of a regulatory model for the use of single-use plastic items intended for direct food contact - one that strikes a balance between health protection, environmental concerns, and economic interests.

“The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture is actively working on the regulation of single-use plastics that come into direct contact with food. I would emphasize that coordinated cooperation with the business sector is of utmost importance to us. The goal of these meetings and discussions is to ensure that any regulations adopted by the state - aimed at improving food safety and environmental standards - are both realisti-

cally enforceable and implemented within reasonable timeframes. I believe that through joint efforts, we can develop a model that supports public health, environmental safety, and the sustainable development of the private sector,” said First Deputy Minister, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

Notably, excessive plastic consumption remains one of the most pressing environmental challenges today. According to research conducted in Georgia, the country annually consumes approximately 612.5 million units of single-use plastic items, such as cups, lids, food containers, knives, forks, spoons, straws, plates, and stirrers. This amounts to a total of 3.9 to 5.9 thousand tonnes of plastic waste per year.

The President of the Business Association of Georgia, Mr. Soso Pkhakadze, along with heads of relevant departments and representatives of the Ministry, attended the meeting.

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Nino Tandilashvili Inspects Infrastructure Projects in Tbilisi National Park



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, and the Chairman of the Agency of Protected Areas, Mr. Besik Amiranashvili, visited the Sabaduri and Zedazeni sections of Tbilisi National Park, inspected the ongoing construction works, and received detailed updates on the progress of the recreational and ecotourism projects in the area.

“The expansion and development of the network of protected areas is a key priority for the Government of Georgia. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, in collaboration with the Agency of Protected Areas, is implementing significant infrastructure projects across various protected areas. Currently, large-scale tourist and recreational infrastructure is being established in Tbilisi National Park, funded by the state budget. The mentioned project is located in close proximity to the capital, offering visitors a comfortable

and diverse travel experience,” said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

Two major projects in Tbilisi National Park are nearing completion, focusing on developing tourist infrastructure in the Sabaduri and Zedazeni areas.

Specifically, the Sabaduri area will feature: A visitor center and administrative building Parking facilities. Children’s entertainment and educational zones. A network of hiking trails stretching 55 kilometers, equipped with supporting infrastructure. In the Zedazeni area, in cooperation with the Municipal Development Fund under the Ministry of Infrastructure, the following facilities will be developed: A visitor center. Hiking trails. Picnic areas and camping zones with gazebos. Mountain shelters. The total investment in these projects amounts to approximately GEL 13 million.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24136>