



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის

Project funded by the European Union

EU4Environment
Green Economy in Eastern Partner Countries



Press Tour of Small and Medium Enterprises Implementing Eco-innovation in Georgia

AGENDA

Wednesday-Thursday
26-27 October 2022

Action implemented by:



Background

In 2014, Georgia signed an Association Agreement with the European Union (EU) demonstrating its commitment and readiness to reform and harmonise different sectors' policies aligned with the EU approaches. Several of the Agreements' articles foresee the transformation towards Green Economy principles, Sustainable Consumption and Production patterns, Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP), as well as promotion of eco-labelling and eco-innovation. Georgia has since made significant steps to harmonize its laws with EU legislation. Contributing to this process is Georgia's liberal foreign trade policy, which implies simplified foreign trade and customs procedures, relatively low import tariffs, and a minimum non-tariff regulation.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is one of the five partner agencies implementing the EU-funded EU4 Environment Action. This regional programme supports 6 Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries, including Georgia, in making policy planning and investment greener, stimulating the uptake of innovative products and technologies, and raising awareness about the benefits of environmental action. More specifically, within EU4Environment's component on "circular economy and new growth opportunities", UNEP, alongside the Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC) and the Global Compact Network Georgia (GCNG) supported an assessment of key sectors for eco-innovative potential, in accordance with UNEP's Eco-innovation methodology. The analysis concluded that the agriculture and hospitality sectors have some of the highest potential for promoting eco-innovative approaches in the country, based on the sectors' greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption, as well as growth and export trends, inter alia. UNEP and GCNG have since launched a national call for proposals to select 8 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from these priority sectors, to receive technical advisory services on their eco-innovation potential and to develop a roadmap for the implementation of eco-innovative practices and technologies.

Another EU4Environment project component, implemented by UNEP in close cooperation with the EIEC and the State Procurement Agency, is focussed on promotion of SPP and eco-labelling. This work aims to promote companies'/SMEs' readiness to respond to public procurement tenders with sustainability criteria. The promotion of SPP and eco-labelling should in turn also help to motivate companies to produce/offer greener and more environmentally friendly products/services, thus contributing to the overall greening of the Georgian economy and market.

Objectives of the press tour

This press tour aims to raise the awareness of SMEs, and that of the broader population, on the benefits of eco-innovation and sustainable production. It will do so by bringing journalists to visit at least 5 enterprises who have already taken steps towards greening their value chains, thereby providing examples, best practices and lessons learned for other interested businesses. These visits and interactions with company representatives will enable to produce newspaper articles and social media content, while also improving the overall capacity of journalists and influencers on communicating about topics related to the green economy. The study tour will also share additional experiences from SMEs outside of Georgia. The tour will also be an opportunity for national and local authorities to highlight what measures they have in place/in the pipeline to further motivate businesses to seek green, innovative solutions that will strengthen their market position and competitiveness in the long-term.

Participants

The press tour will be attended by representatives of Georgian small and medium enterprises, business associations, national and local experts on mass media, social media influencers, as well as representatives of UNEP.

Practical information

The press tour will be held on the 26th-27th of October 2022 (26th October - 14:00-19:00, 27th October 10:00-19:00) with visits to enterprises.

The press tour will be held in English and Georgian languages, with consecutive interpretation provided.

Format and suggested questions to the enterprises

During the press tour the representatives of the enterprises will present their approaches to eco-innovation and of the application of Green Economy principles. The journalists will follow with clarifying questions. These questions might include, but are not limited to:

Q1: What are the policy prerequisites in Georgia to create a favourable environment for eco-innovation and new technologies? Does the EU Association Agreement play a role in such transformation?

Q2: How would you evaluate the level of knowledge of eco-innovative approaches and access to new technologies among national companies? What challenges to the promotion of eco-innovation in Georgia do you see? Are any financial risks involved?

Q3: What benefits would the use of eco-innovation and green technologies bring to the companies in Georgia (for instance, access to national and international markets/customers, financial savings, optimization of own resources etc.)?

Q4: What approaches could be used by the government (as procurers) to motivate businesses to apply eco-innovating approaches and participate in SPP tenders?

Q5: How do you see the role of SMEs in contributing to Georgia' national goal of economy transformation into greener models, including in the framework of post-COVID green recovery?

About EU4Environment

The "European Union for Environment" (EU4Environment – Green Economy) Action helps the Eastern Partnership countries preserve their natural capital and increase people's environmental well-being, by supporting environment-related action, demonstrating and unlocking opportunities for greener growth, and setting mechanisms to better manage environmental risks and impacts.

It is funded by the European Union and implemented by five Partner organisations - OECD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO, and the World Bank – over 2019-2024 period, with a budget of EUR 20 million.

For further information contact: EU4Environment@oecd.org.

For more information please visit our website: www.eu4environment.org.

Time	Item
Day 1 – 26 October	
14:00-14:15	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (TBC) / Ms. Tamar Aladashvili, Director, Environmental Information and Education Centre of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia • Mr. Kakha Demetrashvili, Deputy Chairperson, State Procurement Agency of Georgia • Mr. Davit Advadze, Head of Sustainable Development Division, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia • Ms. Lesya Nikolayeva, International SPP Expert, UNEP
14:15-17:00	Visit “Kvarlis Baga”, Kvareli Georgia
17:00-19:00	Visit linseed oil processing factory, Gurjaani Georgia
19:00-20:00	Returning to the hotel
20:00-21:00	Dinner
Day 2 – 27 October	
09:00-10:00	Breakfast
10:00-12:00	Visit the “White Farm”, Sighnaghi Georgia
12:00-14:00	Solar panel-powered cold storage facility for vegetables and fruits in Sartichala
14:00-15:00	Lunch (lunch boxes provided by hotel earlier)
15:00-18:00	Visit “Biodiesel Georgia”, Tbilisi Georgia