



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

OCTOBER 2023

Tbilisi hosted the “Cattle Expo 2023”



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, and the Ambassador of the United States of America to Georgia, Mrs. Robin L. Dunnigan, made opening remarks at the livestock exhibition “Cattle Expo 2023”.

“Supporting cattle breeding is one of our top priorities. It is essential that the exhibition “Cattle Expo 2023” is being conducted for the third time, providing local farmers the opportunity to display their products and get familiar with the latest news in the field. I appreciate the new US Ambassador’s attendance at the exhibition. With the cooperation of the US Department of Agriculture, a project is being implemented to assist our farmers and companies in producing quality products in compliance with safety standards. I emphasize that several state-funded programs have already produced concrete results. However, the sector needs even more support. Consequently, we will have news for our farmers very soon, enabling access to the technology necessary for increasing their competitiveness.” - noted the Minister of Environmental and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia.

During her remarks, US Ambassador Mrs. Robin Dunnigan discussed the work being implemented with the Georgian government, farmers, and industrial partners to enhance the cattle breeding industry in Georgia.

“I am pleased to participate together with the Ministry of Agriculture in this year’s Livestock Expo, which is supported by the US Department of Agriculture. The United States invests in Georgia’s dairy and meat industries to make them more sustainable, modern, and productive. We collaborate with the government of Georgia, industrial partners, and stakeholders on these matters. This is my first event in Georgia. For many years, we have been working with Georgian farmers, agribusinesses, and Georgian stakeholders, and most importantly, with the Georgian government, to help them strengthen this sector,” said US Ambassador to Georgia, Robin Dunnigan.

The livestock exhibition was held in the vicinity of Lisi Lake.

The expo included an exhibition competition of high-yielding, local cattle breeds presented from different regions of Georgia and an exhibition/sale of agricultural products. Farmers involved in the livestock sector, processors of animal products, and companies supplying agricultural inputs, financial organizations, professional and industrial associations also participated in the event.

The event aims to promote the development of the cattle breeding sector, specifically promoting highly productive local cattle breeds produced from selective breeding.

The livestock exhibition is organized by the Animal Breeders Association of Georgia and the Swiss Agrarian School “Kavkasia.” The partner of the event is the project “Investing in Safe and Quality Livestock,” funded by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), implemented by Land O’Lakes Venture37 in cooperation with the Georgian Farmers’ Association.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21447>

Yuri Nozadze attends the annual meeting of the Regional Consultative Forum of the Eco-Corridor Fund for the Caucasus (ECF) Phase II.



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, opened the annual meeting of the Regional Consultative Forum of the Eco-Corridor Fund for the Caucasus (ECF) Phase II.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the progress achieved in the South Caucasus in 2022-2023 within the Eco-Corridors Fund program and discussed plans for the future.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture thanked the parties involved in the program.

“The first phase of the Eco-Corridors Fund Program created a successful precedent for sustainable landscape management and regional economic development; The second phase of the program will ensure the conservation of biodiversity in the landscapes of the South Caucasus.

One of the priorities of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture is the creation of eco-corridors connecting protected areas, which will contribute to the development of the ecological network in the Caucasus region,

We believe this program will allow us to effectively protect 30% of the territory of Georgia by 2030.

It is essential to create conservation instruments for protected areas and areas beyond them with the support of our partners and donors.

The Eco-Corridor Fund for the Caucasus (ECF) is one of the tools supporting the preservation of living landscapes, the creation of Eco-Corridors connecting protected areas, as well as the employment of the population living in the vicinity of the conservation areas in the region, and the improvement of their socio-economic status,” said Mr. Yuri Nozadze.

The ECF program is implemented by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Caucasus Programme Office with funds provided by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the KfW Development Bank.

Mr. Giorgi Sanadiradze, Head of the Caucasus Program Office of the WWF, representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the Ministry of Environment of Armenia, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, the Embassy of Germany in Georgia, and the Embassy of Switzerland in Armenia.



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Otar Shamugia: “I am confident in the success of the “Georgia Resilient Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land Project” (GRAIL).”



During the meeting with Dr. Ranu Sinha, (GRAIL) Project Manager and Irrigation and Drainage Specialist at World Bank Group, and Mr. Winston Yu, Water Practice Manager for the Europe and Central Asia Region at the World Bank, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia discussed the technical and tariff setting methodology issues of the “Georgia Resilient Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land Project” (GRAIL).

The parties focused on the (GRAIL) project completion phase. As mentioned, the project’s outcomes exceeded expectations due to farmers’ active involvement in the work process.

Minister Shamugia thanked the World Bank for its support over the years.

“We are launching a significant, large-scale project for Georgia’s agricultural sector in collaboration with the World Bank. At the project implementation stage, a team of skilled employees is required, which will effectively manage the processes. It will be crucial for us to involve representatives of the World Bank and receive recommendations from them. Over the years, we have had fruitful and exemplary cooperation with the World Bank, which gives me a reason to be optimistic about the success of the (GRAIL) Project.” Mr. Otar Shamugia stated.

Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, and representatives of relevant services within the Ministry system attended the meeting.



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A National Roadmap for Georgia’s Transition to a Circular Economy will be prepared



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, participated in the first plenary session to prepare a national roadmap for Georgia’s transition to a circular economy model.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the Union of Nature Researchers of Georgia “Orchis” organized the event.

“In recent years, Georgia has taken significant steps toward developing the circular economy in the country. The policy document “Circular Economy Mapping in Georgia” was prepared with the support of the Swedish government. The mentioned document presents the 14 priority sectors of the economy, provides more opportunities for recycling waste and outlines the target indicators recommended for the circular economy national policy and the goals of circularity; furthermore, the respective policy document identifies sectoral circular economy opportunities and develops sectoral policy options and recommendations. All mentioned above provides a basis for moving to the next stage, involving the development of a national roadmap for the circular economy.

The roadmap outlines Georgia’s path toward circular transformation. The world has recognized that resources are exhaustible. Therefore, adopting advanced manufacturing technologies for efficient production, waste reuse, and so forth is crucial. All of this will foster the development of the green economy”, said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

As mentioned, the development of the circular economy benefits businesses, society, and the environment. Moreover, the circular economy, entailing eliminating waste and pollution, conserving goods and raw materials, and restoring natural systems, is linked to both the Sustainable Development Goals and the Green Economy.

A national roadmap for Georgia’s transition to a circular economy will be developed by the expert team of the Union of Nature Researchers of Georgia “Orchis”, in coordination with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, in close cooperation with the Inter-agency Coordination Council created to promote the transition of Georgia to the circular economy system, and with the active involvement of key agencies.

Mrs. Khatia Tsilosani, Deputy Chair of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. Romeo Mikutadze, First Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Mrs. Anna Chernyshova, acting head of the United Nations Development Program in Georgia, Mrs. Mariam Kimeridze, Chairman of the Union of Nature Researchers of Georgia “Orchis”, Mr. Nicholas Cendrowicz, the Head of Cooperation in the EU Delegation to Georgia, the Head of the Environmental Program of the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, Mrs. Khatuna Zaldastanishvili, members of the Interagency Coordination Council and representatives of relevant agencies attended the session.

The event was held within the framework of the “Governance Reform Fund” (GRF) project of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) sub-project “Supporting the Government of Georgia in Enhancing Governance & Policies for a Transition to a Circular Economy”, which is financed by the Government of Sweden.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21442>

Otar Shamugia: “The large-scale project implemented by the Government of Georgia in partnership with the World Bank will make an important contribution to the development of irrigation and land management systems in the country.”



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, attended the presentation of the “Georgia Resilient Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land Project” (GRAIL). The project, launched by the Government of Georgia in partnership with the World Bank, will promote the adoption of sustainable agriculture and land management practices by improving irrigation systems in Georgia.

Mr. Shamugia expressed gratitude to the parties involved in the implementation of the project and thanked them for their support.

“The large-scale project implemented by the Government of Georgia in partnership with the World Bank will make an essential contribution to the development of irrigation and land management systems in the country.

The mentioned project also includes the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices and saving water and soil resources. All mentioned above will bring significant results. As we know, one of the priorities of the Georgian government is agricultural development in the country. For this purpose, we have

implemented several important projects in the last ten years. Today, more than ten projects are underway to support our farmers, covering almost all value chain links - we help farmers and entrepreneurs in primary production, processing, and entering new markets.

“Approximately 20 million GEL will be spent next year to integrate our farmers and entrepreneurs in different markets and promote Georgian products. It is the result of cooperation that increased production and export figures. Last year, we had record indicators in the export of agricultural products. This year, according to the data of 9 months, compared to the previous year, we have about 17-18% growth. We think these data will reflect the results of the state, private, and civil sectors’ collaborative efforts and the programs we have been implementing for years,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Minister emphasized the “Georgia Resilient Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land Project” (GRAIL), which is in the completion phase and is also being implemented in cooperation with the World Bank. According to the Minister, the mentioned project has brought significant results - in the part of the rehabilitation of irrigation systems, water supply for farmers has been improved to approximately 17,500 ha.

Regional Director of the World Bank in the South Caucasus, Mrs. Rolande Pryce, noted that joint and coordinated action is essential to improve the agricultural sector in the country.

“We expect that an integrated approach to agriculture, irrigation, and land management will bring significant economic growth to Georgia, reduce poverty, and create additional jobs. We believe that the collaboration between the Ministries of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, and Finance, and House of Justice is crucial, as previous experience has shown us, it will bring positive results”, said Mrs. Rolande Pryce.

The “Georgia Resilient Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land Project” (GRAIL) amounts to 150 million USD, and the project is financed equally by the Government of Georgia and the World Bank.

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Lasha Khutishvili; First Deputy Minister of Justice, Mrs. Tamar Tkeshelashvili; Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze, and representatives of relevant services included in the Ministry’s system attended the presentation.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21441>

World Food Day was celebrated in Zugdidi



World Food Day was marked in Zugdidi with the participation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the Parliament of Georgia, and through the support of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, attended the event.

“We annually commemorate World Food Day with local farmers in different regions of Georgia. We all understand the importance of this year’s message. Water is an essential resource for life; therefore, life is impossible without water. We must safeguard water and recognize the importance of protecting this vital resource,” Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili said.

Every year, World Food Day is observed in 150 countries on the initiative of the United Nations.

This year, the world community celebrated this day with the main message “Water is Life, Water is Food. - Leave no one behind,” thus united to protect such a vital resource as fresh water.

In his remarks, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, emphasized the importance of properly managing water resources for effective agricultural development.

The representatives of the Parliament of Georgia, government, local government, European Union, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Swiss regional cooperation, and international and partner organizations attended the event.

“World Food Day reminds us once again that we should not produce food in a way that harms nature and water. We are all aware that water supplies are gradually decreasing. Water is not an inexhaustible resource; We must take care of nature. This is one of the objectives for today,” said FAO representative in Georgia, Mr. Raimund Jehle.

“The main message of today is the importance of clean water and water resources. The Parliament of Georgia and the legislators are meeting this day with the new law on water resources management, which has already been adopted,” said Mrs. Nino Tsilosani, Chair of the Agrarian Issues Committee of the Parliament.

The sale of local agricultural products and an exhibition of wheat varieties, including corners for information on food safety, food losses, and waste management, was organized in the garden of the Dadiani palace as part of World Food Day.

The event also embraced an award ceremony in the “Food Hero” nomination, fun, informational activities for children, and a concert with the participation of local artists.

World Food Day was celebrated in Zugdidi with the support of the European Union and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Every year, during World Food Day, the governments of different countries, civil society, industry, the media, and the general public unite around essential messages related to food security.

With the message “Water is life, Water is food,” FAO focused public attention on one of the most essential resources on the planet this year. Fresh water is an exhaustible resource. It is necessary to take urgent measures to reduce water consumption because, by 2050, the worldwide water demand may triple due to population expansion.

Making informed decisions about the products we buy, wasting less water, and preventing flooding, disasters, and pollution are easy ways to contribute to saving water. These activities are crucial to achieving better production, nutrition, environment, and life.

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On the initiative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Forester’s Day was celebrated in the Botanical Garden



Minister Otar Shamugia congratulated the foresters on their professional day and thanked them for their contribution to developing the forestry sector. Successful foresters of the year were revealed and provided with awards and symbolic gifts for their challenging and risky activities.

“Georgia is rich in forests. Our traditions, culture, and knowledge help us to preserve and care for forests. Over the past decade, many changes have been made in the forestry sector. With the help of our international partners and supporters, we gradually try to solve the long-standing problems. It can be said, that today we have the results that will bring even more benefits to the country and its population in the future”, said the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, addressed the participants, noting that the progress achieved by the sector in recent years is the result of the great work undertaken by the Ministry and the National Forestry Agency.

“Legislation was adjusted, governance process was improved, forest inventory and preparation of management plans became systematic, the scale of forest care/maintenance and restoration measures increased, forestry infrastructure was developed through creating the log sort yards and forest roads; organized timber-producing activities contribute to developing the timber market and creating local jobs, and eventually, the foresters play a significant part in all of the mentioned activities”, said Mr. Kakha Tsertsvadze.

The Head of the National Forestry Agency, Mr. Kakha Tsertsvadze, congratulated the foresters on their professional day.

“Apart from its primary ecological purpose, Georgia’s forest has enormous potential to contribute significantly to the economic progress of the country. However, these benefits will not be achieved in the long run without a proper institutional system, proper planning of activities, and protection, maintenance, and restoration of forests. The National Forestry Agency has entirely upgraded the special purpose vehicle fleet to ensure the effective implementation of the forestry measures. Furthermore, social guarantees and employee working conditions remain the Agency’s top priorities. With the recently adopted legislative amendments, we are currently providing foresters with life and health insurance, including incentives for the completion of challenging tasks, which we believe will significantly increase the motivation of employees”, said Mr. Kakha Tsertsvadze.

The Head of the Agency thanked both foresters and representatives of non-governmental and international organizations for their long-standing support and contributions to protecting the country’s unique resources. Over the years, the National Forestry Agency has implemented several projects with the support of the GIZ, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), CENN, and other partners.

Celebrities, athletes, actors, singers, and media representatives were also awarded at the event for their continuous involvement in the information campaigns of the National Forestry Agency.

Representatives of the legislative body, the academic circle, environmental non-governmental, and partner international organizations attended the event.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21435>

On October 10-12, within the framework of the “Wine Days” established upon the initiative of the Prime Minister of Georgia, Tbilisi hosts an international scientific conference



The National Wine Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia has organized the conference “Georgian Vine and Wine Culture Research Scientific Project - Results and News” with the support of the Government of Georgia.

The Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, opened the conference.

“We are glad to host you in Georgia, and I am once again very proud to mention that you, the leading scientists of international universities and institutes, are today the honored guests of the homeland of wine. We launched the project in 2014, which aimed to collect new data and confirm that Georgia has an ancient wine culture and tradition.

The results of the research regarding the domestication of vines and the beginning of wine production gave birth to a new reality. In 2017, the world scientific community acknowledged that the oldest wine/winmaking remains were discovered on the territory of Georgia and that the homeland of wine is Georgia. Today, within the framework of the conference, we want to summarize the results of the project and discuss the priorities of future research together with the researchers, experts, and general public interested in the viticulture and winmaking fields”, Mr. Otar Shamugia stated.

Twenty-two scientists, researchers, and experts from 11 countries worldwide (Georgia, Italy, France, Spain, England, USA, Canada, Israel, Brazil, South Africa, and Croatia) are attending the international scientific conference.

Scientists from Pennsylvania, Montpellier, Milan, Copenhagen, Toronto universities, Israeli Weizmann Institute of Science, and Montpellier National Institute of Agricultural Research (INRA), are involved in the multidisciplinary “Georgian Vine and Wine Culture Scientific Research Project”.

The project investigates the Georgian vine and wine via several scientific disciplines to learn about its history, current state, and potential for future viticulture-winemaking development.

According to Mr. Patrick McGovern, a scientist and researcher at the University of Pennsylvania, the 8,000-year history of Georgian winemaking has already been confirmed by the research project on Georgian vine and wine culture. Excavations and research are underway, and hopefully, more confirmation of the technology of making wine in the pitcher will be revealed.

The conference aims to summarize the results of the scientific research carried out within the project and discuss the priority directions of future research.

The Chairman of the National Wine Agency, Mr. Levan Mekhuzla, the Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Mr. Nodar Papukashvili, the Chairman of the Sectoral Economy and Economic Policy Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. Davit Songhulashvili attended the opening of the event.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21433>

Nino Tandilashvili meets the Ambassador of Brazil to Georgia Oswaldo Biato Júnior



During the introductory meeting, the parties focused on obtaining the important instrument for financing -REDD+ developed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in which Georgia's support will be essential for Brazil. The conversation touched upon the 37th Board meeting of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which will be held in Tbilisi.

“The challenges in the forestry sector in Brazil are familiar to Georgia since we had a similar situation in the past years when deforestation and the use of trees for personal purposes were frequent. Thus, we have implemented several legislative amendments and received funding from the Green Climate Fund to change this practice. Moreover, the Government of Georgia is actively adopting effective mechanisms for forest management to prevent illegal cutting of forests”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the prospects of deepening cooperation between the two countries in the agricultural area.

According to the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Georgia aspires to join the European Union; however, at the same time, it is essential to deepen cooperation with partner countries.

The Ambassador of Brazil to Georgia, Mr. Oswaldo Biato Jr., focused on the importance of cooperation between the two countries in agriculture, including the possibilities of increasing the export and import of agricultural products.

Representatives of relevant services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21436>

Nino Tandilashvili meets with the representatives of the Czech Development Cooperation and the Czech Ministry of Agriculture



During the meeting, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, addressed the expansion of protected areas, forest inventory, sustainable forest management, and arrangement of business yards.

The conversation touched upon the ongoing joint project “ Implementation of Sustainable Forestry Management for the Aragvi Protected Landscape “.

The First Deputy Minister thanked the Czech partners for their support.

“Long and fruitful cooperation with the Czech side binds us in different directions. I would focus on the management of protected areas and forest management. We have made significant progress, specifically, we have adopted the New Forest Code through active collaboration with the Parliament of Georgia. Meanwhile, we are expanding the network of protected areas, since it is a priority for the Government to have as many protected areas as possible in the country.

In addition, the involvement of local municipalities in the processes of managing protected areas and forests, as well as strengthening their capacities, plays an important role since they are more aware of the local needs.

In this respect, we have excellent examples, such as enhancing the capacity of local municipalities with the support of our Czech colleagues.

Sharing the best international practices is crucial for us, and we are delighted to cooperate with EU member states that have already taken this path”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The Representatives of the Czech Development Cooperation and the Czech Ministry of Agriculture emphasized the progress of the project “Implementation of Sustainable Forestry Management for the Aragvi Protected Landscape “ and highlighted future steps planned within the project.

The project “ Implementation of Sustainable Forestry Management for the Aragvi Protected Landscape “ has been implemented since 2021. The initiative aims to address the needs of the forest-dependent local community by promoting sustainable forest management practices and ensuring ecological stability.

Representatives of relevant services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21434>

Otar Shamugia: Within the scope of “Wine Days, the most important international scientific conference was opened with the participation of the world’s leading scientists”

“It is symbolic that today’s international conference “Georgian Vine and Wine Culture Scientific Research Project - Results and News” is being held within the framework of Wine Days, established upon the initiative of the Prime Minister and held annually across the country. With wine days, we remind the entire society that Georgian wine is a part of our culture and history.

It is worth noting that the most important scientific conclusion for Georgia was made within the “Georgian Vine and Wine Culture Research Project,” which was crucial for positioning Georgian wine in the international market. Moreover, it became the main message to the rest of the world that Georgia is the homeland of wine, with an 8000-year continuous history of winemaking” said the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, during his opening remarks at the conference.

Twenty-two scientists, researchers, and experts from 11 countries worldwide (Georgia, Italy, France, Spain, England, USA, Canada, Israel, Brazil, South Africa, and Croatia) are attending the international scientific conference.

The conference aims to provide information about the results and planned future activities of the “Georgian Vine and Wine Culture Research Project,” to the viticulture and winemaking experts, specialists, researchers, experts of different fields, interested persons, and, the general public.

During the conference, scientists and researchers will present reports on the priority areas for future research.

On October 10-12, 2023, within the “Wine Days”, Tbilisi is hosting the international scientific conference “Georgian Vine and Wine Culture Research Project - Results and News”.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21432>

Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Kakha Kakabadze meets the President of the World Wine Tourism Organization, Jose Antonio Vidal



During the meeting, the parties discussed the importance of wine tourism development in Georgia.

“Georgia is a wine-producing country with 8,000 years of history. We pay special care to this history; we work to improve wine quality and increase exports. Tourism in the country is developing rapidly; Tourism and a thriving wine industry boost our economy. Sharing best practices

in any field, including wine tourism, is a necessary and important condition for development,” Mr. Kakha Kakabadze noted.

The parties focused on the quality of the wine. The Georgian side spoke extensively on the efforts to improve the quality of wine in the country. The conversation also touched on the export potential and diversification of markets.

“The main goal of the World Wine Tourism Association is to develop wine tourism in the countries where we start cooperation. The most important task is to increase the awareness of the country. We support both the public and private sectors and the academic sector. “Congresses, meetings, sharing of tourist experience - all these directions are covered by our association,” noted Mr. Jose Antonio Vidal.

Mr. Miguel Gamba, the representative of Alkali University; Mrs. Ketil Gorgiladze, the founder of the Spanish-Georgian Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Zurab Vacharadze, the deputy chairman of the National Wine Agency, and Mr. Vakhtang Tsvitsvadze, the director of the Caucasus International University, attended the meeting.

The guests visited Georgian wine companies and wineries in Kakheti as part of their visit to Georgia.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21429>

Otar Shamugia meets with the representatives of the French Development Agency in Clermont-Ferrand

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, paid a working visit to France.

Within his visit to Clermont-Ferrand, one of the most prestigious exhibitions in the field of livestock - Sommet De Lelevage, the Minister met Mr. Tanguy Vincent, Head of Agriculture and Biodiversity of the French Development Agency AFD - Agence Française de Développement

During the meeting the sides focused on the implemented and ongoing projects of the French Development Agency. It should be mentioned, that land reclamation and land management are priority areas of the cooperation program between Georgia and the French Development Agency.

The program envisages the Zemo Samgori (irrigation) project. According to the Minister, it is essential to implement the initiated new project on time.

“We are actively working on adopting the international standards and European management systems. The support of our international partners and the sharing of their best practices is the most important factor in achieving the goals. I thank all international and donor organizations, including the French Development Agency, for many years of fruitful cooperation and for future plans,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Republic of France, Mr. Gocha Javakishvili, attended the meeting with the representatives of the French Development Agency.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21427>

Otar Shamugia inspected the infrastructural works in the area for the disposal of arsenic-containing waste in the Uravi village



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, along with state representative of Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti regions, Mr. Papuna Margvelidze, and Majoritarian MP Mr. Gocha Enukidze, inspected the ongoing infrastructural works in the village of Uravi, Ambrolauri district, in the area for the disposal of arsenic-containing waste.

“At the beginning of the year, we started to arrange the place for the disposal of arsenic-containing ore-processing waste in Tsana and Uravi villages, following the government’s decision. As soon as the decision was made, the fencing of these sites began. These works have already been completed in Tsana, although activities are being taken in the Uravi village and will be completed shortly. Simultaneously, the work on the environmental impact assessment docu-

ment and the burial project on the Tsana site is underway and will be completed soon and submitted to the competent Agencies for consideration.

We expect to announce the tender for constructing the mentioned burial in the spring of next year. As long as the works are relatively large-scale, constructing will take some time. Ultimately, completing this project will resolve the problem in the mentioned area” Mr. Otar Shamugia said.

According to the state representative, Mr. Papuna Margvelidze, a mining and chemical combine had operated in the Ambrolauri and Lentekhi municipalities for ten years. However, after the events in the 90s of the last century, it stopped functioning. As a result, the former combine and the entire infrastructure were destroyed, and the territories were contaminated with arsenic-containing waste.

“It is crucial that the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture carries out fencing of the said territories. The process has already been completed in Svaneti, in the village of Tsana, and works in this regard are underway in the village of Uravi. Fencing these areas and isolating them from the population is important for the safety of the villagers,” said Mr. Papuna Margvelidze.

It should be mentioned that systematic management measures are already being taken to dispose of the waste generated by processing arsenic-containing ore in the Ambrolauri and Lentekhi districts following a government decision. Apart from fencing the arsenic-affected regions, it is intended to collect arsenic-containing waste and construction waste from buildings, remove the contaminated soil, and bury it in a specially designed burial site.

Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, the Deputy Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture, and Mrs. Khatia Jikuridze, Head of the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Agency, reviewed the course of primary protective measures in the area for disposal of arsenic-containing waste in the village of Uravi along with the Minister.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21439>

Georgia participates as an honoured guest in one of the largest and most prestigious exhibitions of the livestock industry in Europe - Sommet De L'élevage 2023



During his working visit to the Republic of France, Mr. Otar Shamugia, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, delivered the opening remarks at the Sommet De L'élevage 2023 livestock expo in Clermont-Ferrand. Georgia will be an honoured guest at the exhibition this year.

Members of numerous Georgian cattle breeding associations provided information about Georgian output at the event.

The expo held in the centre of France, the largest meat-producing region in Europe, attracts around 105,000 people from 90 nations across the globe, displaying 2000 livestock and small cattle of the best breeds.

A conference on Georgia was organized as part of the expo, embracing French field representatives and Georgian producers.

As Minister Shamugia stated in his opening remarks, the largest exhibit allows Georgian companies to learn about the best production processes, practices, technologies, innovations, and potential for productivity growth.

“The deepening of trade relations between our countries will be important and will benefit not only farmers, but also the industry as a whole, each participant in the livestock production chain, which will directly affect the economy,” said Mr. Shamugia.

It should be noted that within the framework of the exhibition, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Shamugia, hosted his French colleague, the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty of France, Mr. Marc Fesneau, at the Georgian exhibition stand. The Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Georgia to the Republic of France, Mr. Gocha Javakhishvili, attended the events.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21426>

Otar Shamugia meets with international media representatives during his visit to France



During his visit to France, Mr. Otar Shamugia, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, attended a press conference for regional and national media representatives in Clermont-Ferrand's city hall. The event was dedicated to France's most prominent livestock exposition, Sommet De L'élevage.

The mayor of Clermont-Ferrand, Mr. Olivier Bianchi, Jacques Chazalet. President of the SOMMET, the livestock exhibition, and the Ambassador of Georgia to the French Republic, Mr. Gocha Javakhishvili, attended the event.

The largest livestock exhibition in France, “Some de l'Élevage”, has been held for over 30 years. About 105,000 visitors from 90 countries paid a visit to the exhibition. This year, 2,000 cattle and small cattle of the best breeds were presented at the exhibition.

As Mr. Otar Shamugia mentioned at the press conference today, Georgia is waiting for a historic decision; the country is waiting for the support of its European friends to gain the status of a European Union candidate country.

“We are doing everything, and we are making progress, as reflected by the European Commission's conclusion published last year. One of the main priorities for us is the integration into the European Union, the European Union market and the full use of the potential of this market”, said the Minister.

While discussing Georgia's agricultural state strategy, Mr. Otar Shamugia stated that livestock development is crucial for strengthening the agricultural sector.

“I am pleased that a conference is being held in France as part of the livestock exhibition, with Georgia represented as an honoured guest, and that not only state agency representatives but also field associations are attending. I want to thank everyone who was involved in the conference. The cooperation and joint efforts of the government, sectoral groups, business operators, and farmers are crucial for developing the livestock sector. Only through collaborative efforts can tangible progress be made,” Mr. Otar Shamugia stated.

Around 20 media professionals attended the press conference. Following the press conference, an official reception was held at Clermont-Ferrand City Hall for representatives of local institutions, private and public groups, official visitors, journalists and media representatives.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21425>

Otar Shamugia meets the Deputy Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, held a meeting with the delegation of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan led by the Deputy Minister, Mr. Vugar Karimov.

During the meeting, the sides addressed future collaboration issues and the ways to deepen relations between the Ministries.

“Our countries are linked by long-standing friendship and fruitful cooperation, and current high-level meetings and visits will enhance our bilateral ties even further. We have signed a Memorandum with the Azerbaijani side at the Ministry level, which involves cooperation in different areas.

It should be mentioned that we are carrying out important reforms in the environmental protection fields, including forest management and expansion of protected areas; We have accumulated good experience and are ready to share it with our Azerbaijani colleagues”, said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

According to the Deputy Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the two countries should continue their successful cooperation in different fields regarding environmental protection and ecology.

“In terms of biodiversity, the Caucasus region ranks among the top ten worldwide. Georgia and Azerbaijan occupy an important place in the region. I believe it will be crucial for both sides to implement joint, regional, and cross-border projects, which will contribute to the protection and preservation of biodiversity and the development of national parks. We wish to share Georgia’s experience in forest management and the creation of the legal framework, the development of protected areas, and the creation/management of biosphere reserves, etc. On our part, we will share our experience in the field of geology and hydrology with our Georgian colleagues,” said Mr. Vugar Karimov.

After the meeting with Minister Shamugia, the Deputy Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan discussed the details and areas for future cooperation with the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Nino Tandilashvili.

The Deputies of the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Yuri Nozadze and Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, as well as representatives of relevant services of the Ministry, attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21431>

Otar Shamugia meets with the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty of France, Mr. Marc Fesneau



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, hosted the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty of France, Mr. Marc Fesneau, at the Georgian exhibition stand in Clermont-Ferrand, at one of the most prestigious exhibitions in the field of livestock - Sommet De L'élevage, France.

This year, Georgia participated in the exhibition as an honoured guest.

During the meeting, the counterpart Ministers discussed the directions and results of cooperation between Georgia and France. Mr. Shamugia thanked his French colleague for the invitation and noted that strengthening partnerships with EU member states is particularly important today.

“As we all know, Georgia is at a historical crossroads: the country has been given a European perspective, and at this point, we expect to be admitted as a candidate country into the European Union. Georgia has taken appropriate steps to fulfil those important points for the candidate status,” Mr. Otar Shamugia said.

According to the French Minister of Agriculture and Food, France supports Georgia’s road to European integration and appreciates recent progress.

“All of the activities, programs, and events that we plan and implement with our partners, on the one hand, are aimed at maximizing and effectively utilizing the potential in the agricultural sector, promoting the production and sale of competitive Georgian products that are in demand on international markets, and on the other hand, our goal is to develop production while protecting our environment, water, land, forest and wildlife from pressure and damage to the greatest extent possible.

Accordingly, we are actively working on adopting international standards and European management systems. I thank all international and donor organizations, including the French Development Agency. The support of our international partners and the sharing of their best practices is the most essential factor in achieving the goal”, - noted the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

According to Mr Shamugia, there is a long-term and fruitful cooperation between Georgia and France in the agricultural and environmental protection fields. As mentioned, the French side would continue supporting the livestock sector, promoting small farms, land management, and scientific research activities.

At the end of the meeting, the counterpart Ministers signed an agreement document outlining the two nations’ cooperation in areas such as land irrigation, land management, forestry management, animal husbandry, and others.

The extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of Georgia to the Republic of France, Mr. Gocha Javakishvili, attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21423>

Solomon Pavliashvili participates in the 5th session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5)



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, participated in the 5th session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) in the Federal Republic of Germany, Bonn.

The Federal Chancellor of Germany, Mr. Olaf Scholz, made opening remarks at the session held within the “Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management” (SAICM) framework.

Mr. Steffi Lemke, Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection, and Mrs. Inger Andersen, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, addressed the delegates in their opening speech.

During the Conference, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, emphasized the importance of safe management of chemicals and waste at the global level and the challenges and steps taken by Georgia in this direction.

The main task of the Conference is to adopt a “beyond 2020” chemicals and waste global policy framework instrument to address the global challenges of environmental pollution by chemicals.

Mr. Pavliashvili also participated in the high-level round table format discussions held within the Conference. The Deputy Minister spoke about the steps taken by Georgia to harmonize the legislation with the relevant regulations of the European Union in chemical substance and waste management and the measures planned for the future.

As mentioned, Georgia participates in the implementation of the “Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management” (SAICM).

Within the session, the Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Ms. Monika Stankevich, thanked Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili and the members of the Georgian delegation for the approval of the ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury by Georgia.

During the final plenary session of the High-level segment of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, the parties summarized the round table discussions, including a report highlighting the steps taken by Georgia in implementing the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21419>

Otar Shamugia: “I hope the decisions made in Tbilisi regarding the financing of important projects will be another step forward for developing countries in dealing with the global problem of climate change”



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, made opening remarks at the 37th meeting of the Green Climate Fund Board. According to the Minister, it is crucial to take even more effective and prompt steps to deal with the challenges posed by climate change.

“The negative impact of climate change has manifested itself in intensified natural events worldwide. Georgia, of course, is no exception in this respect. This year, natural disasters in our country caused many deaths, which is the biggest tragedy and shows the need for more effective and speedier responses to the challenges posed by climate change.

As has been actively stated in recent years, governments should embrace more ambitious plans for fulfilling the Paris Agreement. We appreciate this approach; the Government of Georgia has taken responsibility for joining a joint decision to fight climate change and transform the country's economy into a low-carbon economy.

Furthermore, we have already set more ambitious goals determined at the national level and reflected in the corresponding strategies, plans, and measures.

The Green Climate Fund significantly contributes to mobilizing funds for projects to combat climate change and support sustainable development for developing countries. GCF has funded two national projects to implement mitigation and adaptation measures in Georgia. In addition, we are also involved in GCF regional projects. The Green Climate Fund is an excellent example of cooperation between developed and developing countries to solve global problems,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

The Minister also focused on the possibilities of future cooperation with the Green Climate Fund in the following areas: Adoption of climate-smart agricultural technologies and practices, promotion of renewable sources of energy, the establishment of sustainable transport and mobility systems, introduction of climate-smart approaches in the education sector, restoration of windbreaks, the establishment of sustainable pasture management systems.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) board meeting is being held for the first time in the Eastern European region, specifically in Georgia. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the world's largest fund supporting developing countries in meeting climate change goals. The Board was created by the governments of 194 countries participating in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21449>

Georgia is hosting the 37th meeting of the Green Climate Fund Board



The 37th meeting of the Governing Board of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) is being held in Tbilisi. The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. Otar Shamugia, and the Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund, Mrs. Mafalda Duarte, made opening remarks at the event. The Minister thanked the members of the Board and the Secretariat of the Green Climate Fund for selecting Georgia as the host country for the Board meeting.

“It is important for us that Georgia is hosting the 37th meeting of the Green Climate Fund GCF Board. The negative impact of climate change has manifested itself in intensified natural events all across the planet. GCF has funded two national projects in Georgia for implementing mitigation and adaptation measures. Furthermore, we are also involved in GCF regional projects. We hope that fruitful cooperation with the Green Climate Fund will continue in the future. I believe that the decisions made in Tbilisi regarding the financing of important projects will be another step forward for developing countries in dealing with the global problem of climate change,” Mr. Otar Shamugia stated.

Mrs. Mafalda Duarte, Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund, thanked the Government of Georgia for its hospitality.

“This is the first time the Green Climate Fund Board meeting is held in the Eastern European region. The mentioned meeting is crucial since the Board of Directors has to make decisions that will be implemented in the next four years. Our partnership with Georgia started in 2016, and since then we have been implementing several joint projects in different directions. Within the mentioned projects, we are planning to visit different locations this week,” said Mrs. Mafalda Duarte.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, a member of the Governing Board of the Green Climate Fund and the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, representing the countries of the Eastern European region, headed the opening of the session. Mrs. Maya Bitadze, Chair of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, attended the meeting.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the world's largest fund that helps developing countries meet their climate change goals.

The high-ranking representatives of relevant Ministries from different countries (USA, Pakistan, Germany, Italy, Canada, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Argentina, China, Great Britain, Spain, Japan, Egypt ...) attended the 37th meeting of the Green Climate Fund Board.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21448>



GREEN CLIMATE FUND



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Confédération suisse
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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

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) board delegation visited the ECO.Georgia project implementation areas in Kakheti region



© GIZ: GCF delegation visiting the forest area in Kakheti region



© GIZ: GCF delegation visiting the forest area in Kakheti region

On 27th October, the GCF delegation together with the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Mr Kakha Kakabadze, representatives of the German Embassy, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH visited different project implementation areas in the municipalities of Kakheti region.

The delegation first arrived at the forest area in the municipality of Kvareli, where the management and local representatives of the National Forestry Agency (NFA), the Department of Environmental Supervision (DES) and the Head of the Biodiversity and Forestry Department of MEPA explained the ongoing and planned activities within the frames of the Forest Sector Reform and the ECO.Georgia project. At the same time, they demonstrated the improved equipment and machinery procured with the aim of strengthening the capacity of the institution.

Another station for the delegation was the so-called Business Service Yard (BSY) of the National Forestry Agency in Akhmeta municipality, where the Deputy Minister handed over the newly procured machinery to the National Forestry Agency. The machinery and equipment for the BSY were funded by the GCF through the grant agreement between the NFA and GIZ. The NFA management explained the newly developed supply chain system for fuelwood provisioning and the role of BSY in it.

During the field visit in the region, the delegation also visited an energy-efficient (EE) stove producer in Akhmeta municipality. The factory construction has been co-financed by the Government of Georgia as a part of its own contribution to the ECO.Georgia project. The producer explained to the delegation the benefits of their products and talked about the achievements and challenges in the market development process. The Rural Development Agency explained the subsidy scheme for households developed within the ECO.Georgia project to make the products affordable for households and support them to switch from the traditional stoves to the new EE stoves for the upcoming heating seasons.

While introducing the different directions of the project, the delegation met the new startups and potential entrepreneurs in the field of ecotourism and forest products. They have been supported through training and business coaching funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The beneficiaries talked about their ongoing and future business ideas and presented their products to the guests.



©GIZ: Visiting BSY and handover of equipment to NFA



©GIZ: At the factory of EE stoves

GIZ oversight mission held the meetings with the ECO.Georgia project executive entities

In the week of October 19-26, the representatives of the GIZ oversight unit visited Georgia. The oversight unit supervises the project implementation as well as is a liaison between the project donor – Green Climate Fund and GIZ.

The mission held meetings with the Deputy Minister Mr Kakha Kakabadze and the management of the National Forestry Agency and the Rural Development Agency as well as the operational level colleagues of the executive entities to learn about the achievements and challenges the institutions face in the project implementation process.

At the meetings, the successes of the last two years, and the challenges were presented to the mission members. The parties shared the risks and ideas for potential solutions and agreed on future steps to respond to the challenges.



The development of energy-efficient public procurement guidelines continues



© GIZ: Workshop on EEPP guidelines

On October 3, a workshop on energy-efficient public procurement was held in Tbilisi, jointly organized by the GIZ and the State Procurement Agency of Georgia. The purpose of the workshop was to present and discuss the working version of the energy-efficient public procurement guideline prepared with the participation of the German Energy Agency (dena). Representatives of the state agencies defining and implementing energy-efficiency policy, such as the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, the State Procurement Agency, the Parliament of Georgia, the Environmental Information and Education Center and other organizations implementing large-scale state procurements, participated in the workshop.



© GIZ: Workshop on EEPP guidelines

Within the framework of the workshop, German experts shared the best international practices and jointly discussed how the tender process should be arranged on the examples of specific cases.

Based on the association agreement between Georgia and the European Union, according to the resolution of the Government of Georgia, the implementation of energy-efficient public procurement will be mandatory for public organizations from 2025, therefore, the guideline for energy-efficient public procurement will help organizations to implement the principles of energy efficiency.