

# **Rikoti Mountain Pass (Khevi-Ubisa Region) Natural Management for the Purpose of Modernization and Rectilinear Transformation of Landscapes**

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Georgia has been a transport corridor between European and Asian countries since ancient times. Due to its strategically important geographical location, the territory of Georgia has been used for trade routes since ancient times. The land-sea route of international importance from Indo-China to the Black Sea passed here - the so-called "The Great Silk Road" (transcontinental trade route), which connected China with the countries of the Mediterranean and Black Sea basins. In this way, trade was started as early as BC. year In the 2nd century, the Silk Road lost its importance at the end of the 17th century, when the ocean route was finally used. Currently, the Silk Road has again gained great economic and political importance for Europe-Asia countries, especially for Georgia.

The new 27-km, 4-lane section of the Rikoti highway starts at Khevi village of Kharagauli municipality and ends at Shorapani township of Zestafoni municipality. Khevi-Shorapni section includes 65 bridges and 38 tunnels.

The Rikoti highway construction project, which is taking place on a difficult terrain with large-scale engineering solutions, is unprecedented in relation to the ongoing infrastructure projects in Georgia. In total, 51 tunnels and 97 bridges are being built within the framework of the Rikoti project. So far, 48 tunnels have been cut and 83 bridges have been built. Construction works are going on in parallel on all the remaining bridges and tunnels.

The construction of the Rikoti pass section is divided into 4 sections: Chumateleti-Khevi, Khevi-Ubisa, Ubisa-Shorapni and Shorapani-Argveta sections. Sh. Khevi Ubisa section is one of the most difficult and challenging sections.

The development of the East-West international highway (E60) contributes to strengthening the competitiveness of the transport corridor of Georgia. The capacity of the high-speed road and transit cargo turnover will increase, the quality of road traffic safety will be improved and the travel time will be reduced. 60% (261 km) of the East-West highway is already open for road traffic. Construction works continue on 81 km of the highway, 261 km of the highway is open today.