



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

MARCH 2024

Otar Shamugia participates in the USAID Agriculture Program summary event



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Mr. Levan Davitashvili, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Georgia, Mrs. Robin L. Dunnigan, and the President of the International Organization "Setting New Frontiers in Agriculture" (CNFA), Mr. Sylvain Roy, delivered opening remarks at the event.

The event addressed the program's achievements, including honoring and awarding the program's recipients, representatives of successful agribusinesses.

Mr. Shamugia commended the US Government and USAID for their assistance, emphasizing that the US is a significant supporter of Georgia, both politically and economically.

"We actively cooperate with the United States of America in environmental protection and agricultural fields. More than 1000 companies received different types of assistance under the indicated program, including adopting International food safety standards.

Moreover, the companies have significantly increased their production and sales both domestically and in export markets. Agricultural development is one of the top priorities for the Georgian Government. This year, we are implementing over 15 programs to support our farmers and entrepreneurs, covering almost the whole value chain. Projects implemented together with partners make all the abovementioned much more effective. Ultimately, our goal is to support farmers to produce quality Georgian products and become more competitive in the global market," said Mr. Otar Shamugia.



Mrs. Robin L. Dunnigan, the US Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Georgia, focused on the results achieved within the program.

"The USA and Georgia have been partners for 32 years, with the United States investing around 6 billion dollars in Georgia throughout that time. The USAID Rural Development Program has played a crucial role in the agricultural development. Within the framework of the said program, six thousand new jobs were created, and the program has improved the lives of one hundred thousand people, while also promoting the development of the agricultural sector," the Ambassador said. According to the First Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Mr. Levan Davitashvili, as a result of the program, agro-food products worth about 150 million dollars were exported.

The representatives of the Parliament of Georgia, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, non-governmental and international organizations, and industry associations attended the meeting.

CNFA carried out the USAID agriculture program for five and a half years, with a budget of 26.88 million US dollars.

The program helped to develop the agricultural sector, boost the economic and social capacities of the rural population, exploit new markets, and increase exports throughout the country.

The partners of the program were: the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the Rural Development Agency, the National Food Agency, the National Wine Agency, "Produce in Georgia", international donor organizations, financial institutions, and media outlets.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21602>

Tbilisi National Park will embrace New Eco-educational and Recreational Spaces



A new eco-educational and recreational project will be implemented in Tbilisi National Park.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, inspected places for creating new recreational and eco-educational spaces in the Sabaduri and Zedazeni districts of Tbilisi National Park.

The Ambassador of Sweden to Georgia, Mrs. Anna Lyberg, the Head of Development Cooperation and Deputy Head of Mission of the Kingdom of Sweden to Georgia, Mr. Erik Illes, Head of the Environmental Program of the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, Mrs. Khatuna Zaldastanishvili accompanied the Minister in the Tbilisi National Park.

The Minister spoke about the management policy of protected areas of Georgia, emphasizing the need for expansion and the importance of infrastructural development.

“We establish new protected areas each year. Currently, intensive work is underway to expand the existing protected area in Racha and establish additional protected areas in Samegrelo and Zemo “Upper” Svaneti regions.

It is worth mentioning that the number of visitors to the protected areas is annually increasing. Last year, we had more than a million visitors, and we expect this figure to rise even more this year.

Given this, it is vital to have proper eco-tourism and recreational infrastructure. We have already started working in the Tbilisi National Park.

This unique nature is near the city and has numerous visitors. Therefore, it is essential to provide the vacationer with a well-organized infrastructure. I would emphasize our collaboration with the Swedish Development Agency, through our cooperation, the GEL seven million two hundred thousand will be invested, with the co-financing of the state budget. The Ministry continues to work in this direction. This year, similar infrastructural works are planned to be implemented in approximately ten locations”, Mr. Otar Shamugia said.

According to the Ambassador of Sweden to Georgia, Mrs. Anna Lyberg, the Swedish side, through the “Save Nature–Georgia” project, actively supports the improvement of sustainable management of natural resources and the protection/restoration of biodiversity in Georgia, for which several crucial activities are carried out.

It is worth mentioning that the Swedish side is considering adding a component to the “Save Nature–Georgia” initiative, which implies financial assistance for the Tbilisi National Park’s eco-tourism and eco-education programs.

Within the framework of the event, the representatives of the relevant agencies of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the diplomatic corps, and donor organizations inspected the construction works of the Tbilisi National Park Visitor Center and the locations where recreation facilities, children’s entertainment spaces, an amphitheater, picnic areas for hiking enthusiasts and new eco-paths are planned to construct. A significant part of the work will be completed before the peak tourist season begins.

https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21626



Nino Tandilashvili was elected as the Vice President of the Seventh Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7)



At the Sixth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6), the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, was elected as the Vice President of the Seventh Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) for a two- year term.

The UN Environment Assembly embraces 193 member states and is the world’s highest-level decision-making body on environmental issues, which sets the global environmental agenda and determines priorities for policy and international environmental law.

The United Nations Environment Assembly promotes cooperation between countries towards mobilizing resources and achieving environmental goals.

https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21615

Otar Shamugia became acquainted with the manufacturing process of energy-efficient stoves in Dusheti



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, the Deputy Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Georgia, Mrs. Anna Chernyshova, and the State Representative in the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region, Mr. Davit Nozadze visited the newly opened enterprise of energy efficient stoves.

The company "Esko-esi" invested GEL 2 million to set up energy-efficient stoves. The mentioned company obtained GEL 15 million in preferential agro-credit and received GEL 500,000 under the Program "Co-financing of Processing and Storage Enterprises". The company participates in the co-financing program for energy-efficient stoves as a manufacturer.

"To alleviate environmental pressures, we must support using energy-efficient technology throughout the country. A new enterprise was opened with the support of the state, and part of the company's financing was fully mobilized by the state. The company embraces an educational component, and individuals interested in professional fields are being trained in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

It is worth mentioning that we are implementing a project with GIZ assistance that allows the population, or interested individuals, to purchase energy-efficient stoves, and around 200 households have already bene-

fitted. We think we need more support to further increase interest in this regard." - said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

"Biomass created from hazelnuts and walnut shells is used to fuel energy-efficient stoves, reducing environmental emissions, and making rational use of forest resources. Forty energy-efficient stoves have already been delivered to locals with the help of UNDP, which is crucial," said Mrs. Anna Chernyshova, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Georgia.

According to Zaal Kheladze, the founder of the company "Esko-ES" and the Green Engineering Centre, the new state-supported company employs 25 people. The company plans to produce 33,000 stoves throughout a five-year project and entirely cover Georgia.

With the support of the UNDP and GEF small grants programs, within the framework of the program "Renewable and sustainable clean energy development and impact on social, economic, and environmental health", the company "Esko-Esi" implements the social project "Warmth for Everyone", which involves the installation of energy-efficient ovens for socially vulnerable families in Dusheti Municipality.

It should be mentioned that the Rural Development Agency has issued a grant totaling more than GEL 600,000 to support energy-efficient production, while the amount of "preferential agro-credit" issued for the same purpose surpasses GEL 1.7 million.

The Director of the Rural Development Agency, members of the local government, representatives of the Austrian Embassy, the Caucasus Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations Network (CENN), non-governmental organizations, media, and business sector attended the event.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21605>

Otar Shamugia meets the World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, met Mrs. Rolande Pryce, World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus.

During the meeting, the parties reviewed current projects and potential cooperation issues with the World Bank's assistance, including agricultural and environmental protection areas.

Mr. Otar Shamugia emphasized the importance of cooperation with the World Bank, focusing on the challenges in the irrigation infrastructure, land management, agricultural development, and the results achieved by joint projects.

"The World Bank-supported "Georgia Resilient Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land Project" plays a special role in reforming the irrigation sector of Georgia. I believe that with maximal collaboration and coordination, we will be able to effectively implement common goals, overcome challenges, and achieve better results," said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

According to Mrs. Rolande Pryce, Georgia, and the World Bank have had a long-standing successful cooperation, and relations will deepen even more in the future.

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

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21607>

Tengiz Nasaridze attended the first meeting of the Advisory Board of the “Green Guria” Project



The first meeting of the advisory board of stakeholders of the project “GREEN Guria: Supporting Local Democracy and Rural Development for Inclusive and Resilient Green Growth” was held through EU funding.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze, Executive Director of the Caucasus Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations Network (CENN), Mr. Laurent Georges Etienne Nicole, and Programme Manager for Emergency Management, Civil Protection, Rural Development, and Intellectual Property of the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, Mrs. Ketevan Khutsishvili, delivered opening remarks at the event. The parties discussed the project’s progress and shared recommendations for its effective implementation.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture thanked the parties involved in the project for their support and emphasized the importance of international partners in rural development.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture thanked the project stakeholders for their assistance and emphasized the importance of International partners in rural development.

“Rural development is one of the top priorities for the Georgian government. We are carrying out several important activities to get closer to Europe and adopt their best practices. Our village should be even more successful in entrepreneurship and sociocultural development. For this reason, the state implements several supporting projects, including the “Community-Based Local Support Program”, which will contribute to the inclusive development of the village”, said Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze.

In his remarks, the New Executive Director of CENN, Mr. Laurent Georges Etienne Nicole, emphasized the importance of the project in enhancing local civil society and adopting competitive agricultural and environmental practices in Georgia.

According to the Programme Manager for Emergency Management, Civil Protection, Rural Development, and Intellectual Property of the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, Mrs. Ketevan Khutsishvili, the European Union will continue to assist Georgia in addressing recognized strategic priorities and needs in agricultural and environmental protection areas.

The event also featured a panel discussion “LAGs for Rural Development – Opportunities and Challenges”, with the participation of the Chairmen of LAGs from Lanchkhuti, Gurjaani, Ozurgeti, and Chokhatauri Municipalities.

Representatives of the European Union, the Ministries of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, the local self-government of the Guria region, and civil society attended the event.

CENN is implementing the project as part of the European Union’s European Neighbourhood Programme for Rural and Agricultural Development (ENPARD IV), in collaboration with partner organizations such as the Union of Young Teachers, the Democracy Institute, and the Keda Local Action Group (LAG).

The project aims to reduce poverty and improve the economic and social environment and living conditions of vulnerable communities through civic engagement, inclusive rural development, and green growth.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21608>

Otar Shamugia meets his Icelandic Counterpart



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Samugia, met with Mr. Gudlaugur Thór Thórdarson, Minister of the Environment, Energy, and Climate in Iceland.

During the meeting, the parties addressed the ways to overcome challenges posed by climate change and the perspectives of bilateral cooperation in the mentioned direction.

The Georgian side briefed the delegation of the Republic of Iceland on the “2030 Climate Change Strategy of Georgia and the 2021–2023 Action Plan”.

As mentioned, sharing the experience of Iceland in combating climate change is crucial for Georgia.

“Deepening bilateral cooperation and sharing the experience of Iceland is very valuable for Georgia. Climate change is a top global concern, and governments are actively cooperating to deal with it. Georgia has been actively working on environmental reforms over the past few years. Last year, our country received the European Union membership candidate status, which obliges us to take even faster and more efficient measures toward fulfilling our responsibilities. I would point out that we are adopting all the major regulations following the EU recommendations, and in this process, the support of our partner and friendly countries is especially valuable for Georgia,” Mr. Otar Shamugia stated.

Mr. Gudlaugur Thór Thórdarson, Minister of the Environment, Energy, and Climate in Iceland, emphasized the importance of bilateral cooperation between the countries, noting that Iceland is ready to share experience and support Georgia in overcoming environmental challenges.

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, and representatives of relevant services of the Ministry, including the state and private sector representatives of the Republic of Iceland, attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21609>

Otar Shamugia hosted the Italian Ambassador to Georgia Massimiliano D'Antuono



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Italian Republic to Georgia, Mr. Massimiliano D'Antuono.

During the introductory meeting, the parties discussed the expansion of future cooperation between the two countries in the agricultural and environmental protection areas, the activation of trade connections, and the assistance of Georgia on the path to European integration.

The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture congratulated the diplomat on the appointment and wished him success.

“Georgia and Italy have a long-standing, successful collaboration. Trade links have expanded in recent years, but there is even greater potential in

this direction. We would point out that we are ready to deepen our partnership with our friendly countries, as their assistance is especially vital for implementing the European Commission’s recommendations and reforms today, as Georgia is a candidate country for EU membership. Moreover, we have taken steps to improve production quality and to introduce food safety standards, including implementing agricultural reforms. We think this will increase competitiveness and export potential of Georgian products in the European market, including Italy,” Mr. Otar Shamugia said.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Italy to Georgia, Mr. Massimiliano D'Antuono, positively evaluated the existing cooperation between Georgia and Italy in many directions, stating that it is crucial to deepen bilateral relations. Italy will continue to support Georgia in fulfilling the obligations taken on the path to European integration, activating trade and economic ties, and enhancing opportunities between the two countries.

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, and Deputy Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Italy, Mrs. Fabiola Albanese, attended the meeting.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21610>

Nino Tandilashvili meets the UNIDO representative in Georgia



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, met with Mrs. Nunu Mosiashvili, UNIDO National Country Programme Coordinator, to discuss issues regarding boosting laboratory capacities, developing and improving bases, increasing access to them, adopting digital technologies in agriculture, and training young staff.

The parties reviewed the potential engagement of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture in the UNIDO program and the action plan for its execution.

“The Ministry has a long-standing, successful collaboration with UNIDO on environmental issues. Moreover, the national program addresses topics that are particularly relevant to us, such as upgrading and digitizing laboratory bases. The European Commission has given a positive assessment of our laboratory capacities. Food safety and security are directly linked to enhancing laboratory capacities in the country; hence, we prioritize the mentioned approach. It is worth mentioning that the engagement of UNIDO will be interesting towards incorporating young people in agriculture, retraining workers, and building a training center as part of adopting a unified systematized approach”, – noted Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

UNIDO’s “Country Programme” will be implemented in 2023 – 2027 and will focus on three primary areas: agribusiness growth, market access and increased possibilities for farmers, environmental protection, and effective use of natural resources.

A National Coordination Committee, comprising several state agencies, will be established to determine the program’s priority directions.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21612>

Nino Tandilashvili hosted the US Ambassador in Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park



Mrs. Robin L. Dunnigan, the U S Ambassador Extraordinary, and Plenipotentiary to Georgia, visited one of the oldest and most unique National Parks in Georgia–Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park, where she learned about the specifics of the management of the protected areas of Georgia and the activities of the rangers.

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, hosted the Ambassador.

The conversation touched upon the successful and close cooperation between Georgia and the United States of America in environmental protection and protected areas.

The parties discussed future initiatives, including sharing the best international practices.

It is worth mentioning that the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the Agency of Protected Areas have a long-standing successful cooper-

ation with the United States of America in several directions.

The American Agency for International Development (USAID) helped to lay the foundation for programs aiming to conserve distinctive species, promote ecotourism, and enhance the institutional framework of the protected area system.

Furthermore, the US Forest Service actively collaborates with the Agency of Protected Areas, providing significant assistance to protected areas concerning biodiversity conservation.

We should emphasize the cooperation towards strengthening the fire management system, particularly in Borjomi-Kharagauli Park, which is one of the most fire-prone areas. A draft version of the fire management plan for Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park was created with assistance from the US Forest Service, which serves as a roadmap for the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park and Agency of Protected Areas while implementing fire safety measures.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21619>

The third plenary session addressing Georgia’s National Roadmap for Transitioning to a Circular Economy



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

As mentioned, the strategic goal of Georgia is to quickly bring its circular economy policy up to speed with European standards, refine existing laws, and create venues for stakeholders to collaborate effectively.

“The Government of Georgia has started to elaborate a national circular economy roadmap to facilitate the transition to the circular economic model. The mentioned document serves as a strategic plan outlining long-term goals and identifying key initiatives to achieve them. The circularity map is based on the E U circular economy action plan, which is a cornerstone of the European “Green Deal”, – noted Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

The circular economy is a systemic approach to economic development designed to benefit businesses, society, and the environment. This economic concept is built on the principles of eliminating waste and pollution, conserving goods and raw materials, and restoring natural systems.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the Georgian Society of Nature Explorers “Orchis” (GSNE “Orchis”) organized the third plenary session 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”, with the financial support of the Swedish government.

The group of experts from the inter-departmental coordination council created by the Georgian Government to promote the transition to the circular economy and the Georgian Society of Nature Explorers “Orchis” (GSNE “Orchis”) participated in the session.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21620>

Nino Tandilashvili meets with the Regional Director of Swiss Cooperation for the South Caucasus



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, met with the Regional Director of Swiss Cooperation for the South Caucasus, Mrs. Barbara Böni.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili emphasized the importance of the joint projects of the Ministry and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and thanked the Swiss government for its long-standing support.

“The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is one of the active donors of Georgia. We have implemented several successful programs. The support of Switzerland and sharing their experience, both in agriculture and environment, is crucial for our country”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

According to Mrs. Barbara Boni, the Swiss government views Georgia as a reliable partner. Thus, the Swiss Agency supports Georgia’s efforts to adapt to climate change, along with deepening trade relations, strengthening the capacity of processing enterprises, expanding the livestock sector, and developing agricultural extension services.

During the meeting, the parties addressed the future cooperation in strengthening the capacities of the National Environmental Agency and reducing the risks of natural disasters in the country.

The representatives of the relevant services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and the Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency attended the meeting.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21623>

Solomon Pavliashvili delivers opening remarks at the Coordination Council session – dedicated to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Requirements



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, delivered opening remarks at the Coordination Council session – dedicated to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Requirements.

Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili thanked the Swedish Government and the United Nations Development Program for supporting the project.

“As we know, sustainable management of resources is one of the government’s top priority areas. Environmental, Social, and Governance indicators are a component of the circular economy, which serves to promote green economic growth in the country, achieve sustainable development goals, and, accordingly, fulfill the obligations assumed by the Association Agreement with the European Union,” said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) requirements consider environmental, social, and corporate governance issues while investing. According to the concept, adopting ESG indicators in all sectors of economic activity is crucial for sustainable development.

Dr. Dariusz Edward Prasek, an International Expert in Sustainable Finance, Environmental, Social, and Governance Areas, and Circular Economy, and a member of the United Nations Advisory Board on Circular Economy, chaired the session, with the participation of the representatives of relevant state institutions and stakeholders involved in the transition to the circular economy and green growth of Georgia.

It is worth mentioning that five thematic sessions are planned to be conducted with the representatives of the target group and share the basic knowledge with them. The sessions will be held in close cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture within 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 Swedish government. The Union of Nature Researchers of Georgia “Orchis” will organize the mentioned meetings.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21614>

Tengiz Nasaridze meets Balázs Molnár, Deputy Secretary of State from the Department for EU Affairs at the Prime Minister's Office



During the official meeting, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze, and the representatives of the Hungarian delegation discussed the potential of the European Union market, the competitiveness of local food products, and promoting the adoption of modern technologies. Mr. Nasaridze thanked the Hungarian government for supporting Georgia on its path to European integration, emphasizing that expanding cooperation with Hungary and sharing their experience is extremely important for Georgia as a candidate country.

“Bilateral cooperation between Georgia and Hungary is further deepening. In 2022, the two countries signed the declaration on strategic partnership. It is worth mentioning that, from an agricultural perspective, we

have very tight ties concerning the export-import of agro-food products, including conducting joint scientific research. Since there is increased competition of agricultural products in the EU market, sharing successful experiences is crucial for us”, said Mr. Tengiz Nasaridze.

It is essential to mention that the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia closely cooperates with the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary. In 2023, the two Agencies signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to promote the trade of agricultural / food products.

“We support the EU enlargement policy and congratulate Georgia on the candidate status. There are several problems in the European market, including finding sources of financing, although this is one of the biggest and stable markets, and Hungary will help Georgia in market positioning,” said Mr. Balázs Molnár.

The visit of the Hungarian delegation to Georgia will last for two days. Official meetings are planned with the representatives of various state agencies.



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21627>



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



ISSUE#10 / March 2024

“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

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

Nino Tandilashvili attended the Project “ Enabling the implementation of Georgia’s Forest Sector Reform – ECO. Georgia” Steering Committee Meeting



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, delivered opening remarks at the 5th Steering Committee meeting of the project “ Enabling the implementation of Georgia’s Forest Sector Reform – ECO.Georgia”.

Mrs. Tandilashvili thanked all participating agencies and international donor organizations for their support, emphasizing the project’s significance in reforming the forestry sector.

“As we know, sustainable development of the forestry sector is one of the significant priorities of the country. Maximum involvement of all responsible agencies plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of forestry sector reform. In the face of numerous challenges, we have tangible achievements. I believe that creating an action plan and a guiding document will be very beneficial to the sustainable development of the forestry sector.

It is essential to mention that “business yards” are already operating across the country, and their number will increase by the end of the year. The Rural Development Agency successfully implements the financing program for energy-efficient stove enterprises. The process of developing and approving forest management plans is actively underway in several municipalities. Meantime, we are strengthening the controlling agency, the Department of Environmental Supervision, by providing the

appropriate equipment and techniques to make the control more strict to detect the facts of illegal forest use / illegal cutting”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

During the meeting, Mrs. Lydia Christman, the Head of the Cooperation Development Department of the Embassy of Germany in the South Caucasus, and Mrs. Barbara Böni, Regional Director of Cooperation South Caucasus, emphasized the progress achieved in the forestry sector in Georgia and the importance of developing an action plan document and active public involvement in reforming the forest management.

Mrs. Nino Chhobadze, Chair of the non-governmental organization “Georgian Green Movement/Friends of the Earth-Georgia”, attended the meeting as a new member of the Steering Committee.

The project “ Enabling the implementation of Georgia’s forest sector reform – ECO.Georgia” is financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and jointly implemented by the Government of Georgia and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ). The project includes three components: “Sustainable forest management”, “Energy efficiency and alternative fuel market development”, and “Income sources and local self-government in forest management”. The project covers three regions of Georgia – Kakheti, Guria, and Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21624>