



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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**REPORT OF THE
MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-INDUSTRY**

Istanbul, 24-25 April 2013

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry was held in Istanbul, on 24-25 April 2012.

2. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Republic of Moldova
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine

3. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.

4. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Alexey GOSPODAREV, Deputy Director of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation, as representative of the Country-Coordinator.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL RELATED TO AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-INDUSTRY AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE JOINT DECLARATIONS OF THE MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

6. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS in the context of this item.

7. The BSEC PERMIS kindly requested the Member States to update, as appropriate, the list of National Contact Points to the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry.

THE “WAY FORWARD FOR AN ACTION PLAN ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “ECONOMIC AGENDA TOWARDS AN ENHANCED BSEC PARTNERSHIP”

8. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the implementation of the “BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership” and, in particular, on the objectives and timetable included in the document “The way forward for an Action Plan on the implementation of the Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership”.

9. The Working Group considered and confirmed the three priorities approved by the BSEC Council of Ministers, in the field of 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 regional cooperation for the sustainable management of fishery resources.

10. Furthermore, the Working Group considered the timetable included in the document “The way forward for an Action Plan on the implementation of the Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership” and exchanged views in its implications on the programming of the Working Group activities in 2013.

11. In this context, the Working Group decided to request the interested Member States to provide their input on the road map for the implementation of the three above mentioned priorities and their proposals on relative project proposals, no later than 24 May 2013.

12. Taking into consideration the timetable approved by the BSEC Council of Ministers, the Working Group further decided:

- Not later than the end of May 2013:
Definition of the road map for the already mentioned three action areas on which work will be focused in 2013-2015.
- Second half June 2013
Submission of the road map and definition of the implementation mechanisms, as well as of the potential projects/deliverables to the Committee of Senior Officials for approval by the CMFA.
- July - September 2013:

Elaboration on the projects/deliverables proposals submitted by the BSEC Member States (identifying also the need for secondees or consultants).

- October - December 2013:
Examination of the possibility of funding or fund raising for the projects/deliverables.
- December 2013:
Preparation of the first annual report of the Working Group on the implementation of the Economic Agenda by the Russian Federation, in its capacity as Country-Coordinator and the BSEC PERMIS.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BSEC PUBLIC COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

13. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS in the context of this item.

14. The Working Group requested the BSEC PERMIS to give due consideration of its activities in the formulation of major directions and project communication, in the framework of the BSEC Public Communication Strategy.

CONSIDERATION OF THE NEW DRAFT ACTION PLAN OF THE WORKING GROUP (2013-2014)

15. The Working Group considered the draft Action Plan for the next Two-Year period, elaborated and presented by the Russian Federation, in its capacity as Country-Coordinator.

16. The Working Group discussed, amended and adopted the draft Action Plan. The Action Plan, as adopted, is attached as Annex III.

PROSPECTS OF THE BLACK SEA REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF FISHERIES

17. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on this item, in particular concerning the launching of the EU “Integrated Maritime Policy for the Black Sea”.

18. Stressing the importance of cooperation in the field of fisheries, the Working Group requested for follow-up information on BSEC-EU cooperation in the area, as well as on the relevant activity of FAO and other international organizations.

19. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey underlined the essential rights of the coastal countries in management of the fisheries in the Black Sea and expressed importance of following up on the developments of the economical aspects of the fisheries in the Black Sea region.

COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF FOOD SAFETY AMONG CENTRAL COMPETENT AUTHORITIES AND NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

20. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey provided information on recent developments in the field of food safety in Turkey, in particular concerning the adoption of laws and regulations in the context of harmonization of national legislation with EU norms.

The delegation of the Republic of Turkey proposed to examine the possibility of harmonizing risk assessment methodologies in the BSEC Member States, in the framework of the Working Group.

21. The Working Group took note of the information provided on the issue of food safety among the Member States and, in view of its importance, decided to continue the discussions on the issue within its framework.

CONSULTATION ON ELABORATION OF HARMONIZING THE LABELING STANDARDS FOR FOOD PRODUCTS AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY

22. The Working Group took note of the information provided by BSEC PERMIS on the issue of the elaboration of the labeling standards for food products and, in view of their importance on food quality and safety, decided to continue the discussions on the issue within its framework.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

23. No issue was raised under this Agenda item.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

24. Working Group suggested to examine the possibility to schedule its next Meeting back-to-back with a relevant agricultural event.

25. The date and venue of the next Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry will be communicated to the BSEC Member States through BSEC PERMIS.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

26. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of the Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.