



# Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

APRIL/2021

## The Government of Georgia adopts the MEPA - initiated documents



The Government of Georgia adopted following documents developed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia – “Nationally Determined Contribution” (NDC) under the Paris Agreement and “2030 Climate Change Strategy and its 2021-2023 Action Plan”. Following the updated NDC Georgia is fully committed to an uncon-

ditional limiting target of 35 % below the 1990 level of its domestic total greenhouse gas emissions by 2030; Georgia is also committed to a target of 50-57% of its total greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990, in case the global greenhouse gas emissions follow the 2 degrees or 1.5 degrees scenarios respectively, with international support.

Georgia’s “2030 Climate Change Strategy and its 2021-2023 Action Plan” sets out long term vision and the short-term agenda for the implementation of Georgia’s 2030 greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction target for climate change mitigation, as set in Georgia’s updated NDC. The document covers sectoral chapters on energy generation and transmission, waste, building, industry, transport, agriculture, and forestry. The Action Plan identifies actions that should be implemented during the 2021-2023 period, which have direct relevance for the reduction of GHG emissions. The Paris Agreement, which marks rebirth of global politics aiming at significant decrease of climate change risks and negative influence of economy, as well as limiting global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C, entered into force for Georgia on June 7, 2017.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20309/>

## Georgia prepares for the United Nations’ Food Systems Summit



Georgia has launched preparatory works for the UN Food Systems Summit, scheduled in September 2021. The Government of Georgia will be supported by the UN agencies operating in Georgia, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The first preparatory working meeting was attended by Mr Giorgi Khanishvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and Ms Sabine Machl, UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia.

*“The COVID-19 pandemic has posed numerous challenges to Georgia and the whole world. Amidst the situation, the Secretary-General’s decision to handle the food security issues under his oversight and convene World Food Systems Summit, is crucial. Georgia, as the UN member country, will be actively involved in the summit and will contribute to the solutions of challenges the world faces” - Deputy Minister Khanishvili stated.*

The UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia, Ms Sabine Machl stressed out

the need to join forces and seek for the ways to transform global food systems.

*“We need to think how to get healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems. Our dialogue will define Georgia’s path in achieving these goals. All countries participating in the summit are expected to develop recommendations for establishing sustainable global food systems” - Ms Machl stated.*

The working meeting was conducted online and attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, FAO, as well as other respective organizations and experts.

The United Nations’ Food Systems Summit is a global-scale event, which will be hosted by the UN Secretary-General in September 2021. Prior to the summit, all participatory states will conduct member state summit dialogues, which should lead to the development of recommendations towards the development of sustainable food systems for the global community. The participant countries are expected to present the recommendations during a meeting scheduled in July this year. The Summit will enjoy presence of various stakeholders, such as scholars, business, policy, healthcare and academia, as well as youth organizations, environmental activists, and other key stakeholders. The attendees will scrutinize to ensure positive changes toward world’s food systems and production of healthy food upon less impact on environment and ensure global sustainable food systems by year 2030.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20326/>

## European Union will launch a new Action in Georgia with a strong focus on environment



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Ms Nino Tandilashvili met with the Attaché of the EU Delegation to Georgia, Mr Alexandre Darras to discuss the details of the essential areas and priorities to be covered by the EU Annual Action Programme 2021, where the environmental protection is a key component. The programme will be implemented during 2022-2027 and provide support for environmental protection amounting up to 20 million euros.

The programme will cover areas such as water resources management, improving ambient air quality, waste management, reducing industrial emissions, developing ecotourism infrastructure in protected areas, environmental education and awareness raising and supporting the implementation of Georgia's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

At the end of the year, the EU will launch two Technical Assistance (TA) projects in Georgia amounting to 2.5 million euros.

Heads of the various departments/bodies under the Ministry attended the meeting. <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20297/>

## Minister Davitashvili opens online session of the 69 th Session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Levan Davitashvili attended the 69th Session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), which was conducted remotely and emphasized on complementing circular economy and natural resources' sustainable management.

Minister Davitashvili briefed attendees on environmental policy of the country, named circular economy enhancement as a core priority, as well as importance of fostering green economy. Minister also emphasized on softening climate change, production of renewable energy and importance of sustainable management of natural resources.

Attendees of the remote session had an opportunity to familiarize themselves on core programming of the rural and agricultural development strategy, spanning across 2021 – 2027. The 69th Session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) was attended by high-ranking officials of 20 countries.



## Minister Davitashvili met with Executive Director of the Caucasian Nature Fund (CNF), Tobias Munchmeyer



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Levan Davitashvili met with Executive Director of the Caucasian Nature Fund (CNF), Mr Tobias Munchmeyer to discuss successful cooperation and set prospects for future cooperation.

In the course of the meeting, Minister Davitashvili briefed Mr Munchmeyer on efforts deployed toward protected areas and biodiversity. Despite of the pandemic, Georgia has significantly expanded protected areas and tourism infrastructure. Mr Munchmeyer has noted that the CNF will complement enhancement of protected areas in Georgia, as well as promoting biodiversity monitoring and fostering ranger institute. The meeting enjoyed presence of Deputy Minister of MEPA, Ms Nino Tandilashvili, as well as representatives of other agencies and units of the Ministry.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20305/>



## Minister Davitashvili attends the 8th Forest Europe Ministerial



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Levan Davitashvili attended the Eighth Forest Europe Ministerial; in his opening remarks, Minister Davitashvili briefed on the importance of legislative efforts targeting sustainable development of forests and the sector itself. Minister also emphasized on forest sector reform efforts in Georgia, which has been complemented through national inventory and supporting biodiversity.

*“I would like to thank partner and donor organizations for actively and meaningfully complementing forest sector reform process. Environmental protection is a priority for Georgia. Frankly speaking, climate change is a major global challenge, which is connected with sustainable development of forests. We are working actively to safeguard Georgia’s greenery, environment and complement softening efforts of climate change” – Minister Davitashvili stated.*

The Forest Europe Ministerial has been hosted by Bratislava, Slovakia. In frames of the Ministerial, Minister Davitashvili joined forces in signing the Bratislava Ministerial Resolution and Declaration.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20321/>

## Deputy Minister Khanishvili met with the Czech Development Agency

The first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Giorgi Khanishvili met with Jan Chernik, Head of the Czech Development Agency; attendees discussed capacities for enhancing phytosanitary possibilities, as well as complementary projects on veterinary, as well as future cooperation prospects.

It has been noted that from next year – Georgian students will enroll to BA and MA programs in Czechia for deepening their knowledge. At the primary stage, a group of students will be selected at the Samtskhe-Javakheti State University in Akhaltsikhe, which will receive education on phytosanitary and veterinary programs at higher education institutions of Czechia.

*“We have been cooperating with the Czech Development Agency for years, which has resulted into harmonizing Georgia’s legislation to the European Union. Educational programming will be vital, which will complement agri-*

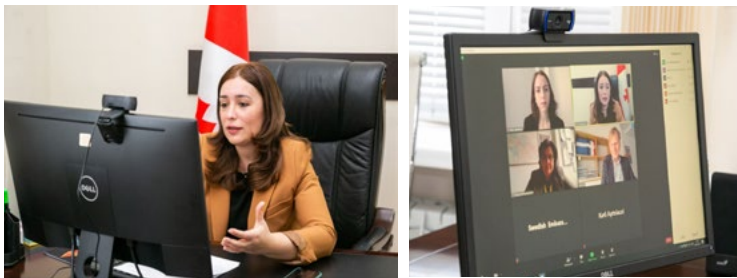


*ultural development and recruitment of the respective professionals” – The first Deputy Minister Khanishvili stated.*

The meeting at the MEPA was attended by Mr Zurab Chekurashvili, head of the National Food Agency and representatives of the Czech Development Agency.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20300/>

## Deputy Minister Tandilashvili met with Deputy Head of the Swedish Embassy and Head of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Erik Illes



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Ms Nino Tandilashvili hosted an online meeting with the Deputy Head of the Swedish Embassy and Head of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Mr Erik Illes. Deputy Minister thanked Mr Illes for the fruitful and continuous support for years, which sets promising perspectives for future cooperation. In the course of the meeting, attendees discussed joint projects and upcoming cooperation prospects.

In the course of the meeting, Ms Tandilashvili provided a brief information on the law “On Environmental Liability”, which establishes a new system of environmental liability based on “polluter pays principle”, as well as the legislative amendments aiming at curbing the emissions from industrial facilities in the country and this way supporting the alignment to the European ambient air quality management system; she touched upon importance of wildlife protection, expansion of protected areas and their management, climate change mitigation, and cooperation in this regard. Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stressed out that financial and technical assistance is vital for to increase the effectiveness of environmental protection, as well as sharing knowledge and expertise.

Mr Illes emphasized that environmental protection and tackling climate change remain as top priorities and expressed willingness to continue cooperation in this regard. Representatives of MEPA’s relevant departments, as well as Development Cooperation Programme Officer at the Embassy of Sweden, Ms Khatuna Zaldastanishvili attended the online meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20303/>

## USAID Georgia to complement hazelnut industry enhancement programming



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20298/>

Support and prospects for enhancement of hazelnut industry has been scrutinized by the first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Giorgi Khanishvili in a meeting with Ms Marika Olson, Economic Growth Office Director, USAID/Georgia and Mr David Tsiklauri, Senior Private Sector Development Advisor. Deputy Minister Khanishvili expressed his gratitude to ongoing and consistent support from the USAID Georgia toward the Ministry; he also stressed out how vital strengthening associations for developing the industry is, thus, approached USAID with the latter objective.

Director Olson embraced positive trends of hazelnut industry development and also demonstrated willingness to complement other associations and industries.

The meeting enjoyed presence of Ms Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister of MEPA and Mr Zurab Chekurashvili, head of the National Food Agency, as well as representatives of the respective agencies of the Ministry.

## Deputy Minister Khanishvili hosts Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) Resident Representative and agrarian cooperative's expert

The first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Giorgi Khanishvili met with the Resident Representative of the JICA, Yukihiko Ejiri and Terenuma Hiroshi, expert on agrarian cooperatives. Parties to the meeting shared experience on cooperatives in the respective countries and briefed on the needs and potential cooperation prospects related to agriculture.

*Deputy Minister Khanishvili discussed incumbent reforms of agriculture in Georgia, as well as projects deployed on enhancement of cooperatives in the country, as well as importance of regional units of extension. "Our objective is to transform the Rural Development Agency into a European-style agency. The respective Agency, apart from complementing agricultural enhancement efforts, also fosters environmental protection matters – including effective usage of forest and natural resources. Moreover, fostering cooperatives is a vital objective, which will increase sustainability of these" – Deputy Minister Khanishvili stated.*

The Japanese attendees of the meeting expressed their willingness to formulate agricultural working groups, which will have agricultural experts on board. As part of technical assistance – sectoral trainings will be entailed, which will also cover study visits to Japan. In the course of the discussions, attendees touched upon implementation of the two-year project, which aims at formulating agrarian-agricultural cooperative model and scrutinizing capabilities for establishing the latter, as well as drafting recommendations.



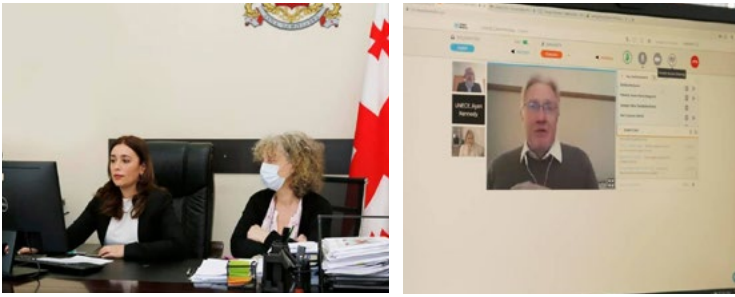
<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20314/>

## 69th session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) hosts the conference “Batumi Talk Show: Scoring SDGs through action on green economy and clean air”

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) hosted 69th online session with the following theme “Batumi Talk Show: Scoring SDGs through action on green economy and clean air”, which was attended by Ms Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA).

The conference was jointly organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and regional office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and aimed at complementing efforts for fulfilling commitments to the Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E) and the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air





<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20328>

(BACA) initiative since both were launched in Batumi, Georgia, in 2016. The BIG and BACA are crucial regional environmental initiatives, which embrace voluntary commitments undertaken by the regional countries on ensuring green economy and clean air. In the course of the regional conference, representatives of six countries discussed the process of undertaking liabilities within the BIG and BACA initiatives and briefed on contemporary commitments. During the sessions, Deputy Minister Tandilashvili provided attendees with detailed information undertaking seven commitments voluntarily and stressed out on the importance of active engagement of local municipalities.

## Deputy Minister Nino Tandilashvili attends national advisory council's session on the Global Environmental Fund's (GEF) small grants

Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Ms Nino Tandilashvili attended a meeting of the national advisory council's session on the Global Environmental Fund's (GEF) small grants. In the course the session, attendees scrutinized small grants proposals drafted by the non-governmental and community organizations, which aim at complementing innovative, inclusive and replica initiatives. These sessions will foster dialogue between civil society, government and private sector for environmental governance enhancement. Moreover, these initiatives will support practical and accessible education on environmental protection and active engagement of women in environmental protection affairs.

The GEF's small grants program is implemented as a joint effort by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the MEPA.

At this stage, there are 72 applications submitted, which will be scrutinized by the council for nominating winners. Funds allocated for the contest are 250, 000 USD.



The GEF has been implementing small grants program in Georgia since 2012, which has resulted into over 70 local and successful projects implemented and amounted to over 1,9 million USD.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20311/>

## Deputy Minister Nino Tandilashvili met with Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA)



Ms Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia met with Coordinator of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) Necla Demirdağ. In the course of the meeting, Coordinator Demirdağ expressed willingness to conduct trainings on fire extinguishing and first-aid support together with Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency of Turkey (AFAD).

*“Strengthening capacity of forestry sector is vital. Sharing expertise will empower our specialists to ensure fire extinguishing and fight pests” – Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stated.*

In the course of the meeting, Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stressed out successful cooperation between TIKA and Environmental Information and Education Centre, which has resulted into trainings on cattle farming and food safety.

Deputy Minister Tandilashvili discussed development of aquaculture in Georgia and importance of sharing expertise of Turkey, which is a leading country in the world.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20295/>



## The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia hosts a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Economy of Armenia



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) hosted a meeting with the Delegation of Armenia, led by the Deputy Minister of Economy of the Republic of Armenia, Mr Arman Khojoyan. In the course of the meeting, Deputy Minister of MEPA, Mr Otar Shamugia stressed out importance of bilateral relations in trade and economic relations. Deputy Minister Khojoyan briefed on challenges and incumbent environment amidst the pandemic turmoil in the Republic of Armenia.

Attendees discussed capabilities for exporting agrarian production to international markets, as well as adhering to the rules of destination of origin, geographical tags and labelling. The meeting at the Ministry enjoyed presence of MEPA's various agencies and divisions, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Finance and the National Intellectual Property Center of Georgia "Sakpatenti".

In an official visit to Georgia, Deputy Minister Khojoyan visited the National Wine Agency, where he familiarized himself with organized efforts for conducting harvest and the corresponding strategy and expertise elaborated by the Government of Georgia. Deputy Minister Khojoyan also professed an interest in cadaster program of vineyards in Georgia; cadaster serves as an integral aspect for enhancing viticulture and producing high-quality wine.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20302/>

## Deputy Minister Solomon Pavliashvili attended the UNDP - organized online meeting



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Solomon Pavliashvili attended a remote meeting hosted by the Unit-

ed Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP's innovations teams have been joining forces with the Czech Government (Czech UNDP Partnership for SDGs) since 2019 for organizing series of meetings with a meaningful engagement of scientific, private, non-governmental and expert groups – aiming at harmonizing research and policy development efforts, upon enhancing contemporary research methods and sharing expertise on incumbent studies.

*"I would like to express my gratitude to the space, which empowers private and public sector representatives to share their scholar expertise for future consideration. Such platform is vital for both, enhancement of environmental protection and agriculture. It is always interesting to learn about other countries' practices from an angle of legislative and private initiatives. We have had a pleasure to observe experience of Czechia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had been briefed by the Czech expert" – Deputy Minister Pavliashvili stated.*

In the course of the meeting, Deputy Minister briefed about waste separation, processing, composting and recycling. He thanked the Czech Government for complementing programming, which is tailored to development objectives.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/Ge/News/Details/20322/>