



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

SEPTEMBER/2021

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF)



The Memorandum of Understanding on expanding and financial stimulus to the protected territories of Georgia has been signed between the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili and Chairperson of the Advisory Council of the Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF), Mr David Morrison and Mr Tobias Munchmeier, Executive Director of the Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF).

“The grant assistance amounts into several million USD and will be donated to Georgia by the Caucasus Nature Fund and through the WYSS Foundation. Such assistance will complement creation of the new protected territories, enhancing and developing infrastructure and implementation of projects, which apart from conservation objectives – also ensure advancement of balanced social approached and economic capacities for the local dwellers” – Minister Davitashvili stated.

In frames of the MoU, space of Georgia’s protected territories will be expanded, which will span across five new territories of Racha, Samegrelo – Zemo Svaneti, Shida Kartli and Guria regions. The Caucasus Nature Fund will award Georgia with a grant ranging between 6 – 10 million USD, which will fall in compliance with newly established protected territories in Georgia. Apart from practical matters of managing protected territories, the CNF will also complement the process of shaping legislative base.

“The MoU signed today will open the door to one of the strongest private American foundations, which will enter Georgia and the whole region for the first time. This will be a step forward, which will assist Georgia in expanding-enhancing protected territories’ network, as well implementation of international obligations, which will increase visibility of Georgia at an international arena” – Mr Morrison stated.

As Mr Tobias Munchmeier, Executive Director of the Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) stated – it is crucial to safeguard protected territories, which will result into attaining biodiversity as well as endangered spaces. The Caucasus Nature Fund will join forces with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia to enhance five new protected territories and manage these in a way to safeguard Georgia’s wild species from dangers and that will also stimulate Georgia to further develop environmental and biodiversity protection; these efforts of Georgia will be especially vital amidst the ongoing struggle of the world with the Climate Change.

The Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) and the Agency of Protected Territories under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia have been cooperating since 2008 though providing financial assistance to rangers, as well as enhancing-developing infrastructure. The CNF has provided assistance to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan for safeguarding biodiversity and eco-systems in the country.

Minister Davitashvili met with the President of the Swiss Company „Camille Bloch”

Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili met with the President of the Swiss Company „Camille Bloch”, Mr Daniel Bloch.

In the course of the meeting, representatives of the „Camille Bloch” delivered a presentation on innovative ways of producing hazelnut in Georgia. Mr Bloch stressed out that Georgia has a great potential for producing hazelnut due to an outstanding quality of the latter. Representatives of the „Camille Bloch” expressed readiness to share experience on the innovative and modern methods with their Georgian counterparts.

As Minister Davitashvili stated – Georgia attains a leading position among the largest producers of hazelnut. “Hazelnut is a highly important export product for Georgia, therefore, it is of utmost importance to increase both, production, as well as quality of the latter. Hence, we are looking forward to sharing successful European experience” – Minister Davitashvili stated.

A chocolate producer Swiss company „Camille Bloch” has undertaken a 40-million GEL investment in the region of Kakheti, Signaghi municipality.



Moreover, the company has started cultivation of hazelnut gardens through deploying innovative technologies and at more than 50 hectares of space. The company will embrace the first harvest in the year of 2025.

Minister Levan Davitashvili met with Mr Christian Schoenenberger, Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland in Georgia



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili met with Mr Christian Schoenenberger, Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland in Georgia to discuss matters related to a successful record of cooperation between the two countries.

Parties to the meeting also touched upon future plans, such as enhancing local bioproduction, livestock and dairy sector, as well as supporting international educational programs for farmers; discussion scrutinized possibilities for enhancing cooperation matters on agrarian matters in the vocational education. Minister Davitashvili stressed out successful reforms in the fields of livestock and dairy; he also highlighted ongoing projects and importance of financial/technical assistance from Switzerland.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Ms Nino Tandilashvili, who stressed out the importance of adapting to the climate change, as well as establishing an early warning and disasters' management system in Georgia, for the first time.

It shall be noted that on October 21, a working visit will take place in Bern, where the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili and the Minister of Environment of Switzerland will sign a bilateral Memorandum on the fulfillment of the Paris Agreement.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20496/>

The Swiss Agrarian School of the Caucasus in the Dmanisi municipality to welcome the first group of students

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Giorgi Khanashvili visited a new professional college, Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus, in Dmanisi municipality, village Sarkineti. According to the Deputy Ministers' statement, such types of professional institutions will assist in raising the interest among youth in the development of Agriculture and enhancement of knowledge in the field of agriculture.

“The newly established “Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus” is one more testament that the government of Georgia, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the business sector of Georgia, Georgian farmers, entrepreneurs correctly view the economic development of Georgia, and invest in the right way. This type of school provides training of qualified staff, and as a result, those strategic goals, which are seated by the government of Georgia, to strengthen the economy, will be reached” – said Mr. Giorgi Khanashvili.

The professional institution is set up according to the Swiss standard and built by the Georgian-Swiss investment. It aims to specialize staff in cattle breeding, dairy, and cheese processing.

The learning program is elaborated by the main partner Swiss agricultural school Plantahof and maintains a three-year theoretical and practical learning course.

On the territory of the college, there is are Swiss standard modern cheese factory and a livestock farm, where by the lead of professionals, students will get involved in daily work and receive practical knowledge and experience.

The project is implemented with the support of the Swiss Embassy in Georgia and actively cooperates with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the Farmers Association, and the Ministry of Education and Science.



The Swiss Agricultural School Caucasus will accept the first students in November 2021. At this stage, there are ten students in the college, and the college campus is intended for 30 students.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20502/>

Karlo Amirgulashvili elected as the member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature



In frames of the Congress hosted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Mr Karlo Amirgulashvili, Head of the Biodiversity and Forestry Department at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia was elected as a member of the board for 4-year period. The council is an executive body throughout the inter-session period of congress.

During the period of September 3 – 11, the IUCN's International Congress took place in Marceille, France. The Congress aspires to foster biodiversity conservation related matters, through exchanging knowledge and information; as well as determining actions that are vital for restoring biodiversity. Among the matters to be discussed during the congress are the following: post-2020 bio-diversity strategy, nature-based solutions, protected territories and sustainable management of forests.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20491/>

Minister Davitashvili:

“We aspire to foster increase of sales and decrease dependency on an existing and traditional markets”

“Today, the Government of Georgia has adopted a crucial decision, which will accelerate support toward promoting visibility of the Georgian wine and boost export sales. It is vital that the new project comes into force during the vintage period. We have launched efforts of working on the respective project from the very start of an incumbent year. The project's design has been agreed with the Winegrowers Association of Georgia. We have hosted numerous meetings with the entrepreneurs in order to reach final agreement on some of the terms. The project entails funding of the so called “Treymarketing”, which spans across numerous actions of trade marketing and provides co-funding grants to the wine-producing companies. As you are aware, the Government and leadership of Georgia have been intensifying efforts for promoting Georgian wine, thus, we shall embrace an increased funding for the respective actions. Since 2013, the budget has been tripled and amounts to 3 million. Nowadays, the budget for promoting Georgian wine is around 9 – 10 million GEL; the National Wine Agency deploys various actions for promotion objectives at pre-selected target markets. As an outcome of the research efforts, specific directions have been selected, which enjoy the most experienced and competent marketing companies, which successfully deploy marketing communications operate in the field of wine industry; we have also selected highly credible and influential wine critics, influencers, masters of wine, masters-sommeliers of wine, which have a long record of promoting the Georgian wine. These are the people who are well-aware of the peculiarities of the Georgian wine. We have already developed numerous materials in multiple languages and for communicating to target markets. Dissemination of information on Georgian wine is held in a constant mode at target markets, such as the United States of America, Great Britain, Poland, as well as South-East Asia, Baltic States and etc. We would like to make the Georgian wine a more popular one and translate our efforts into a more success for the wine companies, which will fundamentally affect success of an entire industry and vine-farmers.

Therefore, we have decided to embrace the new stage, when the Georgian wine expands beyond niche segment into the new markets and into a more universal category. The Georgian wine shall be accessible among the core channels of sale, such as the so called “on trade” as well as service- Horeca sector and chain of shops, retail. Therefore, it is vital to fund specific marketing actions, which



are deployed by the Georgian wine companies. As a result, we will provide co-funding at those markets, which already have Georgian wine, however, it still requires assistance to be at a point, which is desirable by us. The Georgian wine shall attain a crucial position among popular and exporter countries. Wines of a the new world is accessible at every European country's market; moreover, popular wines are accessible in both, US and South-East Asian region. This is the category, where we would love the Georgian wine to move to. Nowadays, the Georgian wine is sold in around 60 countries. In 2019, around 341 countries exported it to 53 countries. Number of companies and export destinations significantly increased in 2020, which has span across 60 countries and 376 companies. However, we are motivated to reflect increased numbers into increased sales. We have already attained a number of 100 million bottles in a year, which is our projection for the year of 2021. We have already advertised 10-year plan, which shall ensure export income of wine sector by the year of 2030 to amount 1 billion USD; the latter objective aims at tripling income from products that are of grape origin.

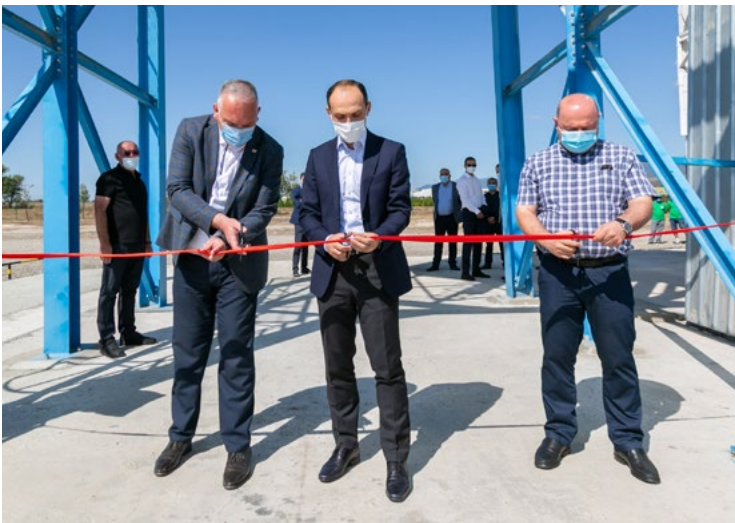
Co-funding of marketing actions aims at spanning across each and every market, which entails Georgian wine, except for Georgia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. By all means, we do not need to foster realization of Georgian wine within the country itself, since small, medium and larger companies have already been engaged into these actions. Our objective is to foster and increase export sales including in new geography. There have been various questions on diversifying the markets; our primary goal in this regard is to access new markets, which we had already targeted and the Georgian wine has already been progressing there. We are motivated to increase pace and decrease dependency on an incumbent and traditional markets. Therefore, we do not fund marketing actions at the Commonwealth of Independent States, however, we do fund all the other countries, which will host marketing initiatives deployed by our wine companies.

The budget for marketing events for a year has been determined at 600, 000 GEL, however we are at the pilot version and the Government may increase funding if the program proves to be successful. At the same time, it has a direct effect on increasing sales. We will have a comparison of a specific reporting year, when the co-funding of the events will be ensured and sales shall be on rise in comparison to the previous year, thus such data will be a turning point for us. In the respective scenario, a limiting and additional factor is 2 GEL

per every bottle sold and it is a budget. As I have already mentioned, a total funding per each company is about 600, 000 with a perspective of boosting it. In fact, we are motivated not to replace the private companies' marketing actions, therefore one of the core objectives for us is for the private companies to increase their marketing budget, which shall also be visible in an audit. More specifically, an incumbent year's marketing costs shall be increased in comparison to the previous year, therefore – we will fund the respective increased amount.

I firmly believe that the program will be successful, as it has been elaborated in close cooperation with the private sector. We have hosted numerous discussions, meetings and negotiations with the wine-producer companies. Throughout the process, we have collected feedback and have reached a joint consensus. Therefore, the project has been translated from joint efforts and I believe that the companies will join in with great enthusiasm. We will deploy significant financial stimulus for the next 3-4 years, which will translate into tangible results and in a short-period of 5 years – we will ensure tremendous success in promoting Georgian wine; moreover, we will transform our successful sales” – the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili stated, after commencing the Government's session.

Minister Davitashvili: “Sartichala Sashrobi” is an outstanding example of the Ministry’s effective policies



“It will be complemented by the State grant funding, which will be implemented through the special program of the State and that ensures co-funding to processing and storage enterprises. A total amount of co-funding is around 80 million GEL and has attracted several hundreds of private investments. In frames of the program, around 200 new enterprises have been funded” – Minister Davitashvili stated.

A complex LTD “Sartichala Sashrobi” with dryer and cereals’ storage facility has been equipped with a funding of 3,5 million GEL of investment, including a 500, 000 GEL grant from the Rural Development Agency; moreover, 3, 000, 000 milliom GEL has been allocated as a preferential agro-credit. The “Sartichala Sashrobi” employs 10 locals and has a capacity to dry 9, 000 tonnes of cereals.

We shall stress out that in frames of the preferential agro-credit, more than 880 million GEL has been allocated for enhancing storage and processing infrastructure; more than 3, 900 loans have been issued and co-funding from the Agency exceeds 11, 4 million GEL.

The grant program has been translated into 10 storage enterprises in the Kvemo Kartli region; co-funding from the State exceeds 5, 2 million GEL

The State funding has ensured establishment of the LTD “Sartichala Sashrobi” with dryer and cereals’ storage facility at the village of Sartichala, Gardabani municipality.

“This is a new enterprise, which will ensure high-quality facility for accommodating cereals. The respective enterprise has been funded by the grant, as well as credit resources; more than 500, 000 million GEL of grant has been issued, apart from awarding a 3,5 million preferential agro-credit. In case we have to harvest an increased amount of high-quality primary production, by all means – we are in need to attain the corresponding storage and processing facilities. Our approach is a complexed one and aims at fostering each and every aspect of the production chain” – Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili stated, upon visiting the village of Sartichala, together with Mr Shota Rekhviashvili, State Trustee of the Kartli Region.

The Minister stressed out that accommodating harvest in Georgia is handled in modern facilities. A preferential agro-credit has assigned a total funding of 900 million GEL to storage and processing infrastructure. Hundreds of such modern enterprises operate nationwide.



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia supported eight Georgian companies in the Italy - based international agro - exhibition “Macfrut 2021”



The city of Rimini of Italy has welcomed eight Georgian companies, which attended an international agro-exhibition “Macfrut 2021”, through assistance of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia. The Georgian stand featured fruit and vegetable products of the respective companies: “Kareli Fruits” (Chikori), “Georgia’s Natural”, “Blue Valley”, “Agrolane”, “Nutsge”, “Caucasus Organic Fruits”, “August Fruit Factory” and “Geo Organic”.

In frames of an exhibition, Ambassador of Georgia to Italy, H.E. Mr Konstantine Surguladze and President of the “Macfrut 2021”, Mr Renzo Piraccini and representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the Georgian companies scrutinized prospects of exporting Georgian production to Italy. In the course of the discussions, attendees discussed importance of international trade with the European countries and Euro-integration of Georgia. An international agro-exhibition “Macfrut 2021” enabled representatives of the Georgian companies to host meetings with the Italian companies and international business associations.

Promoting Georgian agro-production at the global markets is a crucial effort and is a priority for the State. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia is actively engaged into these directions and empowers Georgian companies to increase their production’s visibility.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20495/>

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Iuri Nozadze, is paying an official visit to the Republic of Slovenia.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Iuri Nozadze, and the heads of LEPL National Forestry Agency and other appropriate sector departments are paying a visit to the Republic of Slovenia.

In frames of the visit, the meetings were held with the representatives of Agriculture of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Forestry and National Food, and the State Forestry management institutions.

It is noteworthy that the cooperation between Georgia and the Republic of Slovenia has been established since supporting the development of integrative forest management approaches to the natural ecosystem in Georgia in 2018. (integrative forest management approaches to the natural ecosystem).

On behalf of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, let me express my appreciation and gratitude towards the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the International Cooperation and Development Center of Slovenia for the provided support.

In 2020, we signed the Memorandum of Understanding in the field of sustainable management of the forest. I am glad that we have an opportunity to get introduced to the Slovenian forest management practices, which is special across Europe and unites the components of nature conservation and sustainable use of resources – said the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Iuri Nozadze.

LEPL National Forestry Agency, with the financial support of the International Cooperation and Development Agency of Slovenia, and technical support of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and the company Zavita is implementing a project “Sustainable Forest Management in Adigeni Municipality. In frames of the project, a multifunctional forest management plan will be prepared for the Adigeni municipality and a timber resources value chain.



The project will provide the involvement of the local population in forestry operations and, the LEPL National forestry Agency will train its staff members as well.

The project “Sustainable Forest Management in Adigeni Municipality” will be completed at the end of 2021. The purpose of the project is to assist sustainable use and management of the forest landscape and improvement of the socio-economic level of the local population.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20500/>

The livestock sector enhancement project to launch call for applications



The livestock sector enhancement project to launch call for applications



A new call for grant proposals will be launched in frames of the “Safety and Quality Investment in Livestock (SQIL)” project, which encourages innovative business ideas to be submitted as proposals. A need-based innovative proposals aim toward dairy and beef industries to improve increase local value addition by emphasizing food safety and quality standards. The project is implemented by the Land O'Lakes Venture 37, implemented by the eorgian Farmers' Association and funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

“Enhancement of the livestock industry is of utmost priority for the State. Therefore, we would like to express gratitude to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for their financial assistance. I firmly believe that the grant competitions and their implementation will translate into tangible outcomes in the livestock sector” – The first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Giorgi Khanishvili stated.

Applications to the competition on innovative business ideas in the livestock sector will be accepted between September 11, 2021 to October 22, 2021. The competition aspires to increase accessibility to markets, further processing and storage of production, enhancing productiveness, and improving access to financial services.

The project also actively aims on raising awareness among the persons employed to the livestock sector, which has been enriched through utilizing various trainings or educational-informational guidebooks.

Detailed information on the grant competition can be accessed at:

<https://bit.ly/2YzQNX4>

Further information can be accessed at:

<https://www.facebook.com/SQILGeorgia>

The Georgian Society and Nature Explorers “Orchis” organized discussion of the regional plan of waste management



The Georgian Society and Nature Explorers “Orchis” has hosted an online meeting for discussing a regional action plan for waste management in the Kakheti region; the plan aspires to deploy a modern system for waste management, which is in compliance with the regional development strategies. The

meeting enjoyed active contribution from the Kakheti Regional Administration, eight municipalities and interested parties.

Waste management plan of the Kakheti region is one of the core components of the NGO consortium: the Georgian Society and Nature Explorers “Orchis”, Greens Movement of Georgia/Friends of the Earth-Georgia” in frames of the “Keep Georgia Tidy” project.

The project “Keep Georgia Tidy” is supported by the Swedish Government and is implemented through assistance of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, as well as the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia and in cooperation with the Waste Management Company. “The Swedish Development Agency has supported implementation of the pilot project on waste management in the Kakheti region. Waste management happens to be one of the key challenges for our country, therefore, we aim to develop a model of waste management, which will be carried out in accordance with the European Union’s standards and the Swedish experience” – Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Solomon Pavliashvili stated, upon attending an online conference.

The meeting was attended by the representative/expert of the Swedish Gevle Association, Mr Per-Olaf Hallberg, as well as representatives of “Orchis”, experts and persons responsible for undertaking the working plan on waste management in the Kakheti region.