



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის

Project funded by the European Union

EU4Environment
Green Economy in Eastern Partner Countries



High-level Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement and eco-labelling in Georgia

AGENDA

Tuesday, 25 October, 2022
10:30-17:00 (Tbilisi time, GMT+4)

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 Agreements' articles foresee the transformation towards Green Economy principles, more specifically, it calls for setting up the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) and ecolabelling systems. Ecolabelling is one of the tools for SPP that the EU promotes in Georgia. Furthermore, SPP is considered as an efficient way in shifting to Green Economy.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is one of the five partner agencies implementing a newly launched EU-funded EU4 Environment Action. This regional programme supports 6 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 supports Georgia to promote activities related to SPP issues and its complementary tools, such as eco-labelling.

Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP)

Public procurement makes up around 25-30% of GDP of the countries with economies in transition. Over 5.75 billion GEL were expended by contracting authorities in 2019 in Georgia for the procurement of goods, services and infrastructure construction works. Shifting that spending towards more sustainable goods and services can generate positive social, environmental and economic results such as poverty reduction, improved equity, reduced GHG emissions and increased energy and resource efficiency. It also offers a largely untapped opportunity to drive businesses and domestic markets towards innovation and increased sustainability. SPP is thus emerging as a key policy instrument to support sustainable development and leverage an inclusive green economy transition.

UNEP in close cooperation with the Environmental Information and Education Centre and the State Procurement Agency of Georgia implements a set of activities on promotion and application of SPP. It includes improvement of the legislation to introduce the SPP provisions, elaboration of complementary tools (by-laws, guidelines, training materials), identification of priority goods and services for SPP pilot tenders accompanied by elaboration of the sustainability criteria per prioritised products. Raising awareness of governmental authorities, as well as the business sector, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and business associations on the SPP benefits is envisaged in order to build capacity of business to respond to public tenders.

Objectives of the SPP session of the high-level dialogue

- Leverage the discussion on SPP high in the governmental agenda to support the legal steps done towards SPP implementation in Georgia;
- Raise awareness of the Georgian authority, business associations, national stakeholders on SPP approach and economic, environmental, and social benefits;
- Encourage line ministries and contracting authorities for enlargement of GPP;
- Promote newly developed SPP policy documents in Georgia;

- Ensure synergy between other policy developments in the country towards sustainable development (including achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)), Green Economy shift, promotion of Sustainable Consumption and Production pattern and SPP;
- Ensure awareness and full support of SPP practices in Georgia as an efficient way to meet commitments of Georgia under the EU Association Agreement and numerous environmental multilateral agreements.

Eco-labelling

The eco-labelling system has not been set up in Georgia yet, despite the key legislative documents introducing ecolabelling related texts: the Constitution of Georgia guarantees an accessibility to environmental information; the Law of Georgia on Environmental Protection regulates ecolabelling aspects; and Biodiversity Strategy issues on mandatory insurance for extremely dangerous activities, economic stimulus and ecolabelling. Finally, the numerous international treaties which Georgia is a party to, formulate requirements on ecolabelling development and access to environmental information.

Development of eco-labels contributes to meeting important requests of society:

- General increased concerns of population with regard of products sustainability;
- Coherence between SPP and ecolabeling as a tools for SPP (in case SPP become mandatory in a country, companies would be strongly motivated to obtain eco-labels for their products);
- Increase of access to the EU market of sustainability-marketed products grew more than twice as fast as conventionally marketed products in the past 6 years (Centre for sustainable business, 2021).

For further promotion of eco-labelling in Georgia, UNEP in close cooperation with the Environmental Information and Education Center (EIEC) implements a set of activities. In particular, the report prepared to analyse the national legislative acts regarding eco-labelling including primary and secondary legislation, the international treaties which impose obligations related to the eco-labelling in Georgia and the similar to eco-labelling system that is functioning in Georgia – Etiquette. Labels (Etiquettes) provide information about the accreditation bodies operating in Georgia, those are voluntary scheme, such as BioProduction. The report was circulated among different state authorities and stakeholders. The report on assessment of existing eco-labelling systems in Georgia is available in Georgian and English languages on EIEC web-page.

Additionally, the information materials and a guideline about the existing labels, targeting different stakeholders (policymakers and business) were elaborated. They include topics about general definition of the eco-labelling and its types, connection with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Georgian certification of bio-production and quality mark, etc. The designed version of the materials are available in Georgian and English languages at the MEPA official e-library page and on the EIEC new web-page. Raising awareness of governmental authorities, as well as the business sector, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and business associations on the ecolabelling benefits is envisaged.

Objectives of the ecolabelling session of the high-level dialogue are:

- Leverage the discussion on ecolabelling high in the governmental agenda to support ecolabelling system development in Georgia;
- Raise awareness of the Georgian authorities, business associations, national stakeholders on ecolabelling, etiquette, certification of bio-production and quality mark etc.;
- Promote ecolabelling as an efficient tool for accessing of information for individuals on access of information to individuals, as well as a tool for SPP;
- Promote ecolabelling as a strategic tool to increase access to different markets (i.e. the EU market);
- Ensure awareness and full support of ecolabelling practices in Georgia as an efficient way to meet commitments of Georgia under the EU Association Agreement and numerous environmental multilateral agreements.

Participants

The high-level representatives of the Georgian governmental institutions, business associations, national stakeholders, as well as the EU Delegation, UNEP, World Bank, GIZ, USAID, UNOPS.

Practical information

The high-level dialogue will be held on 25 October (10:300-17:00) at Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel (1 Rose Revolution Square) (Tbilisi, Georgia).

English and Georgian are the languages of the dialogue. English-Georgian simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

Format and questions to the panellists

The dialogue will be organised as the brief introductory presentation to the topics, followed by separate sessions on SPP and eco-labelling the moderation of the questions.

For the SPP session of the high-level dialogue the panellists will contribute to the discussion by answering the following questions:

Q1: What are the policy prerequisites in Georgia to create a favourable environment and conditions to promote and practice SPP?

Q2: How would you evaluate the level of understanding and knowledge of SPP among national stakeholders? What challenges of SPP implementation in Georgia do you see?

Q3: In your opinion, the actions on SPP (improved legislation, elaborated complementary tools, training and communication campaign etc.) supported by the EU4Environment / UNEP project are sufficient to implement SPP in Georgia?

Q4: How do you see the role of international partners (for instance, UN Agencies, GIZ, USAID, IFIs, embassies, etc.) in promoting SPP at national level?

Q5: What approaches could be suggested by the government (procurers) to motivate businesses to participate in SPP, thus contributing to eco-innovation and new technologies transformation of the market?

Q5: How can SPP be better promoted at the highest national level so that to ensure support of Georgia on its way towards SDGs achievement, commitments under different agreements, including the EU Association Agreement are met?

Panellists of SPP session of the dialogue

The panellists will be presented as followed (tbc):

- Chair of the Committee of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Parliament of Georgia;
- Member of the Committee on European Integration, Parliament of Georgia;
- Minister/Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development;
- Minister/Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia;
- Minister/Deputy Minister of Finance;
- Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson of the State Procurement Agency;
- Representative of the EU Delegation to Georgia;
- Regional Coordinator / Coordinator of the Interim Secretariat of the Tehran Convention, UNEP;
- Programme Officer, Economy Division, Resource and Markets Branch, UNEP;
- Representatives of the international organizations;
- Representatives of the business association.

Moderator of the SPP session of the dialogue: Ms. Tamar Aladashvili, Director, EIEC of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

For the eco-labelling session of the high-level dialogue, the panellists will contribute to the discussion by answering the following questions:

Q1: What are the benefits for Georgia to develop its ecolabelling infrastructure?

Q2: What are the policy development priorities of Georgia to create a favourable environment and conditions to promote and practice ecolabelling?

Q3: How effective are eco-labels in scaling up sustainable consumption and production?

Q4: How would you evaluate the level of understanding and knowledge of ecolabelling national stakeholders? What challenges of ecolabelling system in Georgia do you see?

Q5: How the government together with business representatives can encourage the private sector to get certified under existing ecolabels (including EU Ecolabel)? How SPP can be used as a tool to promote ecolabels?

Q6: How do you see the role of international partners (for instance, UN Agencies), as well as international projects (for instance, EU4Environment) in promoting ecolabeling at national level?

Q7: How can ecolabelling be better promoted at the highest national level so that to ensure support of Georgia on its way towards SDGs achievement, commitments under different agreements, including the EU Association Agreement are met?

Panellists of the eco-labelling session of the dialogue

The panellists will be invited as followed (tbc):

- Chair of the Committee of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Parliament of Georgia;
- Member of the Committee on European Integration, Parliament of Georgia;
- Minister/Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development;
- Minister/Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia;
- Minister/Deputy Minister of Finance;

- Deputy Chairperson of the State Procurement Agency;
- Representative of the EU Delegation to Georgia;
- Regional Coordinator / Coordinator of the Interim Secretariat of the Tehran Convention, UNEP;
- Programme Officer, Economy Division, Resource and Markets Branch, UNEP;
- Representatives of the business associations.

Moderator of the eco-labelling session of the dialogue: Ms. Mariam Darchia, Main Specialist of the Sustainable Development Division, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia

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.

High-level Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling in Georgia, 25 October

Time	Item
10:30-11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Coffee and Registration • Interviews for the Press
11:00- 11:20	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Otar Shamugia, Minister, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (tbc) / Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (tbc) • Mr. Levan Davitashvili, Minister, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia (tbc) • Mr. Lasha Khutsishvili, Minister, Ministry of Finance of Georgia (tbc) • Ms. Maia Bitadze, Chair of the Committee of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Parliament of Georgia • Mr. Alexandre Darras, Attaché, Sector Coordinator Connectivity, Energy, Environment & Climate Change, EU delegation to Georgia (tbc) • Mr. Mahir Aliyev, Regional Coordinator / Coordinator of the Interim Secretariat of the Tehran Convention, UNEP
Session on SPP	
11:20-11:50	<p>SPP and regulatory reforms in Georgia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Eriks Mezalis, International Legal Expert, EU4Environment project team <p>SPP legal provisions and regulations in the draft secondary legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Nato Beridze, National Legal Expert, EU4Environment project team, EIEC of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
11:50-14:00	<p>SPP Panel Discussion Session</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Tamar Aladashvili, Director, EIEC of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia</p> <p>Panellists of the session (tbc):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair of the Committee of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Parliament of Georgia;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member of the Committee on European Integration, Parliament of Georgia; - Minister/Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development; - Minister/Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia; - Minister/Deputy Minister of Finance; - Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson of the State Procurement Agency; - Representative of the EU Delegation to Georgia; - Regional Coordinator / Coordinator of the Interim Secretariat of the Tehran Convention, UNEP; - Programme Officer, Economy Division, Resource and Markets Branch, UNEP; - Representatives of the international organizations; - Representatives of the business associations.
14:00-15:00	Lunch
Session on eco-labelling	
15:00-16:45	<p>Eco-labelling Panel Discussion Session</p> <p>Moderation: Main Specialist of the Sustainable Development Division, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia</p> <p>Panellists of the session (tbc):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair of the Committee of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Parliament of Georgia; - Member of the Committee on European Integration, Parliament of Georgia; - Minister/Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development; - Minister/Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia; - Minister/Deputy Minister of Finance; - Deputy Chairperson of the State Procurement Agency; - Representative of the EU Delegation to Georgia; - Regional Coordinator / Coordinator of the Interim Secretariat of the Tehran Convention, UNEP; - Programme Officer, Economy Division, Resource and Markets Branch, UNEP; - Representatives of the international organizations; - Representatives of the business associations.
16:45-17:00	Final remarks and closure of the high-level dialogue