



# Newsletter

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

SEPTEMBER 2023

## Otar Shamugia opens Georgia-Czech Republic business forum



Tbilisi hosted the Georgia-Czech Republic business forum. The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, the Minister of Environment of the Czech Republic, Mr. Petr Hladik, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Georgia, Mr. Giorgi Pertaia, opened the event.

“For many years, Georgia has actively cooperated with the Czech Republic in agricultural and environmental protection fields. We need to strengthen our existing partnerships even further especially today, when Georgia awaits a historic decision from the European Union. Therefore, the support of the Czech Republic in this process will be significant. Moreover, along with strengthening the partnership between the state agencies, it is important to deepen the cooperation between the private sector representatives. I think today’s business forum, the visit of the important delegation to Georgia led by the Minister, is a good opportunity to lay the foundation for deepening trade relations and attracting investments, and further strengthening

the bilateral relations between the Ministries in priority directions,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia. Mr. Petr Hladik, Czech Minister of Environment, stated at the opening ceremony that Georgia is a strategic partner for the Czech Republic, emphasizing that the two countries have had long-standing cooperation and partnership relations and that further deepening collaboration will benefit both parties.

“We welcome Georgia’s aspiration towards integration with the European Union. We have also gone through this path and we know what important steps need to be taken. We support Georgia in fulfilling its obligations under the Association Agreement, both in the agricultural and environmental protection fields, be it waste management, water quality assurance, circular economy development or others. Czech businessmen are already doing business in Georgia in different directions. Georgia is not a new market for us, but we would like to enhance our relations. Therefore, we brought a strong team of Czech businessmen to Georgia, and I think this forum will be fruitful”, said Mr. Petr Hladik.

Representatives of Czech and Georgian business circles in various environmental protection areas attended the forum. Representatives of environmental technologies, the manufacturing industry, e-waste recycling, healthcare, transport, IT technologies, sewage systems, air conditioning, oil, gas, water industry, waste management, and other business areas were represented from the Czech side.

The Embassy of the Czech Republic in Georgia, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Georgia and the Czech Republic organized the business forum.

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## Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Otar Shamugia meets with Petr Hladik, Minister of Environmental Protection of the Czech Republic



The meeting was held within the framework of the Georgia-Czech Republic Business Forum. According to Mr. Otar Shamugia, Georgia supports strengthening bilateral relations with the Czech Republic at the state and private sector levels, and today, the activation of collaboration with partner nations is crucial as Georgia awaits the status of the European Union candidate country.

“Georgia has taken significant steps toward fulfilling its obligations under the Association Agreement with the European Union. The reforms were carried out in the environmental protection field; Important legislative acts have been adopted, which comply with EU directives. We have made commitments on climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Georgia will do everything possible to fulfil its commitments and achieve goals.

However, our partner nations’ assistance and the support of the private sector play a crucial role in this process. We appreciate that the Czech Republic is one of the partner countries that actively collaborates with Georgia in agricultural and environmental protection areas. Through joint efforts, we are ready to enhance our ties and achieve significant results”, said Mr. Otar Shamugia.

“Good relations and long-standing cooperation in agriculture and environmental protection areas bind the Czech Republic and Georgia. We support the creation of protected areas in Georgia and the adoption of environmental laws. We want to expand our collaboration in geology and environmental monitoring, considering that these are one of Georgia’s challenges. We have already taken the route that Georgia is currently taking toward European integration, and we are ready to assist the Georgian side in fulfilling the obligations that will help in this process,” said Mr. Petr Hladik.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the current situation in the environmental protection field, ongoing projects and priority directions for deepening cooperation between the Ministries.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to Georgia, Mr. Petr Kubernat, Deputy Chair of the Czech Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Michael Steffi and representatives of relevant agencies of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Czech Republic attended the meeting.

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## Otar Shamugia meets with the newly appointed Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Georgia, Mrs. Meline Arakelian



During the introductory meeting, the parties reviewed Georgia's progress in agricultural and environmental protection areas, including the challenges and prospects for future cooperation between the two countries.

Mr. Shamugia congratulated the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on starting the diplomatic mission in Georgia and wished her success.

**“Sharing the experience of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in agricultural and environmental protection fields is crucial for our country. The agricultural sector in Georgia has received significant support in recent years. The state is imple-**

**menting more than ten programs, and there are always fresh initiatives. As a result, agro-food product output increases by approximately 10-12% annually. Compared to last year, the export rate increased by about 25%. We export agro-food products to about 100 countries. In terms of environmental protection, we have adopted several important laws regarding industrial emissions, water resources management, radiation safety, and atmospheric air quality management. I would point out that one of the main priorities is to fulfill the obligations under the Association Agreement and we have made significant progress both in terms of environmental protection and agricultural development, and I think that this result will be duly evaluated at the end of the year”,** said Minister Shamugia.

The Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Georgia, Mrs. Meline Arakelian, noted that in recent years, Georgia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands had established trade links in agriculture and various other areas, stating that it is essential to enhance this cooperation even more.

According to the Ambassador, agricultural production is relevant for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Georgia. In this regard, the two countries can share “much-needed” valuable experiences.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the export diversification-related issues, including the efforts to improve the ambient air quality and ways to cope with the climate change challenges.

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## Otar Shamugia meets the representatives of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, and members of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) team addressed ongoing and implemented projects in Georgia with IFAD assistance, the obtained results, and future cooperation.

Mr. Donald Brown, Vice President of IFAD, led the delegation.

**“We have had an active, fruitful and long-standing cooperation with the International Fund for Agricultural Development. The programs we undertake with IFAD's assistance promote the agricultural development of the country. An essential part of the obligations under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement implies implementing reforms and adopting legislation in food safety, agriculture, and environmental protection areas. Although our country has already fulfilled most of its commitments, we still have a lot of work to do and a challenging journey to take, in which we need support from our partners, especially today, when Georgia is waiting to obtain the status of the European Union candidate country.**

**IFAD projects aimed at developing the capabilities of smallholder farmers yield significant results in developing the agricultural value chain,”** stated Mr. Otar Shamugia.

During the meeting, the parties positively evaluated the results of the IFAD-funded “Agriculture Modernization, Market Access, and Resilience Project” (AMMAR), noting that the current IFAD “Dairy Sector Modernization and Market Access Project (DIMMA)” is also essential in terms of bringing similar tangible and valuable results.

Mr. Donald Brown, Vice President of IFAD, stated that IFAD and Georgia have a long history of successful collaboration, including implementing programs to support reforms and economic growth in the country.

**“The International Fund for Agricultural Development will continue to support Georgia in overcoming the field-related challenges. We welcome the fact that the country is actively working on reforming sustainable land management and pasture management, which will significantly contribute to the empowerment of small farmers and their access to IFAD projects, and the overall development of the agricultural sector in the country,”** Mr. Donald Brown said.

Mrs. Dina Saleh, Regional Director in Near East, North Africa, Europe & Central Asia at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the representatives of IFAD and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture attended the meeting.



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## Tbilisi hosts the EU Regional Dialogues “On Sustainable Food Systems”



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, made opening remarks at the conference, which embraced representatives of EU candidate countries.

In her opening remarks, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili emphasized the fulfilment of obligations under the Association Agreement with the European Union and the process of adopting EU

standards and regulations in the agriculture sector of Georgia.

“It is important to mention that today when our country awaits to gain the EU candidate status and we are actively implementing reforms towards agricultural and rural development areas, the European Union and the European Commission are organizing a “such-scale” conference in the country. The conference is crucial in terms of its content on the path to European integration and also for discussing the issues we face today in agricultural and rural development fields in implementing the commitments made with the European Union,” Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili said.

The current event aims to deepen cooperation between participant countries and parties in developing and implementing sustainable food systems.

“Georgia wants to become a member of the European Union, which implies we have close ties and cooperate in several areas. We see significant progress in the food safety and animal welfare fields. Regarding sustainable food systems, we are currently investigating and tackling this as a new challenge in the backdrop of climate change. Today’s event aims to exchange our visions, knowledge, and experience. We must work together to set and achieve our goals”, said Mr. Jan Bloemendal, Policy Officer at the European Commission.

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## Otar Shamugia attends the meeting of the ENPARD Steering Committee



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, attended the 32nd meeting of the European Union’s “European Neighborhood Program for Agriculture and Rural Development” (ENPARD) Steering Committee.

Mr. Otar Shamugia thanked the European Union for its continuous support and contribution to rural and agricultural development.

“Cooperation with international partners and their support is crucial in implementing reforms. We express our full readiness for cooperation and friendship, and we are confident that jointly, we will accomplish numerous additional achievements for the benefit of Georgia and toward the goal of our country’s integration into the European Union.

As we know, Georgia is waiting for the European Union to make a historic decision. Last year, our country was given a European perspective, and 12 recommendations were issued, on which the Government and the Parliament of Georgia are actively working.

Everything is being done to implement the recommendations. The Government of Georgia and the Georgian people are waiting for an important decision, and we hope this decision will be favorable. Regarding the obligations fulfilled within the budget component of the IV phase of ENPARD, the mission of experts hired by the European Commission have paid a visit to Georgia this year. We briefed the evaluators on fulfilling obligations for 2022, and we hope the evaluation will be favorable. Furthermore, the fulfilment of obligations for 2023 is on the agenda, which is a priority for us, and we are actively working to guarantee that all departments, agencies, and services fulfil their responsibilities on time,” stated Mr. Otar Shamugia.

During the meeting, the Minister thanked the European Union for the approval to change the indicator to the quality system in the National Food Agency, noting that the agency is actively working on implementing the specified indicator.

Minister Shamugia also spoke about issues related to the LEADER approach. According to the Minister, in 2023, GEL 1 million was allocated from the state budget. The state program project was developed and reconciled with the European Commission through UNDP’s support.

Mr. Shamugia underlined the institutional reform of the Rural Development Agency, the current state of implementing the 2021-2023 action plan, and the elaboration of the 2024-2027 action plan. The Minister updated the attendees on changes taken in agricultural and environmental protection fields during the previous year, including the progress and plans for the future.

According to Mr. Nicholas Cendrowicz, Head of Cooperation at the European Union, the mentioned initiative is one of the good examples of EU assistance in adopting European standards in Georgia, which will be crucial on the road to EU membership.

The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, participated in the meeting.

The meeting of the ENPARD Steering Committee was held with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Kakha Kakabadze, the representatives of the Ministry and relevant agencies included in its system, the European Union Representation, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Czech Development Agency (CzDA), the Swedish International Development and Representatives of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) attended the meeting.



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## Otar Shamugia meets the World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus, Rolande Pryce



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

During the meeting, the parties discussed joint projects, agricultural and environmental protection achievements, and current challenges.

Minister Shamugia congratulated the newly appointed Director of the World Bank on commencing his activities in the region and wished him success.

**“We have a very important cooperation with the World Bank, which I am confident will be deepened even more in the future. The long-term assistance we’ve**

**received from the World Bank team over the years is crucial for us. We have made tremendous progress in the irrigation infrastructure, land management, and agricultural development by cooperating with them. I am confident that our joint “Georgia Resilient Agriculture, Irrigation, and Land Project” GRAIL will be as successful as the “Georgian Irrigation and Land Market Development Project” and will bring significant success to the country,” said Mr. Otar Shamugia.**

The Minister briefed the World Bank’s regional Director on ongoing state programs to support farmers, agricultural output indicators, and export growth.

Minister Shamugia drew attention to the laws adopted by the Parliament of Georgia in the environmental protection field regarding industrial emissions, water resources management, radiation safety, and atmospheric air quality management, stating that work is underway on the draft law on biodiversity.

The conversation touched upon the forestry sector, the increasing statistics of protected areas in the country, and ways to deal with climate change-related challenges.

According to Mr. Roland Pryce, Georgia and the World Bank have an excellent cooperation, which will be further strengthened.

Mr. Abdulaziz Faghi, Program Leader for the Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Practice Groups in the South Caucasus, and representatives of the relevant Departments of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture attended the meeting.

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## Nino Tandilashvili, meets the Head of Cooperation at the European Union



The First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, met with Mr. Nicholas Cendrowicz, Head of Cooperation at the European Union.

The First Deputy Minister congratulated Mr. Nicholas Cendrowicz on starting his work and wished him success.

**“The European Union has been a long-standing supporter of Georgia, which we greatly appreciate. We are in the midst of a historic moment: Georgia has already embraced a European perspective, and given the efforts we have made toward integration into the European Union, we aspire and hope to receive the status of a candidate country. We have made significant progress in the environmental protection, climate change, agriculture and rural development fields, although, challenges still remain. The progress achieved by Georgia was clearly reflected in the report submitted to the European Commission; We are actively working to fulfill the obligations under the Association Agreement; In this process, the support of the European Union and other international partners is crucial”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.**

According to Mr. Nicholas Cendrowicz, the European Union supports Georgia in implementing reforms.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the progress and challenges in environmental protection and agricultural development. The conversation touched upon waste management, industrial emissions, steps taken forward in air quality management, radiation and nuclear safety, climate change, Georgia’s long-term vision of low-emission development, programs financed by the European Union in environmental protection, food safety, production and export of agricultural products.

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## Solomon Pavliashvili participates in the 67th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference in Vienna

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, participated in the 67th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, Austria. High-ranking officials of the IAEA member states, and about 3,000 delegates attended the conference.

The delegates re-elected Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi as the Director General of the United Nations’ International Atomic Energy Agency for another four-year term.

Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi summarized the results of the agency’s four years of activities, emphasizing the global challenges in nuclear and radiation safety, the role of nuclear energy in mitigating climate change, and the importance of nuclear technology in reducing plastic pollution.

According to Mr. Grossi, the IAEA is an instrument for peace, security, and sustainable development. In 2022 alone, the IAEA assisted 149 countries and territories in food and agriculture, health and nutrition, and nuclear safety.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lasha Darsalia, the Ambassador of Georgia to Austria, Mrs. Ketevan Tsikhelashvili, and representatives of the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Agency attended the conference on behalf of Georgia.

During the conference, Georgia aligned with the statement of the European Union, emphasizing the importance of the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency in ensuring radiation protection, nuclear safety, and security.

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## Solomon Pavliashvili meets the Directorate General of the Ministry of Climate Action and Energy of the Republic of Austria



Within the framework of the 67th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili met with Mr. Herbert Kasser, Head of Directorate General of the Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Transport, Innovation

and Technology of the Republic of Austria.

During the meeting, the Deputy Minister spoke about the long-standing close cooperation between Georgia and Austria in the environmental protection and agricultural fields. Mr. Pavliashvili emphasized the importance of current projects supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) in sustainable forest management, protected areas, waste management and climate change, noting that Georgia had taken appropriate steps to fulfil the essential points for obtaining the EU candidate status and expressed hope that this progress will be duly evaluated and noted.

General Secretary Mr. Herbert Kasser positively evaluated the partnership between Austria and Georgia, the achieved results and expressed readiness for future cooperation in hazardous waste management and sharing experience in nuclear and radiation safety. The parties also discussed issues of deepening cooperation in the Extended Producer Responsibility and the adoption of circular economy principles.

The Ambassador of Georgia to the Republic of Austria, Mrs. Ketevan Tsikhelashvili, members of the Georgian delegation and Mr. Christian Holzer, the Head of the Directorate General for Environment and Circular Economy, attended the meeting.

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## The results of the first half of 2023 were summarized at the fourth meeting of the Steering Committee of the ECO. Georgia Project



The members of the Steering Committee of the project “Enabling the Implementation of Georgia’s Forest Sector Reform (ECO.Georgia)” discussed the challenges and progress achieved in the forestry sector in the first half of 2023.

Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili, the First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, made opening remarks at the meeting.

“We launched the forestry sector reform a few years ago, which was followed by the adoption of legislative amendments resulting in the creation of a new Forest Code. Meanwhile, an international multi-component program funded by the Green Climate Fund was launched to promote forestry sector reform in the country, and we have made some progress on the project. The Rural Development Agency has successfully started financing energy-efficient stove producer companies, providing stoves to our citizens, which is one of the components of our project. Subsequently, the more emphasis placed on increasing awareness about the benefits of energy-efficient technology, the greater the public interest will be.

Moreover, within the project, the process of developing and approving forest management

plans is actively underway in target municipalities. The inventory of tools is currently being carried out at the local level in numerous target municipalities.

At the same time, we are strengthening the control agency, our supervision service, which was provided with the appropriate techniques and equipment to continue and enhance monitoring and detect the facts of illegal forest use and illegal logging.

In addition, the process of setting up log sort yards, so-called “business yards” is actively underway, which is also crucial to gradually adopt the practice of sustainable management of timber production and sale”, said Mrs. Nino Tandilashvili.

The First Deputy Minister also spoke about the qualification requirements and retraining of people employed in the forestry sector, noting that within the framework of cooperation with the Federal University of Zurich, exchange programs are planned to be conducted for Georgian students to increase their awareness on the international European practices for sustainable forest management and forest use.

During the meeting, the Head of the Development Cooperation Service at the Embassy of Germany, Mrs. Lidija Christmann and the Regional Head of Cooperation in South Caucasus at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Mrs. Barbara Boeni, discussed the progress achieved in the forestry sector in Georgia, emphasizing the creation/arrangement of business yards, the active involvement of society in forest management and enhancing professional education.

The project “Enabling the Implementation of Georgia’s Forest Sector Reform - ECO.Georgia” is co-financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Government of Georgia, implemented jointly by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Government of Georgia. The project includes three main components: “Sustainable forest management”, “Promoting market development for energy efficient stoves and alternative fuels”, and “Income sources and strengthening local self-governance in forest management”. The project covers three regions of Georgia - Kakheti, Guria and Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

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## The Biodiversa+ grant competition will be held in partnership with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture



The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia will be one of the partners and co-sponsors of the European Biodiversity Partnership (Biodiversa+) grant competition “Nature-based solutions (NBS) for biodiversity, human well-being and transformative changes”.

Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, attended the meeting, where representatives of the Ministry and the European Biodiversity Partnership provided Georgian scientists with thorough information about the competition.

Mr. Pavliashvili expressed gratitude to the European partners for their long-standing support, noting that the Government of Georgia has taken several significant steps toward biodiversity

in response to their recommendations.

“I am glad that Georgia joined the European Biodiversity Partnership, resulting from years of collaboration among our scientists, both governmental and non-governmental organizations. All mentioned above demonstrates that the recommendations of scientists and scientific investigations should be considered even more in the policies implemented by the state. Respectful cooperation will provide us with further opportunities for conducting biodiversity studies, which will be reflected in political documents later on,” said Mr. Pavliashvili.

Within the framework of the European Biodiversity Partnership (Biodiversa+) grant competition, scientists will conduct research in the field of biodiversity. Moreover, to participate in the competition, it is necessary to create a consortium, where representatives of two European Union countries will be involved jointly with the Georgian scientists.

In the initial stage, the applications will be reviewed by the experts of the European Biodiversity Partnership. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture will vote on the following stage. Currently, applications for the grant competition are being submitted.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture became a member of the European Union co-financed partnership Biodiversa+ (European et al.) in 2023. The European Biodiversity Partnership aims to promote and harmonize the development of outstanding quality biodiversity research, public awareness and policy development.

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## Solomon Pavliashvili: “Preventing climate change-related challenges is one of the most important priorities for the state”

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, met with representatives of the World Bank team. At the meeting, the parties addressed environmental and climate change-related issues, challenges faced by Georgia, and potential future collaboration.

Mr. Pavliashvili thanked the World Bank team for their long-standing support, noting that cooperation with the World Bank has led to the launch of several projects in Georgia, which are crucial for the country to achieve green transformation and sustainable development goals.

“One of the crucial priorities for the government of Georgia is the environmental protection and the prevention of climate-related challenges. The climate change strategy and action plan were adopted to achieve this goal, with an interim assessment scheduled by the end of 2023, and we also received the concept of long-term low-emission development of Georgia and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) document. At this stage, with the support of the United Nations Development Program, Georgia is working towards implementing climate change-responsive policies and early warning systems. Georgia is also gradual-

ly moving to the European air quality management system,” said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili.

Mrs. Paola Agostini, Head of the World Bank team, noted that working with the Georgian side on environmental and climate change issues is a priority.

The conversation touched upon the green growth strategy, the potential and opportunities of the green economy in Georgia, ways to reduce the risk of disasters caused by climate change, the process of determining, measuring and monitoring public costs related to climate change, the reforms carried out in the country to improve air quality and reduce air pollution from road transport.

During the meeting, the parties also discussed the World Bank’s Black Sea project, within which the measures to diagnose the pollution of the Black Sea with plastic waste in Georgia and Turkey and to identify ways to combat the pollution are in the implementation phase.

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

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## Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Solomon Pavliashvili meets with Christopher Hanson, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chair

During the meeting, the parties summarized the reforms and progress achieved due to 20 years of cooperation.

Mr. Pavliashvili expressed gratitude to the representatives of the partner organization for their assistance. The sides emphasized the successful implementation of the legislative reform within the framework of collaboration, the development of a regulatory body in Georgia, the arrangement of infrastructure, and the raising of the qualifications of specialists.

The Deputy Minister underlined the reports of several international missions, in which the country’s efforts were viewed as progress.

The crucial issues regarding protecting the population and environment are regulated by more than 15 subordinate normative acts adopted in compliance with international commitments and International Atomic Energy Agency standards.

The Draft Law of Georgia on “Radiation Safety, Nuclear Safety and Protectiveness,” adopted by the Parliament of Georgia in 2023, is a follow-up of the previously outlined process.

The Chair of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission stated that Georgia is the leading state in the region in the fields of radiation protection and nuclear safety, emphasizing the importance of the country’s rapid progress, the effectiveness of the reforms implemented, and the sustainability of the results.

The parties also reviewed Georgia’s current challenges and the prospects of enhancing cooperation. The Chair of the US Regulatory Commission expressed his willingness to assist the country’s planned activities in the future.

Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, the Agency of Nuclear and Radiation Safety of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, and the Environmental Information and Education Center attended the meeting.

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## Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Yuri Nozadze meets the Austrian delegation



The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, met with the delegation of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regional and Water Management of the Republic of Austria.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the current situation in the forestry sector in Georgia, the challenges, and the ways of future cooperation.

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, thanked the Austrian delegation for their support, stating that several significant initiatives

were implemented in Georgia through Austria's assistance.

“Establishing a sustainable forest management system, which ensures socio-economic balance and rational use of forest resources, is crucial for us. Since 2012, Georgia has undergone a large-scale reform in the forestry sector. In 2013, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the national forestry concept, and we started dealing with the challenges in the forestry sector. In 2020, we adopted a New Forest Code based on international standards due to the state's strategic decisions and efforts.

The national forest inventory was launched for the first time in Georgia and the South Caucasus, laying the foundation for creating a continually updated forest information monitoring system.

The purpose of all of our initiatives, including developing the forestry industry, is to harmonize our legislation with European legislation and, eventually, associate our country with the big European family,” said Mr. Yuri Nozadze.

The Head of the Austrian delegation, the Director of the Forest Policy Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Mr. Gerfried Gruber, emphasized the importance of bilateral cooperation between Georgia and Austria and expressed his readiness to cooperate with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the EU Forum on Forests to support Georgia.

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

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## A modern, high-tech greenhouse was built in the Tsilkani Base of the Scientific Research Center of Agriculture through funding from the Embassy of Israel



The Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Otar Shamugia, the Speaker of the Parliament of Israel (Knesset), Mr. Amir Ohana, and the Ambassador of Israel to Georgia, Mr. Hadas Ester Meitzad, opened a modern, state-of-the-art greenhouse built with the funding of the Israeli Embassy at the research-demonstration base of annual crops of the Scientific and Research Center of Agriculture, in the village of Tsilkani.

A high-tech greenhouse uses a hydroponics system, with a total cost of USD 95,000. The hydroponics system is an innovative agricultural technology for growing crops without soil.

“The Speaker of the Parliament of Israel (Knesset), Mr. Amir Ohana, is currently visiting Georgia, and we hosted him at the base of our Scientific Research Centre. We have an excellent agricultural partnership with Israel. Over the years, more than 1,600 of our citizens have been trained under the MASHAV program, and today, jointly with the Speaker and their support, we have opened a new greenhouse equipped with cutting-edge technology. The greenhouse will allow our farmers to gain more knowledge about the production of products through hydroponics technology, which will increase their productivity and bring more income,” said the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

The long-term cooperation project between the two countries aims to establish a regional demonstration hub where agronomists and experts from Israel, Georgia, and neighboring nations can share knowledge and experience and train students and interested farmers.

“Today, we opened a high-tech greenhouse within the MASHAV program. MASHAV is a program that envisages collaboration and knowledge sharing in modern technologies. We celebrate a special bond between the two countries that dates back 2600 years. This is an excellent opportunity to collaborate towards a better future, and this is what we are doing here Today,” said Mr. Amir Ohana.

The modern greenhouse was constructed under the MASHAV program.

MASHAV is the International Cooperation Development Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, launched in Georgia in 1992, shortly after the opening of the Embassy. Up to this date, more than 1600 specialists from Georgia have received professional MASHAV training - both in Israel and Georgia.

The guests also visited the soil research laboratory named after Professor Ivane Sarishvili, located at the base of Tsilkani. The lab has conducted thorough soil research since 2017, based on which the soil is evaluated for agricultural operations and its fertility level is determined.



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## The Delegation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture visited the Republic of Uzbekistan



The Delegation of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, led by Deputy Minister Mr. Yuri Nozadze, paid a working visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan.

During the visit, the Georgian Delegation held meetings with the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Aziz Voitov and Deputy Minister, Mr. Alisher Shukurov. The sides discussed issues regarding the Action Plan 2023-2024 on joint practical measures “Road Map” for the development of bilateral cooperation between Georgia and the Republic of Uzbekistan (signed on July 17, 2023, Tbilisi).

As mentioned, Georgia and Uzbekistan are located in geo-strategically important regions - the South Caucasus and Central Asia. Therefore, it is important that the two countries effectively use their great potential in the trade-economic and logistical areas.

“The deepening cooperation between Georgia and Uzbekistan in many directions will give impetus to the activation of bilateral and regional relations between Central Asia and the

South Caucasus. Priority should be set on enhancing the ties between the two nations’ business sectors and strengthening cooperation in the fields of tourism, research, and culture in order to achieve better results. We believe that our meetings and efforts will make a significant contribution to the development of our countries and will provide support for trade and sustainable agro-food systems at the global level”, said Mr. Yuri Nozadze.

The Action Plan 2023-2024 on joint practical measures “Road Map” for the development of bilateral cooperation between the Republic of Georgia and the Republic of Uzbekistan, along with several important issues, includes the sharing of experience towards the development of Georgian grapevine varieties nursery and wine production in Uzbekistan, also the registration of agricultural products with their geographical indications; Cooperation in terms of introducing a dual education system in Uzbekistan, creating a bachelor’s program in viticulture and winemaking, training qualified oenologists and developing tea plantations and processing plants in Georgia.

Within the scope of the visit, members of the Georgian Delegation participated in the international conference on food security in the city of Samarkand, which was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan and supported by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO). Ministers of agriculture from different countries, representatives of international organizations, financial institutions and other high-ranking officials attended the event.

During the official visit, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, together with the members of the Delegation and the Acting Ambassador of Georgia to the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Giorgi Chkheidze, met the Director General of FAO, Mr. Qu Dingyu, and discussed the current projects development related issues. The meetings were held at the Scientific Research Institute of Horticulture, Viticulture, and Wine-making, named after Academician M. Mirzaev. The members of the Delegation got familiar with the institute’s research base and visited the wine factory located in the city of Samarkand.

<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21398>

## Georgia and the Republic of Uzbekistan are expanding their agricultural scientific-research cooperation



Georgia and the Republic of Uzbekistan are expanding their agricultural scientific-research cooperation.

The Deputy Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture, Mr. Yuri Nozadze, hosted the members of the delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Academician Mr. Ulugbek Abduganiev, Director of the Scientific-Research Institute of Horticulture, Viticulture and Wine-making, named after Academician M. Mirzaev, headed the delegation.

“It is encouraging that agricultural cooperation between our countries is deepening, as this will provide impetus to further intensifying relations. We will be able to share our successful expertise in different fields of agriculture, which will be beneficial to both sides,” Mr. Yuri Nozadze said.

According to the Head of the delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Ulugbek Abduganiev, the viticulture and winemaking fields have been actively developing in Uzbekistan in recent years. Sharing the experience of Georgia will be especially important for the Uzbek side.

The conversation touched upon the issues of deepening cooperation between the scientific and research institutes of the Republic of Georgia and the Republic of Uzbekistan in viticulture, sericulture, and tea-making industries.

During the visit, the delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan will hold working meetings with the representatives of the Agricultural Scientific Research Center, the National Wine Agency, and the National Food Agency.

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

It should be mentioned that the agreement on the deepening of cooperation between the two countries in various directions, including agriculture, was signed during the visit of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Georgia (July 17-18).



<https://mepa.gov.ge/En/News/Details/21378>



GREEN CLIMATE FUND



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



ISSUE#10 / September 2023

“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

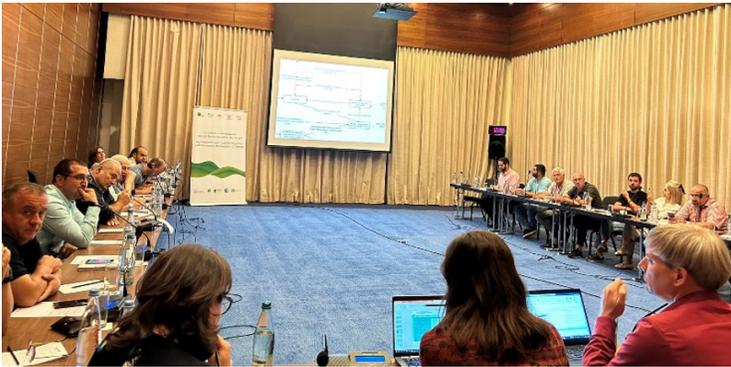
**Activity 3.4:**  
Strengthening of selected value chains (e.g., timber, NTFP, parts of eco-tourism)

■ Activity in 3 target regions only

■ Nation-wide activity

□ Nation-wide activity with focus on 3 target regions

## Workshops on RIA and market study for solid fuel space heaters and alternative fuel

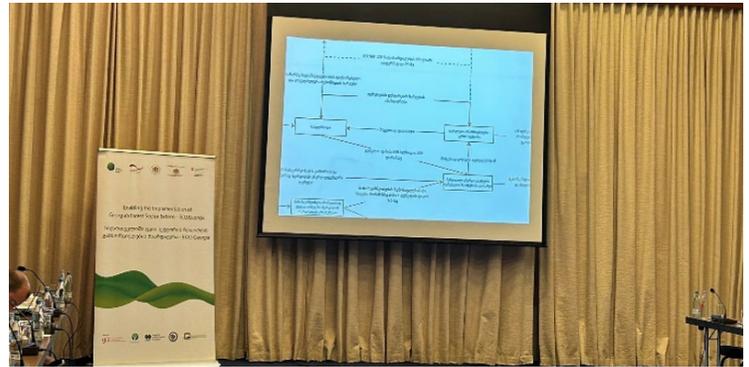


© GIZ: Discussion on RIA results

In September within the frames of ECO.Georgia project a stakeholder workshop was conducted on the Regulatory Impact Assessment of the regulation (EU 2015/1185) regarding the Ecodesign requirements for solid fuel local space heaters i.e. fuelwood stoves.

The workshop was participated by the producers of energy-efficient and alternative fuel products. The research company presented the RIA report with identified and suggested policy alternatives for the subject. The stakeholders discussed RIA results, suggested alternatives, and agreed on future discussions to be organized for the final decision on selecting the most convenient and appropriate solutions for the EE stove productions.

On the other hand, to enable a sustainable market for alternative fuel in the country within



© GIZ: Discussion on RIA results

the frame of the ECO.Georgia project a market study was carried out by Operational Research Center. The results were presented to the representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and its agencies and the representatives of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development as well as to the alternative fuel (AF) producers. Within the study, the consultants also presented policy recommendations based on cost-benefit analysis.

At the meeting, the producers discussed the barriers and opportunities to the sustainable functioning of the market.

As a result of the workshop participants agreed on the further continuation of the discussions, to develop case-tailored solutions for the producers.