



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

JUNE/2022

Unique ecotourism space of Tsalka Canyon opens for visitors!



The opening ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister of Georgia, Mr. Irakli Gharibashvili, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Otar Shamugia, members of the Parliament of Georgia, and representatives of the government and international organizations.

“I would like to express my gratitude to all, who participated and were engaged in the implementation of this unique project. Thanks to our investors, the Agency of Protected Areas, the local population, and everyone for adding another remarkable place to the list of our country’s sights today.

Tsalka Canyon has attracted visitors with its natural beauty up to this time, however, I believe, that this excellent infrastructure will raise interest rates even more. I’m confident, that we will have many foreign and local visitors, which means more opportunities for the region, more local employment and more development.

One of the main priorities of our government is to take care of the environment, and nature. We are carrying out important reforms in the respective area.

The first protected area in Georgia and the Caucasus was established 110 years ago. It was a Lagodekhi reserve, which covered about 3,500 hectares during that time. Today, the area of protected areas in Georgia includes 800,000 hectares. This year we plan to create new protected areas, within which, the territory of protected areas will increase by 100,000 hectares.

We should underline the success achieved in 2022, with regard to protected areas. For the first time in the history of Georgia, four protected areas: Mtirala and Kolkheti National Parks, Kintrishi

and Kobuleti Protected areas have been granted UNESCO World Natural Heritage status. This is another recognition of the uniqueness of our nature by the world community. We are obliged to protect nature and, at the same time, use its ecotourism potential.

We are actively cooperating with the donor organizations, they are providing support in the respective area, for which I would like to express my gratitude. A few days ago, with the support of the German Government, we launched a new project, under which we received a grant of Euros 24 million from the German Development Bank, which will be spent on the development of protected areas and ecotourism in the coming years.

“We are open to investors if nature protection and development of ecotourism infrastructure is promoted in the country,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

Within the public-private partnership project, for the first time in Georgia, a grand space was organized in the protected area of Tsalka Canyon. The unique 240-meter-long glass bridge was built on the canyon, entailing ecotourism trails, a visitor center, a zip bike and a swing, which makes the trip even more special.

Hotels and other tourist infrastructure were built in the surrounding area. It should be mentioned, that the unique nature was preserved through the implementation of the respective project, on the one hand, and on the other hand, a unique infrastructure project was implemented in Georgia.

The investment in the Tsalka Canyon project amounted to GEL 120 000 000 in total, which hit a record high investment for the region, also facilities envisaged by the project are new and unique for Georgia.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20882/>

First time ever in the history of Georgia, two protected areas have been granted the biosphere reserve status. UNESCO has approved the nomination submitted by the Government of Georgia without any comments or suggestions



UNESCO has recognized “Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve” (Dedoplistskaro) and “Sami Alazani Biosphere Reserve” (Tusheti) and included them in the international list of biosphere reserves.

The decision was adopted within the framework of the UNESCO’s Programme on “Man and the Biosphere” (MAB) during the 34th session of the International Coordination Council.

The UNESCO Secretariat of the Programme “Man and the Biosphere” (MAB) approved the nomination submitted by the Government of Georgia without any comments or suggestions.

It should be mentioned, that to this day, none of the territories in the South Caucasus region has the status of a biosphere reserve.”Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve”and “Three Alazani Biosphere Reserves” are the first precedents across the region.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, and Mrs. Tamar Khakhishvili, Deputy Chairman of the Agency of Protected Areas attended the meeting in Paris.

A biosphere reserve is a mechanism used as common practice for the conservation of nature and sustainable land use. The biosphere reserve contributes to sustainable regional development and conservation of biodiversity, it also plays an important role in the climate change adaption and mitigation.

The interest and demand for producing organic products are growing, which is directly related to sustainable economic development. Considering all of the aforementioned, the creation of a biosphere reserve provides a great opportunity to increase economic /tourism potential in the country.

Since 2015, the potential for the establishment and development of a biosphere reserve in Georgia has been thoroughly studied, to this end, Kakheti region was identified as a key priority area, which is the best fit for the development of the biosphere reserve.

Nominations were reopened for submission to UNESCO with the financial support of the German Government, the Zukov Foundation, GIZ and the European Union, in cooperation with the Regional Environmental Center for Caucasus (REC Caucasus). In December 2021, on behalf of the Government of Georgia, all documents were submitted to the UNESCO Secretariat for ‘the ‘Man and the Biosphere’ Program for the nomination of “Three Alazani Biosphere Reserve” in Akhmeta and Telavi municipalities and “Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve” in Dedoplistskaro Municipality.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20884/>

Nino Tandilashvili delivers a speech at the high-level conference in Stockholm



“Since Georgia has officially applied for EU membership, the implementation of international conventions and requirements in practice is of the utmost importance for the country, particularly, to successfully fulfil its obligations taken under the Georgia-EU Association Agreement.”- said the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili at the Conference of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on sound Management of Waste and Chemicals.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili is attending a high-level conference and meetings held within the framework of the high level conference in Stockholm, the capital of the Kingdom of Sweden.

The Conference of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on the Management of Waste and Chemicals is attended by high-ranking officials from around 70 countries, including Mr. John Kerry, United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate.

The conference allows high-level participants to use the interactive platform and exchange their experiences and visions concerning the requirements of the conventions.

The conference also aims to raise the waste management/reduction-related issues in a high political

context, increase political awareness and promote the implementation of the conventions.

During the conference, Mrs. Tandilashvili participated in the discussions. According to the Deputy Minister, the leaders of the highly developed countries stressed the need to continue joint efforts to reduce waste pollution, increase international funding and ensure support in the respective area.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili informed the participants about the steps taken by Georgia to fulfil the requirements of the conventions.

The Deputy Minister also spoke about issues, regarding the establishment of the Extended Producer Responsibility, which will allow Georgia to gradually introduce a separate waste collection system, facilitate waste recycling and reduce environmental pollution with waste. Mrs. Tandilashvili stressed the need for international support in the waste management sector.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20854/>

Nino Tandilashvili speaks on behalf of Georgia at the International Conference “Stockholm +50” in Sweden



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili spoke on behalf of Georgia at the international conference “ Stockholm+50: A Healthy Planet for the Prosperity of All –Our Responsibility, Our Opportunity “. In her speech, the Deputy addressed to environmental challenges facing the country, and brought forward future priorities, while taking note of the progress made in the environmental protection field.

The conference commemorated 50 years since the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment, which made the environment a pressing global issue for the first time.

Mr. John Kerry, US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Change, the Prime Minister of Sweden and other high-rank officials attended the high-level conference, which was opened by his Majesty Carl XVI Gustav, King of Sweden.

During the conference, a high-level opening session and three ‘Leaders’ dialogues were held, where high-rank officials discussed critical issues, namely, sustainable and inclusive recovery in the post-Covid-19 period, accelerating the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development and achieving a healthy planet and prosperity for all.

At the opening session, Mrs. Tandilashvili stated, that improving environmental governance, pro-

tecting biodiversity, fulfilling international commitments to climate change, as well as, preventing waste pollution, expanding protected areas and sustainable use and management of water resources are top priorities of the Government of Georgia. The Government of Georgia consistently strives to fulfil its international obligations in the environmental protection and climate change fields.

Moreover, the Deputy Minister noted, that Georgia has already taken important steps to fulfil its responsibilities under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. Nevertheless, improving air quality, water resources management, sustainable forest management, biodiversity protection and expansion of protected areas will remain priorities for the Government of Georgia in the coming years as well.

“Georgia has taken a historic step by applying for the EU membership. We expect that the EU can make a positive decision regarding Georgia’s accession to the EU. At the same time, we understand what a responsibility this will be for our country. Thus, we are ready to continue working even more intensively to strengthen environmental democracy and environmental governance and the transition to a green economy,” – said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Kingdom of Sweden and the Republic of Finland Mr. Irakli Khutsurauli attended the international conference together with the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

The conference aimed to maximize public involvement, taking into consideration all participants’ visions and opinions. It should be mentioned, that the National consultations were held in 58 countries, embracing representatives of the state agencies, private sector and non-governmental organizations, civil activists, educational circles, community and youth organizations a few months before the Stockholm meeting.

Three National Consultation Meetings were held by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Georgia through the financial support of the Swedish Government. The meetings were conducted in Tbilisi, Batumi and Telavi cities, where participants had the opportunity to express their views and opinions on how to achieve the planetary well-being, and prosperity of all humans and the environment. The UNDP prepared a “Stockholm + 50 National Consultation Report” in Georgia in compliance with the National Consultations.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20864/>

Nino Tandilashvili meets Jenny Ohlsson, State Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Sweden



Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia held a meeting with Mrs. Jenny Olson, State Secretary to the Minister for International Development Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Sweden.

During the meeting held within the framework of the Stockholm + 50 High-Level International Conference in Stockholm, the capital of the Kingdom of Sweden, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili informed Mrs. Jenny Ohlsson about ongoing and planned reforms in Georgia, with a focus on the European integration process.

The Deputy Minister noted, that Georgia has applied for EU membership and is waiting for the most important decision. The sides highlighted trade-economic relations of Georgia, agro-food production and export potential-related issues.

The State Secretary to the Minister for International Development Cooperation, Mrs. Jenny Olson reaffirmed the support of the Swedish Government and expressed readiness for future cooperation.

The meeting between the parties was attended by the Deputy Ambassador of Georgia to the Kingdom of Sweden Mr. Levan Machavariani.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20863/>

German Development and Reconstruction Bank (KfW) provides € 16.250 million in grant financing to the Agency of Protected Areas



The grant agreement has been signed between the Agency of Protected Areas of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the German Development Bank (KfW).

Under the respective agreement, the Agency of Protected Areas will receive a € 16,250 million grant for the creation and development of new protected areas within the next 6 years.

The agreement envisages the improvement of efficiency in the management system, enhancement of monitoring of biodiversity, also, ensuring conservation of natural resources, providing professional development training opportunities for employees, and the development of ecotourism.

The new grant agreement was signed by Mr. David Iosebashvili, Chairman of the Agency for Protected Areas, and Mr. Frank Morschel, Manager of the Environmental Portfolio of the German Development and Reconstruction Bank (KfW) in Georgia. Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Otar Shamugia attended the signing ceremony.

“Taking care for the environment is one of the top priorities for our Government; We are taking crucial measures in the respective area. We have increased protected areas by about 300,000

hectares. This year we plan to establish new protected areas and increase the existing territory by 100,000 hectares.

The funding is required for the establishment of new protected areas to arrange the ecotourism infrastructure, visitor centers, and equip our rangers with the appropriate equipment; Therefore, obtaining adequate financial support is extremely important. The German government has been supporting us in the development of protected areas over the years. Currently, through the support of the German side, one of the projects is being launched in the country;

Today, we have signed a new grant agreement, which will be used for the development of protected areas. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Germany and the German Development and Reconstruction Bank for their support,” said the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

The Agency of Protected Areas of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture has a successful, long-term partnership with the Federal Republic of Germany, which laid the foundation stone for numerous development initiatives.

The new grant agreement “Biodiversity and Sustainable Local Development in Georgia” signed between the Governments of Georgia and the Federal Republic of Germany provide grant support of up to € 24 million, out of which, the Agency of Protected Areas will receive 16,250 million euros within the next 6 years; The strengthening of the capacities of the forestry sector of Adjara is envisaged by the respective agreement.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20878/>

Multiple-use areas will be established in Samukhi Valley between the Vashlovani Protected Areas and Azerbaijan-Georgia State Border



Today, at the session of the Government of Georgia, the draft law prepared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture on the creation and management of Nugzar Zazanashvili Samukhi multipurpose use area has been approved.

The establishment of a category of Samukhi Multipurpose Use Area in the extreme south-eastern part of Georgia, between the Vashlovani Protected Areas and the Azerbaijan-Georgia state border

is envisaged by the draft law on the “ Establishment and Management of Nugzar Zazanashvili Samukh Multipurpose Use Area”.

This will be the first named protected area in Georgia, which immortalizes the name of Georgian scientist, famous environmentalist and poet Mr. Nugzar Zazanashvili. Many protected areas were created in the country, through the direct involvement of Mr. Zazanashvili, who has also supervised the launching of a restoration project for the goitered gazelle in Samukhi Valley since 2013.

In 1990, the Goitered gazelle species became completely extinct in Georgia. In 2013, at the initiative of the Government of Georgia, with the financial assistance of the German Government, the WWF, the Agency for Protected Areas and many other governmental and non-governmental organizations, the restoration project of the Goitered gazelle species was launched.

Currently, about 200 gazelle species live in and around the Samukhi Valley area. This year the eighth generation of gazelles was born. The reintroduction of gazelle species from Azerbaijan (return/restoration of the species) is considered the most successful conservation and restoration project in Georgia.

The creation of a protected area will contribute to the long-term survival of the gazelle population in this region, the protection of biodiversity, the development of ecotourism and the sustainable use of traditional sheep-breeding and pastures.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20869/>

The Government of Georgia approves the Draft Law on the Establishment and Management of Tana and Tedzami Protected Areas

Today, at the session of the Government of Georgia, the draft law prepared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture on the establishment and management of the Tana and Tedzami Protected Areas has been approved.

The draft law on the creation and management of Tana and Tedzami protected areas envisages the establishment of the Tana Reserve and the Tana and Tedzami Protected Landscape, with an area of 32,850 hectares in Shida Kartli region, Gori Municipality (Tana reserve (total area 10,986 hectares) and Tana and Tedzami protected area in total (2164 hectares).

Distinguished by the diversity of flora and fauna species, the areas established in the Tana and

Tedzami valleys are an “important site” for biodiversity conservation. The new protected locations will seek to protect flora and fauna widespread in the area but included in the “Red List” of Georgia that marks endangered species.

Therefore, it is extremely important to create a protected area in the Tana and Tedzami valleys.

The protected areas will ensure the protection of unique ecosystems, preservation of historical and cultural landscape, sustainable use of natural resources, as well as the development of tourism-recreational infrastructure and full utilization of recreational potential, which will be a significant source of income for local residents.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20868/>

Georgian companies participated in the International Wine Exhibition in London

The International Wine and Spirits Exhibition “London Wine Fair 2022” was held at the Olympia London Exhibition Center, with the support of the National Wine Agency and the participation of 17 Georgian wine companies.

“The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the National Wine Agency continue to support wine companies, enabling them to establish their place in the world wine market. The exhibition in London is attended by wine experts, representatives of the wine trade and media around the world. Participation in the exhibition is the best chance for Georgian wine companies to present their products to British consumers, which contributes to the growth of Georgian wine exports to both the UK and various strategic markets around the world.” - said Mr. David Tkemaladze, Deputy Chairman of the National Wine Agency.

Within the framework of the exhibition, the head of the National Wine Agency contractor marketing company, Swirl Wine Group, British Master of Wine – Mrs. Sarah Abbott held a presentation-tasting on Georgian wine for wine professionals.

This year, about 400 participants throughout the world presented more than 3,000 alcoholic beverages of various types at the exhibition, which has been held since 1981 and is considered as one of the major events taking place in the wine sector.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Mrs. Sophio Katsarava and envoy Mr. Giorgi Saganelidze attended the exhibition.

“One of the priorities of our diplomatic mission is to promote the growth of Georgian wine exports to the UK. The respective trend is quite positive in recent years, and exports to the UK is annually increasing- said Mrs. Sophio Katsarava.

The UK is one of the strategic markets for Georgian wine, where various marketing activities are carried out with the financial and organizational support of the National Wine Agency. In January-May of this year, up to 260 thousand bottles of wine were exported from Georgia to the UK, which is 53% more than in the same period last year.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Mrs. Sophio Katsarava and the Deputy Chairman of the National Wine Agency, Mr. David Tkemaladze held a working meeting at the Embassy of Georgia to discuss issues related to the increase of Georgian wine exports to the UK. The conversation touched upon future measures, to provide a support and maintain the growth trend of Georgian wine exports and increase sales in both local restaurants, wine bars, major UK retail chains etc..

<https://wine.gov.ge/En/News/34910/>

Otar Shamugia delivers opening remarks at the 14th International Wine and Spirits Exhibition WinExpo Georgia 2022



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia opened the 14th International Wine and Spirits Exhibition WinExpo Georgia 2022.

“I am delighted that, for the first time after a pandemic pause, I have an opportunity to greet the representatives of the wine industry and devotees of the winery field within the framework of the largest exhibition of wine and spirits in the Caucasus region.

I believe, that similar types of exhibitions and events are the best platform to promote the wine, where interested companies, importers and entrepreneurs have the opportunity to establish business contacts. Wine is a part of Georgian culture and history. Therefore, it is important for us to produce quality wine, “- stated Mr. Shamugia.

In his opening remarks, the Minister also spoke about the Wine Promotion Program, which helps companies in financing their marketing expenses, the Minister also highlighted the importance of the Vineyard Cadaster Program.

Mr. Resan Kikava, the Director of the exhibition center “Expo Georgia” addressed the public.

It should be mentioned, that in 2022, the number of participants in the exhibition has significantly increased compared to previous years.

Approximately 200 companies (family wineries, medium and large enterprises, bio wine and pitcher wine producers, suppliers of wine technologies, packaging materials, accessories and services) attended the Win Expo Georgia 2022. The exhibition embraced international participants from Italy, Turkey and Germany.

Moreover, the large-scale Wine Export Forum – WinExpo Georgia 2022 aims to conduct meetings with the entrepreneurs and wine importers, discuss various export markets and give advice / provide consultations to entrepreneurs. The panel discussion will be held with the local traders, representatives of the HoReCa sector and wine shops to discuss the current market challenges. The importers from Japan, the Netherlands and Poland are invited to participate in the forum.

Under the exhibition WinExpo Georgia, in 2022, the joint competition of the Sommelier Association and Exhibition Center “Expo Georgia” SOMMELIER CHOICE will be held for the first time, which will reveal the best wine among the wines presented at the exhibition.

The jury consists of sommelier members of the Georgian Sommelier Association, who are evaluating wines, designing and managing the wine cards, and presenting them to guests in the HoReCa sector.

As part of the exhibition, a team of marketers, designers and other experts will evaluate the branding of companies and their products presented at the WinExpo Georgia 2022 and will give out a special award MARKETERS CHOICE to the selected company.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20875/>

A New, Modern Visitor Centre opens in Pshav-Khevsureti National Park



A New Modern Visitor Centre in compliance with the international standard opened in Pshav-Khevsureti National Park.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, and the Environmental Portfolio Manager of the KfW in Georgia, Mr. Frank Mörschel paid a visit to the Shatili Visitor Center.

German Ambassador to Georgia Mr. Hubert Knirsch and Mtskheta-Mtianeti State Representative Mr. Davit Nozadze also enjoyed the attendance at the opening ceremony of the visitor center, which has been built in Shatili with the assistance of the German government and German state development bank KfW.

The International Standards Visitor Center and administrative building have been organized with the financial support of the German Development Bank (KfW), with the investment amounting to GEL 4 million.

“With the support of the German government and the German Development Bank (KfW), a new, state-of-the-art standard center has been built in Shatili, where visitors will receive comprehensive information about our cultural heritage, all the tourist attractions, and biodiversity of this area. We have been cooperating with the German government for years and have already implemented

several infrastructure projects with their support. It is very important to take care of our unique biodiversity and at the same time use the opportunities of our nature, its eco-tourism potential to attract more tourists and visitors, which means more opportunities and more income for the local population,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture. Pshav-Khevsureti National Park, with its medieval towers and unique landscapes attracts both Georgian and foreign tourists. The protected area is rich in diverse ecosystems namely: sub-alpine forests, alpine meadows, Rocky Mountains, impressive valleys and lakes. It also boasts a rich cultural heritage from the Middle Ages.

“I am delighted that Georgia-Germany joint project has been successfully implemented, and a visitor center has been established, which is staffed by the rangers and employees of the Agency of Protected Areas. I’m confident, that the visitor center will receive guests from Germany and other countries as well. “I believe, that Shatili and Pshav-Khevsureti National Park will become an even more attractive tourist destination “ stated the German Ambassador to Georgia Mr. Hubert Knirsch.

The visitors will have the opportunity to get detailed information about the biodiversity and eco-tourism services in the Pshav-Khevsureti National Park; Moreover, the administration will be able to identify the needs of travelers and will properly plan/develop ecotourism products.

During the opening ceremony, Mtskheta-Mtianeti State Representative Mr. Davit Nozadze noted, that the new visitor center will attract more tourists, he also mentioned, that growing number of visitors will ultimately have a positive impact on the economic empowerment of the population of Shatili.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20879/>

Otar Shamugia hosted the USDA Regional Director Michael Francom



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr. Otar Shamugia held a meeting with Michael Francom, Regional Director of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The needs and challenges facing the agricultural sector, specifically, in ensuring the growth of crop production have been discussed at the meeting.

The sides also highlighted issues of deepening trade relations between the two countries in the field of agriculture.

The Minister spoke about the challenges facing the wheat production in the country, noting, that the state plans to implement agricultural incentive programs, which will ultimately contribute to the remarkable increase in the wheat production/productivity.

“The current situation has shown us that it is important to increase the self-sufficiency rate of primary consumption products in the shortest possible time and ensure food security. I believe, that we will be able to increase the wheat self-sufficiency rate in the country by about 50% in the coming years,” Mr. Shamugia stated.

The Minister set focus on the positive dynamics of the agricultural policy pursued by the Ministry in the export of agricultural products and noted, that the number of countries exporting Georgian wine is annually increasing. As for the US market, Georgia wine exported up to one million bottles of wine to the US market in the previous year.

Mr. Michael Franco stated, that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) plans to help Georgia in tackling challenges faced by the wheat sector. The Regional Director of the USDA highlighted current projects implemented in Georgia by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), noting, that the USDA provides support to improve the quality standards of locally produced dairy and beef products in the country.

The USDA Representative in Georgia Mr. Demna Dzirkvadze, as well as representatives of relevant Agencies within the Ministry system, attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20885/>

George Khanishvili meets the representatives of the USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. George Khanishvili hosted the representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture, USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The needs and challenges associated with the agricultural data, as well as issues, regarding, producing agricultural statistics in Georgia have been discussed by the participants, who set focus on the future cooperation issues as well.

The First Deputy Minister, Mr. George Khanishvili expressed his gratitude to the USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service for their assistance and long-term support in strengthening statistical capacity in Georgia, and for conducting various training sessions and ensuring technical support through involvement of international experts in the respective area.

During the meeting, the First Deputy Minister spoke about the systemic land registration project, which aims to create comprehensive cadastral data on real estate in the country, encourage the registration of private land plots, and promote the development of the real estate market.

The conversation touched upon issues, regarding, registration of all small entrepreneurs engaged in the agricultural activities throughout Georgia, which will enable the state to access statistical information and identify the target groups correctly, to plan and implement various incentive projects as required.

According to Mrs. Sarah Hoffmann, an expert at the USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service, the USDA will continue to assist the Georgian National Statistics Office in compiling quarterly surveys. The aforementioned studies provide the basis for the production of national and regional data.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of the USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service, David Luckenbach, Shoshana Griffith and Vito Wagner.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20867/>

The first phase of the ECO. Georgia Project to discuss at the wrap-up meeting



The National Wine Agency hosted the wrap-up meeting on the initiation phase of the ECO. Georgia project, which supports the implementation of the forest sector reform of Georgia.

The preparation of essential documents for the project, budget, technical support, as well as timeline/ deadlines and support measures have been discussed during the meeting.

The Project ECO. Georgia will help to increase forest carbon stocks, also to develop markets for energy-efficient and alternative fuels, improve living conditions for local residents, and enhance the role of local self-government in the sustainable forest management through the restoration of forests, reduction of forest loss, sustainable forest management and conservation of biodiversity.

The respective project will help Georgia to fulfil its unconditional and conditional commitments taken under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to advance Intended Nationally Determined Contributions and the implementation of the new Forest Code.

It should be mentioned, that ECO. Georgia includes 8 municipalities in three regions of the country - Guria, Mtskheta-Mtianeti and Kakheti (Akhmeta, Telavi, Dedoplistskaro, Kvareli, Tianeti, Lanchkhuti, Ozurgeti and Chokhatauri).

The project funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Swiss Confederation, and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) is being implemented with the engagement of the Agencies within the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture system - the National Forest Agency, the Rural Development Agency, the State Sub-Agency Department of Environmental Supervision and the Environmental Information and Education Center.

The Deputy Minister Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, as well as international organizations attended the meeting.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20881/>

George Khanishvili meets the Executive Director of the American company “Land O’Lakes Venture37”, John Ellenberger



Mr. George Khanishvili, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture hosted John Ellenberger, CEO of the American company Land O’Lakes Venture37.

The parties discussed the ongoing project “ Safety and Quality Investment in Livestock” (SQIL) during the meeting and drew their attention to future cooperation issues.

“We would like to express our gratitude for your support, and for sharing your knowledge and

experience, which is crucial for us. Through joint efforts, we have achieved significant results, regarding the improvement of food safety and quality standards in the livestock sector,” said Mr. Khanishvili.

The Deputy Minister spoke about the challenges facing the livestock sector, he also underlined the importance of the development of cattle breeding farms, effective management of pastures, increasing the number of animal feed bases and arranging food storage infrastructure in the country.

As stated by Mr. John Ellenberger, the progress made in the sector is visible and the cooperation with the Georgian side will be extended in the future.

The Heads of the relevant departments and a\Agencies within the Ministry system attended the meeting at the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture.

The project “ Safety and Quality Investment in Livestock” (SQIL) funded by the US Department of Agriculture in Georgia (USDA) is implemented by the American company Land O’Lakes Venture37 in cooperation with the Georgian Farmers Association.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20855/>

Otar Shamugia met with the UN Women Country Representative to Georgia, Kaori Ishikawa



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia held a meeting with the UN Women Country Representative to Georgia, Kaori Ishikawa.

The effective cooperation between the Ministry and the UN Women within which the Rural Development Agency developed a greenhouse pilot program for women has been highlighted during the meeting.

The Minister spoke at length about the importance of women’s economic empowerment in vulnerable groups and promoting their participation in the decision-making process at the local level.

Mrs. Kaori Ishikawa noted that the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture is a good example of cooperation, regarding gender equality issues, he also focused on the progress made within the project.

Most importantly, the second phase of the project (2021-2024) was launched in August 2021, which envisaged providing support to women, as well as, institutional development and improvement of the law.

The UN Women project “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus (WEESC)” is being implemented with the financial support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Austrian Development Agency (ADC). Moreover, cooperation with the Rural Development Agency is underway within the framework of this project.

The First Deputy Minister Mr. George Khanishvili and representatives of the relevant service attended the meeting.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20887/>

George Khanishvili meets the representatives of Mawarid Holding Investment, the largest holding in the United Arab Emirates



Mr. Giorgi Khanishvili, First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture met with the representatives of Mawarid Holding Investment, a major holding in the United Arab Emirates.

The conversation touched upon the issues of future trade-economic cooperation and investment opportunities in the agricultural field of Georgia.

The “Mawarid Holding Investment” operates as a holding company bringing together 10 compa-

nies under one umbrella. The livestock farming and animal feed production are the main activities of the Holding, which employs 15,000 people, and is actively engaged in implementing the National Food Safety Program in the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Khanishvili informed the representatives of “Mawarid Holding Investment” about the agricultural development projects and drew his attention to the development potential of livestock farming, sheep feedlot, and grain crops.

The First Deputy Minister spoke extensively about the development potential of the Imereti Agro-zone Greenhouse Cluster Development Project.

According to the representative of the Mawarid Holding Investment, Mr. Mohammad Al Saeed, Georgia has significant potential for agricultural development. In reconciling our interests, the cooperation will be mutually effective, as mentioned by Mr. Mohammad Al Saeed.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the United Arab Emirates Mr. Paata Kalandadze and representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry attended the meeting.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20886/>

George Khanishvili meets the Chairman of the Turkish-Georgian Business Council and representatives of the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEIK)



Mr. George Khanishvili, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture hosted the Chairman of the Turkish-Georgian Business Council, Osman Chalishkan-Mzhavanadze and representatives of the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEIK).

The importance of a partner relationship between the two countries was underlined by participants, who put focus on the opportunities for deepening trade-economic relations in the future, also to start investing in the agricultural sector in Georgia.

Mr. Khanishvili informed the representatives of the business sector about the state projects promoting agricultural development in the country.

The First Deputy Minister spoke at length about the country’s potential for the development of livestock, sheep farming /breeding, also the development of crop cultures such as tea, berry and grain crops, he drew his attention to the Greenhouse Cluster Development project “Imereti agro-zone”, and highlighted possibilities for further development of greenhouses in Georgia.

According to Mr. Osman Chalishkan-Mzhavanadze, Georgia is an important partner for Turkey and trade relations in the agricultural field will be further deepened.

The Heads and representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry attended the meeting.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20871/>