

**JOINT DECLARATION
ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES
(Bucharest, 31 May 2011)**

The Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection and Heads of Delegations of the BSEC Member States met in Bucharest, Romania, on 31 May 2011.

Taking into consideration the progress made in the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection adopted in Bucharest, in March 2006,

Acknowledging the global challenges in the 21st century, particularly the impacts of climate change which require regional concerted actions in the field of environmental protection and environmental risk management,

Considering the essential role of environmental protection for a sustainable development of the region and the necessity for a careful planning, including a proper environmental impact assessment where applicable,

Fully aware of additional difficulties brought about by the economic crisis for the proper development of the environmental infrastructure and its sustainability,

Stressing the need to further improve the existing framework of cooperation in the field of environmental protection,

Re-confirming our commitment to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the protection of the environment in the Black Sea region,

Acknowledging the need for developing regional projects and programmes to be financed within the framework of available international programmes,

Taking into account the obligations under the Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (1992) and under the other relevant international conventions and agreements,

Emphasizing that strengthening relations with interested international and regional organizations, in particular in the environmental field would contribute to the successful implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection,

Stressing the potential contribution of the Environment Partnership of the Black Sea Synergy for cooperation in the area of environmental protection in our region,

We, the Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection and Heads of Delegations of the BSEC Member States:

1. *Endorse* the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection and the goals set forth in the Joint Ministerial Declaration adopted in 2006 as a planning instrument to address the environmental challenges arising in the Black Sea region in a coordinated and synergic manner. To this end decide to update the Action Plan on Environmental Protection, according to the new challenges and priorities of our region and consequently request the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection to prepare and submit a draft updated Action Plan.

2. *Express* our strong willingness to strengthen the co-operation within BSEC by improving the administrative framework and by ensuring proper participation in the meetings and by promoting a close cooperation between national experts

3. *Welcome* the incorporation of environmental approaches in the economic and social development programmes of the BSEC Member States with particular attention paid to the promotion of renewable energy, development of environmentally friendly energy technologies and use of environmental impact assessments, where applicable, for all important developments.

4. *Underline* the importance of an enhanced cooperation among the BSEC Member States, particularly by harmonizing the environmental approaches at the regional level, by promoting exchange of good practices and transfer of technical know-how and by concrete measures and projects related to biodiversity conservation, integrated coastal zone and river management, tackling of pollution sources, as well as to environmental integration monitoring, research and eco-innovation activities.

5. *Welcome* the project oriented approach of the recent BSEC activities in the field of environmental protection, especially the project concept on *Introducing Climate Change in the Environmental Strategy for the Protection of the Black Sea* and project on *Legal Framework for a Green Economy within the BSEC Member States*.

6. *Urge* the Working Group to speed up the establishment of the BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for Environmental Protection.

7. *Call on* the BSEC Related Bodies, especially the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank to further contribute to the implementation of regional projects on sustainable development, environmental protection and climate change in our region.

8. *Reaffirm* the importance of the development in the BSEC Member States of harmonized legislation on environmental protection based on the best practice and experience in the Pan-European region.

9. *Stress* the need to improve the monitoring system using common indicators of the state of environment in our Member States which is essential for the establishment of further actions and measures required in order to protect and, if necessary, rehabilitate the environment

10. *Express* the determination to enhance the cooperation with EU in the field of environmental protection and to use Environment Partnership of the Black Sea Synergy as an opportunity for future development of environmental projects.

11. Initiate and promote cooperation with other regional organizations, institutions and initiatives, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP-MAP) to cooperate with BSEC in the development of concrete environment projects focused on common problems.

12. *Undertake* to enhance further the co-operation between BSEC and the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution,

13. *Welcome* the development of co-operative relations with the UN, UNCSD, UNEP, UNDP, UN FAO, UNESCO, UNECE and the World Bank as well as with other international organizations in order to develop environmentally sustainable and economically viable regional projects.

14. *Express* our gratitude to the Government of Romania for the warm hospitality extended to us during the Meeting.