



MINISTRY OF REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
AND INFRASTRUCTURE
OF GEORGIA

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Georgia: Water Supply and Sanitation—Vision and Policy Statement

(Unofficial Translation)

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1. Introduction

1. This Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) Vision and Policy Statement is the first of its kind. It presents the vision for the sustainable future development of the WSS sector in Georgia.¹ It informs the sector reforms necessary to deliver WSS services that are: universal; in compliance with standards of service; efficient; inclusive; and affordable. It outlines the key policy positions that relate to WSS sector issues in the country, including institutional arrangements, service delivery targets, planning, funding, and public awareness, and engagement.

2. Current sector status

2. The Georgian WSS sector is decentralized. Although the municipalities are responsible for the delivery of water supply (including technical water) and sanitation within their respective

¹ This policy does not provide guidelines for other uses of water such as agriculture and hydropower. Equally, while well-managed water and sanitation services are an important component of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), this policy document does not address IWRM as this will be addressed through the new law on water resources management.

municipal boundaries. As local government bodies, the municipality-run utilities are unlicensed and therefore do not fall within the regulatory remit of the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission (GNERC).

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3. In addition to the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI), the main sector stakeholders are the GNERC, the municipalities and the various service providers, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, several other government agencies, organisations, and key development partners that participate in the sector..

3. Challenges

4. MRDI believes that access to reliable, standards-compliant managed water and sanitation services is essential in improving Georgia's growth and development and the quality of life of its citizens. Although Georgia enjoys relatively high rates of connection to piped water services, the performance of water and sanitation services are more in need of improvement, in particular improving services to rural areas where level of service is much lower than that of urban areas.

5. The principal challenges facing the sector:

- **services in rural areas:** Service quality and coverage provided by licenced companies in rural areas should be increased. Many villages and cities² experience intermittent water supply. Aging and outdated rural WSS infrastructure, , deter efficient service delivery. To achieve the same services in rural areas as in urban areas, WSS infrastructure should be rehabilitated and extended, the private sector should be engaged in services provision.
- **management and operation of the utilities:** There are outdated infrastructure and new infrastructure in the country; however, there are areas with no WSS network. In terms of infrastructure development delivery, there is a need for effective management and the construction/rehabilitation of physical infrastructure This will include a wide range of measures from capacity building through to regulatory enforcement measures. There is also a need to improve the gender balance of utilities companies as it better identifies sector challenges.
- **Environmental harm:** Discharges of untreated or inadequately treated sewage from water utilities contribute to water pollution, outbreaks of water-related diseases, and harm to ecosystems.
- **tariffs and levels of cross-subsidy:** The existing tariffs for water supply, and sanitation, services do not cover the operation cost of delivering the services. For that reason the company is subsidized by the government, except for ongoing and planned investments. This creates inefficient price signals that encourage excess water use resulting in increased financial losses to the utilities. Non-domestic consumers pay significantly higher tariffs that can have adverse economic impacts including increased cost burdens on industry affecting their competitiveness and, in the extreme, may result in some non-domestic consumers choosing to remove themselves from the service, increasing financial losses to the utilities and the economy generally.

² The term "cities" include urban settlements, including towns.

- **COVID-19, hygiene, and economical challenges:** The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened awareness of the importance of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) as the primary line of defence against illness and disease.

4. Goals

6. This policy will:

- address demand for improved WSS services to boost economic growth and living standards, address regional disparities in service coverage and quality, and build awareness of the need for responsible water use in urban and rural areas.
- outline a set of common objectives to guide stakeholders in achieving coherent and consistent WSS sector development; and
- reinforce and advance the WSS goals as outlined in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) commitments on WSS, the European Union (EU) Water Framework Directive, the EU Councils Directive on Urban Wastewater Treatment, and related government strategies and programs.

5. Foundation

7. Policy commitments are founded on the various internationally recognized principles.

8. Since 2015, the Government has been committed to achieving the SDGs. Between 2017 and 2019 the Government completed a process to align the country's policies with a shared vision of the future.³ Georgia is also a signatory to the 2015 Paris Agreement, international treaty on climate change that aims to limit global warming. Some of the commitments are embodied in the Lisbon Charter of 2015.⁴

9. This policy is also founded on the European Union Water Framework Directive and Directive on Urban Wastewater Treatment, and the Georgian legislation with its laws, by-laws, and regulations (

10. Based on above-mentioned founding documents, the policy commitments include the following guiding principles:

- Universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030.
- Achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030.
- The provision of services should enshrine accountability and transparency.
- The economics of service provision should be framed by long-term infrastructure investments and cost recovery instruments.
- Effective service provision relies upon the collective actions of interdependent stakeholders.

³ Government of Georgia. 2020. *Voluntary National Review: Georgia*. Tbilisi.

⁴ The Lisbon Charter was adopted by International Water Association in 2015. It guides the public policy and regulation of drinking water supply, sanitation, and wastewater management services.

- (vii) Service provision should consider the financial, social, and environmental aspects of all water resources.
- (viii) Effective water supply, sanitation, and wastewater management positively contribute to sustainable development.

6. The Vision

11. All people living in Georgia have access to adequate, standards-based, appropriate, and affordable water and sanitation services; use water wisely; and practice standards-based sanitation.

12. Water supply and sanitation services are provided by effective, efficient, and sustainable institutions in each municipality, that are accountable and responsive to those whom they serve. Water service institutions reflect the gender and cultural diversity of Georgia.

13. Water is used effectively, efficiently, and sustainably to reduce poverty, improve human health, and promote economic development. Water and wastewater are managed in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner, aiming, in particular, at restoring and protecting biodiversity, and contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation to reduce the carbon footprint.

7. Policy Statements

7.1 Access to standards-based drinking water and sanitation services

14. Policy statement. The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) will support the progressive delivery of standards-compliant drinking water and sanitation services for all residents of the country, according to strategic goals.

15. all cities in the country will be provided with 24/7 water supply services by the end of 2025, and the rural areas by the end of 2030. The MRDI will also improve sanitation services to the population within its competence. Municipalities will be supported in finding solutions on sanitation services. This will require careful consideration of the service levels, infrastructure, and technologies best suited for different settlement areas, to ensure optimal use of scarce financial resources and available skills and achieve an acceptable balance between affordability and cost recovery. The related strategies, including wastewater and stormwater, will be laid down in the WSS Sector Development Framework for 2021–2030 in consultation with the UWSCG, municipalities, municipal water companies, and community-based organizations.

16. The MRDI will assist the municipalities in implementing water and sanitation services within its competence, and in applying transparent, explicit, and targeted solutions for the poor and vulnerable.⁵

⁵ This support does not apply to the territory of Adjara Autonomous Republic, municipalities on the occupied territories and in the operating area of other licensed utilities.

17. To help generate and maintain reliable WSS data, the MRDI will provide and exchange sufficient data with the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission (GNERC) and the National Statistics Office of Georgia (GEOSTAT).

Background and rationale

18. Despite significant infrastructure investments over the past decade, a full-service coverage has not yet been achieved, and the levels of service are not satisfactorily compliant with the required standards of service. The continuity and reliability of water supply is uneven; sanitation and wastewater infrastructures are either absent or deficient across many urban and rural areas; and management of water, wastewater, and sanitation services requires extensive reform.

19., within its competence, the MRDI will continue to support the improvement of drinking water quality to reduce risks of public health. The development and use of water safety plans will help ensure that water is standards-compliant

20. Current planning initiatives and infrastructure investments are not necessarily focused on the achievement of SDGs and/or to the financial, technological, and long-term operational implications of different technology options and infrastructure investments.

21. Sector data and information should be clarified and updated. There is several data source that need to combined, and it will adequately describe all the requisite planning considerations, e.g., population, service levels, required new infrastructure, major maintenance needs, day-to-day operational requirements, institutional responsibilities, and climate change risks..

22. Investment decision making for water and wastewater services should consider location, geography, and social and environmental impact.

23. A re-orientation of sector priorities, infrastructure planning approaches, and resourcing are required to achieve the SDGs and ensure that no one is left behind. Planning must take account of the full-life cycle requirements of all infrastructure investments, with service levels aligned to support inclusive service delivery by 2030.

7.2 Institutional Arrangements and Governance

24. Policy statement. The MRDI will liaise with sector stakeholders—Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia; Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia; Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Affairs of Georgia; Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission; and the municipalities—to establish systems and mechanisms for dialogue, coordination, cooperation, and service delivery efficiency of sector institutions and actors to achieve optimal service delivery and accountability. The ministry will promote stakeholder awareness and increase public engagement in sector planning and oversight, and strengthen accountability between users, service providers, and service authorities.

25. Within its competence, the MRDI will support private sector participation in the WSS sector for a more effective sector policy.

Background and rationale

26. Institutional arrangements are central to the economic performance and social outcomes of the sector, but sector responsibilities for water supply, sanitation, and wastewater management in Georgia are not always clear.

27. The MRDI is responsible for preparing legislative initiatives, setting tariff policy, and ensuring the delivery of safe water supply and sanitation services to all. According to its charter, supporting the related development and implementation of infrastructure and ensuring water supply and sanitation for the population is a specific goal.

28. GNERC is the national and independent economic and services regulator of licensed water supply and sanitation service providers. Only service providers that can demonstrate commercial viability may be licensed, and only licensed service providers may charge a tariff. This results in inadequate governance and performance oversight of service providers, including municipalities that are not licenced, and extensive reliance on subsidies to cover the costs of service provision.

29. Municipalities are mandated to provide effective, efficient, and sustainable water services (including technical water), They may provide water services themselves, or select, procure, and contract suitable water services providers. However, the majority of the municipalities do not have the financial, technical, or managerial capabilities to fulfil this role.

30. The MRDI will consider the engagement of private sector in the development and operation of water supply and wastewater infrastructure where this can provide overall sustainable net benefits to consumers including:

- (i) enhanced service delivery, level, and quality.
- (ii) Improved financial viability—via improved billing and collection, staff productivity, reduced nonrevenue water (NRW), efficient resource management.
- (iii) transfer of knowledge and skills.
- (iv) introduction of technology; and
- (v) need for a change agent.

32. The MRDI will take into account the need to balance private sector expectations of returns against the benefits that the private sector can deliver, with the optimum private sector business model, based on the best overall net benefits. This will take into consideration the tools available to provide incentives for improved performance that may not be available or as effective in the public sector.

7.3 Environmental protection

33. Policy statement. Decision making at all levels should consider environmental impact. This should not be confined to the direct environmental impacts of the WSS sector, e.g., water resource abstraction and the conservation of water resources and accompanying ecosystems, wastewater discharge quality and the disposal of water supply and wastewater sludge. The decision making will include wider environmental aspects such as climate change. In line with national policies and objectives, the MRDI will encourage the adoption of low-carbon technologies to reduce, whenever possible, the carbon footprint of the water sector. The ministry will encourage the adoption of sound environmental practices .

Background and rationale

34. WSS service provision must take account of all environmental aspects of the water cycle, from the source to the tap and back. Water resources are not limitless, and the eastern parts of the country are prone to periodic drought. Water conservation, demand management and protection of water resources against pollution are essential not only to keep costs down but also to safeguard the adequacy of Georgia's water resources for the future.

7.4 Resilience to climate change

35. Policy statement. The MRDI will support that infrastructure planning, design, and management is climate proof, i.e., incorporate resilience to the anticipated impact of climate change in Georgia, most notably increased variability of rainfall and increasing temperatures.

Background and rationale

36. The impacts of climate change are increasingly evident. Average temperatures in Georgia are expected to rise significantly, with more frequent and intense heat waves. Higher temperatures will affect treatment processes for drinking water and wastewater. Increased water consumption is anticipated, which will impact on water production, treatment, and distribution capacities, and raise power consumption.

37. Climate change is accelerating the variability of rainfall, with more frequent extremes of drought, storms, and flooding. The consequences are flood hazards and landslide risks with impacts on critical infrastructure, buildings, and stormwater.

38. Impacts of environmental pollution and climate change not only disturb water resources availability and quality but also affect the design, construction, location and operations of water supply and sanitation infrastructure. High attention to these impacts will reduce the long-term costs of these investments and increase their performance.

7.5 Sector capacity development

39. Policy statement. To close the gaps between the existing and required levels of competence to plan, implement, operate, and maintain WSS services and infrastructure, the MRDI will support sector promotion through cooperation with high education/academic institutions, vocational training centres, and knowledge institutions. The ministry will also engage in developing practical skills of the WSS sector employees, interns, and young professionals to develop future leaders in the sector. The ministry will increase its efforts to build sector knowledge and apply innovative, knowledge solutions. Private sector participation will be considered to accelerate the improvements required through knowledge, technology and skills transfer. Research will be promoted in areas requiring specialist investigation and enhancement of local knowledge determination duties. The ministry will also encourage knowledge sharing between the utilities through incentives and other measures.

Background and rationale

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41. There are few technical degree programs and limited vocational trainings available in Georgia to address the sector's needs. Some broad academic degree programs being offered are relevant to the WSS sector, but there are few opportunities for training in logistics/supply

chain management, water quality management, civil engineering with specialization in water and sewerage, and wastewater management. The situation is worse at the operational level. A recent analysis identified a complete lack of training providers for customer services, laboratory work, and skills needed for field analysis. Georgia's WSS sector requires establishing dedicated training programs to build the capacity required.

42. Internship, young professional, student exchange program, external learning opportunities and/or partnerships with knowledge institutions will be supported in the sector for sharing first-hand experience and engaging intensive on-the-job training to develop future leaders in the sector.

7.6 Funding service expansion, renewal, and sustained improvement

44. Policy statement. The MRDI will put efforts into seeking engagement and collaboration with leading international institutions and private sector partners to secure the substantial resources required to meet the SDG goals outlined in this policy statement. The ministry will continue cooperation with international financial institutions, the Ministry of Finance, and GNERC to ensure that sufficient funding is available to achieve the WSS sector vision.

45. Service quality will be sustained through improved operation and maintenance across the life of infrastructure investments, funded by optimal tariffs and implemented based on integrated asset management strategies that give attention to preserving, saving, and protecting water resources, and that consider the consequences of climate change.

Background and rationale

46. people living in rural areas lacking in adequate WSS services significant investment is required to meet the sector goals, in particular to renew or replace the aging and under-performing infrastructure. Good quality services require adequate financial provision for day-to-day operational and maintenance activities (OPEX) and periodic major maintenance (CAPMANEX).⁶

47. Funding for new infrastructure (CAPEX) and major maintenance is currently sourced through taxes and transfers from international financial institutions. Nevertheless, prospects for additional resources are to be explored to address service backlogs by 2030, to achieve the SDG target date. This mainly includes infrastructure for water supply to poor rural areas and the construction of additional wastewater treatment facilities.

7.7 Gender equality and social inclusion

48. Policy statement. The MRDI will act as a focal point to enable the access of women and poor and vulnerable people, including those who are socially excluded and disabled, to WSS services, and ensure their participation in community discussions and decision making as users and consumers throughout service delivery planning and delivery. The ministry will promote measures to enhance women's involvement in management, employment, and advancement across the WSS sector and will simultaneously investigate remuneration parity.

Background and rationale

50. Nationally, 77.6 % have access to water supply and 79.2% have access to sanitation services,⁷ with the urban population having more access than the rural population. Since water supply is not available 24/7, households resort to using storage tanks, which may not be safe to drink. As women are traditionally responsible for water use in households, they spend time to collect, store, and treat water, which impacts on women's time. Improved access to good quality water and sanitation services are essential for health and social inclusion, yet the intended users of WSS services, especially women, should be engaged more in service projects are planned and as a result, they often do not meet the needs of women, girls, and marginalized groups.

51. Women's employment in the WSS sector averaged only 25%, and 20% in management positions. Women employees are in administrative positions, and very few are in technical positions. Women do not often choose technical professions, which is one of the most significant obstacles to maintaining gender balance among those employed in the sector.

7.8 Sector Coordination and Alignment

52. Policy statement. The MRDI within its competence will encourage cooperation between sector stakeholders and use all its resources for sector development.. The MRDI will support cooperation with major stakeholders to plan and monitor the implementation of the WSS Sector Vision and Policy Statement and facilitate adoption and implementation of the WSS Sector Development Framework 2021–2030.

Background and rationale

53. Effective services rely on the collective actions of all stakeholders in the sector, namely: government line ministries, departments, local bodies, and private and public service providers. Their activities need to be coordinated and aligned with the vision and policy for WSS services, as well as with the policy and the integrated water resource and river basin management approaches articulated in the forthcoming Law on Water Resource Management.

54. The new Law on Water Resource Management will promote the principle of Integrated Water Resource Management, establish water councils within the river basins, and improve alignment across water resources and water services management.

55. Currently, groundwater abstraction licenses are currently issued by the LEPL National Agency of Mines. This results in a loss of significant customers and revenue by water service providers, as individuals and organizations can easily secure permission to install their own systems of bulk supply.

56. There is room to improve alignment between the water sector and other spheres of economic and social activity. The introduction of integrated development planning will help mitigate such misalignment.

7.9 Performance improvement, monitoring, and regulation

⁷ GEOSTAT, 2020.

57. Policy statement. Regulation and performance monitoring of service providers and infrastructure will be supported and periodically updated to ensure accurate measurement of service levels, service provider performance, and the associated costs. Special attention will be given to drinking water quality.

Background and rationale

58. The MRDI is responsible for WSS sector policy and support. While GNERC carries out effective performance measurement and monitoring, the MRDI will support service providers in achieving the service delivery goals described in the SDGs. This includes the roll-out of new infrastructure, undertaking major maintenance, refurbishment of aging infrastructure, and ensuring sustainable day-to-day operation to achieve efficient and sustainable delivery of services.

59. Comprehensive monitoring requires the active cooperation of services providers, catchment management councils, municipalities, and community-based organizations. The goals will only be achieved if there is systematic capacity building, effective monitoring, and support of all stakeholders in the sector.

60. Planning and comprehensive monitoring would need reliable data. The GNERC will make sure that all relevant data to be used in the sector for planning, performance monitoring, and regulation will be consistent, managed professionally, and made public to the extent possible.

8. The Way Forward

61. This vision and policy statement outlines the priorities of the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure in achieving WSS sector goals. It is a living document that will be revised and updated to align as necessary within a stable framework of objectives and guiding principles.

Signature of the Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure

Name:

Date:

Appendix 1: Definitions

CAPEX	Funding required for, or spent on, the creation of new infrastructure
CAPMANEX	Funding required for, or spent on, major maintenance, refurbishment, or overhaul of existing infrastructure
OPEX	Funding required for, or spent on, day-to-day operation, minor maintenance, and repair activities of existing infrastructure
Climate Change	long-term change in the average weather patterns
Level of Service (LoS)	A defined service quality for a particular activity against which performance may be measured. Service levels usually relate to quality, quantity, reliability, responsiveness, environmental acceptability, and cost.
Lisbon Charter of 2015	International framework of good practice for public policy and regulation in drinking water supply, sanitation, and wastewater management services adopted by International Water Association in 2015
Stakeholders	Individuals or groups having an interest in the authority's performance and success, or the impact of its activities (includes customers, employees, contractors, regulators, suppliers, ministries, municipalities, communities, and nongovernment organizations)
Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)	United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals
Water Supply and Sanitation Services	The provision of drinking water and sanitation services, including sewerage and onsite systems
Water Supply and Sanitation Sector	The sector summarizes the infrastructure and activities involved in managing the end-to-end water cycle from collection of water from the environment through its treatment and use to final disposal of wastewater back to the environment

Appendix 2: Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountability

The provision of services in the water supply and sanitation sector requires that roles and responsibilities be clearly defined. The guiding principle is the achievement of SDG goals for service delivery.

The principal entities with high-level responsibilities are as follows:

Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) – Responsible for ensuring water supply system implementation and development and providing water for citizens of Georgia, within its competence. Besides projects in this field, the MRDI coordinates major infrastructure projects in roads, solid waste, and municipal development.

Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development – The ultimate owner of state-owned entities, including the United Water Supply Company of Georgia (UWSCG). Currently, shareholder rights of UWSCG are transferred to the MRDI.

Ministry of Finance – Responsible for overall state budget management. All the loan agreements by state are signed by the Ministry of Finance and included in state budget. Under the ministry is the Revenue Service, Georgia’s tax authority.

Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission (GNERC) – An independent body that regulates water supply and sanitation sectors by setting tariffs, mandatory rules for water supply services, and minimum service requirements.

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture – Under this Ministry, there is water resources division that issues consent for abstraction of surface water. In the future, a river basin management system will be set up, and run by this ministry and its water resources direction. Also, the ministry is the authority for Environmental Impact Assessment procedures.

LEPL Food Safety Agency – This agency is under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture. It is the authority for enforcing water quality standards.

LEPL National Agency of Mining – This agency is under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. It is the authority that issues licenses for underground water abstraction in the country.

Local municipalities – According to Local Self-Government Code, municipalities are responsible for ensuring water and wastewater services. Local municipalities also issue construction permits.

LEPL Public-Private Partnership Agency – The agency is directly reporting to the Prime – Minister’s Office. This is the agency that coordinates all PPP projects in Georgia.

Table 1 Service Arrangements

Licensed utilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. United Water Supply Company of Georgia LLC, with around 800 thousand beneficiaries 2. Georgian Water and Power (GWP) LLC (including Mtskheta Water Company which is merged with GWP), with around 1.2 million beneficiaries 3. Rustavi Water LLC, with around 125,000 beneficiaries 4. Marneuli Rural Water LLC, with around 7,000 beneficiaries 5. Sachkhere Water Company LLC, with around 6,000 beneficiaries
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	6. Batumi Water LLC, with around 160,000 beneficiaries 7. Kobuleti Water LLC, with around 16,000 beneficiaries 8. Soguri LLC, with around 300 beneficiaries.
Non-licensed utilities	Non-licensed utilities operate and provide WSS services (including technical water) at the municipal level, mainly in rural areas.

LEPL = Legal Entity of Public Law, LLC = limited liability company

Appendix 3: Applicable Legislation and Documentation Framework

For a good understanding, the set of policy statements should not be read in isolation. Reference must be made to other sector documentation and legislation such as the following:

Primary Legislation

- Organic Law, Local Self-Government Code, adopted on 5 February 2014 – sets the legal framework for functioning municipalities.
- Organic Law on Labour Safety, adopted on 19 February 2019 – sets the main requirements for labour safety.
- Law on Water, adopted on 16 October 1997 – sets the framework for water resources.
- Law on Energy and Water Supply, adopted on 20 December 2019 – regulates water supply and sets its general legal framework.
- Law on Licenses and Permits, adopted on 24 June 2005 – sets the list of licenses and permits, including for water supply and underground water abstraction, and as part of mineral resources extraction license.
- Law on Public-Private Partnership, adopted on 4 May 2018 – sets the PPP legal framework.
- Law on State Property, adopted on 21 July 2010 – sets regulations on management, administration, and transfer into use of state property.
- Law on Public Registry, adopted on 19 December 2008 – sets regulations on registration of property and other public services.

Secondary Legislation

- Technical Regulation on Drinking Water, Government of Georgia Decree N58, dated 15 January 2014 – sets drinking water quality standards.
- Technical Regulation on Chlorine usage in centralized and local water supply systems and water supply facility disinfection, Government of Georgia Decree N62, dated 15 January 2014 – sets standards for chlorine usage and facility disinfection.
- Technical Regulation on the calculation of the maximum permissible discharge norms of pollutants discharged together with wastewater into surface water body, Government of Georgia Decree N414, dated 31 December 2013 – sets methods for determining the maximum allowable discharge of pollutants into surface water body.
- Rules for Water Supply and Usage, Decree N32 by Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission – sets service standards for water supply.

Strategic Documents and Policies

Sustainable Development Goals – The Government of Georgia adopted the National Document on SDG and approved it by Decree N2328, dated 12 November 2019. Notably, in 2016, Georgia submitted the First Voluntary National Review to High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

Decentralization – Georgia adopted the Decentralization Strategy for 2020–2025 and Action Plan for 2020–2021, which were approved by the Government of Georgia Decree N678, dated 31 December 2019.

State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) – In September of 2020, the Ministry of Finance prepared the Fiscal Risk Analysis which reviews and analyses fiscal risks related to SOEs.

Water resource management and resource efficiency

Currently, water resources are governed by Law on Water. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MOEPA), however, has prepared the Draft Law on Water Resources Management. The draft law was submitted to the Parliament of Georgia for further review. The MOEPA has conducted a regulatory impact assessment of the draft law, supported by USAID. Water resources are also covered in Environmental Actions. The current document covers the period of 2017–2021, namely:

- On the Approval of the Third National Environmental Action Program of Georgia, Government of Georgia Decree N1124, dated 22 May 2018 (2017–2021).

Agriculture, irrigation

There are two strategic documents adopted in agriculture and irrigation sectors:

- Strategy for Rural and Agriculture Development for 2021–2027, and its Action Plan for 2021–2023.
- Irrigation Strategy for Georgia, 2017–2025.

Climate change

A party to the UN Climate Change framework convention and Kyoto Protocol, the Government of Georgia created the Climate Change Council by Decree N54, dated 23 January 2020. Also, the Government of Georgia adopted Decree N167, dated 8 April 2021, which approved the Climate Change Strategy for 2030 and its action plan for 2021–2023.

Energy

The Parliament of Georgia has defined the *Main Directions of State Policy in Energy Sector*. The document was approved by the Parliament of Georgia on 24 June 2015, by Decree N3758-IIs. In addition, there are two important action plans by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, which manages the energy sector, which are as follows:

- Energy Efficiency National Action Plan 2019–2020, approved by the Government of Georgia by Decree N2680, dated 23 December 2019
- Renewable Energy National Action Plan, to reach a share of 35% by renewables by 2030.

Gender equality

Georgia is a member of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Its membership to CEDAW was ratified by the Parliament of Georgia on 22 September 1994. Georgia is also a member of the Beijing Platform for Action, which has flagged 12 key areas, where urgent action is needed to ensure greater equality and opportunities for women and men, and girls and boys. Georgia has adopted the Law on Gender Equality, dated 26 March 2010.

The Parliament of Georgia approved the National Strategy for Human Rights, 2014–2020, dated 30 April 2014, N2315-IIs. Based on this document, the Government of Georgia approved the Government Action Plan for Human Rights, 2018–2020, by Decree N182, dated 17 April 2018. These documents include directions for gender equality.