



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის

Project funded by the European Union

EU4Environment

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine

PRESS RELEASE

EU Industry Weeks 2022 - EU4Environment hosts a National Conference to address Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) in Georgia

(Online) Tbilisi, 08 February 2022

The National Conference on Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) took place in Georgia on 8 February 2022. Hosted in a virtual format, the event targeted Georgia's industrial enterprises, bringing them closer to the path of green production, resilience, and green growth.

The robust conference contained seven sessions ranging from national policies and strategies for green development, to circular economy and new growth opportunities (like the RECP methodology), the EU Single Market for Green Products and the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF), all the way to financial opportunities and business success stories, ongoing programmes supporting the green development of Georgian businesses, and Sustainable Public Procurement. The event was a topically rich, diverse, and cross-sectional one, encompassing various sectors of the economy (private/business, executive/Government, banking/financial).

*I would like to thank the European Union for the effort it invests to help Georgia in its transition and the implementation of the obligations under the G4G (Governing4Growth) Convention. We have important ongoing developments (both for the government and non-government sector, as well as private sector), and our Committee has already drafted a seven-items plan, where the major issue being discussed is Circular Economy (CE). We are working on laws on a waste management code, and on integrating environmental protection technologies into businesses. EU4Environment is hence a good opportunity to share experiences with businesses on what can be done and what the benefits of efficient use of resources are, said **Ms. Maia Bitadze**, Chairperson of Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Protection & Natural Resources.*

The conference included speakers from various fields of work and engagement (members of enterprises, businesses, government, academia, environmental agencies and energy experts). Overall, more than 70 participants (with additional viewers watching the event on social media) tuned in for over five hours to discuss, share experiences, and learn more about the green transition of businesses and industrial enterprises in the country.

Our vision is to improve the national situation, for which we need a better economic model that diminishes the damage done to the environment, and better identifies and implements innovative technologies (a

Action implemented by:



priority). Over the recent years, the Government of Georgia elaborated several strategic documents related to the green development of the economy, including directions such as CE. In doing so, RECP will provide the possibility for Georgian enterprises to improve the environment they work in, as well as their mentality and production approaches. Between 2014-2018, we have implemented UNIDO's RECP framework, and many enterprises boosted their economic benefits and gained positive outcomes thank to it (while saving natural resources, reducing costs, and improving the health and working conditions of staff). We do hope that EU4Environment will include even more enterprises and that it will further promote RECP. We are looking forward to continue our cooperation and we very well understand that lot needs to be done in the direction towards Circular Economy, said **Ms. Margalita Arabidze**, Head of the Department of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Policy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia.

The occasion also gave room for a wider outreach of the EU-funded regional programme (EU4Environment) under which the event was organized - the framework of the EU Industry Days 2022 (8-12 February 2022). This is Europe's flagship annual event that highlights industrial frontrunners and ongoing industrial policy discussions in Europe and its neighbourhood (as part of the larger body, the EU Industry Weeks 2022).

The overall purpose of the conference was to showcase and promote the resilience of Georgian industries in their green transition by using the RECP methodology, giving Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) an opportunity to discover additional tools and programmes that support them in becoming more environmentally friendly. It also recognized and promoted the success stories of the companies and experts who participated in the RECP Training Programme, implemented in the country by UNIDO under the EU4Environment Action.

This conference was organised to take stock of the current results in Georgia. For UNIDO, RECP is a flagship initiative on the way to make Circular Economy a reality, thanks to the Action's donor, the European Union. It is critical for integrating the RECP methodology and promoting the efficiency and environmentally friendly practices within enterprises. In Georgia, we have good results to show from the business sector, despite the hardship of the last years. Today's event is mostly about these enterprises which successfully built their resilience, improved their production processes, and increased employment and working conditions, all whilst minimising their impact on the environment, said **Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya**, EU4Environment Project Manager, Directorate for Environment and Energy, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

Such examples were presented by several SMEs who took part in UNIDO's RECP Training Programme as Demonstration Companies. They ranged from food production (eggs, juice, jam, fried fruits, cheese, wine) to construction materials (concrete, asphalt) and even bio-fuel, and plastic. During the closing ceremony, these companies, together with the RECP Experts who were trained to assess, monitor, and guide them, were awarded with certificates of participation in the RECP Program. In total, 13 experts and 10 SMEs were acknowledged.

Representatives from the Government-supported grant and investment programmes, from the Rural Development Agency, Enterprise Georgia, as well as TBC Bank also joined a session dedicated to financial opportunities and the success stories of green industries, moderated by the OECD.

Background

EU4Environment Action, funded by the European Union, aims to support Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to preserve and better use their natural capital, increase people's environmental well-being, and grasp new development opportunities. With a budget of some EUR 20 million for all six countries, EU4Environment is carried out with implementation support by five international partners: OECD, UNIDO, UNEP, UNECE and the World Bank Group. For more information, please visit: www.eu4environment.org

For more details about the RECP in Georgia, please visit: www.recp.ge

Contact

Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya
EU4Environment Project Manager
Directorate for Environment and Energy
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Email: T.CHERNYAVSKAYA@unido.org