**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**OF THE BSEC AD HOC WORKING GROUP
ON MASSIVE FOREST FIRES**

Pursuant to Articles 4 and 12 of the BSEC Charter, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires, subordinated to the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance, is a BSEC Subsidiary Organ and shall carry out its activities in conformity with the BSEC Statutory Documents and in accordance with the following Terms of Reference (ToR):

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Ad Hoc Working Group are as follows:

* strengthening cooperation in implementing the Agreement among the Governments of the BSEC Member States on Collaboration in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters and its Additional Protocol as a legal basis for cooperation mechanisms and agreements, and developing relevant proposals;
* enhancing coordination among the BSEC Member States and promoting international cooperation in preventing and eliminating the consequences of massive forest fires and on providing necessary assistance in case of emergency situations in the BSEC Member States;
* strengthening cooperation among the BSEC Member States on developing and use of modern technologies to prevent massive forest fires;
* promoting regional trainings, seminars and scientific conferences aimed at the achievement of better application of joint efforts in case of massive forest fires.

**MANDATE**

The mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group is to:

* encourage multilateral cooperation among the institutes and centers for prevention and elimination of massive forest fires in the BSEC Member States, as well as practical involvement of other relevant organizations in this cooperation;
* consolidate efforts by the BSEC Member States in developing a set of measures for prevention and elimination of massive forest fires;
* elaborate proposals on identifying and managing massive forest fires in the BSEC Member States and to mitigate risks in fires seasons;
* improve public assistance in fire-rescue activities in the BSEC Member States;
* promote exchange of experience among the experts of the BSEC Member States on prevention and elimination of massive forest fires;
* exchange scientific and technological information and data, as well as technologies for prevention and elimination of massive forest fires including through the implementation of multilateral programs and projects;
* convene its Meeting at least once a year.

**GENERAL PROVISIONS[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**1. FUNCTIONS**

The Working Group shall:

1. carry out the mandate defined by the Council in its resolutions, decisions and recommendations related to its activities, as well as in its Terms of Reference;
2. draw up cooperation projects and joint projects as well as pursue implementation of such projects/activities in the area of its competence;
3. approve the priority areas and consider projects for PDF funding in line with the two-year Plan of Action;
4. elaborate projects to be submitted to the Project Management Unit and/or might formulate recommendations on them;
5. consider reports of the subordinated Ad Hoc Working Groups,Group of Experts, Task Force and decide accordingly;
6. consider and approve final documents (reports, conclusions, recommendations, summary of the proceedings etc.) of other BSEC events (seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences) or, whenever necessary, submit to the CSO together with relevant draft decision;
7. submit to the Council reports on the progress of its activities, as well as relevant recommendations.

**2. MODALITIES**

**2.1 Country-Coordinator**

1. The operative management of the Working Group activities is carried out by the Country-Coordinator, appointed for a term of two years, with the assistance of BSEC PERMIS.
2. **After the appointment of the new Country-Coordinator a meeting of incoming and outgoing Country-Coordinators and PERMIS representatives should be held in order to ensure continuity.**
3. At the end of their term in office the Country-Coordinator should prepare an evaluation report on the strengths, weaknesses and lessons learned in the activity of the Working Group over the period in office, accompanied by proposals for future action, including adjustments of priorities as necessary.
4. The Country-Coordinator and/or the Executive Manager in charge of the Working Group will submit in early January of each year a report on the implementation of the Economic Agenda 2012.
5. The Country-Coordinator shall provide the BSEC PERMIS with information on the priorities/obligations/activities arising from the action plans applicable for the FY in January of the year preceding the FY (Rule 5.3 of the Financial Regulations and Procedures of the BSEC PERMIS).
6. In order to ensure functioning of the Working Group in case a Country-Coordinator is temporarily not appointed, the task of coordination shall be assigned to the relevant Executive Manager of the PERMIS Staff who fills in for the Country-Coordinator.

**2.2 Chair of the Meetings**

The Meeting of the Working Group shall be chaired by a representative of the Chairmanship-in-Office or a representative of the host country, should the meeting of the Working Group be held in the Member State.Upon the invitation of the Chairman-in-Office the Country-Coordinator may chair or co-chair meetings of the Working Group.

**2.3 Rules of Procedure and Decision-Making**

The decision-making mechanism is set forth in the BSEC Rules of Procedure.

**2.4 Quorum**

Quorum for meetings of the Working Group shall be simple majority of the Member States taking part in the WG. The Members States shall inform the BSEC PERMIS on their attendance at least five working days before the meeting.

**2.5 Number of Meetings**

The Working Group shall hold at least one meeting per year, their date and venue remaining to be coordinated by the Country-Coordinator with the Chairmanship-in-Office.

**2.6. Relationship with Other Working Groups,**

**Related Bodies and International Organizations**

Within the area of its activities the Working Group may also cooperate with other BSEC Working Groups, PABSEC, including the Assembly’s Committees, BSTDB, BSEC BC, ICBSS, as well as with relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and initiatives.

**3. Agenda**

The provisions of the BSEC Rules of Procedure on preparation of the draft Agenda shall be applied to the proceedings of the Working Group. The agenda of each meeting of the Working Group should include items on the implementation of the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the Council and the follow-up of the Declarations and Joint Statements adopted by the sectoral Ministerial Meetings.

**4. Reports**

The reports from the meetings should contain an evaluation of the state of affairs and proposals for measures to be undertaken.

The Meetings of the Working Groups preceding the sectoral Ministerial Meetings should submit a report on the implementation of the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the Council and the follow-up of the Declarations and Joint Statements adopted by the Ministers in charge, to be drafted by the Country-Coordinator taking into consideration the contributions from the BSEC Member States.

**5. Expenses Incurred for the Organization of Meetings**

Expenses incurred for the organization of meetings shall be borne in accordance with article 22 of the Rules of Procedure and paragraph 1.4 of the Regulations on the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status with BSEC.

**6. PLAN OF ACTION AND FUNDING**

1. The Country-Coordinator at the beginning of their mandate shall submit a draft
two-year Plan of Action of the Working Group that shall include specific provisions setting clear responsibilities and deadlines for its implementation. The draft Plan of Action and amendments thereto are subject to approval by the Working Group.

2. A long term Action Plan in the present area of cooperation could be drafted by the Working Group, may be endorsed by the respective Meeting of Ministers responsible for this area of cooperation and approved by the Council

3. The Working Group might formulate recommendations on the projects to be submitted to the Project Management Unit and might support the fundraising activities.

1. This document reflects the provisions of the BSEC Statutory Documents and the relevant decisions of the Council and is valid for all Working Groups/Ad Hoc Working Groups. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)