



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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BS/WG/EP/R(2012)2

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Istanbul, 11-12 October 2012

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection was held at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul on 11-12 October 2012.

2. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Esen ALTUĞ, Head of Department, Deputy Directorate General for Multilateral Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine

4. The representatives of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), EnviroGRIDS Project and the Turkish Nature Conservation NGO (Doğa Derneği) attended the Meeting as Guests.

The list of participants is attached as **Annex I**.

5. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT WORK PROGRAM/PLAN OF ACTION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR 2012-2013

6. The delegation of Turkey in its capacity as Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Environmental Protection presented the draft Work Program/Plan of Action of the BSEC Working Group for 2012-2013. The draft document was discussed, amended and approved. The Program, as approved, is attached as **Annex III**.

7. The Country-Coordinator was requested to forward by 1 December 2012 information on exact dates of and participation in the Workshops included in the above mentioned Work Program. The Member States are invited to cooperate with the Country-Coordinator on this issue.

INFORMATION ON THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION AND THE PROGRESS TOWARDS PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT WITH MORE STRICT REGULATIONS IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

8. The delegation of Turkey briefed the participants on the recent developments in the environmental legislation and the progress towards protecting the environment in the Republic of Turkey.

BSEC COUNTRIES' PRIORITIES IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT, PARTICULARLY ON REGIONAL ASPECTS

9. The Working Group agreed on the paper on Environmental Priorities for the BSEC Region which is attached as **Annex IV**.

10. It was decided to adapt the said paper to the format of background information document in compliance with Goal 5 of the BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership, adopted by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Belgrade, 11 June 2012).

POSSIBILITIES FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE SPHERE OF PREVENTING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

11. The representative of Turkey informed the participants on the legislation framework of the Republic of Turkey regarding the activities on combating climate change.

12. It was proposed by BSEC PERMIS to include in a draft BSEC Calendar of Events for the next Chairman-in-Office (Ukraine) a Workshop on climate change mitigation in the BSEC cities to be organized in collaboration with the UNEP Regional Office for Europe.

DISCUSSION ON THE MODALITIES OF ESTABLISHING AN INFORMATION EXCHANGE MECHANISM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

13. With the aim to proceed with the task to establish a BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for the Environmental Protection, the delegation of Bulgaria expressed its intention to explore a possibility to identify a project proposal on the issue in cooperation with other Member States.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND AND REGIONAL PROJECTS

14. It was noted that no new PDF applications had been submitted for funding since the last year. The Working Group invited the Member States to forward their applications taking into account the priorities for PDF projects.

15. Executive Manager of BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on the state of affairs with regard to the Joint BSEC-UNDP Project “Introducing Climate Change in the Environmental Strategy for the Protection of the Black Sea”. The first meeting of the sub-steering committee of the project is scheduled for the beginning of November 2012.

16. BSEC PERMIS also informed the delegations on the state of affairs with regard to the Joint BSEC-GIZ Project “Legal Framework for a Green Economy within the BSEC Member States – Regional Review and Dialogue on Systems and Perspectives”. In particular, the brochure that includes three reviews on legal framework of green economy development, especially in the field of energy efficiency and renewables in Azerbaijan, Russia and Ukraine, was published in English and Russian.

17. It was also noted that the final Meeting of the said Project’s Coordinating Group is anticipated to be convened by the end of 2012.

ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, INSTITUTIONS AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE BSEC REGION

- BSEC-UN interaction

18. The Working Group took note of the presentation delivered by the representative of UNEP and welcomed the project idea on a strategy on promoting green economy in the BSEC region, referring to the outcomes of the Rio + 20. The presentation is attached as **Annex V**.

19. The Working Group requested the Secretariat to communicate with UNEP on ways and means, as well as terms and conditions of implementing the project with regard to promoting the green economy in the Black Sea region. The Secretariat is requested to disseminate a paper with a common vision on the matter among the BSEC Member States by 30 November 2012. The UNEP representative was requested to forward at his earliest convenience a concept paper of the project to be considered by the Member States at the next Meeting of the Working Group.

20. The UNEP’s paper on Common Vision for Sustainable Development in the Wider Black Sea Region, prepared by UNEP, was disseminated among the participants for their information. The paper is attached **Annex VI**.

- BSEC-EU interaction

21. The delegation of the Republic of Armenia presented the proposal on elaboration of a draft Memorandum of Understanding on BSEC-EU interaction in the field of environmental protection.

22. The Working Group requested Armenia to forward a draft Memorandum for consideration at the next Meeting of the Working Group.

23. The delegation of Turkey, on the basis of the Legal Advisor's opinion, noted that the draft should not be binding.

24. The representative of Bulgaria reserved the right to consult the relevant authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria.

REVISION OF THE BSEC ACTION PLAN FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (BUCHAREST, MARCH 2006)

25. The participants discussed and amended the draft BSEC Regional Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection. The draft, as amended, is attached as **Annex VII**.

26. It was decided to continue consideration of the draft document at the next Meeting.

27. Thereafter, the Member States were requested to submit their possible proposals and amendments to the draft Regional Action Plan for its updating in compliance with the relevant decisions of the BSEC Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection and Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Bucharest, 31 May 2011 and 8 June 2011 respectively).

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL AND PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT DECLARATIONS ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES (BUCHAREST, 3 MARCH 2006 AND 31 MAY 2011)

28. BSEC PERMIS briefed the participants on the status of implementation of the resolutions, decisions and recommendations of the Council and provisions of the Joint Declarations adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States (Bucharest, 3 March 2006 and 31 May 2011).

29. The participants were invited to transmit available updated information with respect to the existing List of Representatives – National Contact Points in the Working Group on Environmental Protection. The List is attached as **Annex VIII**.

30. The Working Group took note of information on the BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership, and BSEC Public Communication Strategy, adopted by the BSEC Council (Belgrade, 11 June 2012).

31. It was decided that the provisions of both documents pertaining to the issues of environmental protection and promoting relevant activities in the field, should be taken into consideration when drafting and revising documents (e.g. regional action plans, terms of reference) as well as when developing key messages regarding initiatives and projects of the Working Group.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

32. The EnviroGRIDS Project on coordination and mutual sharing of environmental and geospatial data, was presented by its Coordinator Dr. Anthony LEHMANN. The Working Group appreciated the presented activities, took note of the presentation and requested BSEC PERMIS to explore further possible cooperation. The presentation is attached as **Annex IX**.

33. The Working Group took note of the presentation on the Black Sea Seabirds project delivered by the representative of the Turkish Nature Conservation NGO (Doğa Derneği). The presentation is attached as **Annex X**.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

34. The date and venue of the next Meeting will be communicated to the Member States in due course by BSEC PERMIS.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

35. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the next Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials to be held in Istanbul on 31 October - 1 November 2012.