

**PLAN OF ACTION  
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON  
AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-  
INDUSTRY**



**for the period of 1 January 2017 – 31  
December 2018**

**Country Coordinator:**

**Republic of Turkey**

## **RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION:**

Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Directorate General of European Union and Foreign Relations

Contact point: Mr. Ahmet Volkan GUNGOREN, Head of Department

Tel: +90 312 258 88 20

Fax: +90 312 258 86 43

E-mail: volkan.gungoren@tarim.gov.tr

## **1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES:**

Today, competition based on “innovation”, “difference” and “benefit”, supercede the competition based on “price”. The necessity of using existing sources in direction of correct decisions and goals with sound plannings, comes in sight, concept of “management of agriculture” gains importance and it is aimed to reach better technologies and productivity growth. The need to solution for food security grows day after day, in accordance with the problem of increasing population and diminishing sources. Food security at national level, is influenced by agriculture and food policy, beside the whole other sectoral policies affecting economic growth and progress. Therefore, the concept of “sustainable food systems” is one of the main and important issues which has to be taken into consideration at global level. Improving the sector of agriculture will be able to possible by **supporting domestic and regional production** beside determining agricultural strategies based on international collaboration.

The Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-industry will carry out its activities taking into account the provisions of the BSEC Charter, the BSEC Economic Agenda for the Future, the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations adopted by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the provisions of the Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Agriculture of the BSEC Member States (Moscow, 7 October 2011).

The Working Group will be working towards accomplishment of the following general objectives of the Working Group:

- Intensify joint efforts to promote cooperation among the BSEC Member States in order to help to reduce regional disparities and to give an impetus to the regional trade in agricultural products.
- Consider, approve, monitor and implement relevant projects within the BSEC Project Development Fund and through the BSEC Project Management Unit, as well as other available project facilities s in the field of production and processing of agricultural products, as well as in other related areas.

- Enhance cooperation with relevant international organizations and structures, in order to create appropriate coordination mechanisms in agriculture and agro-industry matters and elaborate initiatives and programmes in the field of agriculture.

The Working Group will carry out its activities in conformity with its mandate and will work towards the fulfilment of the following tasks:

- Enhance cooperation among the BSEC Member States in selection, reproduction, and protection of plants and plant health, as well as in veterinary issues, food and feed safety, including through the elaboration of joint regional programs in these fields.
- Promote simplification of export and import procedures for agricultural products among the BSEC Member States, particularly for the fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Enhance cooperation among the BSEC Member States' national genetic banks of plants for protecting, storing and exploring the genetic resources of plants in order to include the latter into national or regional programs of selection and to secure biodiversity.
- Enhance cooperation in the production and processing of agricultural products, inter alia, in the vine-growing and the wine-making sectors, including through the organization of and participation in relevant exhibitions and fairs.
- Promote cooperation related to the procedures of import/export of animals (e.g. certification, laboratory testing, additional requirements).
- Enhance cooperation among the BSEC Member States in cases of epizootic situations.
- Follow up on the developments in the field of fisheries.
- Encourage the collection and analysis of scientific data in the field of fish resources.
- Promote the elaboration of studies and the application of good practices in the field of fisheries.
- Promote cooperation in the field of food and feed safety among the national competent authorities, national reference laboratories and relevant research institutions, in order to share experience and know-how.
- Promote consultations on the issue of harmonizing the labeling standards for food products, as an important part of food quality and food safety in the Member States, in conformity with their obligations in other regional and international organizations and agreements.
- Encourage cooperation and business contacts in the field of agriculture and agro-industry between producers, importers, exporters and other stakeholders from cooperative and private sector of the BSEC Member States.
- Promoting bilateral short-term and long term training programs for collaborating among BSEC countries concerning the main theme (sustainable food systems and the future of aquaculture).

- Organize joint specialist exchange programs and short term and long term training activities among the countries so as to promote joint approach among BSEC countries to specific issues in the field of agriculture and agro-industry, especially in sustainable food systems and the future of aquaculture.
- Organize side events including display of the local products and hand craft of the BSEC countries
- Enhancing publishing joint ministerial declaration on main theme which is “sustainable food systems and the future of aquaculture” with the contribution of representatives of the BSEC Member States
- Consider the possibility of establishing a BSEC Regional Cooperation Office within the BSEC with the partnership of the FAO and support the projects in the priority areas of cooperation.

## **2. PRIORITIES OF THE 2016-2018 TERM**

The Working Group will take into account the Priorities for the second medium-term (2016-2018) of the implementation of the “BSEC Economic Agenda 2012” under Goal 6: Food Security and Safety, namely:

- Improving sustainable rural productivity and enhancing the international competitiveness of the Member States in food and agricultural products, in particular through: facilitating the access to new technologies and know-how, scaling up managerial innovations and harmonization and adoption of quality standards for products.
- Promoting exchange of information, experience and best practices among the competent authorities, national reference laboratories, agrarian research and education institutions and the private sector enterprises in the fields of agriculture, agro-industry and food safety in the Member States.
- Promoting the effective and sustainable use of land resources for the agricultural production in the BSEC Member States.
- Promoting regional cooperation for the sustainable management of fishery resources.
- Promoting sustainable use of natural resources effectively in agriculture activities among the BSEC countries
- Promoting sustainable use of natural resources effectively in agriculture activities among the BSEC countries
- Establishing agricultural business platforms and display investment opportunities to develop agricultural and agro-industry products trade amongst the BSEC countries.
- Establishing effective network on public and private institutions, universities, NGO’s and the relevant interesting groups operating in the field of agriculture, agro-business sector of the BSEC countries.

### **3. MINISTERIAL MEETING**

The Working Group will prepare the meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the BSEC Member States planned on 16-17 May 2017 in Istanbul with the thematic **“Sustainable Food Systems and the Future of Aquaculture.”** The national experts will negotiate and agree on a draft Declaration to be adopted by the Ministerial meeting.

Establishing Stands of member countries concerning domestic products and handicrafts of BSEC Member States. Each and every member country is requested a contact point in order to establish the mentioned stands.

Organize side events including display of the local products and handicrafts materials of the BSEC Member States. Each and every member country is requested a contact point in order to establish the mentioned stands.

Holding three-day international workshop in one of the BSEC countries to develop cooperation on, and share experience and technology with the BSEC countries, with the aim of ensuring increase in welfare level and incomes of the young and women farmers living in BSEC countries, by increasing technical and economic capacities and raising competitiveness power in value chain by means of promoting agriculture producer organizations in agricultural production areas, especially in rural areas.

Organizing a four-day event to share Turkey’s country experience on aquaculture with the other BSEC countries, ensure the exchange of information and experience on aquaculture amongst BSEC countries and give an opportunity for gathering public and private sector representatives in this issue to BSEC countries.

Organizing a panel on exchange of information about, and opportunities for agricultural investment of BSEC countries with the participation of related groups.

Researching on seed and seedling market of BSEC countries, publicizing Turkish seed and seedling varieties to the other BSEC countries, discussing on trade barriers to seed seedling products amongst the BSEC countries and accordingly, signing bilateral and regional protocols with the other BSEC countries.

### **4. ACTIVITIES AND JOINT PROJECTS:**

(The list of activities will be supplemented during the 2- year period by adding new events as they are planned by the Member States)

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Expected Result</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
1	Meeting of the Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of current subjects on the agenda</li> <li>• Negotiation of the draft Joint Ministerial Declaration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endorsed draft Joint Ministerial Declaration</li> <li>• MoU between BSEC and FAO</li> <li>• Regional cooperation in the field of fisheries</li> </ul>	28-29 March 2017	Istanbul, BSEC HQ
2	Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of the issues related to sustainable food systems and the future of aquaculture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of views on sustainable food systems and the future of aquaculture</li> <li>• Adoption of the Joint Ministerial Declaration</li> </ul>	16-17 May 2017	Istanbul
3	Conference of Fisheries and Aquaculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debating the state of affairs with fisheries and aquaculture in the Black Sea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practices will be identified to enhance public-private sector cooperation in these fields. The participants make proposals and some recommendations for the BSEC Member States.</li> </ul>	31 October – 1 November 2017	Istanbul

4	Meeting of the Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of current subjects on the agenda</li> <li>• Fisheries and aquaculture</li> <li>• Phyto-sanitary and plant quarantine services</li> </ul>	Recommendations for the Member States in the relevant fields.	April 2018	TBD
5	Seminar and Technical Visit Programme	Consideration of the future of sustainable aquaculture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of views on development of sustainable aquaculture among the BSEC Member States.</li> <li>• Establishing fruitful relations and exchange of knowledge among the BSEC Member States.</li> </ul>	25-29 September 2017	Trabzon  (Central Fisheries Research Institute of MFAL-Turkey)
6	Seminar and Technical Visit on Sustainable Aquaculture	Consideration of the future of sustainable aquaculture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of views on development of sustainable aquaculture among the BSEC Member States.</li> <li>• Establishing fruitful relations and exchange of knowledge among the</li> </ul>	27 May-02 June 2018	İzmir  (International Agricultural Research and Training Center of MFAL-Turkey)

			BSEC Member States.		
7	Panel on agricultural investments	Introduction of the agricultural investment opportunities of the BSEC Member States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation of investment potential in the field of agriculture and agricultural industries and the investors among the BSEC Member States.</li> <li>Exchange of experiences on agricultural investments among the BSEC Member States.</li> </ul>	May 2018	Istanbul, MFAL-Turkey
8	Workshop on climate friendly agriculture and innovative methodologies	Raising awareness on climate friendly agriculture and innovative methodologies among the BSEC Member States	Knowledge-sharing for developing new and innovative methodologies and tools to maintain the food security using climate friendly agricultural practices and techniques that will contribute to the protection of soil and water quality.	2-5 October 2017	İzmir (International Agricultural Research and Training Center of MFAL-Turkey)