



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

MAY/2021

Qvevri granted with the status of protected geographical indication



Qvevri is the first non-food product, which has been indicated into the State Register of Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications. The respective certificate has been awarded to the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Levan Davitashvili by Mr Mindia Davitadze, Chairperson of the Georgian National Intellectual Property Center “Sakpatenti”.

“The Georgian wine has been harvesting an increasing popularity both, at Georgian and foreign markets, which has significantly boosted visibility. Therefore, Qvevri requires more attention as the latter has a profound impact on the wine quality. UNESCO’s recognition has imposed a bigger responsibility upon us. The Government has had endless efforts for promoting wine made in Qvevri. The Ministry has shaped a standard of Qvevri, which embraces historical heritage and preserves our memory in this regard. We have actively joined efforts with the Sakpatenti and our cooperation has harvested that the Qvevri is the first-ever non-food product to have a status of the protected geographical location in Georgia. The latter achievement will accelerate the process of promoting Georgian Qvevri wine both, in Georgia, as well as abroad” – Minister Levan Davitashvili stated.

The year of 2013 has marked recognition of an ancient Georgian traditional wine-making method as the UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, which celebrated uniqueness of the respective method and is a message to an entire world that wine-making heritage is at core of Georgian culture.

The MEPA has accurately filled out the respective registration forms, which has dealt with size, shape, material, composition, production methodology and other characteristics of Qvevri. These peculiarities are vital for improving Georgian wine and serves as yet another progressive step made forward.

“The Qvevri has been added to the State Register of Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications. The respective registration process has been initiated by Minister; thus, I would like express my appreciation for such an initiative. The process was launched last year and has successfully commenced every stage” – Mr Mindia Davitadze stated.

Transforming Qvevri into the geographical indication is a vital event for Georgia, which has enjoyed 8 thousand years of an uninterrupted history. Georgian traditional wine-making is closely tied to Qvevri, which is an intangible intellectual resource of the Georgian nation.

Almost each and every Georgian wine-making company produces Qvevri wine, which has embraced an increased export volume. At this stage, some of the wine-makers are producing wine in Italy, USA, France, Spain, Japan, Slovenia and other countries with the Georgian Qvevri.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20361/>

Minister Davitashvili: “Cooperation between Georgia and Germany is an outstanding practice of friendly and fruitful partnership”

Embassy of Georgia to the Federal Republic of Germany has initiated the first thematic digital meeting regarding the cooperation of agricultural industries in frames of the bi-lateral “Georgian – German Business Dialogue”. The meeting was attended by Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture, Mr Hans-Joachim Fuchtel, Ambassador of Georgia to the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Levan Izoria, Ambassador of the Federal Republic to Georgia, H.E. Hubert Knirsch, as well as leaders of the business unions and representatives of relevant economic agencies.

In the course of the webinar, around 100 attendees joined sessions. Speakers stressed out successful cooperation between the two countries and discussed

possibilities for boosting rural-agricultural production of Georgia into the German market.

In his opening remarks, Minister Davitashvili stressed out importance for deepening trade relations between the two countries – *“At first, I would like to express gratitude to the German Government for supporting Georgia in environmental protection and agriculture affairs. Cooperation between Germany and Georgia is an outstanding practice of friendly and fruitful cooperation. German business in Georgia is successful, which can become an additional stimulus for attracting new investments. Fulfillment of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTA) is highly important for us. Agricultural production of Georgia has a great potential.*

We will be delighted to have an opportunity to deepen irrigation infrastructure, food safety and control, as well as raising awareness among the farmers". In the course of the sessions, Minister Davitashvili spoke about possibilities for exporting wine, as well as other agricultural production. Minister encouraged to profess interest into the "Imereti Agro Zone" and its innovative greenhouse cluster.

At the first session of the Georgian – German Business Dialogue", Ambassador of Georgia to the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Levan Izoria discussed prospects for deepening trade-economic cooperation between the two countries.

Ambassador of the Federal Republic to Georgia, H.E. Hubert Knirsch highlighted that Georgia is an important partner for Germany and expressed willingness to deepen relations in terms of investments and partner cooperation.

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Deputy Minister Giorgi Khanishvili attends a webinar on "Potential brewing for Azerbaijani and Georgian tea industries"



The first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Giorgi Khanishvili attended a webinar on "Potential brewing for Azerbaijani and Georgian tea industries", which was organized by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) and the FAO Investment Centre.

In the course of the webinar, attendees scrutinized matters related to tea industries potential in Georgia aiming at raising international awareness, sharing best practices of tea industries as well as joint projects of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The presentations have reviewed tea sector's challenges and future plans in Georgia and Azerbaijan.

"Georgia, together with Azerbaijan held a crucial role in supplying tea to the Soviet Union countries. In Georgia, tea plantations had span across 65, 000 hectares. Nowadays, we have numerous projects, which are vital for enhancing tea brewing. Next year, we are going to emphasize on improving tea quality" – Deputy Minister Khanishvili stated.

In the course of the meeting, Mr Inam Karimov, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as representatives of the International Financial Institutions (EBRD, West Bank), relevant Ministries and state agencies, as well as research-scientific centers and tea brewers' companies attended the meeting.

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Deputy Minister Shamugia met with representatives of the World Bank



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Otar Shamugia hosted an online session with the World Bank to discuss the "Irrigation and Land Market Development Project", as well as entailing outcomes and working plan.

Attendees to the meeting professed an interest into discussing Kvemo Samgori (Kakheti) and upper (Gori and Kareli) irrigation systems' internal rehabilitation, as well as security of ongoing construction of Algeti and Sioni reservoirs. Attendees touched upon water consumer organizations' plans, irrigation rate reform and institutional strengthening of the LTD Georgian Amelioration. In the course of the meeting, attendees discussed priorities, which shall be covered upon cooperating with the World Bank.

At an online meeting, Mr Pierrick Fraval, Project manager at the World Bank, as well as other experts of the World Bank, representatives of the MEPA's hydro-melioration and land management departments, Georgia's implementing unit and LTD "Georgian Amelioration" attended the meeting.

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Deputy Minister Nino Tandilashvili met with Economic and Trade Attaché of the Kingdom of Spain, Guillermo Kessler



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Ms Nino Tandilashvili met with Economic and Trade Attaché of the Kingdom of Spain, Mr Guillermo Kessler. In the course of the meeting, attendees scrutinized prospects for trade-economic relations between the two countries, including environmental programming, as well as agricultural and winery industries.

Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stressed out importance of successful bilateral relations and stressed-out possibilities for future cooperation and programming.

Mr Kessler highlighted that Georgia is a country of diverse possibilities, therefore, the Kingdom of Spain regards Georgia as a reliable and interesting partner

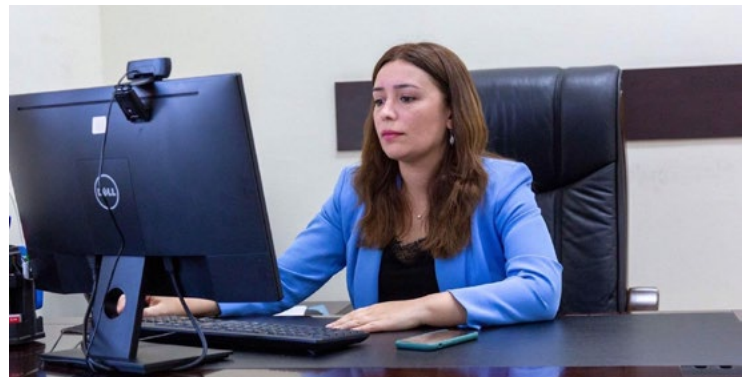
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Deputy Minister Nino Tandilashvili attends the Fifth High - level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment

Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Ms Nino Tandilashvili attended the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment organized as a joint effort by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of Austria in frames of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme. In the course of the meeting, attendees scrutinized matters related to transport means, impact on peoples' health and an environment.

“Georgia has cultivated a multi-sectoral council on climate change, which aims at ensuring an effective deployment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. The Council has supported Georgia’s Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), which has been recently adopted by the Government of Georgia. Moreover, Georgia has just adopted the Climate Change Strategy for 2030 and Climate Change Action Plan for 2021 – 2023. The core objective of the Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) is to ensure activities for transport, health and environmental protection sectors, which will be translated into green and healthy transport. We are fully committed to joining forces and developing green and healthy transport. Therefore, Georgia has adopted decreased emissions as one of the priorities” – Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stated.

The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP), a joint programme of UNECE and WHO/Europe, provides a unique intersectoral policy platform and brings together ministers and high-level officials from the governments of 56 Member States of the United Nations Eco-



omic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the WHO European region, and representatives of international, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, academia, the business community and other key stakeholders in the fields of transport, health and environment. The program complements an integrated policy approach, which aims at joining forces between transport, health and environmental protection sectors in Europe for ensuring green and healthy transport in Europe.

The meeting was concluded by attendees adopting transport, health and environmental Declaration of Vienna. The Vienna Declaration sets vision of transitioning to clean, safe, healthy and inclusive mobility and transport systems. The meeting also resulted into adopting the first Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20352/>

Madrid hosts the Georgian delegation at the presentation of “Georgia – the cradle of wine”



The IE Business School Madrid hosted a presentation of “Georgia – the cradle of wine”, which was attended by the representatives of international community, business and academia. The respective event aimed at familiarizing attendees on the history of Georgian wine.

In his speech, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Mr Levan Davitashvili stressed out importance of attracting interest to the Georgian wine at one of the most high-ranking

business schools, which will complement efforts of promoting Georgian wine and raising awareness of the latter.

“I would like to express my appreciation to one of the leading universities in Madrid and one of the high-ranking business schools of the world, where Georgians are also enrolled to, for professing interest into Georgian wine’s success story. Such development will complement raising awareness on Georgian wine and promoting the latter, due to high number of students enrolled to business at the IE from the whole world” – Minister Davitashvili stated.

Minister Davitashvili also spoke about various steps to be undertaken in the wine industry in the nearest future. Georgia is a cradle of wine and has peculiar methods for wine production, therefore, there is a need for boosting commercialization and foreseeing increased production and export of Georgian wine. Minister Davitashvili also stressed out that Georgia is a guest to the International Tourism Fair and highlighted new trends identified in the tourism industry.

“Georgia has always regarded tourism industry as an outstanding one. Unfortunately, the pandemic turmoil has decreased tourism in the whole world and has caused major challenges to the tourism industry. Nevertheless, incoming tourists have already been increasing and the industry is gradually reinstating pre-pandemic situation. We have embraced new trends that gain bigger interest, such as ecotourism, agro and wine tourism, which Georgia is so esteemed with” – Minister Davitashvili stated.

The presentation “Georgia – the cradle of wine” was attended by Ms Natia Turnava, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Chair of the



Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee, MP David Songhulashvili, Ambassador of Georgia to the Kingdom of Spain, H.E Ilia Giorgadze and Mr David Saganelidze, Executive Director of the Partnership Fund.

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Second meeting of the Georgia – Hungary Agriculture Working Group



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) hosted the second meeting of the Georgia – Hungary Agriculture Working Group, which was opened by Deputy Minister of MEPA, Ms Nino Tandilashvili and Mr David Benchik, Deputy State Secretary in International Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary.

“Complementing agricultural development is our priority. The state has deployed an effective and consistent policy, which has resulted into tangible positive changes. Each year, local production is boosting and export of Georgian production is increasing. Frankly speaking, our country can aim higher and we have a potential required to. Sharing experience of the European countries and effective cooperation with them empowers us to fully absorb the potential. I hope that visit of the Hungarian Delegation has been highly productive; we are confident that relations between our two countries will be further tightened and harvest mutual benefit” – Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stated.

Mr David Benchik, Deputy State Secretary in International Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary stated that enhancement of agriculture and export of Georgian production has great potential in Georgia. Hungary has a demonstrated readiness to tighten cooperation with Georgia with regard to research-academic affairs, which will be mutually beneficial for both countries.

In the course of the working meeting, attendees touched upon matters related to bioproduction, organic farming, aquaculture enhancement, as well as food and wine production matters and research-academic projects. Attendees scrutinized matters related to fishing, aquaculture, viticulture, wine-making and possibilities for cooperation in this regard.

The meeting was attended by the heads of agencies and bodies under the MEPA, as well as representatives of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and Scientific Research Center.

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The Hungarian Agriculture Ministry's Delegation visited the State - deployed agrarian enterprises in Kakheti



Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Ms Nino Tandilashvili and the Hungarian Agriculture Ministry's Delegation visited the Kakheti region and the respective enterprises, which have been established upon the State-deployed programs.

The Hungarian Delegation has been led by Mr David Benchik, Deputy State Secretary in International Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary. Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stressed out importance of the Delegation's visit for deepening relations between the two countries in agriculture programming.

"I would like to especially emphasize on the prospects of scientific and research programming and cooperation between the two countries. We have scrutinized these matters with an engagement of the private sector and the Delegation" – Deputy Minister Tandilashvili stated.

"We have visited Georgia to deepen relations with regard to trade affairs. Throughout the visit, we have observed those enterprises, which have been established upon the State-deployed programs. We have shared experience that Georgia has accrued upon enhancing agricultural spheres. We visited the „Agri Management Group of Georgia“, to observe how hazelnut production is held and how can such production be integrated into the European Union's hazelnut industry. I believe that these are just the first steps and the future is promising" – Mr David Benchik, Deputy State Secretary in International Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary stated.

During the visit, the Delegation paid a visit to the cattle farm "White Farm" and LTD "Badagi +", which produces Churchkhela.

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Georgia to host the first - ever National Agrarian Olympic Tournament

Georgia will host the first-ever National Agrarian Olympic Tournament, which aspires to foster agrarian education and professions, raise awareness among young people on agrarian-agricultural fields, as well as boost non-formal education efforts to the respective sector.

"Apart from promoting agrarian affairs, the agrarian education becomes highly crucial. We aspire to inspire those, who have motivation in these fields, thus, we have initiated the first-ever agrarian Olympic tournament under aegis of the Ministry. The idea has a capacity to turn into a popular and annual event in the future. Frankly speaking, the Agro-Olympic tournament will be a highly effective platform for people in agricultural sector or interested in the latter to demonstrate their knowledge. The tests have been designed by professional experts and specialists. The respective tournament will play a crucial role in promoting agrarian education and the field in general" – Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili stated.

The tournament consists of the following target groups:

- Specialists with higher or vocational education in agrarian field;
- Students enrolled to agrarian-focused universities or vocational education institutions;



- Farmers, who are involved into agrarian-agricultural activities and have accrued sufficient knowledge and experience;
- Pupils aged 14 – 18, both, enrolled at public/private schools, as well as specialized colleges.

"We would like to provide any person interested into agrarian spheres to demonstrate their knowledge, increase visibility toward em-

players and discover even more opportunities” - Mamuka Meskhi, Assistant Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Georgia stated.

An Olympic tournament will be held in three stages. The first stage will open up registration process; the second phase will invite registered participants to testing (via online platform, distant) on matters that they had indicated from agricultural-agrarian fields; the third stage will nominate winners after the testing results.

The respective fields will be utilized for nominating a winner (1st, 2nd and 3rd places) per each category – farmer, student and a specialist, pupil. Winners within the Olympic tournament will be awarded with prizes and certificates.

“National Agrarian Olympic Tournament will be a novelty in Georgia; it also happens to be a novelty for the European Union. We are expecting that the tournament will cultivate interest among more people to get involved into agriculture and agrarian sphere” - Mr Alexander Karner, Head of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)’s South Caucasus Office.

The National Agrarian Olympic tournament will be organized in Georgia for the first time. Long-term strategic objectives of the latter tournament are to establish the Tournament in an agrarian sphere, as well as on a national spectrum respectively.

The tournament will be organized under aegis of the MEPA. The respective concept has been developed by the “Association for the Agriculture Development”. Organizers of the tournament are the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)’s South Caucasus Office and the Association for the Agriculture Development. The partners of the Tournament are the USAID Agriculture Program, GRETA / Green Econ-



omy project: sustainable mountain tourism and organic agriculture, the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN), Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC). <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/20360/>

The Government of Georgia adopts the “Rule on Forest Use”



Today, the session of the Government of Georgia adopted the “rule on forest use”; the respective by-law has been fully harmonized with the new “Forest Code” adopted by the Parliament of Georgia in May 2020, and entailing sustainable management principles of forest. The new “rule on forest rule” has determined legislative mechanisms on sustainable management and use of forests, which will safeguard sustainable use of Georgia’s forest resources upon enhancing, as well as improvement of characteristics, protection and maintenance of ecological worth of forests. Access of local dwellers, public and business sectors to the forest resources will be enhanced, both – timber (materials, wood), as well as non-timber materials, which are transformed into

producing alternative and ecological energy resources (briquettes, pallets); these also complements to decreasing impact on forests. Moreover, access to forest resources will be handled in a fully open and transparent process, which implies that production of wood and timber materials will only be provided by forest management bodies, who will process these with a special rule and allocate at storages (so called “business yards”), which will operate at each and every municipality nationwide. Realization of forest resources will be processed upon an auction rule (mostly with regard to high quality, so called – material timber), as well as direct procurement (wood and forest waste).

Determining special types of forest use is the highlight of the respective rule. These types are non-timber resources of forest, products processed of timber plants and secondary materials produces by wood. Prior to adopting the new rule on forest use – utilizing the above-mentioned resources for commercial use had been prohibited. The new rule and law have made it possible to enable commercialization of these resources, in accordance with the market demand. Moreover, the rule enables usage of forest for tourist, recreational, sport and other cultural-healthy endeavors, which will boost Georgia’s unique eco-tourism potential and expand recreational-tourism actions beyond protected areas and into each and every forest of Georgia.

The Government of Georgia-adopted rule for forest use adopts the principles of the forest code and empowers Georgia’s citizens to sustainably utilize forest resources in a multifunctional capacity.

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