



Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

JANUARY 2026

New Regulation on the Reduction of Plastic Consumption Enters into Force on April 1, 2026

In line with international best practices and the principles of sustainable development, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia is implementing new regulatory measures to prevent plastic pollution and mitigate pressure on natural ecosystems.

At the initiative of the Ministry, a draft Resolution of the Government of Georgia has been prepared, which prohibits organizations conducting state procurement from purchasing plastic cups, plastic containers, and beverages packaged in plastic bottles with a capacity of up to 3 liters. This restriction does not apply to state procurements specifically conducted for the operational needs of the Defense Forces and for supplying military personnel with essential goods during official assignments, training, or missions.

The Regulation will come into force on April 1, 2026.

Notably, as of January 1, 2026, the placing on the market of certain plastic items intended for food contact has already been prohibited, reflecting a gradual and systematic approach to reducing single-use plastics.

The use of single-use plastics poses a significant risk to both the environment and human health. Reducing their consumption and introducing appropriate alternatives are essential to safeguarding ecosystems and public health.

Several studies have been undertaken across Georgia to assess plastic pollution. Within a project implemented with financial support from the World Bank, assessments conducted at 13 sites in the Rioni River basin confirmed the prevalence of plastic waste at all locations. The studies also revealed that the average density of waste in the Rioni River is 1.77 items per square meter, reaching nearly 4 items per square meter in some areas. These figures significantly exceed the average levels recorded in other European rivers (approximately 0.5 items per square meter), underscoring the scale of the problem and the urgent need for action. Furthermore, a study conducted under a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project confirmed that the consumption of single-use plastics in Georgia remains high, amounting to approximately 613.5 million items annually, corresponding to an estimated 3.9–5.9 thousand tonnes of plastic waste per year.

Based on these findings, the proposed Draft Resolution introduces a prohibition, effective from April 1, 2026, on the procurement of beverages in plastic bottles of up to 3 liters by budgetary organizations. The implementation of this measure represents a further step toward reducing plastic consumption.

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Solomon Pavliashvili Participates in the 5th Ministerial Conference of the "Future Minerals Forum 2026"



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, participated in the 5th Ministerial Roundtable and Conference of the Future Minerals Forum (FMF) in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

During his remarks, Mr. Pavliashvili spoke about Georgia's long-standing experience in mining while emphasizing the importance of developing the sector.

"A new Mining Code has been developed in the country, integrating environmental, social, and economic aspects, while ensuring a transparent, predictable, and investor-friendly regulatory framework. Consultations with stakeholders on the draft code will begin in the near future. An-

other important milestone is our interactive geological map, which will soon be accessible through official platforms. This initiative reflects our commitment to data transparency, enhancing investor confidence, and evidence-based policymaking, while also showcasing Georgia's mineral resource potential," stated the Deputy Minister.

According to Mr. Pavliashvili, Georgia has achieved strong economic growth in recent years, reflecting the results of a peace-oriented and pragmatic government policy.

"Georgia is increasingly playing a key role as a regional hub, connecting Europe and Asia through major trade, transport, and energy corridors. This strategic position enhances the resilience of supply chains, enabling

the country to make a significant contribution to regional stability, co-operation, and economic integration. Georgia is ready to be a reliable partner in regional and global efforts aimed at ensuring sustainable, secure, and diversified critical mineral supply chains. We firmly support transparency, international cooperation, and innovation in the mining sector," Mr. Pavliashvili stated.

The 2026 Future Minerals Forum (FMF) conference placed special emphasis on mineral supply security, attracting investment, enhancing the industry's reputation, and other key topics.

The conference's updated communication format included panel sessions, informational dialogues, and decision-oriented working meetings.

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Presentation of the Results of the Study on Glacial Valleys Held at the Government Administration



At the Government Administration of Georgia, Daniel Tobler, an expert from the Swiss company GEOTEST AG, delivered a presentation to members of the Georgian Government on the results of a comprehensive study assessing natural hazards in glacial valleys.

The study was conducted under a contract signed with the National Environmental Agency in 2024.

Notably, to effectively address the challenges posed by climate change, the establishment of a system enabling the rapid collection and processing of information on anticipated natural hazards is becoming increasingly important.

"Today, the Swiss company GEOTEST AG presented the results of its research on natural hazards in glacial valleys. A study of this scale and depth has been carried out in the region for the first time, which once again underscores its significance. I would emphasize that the monitoring and forecasting technologies currently in place in Georgia meet the requirements of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Accordingly, we now have more accurate, timely, and reliable data, enabling us to better assess ongoing natural processes and their potential impacts,"

stated the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili.

As part of the study, hazards were assessed in 22 glacial valleys across the country. As a result, geographic areas with specific challenges have been identified where the installation of modern monitoring systems and relevant equipment is necessary. This process will commence in the current year and will be gradually implemented over successive phases.

Georgian specialists were also involved in the large-scale study. The participation of local experts in research of this magnitude is crucial, as it facilitates the sharing of their experience and their in-depth knowledge of Georgia's geographical and geological characteristics.

It is worth mentioning that GEOTEST AG is one of Switzerland's leading companies, with experience in hazard assessment and the development of preventive recommendations in nearly every region of the world, including Europe, South and North America, Asia, and the South Caucasus. The National Environmental Agency has been cooperating with the company since 2014.



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David Songulashvili: "By the end of April, the public will be briefed on the concrete outcomes of the Commission's work"



According to Mr. Songulashvili, Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and a member of the Governmental Coordination Commission on food prices, the public will be informed of the commission's concrete outcomes by the end of April.

"During the organizational meeting of the governmental commission, we reviewed the action plan while also outlining the operational process for moving forward. Meetings with all relevant stakeholders have been scheduled to discuss the action plan and determine the priority outcomes of the commission's activities," Mr. David Songulashvili stated. The Governmental Coordination Commission, led by Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze and initially focused on food prices, will also ad-



dress pharmaceutical and fuel pricing. The decision was announced at the commission's first session at the Government Administration, where members outlined an action plan for the coming weeks, including meetings with producers, retail chains, and distribution companies. The commission will work in coordination with the relevant parliamentary committee and is expected to complete its activities by the end of April. Throughout the process, the public will be briefed on the actual cost of products, the components of pricing, and any potentially unjustified price markups. Members of the commission anticipate that price reductions will begin gradually, in parallel with the progress of the commission's work.

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Additional Meeting Convened to Discuss Measures for Improving Ambient Air Quality in Rustavi



As part of a working meeting dedicated to improving ambient air quality and fulfilling environmental obligations in the city of Rustavi, the parties reviewed the outcomes of the Rustavi Ambient Air Quality Management Plan (2023–2025), existing challenges, and additional measures aimed at reducing air pollution.

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili; the Mayor of Rustavi, Mrs. Nino Latsabidze;



and the Member of Parliament of Georgia representing the 10 communities of Rustavi and Gardabani, Mr. Irakli Shatakishvili, attended the meeting.

The parties focused on strengthening controls over emissions from industrial facilities and motor vehicles, reviewing inspection outcomes, tightening sanctions, and enhancing the monitoring system.

"We must continue our efforts to improve air quality in a proactive

manner. While notable progress has been made, the development of additional initiatives remains essential. This issue is a priority for the Ministry, and together with the Rustavi City Hall, we are ready to take more ambitious steps jointly," noted Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The parties outlined future measures, including increasing the frequency of inspections, conducting proactive analysis of self-monitoring results, and enforcing fines appropriately, including tightening sanctions for exceeding emission standards. Plans also include the gradual implementation of the Law on Industrial Emissions, integrated environmental permits, and Best Available Techniques (BAT).

It is planned to establish a green buffer zone between Old Rustavi and the industrial area, financed through the Environmental Responsibility

Fund and the local municipality, along with the expansion of green spaces in other parts of Rustavi.

"Rustavi needs a new wave—legislative changes, new approaches, and stricter control over enterprises. Under conditions of economic growth, when industries are operating actively, new plans and steps are necessary to improve the environmental situation," stated Mrs. Nino Latsabidze. The Head of the National Environmental Agency, Mrs. Elene Ghubianuri, the Head of the Environmental Supervision Department, Mr. Levan Jgharkava, the Director of the Environmental Information and Education Center, Mrs. Tamta Devdariani, and the heads of relevant departments of the Ministry also attended the meeting.

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David Songulashvili: "One of the Fundamental Pillars of Agricultural Development Is a Well-Functioning and Efficient Land Amelioration System"



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. David Songulashvili, attended the presentation of the 2025 Activity Report of LLC "Georgian Amelioration," which outlined the company's key projects, systemic reforms, and achieved results.

The Minister thanked the company's employees for their efforts during 2025, noting that, with continued joint efforts, implementing the plans set for 2026 will be possible.

"LLC Georgian Amelioration is one of the key agencies within our Ministry. Through coordinated efforts, we have managed to implement a number of significant reforms. If we aim to develop agriculture, we must clearly understand that one of its fundamental foundations is a well-organized and efficient land reclamation system. This understanding has led to the transformation of the land reclamation service and the beginning of a new stage of development. From our side, I once again reaffirm our full readiness to provide maximum support—both at the legislative level and through the involvement of central authorities and other members of the Government and ensure that all the needs of our country in this field are fully met through adequate budgeting and practical mea-

sures," Mr. Songulashvili stated.

In 2025, the "Georgian Amelioration" took significant steps toward enhancing the efficiency of irrigation and drainage infrastructure, improving service quality, and ensuring the rational management of water resources. Major technical and administrative changes were implemented, while rehabilitation and cleaning works were carried out on strategic canals and facilities, ensuring a stable water supply across thousands of hectares of agricultural land. At the same time, the company upgraded its technical base and strengthened regional operations, which will have a positive impact on both agricultural development and local employment.

During the presentation, the company's General Director, Mr. Gigla Tamazashvili, emphasized the reorganization process launched in March 2025. As a result, the inspection service was strengthened, an Information and Training Center was established, and work began on the development of an interactive mapping system. After a 14-year hiatus, a new irrigation tariff was approved by the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission (GNERC). The company also created a new logo and brand book. As a result of the reforms, internal coordination and operational management improved, revenue collection rates increased, and the area of contracted agricultural land reached a record level, expanding from 60,440 hectares to 74,000 hectares.

For 2026, the company has planned the implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects, including the rehabilitation of irrigation and drainage systems, the construction and modernization of reservoirs, the rollout of a climate-smart irrigation program, and the introduction of billing and dispatch monitoring (SCADA) systems. Plans also include the establishment of regional offices and modern, customer-oriented service facilities.

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David Songulashvili Meets with FAO Representative Raimund Jehle



Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mr. David Songulashvili, met with the Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Georgia, Mr. Raimund Jehle.

During the meeting, the parties discussed ongoing and future areas of co-operation. The discussions covered key issues, including land consolidation, climate change resilience, effective pasture management, and support for the development of the wine sector, forestry, and aquaculture.

Mr. Songulashvili thanked the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and emphasized the importance of cooperation with FAO toward environmental protection and agricultural development. According to Mr. Jehle, FAO has a long-standing and successful partnership with Georgia; therefore, the Organization will continue to support the development of Georgia's environmental protection and agricultural sectors in the future.

The Assistant FAO Representative in Georgia, Mr. Mamuka Meskhi, and the Head of the Ministry's Department of International Relations and European Integration, attended the meeting.

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Meeting Held with Representatives of Cement Manufacturing Enterprises to Improve Ambient Air Quality in Rustavi.



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, along with the Member of Parliament, Mr. Irakli Shatakishvili, representing Rustavi and ten communities of Gardabani, held a meeting with representatives of cement manufacturing enterprises in Rustavi.

The parties focused on the functioning of continuous self-monitoring systems for emissions of harmful substances released into the atmosphere by industrial facilities, emphasizing the importance of balancing effective environmental protection and state oversight with the need to ensure uninterrupted industrial production.

“Over recent years, we have been actively working to improve air quality in Rustavi. Several important regulations have been adopted, including the obligation for large enterprises to implement continuous monitoring of emitted pollutants, which has already yielded certain positive results.

However, it is necessary to plan additional, comprehensive measures

to achieve even better outcomes in the near future. We listened to the challenges faced by enterprise representatives regarding the operation of self-monitoring systems and discussed ways to improve these systems without disrupting production, while ensuring that the state maintains effective control mechanisms,” stated Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the challenges that enterprises face in complying with regulatory requirements.

“All enterprises whose representatives we met with at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture are integrated into a 24-hour continuous monitoring system. Despite certain difficulties faced by business entities, there is a clear willingness on their part to further refine technological processes. The Ministry is also ready to support manufacturers to ensure that no disruptions occur during the implementation and operation of monitoring systems,” stated Mr. Irakli Shatakishvili.

It is worth noting that, under legislative amendments in force since June 1, 2021, large industrial enterprises are required to install continuous automatic self-monitoring systems for emissions and submit relevant data to the Ministry. In the event of non-compliance with established requirements, including the absence or non-use of gas and dust filtration systems, enterprises are subject to significant sanctions under the law for excessive emissions.

The Head of the National Environmental Agency, Mrs. Elene Ghubianuri, the Head of the Environmental Supervision Department, Mr. Levan Jgharkava, and the Heads of relevant departments of the Ministry attended the meeting.

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