

ON THE SYSTEM OF PROTECTED AREAS

The formation of the system of protected areas in Georgia serves the preservation of original natural and cultural environment and its individual components for future generations, and the ensuring of conditions for the mental and physical health of humans and the creation of one of the main bases for the civilised development of society.

In Georgia, protected areas are established for protecting and restoring significant national heritage - unique, rare and distinctive ecosystems, plant and animal species, natural formations and cultural areas, and for ensuring their use for scientific, educational and recreational purposes and for the purposes of developing a saving economy for natural resources.

Article 1 - Goals of the system of protected areas

The planning of the system of protected areas in the territory of Georgia, the selection of categories of protected areas and the establishment and functioning of each protected area have the following goals:

- a) the guaranteed long-term protection of the bio-geographic units of Georgia to ensure the continuous development of natural processes;
- b) the protection and restoration of natural ecosystems, landscapes and living organisms;
- c) the protection of the genetic pool of endangered wild animals and plants included in the Red List of Georgia, and the preservation of biological diversity;
- d) the preservation of unique and rare organic and inorganic natural formations;
- e) protection against human-induced impacts on territories within active zones of erosion, mudflows, floods, torrents, avalanches, landslides, as well as areas of surface and ground water formation, drainage and discharge;
- f) the preservation and restoration of sceneries characteristic of historical and cultural landscapes and architectural and archaeological complexes;
- g) the creation of appropriate field conditions in areas of invaluable and irreplaceable objects in order to carry out educational and scientific research;
- h) the ensuring of favourable conditions in the natural, historical and cultural environment for recreation, health care and tourism purposes;
- i) the facilitation of the protection, restoration and development of traditional economic activities and folk arts in order to preserve the original historical and cultural environment;
- j) the promotion of the saving economy of areas used for agricultural, industrial, transport and energy purposes, and of natural resources.

Law of Georgia No 2368 of 6 June 2003 - LHG I, No 19, 1.7.2003, Art. 128

Article 1¹ - Definition of terms

The terms used herein have the following meanings for the purposes of this Law:

- a) human-induced impact - a foreseen or unforeseen transforming impact on the living environment by humans and society, which mostly results in ecological disruption and the unrecoverable destruction of natural resources;
- b) managed reserve - corresponds to Category IV of protected areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Habitat/Species Management Area;
- c) bio-geographic units - zoning units according to landscapes, flora and fauna;
- d) biome - a bio-geographic zoning unit;
- e) natural monument - corresponds to Category III of protected areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Natural Monument;
- f) characteristic scenery - the visual appearance of the types of natural, historical and cultural landscapes of various regions;
- g) protected landscape - corresponds to Category V of protected areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Protected Landscape;
- h) protected area - a land territory and/or a water area of special importance for preserving biological diversity, natural resources and cultural phenomena integrated into the natural environment, which is protected and managed on a long-term and sound legal basis;
- i) International Network of Protected Areas - networks of protected areas having the status of protection, and the observation of, and care and financial support for, biosphere reserves, world heritage sites and high humidity areas;
- j) system of protected areas - a network formed of protected areas of different categories, which functions and is managed as a unified system of nature conservation and sustainable development;



k) demarcation - the determination of accurate coordinates of the perimeter of the boundaries of protected areas for the purposes of this Law, during which the boundary is determined on site, including when the property of natural and legal persons and infrastructure objects atypical for a protected area are recorded in order to exclude them from the boundaries of protected areas and to register adjusted boundaries in the Public Registry;

l) national park - corresponds to Category II of protected areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - National Park;

m) visitor - a person, other than the personnel of the administration of a protected area, granted access to this area in accordance with procedures established by law;

n) original natural and cultural environment - diverse, intact and little modified natural environment and historical and cultural environment formed and merged together as a result of centuries-long development, which is distinguished by ecological balance, high aesthetic value and rational economic use;

o) historical and cultural landscape - a human-made landscape materially reflecting a long-lasting historical process or any of its periods, which is distinguished by ethical, aesthetic and other cultural values;

p) manipulations - active actions and activities performed for the purposes of scientific research and maintenance, in particular, the extraction of natural materials, the establishment of laboratories and testing stations, the introduction, reintroduction and translocation of animal species, and sanitary and other measures for forest maintenance and restoration, etc.;

q) management plan - an integrated document oriented towards feasible measures intended to provide functional and planning organisation and the economic planning of a protected area;

r) multi-purpose use area - corresponds to Category VI of protected areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Managed Resource Protected Area;

s) state reserve - corresponds to Category I of protected areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Strict Nature Reserve/Wilderness Area;

t) territorial planning - the territorial planning of the country using various territorial ranks and different details: based on spatial territorial plans - throughout the territory of the country; based on planning schemes and designs of self-governing units - at a regional level; based on general schemes and management plans - in the territories and zones of special importance; based on land use general plans - in settlements and groups of settlements, etc.;

u) harmonic landscape - a landscape where natural and man-made components and elements are functionally balanced and aesthetically merged.

Law of Georgia No 2307 of 30 April 2014 - website, 13.5.2014

Article 2 - Legislation on protected areas

1. The legislation on protected areas is based on the provisions of the Constitution of Georgia and includes this Law and other legal acts adopted in accordance with this Law.

2. Relations arising from the use of land, forest, water and natural resources of protected areas, as well as historical and cultural monuments, shall be regulated by the respective legislation of Georgia.

3. Property relations in the field of the use and protection of protected areas shall be regulated by civil legislation.

Article 3 - Categories of protected areas

1. The categories of protected areas are: a state reserve, a national park, a natural monument, a managed reserve, a protected landscape and a multi-purpose use area.

2. The following categories included in the International Network of Protected Areas may exist in Georgia: a biosphere reserve, a world heritage site, and a high humidity area of international importance.

Article 4 - State reserve

1. A state reserve may be created for the purposes of preserving the dynamic and intact condition of nature, natural processes and genetic resources and for the purposes of carrying out scientific research, educational activities and environmental monitoring, which activities have an insignificant impact on nature, natural processes and genetic resources.

2. A state reserve shall be created on state-owned land and/or water areas, the size and state of which ensure the preservation of natural objects and natural processes without special care and restoration by humans.

3. A state reserve may be part of any protected area (a biosphere reserve, a world heritage site, a high humidity area of international importance) and/or include another protected area (natural monument).



Article 5 - National park

1. A national park shall be created to protect relatively large ecosystems distinguished by natural beauty and having national and international importance, and to preserve the living environment and to carry out scientific research and educational and recreational activities.

2. A national park may be created on a relatively large natural land territory and/or water area, where one or several undamaged or little damaged unique, rare or endangered ecosystem(s), biocoenosis and endangered wild animal and plant species included in the Red List of Georgia are present.

3. The following main zones may be created within a national park:

a) a strict natural protection zone - a zone that is created for preserving nature intact and carrying out non-manipulative scientific research and educational activities;

b) a controllable natural protection zone - a zone that is created for the protection, maintenance and restoration of the living environment, as well as for manipulative scientific research and tourism and educational activities;

c) a visitors' zone - a zone created for activities related to nature conservation, recreation and education;

d) a restoration zone - a zone created for the protection and restoration of natural objects and territories damaged due to a human-induced impact;

e) a historical and cultural zone - a zone, free of any settlements, created for the protection and restoration of the natural environment, historical and cultural objects and/or architectural monuments, and for recreation, tourism and educational activities;

f) an administration zone - a zone created for providing the infrastructure necessary to administer a national park;

g) a zone of traditional use - a zone created for nature conservation and economic activities related to the traditional use of renewable natural resources. Activities such as mowing, pasturing, harvesting of firewood and others limited to the needs of the local population and natural productivity shall be permitted in this zone. In this zone it shall be inadmissible to plough and sow and erect agricultural buildings (except camps for domestic animals and auxiliary or temporary buildings determined by a management plan of a protected area or a temporary regulation rule).

4. A national park may include protected areas of various categories (a natural monument, a managed reserve, a world heritage site), and/or it may itself be categorised as a biosphere reserve, a world heritage site or a high humidity area of international importance.

Law of Georgia No 2368 of 6 June 2003 - LHG I, No 19, 1.7.2003, Art.128

Law of Georgia No 4736 of 17 February 2016 - website, 25.2.2016

Article 6 - Natural monument

1. A natural monument may be established to protect relatively small unique natural territories and rare natural and natural-cultural formations of national importance.

2. A natural monument requires a relatively small territory of national importance where rare and unique compact ecosystems with high aesthetic characteristics, individual geomorphological and hydrological formations, and certain specimens of plants and fossil objects of living organisms, are present.

3. A natural monument may be part of any protected area.

4. (Deleted - 25.3.2013, No 476).

Law of Georgia No 5201 of 8 November 2011 – website, 14.11.2011

Law of Georgia No 476 of 25 March 2013 - website, 5.4.2013

Article 7 - Managed reserve

1. A managed reserve may be created to conserve natural conditions necessary for preserving wild species of living organisms, groups of species, biocoenosis and inorganic natural formations of national importance, which requires the implementation of special restoration and maintenance measures by humans. Individual renewable resources may be used under strict control in a managed reserve.

2. A managed reserve requires a land territory and/or a water area of national and, in some cases, of international importance where rare, unique and distinct species of living organisms and endangered wild animal and plant species included in the Red List of Georgia and certain significant components of ecosystems are present.

3. A managed reserve may be part of a biosphere reserve, a world heritage site or a high humidity area of international importance, and may also include a natural monument.

4. Various zones may be created within a managed reserve if necessary.

5. (Deleted - 25.3.2013, No 476).

Law of Georgia No 2368 of 6 June 2003 - LHG I, No 19, 1.7.2003, Art.128



Article 8 - Protected landscape

1. A protected landscape may be established to protect both natural landscapes and natural and cultural landscapes created as a result of harmonic interaction between humans and the natural environment, and to preserve the living environment and carry out recreational, tourism and traditional economic activities.

1¹. (Deleted - 25.3.2013, No 476).

2. A protected landscape requires a large land territory and/or water area of national importance where the original natural and cultural landscape is distinguished by high historical and aesthetic values.

3. A protected landscape may be part of another protected area (biosphere reserve, world heritage site) or include another protected area (natural monument).

4. Various zones may be created in a protected landscape.

Article 9 - Multi-purpose use area

1. A multi-purpose use area shall be created for economic activities organised around environmental requirements and using renewable natural resources.

2. A multi-purpose use area requires a relatively large land territory and/or water area, which represent natural bases necessary for water accumulation, forest and pasture productivity, hunting, fishing and the dissemination of animals and birds, as well as tourism. It may be partially modified and include settlements. Unique natural formations of national importance shall not take place in multi-purpose use areas.

2¹. (Deleted - 25.3.2013, No 476).

3. It shall be admissible to designate zones with different allowable proportions of nature conservation and multi-purpose use to ensure the continuity and guaranteed use of renewable natural resources.

Article 10 - Biosphere reserve

1. A biosphere reserve shall be created to conserve dynamic and self-regulating conditions of nature, natural processes and biological diversity, and to preserve the living environment, and to carry out global environmental monitoring, scientific research, and recreational and educational activities.

2. A biosphere reserve requires a large territory where one or several natural and natural and man-made objects of international significance are located. Such objects are:

natural representative samples of biomes;

territories of particular importance comprising special natural formations;

samples of harmonic landscapes formed in given biomes during the historical process of traditional land use;

modified and degraded landscapes that may still be restored to a natural condition.

A selected territory shall be approved as a biosphere reserve only after it is recognised as such by the International Co-ordinating Council of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme.

3. A biosphere reserve may comprise the following main zones:

a) a core or strict natural protection zone;

b) a controllable natural protection (manipulation) or buffer zone;

c) a restoration zone;



d) a traditional and cultural landscape zone.

In a core or strict natural protection zone, only non-manipulative scientific observations shall be permitted.

In a controllable natural protection zone, research, environmental and restoration activities shall be permitted.

In a restoration zone, the protection and the restoration of territories damaged due to anthropogenisation shall be permitted.

In a traditional and cultural landscape zone, the traditional economic use of renewable natural resources shall be permitted.

4. One or several categories of protected areas (a state reserve, a national park, a natural monument, a managed reserve, a protected landscape, a multi-purpose use area) may be included in a biosphere reserve.

Article 11 - World heritage site

1. A world heritage site shall be created to carry out scientific research and educational and monitoring activities of international importance in order to protect natural and natural and cultural areas and formations of international importance.

2. A world heritage site shall need a territory where natural or natural and cultural values of international importance are present, in particular:

a) samples objectivised in the natural environment and reflecting the different stages of Earth's history;

b) environmental examples formed as a result of geological and biological processes, as well as historical interaction between humans and the environment;

c) unique and rare natural phenomena, formations or natural territories having a distinctive aesthetic value;

d) populations and habitats of endangered wild animal and plant species included in the Red List of Georgia;

e) rare, unique and especially highly artistic works of human creation, which have played a significant role in the development of city planning, landscape architecture, architecture and associated fine art in certain periods of the history of world culture, and/or which are examples of the harmonic integration of nature and culture.

A selected object shall be approved as a world heritage site only after it is recognised as such and included in the list of world heritage by the UNESCO Committee for the World Heritage Convention.

3. One or several categories of protected areas (a state reserve, a national park, a natural monument, a managed reserve and a protected landscape) may be included within a world heritage site, or a world heritage site itself may be included in another protected area (biosphere reserve, state reserve, national park, managed reserve and protected landscape).

Law of Georgia No 2368 of 6 June 2003 - LHG I, No 19, 1.7.2003, Art.128

Article 12 - Property in protected areas

1. The allowed forms of possessing, administering and using natural resources in protected areas shall be determined according to their categories and territorial and functional zones.

2. The State is the sole owner of the territories of state reserves, national parks, natural monuments and managed reserves and of natural resources in those territories. It shall be inadmissible to transfer these territories and natural resources in these territories for use to natural and legal persons, except traditional use zones of national parks and individual sites of managed reserves determined by a management plan or by a temporary regulation rule and in cases provided for by paragraphs 2¹–2⁵ of this article.

2¹. Taking into account the designated purpose of a natural monument, the natural monument may be transferred for use to natural and legal persons only for ecotourism and recreational purposes, in accordance with procedures established by the legislation of Georgia.

2². In traditional use zones of national parks and in individual sites of managed reserves, on the basis of a recommendation of a local self-government body, agricultural plots of land (hayfield and pasture), determined by a management plan or a temporary regulation rule, may be transferred for use to the local population in the form of rent determined by the Civil Code of Georgia for not more than 10 years, in accordance with procedures established by the legislation of Georgia.

2³. In administrative, visitor and traditional use zones of national parks, as well as in individual sites of managed reserves, it shall be admissible to transfer an optimal area of a plot of land for use to natural and legal persons in the form of non-gratuitous superficies determined by the Civil Code of Georgia, for not more than 49 years, for constructing a visitor infrastructure object defined in a management plan or a temporary regulation rule, within the scope of basic architectural, construction and technical specifications and the specialised designated use of the object defined by the same plan or the temporary regulation rule, in accordance with procedures established by the legislation of Georgia, provided the owner of the plot of land agrees to transfer or lease the right of superficies.

2⁴. In a protected area, a state-owned tourism infrastructure object (except land) may be transferred for use to natural and legal persons in the form determined by the Civil Code of Georgia.

2⁵. In administrative zones and traditional use zones of national parks, individual sites of managed reserves, protected landscapes and multi-purpose use areas, communication structures may erected in accordance with procedures established by the legislation of Georgia.



3. In addition to state ownership, other forms of ownership provided for in the legislation of Georgia shall be admissible for the territories of protected landscapes, and natural resources, natural and cultural objects, and historical and cultural objects in those territories.

4. In addition to state ownership, other forms of ownership shall be admissible for natural resources in multi-purpose use areas, and natural and man-made objects, and man-made objects in those areas.

5. The State is the sole owner of territories within the core of a biosphere reserve or strict natural protection zone and of natural resources in these territories. Natural resources may not be transferred for use in a strict natural protection zone.

The territories within controllable natural protection zones of a biosphere reserve and natural resources in these territories, including migratory living organisms, are the property of the State.

The territories within restoration and traditional and cultural landscape zones of a biosphere reserve and natural resources, natural, cultural, historical and cultural objects in these territories are the property of the State. Other forms of ownership shall also be permitted in accordance with the legislation in force.

6. The forms of ownership of high humidity areas of international importance, the territories of world heritage sites, and natural resources in those areas, shall be determined by the form of ownership of the categories of protected areas on the basis of which they were formed.

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Law of Georgia No 4863 of 21 June 2011 – website, 6.7.2011

Law of Georgia No 1357 of 27 September 2013 – website, 9.10.2013

Law of Georgia No 4736 of 17 February 2016 - website, 25.2.2016

Article 13 - Planning the system of protected areas

1. The planning of the system of protected areas is part of the development strategy of Georgia and is closely related to both the various levels (national, regional) of the state system of territorial planning (landscape planning) and the numerous programmes of sectoral planning (natural protection, environmental preservation, science, education, health care, tourism, recreation, forestry, hunting industry, energy, agriculture, transport, construction, the protection of historical and cultural monuments, etc.).

2. The planning of the system of protected areas shall determine planning regions, natural, historical and cultural complexes and objects to be protected, and shall establish recommended categories, boundaries and zones of protected areas, and prohibitions and allowed activities, and shall set out the priorities and stages of creating protected areas.

3. The planning of the system of protected areas shall be performed by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, the legal entity under public law called the Agency of Protected Areas operating within the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia ('the Agency of Protected Areas'), and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia.

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Law of Georgia No 4392 of 11 March 2011 - website, 17.3.2011

Law of Georgia No 476 of 25 March 2013 - website, 5.4.2013

Law of Georgia No 1671 of 7 December 2017 - website, 14.12.2017

Article 14 - Creating, developing and abolishing protected areas

1. Decisions on the creation, territorial expansion and upgrading of protection categories of protected areas in Georgia shall be made by the Parliament of Georgia.

2. The Parliament of Georgia may permit the temporary or permanent abolishment of a protected area, the reduction of the territory of a protected area or the downgrading of a protection category of a protected area, only on the basis of an opinion of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia in the following cases:

a) catastrophic and irreversible damage to protected ecosystems;

b) the necessity of performing works to restore biodiversity;

c) after the demarcation of the boundaries of a protected area, the procedure for which shall be determined by the Government of Georgia.

3. In certain complicated cases, a temporary category of a protected area shall be established by a decision of the Parliament of Georgia before detailed programmes for protecting, maintaining and managing adjusted territorial boundaries and zones (protected area management plans) are developed, and a permanent category is determined.

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125



Law of Georgia No 4392 of 11 March 2011 - website, 17.3.2011

Law of Georgia No 476 of 25 March 2013 - website, 5.4.2013

Law of Georgia No 2307 of 30 April 2014 - website, 13.5.2014

Law of Georgia No 1671 of 7 December 2017 - website, 14.12.2017

Article 15 - Management plans of protected areas

1. The first stage of the planning of protected areas (the planning of the system at national and regional levels) for each protected area shall be developed by means of a mandatory management plan.

2. A management plan determining adjusted boundaries of protected areas, zones, their territorial organisation and the programme and the budget for the integrated development of activities related to support zones (buffer zones) and protection, scientific research and monitoring, education, recreation, tourism, administration and other activities, shall be developed and presented to the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia by the Agency upon the creation of a protected area, and in an exceptional case (in the absence of an extreme need to create a protected area and guaranteed state budget funds, and where there is a need to raise funds from donor organisations or other non-budgetary organisations), within three years after its creation.

3. Based on the peculiarities of each protected area, a management plan shall determine measures supporting the generation of local financial resources for the functioning of the protected area at different stages of its initial operation. A management plan shall be developed for different periods of its introduction, or after the expiry of the period, a renewed management plan shall be developed.

4. A management plan of a protected area, a renewed management plan or a temporary regulation rule shall be approved by the Government of Georgia.

Law of Georgia No 2118 of 25 November 2005 – LHG I, No 51, 6.12.2005, Art. 336

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Law of Georgia No 4392 of 11 March 2011 - website, 17.3.2011

Law of Georgia No 476 of 25 March 2013 - website, 5.4.2013

Law of Georgia No 2307 of 30 April 2014 – website, 13.5.2014

Law of Georgia No 1671 of 7 December 2017 - website, 14.12.2017

Article 16 - Support (buffer) zone of a protected area

1. Support (buffer) zones shall be created around state reserves, national parks, natural monuments, managed reserves and protected landscapes as needed, and in biosphere reserves compulsorily.

2. A support zone shall be created by using a multi-purpose use area category and shall aim at implementing measures for facilitating the balanced activities of natural protection and sustainable development and for generating local financial resources. If necessary, the management of the zone, the coordination of actions and the development of allowed activities in the zone shall be determined by a special programme approved by the Government of Georgia.

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Law of Georgia No 1027 of 6 September 2013 - website, 23.9.2013

Article 17 - (Deleted)

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Law of Georgia No 4392 of 11 March 2011 - website, 17.3.2011

Article 18 - Managing protected areas

1. A state policy for establishing, operating and managing the system of protected areas, and the coordination and control of actions, shall be implemented by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

2. Protected areas shall be managed by the Agency of Protected Areas.

3. The Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia shall be authorised, within the scope of its competence, to:



- a) supervise the observance of the regime of protected areas established by the legislation of Georgia and the fulfilment of the requirements of the legislation on environmental protection and natural resource management and of international obligations;
- b) design strategic measures for the development of the system of protected areas and organise their review;
- c) draw up, agree and approve normative and methodical documents related to protected areas;
- d) coordinate environmental monitoring and scientific research;
- e) plan and coordinate works related to the restoration of the number of endemic, rare and endangered species of flora and fauna;
- f) coordinate international cooperation in protected areas;
- g) establish territorial administrations on the recommendation of the Agency of Protected Areas;
- h) approve the statutes of the Agency of Protected Areas and its territorial administrations.

4. The Agency of Protected Areas shall be authorised, within the scope of its competence, to:

- a) manage state reserves, national parks, natural monuments, managed reserves, biosphere reserves, world heritage sites and high humidity areas of international importance;
- b) manage protected landscapes jointly with other organisations, and in exceptional cases, manage individual zones of managed reserves, biosphere reserves, world heritage sites and natural monuments;
- c) control multi-purpose use areas;
- d) implement activities for maintaining, supervising, preserving, restoring and protecting protected areas;
- e) develop and submit protected area management plans to the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia for approval;
- f) draft relevant legislative and subordinate normative acts and submit them to the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia in accordance with the established procedure;
- g) organise monitoring and scientific research, and process, store and disseminate observation data;
- h) improve management mechanisms and upgrade the qualification of personnel;
- i) draw up regular reports on the condition of protected areas;
- j) administer protected areas and cooperate with local and international non-governmental funds;
- k) organise construction activities and improvement works necessary for the functioning of protected areas (paths, fences, shelters, guides, etc.);
- l) ensure international cooperation related to protected areas and participate in respective programmes;
- m) cooperate with governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations having respective functions;
- n) cooperate with broader society;
- o) fix tariffs for tourism services provided in protected areas;
- o¹) enter into agreements in accordance with the legislation of Georgia in the cases provided for in Article 12(2¹–2⁵) of this Law;
- p) perform other actions determined by this Law, the legislation of Georgia and the statute of the Agency.

5. The Agency of Protected Areas shall manage protected areas through territorial administrations. A scientific advisory council may be established in an administration. An administration shall be authorised, according to the category of the protected area and the administration's statute, to:

- a) protect and restore protected areas and ecosystems, species of flora and fauna and their habitat in these protected areas;
- b) prevent the destruction and capture of and damage to animals and plants;
- c) prevent the spread of alien species of flora and fauna;
- d) cooperate with local self-government bodies, governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations, and various interested groups of the population;
- e) control the use of territories (in protected areas and buffer zones) and natural resources, as well as control vehicles and visitors;
- f) detain illegally intruding persons and means of land, air, and marine transport and vehicles;
- g) prevent, within the scope of its competence, administrative offences in protected areas, and draw up administrative offence reports and transfer them to relevant bodies for further action;
- h) ensure ecotourism services for visitors of protected areas;



- i) fulfil a respective protected area management plan;
- j) sustainably use protected areas;
- k) create infrastructure for protected areas;
- l) perform other actions determined by this Law, the legislation of Georgia and the statute of the administration.

Law of Georgia No 3975 of 14 December 2006 - LHG I, No 48, 22.12.2006, Art. 342

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Law of Georgia No 4392 of 11 March 2011 - website, 17.3.2011

Law of Georgia No 4863 of 21 June 2011 – website, 6.7.2011

Law of Georgia No 476 of 25 March 2013 - website, 5.4.2013

Law of Georgia No 1357 of 27 September 2013 – website, 9.10.2013

Law of Georgia No 1671 of 7 December 2017 - website, 14.12.2017

Article 18¹ - Management and representation of the Agency of Protected Areas

1. The Agency of Protected Areas shall be managed by the chairperson who shall be appointed and may be dismissed by the Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

2. A chairperson of the Agency of Protected Areas shall:

- a) represent the Agency in relations with other state bodies and natural and legal persons;
- b) use the funds of the State Budget of Georgia and be accountable to the Minister of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia ('the Minister') in accordance with procedures established by the legislation of Georgia for their designated use;
- c) be responsible for the strict observance of legal acts regulating the activities of the Agency and be accountable to the Minister;
- d) present proposals to the Minister on the regulation of the scope of activities of the Agency;
- e) appoint and dismiss employees of the central office of the Agency and its territorial administrations;
- f) determine disciplinary responsibility and incentives for the employees of the central office of the Agency and its territorial administrations;
- g) issue individual administrative acts within the scope of his/her competence;
- h) establish contacts and enter into agreements on issues within the scope of activities of the Agency, and within the scope of his/her competence;
- i) submit technical and financial reports to the Minister once a year;
- j) approve the internal regulations of the Agency;
- k) administer the revenues of the Agency;
- l) perform other functions assigned to him/her by the legislation of Georgia and the statute of the Agency.

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Law of Georgia No 4392 of 11 March 2011 - website, 17.3.2011

Law of Georgia No 476 of 25 March 2013 - website, 5.4.2013

Law of Georgia No 1671 of 7 December 2017 - website, 14.12.2017

Article 18² - Use of special means and standard service weapons in protected areas

1. In emergency cases (fire, flood, etc.), employees of the Agency of Protected Areas and its territorial administrations ('employee of the Agency') may use flashing and audible signals installed on vehicles and means of marine transport of the Agency of Protected Areas.

2. Employees of the Agency as determined by the legislation of Georgia may keep, carry and use standard service weapons in accordance with procedures established by the legislation of Georgia.



3. An aimed shot shall be considered the use of a standard service weapon.
4. Employees of the Agency may use standard service weapons as a measure of self-defence or as an extreme measure to:
 - a) protect citizens and/or themselves against a danger that poses a real threat to their lives or health;
 - b) prevent the seizure of firearms;
 - c) give an alarm signal or call for reinforcements.
5. The use of standard service weapons shall be preceded by a verbal warning of its intended use. A warning shot may be fired where necessary.
6. Standard service weapons may be used without a warning only in the case of an unexpected armed attack with any kind of vehicle or mechanical means.
7. Standard service weapons may not be used in places where other persons may be injured, and in flammable and explosive places, as well as, knowingly, in relation to pregnant women, minors, or persons with disabilities, except where such persons are armed or carry out a group attack or show armed resistance to employees of the Agency, which poses a threat to the life and health of citizens or themselves, and if there are no other ways or means to repel such an attack and/or resistance.

Law of Georgia No 1357 of 27 September 2013 – website, 9.10.2013

Article 18³ - Social insurance for employees of the Agency

1. The Agency may insure the life and health of its employees.
2. If an employee of the Agency dies in the line of duty, his/her family or his/her dependants shall be paid a one-time allowance of GEL 15 000 from the funds of the State Budget of Georgia. Expenses for the burial of an employee of the Agency shall be covered by the State.
3. Employees of the Agency who have been maimed while performing their official duties, or who have been granted the status of a person with disabilities, shall be paid a one-time allowance of not more than GEL 7000 from the funds of the State Budget of Georgia according to the gravity of the injury.

Law of Georgia No 1357 of 27 September 2013 – website, 9.10.2013

Article 19 - Financing

1. The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia shall transfer the appropriate property to the Agency of Protected Areas in accordance with procedures established by the legislation of Georgia in order for the Agency to achieve the goals determined by this Law and its statute.
2. The sources of income of the Agency of Protected Areas may be:
 - a) targeted funds allocated from the respective budget in accordance with the legislation of Georgia;
 - b) income received from the fulfilment of state orders;
 - c) income received for performing work on the basis of a contract;
 - d) contributions from international organisations, governmental institutions, non-governmental organisations and charitable foundations, as well as natural and legal persons;
 - e) revenues received from research and educational activities permitted in protected areas;
 - f) proceeds from the sale of souvenirs made by using funds from recreational, economic and tourism activities and non-budgetary funds;
 - g) revenues received from transferring property for use in the form determined by the Civil Code of Georgia in the cases provided for by Article 12(2¹–2⁵) of this Law;
 - h) revenues received from the use of the names or symbols of protected areas by natural and legal persons (during economic and other types of activities);
 - i) revenues received from the service provided for harvesting 1 cubic metre of wood by the local population living in the vicinity of a protected area;
 - j) revenues received from providing tourism services in protected areas and transferring the right to administer property associated with these services.
- 2¹. In cases provided for by Article 12(2⁵) of this Law and paragraph 2(i) of this article, the fees shall be determined by the Government of Georgia.
3. The activities of the Agency of Protected Areas that require approval shall be determined by the legislation of Georgia.
4. Protected areas may not be alienated.
5. The approval of the Ministry of Finance of Georgia shall be required for carrying out activities provided for by paragraph 3(b) and (c) of this article.



6. The approval of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia shall be required for carrying out activities provided for by paragraph 3(a) and (e) of this article.

Law of Georgia No 865 of 29 December 2004 - LHG I, No 6, 19.1.2005, Art. 32

Law of Georgia No 3975 of 14 December 2006 - LHG I, No 48, 22.12.2006, Art. 342

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Law of Georgia No 4392 of 11 March 2011 - website, 17.3.2011

Law of Georgia No 4863 of 21 June 2011 – website, 6.7.2011

Law of Georgia No 1357 of 27 September 2013 – website, 9.10.2013

Law of Georgia No 4736 of 17 February 2016 - website, 25.2.2016

Article 20 - Carrying out activities in protected areas

1. The carrying out of activities in protected areas shall depend on the categories of protected areas in accordance with international agreements and conventions.

2. Activities related to protected areas shall be organised by:

- a) regulation within the protected area;
- b) regulation outside the protected area;
- c) temporary regulation.

3. A procedure for regulating activities related to protected areas shall be determined in detail by individual regulations and the management plan of a protected area.

4. The following shall be prohibited within protected areas:

- a) the disturbance and modification of natural ecosystems;
- b) the destruction (extermination), extraction (capture), ripping, damage (mutilation) and disturbance of any natural resources for exploitation or any other purposes;
- c) damage to natural ecosystems and species by polluting the environment;
- d) the introduction and dissemination of alien and exotic species of living organisms;
- e) the bringing of explosive and toxic substances into the area;
- f) other activities prohibited by the individual regulations and management plan of a protected area.

5. The following shall be subject to regulation within a protected area:

- a) granting to visitors access to determined places;
- b) hunting, fishing, camping, lighting bonfires, trade and commercial activities, the construction of buildings, roads and structures and the modification of their historical appearance, the use of the means of land, air and water transport in, over or under the protected area;
- c) the behaviour of visitors, on a 24-hour basis, taking into account the requirements of the protection regime;
- d) collecting, capturing and taking plants and animals outside the protected area;
- e) driving away, isolating and destroying abandoned domestic animals;
- f) collecting non-renewable natural resources (e.g. shale stone) for the construction of traditional buildings and structures or for activities determined by the management plan of a protected area. The procedure for extracting such resources shall be determined by the Government of Georgia.

6. The following shall be controlled within a protected area:

- a) all allowed types of scientific activities;
- b) all allowed types of educational activities;
- c) all allowed types of economic activities;
- d) tourism and recreational activities, which will ensure:



the equal distribution of the flow of visitors in protected areas;

the prior registration of areas selected according to the interests of visitors;

the relevance of the time and duration of the access of visitors to the objectives of protected areas;

the correspondence of the allowed limit of visitors with the number of visitors in each area.

e) the threat of natural disasters and catastrophes.

7. Protected areas shall be controlled by temporary regulation:

- a) before the legalisation of the category and approval of the first management plan;
- b) during the implementation of measures to redress natural disasters and catastrophes (special procedures shall be determined by normative acts).

8. The following shall be controlled outside protected areas:

- a) the condition of ecosystems and natural resources in buffer zones;
- b) development programmes related to buffer zones and individual significant economic and construction projects (for the purposes of assessing negative impacts on the environment);
- c) preventive measures against outside activities harmful for protected areas (imposition of preventive fines);
- d) compensation for damage caused to the protected area by harmful activities.

Law of Georgia No 4736 of 17 February 2016 - website, 25.2.2016

Article 21 - Cooperation with governmental institutions and local self-government bodies

1. The Agency of Protected Areas shall closely cooperate with governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations during planning, and the implementation and management of projects.
2. Scientific advisory councils shall be established for individual protected areas in order to cooperate with inter-agency and local self-government bodies. The composition of the councils shall be approved by the Minister.
3. The rights and obligations, the rules of operation and the rules of procedure of the scientific advisory councils shall be determined by typical statutes of the territorial administrations of the Agency of Protected Areas.
4. The Agency of Protected Areas shall cooperate with governmental institutions and local self-government bodies through scientific advisory councils on:
 - a) issues of the management and control of protected landscapes, and in exceptional cases, of managed reserves, national parks, biosphere reserves and certain zones of world heritage sites;
 - b) issues of the regulation and control of multi-purpose use areas (buffer zones).

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Article 22 - Cooperation with the population and public associations

Representatives of the population and public associations shall have the right to participate in:

- a) the process of considering and amending decisions on the creation, development, reduction and abolishment of protected areas, and the management plans and statutes of administrations, and other documents;
- b) the maintenance and management of protected areas and buffer zones.

Law of Georgia No 4683 of 27 April 2007 – LHG I, No 16, 7.5.2007, Art.125

Article 23 - Liability for violating the Law of Georgia on the System of Protected Areas

In the case of violations of the requirements of this Law, administrative, civil and criminal liability shall be imposed.

Article 24 - Transitional provisions



1. (Deleted - 17.2.2016, No 4736).

2. By 1 June 2013, the following orders of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia shall be issued:

a) the Order on the Approval of the Statute of the Agency of Protected Areas;

b) the Order on the Approval of a Typical Statute of the Territorial Administrations of the Agency of Protected Areas.

3. By 1 July 2013, the Ordinance of the Government of Georgia on the Approval of Regulations for Determining an Initial Auction Price and Conducting Auctions when Transferring for Use Immovable Property of Protected Areas.

4. By 1 December 2013, the following orders of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia shall be issued:

a) the Order on the Stages and Procedure for Preparing a Methodology of Developing the Structure, Content and Thematic Parts of Management Plans of Protected Areas.

(Deleted - 17.2.2016, No 4736).

4¹. By 31 December 2016, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Georgia shall issue the Order on the Approval of the Strategy and Action Plan for the Development of the System of Protected Areas of Georgia.

4². By 1 July 2016, the Government of Georgia shall adopt the Ordinance on the Approval of Regulations for Determining an Initial Auction Price and Conducting Auctions When Providing Tourism Services in Protected Areas and Transferring Property Related to These Services with the Right to Administer the Property.

5. (Deleted - 25.3.2013, No 476).

6. By 1 June 2014, the Ordinance of the Government of Georgia on the Approval of the Procedure for Demarcating the Boundaries of Protected Areas shall be adopted.

7. The demarcation of the boundaries of protected areas, existing before 31 December 2013, shall be completed by 31 December 2016.

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

Law of Georgia No 4863 of 21 June 2011 – website, 6.7.2011

Law of Georgia No 476 of 25 March 2013 - website, 5.4.2013

Law of Georgia No 1027 of 6 September 2013 - website, 23.9.2013

Law of Georgia No 2307 of 30 April 2014 - website, 13.5.2014

Law of Georgia No 4736 of 17 February 2016 - website, 25.2.2016

Article 25 - Final provisions

The following shall be declared void from 1 January 2008:

a) Decree No 337 of 19 June 2006 of the President of Georgia on the Approval of the Composition of the Scientific Advisory Council of the Kolkheti National Park;

b) Decree No 62 of 10 February 2006 of the President of Georgia on the Setting up of and the Approval of the Composition of the Scientific Advisory Council of the Tusheti National Park;

c) Decree No 61 of 10 February 2006 of the President of Georgia on the Setting up of and the Approval of the Composition of the Scientific Advisory Council of Lagodekhi Protected Areas;

d) Decree No 60 of 10 February 2006 of the President of Georgia on the Setting up of and the Approval of the Composition of the Scientific Advisory Council of Batsara-Babaneuri Protected Areas;

e) Order No 368 of 15 May 2006 of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia on the Approval of the Statute of the Administration of the Legal Entity under Public Law within the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia called the Kolkheti National Park and of the Kolkheti Multi-purpose Use Area;

f) Order No 367 of 15 May 2006 of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia on the Approval of the Statute of the Administration of the Legal Entity under Public Law within the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia called the Kobuleti State Reserve, the Kobuleti Managed Reserve and of the Kobuleti Multi-purpose Use Area;

g) Order No 369 of 15 May 2006 of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia on the Approval of the Statute of the Administration of the Legal Entity under Public Law within the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia called the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park and of the Borjomi-Kharagauli State Reserve;

h) Order No158 of 1 March 2007 of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia on the Approval of the Statute of the Administration of the Legal Entity under Public Law within the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia called the



Mtiral National Park.

Law of Georgia No 5629 of 18 December 2007 - LHG I, No 48, 27.12.2007, Art. 419

President of Georgia

Eduard Shevardnadze

Tbilisi

7 March 1996

No 136-III

