



BS/EP/WG/R(2007)1

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

Belgrade, 14 – 15 March 2007

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection was held in Belgrade, on 14 – 15 March 2007.
2. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
3. The Meeting was attended by the representative of the United States of America in the capacity as BSEC Observer.
4. The representatives of the Mediterranean Centre of Environmental Development – Glaukos (NGO from Greece) and the State Oceanographic Institute of the Russian Federation also participated in the Meeting.

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

4. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Mihailo DJUKIĆ, Head of Department for International Cooperation, Directorate for Environmental Protection, Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia, and Mr. Ali ALBAYRAK, Mining Engineer, Department of Foreign Affairs and European Union, Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey.

5. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

DISCUSSION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES (BUCHAREST, 3 MARCH 2006)

6. The Working Group exchanged information on the measures undertaken at national level for the implementation of the provisions of the Joint Declaration adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States (Bucharest, 3 March 2006).

7. The Working Group appreciated the progress done for the implementation of the “BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection” endorsed by the Ministers in the said Joint Declaration “as a means of achieving the goals set forth in the Declaration” and discussed on future project ideas and joint activities to be carried out for the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan and of the Joint Ministerial Declaration.

PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BSEC ACTION PLAN FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ITS WORK PROGRAM

8. PERMIS presented information on the state of affairs with respect to the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection since the adoption of the Work Program by the Working Group (Istanbul, 6 – 7 July 2006).

9. Furthermore, the participants exchanged information on the ongoing and planned activities to be carried out for the implementation of the Action Plan.

10. The participants expressed satisfaction for the work done by the Working Group for the implementation of the Action Plan so far.

11. The need of the continuation of the regularly exchange of information on new developments in environmental legislation among the BSEC Member States was emphasized.

12. Furthermore, the Working Group proposed to explore possibilities of the organization of training courses related to technical issues, in cooperation with the European Union.

13. The Working Group amended the Work Program for the Implementation of the Action Plan. The updated Work Program, as amended, is attached as **Annex III**.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INFORMATION EXCHANGE MECHANISM FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMONG THE BSEC MEMBER STATES: CONSIDERATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKSHOP “ESTABLISHMENT OF A CLEARING HOUSE MECHANISM FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION” (ISTANBUL, 24 NOVEMBER 2006)

14. PERMIS presented information on the Workshop “Establishment of a Clearing House Mechanism for the Environmental Protection in the Black Sea Region” (Istanbul, 24 November 2006).

15. The participants shared the view that the establishment of an Information Exchange Mechanism for providing a better environmental tool and a better cooperation, coordination among the BSEC Member States is an important step toward the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection and an effective instrument for sharing information, experience and best practices. They agreed that the BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for the Environmental Protection to be created should address all aspects related to environmental protection as specified in the BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection.

16. Furthermore, they shared the view that the implementation of such a project is a long-term process that requires technical and financial national efforts, technical expertise and a sustainable information exchange network.

17. The Working Group agreed to submit the following recommendations for consideration and appropriate decision to the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials and the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs:

a) The Council should consider the possibility of the gradually establishment of a BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for the Environmental Protection as a long-term goal, as well as the necessary measures to be taken at national and regional level to achieve this goal. This mechanism should be building on the existing information systems and databases and should avoid duplication with other similar efforts.

b) Following steps are recommended for the gradual implementation of the BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for the Environmental Protection:

b.1) An initial BSEC Information System for the Environmental Protection shall be created by upgrading the PERMIS existing web page with following information to be provided by the BSEC Member States:

- Links to governmental organizations, ministries or environmental agencies; national legislation;
- Key/contact persons (expert level) willing to provide necessary information on general issues related to environmental protection;
- Links to the Chamber of Commerce, business and professional associations (private sector) for data and information on best practices, ecological technologies and products;
- Existing national reports on the State of Environment.

b.2) Each BSEC Member State could identify its priority sectors and the information to be included in the said Information Exchange Mechanism, eventually by carrying out feasibility studies, and appoint contact persons in charge of collecting, disseminating, processing and exchanging data and information; importance should be given to the business and economic approach, as well as to

information related to economic activities with environmental impact such as: regional projects with heavy environmental impact; environmental sound business opportunities; innovative environmentally friendly and resource saving technologies.

b.3) The BSEC Member States could decide at a later stage the content of the BSEC Information Exchange Mechanism for the Environmental Protection after the identification of common priorities of the BSEC Member States and the consideration of the general framework and of the measures to be taken at national and multilateral level for its establishment.

18. Furthermore, the Working Group called upon the BSEC Member States to communicate to PERMIS the necessary information for the creation of the BSEC Information System for the Environmental Protection (para 17.b.1) by end of June 2007.

CONSIDERATION OF PDF APPLICATIONS:

19. The delegations submitted for discussion their proposals on elaboration of multilateral projects in the BSEC framework. The following project standard applications were considered:

a) **“Improvement of the scientific background for assuring sustainable development in the Black Sea coastal zone – pre-feasibility study”**, submitted by institutions of Romania (lead partner), Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine;

20. The representative of the National Institute for Marine Research and Development “Grigore Antipa” of Romania (lead partner) made a presentation on the project application.

21. The Working Group assessed the project especially taking into account the relevant Resolution of the 15th BSEC Council and the recommendation made by the Committee of Senior Officials with respect to the PDF applications.

22. Furthermore, it considered that the said project would contribute to the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection.

23. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey expressed the interest of the 19 May University of Samsun to participate in the project.

24. The representative of Romania invited the said University to become a partner to the project. The concrete modalities for the participation of the new partner will be established through bilateral channels.

25. The Working Group agreed to submit the standard project application to the Committee of Senior Official for endorsement.

b) **“Revitalization of urban ecosystems through vascular plants: assessment of technogenic pollution impact – Garden City”** submitted by institutions of Bulgaria (lead partner), Greece, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Turkey;

26. The representative of the Institute of Physics of the Republic of Serbia (project partner) made a presentation on the project application.

27. The Working Group assessed the project and recommended to the applicants to amend the application with an assessment on how the project may contribute to the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection.

28. Furthermore, it agreed to submit the standard project application to the Committee of Senior Officials for endorsement.

c) **“Improvement of ecological assessment of marine coastal zones enriched by toxic aerosols”**, submitted by institutions of Russia (lead partner), Ukraine and Greece;

29. The representative of the State Oceanographic Institute of the Russian Federation (lead partner) made a presentation on the project application, emphasizing the contribution of the project to the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection.

30. The participants considered that the said project might contribute to the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection.

31. Furthermore, the Working Group recommended to the applicants to amend the application according to the technical observations made by the Project Coordinator of BSEC PERMIS.

32. The Working Group agreed to submit the amended standard project application to the Committee of Senior Officials for endorsement.

d) **Study of the capabilities and requirements of the operational monitoring of air pollution levels**, submitted by institutions of Greece, Bulgaria and Romania;

33. The Working Group reassessed the project based on the additional information provided by the lead partner with respect to the economic component and its contribution to the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection.

34. Furthermore, it agreed to submit the standard project application to the Committee of Senior Officials for endorsement.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS AND PROJECT IDEAS FOR COOPERATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMONG BSEC MEMBER STATES:

35. The Working Group welcomed the project idea “Identification, monitoring and remediation of polluted riverbanks in the Black Sea basin” presented by the Republic of Serbia and expressed its support for the preparation of the said project within the BSEC framework.

36. The participants took note of the presentation made by the representative of the Mediterranean Centre of Environmental Development – Glaukos on the project idea titled “Black Sea Deltas”.

37. The BSEC Member States will communicate to PERMIS their opinion regarding their support to the said project idea in due time.

SIXTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE” (BELGRADE, 2007): INFORMATION BY THE BSEC CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE

38. The Working Group appreciated in a positive way the information presented by the Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia regarding the preparation of the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” to be held in Belgrade, on 10-12 October 2007.

39. Furthermore, the participants welcomed the proposal made by the Republic of Serbia to organize a BSEC side event on this occasion.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

40. The participants took note of the information presented by the representative of the Embassy of the United States of America with respect to the proposal made by the USA, in its capacity as the BSEC Observer, regarding the organization of a joint BSEC – USA Symposium “Environmental Protection for Economic Growth. Best Practices Exchange”. The background paper and the provisional agenda of the Symposium are attached as **Annex IV**.

41. The Working Group welcomed the USA initiative, expressed its support to it and called upon the next BSEC Chairmanship to include the Symposium in its Calendar of Events.

42. Furthermore, the Working Group instructed PERMIS to continue the consultations with the American counterpart for the elaboration of the draft agenda and of the technical and financial aspects related to the said event.

43. The Working Group called upon the Member States to communicate to PERMIS their suggestions and opinions on the draft agenda of the said Symposium, as well as their proposals for possible speakers by 1 May 2007.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

44. The Participants expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia for the hospitality extended to them during the Meeting and excellent organization of the event.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

45. The exact date and venue of the next Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection will be communicated to the BSEC Member States through BSEC PERMIS in due course.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

46. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the Committee of Senior Officials and the Sixteenth Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to be held in Belgrade on 19 April 2007.