

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
on Cooperation between  
**the Economic Cooperation Organization**  
and  
**the United Nations Environment Programme**

Whereas the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2997 (XXVII) as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda and promotes the integration of the environmental aspects of sustainable development into the work of the United Nations system;

Whereas the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was founded pursuant to the treaty of Izmir with the aims, *inter alia*, of strengthening the unity and solidarity of its Member States, intensifying their cooperation and their efforts to provide better living conditions to their people, and promoting international cooperation;

Recalling that The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) emphasized development and strengthening of regional initiatives and cooperation for sustainable development;

Recalling also that the First ECO Ministerial Declaration on Environment, adopted on 15 December 2002 in Tehran, reaffirmed the countries' willingness to promote regional cooperation in the field of environment in cooperation with relevant regional and international actors;

Noting that UNEP Governing Council decision 22/14 (February 2003) requested UNEP's Executive Director to support and promote the sub-regional environmental initiatives of the ECO region;

Now, therefore, UNEP and ECO have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**  
**Objectives**

The United Nations Environment Programme and The Economic Cooperation Organization have agreed to expand their cooperation as reflected in the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

This Memorandum of Understanding contains an outline of principles for cooperation between UNEP and the ECO (collectively "the Parties"). It further identifies certain measures for consideration by the parties which may promote cooperation, such measures being a possible foundation for mutual assistance in matters of common interest.

The cooperation between the Parties will take place within the scope of the respective constitutional instruments, mandates and activities of the Parties.

Building on the WSSD Plan of Implementation, and the ECO's Tehran Declaration, the Parties agree that the following objectives shall constitute the basis of their mutual cooperation:

- i. Assisting countries of the ECO region to strengthen their environmental policies and institutions. This assistance shall enhance cooperation and programs at the regional and sub-regional levels aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
- ii. Promoting greater awareness and facilitating policy exchange between and among environmental actors in the ECO region involved in the implementation of the international environmental agenda. Such measures shall include, *inter alia*, serving as an effective link between the scientific community and policy makers at the regional level and providing environmental policy and advisory services to the countries and relevant institutions of the ECO region.
- iii. Contributing to the ECO region's sustainable development programmes and the implementation of Agenda 21 through joint programs of action such as Regional Environmental Action Plan for Central Asia (REAP) and other post-WSSD partnerships, etc.
- iv. Facilitating partnerships, scientific research and diffusion of technical knowledge; mobilizing domestic, regional and international resources; and promoting human and institutional capacity building.

In line with the above objectives, UNEP and ECO, in collaboration with other international and regional partners, agree on the following as major areas of cooperation:

### **1. Enhancing the environmentally Sound and Renewable Energy Services and Resources:**

The Parties will explore the possibility of undertaking the following energy-related activities in line with energy issues as indicated in Johannesburg Plan of Action:

- A. Launch of a regional renewable and environmentally compatible energy resource assessment, building on existing work in this area, including the GEF-supported Solar and Wind Energy Resource Assessment (SWERA) project.
- B. Support for renewable and environmentally compatible energy policy development, drawing on experiences from other countries and focusing on providing practical measures readily applicable in the ECO region.

### **2. Capacity-building Services in areas of:**

- A. Environmental Law the Parties will explore specific capacity building activities, which could entail:
  - i. Strengthening the legal and institutional frameworks for environmental management in the context of sustainable development.

- ii. Capacity building of legal stakeholders to empower them to participate effectively in the development, implementation and enforcement of national environmental legislation including legislation for the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements at the national level.
  - iii. Development of global, inter-regional, regional and bilateral environmental agreements.
- B. Environmental Education The Parties will explore possibilities for joint development and implementation of awareness raising and environmental education and training programmes, which could include:
- i. Facilitating dialogue on policy between and among environmental actors and major groups involved in the implementation of the international environmental agenda in the ECO region.
  - ii. Promoting the link between the scientific community and policy makers in the ECO region and providing environmental policy and advisory services to the countries and relevant institutions of the ECO region.
  - iii. Formulating a sub-regional strategy for ECO Member States, drawing upon the experience of formulating sub-regional environmental education and training strategies in the Asia-Pacific region (depending on the availability of resources).
- C. ECO-tourism The Parties will explore the possibility of undertaking the following tourism-related activities:
- i. Capacity building of the private sector (and in particular accommodation and excursions providers) in the ECO region with a view to promoting environmentally-sound practices within the industry.
  - ii. Supporting the development and implementation of sustainable tourism policies among local (and national) authorities, in particular by promoting local Agenda 21 processes.

### **3. Supporting the Environmental Assessment Services:**

The Parties will explore the possibility of undertaking joint activities related to environmental assessment along the following lines:

- a. Participation in activities of the regional Collaborative Assessment Network relating to identification of common and emerging transboundary environmental issues.
- b. Consultations on technical and policy responses convened.

- c. Participation in specific projects and activities to address priority issues developed in partnership with relevant donor agencies.
- d. Participation in national and sub-regional assessments, as well as civil society networks, such as the media.

### Article 3

#### **Implementation Mechanisms and follow up**

##### **Joint Action**

1. Either UNEP or ECO may, when desirable, request cooperation from each other in areas of joint interest. *Ad hoc* arrangements, defining the terms of joint action to be taken with regard to particular issues, may be concluded in writing in accordance with procedures to be agreed upon between UNEP and ECO. Each Party shall endeavour, as far as possible, under its constitutional instruments, decisions of its governing bodies, and respective priorities to respond favourably to such requests for cooperation.

##### **Amendments**

2. The provisions of this Memorandum of Understanding may be amended at any time by written agreement between the Parties.

##### **Termination of Memorandum of Understanding**

3. Either Party may terminate this MoU, in whole or in part, upon thirty days written notice to the other. If one of the parties decides to terminate this MoU, the obligations previously entered into in respect of projects under implementation through this MoU shall be reviewed and resolved on a case-by-case basis.

##### **Periodical Joint Review**

4. UNEP, through its Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and ECO, through its Directorate of Energy, Minerals & Environment, will undertake annual consultations and a review of the implementation of the MoU. An annual joint report will be prepared by the ECO Secretary General and the UNEP Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific clearly highlighting the achievements, constraints, and follow-up activities under the MoU.

### Article 4

#### **General Provisions**

1. Nothing herein imposes a financial obligation upon either Party. If the Parties mutually agree to allocate specific funds to facilitate an activity undertaken pursuant to this MoU, such an agreement will be reflected in writing and signed by both Parties.
2. ECO staff members and contractors shall not be considered in any respect to be United Nations officials or staff members.

3. ECO shall not employ the use of the UNEP official emblem or logo without written consent of UNEP.
4. Nothing herein shall be deemed a waiver of any of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations.
5. The Parties recognize that their collaboration under this Agreement is non-exclusive and, therefore, UNEP may enter into similar collaboration with third parties.
6. Nothing contained in this MoU shall create any partnership or joint venture between the Parties. Neither party may pledge the credit of the other or make binding commitments on the part of the other.

**Article 5**  
**Disputes Settlement**

Any dispute arising out of or in connection with this MoU shall be settled by amicable negotiation between the two Parties. Should attempts at amicable negotiation fail, any such dispute shall, upon request by either party, be referred to arbitration in accordance with the UNCITRAL arbitration rules then prevailing.

In agreement whereof the parties have signed this Memorandum in the English language in two copies in Tehran on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2004

For and on behalf of the United  
Nations  
Environment Programme (UNEP)

**Klaus Töpfer**  
Executive Director

For and on behalf of the Economic  
Cooperation Organization (ECO)

**Askhat Orazbay**  
Secretary General