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ANTI-LITTERING PARTNERSHIP FOR GREEN RURAL AREAS

ABOUT THE PROJECT



On May 1st 2020 the project implementation started in the participating countries.

The project involve 5 partners: Tskaltubo Municipality, as Lead Partner and Project Partners: REC Caucasus Armenia (Armenia), Ungheni City Hall (Moldova), Tehnopol Galati Association (Romania), Imereti Scientists' Union "Spectri" (Georgia).

The project aims to contribute to the improvement of environmental quality and reducing river littering in rural areas by supporting the introduction of modern practice of waste management and environmental awareness raising through cross-boundary cooperation and cross-sectoral partnership in Georgia,

Armenia, Moldova and Romania.

The project puts a special focus on anti-littering capacity building of rural areas. The capacities of the rural communities for the realization of 3R principle of waste will be increased, which will significantly reduce the anthropogenic impact on rivers, especially on small rivers.

The project will facilitate the introduction of best practices of waste management based on the EU approaches in selected rural areas of Georgia, Armenia and Moldova. In particular,

plastic and paper separation will be introduced in 7 communities of Tskaltubo and Khoni Municipalities (Georgia) and 4 communities of Vanadzor and Dilijan Municipalities (Armenia).

One of the main goals of project is to raise the level of public awareness and education regarding river and marine litter problems, the importance of environmental protection, modern waste management practice. To that end, there will be used such tools as the implementation of anti-littering educational program for schools and information campaigns, direct involvement of citizens in environmental and Clean Up events. Different publications about river litter, modern waste management will be made for target groups of the project.

The project will facilitate cross-boundary cooperation in the Black Sea Basin. In particular, there will be established the cross-border network with the participation of countries involved in the project. Sister Cities Agreements between municipality involved in the project will be signed.

The Municipal Waste Management Plan for Dilijan Municipality (Armenia) and Local Environmental Action Plans for Tskaltubo and Khoni municipalities (Georgia) with the participation of stakeholders will be created.

The project duration is 24 months.



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PROJECT PARTNERS

LEAD PARTNER TSKALTUBO MUNICIPALITY



Tskaltubo Municipality is located in western Georgia and belongs to Imereti region. Tskaltubo Municipality consists of 16 rural communities (including 42 villages) and 1 urban community. 90% of the Tskaltubo Municipality is located in rural area. Agriculture is one of the important sectors of Tskaltubo Municipality. The population of the Tskaltubo Municipality is 56,883 people. About 90% of the population is associated with the agricultural sector.

Powers of the Tskaltubo Municipality include the municipal budget formulation and implementation, property management and disposal, natural resource management, the introduction of taxes and charges, the compilation of a comprehensive land-use plan, the municipal area improvements and the development of appropriate engineering infrastructure, municipal territory landscaping, water supply, management of local roads. The municipality is also authorized to carry out activities for promoting agriculture, tourism development, youth policy development at a local level, environmental protection, public education, promoting gender equality, healthy lifestyle, healthy environment, attracting investment to the municipality's territory, supporting innovative development and so on.

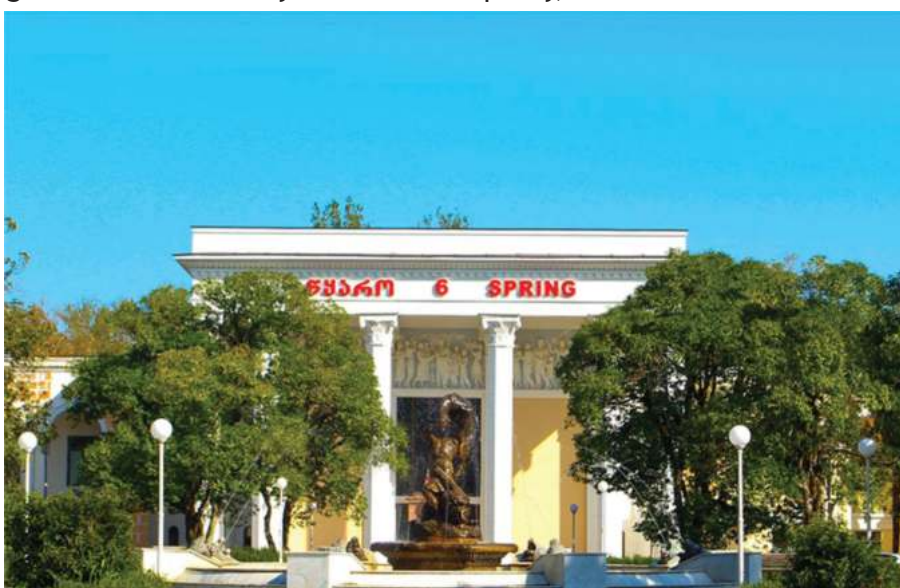
One of the most important powers of the Tskaltubo Municipality is municipal waste management throughout the entire municipal territory. In December 2017, Tskaltubo Sakrebulo (City Council) approved the 2018-2022 Waste Management Plan for Tskaltubo Municipality, which envisages the improvement of the waste management system and the introduction of the separated collection of waste on the municipal territory. One of the strategic goals of this plan is to raise public awareness of environmental protection and waste management.

Tskaltubo Municipality cares for the improvement of the road, engineering, utilities and tourism infrastructure since the favorable infrastructure is one of the main prerequisites for improvements in socio-economic and housing conditions for the population living within the territory of the municipality, as well as for the development of agriculture and increasing the municipality's tourist potential.

Tskaltubo Municipality has a significant tourist potential with its spa resorts and karst caves. In 2018, Tskaltubo, a spa resort, became a member of the European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA).

Tskaltubo Municipality is a member of the European Union project "Mayors for the Economic Growth".

Tskaltubo Municipality has signed the Sister Cities Agreements with cities from Hungary, Latvia, Israel, Ukraine, and Belarus.



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PROJECT PARTNER THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE FOR THE CAUCASUS



The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus) is an independent, non-profit organization established to assist in solving environmental problems as well as development of the civic society in the countries of the South Caucasus.

The mission of the REC Caucasus is determined as “to assist in solving environmental problems in the Caucasus region through the promotion of co-operation at national and regional level among NGOs, governments, business, local communities, and all other environmental stakeholders, in order to develop a free exchange of information, in line with the principles of the Aarhus Convention; offer assistance to all environmental NGOs and other stakeholders; and increase public participation in the decision-making process, thereby assisting the states of the Caucasus in the further development of a democratic civil society”.

REC Caucasus successfully implements its mission through various programmes and projects throughout the Caucasus region. One of the tasks of REC Caucasus is to serve as a “bridge” between the public and governments. REC Caucasus assists its stakeholders in capacity building through provision of information, advice, and expertise and to encourage dialogue, cooperation and public participation in environmental decision-making. REC Caucasus plays an active role in inter-agency cooperation, too. The organization together with active environmental NGOs and the ministries of environment promotes the idea of environmental protection and sustainable development in the South Caucasus countries, demonstrating examples and arguments of direct links between environmental degradation/ destruction and the growth of poverty, migration, and economic recession.

Since its establishment the REC Caucasus has implemented about 60 medium and large scale projects in the region which have contributed to policy development, capacity building, facilitation of dialogue and networking, information exchange on environmental issues and supporting the civil society in the South Caucasus states. Capacity building and training of various environmental stakeholders at regional, national and local levels have been provided throughout project implementation. REC Caucasus has strong experience in providing trainings to different interest groups and deep insight regarding their needs, demands and constraints.

REC Caucasus is well positioned in the South Caucasus region to assist various national and international organizations in implementing their activities targeted at the needs of the region, countries and specific stakeholders.

REC Caucasus has strong capacity to address environmental issues related to Rio Conventions and other international covenants simultaneously at national and regional levels. REC Caucasus has been addressing environmental challenges in the region through implementation of local and regional initiatives and projects based on a regional approach.

REC Caucasus has proven to be a viable and independent partner providing services to governments, local authorities, non-governmental organisations, businesses, international organisations and other environmental stakeholders.



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PROJECT PARTNER UNGHENI CITY HALL



Ungheni City Hall is a local public authority that operates according to the Law of Local Public Administration no. 436-XVI from 28.12.2006 and unfolds the activity of public interest. As a public institution with permanent activity, Ungheni City Hall fulfils the decisions of the City Council, implements the local budget, strategies and programs for improving citizens' life quality in the economic, social, health, education and cultural fields.

In order to achieve its goals and responsibilities, Ungheni City Hall has elaborated and approved 3 strategic documents: Local Agenda 21 Ungheni / Local plan of sustainable development for 2007-2017, Strategy of Socio-Economic Development of Ungheni for 2014-2020 and General Urban Plan of Ungheni for 2015-2030.

Under these strategic documents, Ungheni City Hall is implementing the following priorities:

- Encouraging entrepreneurship and attracting investments;
- Developing health, social assistance, education and environment infrastructure
- Promotion of continuous education;
- Protection of the environment and rational management of natural resources;
- Establishing and developing relations with external partners;
- Capacity building of local public administration;
- Rational capitalization of local and external resources to achieve a high level of economic development;
 - Modernization of urban infrastructure and environmental protection for citizens' welfare;
 - Harmonizing social services with European standards;
 - Reorganizing and rehabilitation of streets;
 - Rehabilitation of water supply and sewage systems;
 - Using renewable energy and increasing energy efficiency;
 - Efficiency of the waste management system;
 - Continuous improvement of the educational system and its adjustment to the requirements of the labor market;
 - Optimization and modernization of institutions with functions of education, sports and recreation;
 - Developing health infrastructure and increasing quality of health services;
 - Diversifying efficient and effective social services;
 - Developing public security infrastructure;
 - Integrated public domain planning;
 - Rehabilitation and modernization of residential buildings;
 - Rehabilitation and modernization of cultural and historical heritage to reduce natural and technological risks of disasters;
 - Development of administrative capacity in city management;



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- Increase capacity for public management and local autonomy.

Waste management is a priority of Ungheni City authorities, this field being found in the strategic documents of Ungheni City: Sustainable Development Strategy of Ungheni City Local Agenda 21 Ungheni 2007 - 2017, Socio-Economic Development Strategy of Ungheni City 2014 - 2020, Local Action Plan for Environment of Ungheni City 2016 - 2020.

Ungheni City Hall has a wide experience in waste management, the basis starting by a public private partnership with attracting external investments that made the waste disposal system to be adjusted to the European standards in proportion of at least 60%.

Waste management is ensured by the municipal enterprise „Ave-Ungheni”, which collects selectively domestic waste in containers placed on well arranged platforms near the blocks of flats, public and private organizations as well as in residential districts. The waste disposal services lift mechanically and transport/ remove street and domestic waste. Ungheni City, many years in a row is recognized as one of the most wholesome/ cleanest and arranged urban locality from the Republic of Moldova.

Ungheni City Hall is applicant and partner in a big range of environmental projects that lead to the insurance of good waste management and change in good of the inhabitants' attitude towards cleaning up at home and in public spaces of Ungheni City.

PROJECT PARTNER GALATI TEHNOPOL ASSOCIATION



Galati Tehnopol Association is an organization of community interest, whose founding members are: Galati Local Council (CLG), Galati County Council (CJG), “Dunarea de Jos” University (UGAL), Galati Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (GL CCIA) and the Association of Software Producers, Galati (GLAPS), having the main objective of achiev-

ing the strategy and programs of the Public Administration for local economic development.

Galati Tehnopol Association takes into account the local economic innovative development strategy, actively administers and also contributes to completing and refining the provisions by observing and identifying new trends and priorities.

The mission of Tehnopol is to contribute to the Strategy and Programs of Public Administration and innovative development by stimulating the creation, support and coordination of the work of the companies, universities, research & development centres and production centres in the area. Tehnopol Association has the full support of Galati City Hall, through the Local County, one of the founders of our organization.

The vision of Tehnopol is to become in the coming years the most important entity in the county of Galati regarding:

- attracting foreign capital necessary for the economic recovery of the area;
- providing resources for solving structural problems in the economy of Galati;
- promote effective industrial techniques;
- support for start-up companies led by young graduates, through the business incubator;
- cultivating an environmental consciousness by promoting technologies that will ensure sustainable development of the area.

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Main sectors of operation include:

General services

Services provided by Tehnopol Galati:

- Support for investments and businesses (information, feedback, cooperation and internationalization);
- Support for innovation (transfer of know-how and technology);
- Supporting SME participation in EU programs for research and development.

Specialized services are provided as assistance and advice with high added value in the form of individual services or service packages aimed at creating business connections and innovation, such as national or international cooperation relations, technology and know-how transfers, applications of research and development for innovation in the industry.

Main services offered:

- developing studies and strategies for local and regional development and / or tourism;
- developing strategies and social development programs;
- execution and implementation of investment projects based on feasibility studies, market studies, technical projects and financial audit;
- consultancy in the preparation and implementation of projects for accessing loans and grants for public authorities, institutions, businesses and individuals;
- producing leaflets, brochures, newsletters and other publications;
- seminars, trainings, summer schools and similar educational events;
- development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of training programs.

GTA has ample experience in working in strategy-relevant and real-impact projects and/or activities, most of them with transnational and cross-regional aspects. GTA worked with transnational institutions - the European Bank for Development and Reconstruction - when working for the project "Urban Rehabilitation - Public Transport in Galati". Following the project mentioned above, GTA conducted the "Strategy for Galati Public Transport for the period 2014 - 2020" in collaboration with the departments of the City Hall.

GTA was also the integrator of materials and documentation emanating from the specialized departments of Galati City Hall, institutions and companies providing information and statistics (National Institute of Statistics, the Labor Inspectorate, Galati County Council, Department of Culture, etc.) for the creation of "Development Strategy of Galati City for the period 2016 - 2025".

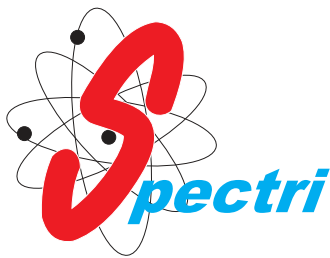
The international experience our staff has is also at a very high level. Tehnopol Galati Association is:

- is a member of the International Urban Development Association.
- is an organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.
- in a partnership with Black Sea Economic Cooperation Business Council
- is a member of the Business Council of the International Black Sea Club.



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PROJECT PARTNER IMERETI SCIENTISTS' UNION "SPECTRI"



Since 1997, the Imereti Scientists' Union "Spectri" has been a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization acting in Georgia. Organization's goal is to contribute to the development of civil society in Georgia, take part in solving social-economic and environmental problems at local and regional levels.

Fields of work are as follows: Education and Science, Environment, Waste Management, Energy Efficiency, Social and Health Care, Development of Small Businesses. SPECTRI has implemented 40 projects funded by different donor organizations.

Main activities provided by SPECTRI are as follows: implementation of pilot projects, management of educational programs, advocacy events, consultations, trainings, publications, etc.

SPECTRI has successful experience in the implementation of advocacy-related projects and in public involvement in the decision-making process. The SPECTRI has publications and experience of the conduction of information campaigns and implementation of educational projects.

The organization pays significant attention to raising public awareness of issues related to environmental protection. Educational activities represent one of the priorities of SPECTRI. The target groups of SPECTRI are students and the upper-form pupils, teachers from educational institutions and kindergarten assistants, mass media representatives, youth, farmers, SMEs, etc. The SPECTRI is engaged in preparing training curricula, training-modules, presentations and publications related to the fields as follows: environmental protection, waste management, composting, energy efficiency, producing bio-products and so on. Each year, the SPECTRI conducts at least 10 trainings. It should be highlighted that the SPECTRI makes the various-



type publications intended for children, youth and adults. In just the past 5 years, the SPECTRI has prepared and printed up to 35 various-type publications (manuals, the glossary of terms, brochures, coloring books and booklets).

The SPECTRI is active in working on the adoption of modern waste management approaches in the country's regions, and in contributing to the introduction of plastic waste sorted collection in three cities of Georgia (Kutaisi, Tkibuli and Tskaltubo) that should be considered as one of the most significant successes of SPECTRI.

The SPECTRI has the experience of implementation of projects financed by the BSB Programs. The implementation of the project "Introduction of innovative waste management practices in selected cities of Georgia, Moldova and Armenia" funded by the Black Sea Basin Program 2007-2013 was initiated by SPECTRI. As the partner of this project, the SPECTRI has implemented environmental educational activities, conducted trainings and prepared publications on waste management for different target groups. From September 2018, the SPECTRI, as the partner, participates in the implementation of the project "Waste Free Rivers for a Clean Black Sea", which is funded by the Black Sea Basin Program 2014-2020.

The SPECTRI is a member of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform and Georgian Regional Civil Society Network (R-CSN).

The SPECTRI actively cooperates with other governmental and non-governmental organizations on the implementation of different activities.

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START-UP ACTIVITIES IN THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

GEORGIA KICK-OFF MEETING

On July 28, 2020 a kick-off meeting was held in Tskaltubo (Georgia). Where participated: David Bujiashvili (Director of the EU Assistance Coordination and Sectorial Integration Department of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Georgia), Levan Kiknavelidze (Deputy State Representative in Imereti Region), Grigol Ioseliani (Tskaltubo Municipality Mayor), Paata Akhaladze (Acting Chairman of the Council), local self-government leadership and representatives of the non-governmental organizations.

Information about the goals and main activities of the project was provided by Ketevan Tskhakaia, Executive Director of the Imereti Region Union of Scientists “Spectri”.



Mr. David Bujiashvili, Director of the EU Assistance Coordination and Sectorial Integration Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, in his speech noted the support of the European Union and in particular, for the Black Sea program, through which various projects were being implemented in Georgia.

Mr. Grigol Ioseliani, Mayor Tskaltubo, noted that Tskaltubo Municipality, as a lead partner of the project, faced great challenges. The implementation of the project facilitated the introduction of waste recycling and modern approaches in rural communities,

he emphasized a significant contribution to fulfilling of the municipality’s commitments.

Mr. Paata Akhaladze, the Acting Chairman of the Council of Tskaltubo Municipality, expressed the hope that Tskaltubo Municipality would not only gain even more experience in implementing international projects, but also it would establish cooperation with cities in partner countries, and he noted that it would be a great additional achievement of this project.

Mrs. Maia Panchulidze, Project Coordinator, spoke about the measures to be implemented in Georgia and their importance for improving environmental protection and waste management systems.



PRESS-CONFERENCE

On August 15, 2020, the press conference for the journalists conducted in Georgia within the framework of the project “Anti-Littering Partnership For Green Rural Areas”. Representatives of mass media operating in Imereti region took part in the meeting. The journalists received the information about the project goals and expected results. The executors of the project responded to the questions of the journalists.

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START-UP ACTIVITIES IN THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

ARMENIA PRESS-CONFERENCE

The Regional Environmental Center for the Caucasus on August 21, 2020 has convened a press conference on ZOOM platform with the participation of 29 participants from the EU Delegation in Armenia, Ministry of Environment of RA, local self-government bodies and representatives of mass media operating in Armenia. The meeting aimed to present the activities and expected results of the project.



Regional director of REC C Nune Harutyunyan made an opening speech welcoming the participants and wishing them productive work. Then the Deputy Minister of Environment of the RA Irina Ghaplanyan welcomed the participants emphasizing the relevance of the project at the current stage of the anti-plastic policy pursued by the Republic of Armenia. Presenting the environmental situation in Ar-

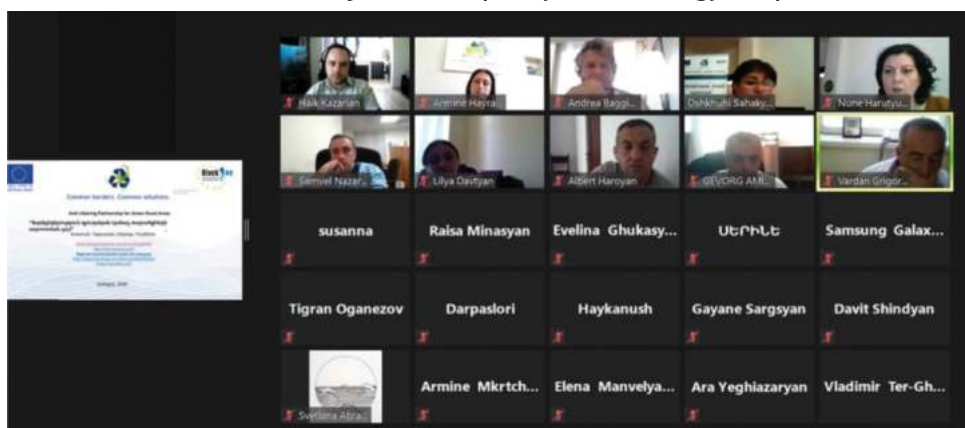
menia, the speaker thanked the REC C team for their efforts and work done.

In her speech, the EU Ambassador to Armenia, head of the delegation Andrea Wiktorin highlighted the implementation of such a program in Armenia and in the region, touching upon the environmental problems of Armenia, in particular the Lake Sevan problem, and the role of the delegation in identifying and solving these problems.

Welcoming remarks were also made by International Aid and Cooperation Officer Of EU delegation in Armenia Andrea Bagioli, and Project Co-coordinator Ketevan Tskhakaia. The speakers wished the team success and excellent final results.

The Mayor of Vanadzor city Mr. Mamikon Aslanyan also made a speech as a local self-government body participating in the project. Noting the importance and relevance of the program, he expressed his readiness to support further actions and events. The staff member of the Dilijan Municipality Levon Avagyan spoke about the effective cooperation of the municipality with the REC C, presenting the importance and urgency of this project.

Afterwards the regional director of REC C Nune Harutyunyan made a speech, presenting the REC C, as well as the activities of the center, focusing on the projects implemented and achievements in the



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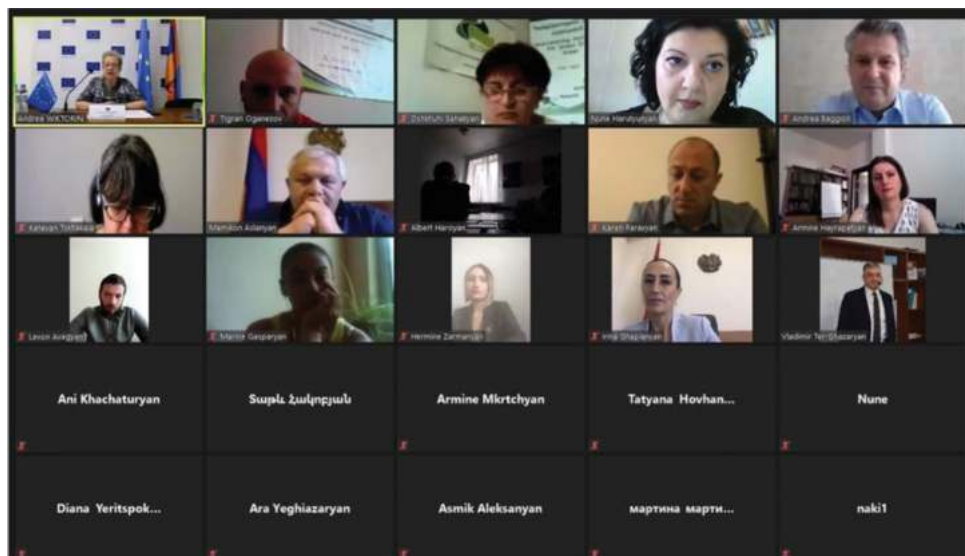
field of waste management. In her speech, the national coordinator of the project Dshkhui Sahakyan presented in detail the goals, objectives, process, actions to be implemented and expected results of the project.

During the speeches, the speakers emphasized the support of cross-border cooperation in the region with the help of the cross-border network with the participation of the countries involved in the project.

At the end of the press conference the press representatives asked questions to the speakers and a constructive dialogue took place.

KICK-OFF MEETING

on August 28, 2020 The Regional Environmental Center for the Caucasus, has convened a kick-off meeting on ZOOM platform with the participation of 25 participants from the EU Delegation in Armenia, Ministry of Environment of RA, local self-government bodies and representatives of organizations experienced in waste management. The meeting aimed to present the activities, process and expected results of the project, to hear opinions and suggestions.



The EU Ambassador to Armenia, Head of the delegation Andrea Wiktorin welcomed the participants emphasizing the importance of such a program in Armenia, also referred to the importance of energy efficiency policy. The ambassador highlighted, that first of all the residents/people should understand what changes their behavior needs, and in order to achieve the latter they should be guided by the civil society, cooperating with the government.

Welcoming remarks were also made by International Aid and Cooperation Officer Of EU delegation in Armenia Andrea Bagioli, and Deputy Minister of Environment of the RA Irina Ghaplanyan. Deputy Minister mentioned that due to such programs a value system in the field of waste management will be formed in the society. Presenting the environmental situation in Armenia, the speaker thanked the REC C team for the efforts and work done.

Regional director of REC C Nune Harutyunyan in her speech presented the organization's activities in the field of green economy and waste management, and the National Program Coordinator Dshkhuhi Sahakyan presented in detail the goals, process, actions to be implemented and expected results of the project. At the end of the meeting, Haykanush Hovhannisyan, the coordinator of the project implemented in Ararat, Hayk Kazaryan the representative of "Smart Apaga" Foundation, Samvel Nazaryan and Gayane Sargsyan representatives of the Urban Foundation, as well as the coordinator of the Environmental Programs of "My Step" Foundation David Shidyan made speeches.

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MOLDOVA

On August 14, 2020, withing the project BSB1138 “Anti-Littering Partnership for Green Rural Areas” was held the Kick-off meeting in Ungheni City Hall where 26 representatives were participated. the conference was attended by Mayor of Ungheni Alexandru Ambros.

The project coordinator Svetlana Ciobanu described the goals and expected results of the project.



ROMANIA

On July, 28, 2020, Association Tehnopol of Galati organized the launching Kick-off meeting of the project “Anti-Littering Partnership for Green Rural Areas”.The conference took place at the terrace of the Cosoreanu Restaurant from Galați. 20 representatives of Galati society were participated.



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NEWS FROM THE PARTNERS

MOLDOVA



Several cleaning activities took place in Ungheni and 5 rural localities within the project “Anti-Littering Partnership for Green Rural Areas” on the period 19.09.2020-19.11.2020. The sanitation activities were dedicated to the World Clean-up Day marked on September 19, 2020 as well as to the local cleaning events in the green spaces, aiming to increase the level of awareness on environmental protection by involving citizens in the sanitation of public spaces. The sanitation activities



were attended by 439 people, students of the high schools “Gheorghe Asachi” and “Vasile Alecsandri” from Ungheni, civil servants, teachers, students and ordinary citizens from the villages Valea Marea and Costuleni, Mănoilești, Zagarancea and Pârlița communes from Ungheni district.

GEORGIA

Regarding the World Cleaning Day, several cleaning actions were held in Tskaltubo municipality within the project “Anti-Littering Partnership For Green Rural Areas” and the pupils of Gvishtibi, Kvitiri, Tskaltubo public schools N1 and N 4 took part in it. Despite the desire of the majority of young people to be actively involved in the cleaning campaign, the number of participants was determined by the COVID19 restrictions and only 12-15 students participated from each school. The youths cleaned up schools and nearby areas. The cleaning actions was held in compliance with all regulations and rules of COVID19.



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ARMENIA

On August 4-5, 2020, within the framework of project BSB 1138 - “Anti-Littering Partnership for Green Rural Areas”, the project team of the REC Caucasus Armenia visited Lori and Tavush regions, to sign the Memorandums of cooperation between Vanadzor and Dilijan Municipalities and the Armenian branch of Regional Environmental Center for Caucasus.



Regional Director of REC Caucasus Nune Harutyunyan, National Project Coordinator Dshkhuhi Sahakyan, Project Assistant Armine Hayrapetyan and Project Environmentalist Tigran Oganezov presented the project components, Cooperation Objectives and Directions.

The speakers presented the activities to be implemented during the project and mentioned that it is very important to support the cross-border cooperation in the region with the help of a cross-border network with the participation of the countries involved in the project. Special attention will be paid to the replication of project results and achievements, for which various publications, meetings and electronic media will be used.

Within the framework of cooperation under this Memorandum, the Regional Environmental Center for the Caucasus ensure the proper implementation of the program: implementation of best practices based on EU approaches, such as the separation of plastic and paper waste, raising the level of public environmental awareness on biodegradable waste composting, river pollution, waste management practices; exchange of knowledge and skills between project partners.

The municipality will ensure the direct involvement and full participation of the community members in the environmental and cleaning activities in educational programs and in implementation of information campaigns.

The signing of the agreement is a mutually beneficial initiative that will help to improve the management of solid waste in the regions.

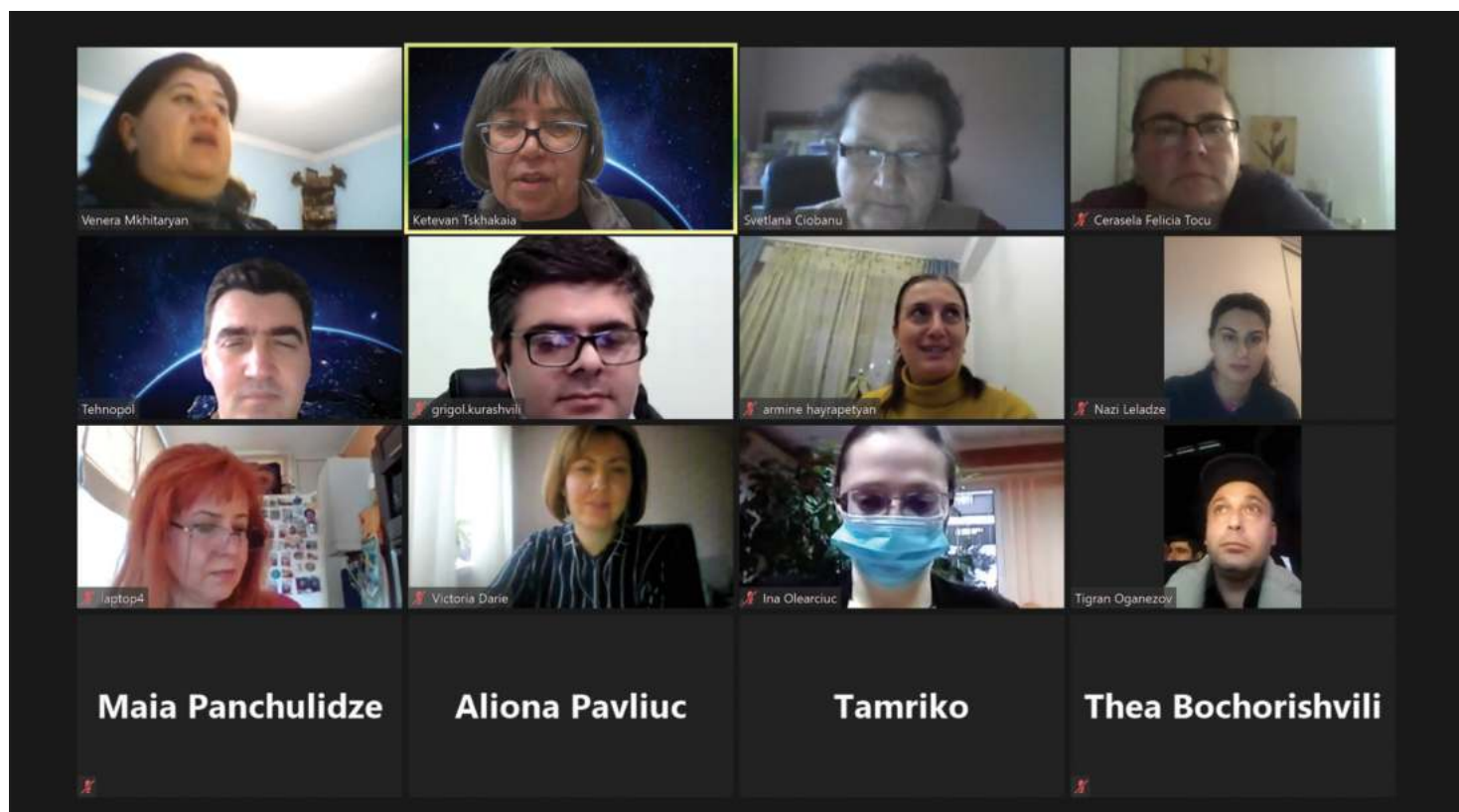
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PARTNERS ONLINE MEETING

On August 26, 2020 within the project “Anti-Littering Partnership for Green Rural Areas” was held the first Steering Committee (Online) Meeting. The meeting was attended by Tskaltubo Municipality (Leader Partner), representatives of the project partners : REC Caucasus Armenia (Armenia), Ugeni City Hall (Moldova), Association TEHNOPOL GALATI (Romania) and The Imereti Scientists’ Union ”Spectri” (Georgia). At the meeting, the partners made presentations on the activities of their own organizations, discussed project implementation and monitoring plans and other organizational issues. 24 project team members participated in the meeting.



Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin 2014-2020
Imereti Scientists’ Union SPECTRI
2020

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