



BS/WG/EP/R(2010)2

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

Istanbul, 13-14 May 2010

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection was held at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul on 13-14 May 2010.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Gheorghe CONSTANTIN, Director, Ministry of Environment and Forests of Romania, the Country Coordinator of the Working Group.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following Member States:
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The representatives of the PABSEC and the BSEC Business Council also participated in the Meeting.
5. The Meeting was attended by the representative of the Czech Republic in the capacity of BSEC Observer.
6. The representative of the Republic of Hungary also attended the Meeting in the capacity of Sectoral Dialogue Partner.
7. The representatives of UNDP and GTZ participated in the Meeting as Guests.

The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

8. 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 DECLARATION ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES (BUCHAREST, 3 MARCH 2006)

9. BSEC PERMIS briefed the Working Group on the status of implementation of the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the Council and provisions of the Joint Declaration adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States (Bucharest, 3 March 2006).

10. The participants welcomed information that all Member States had appointed their representatives – national contact points to the Working Group on Environmental Protection as provisioned by the relevant Resolution of the Council (Belgrade, April 2007). The list of representatives is attached as Annex III.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS OF THE BSEC ACTION PLAN FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSIDERATION OF ITS DRAFT WORK PROGRAM/PLAN OF ACTION OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR 2009-2011

11. The Country Coordinator reported on the implementation progress of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection.

12. Armenia, Greece and Turkey expressed their intention to forward in the near future the updated lists of ongoing and planned activities carried out in view of implementing the BSEC Action Plan. Turkey also informed shortly the participants on its environmental projects financed by GEF.

13. The Member States were invited to provide short presentations on best experience in projects' implementation with the view of their placing on the BSEC website. Furthermore the Member States that had not yet submitted their lists of activities in this regard were requested to do so as soon as possible.

14. The Working Group discussed, amended and approved the draft Work Program/ Plan of Action of the Working Group for 2009-2011. The Plan of Action as approved is attached as Annex IV.

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. Armenia, Greece and Romania presented to the Working Group the information on the new developments in their national environmental legislation.

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

16. The Background Paper on Environmental Priorities for the BSEC Region, presented by the Country Coordinator, was discussed and amended. The Paper as amended is attached as Annex V.

17. The Member States were invited to forward by the end of September 2010 their comments to the document, in particular, with the view to work out ideas and proposals for possible regional projects.

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

18. Armenia informed the participants on its activities and practice in the sphere of preventing climate change and its negative consequences.

19. The Working Group agreed to continue exchange of information on the issue at its next meeting.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND AND REGIONAL PROJECTS

a) Project Development Fund

20. BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on finalization of two projects financed by PDF - "Revitalization of urban ecosystems through vascular plants: assessment of technogenic pollution impact – Garden City" and "Study of the capabilities and requirements of the operational monitoring of air pollution levels".

21. It was agreed to invite to the next meeting of the Working Group the Lead Partners of the aforesaid projects with the aim to discuss and assess further applicability of the projects' outcome for the activities of the Working Group, in particular, and within the BSEC Region, in general.

22. The Member States repeatedly were invited to forward their proposals on the priority areas for PDF projects and possible timeframes according to the Work Program/ Plan of Action of the Working Group for 2009-2011 for discussion and further submission for consideration by the Committee of Senior Officials.

b) Regional Projects

23. The representative of UNDP informed the participants on the status of the Joint BSEC-UNDP project “Introducing Climate Change in the Environmental Strategy for the Protection of the Black Sea”. The agreement for funding the project was signed between UNDP and the Austrian side. In addition, the UNDP application had been approved by the Steering Committee of the BSEC PDF.

24. Taking into account three main actions provisioned within the project, namely, training courses, review of the existing scientific researches, convening of a conference, the Member States were invited to inform on their wish to host such a conference subject to the official inquiry from UNDP to be submitted through BSEC PERMIS.

25. The Working Group was informed on the status of the Joint BSEC-GTZ project “Legal Framework for a Green Economy within the BSEC Member States – Regional Review and Dialogue on Systems and Perspectives”. The representative of GTZ delivered the presentation on planning activities to be undertaken in the pilot countries (Azerbaijan, Russia and Ukraine, as it was notified at the CSO Meeting, Istanbul, 29-30 March 2010) within the implementation process of the project. The presentation and the additional information on the project’s operational planning are attached as Annex VI.

26. The delegation of the Republic of Armenia welcomed the implementation of the project, presented its experience in this field and expressed its readiness to participate in the ongoing and future projects with GTZ.

SUMMING UP OF THE THIRD WORKSHOP ON ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BSEC INFORMATION EXCHANGE MECHANISM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

27. The Country Coordinator informed the participants on the discussion and conclusions of the third Workshop on Establishment of the BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for the Environmental Protection held on 12 May 2010 prior to the meeting of the Working Group.

28. It was agreed that the summary of the replies to the first questionnaire on setting up of data base, provided by the Country Coordinator, will be placed on the BSEC website.

29. The participants also took note that only two Member States, namely Bulgaria and the Hellenic Republic, had forwarded their replies to the complementary questionnaire on

establishment of the BSEC information exchange mechanism for the environmental protection, provided by the Country Coordinator.

30. Therefore, the Member States that had not forwarded their replies to the questionnaires yet were requested to do so by 31 May 2010.

31. The Member States were also requested to forward their ideas and proposals on what measures could and/or should be undertaken at the national level for establishing the BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism prior to the next meeting of the Working Group.

32. The Country Coordinator also expressed its readiness to prepare a proposal on further actions on the basis of the Member States' replies to the questionnaires and proposals to be discussed at the next meeting of the Working Group.

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE BSEC-EU COOPERATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

33. BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on the developments regarding the launching of the Environmental Partnership of the Black Sea Synergy in Brussels on 16 March 2010.

34. Referring to the consultations with the representative of the European Commission (BS/INFO.2009.0089 dated 3 February 2009) the Member States were requested to forward their proposals on possible BSEC-EU interactions in the field of environmental protection, in particular on the issues of climate change, integration of environmental aspects to different sectors of economic activities within BSEC and environmental education by 30 June 2010 for further discussion with the European Commission.

35. Guiding by the relevant Resolutions of the Council (Kyiv, April 2008 and Tirana, October 2008) on BSEC-EU interaction, the Working Group agreed to keep the item on the BSEC-EU Interaction in the Field of Environmental Protection in the Agenda of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection as permanent.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

36. BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on the undergoing upgrading process of the BSEC portal responding to the participants' questions on problems that they face while opening the portal.

37. BSEC PERMIS was requested to place the link to the portal on the BSEC webpage as well as to undertake the steps for updating the list of the portal's users and to provide them with the necessary passwords.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

38. Preliminary it was agreed to convene the next meeting in November 2010 with the view to organize a joint meeting with BSC. The date and venue of the meeting will be communicated to the Member States in due course by BSEC PERMIS.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

39. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the Committee of Senior Officials to be held in Sofia on 26-27 May 2010.