



### Mining Pumice in Okami

Davit Gvarjaladze is the Director of Meridiani 2006 LLC which possesses a quarry of pumice in the village of Okami which is located in the Akhalkalaki Municipality. His license enables him to obtain 400,000 m3 of minerals while the total area of the quarry is about eight hectares.

Pumice is used to prepare construction blocks and also functions as a natural insulation. It is also characterized with fire-prevention features which is why pumice is used between floors of buildings under the concrete cover. Moreover, it is a best choice for soundproofing. According to the company's representatives, even though pumice is derived from volcanic rock, it is not dangerous in terms of radiation. The demand for pumice has increased on the local market. The pumice which is mined at Davit Gvarjaladze's quarry is much lighter and so companies which are constructing high-rise buildings often contact him for his product.



Employees: 4 locals  
Total budget of the project: GEL 174050.00  
Share: GEL 103147.38  
Co-financing: GEL 70902.62



“Meridiani 2006 is one of the leading companies in the region, although, the business requires constant updates in order to meet modern standards and this is something which certainly requires additional expenses. So, our company applied for the grant competition and obtained financial support from the European Union.

We procured a load-handler truck that eased our work and doubled the volume of products. Basically, we work on the field so we needed a proper container which was bought with the received grant and we also installed surveillance cameras. The EU supported us not only with money but also with its shared experience and expertise in this area. They proposed that we use solar batteries and wind turbines as the source of electric power which decreases any environmental impact and provides the required power,” said Davit Gvarjaladze.





The company is taking additional measures to reduce any negative effect on the environment. They have placed special bins on their territory for separated waste.

“Our company is an important contributor to the regional budget as well as the central budget. Additionally, we have employed 15 locals and intend to create more workplaces in the nearest future. I would like to express my gratitude to the EU, GIPA and the Akhalkalaki LAG for noticing our capabilities and giving us this opportunity to grow,” said Mr Gvarjaladze.

*The initiative has been financed by the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) through the project of promoting new approaches in Rural Development in Akhalkhalaki.*

*Project is being implemented by the Department of Rural Development and Vocational Education (DRDVE) of the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA). Project Partners are Mercy Corps, Elva - Community Engagement and West Cork Development Partnership.*

*The European Union supports agriculture and rural development of Georgia through the programme of ENPARD, which has been implemented in Georgia since 2013. The total budget is 179.5 mio EUR. The main goal of the ENPARD is to reduce the rural poverty. The main priority of the first phase of the program was to support agricultural development, whereas the main aim of the second and third phases is to promote economic opportunities and capacity building of people living in the rural areas. For the additional information, please follow the link: [www.enpard.ge](http://www.enpard.ge)*