



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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

Istanbul, 10-11 April 2012

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection was held at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul on 10-11 April 2012.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Vasilije PETKOVIC, Consul, Consulate General of the Republic of Serbia in Istanbul.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representatives of the United States of America attended the Meeting as BSEC Observer.
5. The representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) attended the Meeting as Guests.

The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

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

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)

7. 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).

8. The participants took note of the existing List of Representatives – National Contact Points in the Working Group on Environmental Protection. The Member States were requested to forward available updated information in this respect. The List is attached as Annex III.

CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT JOINT DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERS OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

9. The draft Joint Belgrade Declaration on Climate Change and Green Economy – BSEC Contribution to Rio + 20, elaborated by the Republic of Serbia in its capacity as BSEC Chairman-in-Office and the host country of the Ministerial meeting, was discussed, amended and finalized. The Draft Declaration, as finalized, is attached as Annex IV.

10. The delegation of the Republic of Serbia also informed the participants on the Administrative Arrangements of the forthcoming Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States to be held in Belgrade on 23 April 2012.

11. The Member States were reminded that they are expected to notify on participation at the Ministerial meeting before 13 April 2012. The Administrative Arrangements and the provisional Program of the forthcoming meeting, are attached as Annex V.

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

12. In furtherance to the Joint Declaration Adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States (Bucharest, 31 May 2011) and the BSEC Council Decision (Bucharest, 8 June 2011), the Member States agreed to forward by the end of May their proposals and comments in written form for revising of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection (Bucharest, March 2006).

13. Thereafter, the Republic of Turkey in its capacity as the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group will elaborate by the end of June 2012 a revised Draft of the said Action Plan, which will be considered at the next Meeting of the Working Group.

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

14. The Republic of Turkey informed the Working Group that due to the ongoing reorganization in its Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, a Draft Plan of Action of the Working Group on Environmental Protection for 2012-2013 will be presented prior to the next Meeting.

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

15. The delegation of the Republic of Moldova briefed the participants on the new developments in its environmental legislation.

16. The Working Group will continue exchange of information on new developments with regard to the environmental legislation, progress and activities towards protecting the environment in the Member States at its next Meetings.

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

17. It was agreed that the Member States will forward their possible comments and proposals to the Background Paper on Environmental Priorities for the BSEC Region, which will be further considered at the next Meeting of the Working Group. The Background Paper is attached as Annex VI.

18. The delegation of the Republic of Bulgaria advised the paper to be taken into account while elaborating a Draft Plan of Action of the Working Group for 2012-2013.

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

19. Acknowledging importance of the issue of climate change, the Working Group decided to continue discussion on possible regional cooperation in the sphere at its next Meeting.

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

20. In furtherance to the BSEC Council Decisions (Belgrade, April 2007) and the outcomes of the BSEC Workshops, the Working Group reiterated its commitment to proceed with the task to establish a BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for the Environmental Protection.

21. The Member States were invited to forward their proposals on the issue to be discussed and considered at the next Meeting.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND AND REGIONAL PROJECTS

22. The Working Group finalized its priority areas for PDF as follows:

- Integration of sustainable development and green development objectives into BSEC sectoral economic policy;
- Water resources preservation and prevention of pollution;
- Protection of biodiversity and development of ecotourism;
- Improvement of hard waste management;
- Prevention of the land degradation;
- Elaboration of regional scenarios for adaptation to the climate change.

23. The Project Coordinator reported on PDF applications titled “Survey of the Applicability and Implementation Possibilities for the Reuse Water and Nutrient Sources from Treated Wastewater in the Agro-Ecological Environment” and “The Diversity of Canopy and Soil Inhabiting Mites Together with Evaluation of Forest Health Using Mites as Bio-indicators in Black Sea Adjacent Countries (Evaluation of Forest Health)”.

24. After consideration the Working Group assessed these applications as non-viable for realization with funding by PDF.

25. The representative of UNDP presented information on the status of the Joint BSEC-UNDP Project “Introducing Climate Change in the Environmental Strategy for the Protection of the Black Sea” and planning activities for its implementation. The presentation is attached as Annex VII.

26. BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on the implementation progress of the Joint BSEC-GIZ Project “Legal Framework for a Green Economy within the BSEC Member States – Regional Review and Dialogue on Systems and Perspectives”.

27. In particular, all three workshops, provisioned by the plan of activities of the project, in the pilot countries – Azerbaijan, Russia and Ukraine, had been convened (BS/INFO.2011.0446 dated 20 June 2011; BS/INFO.2011.0591 dated 8 September 2011; BS/INFO.2012.0163 dated 12 March 2012).

28. The study on legal framework of green economy development, especially in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy, in Ukraine was completed. The relevant studies for the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation are being finalized.

29. The Republic of Armenia requested BSEC PERMIS upon completion of the above-said project to conduct negotiations with GIZ for the possibility to initiate a new project alike with participation of the Member States.

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

30. The representative of UNEP made a presentation on UNEP input to the compilation document Rio + 20. The presentation is attached as Annex VIII.

31. The representatives of UNEP and BSEC PERMIS will explore the possibilities for joint initiatives and projects in the near future.

32. BSEC PERMIS informed the Working Group on the current situation with regard to the BSEC-EU interaction. It was agreed that the Member States will forward in writing their proposals and possible topics for BSEC-EU cooperation by September 2012.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

33. In compliance with the MoI between the Government of the USA and BSEC on Science and Technology Cooperation signed in Thessaloniki in November 2010, the representative of the USA presented to the participants the proposal on convening a 10-day course on marine spatial planning. The proposal is attached as Annex IX.

34. It was decided that the Member States will forward their views and suggestions with regard to the said proposal by mid-June 2012.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

35. 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

36. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the Committee of Senior Officials to be held in Istanbul on 19-20 April 2012.