



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **National Policy Dialogue Steering Committee on Integrated Water Resources Management in Georgia discussed the upcoming adoption of the new water law and long-term priorities for the water sector to overcome existing and future challenges**

On 2 October 2018, the 6th Steering Committee Meeting of the National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management - the UNECE-OECD facilitated water policy process - took place in Tbilisi, Georgia. The meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and chaired by the Deputy Minister Ms. Nino Tandilashvili. The multi-stakeholder meeting brought together around 40 participants, representing various national ministries, the national environmental agency, NGOs, civil society and representatives from the European Union Delegation to Georgia, EU Member States and International Organizations.

Participants discussed the recent progress achieved in implementing the European Union Water Initiative Plus Program for the Eastern Partnership countries (EUWI+) in Georgia, and particularly, the development of new water legislation.

The meeting participants welcomed the imminent adoption of the new water law in line with the European Union Water Framework Directive principles. Highlighting the importance of this law for the country, Ms. Tandilashvili emphasized that it will help to ensure sustainable water resources management and serve as the basis for implementation of river basin management principles in Georgia in the upcoming years.

The long-term priorities of the water sector were also discussed in the context of developing a National Water Strategy. The meeting participants agreed that an integrated approach shall be applied for developing the Strategy with the aim to enhance sustainable water resources management across different sectors and ensure sustainable access of citizens to water resources of a good quality. The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss the next steps in developing monitoring and laboratory capacities and to review the progress achieved in river basin management planning in different basins of the country. Furthermore, it provided a platform for coordination of donor activities in the water sector in Georgia. The meeting was organized with the support of the EUWI+ project.

**Background information:** The "European Union Water Initiative Plus for the Eastern Partnership" project addresses existing challenges in both development and implementation of efficient water resources management. It supports Georgia and other partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) in aligning their legislation with EU policy in the field of water management and in enhancing water resources management with the overall aim to contribute to improved access to and good quality of water for the citizens. It also contributes to the development of river basin management plans and the sustainable use of transboundary water resources by facilitating cooperation at the national and transboundary level and by promoting public participation in river basin management planning.

**Implementing partners:** The project is funded by the European Union and is implemented by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and an EU Consortium comprising the Austrian Environment Agency (Austria) and the International Office for Water (France). For more information on the project, please visit the website: [www.euwipluseast.eu](http://www.euwipluseast.eu)

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**National Policy Dialogues (NPDs)** are the main operational instrument under the European Union Water Initiative in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The objective of NPDs is to facilitate the reform of water policies in a particular country. The UNECE is the strategic partner for NPDs on IWRM; the OECD is the strategic partner for NPDs on Water Supply and Sanitation and also works on the economic and financial dimension of water policies.

More information is available at <http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd>



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