



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

DECEMBER 2025

Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture David Songulashvili Meets with the President of the Italian Winemakers' Association, Riccardo Cotarella, and the Founders of the Wine Company "Nimbi"



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, met with the President of the Italian Winemakers' Association, Honorary President of the International Winemakers' Association, and renowned Italian oenologist Riccardo Cotarella, as well as the founders of the wine-producing company "Nimbi."

During the meeting, the parties discussed strategies to boost the visibility of Georgian wine

and expand its exports in the Italian market. As mentioned, Georgian wine should establish a strong reputation as a premium-quality product.

"Georgia has already proven to the world that it is the cradle of wine. Today, we stand ready to embark on a new chapter in the evolution of our winemaking tradition. Ensuring that Georgian wine becomes a hallmark of quality is a priority to which we are firmly committed. I am pleased that Georgian wine has such a distinguished and dedicated advocate representing it on the international stage," stated Minister Songulashvili.

"For me, the opportunity to make wine in Georgia is a long-cherished adventure. I have worked in many countries around the world, yet working in the homeland of the vine re-connects me with my historical roots.

I consider my work in Georgia to be the crowning achievement and culmination of my professional career. I am confident that, through coordinated collaboration, we can elevate the global recognition of Georgian wine to new heights. The country possesses all the necessary resources to achieve this goal," said Mr. Riccardo Cotarella.

During the meeting, the founders of the wine company "Nimbi" provided the Minister with detailed information about the company's activities and expressed their gratitude for his support.

It is noteworthy that Mr. Riccardo Cotarella has been working in the winemaking sector for more than 60 years and currently serves as the chief winemaker of "Nimbi." "Nimbi" is a new Georgian wine-producing company that plans to position itself with premium-quality products on both local and international markets in the near future. The state-of-the-art winery is located in Kakheti, in the village of Khashmi.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24221/>

Nino Tandilashvili: "Georgia Is Taking Significant Steps Toward Sustainable Management of Food and Water Waste"



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs Nino Tandilashvili, attended the Ministerial meeting "Preventing Food and Water Waste – Owning the Future" in Istanbul and participated in a panel discussion. She highlighted the legislative and structural reforms Georgia has undertaken in recent years.

"Georgia is taking important steps toward the sustainable management of food and water resources waste. The Law on 'Reducing Food Loss and Waste and on Food Donation' enforced since 2023, establishes a comprehensive framework that ensures

the reduction of food loss, promotes food donation, and supports the efficient use of water resources. At the same time, the Water Resources Management reform implemented by Georgia, based on the EU Water Framework Directive, introduces a river-basin-based management model. The new legislation ensures fair and safe use of water resources. Georgia is creating an integrated and sustainable system that reduces food and water waste and ensures access to safe food and water for the population," noted Mrs Tandilashvili.

The Ministerial meeting was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey and held under the patronage of Turkey's First Lady, Mrs Emine Erdogan. The event was convened in the context of UN General Assembly resolutions adopted in 2022 and 2023, which identify zero waste and food waste prevention as key priorities of the 2030 Agenda. As part of the implementation of these resolutions, an advisory board was established, chaired by Turkey's First Lady, Mrs Emine Erdogan. At her initiative, the International Zero Waste Fund was created in 2023 to support the dissemination and exchange of innovative knowledge and strengthen international cooperation at the local, national, and global levels.

High-level officials from various countries attended the panel discussion in Istanbul, including the Agriculture Ministers of Italy, Spain, Hungary, the United Arab Emirates, and Azerbaijan. Participants discussed modern models of effective food and water resource management, waste reduction initiatives, and the importance of integrating these efforts into the sustainable development agenda.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24224/>

The Government of Georgia has reviewed and approved the draft law on “Amendments to the Law of Georgia on Vine and Wine.”

The draft law on “Amendments to the Law of Georgia on Vine and Wine” aims to promote the production and sale of high-quality, competitive grape-origin alcoholic beverages, taking into account the requirements of both domestic and international markets.

The mentioned draft law will regulate the establishment of vineyards, the labelling of products, packaging in consumer containers, and the rules of record-keeping.

In recent years, interest in viticulture and winemaking has increased significantly, reflected in the intensive planting of new vineyards.

It is noteworthy that, in some cases, vineyards have been planted with grape varieties not permitted for the relevant viticulture zones and subzones, or with seedlings grown in uncertified nurseries, which subsequently cause problems in grape production/sale and in wine production.

The new regulation ensures that the establishment of commercial vineyards requires approval, which will be granted by the LEPL National Wine Agency of Georgia.

In light of the growing number of vineyards and the resulting increase in grape yields, the amendment stipulates that, to safeguard the high quality of wines and spirits with protected designations of origin, these alcoholic beverages must be produced solely from grapes harvested within the microzone defined in the relevant production specification.

The amendment also establishes requirements for all wine companies to record and report technological processes in viticulture and winemaking practices.

The draft law will be submitted to the Parliament of Georgia for adoption. The draft law has been prepared by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24228>

David Songulashvili Pays a Working Visit to the State of Israel



As part of a working visit to the State of Israel, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, held a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security of the State of Israel, Mr. Avi Dichter.

The parties underscored the strong partnership between the two countries and explored opportunities to deepen cooperation in agricultural trade, including the exchange of expertise and best practices.

During the meeting, the counterpart Ministers signed a Declaration of Intent, outlining key areas of cooperation, including the expansion of trade in agricultural products; food safety; support for the adoption of modern irrigation systems; development of modern orchards; enhanced cooperation between scientific research institutions; collaboration in the veterinary field, including animal health monitoring; and food safety, with a particular emphasis on strengthening laboratory capacities.

Within the working visit, Minister Songulashvili, along with Minister Avi Dichter, visited the Israeli National Agricultural Research Institute, the Volcani Center, where high-ranking officials were briefed on ongoing activities and research initiatives.

In Jerusalem, Mr. Songulashvili met with the Speaker of the Knesset, Mr. Amir Ohana, as well as Mr. David Bitan, Chair of the Georgia–Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group and the Economic Affairs Committee of the Knesset. The discussions focused on opportunities to deepen bilateral partnership, explore new areas of trade and economic cooperation, and address issues related to regional stability.

It is also noteworthy that, during the visit, Mr. David Songulashvili met with the Minister of Environmental Protection of the state of Israel, Mrs. Idit Silman. The parties discussed challenges arising from climate change, which affect the social, economic, and security spheres of all countries. In this context, the importance of international cooperation was particularly emphasized.

Together with members of the Georgian delegation, Minister Songulashvili met with Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem and All Palestine. The conversation touched upon the historical ties between the Georgian and Jerusalem Churches, as well as the significance of peace and stability.

Mr. Lasha Dolidze, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia; Mr. Zaza Kandelaki, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the State of Israel; and Mr. Meni Benish, Honorary Consul of Georgia, also attended the official meetings.

[https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24227/](https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24227)
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24226/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24225/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24235/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24234/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24233/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24232/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24231/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24230/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24229/>

Georgia Joins the Celebration of World Soil Day



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture has traditionally joined the celebration of World Soil Day.

The World Soil Day 2025 theme, “Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities,” underscores the role of sustainable soil practices in urban areas.

The event, organised by the Environmental Information and Education Centre, aimed to support the development of soil science in Georgia and increase motivation among young specialists.

Researchers and young professionals engaged in the agricultural and scientific fields received honorary certificates named after one of the founders of the Georgian school of soil science, academician Tengiz (Gizo) Urushadze.

During the event, the winners of the photo contest “Soil in Urban Cities” were announced and awarded computer equipment and certificates by Mrs Ia Mirazanashvili, a representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). As part of the event, the Head of the Department of Sustainable Soil Management of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture delivered a presentation on the importance of soil and its protection.

The event was attended by invited guests, including the Deputy Minister of Environmental

Protection and Agriculture, Mr Lasha Dolidze, and the Chair of the Agrarian Issues Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr Gela Samkharauli.

“The protection of soil and the preservation of its fertility are of particular importance for the development of Georgia’s agricultural sector. Fertile and healthy soil forms the basis for increased productivity, quality production, and growth in exports. This day should once again remind us how essential it is to raise awareness among soil users about maintaining soil fertility and quality,” stated Mr Lasha Dolidze.

Mr Samkharauli emphasized the need for coordinated work among relevant institutions to protect soils and preserve their fertility.

“It is crucial that we devote maximum attention to soils, as current processes, such as global warming, climate change, industrialization, and environmental pollution, place soils in a dire condition. Soil plays a vital role in the development of humanity and in preserving the Earth’s overall ecosystem. All relevant institutions must focus on soil protection and the conservation of its fertility,” said Mr Gela Samkharauli.

World Soil Day is observed annually on 5 December at the initiative of the UN General Assembly and has been celebrated since 2014.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24236/>

Lasha Dolidze: “The bread is produced with a specialized technology and enjoys strong demand in our partner country, Israel.”



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Lasha Dolidze, accompanied by Mr. Omar Kacharava, Consultant on Agricultural and Rural Development Policy, visited the “Ipkli Digomi” bread factory to observe the production process on site.

“‘Ipkli Digomi’ exports Georgian bread to Israel. During the visit, company representatives briefed the Deputy Minister on the technological production line and the procedures established to meet international export requirements.

“The products of ‘Ipkli Digomi’ have already been exported to the State of Israel for the third time. This bread is made using a special technology and is in high demand in our friendly country. I am confident that this is only the beginning of great success. I hope that cooperation between the two countries towards bread export will become even more successful,” stated Mr. Lasha Dolidze.

“Ipkli Digomi” is the first company to export bread. As the company explains, the product intended for export has met all standards required by the Ministry of Health of Israel and has received accreditation. Georgian bread from the company “Ipkli Digomi” is sold in Israeli supermarket chains.

For export, the product is produced using a special technology: after baking, the bread is placed in a shock freezer and frozen at -35°C , after which it is stored in a special container at -18°C . The shelf life of the frozen bread is six months. Importantly, after thawing, the structure and quality of freshly baked bread are preserved.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24237/>

UNESCO Inscribes “Georgian Wheat Culture: Traditions and Rituals” on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity



By the decision adopted at the 20th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, held on 10 December in New Delhi, India, UNESCO inscribed “Georgian Wheat Culture: Traditions and Rituals” on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Georgia’s nomination was unanimously supported by the Committee’s member states, and during the official ceremony held on 11 December, the Georgian delegation received a certificate signed by the Director-General of UNESCO.

According to UNESCO, Georgian wheat culture encompasses the complete cycle that Georgians have preserved over centuries: preparing the soil for sowing with a plough, harvesting with a hand sickle, and using a rain-threshing tool “kevri.” This cycle goes far beyond agricultural activity alone; it forms an essential part of Georgian daily life, social relations, and intergenerational transmission of knowledge. An integral element of this heritage is the tradition of bread-making—an ancient practice expressed through diverse ritual breads baked in the “tone”- Georgian clay oven, “Furne” a traditional wood-fired masonry oven, “Kera” open hearth / cooking fireplace, or on the “Ketsi” a baking stone. In Georgian culture, these

breads symbolize abundance, unity, and purity. The continuous traditions—from sowing to baking—form a living, archaic heritage whose safeguarding and transmission UNESCO considers of exceptional importance.

With this inscription, “Georgian Wheat Culture: Traditions and Rituals” becomes the fifth Georgian element included on UNESCO’s Representative List, following Georgian polyphonic singing, the traditional Qvevri wine-making method, the three scripts of the Georgian alphabet, and Georgian wrestling (Chidaoba).

Notably, 14 out of the 27 cultural and wild wheat species described worldwide have been identified in Georgia, five of which are endemic.

“We are deeply proud that wheat culture and its associated rituals now stand alongside Georgia’s 8,000-year-old uninterrupted winemaking tradition.

The unique methods of harvesting and post-harvest handling deserve special attention, be it harvesting with a hand sickle, preparing the soil for sowing with a plough, or using rain-threshing tools, followed by the storage of grain in barns, granaries, or underground pits. As for the tradition of bread baking, with its distinctiveness and diversity, it can truly be described as a living, functioning gastronomic museum.

I would underscore that, in addition to the work carried out jointly with UNESCO, the Ministry has, over the years, collaborated closely with the FAO to refine the certification system for Georgian wheat, develop a national catalogue, and establish a genetic bank. This cooperation has, on the one hand, enabled farmers to access certified seed material that meets established standards and, on the other hand, has protected the market from counterfeit products. Special recognition is also due to the significant efforts of the Ministry’s Scientific Research Centre in placing 210 unique samples of Georgian wheat, maize, and beans in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway,” stated Mr. David Songulashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24239/>
https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24238
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24252/>

David Songulashvili Participates in the Seventh Session of the UN Environment Assembly



Mr. David Songulashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, delivered remarks at the Seventh Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) in Nairobi, Kenya.

During his address at the leaders’ panel, Minister Songulashvili highlighted Georgia’s environmental policy priorities, the progress achieved, and the country’s role in advancing global sustainable development. Special attention was given to the importance of peace and stability in the region.

“Environmental reforms and the achievement of sustainable development goals are impossible without peace. Only peace ensures the stable development of each country and the attainment of set objectives,” stated Minister Songulashvili.

During the visit, Minister Songulashvili held meetings with Mrs. Tatiana Molcean, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE); Mrs. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), including the relevant Ministers from Kenya and Belgium. The discussions focused on Georgia’s environmental reforms, achieved results, and prospects for future cooperation. The Minister noted that international partners expressed unwavering support for Georgia and pledged continued assistance in implementing reforms.

The UNECE Executive Secretary positively assessed Georgia’s progress in improving air quality, protecting water resources, and fostering transboundary cooperation. Similarly, the UNEP Executive Director recognized Georgia as a regional leader in environmental reform, highlighting initiatives to regulate single-use plastics as an important step toward human health protection and biodiversity conservation.

Special attention was given to EU–Georgia cooperation, noting that of the 27 environmental directives under the Association Agreement, 21 have already been incorporated into Georgian legislation, with the remaining six expected to be integrated by the end of 2028. Minister Songulashvili emphasized that environmental protection remains a key priority for the Georgian government, outlining increased budget allocations, strengthened institutional capacity, and accelerated harmonization of environmental legislation with international standards.

The parties also addressed opportunities to enhance cooperation in the agricultural sector. Minister Songulashvili highlighted that increasing agricultural production and exports, opening new markets, and introducing modern technologies in Georgia create new opportunities for international partners.

David Songulashvili delivered remarks in Nairobi, Kenya, at a high-level panel discussion, following a joint invitation from Mrs. Jessika Roswall, European Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience, and a Competitive Circular Economy, and Mr. Magnus Heunicke, Denmark’s Minister for the Environment, representing the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.



As part of the Seventh Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), a Ministerial panel discussion was held on the topic: “Time is Running Out for a Global Treaty to End Plastic Pollution”.

“The reforms implemented by the Government provide a solid foundation for strengthening Georgia’s economic role and further expanding international cooperation. Reforming the national environmental system remains a key priority of the Government of Georgia, aimed at creating a healthier environment for citizens and ensuring full compliance with international obligations,” Mr. David Songulashvili stated.

In his remarks, Minister Songulashvili also noted that as an EU candidate country, Georgia is ready to align its environmental standards with European requirements. He outlined new regulations that, as of January 2026, will prohibit the import, production, and sale of selected single-use plastic products and expanded polystyrene (EPS) food containers, contributing to plastic pollution reduction and the development of a circular economy.

The Seventh Session of the UN Environment Assembly was held at the UNEP Headquarters, attended by environmental and climate Ministers from nearly 50 countries, as well as representatives from 130 countries and international organizations.

- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24243/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24242/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24241/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24240/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24248/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24247/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24246/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24245/>
- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24249/>

Lasha Avaliani: “The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Has Taken Significant Steps to Reduce Trans Fats in Food”



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Lasha Avaliani, attended the high-level political dialogue “Eliminating Trans Fats, Saving Lives.” The meeting discussed the progress made in Georgia in eliminating industrially produced trans fatty acids, the alignment of national legislation with international standards, existing challenges, resources, and the need for multi-sectoral cooperation.

“Georgia is recognised as a successful example, with the results achieved providing clear evidence of this. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture has undertaken extensive efforts in this area, resulting in significant progress in reducing the risks associated with trans fats,” noted Mr Mikheil Sarjveladze.

Participants shared regional and international experiences, best practices, and recommendations aimed at supporting the full and effective implementation of a healthy nutrition policy in the country.

“The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture has taken significant steps to reduce trans fats in food, strengthened laboratory capacities, and ensured effective state control. Additional measures are planned to provide consumers with clearer information about trans fat content and its potential health risks,” emphasised Mr Avaliani.

Mr Zurab Tskitishvili, Academician of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences of Georgia, presented the progress achieved by Georgia in reducing trans fats, including the measures implemented in the country.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched a new phase of its project to accelerate the elimination of industrially produced trans fats in the European region, with Georgia, Turkey, and Tajikistan identified as priority countries. The project aims to strengthen the implementation and monitoring mechanisms of trans fat elimination policies in the selected countries, as well as to enforce the WHO’s Validation Programme for Trans Fat Elimination.

In Georgia, the limit for industrial trans fats was first established in 2016 by a government decree, based on the conclusions of the Ministry of Agriculture’s Risk Assessment Service. Since 2017, the National Food Agency has systematically collected samples, while the State Laboratory of Agriculture adopted a testing method, following the international standard ISO 12966-4:2015, ensuring precise determination of fat composition in products.

In 2023, considering the obligations under the DCFTA with the European Union, national legislative requirements regarding trans fats were fully harmonised with EU Regulation (EC No 1925/2006). As a result, Georgia’s legislation is now fully aligned with EU law and WHO requirements regarding trans fats.

- <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24244/>

Carl Amirgulashvili Elected as the Chair of the Bern Convention of the Council of Europe



From December 8 to 12, Strasbourg, France, hosted the 45th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Council of Europe's Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats.

The participants elected Mr. Amirgulashvili, Head of the Forestry Department at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, as Chair of both the Bureau and the Committee. Notably, Mr. Amirgulashvili has served as Vice-Chair of the Bureau since 2021.

The Bern Convention is one of the most significant international agreements in the field of environmental protection. Accordingly, the appointment of a Georgian representative to this position will enhance Georgia's active engagement within European Union structures, support the effective implementation of obligations under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, advance the Convention's adoption in Georgia, and promote the effective implementation of environmental policy in the country.

It is also noteworthy that, to facilitate the implementation of the Convention, the Emerald Network has been established in Georgia. As of 2023, the Emerald Network in Georgia covers an area of 1,307,501 hectares and includes 66 designated sites. Currently, management plans are being developed for the territories included in the network.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24253/>

Nino Tandilashvili Re-elected for a Second Term as Vice-President of the Eighth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-8), Representing Eastern European States



First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, has been unanimously re-elected for a second term as Vice-President of the Eighth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-8), representing the Eastern European States. The decision was made within the framework of the ongoing Seventh Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) in Kenya.

"I am deeply honored to be re-elected for a second term to represent Georgia on the United Nations' highest forum dedicated to defining the global environmental agenda. As Vice-President, I will do my utmost, on behalf of my country and region, to ensure that our priorities in environmental protection and sustainable ecosystem management are heard at the highest UN level," stated First Deputy Minister, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

At the Seventh Session of UNEA in Nairobi, Kenya, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili exercised her role as Vice-President by presiding over the Assembly's plenary sessions.

Mrs. Tandilashvili also participated in several panel discussions and actively engaged in the work of the Assembly's committees.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24250/>

During his visit to Hungary, Solomon Pavliashvili met with Csaba Gondola, State Secretary for Circular Economy and Climate Policy, and Chief Advisor to the Minister of Energy of Hungary



As part of his visit to Budapest, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, held a meeting with the Chief Advisor to the Minister of Energy of Hungary and State Secretary, Mr. Csaba Gondola.

Mr. Pavliashvili expressed his gratitude to his Hungarian counterpart for the international support extended to Georgia by the Government of Hungary.

The Deputy Minister underscored Georgia's efforts to fulfill the requirements of international conventions. He highlighted the legislative reforms implemented by Georgia in the fields of waste management and the circular economy. The discussion also addressed measures taken to prevent plastic waste pollution and adopt extended producer responsibility mechanisms nationwide.

Mr. Pavliashvili briefed his Hungarian counterpart on the legislative amendments planned by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia to combat environmental pollution caused by plastics and adopt extended producer responsibility in sectors such as end-of-life vehicles and packaging waste. In this process, sharing Hungary's experience would be valuable for us.

Mr. Csaba Gondola welcomed the reforms carried out by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and provided a detailed overview of Hungary's waste management system. He expressed readiness to share experience and engage in close cooperation.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24251/>

The Green and Agro Scholarship Award Ceremony



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili; the Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Youth, Mrs. Baia Kvitsiani; the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Georgia, Mr. Douglas Webb; the Chair of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Mrs. Maia Bitadze; and the Chairperson of the Agrarian Issues Committee, Mr. Gela Samkharauli, awarded the winning students of the “Green and Agro Scholarships” Program.

During the ceremony, Minister Songulashvili congratulated the young scholars on their achievements and wished them success in their professional development, noting that in today’s rapidly changing world, humanity is simultaneously facing serious challenges related to climate change, geopolitical instability, and food security. Therefore, strengthening environmental protection and developing the agricultural sectors are particularly important.

“For the Government of Georgia, environmental responsibility and agricultural development are integral to the country’s economic development vision. These sectors rely heavily on educated, highly qualified, and motivated young professionals. Strong human capital is a fundamental driver of long-term success. Through its programs, the Ministry actively promotes high-demand professions and provides meaningful

support to young people, enabling them to fully develop their potential and contribute effectively to these vital fields,” stated Mr. Songulashvili.

Since 2022, the Environmental Information and Education Centre of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture has been implementing the “Green and Agro Scholarships” Program, aiming to promote environmentally and agriculturally relevant high-demand professions, encourage outstanding students, and provide them with opportunities to gain practical experience within relevant state institutions.

The “Green and Agro Scholarships” Program is implemented within the project “Reducing the risk of climate-driven disasters in Georgia,” which is funded by the Government of Georgia, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the governments of Sweden and Switzerland. The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The scholarship recipients represent educational institutions across various regions of Georgia. Within the program, each student was awarded a GEL 1,500 scholarship.

Now in its fourth consecutive year, the program continues to expand, offering an increasing number of young people the opportunity to actively engage in addressing climate change-related challenges. This year, 72 students received scholarships, including 32 recipients of the “Green Scholarship” and 40 recipients of the “Agro Scholarship.”

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24255/>

Winners of the National Agrarian Olympiad 2025 Announced



The National Agrarian Olympiad 2025 concluded with an awards ceremony celebrating its winners. At the fifth Agrarian Olympiad, 36 participants were recognized across diverse categories by Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Lasha Avaliani; Deputy Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Georgia, Mr. Mamuka Meskhi; and the UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia, Mr. Didier Trebuq.

In his address, Deputy Minister Mr. Lasha Avaliani underscored the critical importance of agrarian education, the need to support highly qualified professionals, and the significant role of the Agrarian Olympiad in promoting the development of professions currently in short supply.

“As we honor the winners of the fifth Agrarian Olympiad, it is evident that this project has become a robust platform rooted in expertise and professionalism, drawing more participants each year. Hosting such contests based on competitiveness is essential, especially in sectors with workforce

shortages within Georgia. I am glad this year’s winners include veterinarians, food and wine technologists, forestry experts, and agronomists. The Olympiad once again proved Georgia’s agrarian sector holds exceptional growth potential, and supporting trained professionals is vital to achieving it,” Mr. Avaliani stated.

The Olympiad was held in the fields of agronomy, food technology, forestry, wine technology, veterinary medicine, and environmental protection, encompassing virtually all priority sectors and specialties that are currently in the highest demand on Georgia’s labor market.

“We believe that this initiative will make a significant contribution to the development and popularization of Georgia’s agricultural sector, increasing young people’s interest and active engagement in this field. At the same time, it supports the identification of qualified experts and strengthens agricultural education as a whole. Skilled human resources are the driving force behind innovation and the development of new technologies, ultimately creating new opportunities, including additional employment,” noted Mr. Mamuka Meskhi.

The National Agrarian Olympiad is the only knowledge-based competition in the agrarian field conducted nationwide and across the region, aiming to promote agrarian education and professions, establish a qualified mechanism for assessing professional knowledge, raise awareness among young people about agricultural sectors, and support non-formal agricultural education.

Since 2021, the National Agrarian Olympiad has been organized by FAO under the patronage of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, with financial support from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

The 2025 winners received awards established by FAO, the Environmental Information and Education Center, the Agricultural Development Association (ADA), the National Forestry Agency, as well as partner organizations and sponsors supporting the Agrarian Olympiad.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24254/>

David Songulashvili Reviews the Citrus Harvest Delivery Process in Kobuleti



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, along with the Chairman of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, Mr. Sulkhan Tamazashvili, the Minister of Agriculture of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, Mr. Denis Salukvadze, and Members of the Parliament of Georgia, visited the citrus receiving and processing facility Iberia Orbi Citrus LLC in Kobuleti. During the visit, the delegation got familiar with the company's technological and production processes. The facility has the capacity to receive, sort, and wax up to 250 tonnes of citrus fruit per 24 hours.

“More than 20,000 tonnes of products have already been exported, generating approximately USD 12 million in revenue. Within the framework of state subsidies for non-standard citrus, GEL 4 million has already been allocated. It is crucial that, given this year's abundant harvest, the entire volume of produce is successfully stored. The process is coordinated by local authorities, in close cooperation with the central government, to ensure full storage of the harvest and increase export volumes. Despite the abundant harvest recorded this year, our key priority remains the complete and efficient delivery of citrus. Citrus is among the top crops with significant economic value. Georgian citrus is

in demand on both domestic and export markets, creating strong preconditions for sectoral development and ensuring high-quality by farmers. In addition, processing enterprises operating in the region accept non-standard tangerines, generating additional income,” stated Minister Songulashvili. During the current citrus season, the company plans to receive and process up to 4,000 tonnes of citrus fruit, all of which will be exported. At present, approximately 100 people are employed at the facility.

Iberia Orbi Citrus LLC also processes non-standard tangerines, with a daily processing capacity of up to 200 tonnes of raw material. The processed raw material is used to produce citrus concentrate, the export of which is planned in the near future. The enterprise also operates cold storage facilities with a capacity of 3,000 tonnes.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture continues to support the citrus sector, contributing to increased farmer incomes and strengthening the competitiveness of Georgian products on international markets.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24257/>
<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24256/>

David Songulashvili Visits a Grape Processing Facility in Keda Municipality



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, visited the village of Makhuntseti in Keda Municipality. The Chairman of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, Mr. Sulkhan Tamazashvili; the Minister of Agriculture of Adjara, Mr. Denis Salukvadze; and Members of the Parliament of Georgia, accompanied the Minister. During their visit, the officials toured “The Avaliani Brothers’ Winery,” a beneficiary company of the Rural Development Agency, operating a grape processing facility, which was established in 2023 with state co-financing totaling GEL 500,000.

According to Mr. Songulashvili, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture continues to develop agro-industrial infrastructure in the regions to support and enhance local production and promote sustainable economic development.

“Georgia is one of the world's oldest winemaking countries, with an 8,000-year history. This is precisely why it stands out for its unique diversity of grapevine varieties; more than 500 grape varieties are found across almost every region of the country. Due to this diversity, the development of small wineries is especially important, as they preserve the uniqueness and distinctive characteristics that define Georgian wine and viticulture. Small wineries play a crucial role in preserving and developing regional grape varieties, thereby ensuring the diversity of Georgian wine. For this reason, our programs actively support small wineries, so that we can preserve this centuries-old tradition that has survived to the present day, improve its quality, and introduce Georgian wine to the global market,” stated Mr. David Songulashvili.

“The Avaliani Brothers Winery” was established within the framework of the Co-financing Program for Processing and Storage Enterprises. The company also benefits from state programs, including the Technical Support Program and Preferential Agrocredit. At this stage, the enterprise produces ten varieties of wine, which are marketed on the local market under the brand name “Avaliani Brothers.”

It is noteworthy that within the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, four enterprises have been established under the Co-financing Program for Processing and Storage Enterprises implemented by the Rural Development Agency, with a total co-financing of GEL 2.5 million.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr Zurab Ezugbaia; the Director of the Rural Development Agency, Mr Zurab Gozalishvili; the Acting Head of the National Food Agency, Mr Giorgi Iakobashvili; as well as representatives of local self-government, also attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24259/>

Nino Tandilashvili delivered the opening remarks at the community forum “Reducing the risk of climate-driven disasters in Georgia”.



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, delivered the opening remarks at the community forum “Reducing the risk of climate-driven disasters in Georgia”.

The First Deputy Minister expressed her gratitude to representatives of local authorities for their engagement, as well as partner international organizations for their support, while emphasizing the significance of the project.

“This project, aiming to reduce the risks of natural hazards driven by climate change, is of critical importance to our country. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Green Climate Fund, one of Georgia’s largest donor organizations in the field of climate change mitigation, for its substantial financial support of this project. I would also like to express special appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme in Georgia for its contribution to the project’s implementation, and to the Government of Switzerland for its support,” stated Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

According to the First Deputy Minister, active efforts are underway to establish an effective national system for natural hazard management. Modern weather forecasting systems have been significantly enhanced, thereby strengthening the state’s national capacity to analyze climate change-related data, forecast natural hazard-induced disasters, and prevent their impacts.

“As you are aware, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) cooperates with the Green Climate Fund, the Government of Switzerland, and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) to promote the development of early warning systems and reduce disaster risks across the country. This cooperation aims to convert early warning systems into real and practical action plans at the community and municipal levels. Furthermore, within the project, satellite data and hazard-related information are being integrated into operational systems functioning at the local level, which enhances preparedness and the effectiveness of response,” stated Douglas Webb, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Georgia.

Within the framework of the Community Forum, participants discussed issues related to the project’s educational and structural activities, risk forecasting, and strengthening the capacities of local communities, including the integration of a module on disaster risk reduction related to climate change into undergraduate environmental programs in Georgia.

The Community Forum was organized by the Environmental Information and Education Center, an agency within the system of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia. The forum was attended by State Representatives (Governors) from Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, and Samtskhe-Javakheti, as well as representatives of 15 municipalities, stakeholders, and other interested parties.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/24258>