



## Press Release

**At the meeting with the Minister of Environment and Agriculture that was held at the Business Association, members of the Association discussed important problems encountered in the area.**

On March 2018, members of the Business Association had a meeting with Mr. Levan Davitashvili, Minister of Environment and Agriculture. At the meeting organized by Business Association, the Minister introduced to the business sector the works already completed and the plans to implement in the future for the environment and agriculture area. At the meeting, representatives of the business association raised some questions such as the improvement of a process/procedures of environmental impact assessment, the prohibition of selling of the agricultural lands to the foreigners, more communication with the business sector etc. As regards the environmental impact assessment problems, Mr. Levan Vepkhvadze introduced to the participants the position of the Georgian Industrial Group that was also shared by the Minister. As stated by Mr. Levan Vepkhvadze, the requirements and costs included in the environmental impact assessment, frequently outweigh total cost of the project. "Prior to obtaining a permit document, one has to compile the environmental documents in which such obligations are often stated that outweigh the project costs and the costs have not been envisaged in due time posing threats to the project implementation notwithstanding whether the company's liability is reasonable", said Mr. Levan Vepkhvadze, Strategic Adviser to General Director of the Georgian Industrial Group. As the Minister said, the communication between the state and private sectors is critical in the process of development of the effective policy and that the decisions made would have to be acceptable to and shared by business circles.

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GIG - the company having 20 - year business experience is one of the largest Industrial Group in Georgia. Its business portfolio includes coal mining, electric power generation (hydro, natural gas and coal-fired stations) natural gas trade and real estate management. David Bezhuashvili is the founder of Georgian Industrial Group.