



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

September 2026

Deputy Minister Lasha Avaliani Meets with Representatives of the U.S. Embassy and FHI 360



Mr Lasha Avaliani, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, met with representatives of the U.S. Embassy and the U.S.-based organization FHI 360 to discuss activities planned under the ongoing “Meeting Targets and Maintaining Epidemic Control” (EpiC) project.

The project focuses on early detection and control of highly pathogenic avian in-

fluenza (HPAI), strengthening veterinary and laboratory capacities, and enhancing genomic surveillance and genetic traceability.

“This project is important for the sustainability and development of Georgia’s poultry sector. It will enhance the capacity of field and state veterinary professionals to ensure the early detection and effective control of highly pathogenic avian influenza. Laboratory capacities will also be enhanced, including genetic analysis and genomic surveillance. Avian influenza is a zoonotic disease and may be transmitted from animals to humans. Accordingly, relevant agencies and laboratories operating under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia will be involved in the project. This coordinated approach will contribute to the early detection and investigation of the disease, as well as to genomic-level tracing and surveillance,” Mr Lasha Avaliani stated.

As part of the project, veterinarians, farmers, and other relevant specialists will receive training on the early detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza and appropriate response measures. The initiative will strengthen Georgia’s preparedness and response system for zoonotic diseases by facilitating early detection and improving national laboratory capacities.

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David Songulashvili: “Georgia and Jordan Have Significant Potential for Further Deepening Bilateral Cooperation”



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr David Songulashvili, met with Mr Omer Barakat Mnawel Al-Nahar, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Georgia, residing in Baku, Azerbaijan.

During the meeting, the parties discussed opportunities to develop bilateral trade and economic relations, as well as prospects for agricultural cooperation.

“There is significant potential to deepen cooperation between Georgia and Jordan. Our country’s economy is developing rapidly. As you know, Georgia has signed free trade agreements with several countries, providing our partners with opportunities to access multimillion-consumer markets through Georgia. I would be pleased to host my counterpart in Georgia so that we can discuss specific areas of cooperation, as well as the opportunities that can further strengthen our mutually beneficial partnership,” said Mr David Songulashvili.

According to Mr Omer Barakat Mnawel Al-Nahar, the close partnership and mutual support between the two countries provide an important foundation for strengthening economic ties and developing new opportunities.

The discussion also focused on the import of olive oil and vegetables from Jordan, as well as opportunities for Georgia to export live and slaughtered sheep, Halal-certified poultry meat, hazelnuts, wine, mineral water, and other beverages to the Jordanian market.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr Lasha Avaliani, and Mr David Chitaishvili, Head of the Department of International Relations and European Integration, also attended the meeting.

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Solomon Pavliashvili Participates in Taiyuan Energy Low-Carbon Development Forum in China



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr Solomon Pavliashvili, participated in the Low-Carbon Energy Forum in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China.

During the forum, Deputy Pavliashvili shared Georgia's experience, emphasizing the

reforms implemented and planned in waste management. Moreover, he highlighted measures Georgia has taken to develop an effective waste management system, promote efficient resource use, and advance the adoption of circular economy principles. The Administrative Division of Shanxi Province of the People's Republic of China organized the forum, bringing together more than 180 participants from 35 countries.

Participants included representatives of government institutions responsible for energy, environmental protection, and climate change, including deputy ministers, as well as members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of international organizations, academia, and the private sector.

The forum focused on key issues including energy transition, low-carbon development, innovative energy technologies, and prospects for green development.

As part of his visit, Mr Pavliashvili held meetings with the heads of companies operating in the field of the circular economy in China. He visited waste processing facilities and discussed opportunities for cooperation between Georgia and China in the circular economy with Chinese partners.

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USD 11 million will be spent in Protected Areas under Renewed Cooperation between Georgia and the Caucasus Nature Fund



As part of renewed cooperation between Georgia and the Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) in protected areas, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr David Songulashvili and Mr David Morrison, Executive Director of the Caucasus Nature Fund, signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation to develop protected areas.

Minister Songulashvili thanked the Caucasus Nature Fund for its longstanding support and effective cooperation.

According to the Minister, the renewed Memorandum of Understanding marks another important milestone in the continued development of Georgia's protected areas and in further strengthening the country's cooperation with international partners on nature conservation.

"The renewed cooperation will make a significant contribution to the further devel-

opment and strengthening of Georgia's protected areas. Our objective is to support the establishment of new protected areas, improve existing infrastructure, and implement projects that, alongside nature conservation, also promote greater economic opportunities for local communities. I am confident that our renewed partnership with the Caucasus Nature Fund will help us achieve significant results in these areas," stated Mr Songulashvili.

"It is evident that the country has made significant progress over the past decade. I am pleased to be part of this process. We have a particularly exciting year ahead in terms of the development of protected areas," noted Mr David Morrison.

As part of the renewed Memorandum of Understanding, the Caucasus Nature Fund will support the development of the new Tsiv-Gombori protected area in the Kakheti region. With the support of the international donor organization Wyss Foundation, the Caucasus Nature Fund will also continue supporting the development of protected areas across Georgia.

Notably, under the Memorandum of Understanding, the Wyss Foundation has allocated a total grant of up to USD 7.25 million to the Caucasus Nature Fund.

With co-financing from the Caucasus Nature Fund and other donors, the project's total estimated value is approximately USD 11 million, with implementation planned over a five-year period.

Particular emphasis will be placed on strengthening the effective management of protected areas, enhancing staff capacity, developing biodiversity monitoring systems, and deepening partnerships with local communities.

Cooperation between Georgia and the Caucasus Nature Fund in the field of protected areas began in 2008 and has since contributed to the development of 15 protected areas across Georgia.

The First Deputy Minister, Mrs Nino Tandilashvili, and senior officials of the Ministry's relevant Agencies and Departments attended the meeting.

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David Songulashvili Participates in the Annual Conference of the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr David Songulashvili, attended the opening ceremony of the 2026 Annual Conference of the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN), where he addressed participants.

In his remarks, Mr Songulashvili underscored the importance of international cooperation, the exchange of expertise and best practices, and close partnership between public authorities and the business community.

Mr Songulashvili emphasised that concerted efforts in these areas would help strengthen consumer protection and foster a more sustainable, responsible, and trusted economic environment.

“Today, alongside product quality, consumers are increasingly concerned about the origin of products, the conditions under which they are produced, food safety, and

their environmental impact. Digital technologies and artificial intelligence, in turn, offer significant opportunities to improve product traceability and food safety, while also enabling information to be delivered to consumers more rapidly and transparently. This is precisely why sharing international experience and fostering close cooperation between public authorities and businesses are so important. Georgia’s ICPEN Presidency for 2026–2027 represents a significant opportunity to strengthen such cooperation even further,” stated Mr David Songulashvili.

Georgian National Competition and Consumer Agency organised the conference at the National Youth Palace in Tbilisi. The event brought together approximately 100 representatives from 55 countries, including heads and senior officials of consumer protection authorities, representatives of international organisations, and field experts.

During the conference, the parties discussed current challenges in consumer protection and enforcement, international experience and best practices, and opportunities for strengthening international cooperation.

In 2026–2027, the Georgian National Competition and Consumer Agency is serving as the Chair of the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN). ICPEN is a global network of authorities responsible for consumer protection and enforcement, bringing together relevant agencies from nearly 80 countries.

The Network cooperates with a range of international organisations and partners, including the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and other international partners.

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Deputy Minister Solomon Pavliashvili Participates in the 70th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr Solomon Pavliashvili, and Mrs Nino Utiashvili, Head of the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Agency, are participating in the 70th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The General Conference, the Agency’s main annual forum bringing together representatives of its Member States, is being held in Vienna. The Conference addresses the Agency’s key areas of activity, sets the organization’s policy priorities, and discusses issues related to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, nuclear and radiation safety, and international cooperation.

Representatives of more than 150 IAEA Member States are participating in the 70th General Conference.

“Close and constructive cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency is of particular importance to Georgia. With the support of the IAEA, several projects are being implemented in Georgia to strengthen our capacities in the field of nuclear and radiation safety, introducing modern standards, and developing professional expertise. It is important for us to share experience with our international partners and further strengthen regional cooperation,” said Deputy Pavliashvili.

As part of the General Conference, the Georgian delegation is scheduled to hold several bilateral meetings, including with IAEA representatives who provide significant support to Georgia through the Agency’s technical cooperation projects.

The meetings will focus on opportunities to strengthen regional cooperation, mechanisms for the exchange of information and expertise, as well as the development of joint educational programmes and training initiatives.

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David Songulashvili Meets with American Wine Professionals and Journalists



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr David Songulashvili, met with leading American wine journalists and wine professionals.

During the meeting, the parties discussed implemented, ongoing, and planned initiatives to promote Georgian wine in the United States and further strengthen its visibility, recognition, and demand in the U.S. market.

According to Minister Songulashvili, the United States is one of the key export markets for Georgian wine, and a range of marketing initiatives carried out in the U.S. in recent years with the support of the National Wine Agency have significantly increased awareness of Georgian wine.

“Active cooperation with wine professionals and media representatives is essential to raising awareness of Georgian wine in the United States. Moreover, working with international wine professionals and media representatives provides an excellent opportunity to showcase Georgia’s ancient winemaking method, as well as its rich

culture and traditions. We believe that this experience will contribute to further increasing awareness of Georgian wine in the United States while highlighting its unique character,” stated Mr David Songulashvili.

As part of a visit organized by Glodow Nead Communications, LLC, the U.S.-based marketing company contracted by the National Wine Agency, a group of American wine professionals visited 11 wineries and wine-producing companies across Kartli and Kakheti regions. During their visit, the professionals observed the winemaking process firsthand and learned about contemporary and traditional approaches to Georgian winemaking. They also received comprehensive information about Georgian wine’s centuries-old history, culture, and traditions. As part of the visit, the participants tasted both classical and traditionally produced Georgian wines and explored Georgian cuisine and the close relationship between wine and Georgian culture.

Mrs Karen MacNeil, editor of the digital publication WineSpeed and author of The Wine Bible, noted that her visit to Georgia offered a valuable opportunity to deepen her understanding of Georgian wine and explore its remarkable diversity.

“Coming to Georgia from California, I had no idea just how extraordinary Georgia and its wine would be. Throughout this journey, I tasted numerous delicious Georgian wines, and I am immensely grateful for this experience. The ancient and unique history of your winemaking, along with the very exciting and promising future of Georgian wine, is truly remarkable,” said Mrs Karen MacNeil.

Mr Alex Fondren, Vice President of Glodow Nead Communications, LLC; Mrs Charlene Peters, freelance writer and contributor to Apple News; Mrs Stacy Buchanan, founder and publisher of Blood of Gods magazine; and Mr Pete Holland, sommelier and wine writer, along with representatives of the National Wine Agency, attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/27594/>

Tbilisi Open Air Museum of Ethnography Hosts “Farmer’s Day 2026”



The Tbilisi Open Air Museum of Ethnography hosted “Farmer’s Day 2026,” officially opened by Georgia’s Prime Minister, Mr Irakli Kobakhidze, and the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr David Songulashvili. The event, held at the initiative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and organised by the Rural Development Agency, aimed to showcase the work of farmers and agribusiness representatives, highlight their vital role, and support the continued development of Georgia’s agricultural sector.

“The agricultural sector is developing steadily in Georgia, and this positive momentum is driven by the efforts of our farmers and agribusiness representatives, along with the

government’s consistent support. Today, half of Georgia’s ten largest export products are agri-food products. Since the launch of state support programs, agribusiness output has increased by an average of 8 per cent annually. Last year, Georgia exported a record USD 1.8 billion worth of agri-food products to 110 countries around the world. Our goal is to fully realise the potential of the agricultural sector, strengthen its competitiveness, and support the consolidation of Georgian products in global markets,” stated Mr David Songulashvili.

As part of “Farmer’s Day 2026,” visitors had the opportunity to discover the diverse range of Georgian products. At specially arranged pavilions, farmers and agribusiness representatives showcased their products and introduced visitors to the variety of locally produced agri-food products. Visitors could also obtain information from representatives of the Ministry and its Agencies about agricultural services and support mechanisms available to farmers and agribusinesses.

The “Farmer’s Day” program featured a variety of engaging activities. Professional chefs conducted culinary masterclasses, while a specially designated area for children offered a range of educational and recreational activities.

A key component of the event was the recognition of outstanding representatives of the agricultural sector. Special awards were presented to farmers and agribusiness representatives who had made significant contributions to the development of Georgia’s agriculture.

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Nino Tandilashvili Presents Planned Amendments to the Environmental Assessment Code and Law on Industrial Emissions to the Business Community



Mrs Nino Tandilashvili, First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, met with business sector representatives at the Georgian Business Association.

During the meeting, the parties focused on the Draft Law on Amendments to the Environmental Assessment Code and the planned amendments to the Law on Industrial Emissions.

Mrs Tandilashvili highlighted the objectives of the proposed legislative changes, noting that the new regulations are intended not only to improve environmental standards but also to enhance the quality of services provided to businesses and streamline administrative procedures.

“The Amendments we are introducing to the legislation serve environmental interests on the one hand, while on the other hand, they aim to reduce bureaucratic barriers and improve administrative procedures. Moreover, the amendments to the Environmental Assessment Code introduced last year, along with the experience gained from their implementation, have demonstrated a clear demand among businesses for expedited services. Our objective is to safeguard environmental interests while supporting the development of economic activity,” Mrs Tandilashvili stated.

The draft law envisages revising the service fees applicable to environmental assessment procedures. The proposed amendments also clarify procedural timeframes for standard and expedited proceedings and update existing regulations in waste management. These changes include defining daily capacity limits for waste recovery and disposal facilities and further specifying the concept of “pre-treatment of waste.”

The meeting also addressed the planned amendments to the Law on Industrial Emissions. The draft legislation establishes a service fee for the issuance of an integrated environmental permit. The fee will be set at the same level as the service fee for the issuance of an environmental decision.

For activities that are simultaneously subject to both an integrated environmental permit and an environmental impact assessment, businesses will be required to pay only one service fee. At the same time, the state fee for an integrated environmental permit will remain unchanged at GEL 5,000.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr Zurab Ezugbaia, the Head of the National Environmental Agency, Mrs Elene Ghubianuri, and the Executive Director of the Business Association, Mr Levan Vepkhvadze, also attended the meeting.

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David Songulashvili Meets the Founder of Swiss Chocolate Company Camille Bloch



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr David Songulashvili, met with Mr Daniel Bloch, the founder of Swiss chocolate manufacturer Camille Bloch.

The parties focused on showcasing Georgia’s investment potential and exploring opportunities for developing the hazelnut sector.

Minister Songulashvili highlighted Georgia’s favorable investment environment, emphasizing the country’s access to multimillion-consumer markets through its free trade agreements. According to the Minister, this market access represents a significant advantage for attracting investment and expanding production in Georgia.

The Minister also underscored the importance of the hazelnut sector to Georgia’s economy, noting that hazelnuts are one of the top export products, while increasing hazelnut production, quality, and competitiveness remains an important priority for the government.

According to Mr Bloch, improving the quality of Georgian hazelnuts is crucial, given the significant role hazelnuts play in producing Camille Bloch’s products.

Founded in 1929, Camille Bloch is a third-generation Swiss family-owned business. Hazelnuts have been an important ingredient in one of the company’s best-known products, Ragusa, since 1942. The company processes approximately 600 tonnes of hazelnuts annually.

Mr René Meier, a representative of Camille Bloch, and Mr Mikheil Svimonishvili, founder of the Georgian-Swiss Agricultural School, also attended the meeting.

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David Songulashvili: “Our Goal Is to Move Georgia to a Modern Waste Management System”



Mr David Songulashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, attended the opening ceremony of “Scrap,” a medical waste treatment facility, and addressed guests and attendees.

The newly established environmentally friendly facility ensures safe treatment and neutralization of hazardous medical and infectious waste without incineration. The facility is expected to contribute to developing a modern medical waste management system in Georgia and strengthening environmental standards.

“Waste management is a specific and complex process requiring a systematic approach, modern infrastructure, and continuous monitoring. The Ministry is taking significant steps to strengthen and modernize Georgia’s waste management system, including

developing the necessary infrastructure and establishing specialized facilities for the safe and effective management of hazardous waste. We aim to move Georgia to a waste management system where waste is regarded as a resource, and its reduction, reuse, recycling, and safe management form an integral part of the development of a green and circular economy. In this process, private-sector initiatives and investment are of particular importance, supported by a stable and predictable environment created by the state,” said Mr David Songulashvili.

For the first time in Georgia and the South Caucasus region, advanced ECOSTERYL technology is being deployed to ensure the safe treatment and subsequent management of medical and infectious waste. The project marks a significant step toward modernizing Georgia’s medical waste management system and strengthening environmental practices.

ECOSTERYL technology treats waste without incineration, using microwave technology. The system operates entirely on electricity, and the treatment process produces a dry, sterile, and safe material. This reduces the risk of toxic emissions and contributes to the safe subsequent management of the treated waste.

The launch of the new facility will help modernize medical waste management, strengthen operational safety, and advance the implementation of modern environmental standards. The project draws on European and international best practices and provides an additional opportunity to use modern, environmentally sound technologies in Georgia’s waste management sector.

Mr Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, and Mr Mikheil Gogolidze, Director of the Solid Waste Management Company of Georgia attended the event.

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Lasha Avaliani Participates in the WOAAH 32nd Conference of the Regional Commission for Europe



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr Lasha Avaliani, participated in the 32nd Conference of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Regional Commission for Europe in Riga, Latvia.

During the conference, participants addressed issues of regional importance and developed relevant recommendations for member countries.

Particular emphasis was placed on strengthening animal disease control and early warning systems, along with harmonising biosecurity measures to prevent the spread of transboundary animal diseases.

Participants also discussed preparedness and response measures to prevent and control peste des petits ruminants (PPR) plague, as well as sheep and goat pox. The discussions covered disease prevention and control mechanisms, existing risks, and approaches to ensuring an effective response to animal health emergencies.

The WOAAH Regional Commission for Europe strives to strengthen regional cooperation on animal health, enhance the capacity of veterinary services, and promote the harmonisation of sanitary regulations governing trade in animals and products of animal origin. In this regard, the regional conference provides an important platform for sharing experience and developing common approaches among member countries.

Mr Avaliani serves as Georgia’s Delegate to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

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Minister David Songulashvili Hosts UN Resident Coordinator Didier Trebucq



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr David Songulashvili, met with Mr Didier Trebucq, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Georgia.

The meeting addressed key issues related to the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including opportunities to deepen and expand bilateral cooperation in environmental protection.

Particular attention was devoted to managing climate-change risks and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The discussions also highlighted the importance of effective natural resource management and implementing joint environmental initiatives and projects.

“I would like to express my gratitude for your long-standing support and cooperation. Our close and strong partnership with the United Nations is particularly valuable to us. Effectively addressing the challenges posed by climate change and successfully advancing the environmental agenda can only be achieved through concerted efforts and close cooperation,” stated Mr Songulashvili.

The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change brings the global community together to address the challenges posed by climate change. The principal objectives include curbing global warming, strengthening international cooperation to advance the goals of the Paris Agreement, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and mobilising financial and technological resources to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change.

The First Deputy Minister, Mrs Nino Tandilashvili; Mr Douglas Webb, UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia; Mrs Isabelle Castrogiovanni, UNICEF Representative in Georgia; Mr Eric Andermo, Economist at the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator; and senior officials from the relevant departments of the Ministry attended the meeting.

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