

Where do The Parties Stand on Environment?

Parliamentary Elections 2012

Green Alternative gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the South Caucasus Regional office of the Heinrich Boell Foundation

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Introduction

The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) emphasized the responsibility of governments, businesses and civil society groups to ensure that development and economic growth do not cause the harm to the environment. In addition, the national governments have to assume the most important role in leading the processes in order to achieve this goal. Accordingly, the issues as sustainable development and environmental protection should play an important role in political party platforms, political debates and activities.

The goal of the present assessment is to assess how the environmental and sustainable development issues have been integrated into the political platforms and agendas of the parties running in the 2012 parliamentary elections.

The objective was to assess the visions of various political parties, as well as their ambitions, assumed obligations and the ways of their fulfillment. After 2012 parliamentary elections we composed the profiles of the political parties running in the parliamentary elections in respect of environmental protection and sustainable development. When composing the profiles we focused on how the political parties' visions and obligations had met the principles of the Rio Declaration, as well as Georgia's European Integration agenda, specifically, EU-Georgian Action Plan, in terms of environmental protection and sustainable development; on how logically the sustainable development issues are integrated into a political party's economic and social policy and how political party sees the role of environmental protection in economic development.

Methodologically, the assessment was made based on the pre-election platforms of leading political parties (posted at www.ivote.ge), as well as on various types of interviews and/or other sources (websites, debates, etc.). Here, we want to express our gratitude to those political party leaders, who agreed to be interviewed and personally presented their party visions to the society participating in the discussions held in frames of the project¹.

The assessment is subjective to a certain extent. However, the purpose behind of the study is not to criticize political party platforms, but to identify the challenges existing throughout in the country in terms of environmental protection and sustainable development in order to further integrate them into the political agenda. The report reflects the vital challenges that political parties should respond and the measures to be implemented. In addition, since the assessment has been made in the post-election period, the position of the winning coalition, which should deliver on its promises, fell under the increased attention and critical review.

The methodology of assessment of political parties' environmental platforms developed by us is based upon the experience of Association Green Alternative in the field of environmental protection and sustainable development as well as on the knowledge, and experience gained as a result of monitoring of the election programs of political parties running in the 2010 local elections. Moreover, we relied upon the experience of partner non-governmental organizations from both inside and outside the country.

¹ www.greeningfuture.net

2012 Parliamentary Elections

General Conclusions and Challenges Facing the Country in Terms of Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

Ahead of the 2012 parliamentary elections, a great part of the political parties failed to provide the Georgian public with a comprehensive political program – a document, which would have enabled the public to form an opinion about the priorities of this or that political party. Unfortunately, the sections of political party programs dealing with economic issues significantly lagged behind those dealing with state arrangement, human rights and social issues.

The analysis of political party programs and interviews has shown that most political parties do not consider environmental protection and sustainable development to be important as economic and social spheres. However, the interviews have revealed even those political parties, which had not even mentioned environmental protection in their respective programs, have some information about the environmental challenges facing and have actually planned some measures in that direction.

It should be noted that almost all political parties emphasized the importance of healthcare reform and accessibility of healthcare services to the public. However, they felt to assess the linkages between increased environmental risks, environmental degradation and public health challenges.

It should also be noted that energy and transport sector and its development perspectives, like other economic fields, were not among the priority issues for most of the political parties. In the best case, they limited themselves by general sentences, giving a very vague picture what particular breakthrough and innovative approaches they were offering electorate in case of winning the elections.

Under conditions, when energy security represents a acute problem for the country, similar approach triggers only astonishment. Noteworthy that 65% of energy resources consumed in Georgia come to imported gas and oil; 20% - to locally generated electricity and 15% - to firewood. In addition, it should be noted that although Georgia consumes six-fold less energy than Norway or Finland per capita and 2.5-fold less than Greece, energy intensity in Georgia per unit of GDP is four times higher than in the mentioned countries. A great share of imported energy and high energy intensity of GDP impedes the growth of the country's economic competitiveness. Furthermore, Georgia significantly depends on imported organic fuel that further increases the risk of the country's economic and political dependence.

Considering the country's geographical location and its transit function, it is quite strange that most political parties do not regard these issues as challenges to the country's economy, environment and society, whereas an intensified transport load as brings to the forefront such important issues, as development of local industry, increased environmental stress on environmental parameters, illegal freight turnover, trafficking, etc.

Noteworthy that the absolute majority of political parties expressed concerns about the forest sector, considering the significance of forest resources in the everyday life of rural population. However, it should be noted that only few several parties prioritized and underlines environmental functions of forests.

Unfortunately, the majority of parties have not realized current and future impact of climate change processes on natural environment, potential for increased natural disasters, on poverty, on agriculture, on economy and population, whereas it is very important for the Georgian political parties to really see the ongoing natural processes in the country, which have more than enough impacts not only on the environment, but also on human life.

The political party programs in general do not discuss any women's rights. Respectively, it should be no surprise that parties programs say nothing about either gender aspects of environmental problems, or the ways of settlement of the gender related problems.

Association Green Alternative hopes for close cooperation with various political parties during the post-election period over the problems highlighted in the assessment. In addition, it has been planned to carry out similar assessments periodically, before the forthcoming presidential elections, as well as ahead of local and parliamentary elections. In our opinion, finally that approach and monitoring of the commitments undertaken by the political parties will be fruitful to address the challenges existing within the field of environmental protection and sustainable development.

Political Party Profiles

New Rights Political Party

Political platform – the center-right political association.

Date of foundation – June 2001

The 2012 parliamentary elections: 0.43% through the party list

International cooperation: an associate member of the International Democrat Union and an applicant of the European People's Party

Website: <http://www.nrp.ge/>

Aims envisaged by the 2012 election platform in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development field.

The election program “Wealthy Family in the Village and in the City” of New Rights does not dedicate a separate chapter to environmental protection; however, chapter 3 “Foreign policy – Policy trusted in the World” outlines the energy and ecological security priorities, as well as the measures to address the problems of natural calamities, natural disaster and associated risk management, as priorities. (see annex 1.) However, these priorities are insufficiently highlighted in the relevant sectors, and major attention is paid to agriculture and trade sectors.

The party program focuses on special importance of agricultural revival in the context of the country's future development that is perceived positively considering the concept of sustainable livelihood. It addresses not only the agricultural development, but also to equalize the existing capacities in the rural and urban areas (education, healthcare, infrastructure, etc.).

It is also interesting that the party discusses agriculture as one of the key components of rural development throughout the country economic and social system. Program logically links the issue of rural development with the issue of national identity and tradition. The party has correct position that extremely low agricultural productivity is one of the major impediments of and social development throughout Georgia.

In the agricultural sector, among the issues interesting from the environmental point of view, special attention is paid to the issues of accessibility to agricultural chemicals and state control. According to the program, “along with increasing accessibility of chemicals and pesticides, it is important to control the quality in order to avoid the import of outdated and low quality products. For this purpose, the state should tighten quality control and certify the products of those companies, which are importing and distributing chemicals and pesticides.” The party propose to implement these measures that would worth approximately GEL 13.2 million to the state budget annually. However, while the issue of state control over the agricultural chemicals and pesticides is important, the program says nothing about the development of organic farming that really needs support.

The priorities outlined by the party in chapter 3 are quite important; however, it is regretful that the ways of fulfillment of these priorities are not specified. It should also be noted that no increased funding is envisaged to settle the persisting environmental problems and there is not clear from proposed budget, how the promises would be fulfilled.

One of the subchapters of the party program emphasizes the problem of the migration and the country's disproportionate development, and advocates that it should be done through providing of the social-economic development that meets modern requirements and taking into account needs of the future generations. It can be done only through elaboration of respective legislation and relevant state funding. The listed measures include: strengthening of economic and social-cultural activities; declining the migration of population; revival of abandoned and semi-abandoned villages and communities; development of local resources; industrial development; increasing the level of employment; conservation of ecosystems; road construction, etc. The list is rather positive, as the vision of the New Rights party integrates a number of sustainable development signs. However, it remains quite problematic to understand how the party planned to achieve listed outcomes..

E.g. the program says: “In order to protect the areas against abandonment under conditions of migration towards industrial centers, it is essential to create special funds like those in European countries, which will raise funds, issue soft loans, promote the development of agricultural, forest farms.” However, it should be noted that it will be impossible to achieve this goal by issuing just soft loans and, etc.

Although the rural and agricultural development takes an important part in the party’s election program, main attention is focused on eradication of already existing problems and the party is not familiar with new and forthcoming challenges, which Georgian agricultural sector faces or may face from climate change perspective. Hence, a huge list of problems remains unanswered.

It is important, that political program of the party alongside the economic and social issues, dedicates more time and attention towards environmental protection, as well as highlights how it plans to achieve proposed goals.

Additionally, party should pay more attention to energy sector development, based on its own concept of rural development and taking into consideration the problems and challenges in this sector persisting in rural areas.

United National Movement

Political platform – the center-right political party

Date of foundation – 2001, reregistered – in 2004

The ruling party – in 2004-2012

The 2012 parliamentary elections: 40% (33 mandates) through the proportional system and 32 mandates in the single-mandate constituencies.

International cooperation: member of the European People’s Party

Aims envisaged by the 2012 election platform in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development field

In 2012, the United National Movement (UNM) presented an election program “More Benefit to the People,” which did not even mention the word “environment,” as well as the words “energy” and “transport.” It should also be noted that despite our numerous efforts, we failed to interview any representative of the United National Movement about the environmental issues.

However, when answering to the question of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy posted on its website www.partiebi.ge, “Please present your policy proposals (if any) aiming for the creation of a healthy and safe environment”, the United National Movement said: “Creating a healthy and safe environment for our citizens is one of our main tasks. We consider paying particular attention to ecological safety to be of utmost importance for both the preservation of Georgia’s natural environment and biodiversity and the welfare of its citizens.

In order to build a healthier and safer environment, we aim to: adopt modern waste management systems; ensure the protection and restoration of Georgia’s unique eco-systems, biodiversity

and genetic resources; provide safe drinking water to the country’s entire population; minimize the potential for damage to a person’s health or to eco-systems; ensure the safety of the country’s population by taking steps to combat climate change and by decreasing the emission of greenhouse gases; protect the country’s forests and forestry resources; and, finally, to rid the country of radioactive or otherwise harmful waste and halt the pollution of the Black Sea, etc.

Russia is unfortunately actively dumping harmful waste in the Georgian territories it is occupying and in doing so is causing grave damage to the environment. Together with the international community we will use all available means to prevent the occupation regimes from harming the environment and will make every effort to avoid an ecological catastrophe on the Black Sea coast.

Particular attention is also being paid to natural disasters such as floods, avalanches, landslides and earthquakes and to prevent industrial accidents from endangering the environment.

Preventive measures to ensure people are able to live in a healthy environment will also be worked out.”

In the interview with the newspaper Batumelebi, MP Goga Khachidze of the United National Movement said: “In 2012 the government approved the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), a four-year program, which is a very legitimate document. It describes thoroughly all the problems which our country faces in terms of environmental protection; it also outlines the priorities; it is a four-year concrete strategy for 2012-2016 years together with its budget. The United National Movement has discussed this document and recognizes it as the major document of our country in the sector of environmental protection.²”

The National Environmental Action Plan for 2012-2016 was developed by the Government of Georgia. It was made possible to adopt the second NEAP only in January 2012. The program was developed in 2009-2010 with the support of the Government of Netherlands. The draft action plan was prepared in November 2010; during 2011 it underwent consideration by various Georgian state agencies. The Second National Environmental Action Program of Georgia (NEAP-2) was approved by decree No 127 of the Government of Georgia dated 24 January 2012. The program envisages the implementation of various measures in 2012-2016.

The document covers eleven priorities: Water Resources; Ambient Air Protection; Waste and Chemicals; Black Sea; Biodiversity and Protected Areas; Forestry; Land Resources; Mineral Resources and Groundwater; Disasters; Nuclear and Radiation Safety; Climate Change. Long-term goals, short-term targets and respective activities are presented in NEAP-2 for eleven themes. Each thematic chapter in this document clarifies the environmental problems and causes, stakeholders, the actions taken to-date, national and international developments and an assessment of the legal framework. Potential sources of financing and indicators of success are also listed.

However, it should be noted that despite the remarks made by the former environment minister, Goga Khachidze³, we failed to find any official statement proving that the 2012-2016 National Environmental Action Plan really represents an integral part of the National Movement’s party program. In addition, a great part of measures envisaged by the program will be implemented through donor support. It should also be noted that the budgetary funding prepared by the National Movement does not reflect environmental protection at all.

² <http://netgazeti.ge/GE/105/News/12890/> 2012.09.18 ; What the political parties are offering their voters in terms of environmental protection

³ <http://netgazeti.ge/GE/105/News/12890/> 2012.09.18 ; What the political parties are offering their voters in terms of environmental protection

Electoral Coalition “Bidzina Ivanishvili – Georgian Dream”

Party history: the coalition was founded in late 2011 by Bidzina Ivanishvili. It unites six political parties: Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia; Republican Party; Our Georgia – Free Democrats; National Forum; Conservative Party and Industry will Save Georgia.

Political platform – the center-left political party

The 2012 parliamentary elections: 44% (44 mandates) through the proportional system and 41 mandates in the single-mandate constituencies.

Website: www.georgiandream.ge

Aims envisaged by the 2012 election platform in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development field

In its 2012 election platform the electoral coalition “Bidzina Ivanishvili – Georgian Dream” has widely highlighted the environmental protection and sustainable development plan.

In chapter 2 of the election platform “Foreign Political Relations,” the coalition says that “all conditions must be ensured in the near future possible that will enable Georgia to successfully complete negotiations on Association agreement with the European Union and to promote cooperation in four main directions within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, namely: democracy and human rights; economic integration and harmonization with the EU legislation; environmental protection and energy security; people-to-people, relations.”

Chapter 4 “Environmental Protection and Rational Utilization of the Natural Resources” defines the coalition’s priorities in this direction. It should be noted from the very beginning that the authors of the platform are concerned about the fact that environmental protection does not represent a priority sector and that nowadays economic development represents an unambiguously heavy burden on environment. The authors are well familiar with the challenges existing in the sector. They offer quite adequate decisions and operate with correct categories.

It should be noted that this chapter properly assesses the problems and challenges existing in this sector – preference of economic profit over the environmental protection. It describes those problems, which emerged as a result of ineffective and frequently unreasonable legislative amendments that further weakened the environmental monitoring system and simultaneously promoted ineffective decision making. The party says that the Environmental Impact Assessment System is inefficient and weak, whereas the transfer of natural resource management to the Ministry of Energy has posed a threat to biodiversity and first and foremost, to the species included in the Red List. The coalition emphasizes that “natural calamities became dramatically frequent throughout the country – the reason of which is not only global changes but also gross human interference into nature and unplanned development of the infrastructure.”

The coalition recognizes that the economic development throughout the country should be based on the principle of sustainable development; it declares the environmental sphere “as one of the priority directions and believes that financial resources spent for the given field by the state do not represent expenditure but investments, providing protection of life and healthcare for the Georgian population as well as protection of natural heritage and also steady economic development of the state.” To achieve the above mentioned goals in the environmental sphere, the coalition believes that it is essential to elaborate environmental standards and normative and legal base complying with EU requirements, to carry out step-by-step commitments undertaken by Georgia in accordance with bilateral and multilateral environmental agreements.

Among the measures to be implemented in the first place, the document names enhancing functional and administrative capacities of the Ministry of Environment Protection, first and foremost, through the development of the so called horizontal legislation. It envisages the development of the modern system of decision making (spatial planning, strategic assessment, and environmental impact assessment) and simultaneously, the creation of the modern environmental monitoring system. The program envisages the implementation of a quite burdensome action plan at both legislative and practical levels.

Georgian Dream’s election program also highlights a number of priority spheres, including reduction of pollution (air, water, and soil), forecasting natural disasters and taking preventive measures, waste

management, including hazardous waste management. It should also be noted that along with legislative initiatives on the protection of biodiversity, the party plan to carry out researches and implement complex measures, as well as to expand and increase the protected areas. Noteworthy that one of the priorities of the party is to maintain the environmental and recreation function of forests. Accordingly, Georgian Dream promises to restrict the extraction of timber resources and to promote the introduction of the modern methods of forest utilization.

In order to implement environmental measures the coalition plans to allocate 4% of the state budget to the environmental protection that is quite a positive signal, especially against the background, when since 2008 this figure has been decreasing and has never exceeded 1% (the analysis of the 2012 state budget shows that environmental spending in 2012 was by 11, 4% less compared to previous year⁴).

It should be noted that energy-related issues (including introduction of energy saving and renewable energy technologies; moratorium on the construction of large hydro power plants and nuclear power plants) are included in the part dealing with the issues of environmental protection and natural resources. We can only welcome it, on the one hand. However, in our opinion, the important shortcoming of the program is that it has no chapters dealing with energy and transport spheres. At the same time, it should be noted that the later published governmental program by Georgian Dream does not contain any activities in the energy sector⁵.

Furthermore, the program does not adequately assess the impact of climate change on the environment, as well as on economy and agriculture. It definitely represents a shortcoming of the program; therefore, it will be crucial to pay more attention to these issues in future.

National Democratic Party of Georgia

Party history: Founded in 1917. After suppressing the rebellion by the Soviet authorities in 1924, the party suspended its political activities in Georgia. The party's activities were resumed in 1981 by Giorgi Chanturia. In November 2008 the party won by-elections in the Didube constituency.

Political platform: moderately socialist

The 2012 parliamentary elections: 0.14% of votes on party list

No international cooperation

Aims envisaged by the 2012 election platform in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development field

The official election platform of the National Democratic Party (NDP) does not discuss environmental protection, natural resource management, energy and transport sector development issues at all. The party mostly focuses on the development of small and medium-sized businesses and agriculture, and solution of social problems (healthcare, unemployment, pensions).

During the interview with the representatives of the political party, a number of environmental issues were identified, which the party deems as challenges⁶. Among these issues there are: creation of a modern system of analysis and monitoring of environmental protection and rational use of natural resources and improvement of its legal framework. Among the priority issues the party outlines water and sewerage systems, problems of industrial and municipal waste management, biodiversity protection and development of renewable energy.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how the party plans to implement reforms in the above mentioned sectors and integrate them into the entire economic agenda. It is desirable that the party documents are more relevant to those promises, which the party candidates give.

⁴ <http://csrdg.ge/upload/editor/file/saxelmtsifo%20biujetis%20analizi%202012/2012%20wlis%20biujetis%20analizi%20-%20damtkicebuli.pdf>

⁵ www.civil.ge/files/files/2012/IvanishviliGovProgram.pdf

⁶ Interview with Gela Kvachantiradze, majoritarian MP candidate in the Vake single-mandate constituency, http://greeningfuture.net/?filename=ge_14_09_2012_07_55_42.new&pathm=webmill/data/news/ints/&lng=ge_&more=1&c=ints&page=home

Christian Democratic Movement

Party history: Founded in 2008. During the 2010 local elections the party showed the best results after the ruling party.

Political platform: socialist-democratic

The 2012 parliamentary elections: 2.05% of votes

International cooperation: Full member of the International Democrat Union (IDU)

Aims envisaged by the 2012 election platform in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development field

The document “Ten-Point State Budget” presented by Christian Democratic Movement (CDM) is not a programming document from this document, as well as from various interviews with the members of CDM, it becomes clear, that the issue of environmental protection and sustainable development does not represent any priority for the party.

According to subparagraph 6 – Free Tariffs to the People, Let’s Return Georgian Energy – Christian Democratic Movement plans to allocate GEL 1 billion per annum from the state budget to the energy sector. The program proposals about settlement of energy problems are also very interesting: “Construction-rehabilitation of energy infrastructure – construction of hydro power plants will continue; however, the generated cheap hydro electric power will be consumed to reduce an electricity tariff, to develop economy and create new jobs; the state will provide gasification of settlements.”

When distributing the budgetary funds, CDM allocates 10% for the energy sector. In addition, CDM is proposing to buy back two electricity distribution companies – Telasi, an electricity grid in capital Tbilisi in which 75% is owned by Russia’s state-controlled power trader, Inter RAO, and 24.53% - by the Georgian state, and Energo-Pro Georgia, a local subsidiary of the Czech company Energo-Pro, in order to exclude an investment component from the tariff.

However, it should be noted that such approach will not help solve existing problems within the energy sector. It is also difficult to imagine that this approach will encourage the integration of social and environmental requirements.

According to the assessments of Georgian economists,⁷ “low tariffs on gas and electricity may really promote the employment, but not always. If gas and electricity tariffs are reduced, its consumption may be increased by businesses and instead of increasing the employment rate, it may lead to the purchase of new capital equipment consuming more gas or electricity.”

In the interview with Green Alternative, CDM’s Secretary General confirmed that they had “comparatively simple vision” about energy sector, and their goal is to ensure cheap energy resources for the development of Georgian business. He also stressed that “any hydro power plant, even the smallest one, has a negative impact on the environment. However, if we are doing some activity it should be worth for the country and the activities that is being done nowadays is not worth, like, the construction Namakhvani Hydro cascade, which may cause harm to the Rioni River Gorge or destroy the village of Tvishi.”

Generally, based on the interviews, it seems that CDM’s approach towards environmental protection is reflected in observing the principle of social justice during natural resource’s exploitation. However, simultaneously, it is quite strange that CDM’s social justice principal does not include the right to live in the clean and safe environment and considering the interests of future generations.

⁷ http://www.econpolicyfact.ge/ka/category/makroekonomikuri-sakitkhebi/policy_brief/kristian-demokratiuli-modzraoba

Party history: Founded in 1995

The 2012 parliamentary elections: 1.2% of votes

Political platform: Center-left political party

No international cooperation

Aims envisaged by the 2012 election platform in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development field

The Labor Party of Georgia has not prepared any election program for the 2012 parliamentary elections. “The Metekhi Obligation - Shalva Natelashvili’s Presidential Program” developed for the 2008 presidential elections proved relevant for the 2012 elections too. It should be noted that the program and analyzed interviews do not create a comprehensive picture how the party plans to solve the economic issues. The idea in itself - Taking from the Rich, Giving to the Poor – and abolition of all types of utility payments, may seem to be in compliance with the principle of social justice, but it is very interesting against the background of these promises, how the party plans to solve economic, including environmental protection and sustainable development issues or challenges.

It was revealed during the interview with the Labor Party’s ideological leader, that in the party’s opinion, environmental protection, natural resource management, and energy issue’s are the full prerogative of the state.

However, the representatives of Labor Party do not have a clear-cut position about how this sphere should be managed and controlled. They believe that if everything is transferred to the state, the problem will be removed: “We submitted a draft law to the Parliament long ago stipulating a ban on privatization of forests. We have also submitted a draft law envisaging a ban on privatization of land plots to foreigners so that these land plots are utilized by Georgian citizens. These two initiatives should be resubmitted again. We should also prohibit transferring of gold, coal, manganese and other mineral deposits to private ownership. The law should ban the transfer of natural wealth to private ownership. Those scarce oil and gas resources, which we have, should be exclusively managed by the state. The relevant draft law has already been submitted to the Parliament for consideration and certainly, it will be reflected in our program too. As far as the expenses are concerned, legislative amendments will need no money⁸.”

Although Labor Party has no clear-cut program in the sector of environmental protection and utilization of natural resources, it also offers quite interesting positions based on its platform, for example, that party “should regulate the legal framework so that minerals as gold, manganese, coal are exclusively managed by the people and the state, to ensure that the benefits gained from minerals are equally distributed among our citizens.” We may disagree with Labor Party that utilization of natural resources should be exclusively managed by the state; however, the assumption that the benefits gained from ore deposits should be equally distributed among the people is intensively being discussed in the international environmental law in recent times.

It is regretful, but the Labor Party has no clear-cut vision about environmental protection and natural resource management, which would be closely linked with social and economic issues and would have promoted the development of real mechanisms of social justice.

⁸ Interview with the ideological secretary of Labor Party, Kakha Dzagania http://greeningfuture.net/?filename=ge_22_08_2012_07_22_45.new&pathm=webmill/data/news/ints/&lng=ge_&more=1&c=ints&page=home

Environmental commitments undertaken Political Parties Ahead of 2012 Parliamentary Elections:

| New Rights Party | United National Movement | Election bloc Bidzina Ivanishvili – Georgian Dream | Christian Democratic Movement | Labor Party of Georgia | National Democratic Party |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p>To ensure safety of future generations and harmonious, sustainable development of the country, it is essential to start caring about the environment already today. For this purpose, it is vital:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ To create and strengthen the economic and legal barriers against ineffective utilization of Georgia's natural resources; ➢ To search and develop alternative energy sources; ➢ To undertake all relevant measures to minimize environmental pollution by exhaust gas, chemical substances and other waste. ➢ To establish ecological culture and promote environmental protection among the population. <p>Source: www.parteibi.ge</p> <p>You can read the interview conducted by Green Alternative with Manana Nachkebia, member of the Council of Leaders of the New Rights Party and majoritarian MP candidate in the Zugdidi single-mandate constituency at: http://www.greeningfuture.net/?filename=ge_03_09_2012_08_35_12.new&pathm=webmill/data/news/intis/&lng=ge_&more=1&c=intis&page=home</p> | <p>Ensuring the safe and healthy environment for the citizens of our country is one of the main tasks for us. For the benefit of Georgia's natural environment, biodiversity and its citizens, we consider it is important to pay special attention to ecological safety. In order to create healthy and safe environment, we aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ To introduce modern systems of waste management; ➢ To ensure protection and rehabilitation of Georgia's unique ecosystems, diversity of species and genetic resources; ➢ To supply entire Georgian population with safe potable water; ➢ To minimize possible harm and economic damage caused to human health and ecosystems; ➢ To ensure safety of the Georgian population through implementing the measures for climate change adaptation and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; ➢ To protect forest resources; | <p>Our priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ To comply existing current environmental standards and legislation with the EU requirements for to ensure safe environment for human; ➢ To create a strategic environmental impact assessment and environmental monitoring system based on modern principles; ➢ To provide the citizens with comprehensive information on state of the environment, and to create effective mechanisms for public involvement in the decision-making process on environmental matters; ➢ To understand and get aware about the importance of environmental protection through preparing and introducing relevant national curricula for the educational institutions; ➢ To train staff and build capacities at scientific-research institutes on environmental and natural sciences; ➢ To introduce universally recognized principles of rational use of natural resources in order to ensure sustainable development; ➢ To introduce environmentally sound energy saving technologies; ➢ To research the state of various species and populations for protection and conservation of biodiversity and its rational exploitation; ➢ To improve the protection of existing protected areas and expansion of its territories; to carry out an inventory of nature monuments and protected landscapes; to popularize protected areas and promote the development | <p>Christian Democratic Movement election program does not include environmental protection and sustainable development chapter.</p> <p>The mission of Christian-Democratic Movement for 2009-2013 (source: http://cdm.ge/ge/mission.html)</p> <p>Christian Democratic Movement deems it essential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ To ensure rational use of our national wealth, natural resources; to push forward environmental protection, as the issue of state importance, and to form an active public-political opinion in this direction; <p>You can read the interview conducted by Green Alternative with Levan Vepkhvadze, the secretary general of Christian Democratic Movement at: http://www.greeningfuture.net/?filename=ge_07_09_2012_07_15_20.new&pathm=webmill/data/news/intis/&lng=ge_&more=1&c=intis&page=home</p> | <p>Labor Party election program does not include environmental protection and sustainable development chapter.</p> <p>You can read the interview conducted by Green Alternative with the ideological secretary of the Labor Party, Kakha Dzagania at: http://www.greeningfuture.net/?filename=ge_22_08_2012_07_22_45.new&pathm=webmill/data/news/intis/&lng=ge_&more=1&c=intis&page=home</p> | <p>National Democratic Party election program does not include environmental protection and sustainable development chapter.</p> <p>You can read the interview conducted by Green Alternative with Gela Kvachantiradze, the party's majoritarian MP candidate in the Vake single-mandate at: http://www.greeningfuture.net/?filename=ge_14_09_2012_07_55_42.new&pathm=webmill/data/news/intis/&lng=ge_&more=1&c=intis&page=home</p> |

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| | <p>➤ To carry out all necessary works to clean the country's territory from radioactive and other harmful waste;</p> <p>➤ To prevent the Black Sea pollution, etc.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Russia actively extracts gravel from occupied Georgian territories while causing grave damage to the environment. Together with the international community we will use all available means and efforts to stop the occupation regime and to avoid an ecological catastrophe on the Black Sea coast.</p> <p>We pay special attention to natural disasters such as floods, avalanches, landslides and earthquakes, as well as to prevent industrial accidents harming the environment.</p> <p>The precautionary measures would be elaborated to ensure the right of the people to live in a healthy and safe environment.</p> <p>Source: www.partiebi.ge</p> | <p>of ecotourism;</p> <p>➤ To prioritize protection of forests environmental and recreation functions; to restrict and regulate the extraction of timber resources;</p> <p>➤ To ban the construction of nuclear power plants; and to promote development of alternative and renewable-energy sources; to implement energy efficiency programs; to support the construction of modern environmentally sound micro and small hydro power plants; to rehabilitate the existing hydro power plants;</p> <p>➤ To prohibit an import of genetically modified seeds and plants; to mark that type of products and promote the conservation and use of local cultural varieties;</p> <p>➤ To prohibit transportation of the radioactive waste and other substances with ionizing radiation on country's territory; to identify the existing sources and dispose them safely; to build a modern depository;</p> <p>➤ To establish a system of forecasting natural disasters and early warning aimed at maximum reducing of harm, as well as a number of victims. To implement all necessary measures aimed at protection and restoration of river banks;</p> <p>➤ To protect and expand the greenery.</p> <p>Source: www.partiebi.ge</p> <p>You can read the interview conducted by Green Alternative with Gia Gachechiladze, leader of Greens Party and member of the coalition Georgian Dream's::</p> <p>http://www.greeningfuture.net/?filename=ge_05_09_2012_05_43_57_new&pathm=webmill/data/news/mts/&lng=ge_&more=1&c=mts&page=home</p> | | |
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