



BS/EP/WG/R(95)1

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

Athens, 21-22 March 1995

1. The Meeting of the Working Group (WG) on Environmental Protection was held on 21-22 March 1995 in Athens, Greece.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mrs. Elissabeth PAPAZOI, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environment, Planning and Public Works of the Hellenic Republic.
3. The Meeting was attended by the following Participating States of the BSEC:
 - Republic of Albania
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Republic of Georgia
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The representatives of Egypt and Israel attended the Meeting as Observers.
5. The Meeting was also attended by the representatives of UNIDO, the GEF Black Sea Environmental Program, MEDWET, HELMEPA and the Russian Foreign Policy Foundation as guests.

The list of participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.

6. Mrs. Elissabeth PAPAZOI, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environment, Planning and Public Works of the Hellenic Republic, made an inaugural statement to the Meeting.

The text of the statement is attached as Annex II.

7. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The agenda, as adopted by the WG, is attached as Annex III.

8. The delegations expressed their appreciation to the host country for its initiative in inviting representatives of the leadership of the Ministries of the Environment from the BSEC Participating States which added authority to the decisions taken and enhanced the prospects for their implementation. The participants expressed their wish that this level of representation would become a tradition for the subsequent activities of the said WG.

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE BSEC REGION

9. The WG discussed the reports related to the state of the environment in the region which were presented by the Georgian and the Greek Delegations upon the recommendation of the Conference on Environment and Development held in Tbilisi on 25-27 September 1994.

10. Certain delegations presented their comments and additional data on the above subject.

11. The WG expressed its thanks to the representatives of Georgia and Greece as well as to the European Union for the preparation of the above reports.

12. It was recommended that the reports, in combined form, together with the proposals on the priorities for actions to be implemented with regard to protecting the regional environment, be presented for the consideration of the Fifth MMFA.

13. The Participating States were asked to forward at their earliest convenience to the Hellenic Republic their comments on the above reports.

14. It was also recommended that the Greek Delegation will elaborate an extended version of the two reports to be presented to the Conference "Environment for Europe" to be held in Sofia in October 1995.

15. The WG agreed that it would be useful to periodically update the above mentioned reports, initially every two years, on the basis of the contributions of all the Participating States.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTIONS

16. Under this agenda item, the WG discussed and approved the proposals submitted by Greece and the Secretariat with respect to:

- a) Goals and Organizing Principles for BSEC Environmental Cooperation;
- b) Joint endeavors;
- c) Working Plan for 1995-1996.

17. The above documents, as approved by the WG, are attached as Annexes IV, V and VI, respectively.

18. The WG also discussed the background paper of the Program Coordinating Unit of the Global Environment Facility Black Sea Environmental Program (PCU GEF BSEP) with regard to developing a BSEC initiative for setting up a Black Sea Environmental Fund.

19. The WG discussed financial mechanisms for environmental programs and agreed to continue the relevant discussion at the next meeting of the WG.

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON ENVIRONMENT DEVELOPMENT

20. Under this agenda item, the WG had a thorough exchange of views on the basis of a background report prepared by the Greek Delegation.

21. Confirming the importance of such an information exchange, the WG agreed to explore the means to facilitate this process through harmonization of information collection and retrieval.

22. In this context, the WG recommended that the Greek Delegation initiate the development of a model (a template) for the exchange of information in a printed form or through electronic means and distribute it to the Participating States for review, update and consideration for discussion at a future WG meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

23. The WG took note of the information presented by a representative of the Russian Foreign Policy Foundation (RFPF) with regard to its activities in the field of environmental protection as well as its proposal to host the next BSEC Conference on

Environment and Development in the city of Gelendgik and recommended to forward it to the relevant institutions.

24. The WG took note of the information presented by the Ukrainian Delegation on the project “International Environmental Facilities to Prevent Pollution of the Black and Azov Sea Basin and the Sea of Marmara” and welcomed this idea. It was recommended that further study be undertaken on this issue, including the possibility of creating a network of interested parties and relevant international organizations.

25. The WG was informed by the Bulgarian Delegation of the latest developments with regard to the forthcoming Conference “Environment for Europe” to be held in Sofia in October 1995.

26. The WG took note of the information presented by the representative of MEDWET on the network of wetland conservation and recognized the potential of such a tool for the protection of the natural environment.

27. The representative of HELECO presented information with regard to the second International Environment Fair in Athens.

28. The WG took note of the information presented by the Turkish Delegation on the Declaration of the Governors and Mayors of Coastal Provinces of Turkey in the Marmara and the Black Sea Regions.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

30. The participants expressed their thanks to the Government of the Hellenic Republic for hosting the Meeting and for the excellent arrangements as well as the warm hospitality extended to them.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

31. The Participating States which may wish to host the next Meeting of the WG on Environmental Protection will accordingly notify the Secretariat.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

32. The WG adopted the present report for submission to the Fifth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.
