



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

APRIL 2023

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Otar Shamugia presents the Activity Report 2022 of the Ministry to the Parliament of Georgia.



Within the frames of the “Ministerial Hour”, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia is presenting the results of the activities carried out by the Ministry in 2022 and highlighting current challenges and future visions in the Parliament of Georgia.

“Before going directly to the presentation of the report, I would like to emphasize that economic development, and at the same time, the protection of the environment, maintaining its sustainability, and rational use of natural resources represent an important challenge for our country and the whole world. Therefore, all the activities, programs, and events that we plan and implement, on the one hand, are aimed at maximally and effectively utilizing the potential of the agricultural sector, promoting the production and sale of competitive Georgian products that are in demand on international markets, and on the other hand, we seek to safeguard our environment to the greatest extent possible and protect our water, land, and forest resources from pressure and damage while developing and expanding our production. Consistent implementation of the environmental policy should ensure sustainable and balanced development of the country. With all of the above in mind, we will meet the standards set by the international community,” said the Minister.

The Minister noted that the situation in the region is an enormous challenge for the whole world.

“Each of us shares the gravity of the situation caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In this context, we have even more responsibility to protect the interests of the country, maintain peace, avoid a difficult political, and socio-economic situation, and keep moving towards our primary goal- European integration”, stated Mr. Shamugia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21230/>

A new project will be implemented in Georgia to support the low-emission and climate-resilient agricultural sector.



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is launching a new project in Georgia, aiming to support the low-emission and climate-resilient development of the agriculture sector in the country.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Representative in Georgia, Mr. Raimund Jehle signed a new two-year project.

The project “Strategic Readiness to Support the Updated NDC and its Climate Action for Georgia: Transforming Agriculture Sector through Low-Emissions and Climate-Resilient Pathways” is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The project has a budget of \$500,000 and will be implemented over two years.

During the meeting, Mr. Shamugia expressed his gratitude to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization for its close partnership and cooperation and spoke extensively about the progress made by the country in fulfilling obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. The Minister underlined the importance of FAO’s support in the mentioned process.

“Cooperation with you is extremely important for the development of climate-smart agriculture in the country. I believe, that within the new project, we will be able to achieve effective results”, said Mr. Shamugia.

Minister Shamugia discussed issues regarding ensuring research to evaluate the effectiveness of the projects implemented by the Ministry and emphasized the importance of FAO’s support in the fight against the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.

According to Mr. Raymond Jehle, Georgia is an important partner for FAO; The UN Food and Agriculture organization will continue to support the development of the agricultural sector in the country.

“FAO recognizes the importance of supporting Georgia in its efforts to tackle climate change and accelerate nature-positive development. By supporting Georgia in achieving its climate goals, we aim to enhance the resilience of agricultural communities, ensure green growth and foster an overall sustainable future for the country,” said Mr. Raimund Jehle.

Mr. Mamuka Meskhi, Assistant FAO Representative in Georgia, and representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry attended the meeting.

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Otar Shamugia meets the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Latvia, Edite Medne.



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia hosted the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia to Georgia, Mrs. Edite Medne.

During the meeting, the parties discussed issues of strengthening bilateral cooperation in the agricultural and environmental protection fields.

Mr. Shamugia emphasized the importance of effective collaboration between Georgia and Latvia in a wide range of areas, pointing out that Latvia is assisting Georgia in its European integration process.

“Latvia is a strong supporter of Georgia on the path of European integration, and we appreciate it. Today, as we embark on an important milestone on this journey,

preparing to obtain candidate status, the support of our partners and friendly countries is vitally important for us. I would like to emphasize that we have made progress in fulfilling obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, as well as implementing reforms, and we will do our best to show this progress to everyone,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Minister spoke about the bilateral agricultural cooperation within the scope of the Memorandum signed between the two countries and emphasized the beneficial economic links and successful trade relations.

On behalf of the Latvian side, the Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia to Georgia confirmed her readiness to support and share the experience with the Georgian side in the process of Georgia’s integration into the European Union.

“Latvia will support Georgia in all directions, which will help the country in its path to European integration. Our countries have an outstanding partnership in agricultural and environmental protection areas. However, we can deepen our relationships, do even more, and do even better. Moreover, Agricultural subjects are taught at a reasonably high level at the University of Life Sciences and Technologies in Latvia, and we would be delighted if Georgian students get their education there. We are ready to share our successful experience in the waste and forest resources management and food safety area, also towards the adoption of modern technologies. I hope that relations between our countries will become even more active and Georgia will achieve its goal of European integration”, Mrs. Edite Medne stated.

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Otar Shamugia meets the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) representative in Georgia, Raimund Jehle.



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia hosted the FAO Representative in Georgia, Mr. Raimund Jehle.

Minister Shamugia expressed his gratitude to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization for its cooperation and active support for Georgia in obtaining the EU candidate status and emphasized the importance of strengthening coordination and cooperation with FAO.

The Minister underlined the importance of fulfilling the obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and emphasized the need for expert support of FAO for developing and implementing a wide range of food regulations.

Ensuring support for the aquaculture and hazelnut sectors was also discussed during the meeting.

According to Mr. Raimund Jehle, Georgia is an important partner of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and FAO will continue to support the agricultural sector and food security in Georgia.

The First Deputy Minister, Mr. George Khanishvili, Deputy Minister, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Representative of FAO, Mr. Mamuka Meskhi, and representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21211>

Nino Tandilashvili meets representatives of the Directorate-General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) and various sectoral services.

During the visit of the Interdepartmental Delegation of Georgia to Brussels, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili met with the representatives of the Directorate General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission and various sectoral services.

Mrs. Tandilashvili held consultations with the Leadership and representatives of Directorates working on agricultural, food safety, and climate change-related issues. During the official meetings, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili briefed the representatives of the relevant services of the European Commission on the progress of Georgia in the agricultural, food safety, and climate change fields. The Deputy also provided the results achieved in fulfilling obligations taken

under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

Mrs. Tandilashvili emphasized that the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture is making strides to bring the national legislation and systems closer to the European Union. At the official meeting, the sides planned the visit of the European Union’s relevant services to Georgia to deepen cooperation and ensure additional, sectoral, and institutional rapprochement on the road to Georgia’s membership in the European Union.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Teimuraz Janjalia led the Interdepartmental Delegation of Georgia to Brussels.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21214>

Georgia joins the “Zero Waste” initiative.



During the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly Hall, marking the International Day of Zero Waste, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili supported the “Zero Waste” initiative on behalf of Georgia.

The high-level meeting was initiated by the Turkish side and held under the United Nations

General Assembly Resolution 77/161 on the International Day of “Zero Waste. 105 countries supported the mentioned initiative.

“The adoption of the “Zero Waste” approach is one of the primary priorities for Georgia for the development of the circular economy, and at the same time, it is the main focus of the EU-supported waste management reform being currently implemented in the country to achieve sustainable development goals towards waste prevention. By supporting the “Zero Waste” initiative, our country joins the International Community’s statement to more actively and jointly deal with the triple planetary crisis – Climate Change, Air Pollution, and Biodiversity Loss. The “Zero Waste” approach creates a new opportunity for the business sector to support the adoption of zero-waste manufacturing and circular economy practices” said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

During the meeting, Mr. Pavliashvili spoke about the need for joint programs and projects to introduce the concept of “Zero Waste”, moreover, the parties agreed on the specific action plan, with the active participation of Georgia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21216>

Solomon Pavliashvili attends the presentation on the Fact-finding Mission Report in Georgia on Waste and Chemicals Management.



The presentation of the Fact-finding Mission in Georgia on Waste and Chemicals Management was held at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili attended the presentation.

The respective report was prepared by the researchers of the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) and invited experts from different countries of the world.

Mr. Pavliashvili expressed his gratitude to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Swedish Embassy in Georgia for their support in the chemicals and waste management and emphasized the importance of the analysis of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agricultural of Georgia’s (MEPA) institutional structure, functions, and technical capacity suggested in the report.

“The report presented today is of the utmost importance. The presented vision enables the enhancement of the waste management policy, its regulation, monitoring, and enforcement in the country. In the mentioned process, special attention is paid to accessing efficient local public services. I believe that close collaboration with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency will enable us to achieve the intended result”, said Mr. Pavliashvili.

The key objective of this project is to support the increase of the effectiveness and functioning of the existing waste and chemicals management practices in the country and support Georgia in meeting its obligations under the EU Association Agreement and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

“Sweden is an active supporter of Georgia in its efforts to improve waste and chemicals management. I believe the prepared document will assist the Government in its efforts to improve the waste management policy,” stated Mr. Erik Illes, Head of Development Cooperation / Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Sweden

The representatives of the MEPAs relevant agencies, as well as the Development Cooperation Programme Officer at the Embassy of Sweden, Ms. Khatuna Zaldastanishvili attended the meeting.

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Nino Tandilashvili meets the representatives of the Asian Development Bank (ADB)



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili hosted the representatives of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). During the meeting, attendees discussed current projects and upcoming cooperation prospects with the Asian Development Bank.

The Deputy Minister emphasized the support of the Asian Development Bank in the agricultural field, including assistance in irrigation and water resources management, which will play a vital role in climate change mitigation.

“New irrigation project will be implemented in Georgia with the financial support of the Asian Development Bank. The project will significantly contribute to the development of both the agricultural and its allied sectors. We are ready to actively collaborate with all donors, all those organizations that will assist us in fulfilling obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and in overcoming challenges in the agricultural and environmental protection fields in the country”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The conversation touched upon the Asian Development Bank’s key investment areas (food security, agricultural infrastructure, air quality, climate change, etc.), including financing mechanisms for projects.

It was mentioned, that all projects implemented through ADB’s financial support will include climate change components. The parties agreed to meet soon to discuss the details of the new project and future partnership areas.

The representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the Asian Development Bank attended the meeting.

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Otar Shamugia made opening remarks at the “Youth Forum - for Sustainable Development and European Integration”.



The Minister underlined the importance of the European integration process and sustainable development for the country, emphasizing the need to popularize environmental and agricultural education among young people.

“Education is the most powerful weapon for overcoming global challenges.” As you know, Georgia has been given a European perspective. Our objective is to become a candidate country for the European Union. The engagement of young people is critical in this process. One of the priorities of the Ministry is to en-

hance awareness of educational programs regarding environmental protection and agricultural development. I hope that more young people will get an education in the mentioned field in the future,” Mr. Otar Shamugia stated.

According to Mrs. Maia Bitadze, Chair of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, the Youth Forum has the most significant function in its content for an in-depth analysis of European integration and sustainable development goals.

Students from twelve educational institutions in Georgia participated in the Forum, which aimed at increasing the involvement of young people in fulfilling the UN Sustainable Development Goals, taking part in the European integration process, and sharing innovative visions.

During the Forum, the students held panel discussions, highlighting the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, and the fulfillment of the obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, including the country’s economic development.

The youth forum was organized by the Green Movement of Georgia/Friends of the Earth - Georgia and supported by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Sweden in Georgia.

Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Rectors of State and Private Universities, students, and other stakeholders attended the event.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21228>

Atskhuri Public School hosted the meeting as part of the project “Reducing the Risk of Disasters Caused by Climate Change in Georgia”.



Within the framework of the project “Reducing the Risk of Disasters Caused by Climate Change in Georgia”, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, along with the Director General of the Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency, Mrs. Patricia Danzi, and the Swiss Ambassador to Georgia, Mrs. Heidi Grau, and high-ranking delegation attended the meeting in Atskhuri Public School.

The participants summed up the activities jointly taken by the National Environmental Agency and the Swiss Development Agency.

“The project launched in Georgia with the support of the Green Climate Fund, the Swiss government, and the Swiss Development Agency, assists our country in developing early warning systems to create a modern weather forecasting system that will protect us from expected natural processes” said the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

“The climate change adaptation project that we finance is very interesting and important for us as long as our countries are mountainous and thus facing certain

risks of climate change. Hence, the implementation of the project, as well as its outcomes are critical, it is crucial to share our experiences” stated the President of the Swiss Advisory Commission on International Cooperation of the Swiss Government, Mr. Felix Gutzwiller.

The Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure Mrs. Mzia Giorgobiani, and the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Georgia, Mrs. Anna Chernyshova attended the meeting.

According to Mrs. Anna Chernyshova, climate change is a global problem and Georgia is no exception in this regard.

A young climate ambassador from a local school delivered a presentation on the disasters caused by climate change, noting his participation in the project and sharing his experience as a climate ambassador.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, together with the members of the delegation, inspected the embankment on the Zemo Khodashni Khevi River, which was built with the support of the Government of Georgia as part of the mentioned program. The program “Reducing the Risk of Disasters Caused by Climate Change in Georgia” is financed by the Government of Georgia, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the governments of Switzerland and Sweden, and its implementation is ensured by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21231>



GREEN CLIMATE FUND



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development

ENABLING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GEORGIA'S FOREST SECTOR REFORM - ECO.Georgia



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“What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another.” - Mahatma Gandhi

PROJECT BRIEF

The project “Enabling the implementation of Georgia’s forest sector reform - ECO.Georgia” is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture together with the National Forestry Agency, Rural Development Agency, Environmental Information and Education Centre, Department of Environmental Supervision; by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The project aims to mitigate GHG emissions through the nature-based management of the country’s forests and the improvement of energy efficiency to reduce the demand for fuelwood. It also envisages the strengthening of local self-governance and diversifying livelihood opportunities in the forest adjoining rural communities to benefit from diversified income opportunities through improved forestry value chains and better access to forestry knowledge and skills. The project focuses on three target regions (Guria, Kakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti) and eight municipalities: Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri, Lanchkhuti, Telavi, Kvareli, Akhmeta, Dedoplistskaro and Tianeti. The Project is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Government of Georgia (GoG) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).



Component 1: Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)

Activity 1.1:
Development and implementation of SFM plans

Activity 1.2:
Strengthening of forest supervision

Activity 1.3:
Provision of sustainably produced fuelwood by NFA

Activity 1.4: Enhancement of enabling environment for the nation-wide implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM)

Activity 1.5: Improvement of monitoring and measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems for the forest sector



Component 2: Market Development for Energy Efficiency (EE) and Alternative Fuels (AF)

Activity 2.1: EE-AF supply chain development

Activity 2.2: Implementing consumer financing instruments for EE-AF solutions

Activity 2.3: Creating consumer awareness and provision of technical advisory services for fuelwood users

Activity 2.4: Enabling policies and regulations



Component 3: Livelihood opportunities and local self-governance in forest management

Activity 3.1:
Development and introduction of municipal-level tools, practices, plans and necessary capacities for participatory SFM and conservation

Activity 3.2:
Development, testing and promotion of mechanisms at the local level to better protect interests of adversely affected stakeholders

Activity 3.3:
Development of professional skills and knowledge relevant to SFM and conservation through vocational education and international partnerships with centers of knowledge

Activity 3.4:
Strengthening of selected value chains (e.g., timber, NTFP, parts of eco-tourism)

■ Activity in 3 target regions only

■ Nation-wide activity

□ Nation-wide activity with focus on 3 target regions

Media representatives got introduced with the ECO.Georgia project

Within the frames of the ECO. Georgia project, about 30 media representatives attended the workshop organized by the Environmental Information and Education Center. The project director, Lutz Jarczyński, together with the representatives of the project Executive Entities, introduced the project benefits to the media and presented information on how the project supports the Forest Sector Reform, what benefits the project will bring to the country, and especially to the local municipalities and what the ongoing processes and planned activities there are within the project.

During the workshop, the journalists from different media platforms had an opportunity to get information in different directions, like: What does the project do to promote energy efficiency in the country? How does the Department of Environmental Supervision work? How will they strengthen the control of forests? What are the future envisaged steps of the National

Forestry Agency in terms of sustainable provisioning of firewood and development of sustainable forest management plans? The journalists also got detailed information about the just launched subsidy program for energy-efficient stoves and entrepreneurs with the involvement of the Rural Development Agency.

At the meeting, project representatives highlighted the value of media relations for the ECO. Georgia project, emphasized their openness and readiness to have close cooperation with different media sources for transparency purposes and broader public outreach through the media to raise or create awareness about the topics covered by the project and agencies involved in it. The journalists expressed their interest and desire to be involved in the process for their part.



Meeting with media representatives
©Environmental Information and Education center



Meeting with media representatives
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The Rural Development Agency launched the co-financing program for the energy-efficient stoves

Within the frames of the ECO.Georgia project, the Rural Development Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture launched the co-financing program for energy-efficient stoves.

The ECO.Georgia project aims to reduce pressure on forests through the introduction of Sustainable Forest Management practices in the country and through the promotion and availability of energy-efficient solutions for firewood consumers. The new programme offers rural households to purchase energy-efficient stoves through the co-financing program, which means that within the project, 30% of the cost of energy-efficient stoves, no more than 300 GEL, is financed as a subsidy for the beneficiary. With these efficient stoves, families will consume 50% less firewood and thus will save up to 50% on fuel costs too.

The presentation of the program took place in Telavi on March 29. The first Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture - Giorgi Khanishvili, the director of the Rural Development Agency - Davit Tsitlidze, Lutz Jarczyński - the ECO.Georgia Project Director and the Head of the Energy-Efficiency component of the project - Marit Berchner, as well as the first Deputy Governor of Kakheti region - Platon Kalmakhelidze, attended the event.

At the program presentation, the five manufacturers presented 11 eleven types of energy-efficient stoves. The residents attending the event, together with the representatives of the project Executive Entities, had an opportunity to check the stoves and meet the entrepreneurs there.

“The Forest Sector Reform is a priority for the Government of Georgia and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture. Part of the reform is the introduction of energy-efficient stoves in the country, which will contribute to the reduction of pressure on forests, will support the production of briquettes and alternative fuels in the country and will create new jobs. We think that offering such a project to the population of Georgia is another step forward on the way to the European Union, from the compliance perspective with European regulations” - stated George Khanishvili, First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

The population will enjoy the co-financing program in all regions of the country through the Rural Development Agency. Beneficiaries can find the detailed information at: <https://rda.gov.ge/programs>



Energy-efficient stoves
© Rural Development Agency



Marit Berchner – Head of Energy-Efficiency component of ECO.Georgia project
© Rural Development Agency

Handover and presentation of the newly purchased equipment for the Department of Environmental Supervision



To enable the implementation of Forest Sector Reform in Georgia, the project ECO.Georgia supports the sector in different directions. Strengthening the control of the forests is crucial for the successful implementation of the reform and for the introduction of sustainable forest management. In light of this, the project envisages capacitating the Department of Environmental Supervision (DES) with respective knowledge and equipment.

In early April, the Department of Environmental Supervision received newly purchased machinery and equipment, which they will distribute to the regional services to help the DES personnel reveal environmental crimes easier and patrol in remote and hard-to-access areas. The DES received 14 Renault Duster cars, six buggy cars, and eight inflatable boats. New equipment is crucial for detecting illegal logging, poaching, and air pollution violations.

“We are implementing the most important reforms in the environmental policy. The reforms aim to bring legal regulations closer to the EU requirements. We actively cooperate with the civil sector and the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia. Several new draft laws are currently being reviewed in the legislative body, and certainly, the process is underway,” stated Minister Otar Shamugia.

According to the Minister, enforcing regulations and implementing environmental control is crucial. Therefore the Department of Environmental Supervision has been provided with the appropriate equipment to enhance its capabilities.

“We have purchased different types of modern equipment - drones, photo traps, video recorders, devices for dust particle measurement - with the state budget funds and Donor’s financial assistance, through the support of the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ). The equipment will be transferred to the relevant services of the DES, which will help them to more effectively prevent, detect and investigate environmental violations” - said the Minister.

New Renault Dusters are equipped with GPS tracking devices, which allow patrolling in hard-to-reach areas. The Department employees will use buggy cars to patrol practically inaccessible places.

According to Mrs Nino Chkhobadze, Chair of the “Greens Movement of Georgia/Friends of the Earth - Georgia” strengthening the environmental supervision department is very important, especially in the direction of illegal fishing.

“Poachers are destroying our ichthyofauna to such an extent that it may even be difficult to restore. With this background, imposing strict sanctions and taking effective control is important. The department should work as hard as possible to stop poaching” - said Mrs Nino Chkhobadze.

“German government wants to support Georgia, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture to implement the Forest Sector Reform in the country, in the direction of forest maintenance. The support aims at enabling the country to have the sustainable forest management mechanism and ensure the maintenance of ecosystems, biodiversity protection, and climate change mitigation” - stated Christian Gönner - Head of the Sustainable Forest Management component of the ECO.Georgia project.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture – Mr Otar Shamugia, the Deputy Minister – Mr Kakha Kakabadze, the ECO.Georgia Project Director – Mr Lutz Jarczyński, the Head of the Sustainable Forest Management component of the project -Mr. Christian Gönner, the Head of the DES – Mr Levan Jgharkava, the Head of the Wildlife agency – Mr Rezo Bezhashvili, the representatives of the Biodiversity and Forestry Department of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, as well as the Environmental Non-governmental Organizations, attended the event in Krtsanisi forest.



Soil and Soil Assessment Spring School for the young researchers

Georgian Agrarian University (<http://www.agruni.edu.ge/en>) hosted the Spring School on Soils and Soil Survey. The spring school was organized by the project ECO.Georgia. The students of Ilia State University, Agrarian University and Technical University and young researchers from relevant fields, participating in the spring school had an opportunity to deepen their understanding of soil assessments and the soil’s relevance for landscapes and land use. The school program also served as re-training for field teams surveying Georgia’s forest soils to conclude the relationship between forest management above ground and carbon storage capacity below ground.

The Spring School program included both a theoretical and a practical part and was led by Professors Peter Schad and Vincent Bunes from the University of Munich and the University of Sweden.



Soil and Soil Assessment Spring School © Agrarian University



Practical part of the Soil Spring School © Agrarian University