

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND GEORGIA: TOGETHER FOR ENVIRONMENT



Protecting, preserving and improving the environment is essential for present and future generations. Georgia, like other countries in the region, faces difficult challenges in air pollution, ensuring a clean and safe water supply and sustainable waste management. The European Union is working together with Georgia to tackle climate change and to ensure a better quality of life for Georgian citizens through the development of better environmental policies and greener investments in the modernisation of the social and technical infrastructure in cities.

HOW ARE THE EU AND GEORGIA WORKING TOGETHER?

- **Promoting decisions which respect both people and the environment:**

Developing and implementing policies which ensure a high level of environmental protection and improve the quality of life of Georgian citizens.

- **Protecting nature:**

Building a joint network of protected areas across the Eastern Partnership region, the **Emerald Network**, and supporting the sustainable management of forests, crucial for better livelihoods in forestry-dependent communities.

- **Investing in an environmentally friendly future:**

Unlocking cheaper and more sustainable finance for local companies, municipalities and households willing to invest in environmentally friendly technologies.

- **Managing vital resources better:**

Improving the water management systems.

- **Delivering on climate policy goals:**

Supporting the delivery of the goals set by the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Saving the Black Sea

The EU supports Georgia in tackling common environmental challenges through marine environmental monitoring and data collection on the status of the Black Sea.

Joint **Black Sea surveys** carried out by the EU have:

- identified a decrease in the sea's **oxygen layer**, reducing the living space for marine species
- analysed water, sediments and fish for the presence of pollution from more than 2,100 **toxic substances**, including pesticides, industrial chemicals, etc.
- mapped the places where the dolphins gather
- identified high concentrations of **floating litter** in the middle of the Black Sea
- mapped the presence of **alien species** in the sea
- observed a decline in **'algal blooming'** caused by river pollution discharge
- detected **rare fish** and marine species.

Find out more:

www.emblasproject.org



"This survey gives our country a unique opportunity to assess qualitatively the real status of the Black Sea along the Georgian coast." **Tamar Bagratia**,
Head of the National Environmental Agency,
Georgia

Waste management

Around 900,000 tons of rubbish is generated annually in Georgia and more than 75% of it is estimated to end up in landfill sites, none of which meet EU standards. With EU support, a modern landfill site is being built in Kutaisi, with strict measures to prevent soil and groundwater contamination, the first of 10 new landfills that will replace all existing dumping sites. The EU also supports the government's national waste management strategy, which includes ambitious recycling targets.

Protecting biodiversity

In the **Vashlovani National Park** in Eastern Georgia, the unsustainable uses of pastures, coupled with the negative effects of climate change, has led to a **loss of vegetation** and diversity, increased **land erosion** and **desertification**. The EU and Georgia are working together to rehabilitate the land, promote sustainable pasture management, and secure climate-resilient livelihoods for the local population.

Results include:

- rehabilitation of **4,064 hectares of degraded pastures**, including 300ha of **migratory routes**
- **sustainable pasture management plans** for 16,000ha within the park
- collaboration with **farmers and sheep-breeders** in implementing sustainable management
- two **pilot farms** established to demonstrate good practices
- five **new watering points** installed, supporting 15 farms, as well as two meteorological stations
- unified **veterinary system** for Tush shepherds, covering around 5,000 sheep, with the possibility of scaling up to 30,000 in future.

Find out more:

www.climateeast.eu

and www.pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/emerald-network



"We don't know how much waste is being recycled or used for energy. We only know how much ends up in landfill, because they weigh it. Very little is being recycled..."

Kakha Rukhaia,
Caucasus Environmental
NGO Network



"I can definitely say that climate is changing. Some of the vegetation does not exist here any more."

Vazha Cherkezishvili,
Vashlovani Protected
Areas Administration

LOOKING FORWARD

To help deliver on its commitments the EU is launching two major initiatives:

- **EU4Environment** integrates in a single strategic framework initiatives to achieve: **greener decision making** – sustainable economy and green growth – 'smart' environmental regulation – ecosystem protection – knowledge sharing
- **EU4Climate** will support the Eastern partner countries to implement their climate policies by contributing to **low emission** and **climate resilient development**, and helping them to meet their commitments under the 2016 Paris Agreement on Climate Change

KEY STATISTICS

To find **key environmental statistics for Georgia** on air pollution, biodiversity, waste, etc. visit the portal of the EU-funded project for shared environmental information systems – ENI SEIS II East.

www.eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/east