

## ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION



### ***ECO Regional Projects 2021***

The present document follows usual Secretariat practices of informing the ECO Council of Ministers Meeting (COM) about the current status of the Organization's overall projects.

# TRADE & INVESTMENTS

## Project 1

### **“ECO Regional Payment System (ERPS) Feasibility Study Phase-I”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

Endorsement: Paragraph-2: Completed and Project Report shared with Member States vide N.V No. T&I/ERPS/354 dated 30-3-2021.

*Status: Completed*

## Project 2

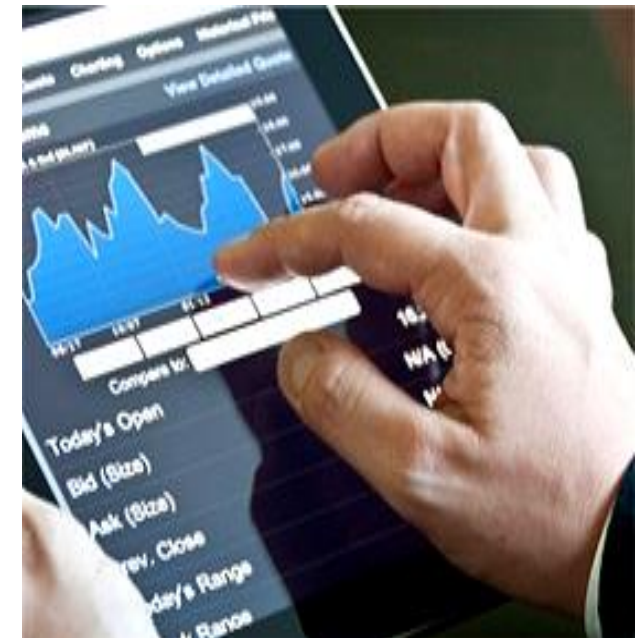
### **“Study on Impediments in Implementation of ECO’s Trade Tools and Measures to Resolve”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-7: The project has been completed and its report shared with Member States via Secretariat's Note Verbale No. TI/2021/29 dated April 13, 2021.

*Status: Completed.*

**SECTOR “A”: TRADE & Investment**



### Project 3

**“Study on preparation of the guidelines and Joint Action Plan for the establishment of ECO Regional Network of Special Economic Zones/Free Trade Zones (SEZs/FTZs) in the ECO Member States”**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-44: The detailed TORs for 'Study on preparation of the guidelines and Joint Action Plan for the establishment of ECO Regional Network of Special Economic Zones/Free Trade Zones (SEZs/FTZs) in the ECO Member States' have been prepared and the Project Management Section has been tasked to hire the services of a Specialist as per rules.

*Status: In-process.*

### Project 4

**"4th Phase of the ECO-UNIDO Trade Capacity Building Project"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Para-21. The Secretariat will pursue UNIDO and other institutions like IsDB to get support for implementation of these projects.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### Project 5

**"Strengthening Cooperation amongst Public and Private Sectors in the ECO Region"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Para-41. Project may be deleted from Work Programme 2021 due to Codiv-19 restrictions on in-person participation and may be reconsidered as a new project with wider scope in 2022, as proposed by ECO Project Monitoring Group.

*Status: Re-scheduled for 2022.*

### **Project 6**

**“Study on preparation of the Road Map for Formulating a Comprehensive Plan among the Sovereign and National Development Funds of the Member States”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-43. Secretariat jointly with National Development Fund of Iran prepared a Concept Paper for networking among SWs/NDFs of ECO Member States. The TOR for the project will be prepared after Concept Paper is finalized.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### **Project 7**

**“Study on Impediments in Issuance of 'ECO Business Visa Stickers to the Businessmen of the ECO Region”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-42: To expand the project scope and include it in the list of new projects; the scope of the project can include visa stickers for businessmen and International Commercial truck drivers.

*Status: Newly proposed.*

### **Summary:**

During January-September 2021, the two short term projects have successfully been fulfilled in the area of Trade & Investments. Under consideration are currently two other projects; one additional short term project is already in process whereas one project has been re-scheduled and the other has newly been proposed. In the reporting period, the Trade & Investment sector has been dealing with seven projects, in overall.



### **Project 8**

**“Development of economic corridor along ECO KTI Railway Corridor”**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-13: The ToR for this project proposal is prepared and posted on ECO website for procurement of consultant to conduct the project.

*Status: In-process. The project is based on the KTI Commercialization project which was **completed** in 2020.*

### **Project 9**

**"Railway Project on Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran)-Astara (Azerbaijan) Railway Route"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-33: The issue is under process of preparation of Project Proposal in the ECO Secretariat.

*Status: Ongoing.*

### **Project 10**

**“Application of Unified Railway Law in the Routes”**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-23: The project proposal is in final stages of preparation and will be circulated soon to the Member States.

*Status: In-process.*

### **Project 11**

**"Railway Project for the Connection of China to Europe through Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Iran (KTAI)"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Para-29: The fund raising matter was followed up with the I. R. Afghanistan vide note verbal no. 98 dated 3/2/2021. The issue has been referred to be followed up under the ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan in the JPC and EAPA Section.

*Status: Ongoing.*

### **Project 12**

**"Ways and means to establish direct flights among capital cities and the major tourist destinations within the ECO region with a priority to charter flights"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-67: The Council requested the Secretariat to implement a small sized study project on "The ways and means to establish direct flights among capital cities and the major tourist destinations within the ECO region with a priority to charter flights" and in this regard the Council may call the Secretariat for recruitment of a specialist for implementation of the said Study Project in 2021. Paragraph 66: The I.R of Iran was requested to provide the suggested draft Action Plan vide note verbal no. 114 dated 4/2/2021. The issue is followed up vide note verbal no. 574 dated 2/6/2021.

*Status: Will soon be started.*

### **Project 13**

**"Establishing TIR Green Lanes for main ECO Crossing Points"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-47: The Council mandated the Secretariat to initiate a Small Sized Project on "Establishing TIR Green Lanes for main ECO Crossing Points" and recruit a specialist for implementation of the Project in the first half of 2021.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### **Project 14**

**“Needs-based financial and technical assessment for installing the transshipment facilities, instruments and tools in Taftan railway station”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-13: The ToR for the project proposal is prepared and posted on ECO website for procurement of consultant to conduct the project.

*Status: In-process.*

### **Project 15**

**“Ways and means to establish and develop ECO regional fiber optic network”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph 70: The Council requested the Secretariat to implement, in consultation with ITU, a small sized study project on “The ways and means to establish and develop ECO regional fiber optic network” and to recruit a specialist for implementation of the Study Project in 2021.

*Status: Will soon be started.*

### **Project 16**

**“Joint ISDB/UNECE Project on Transport Geographical Information Systems-GIS”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-50: The Council appreciated the efforts of the Member States for completion of the 1st phase of the joint ECO/UNECE/IsDB project titled “Benchmarking Study for Transport Infrastructure Construction Costs” in the ECO Member States using GIS and requested the Secretariat to finalize the negotiations with UNECE and IsDB for the commencement of the 2nd phase of the project on the “Creation of a comprehensive GIS database and related maps, including the maps of ECO Region, for displaying regional and sub-regional transport networks and geo-mapping of infrastructure projects along these networks”.

*Status: Completed.*



### **Project 17**

**“ECO Road Corridors on Kyrgyz Republic-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI) and Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Routes”**

RPC: **Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021**

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-35: The Council acknowledged the Secretariat’s update on the completion of the Study project on ITI and KTAI road corridors in 2020 and requested the en-route Member States to consider expediting the implementation of the Action Plan approved by the 4th and 5th HLWGMs on KTAI and ITI road corridors.

*Status: Completed.*

### **Project 18**

**“Establishment of a Common Gateway among ECO Countries - ECO Gate”**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph- 58: The Council requested the Secretariat to hire a consultant/specialist for preparation of a bankable project proposal document to design ECO Gateways and their application to the existing main ports in the ECO region as well as to explore the possible ways and means to link the existing regional sea ports in the ECO region with the landlocked and transit countries’ dry ports, based on the “ECO Gate” concept proposal. Paragraph-59: The Council requested the Secretariat to approach IsDB, UNESCAP, IRU and International Maritime Organization (IMO), for possible financial and technical support to implement the ECO Gate Project.

*Status: In-process.*



### Project 19

**“ECO Container Train operationalization on Istanbul-Almaty and Bandar Abbas-Almaty”**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-22: The **Council** considered the project titled: “ECO Container Train operationalization on Istanbul-Almaty and Bandar Abbas-Almaty” as completed. The Routes still will remain as the ECO's main railway routes as stipulated in the ECO Railway Network Development Plan.

*Status: Completed.*

### Summary:

During the reporting period of **January-September 2021**, the Transport and Communications sector has successfully completed two projects.

In addition to the above, **during 2020**, the fulfilled projects reached five.

Currently, the three projects are undergoing the processing. Three are under consideration whereas two small sized projects will soon start.

Overall, there are twelve projects registered in the Transport and Communications sector as per ECO Midterm Regional Planning Council Meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

# Energy, Minerals and Environment



SECTOR "C": ENERGY, MINERALS, ENVIRONEMENT

## Project 20

**"Establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market" (ECO-REM)"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph 21: The 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy (24 June 2021) adopted the proposed "Roadmap on ECO Regional Electricity Market" while mandated the Secretariat to follow it up.

*Status: Proposed project.*

## Project 21

**"Development of ECO Clean Energy" (CECECO)**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-7: The Council encouraged to actively participating in ECO Experts Group on Renewable Energy Sources (EGRES) in view of mainstreaming sustainable energy in ECO agenda and ongoing development of the Project on establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center.

*Status: Proposed project.*

### **Project 22**

**"Manufacturing and Marketing Opportunities for Promotion of the Sustainable and Advanced Phase Change Material-based Renewable Energy Technologies"**

**RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021**

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-9: The Secretariat prepared ToR and included it in the list of Small Size Projects. The ToR will seek validation at the 4<sup>th</sup> EGRES Meeting.

*Status: Proposed project.*

### **Project 23**

**"Project on Preparation of ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map (1:5M)"**

**RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021**

**Endorsement:** Paragraph 30: Project on Preparation of ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map (1:5M). "In order to gain more support of MS, the Secretariat proposed to discuss and validate ToR of the project through expert group meeting. The initiator side has not yet responded".

*Status: Proposed project.*

### **Project 24**

**"Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States"**

**RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021**

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-50: The Council requested the Member States to consider allocation of appropriate contribution for launching the project profile for preparation of a regional program for implementation of the "Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States".

*Status: Proposed project.*

### **Project 25**

#### **"Launching and implementation of ECO LandCare Programme"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-49: The Council took note the proposal of the establishment of Coordination Mechanism as a key factor on implementation of the 1st phase of the ECO LandCare Programme to appeal one of the next CPR meetings by the Secretariat for allocation of 50000USD from the ECO FGPF. The Republic of Turkey has reservation on this issue, reasoned by duplication of the project with other International and national initiatives.

*Status: Proposed project.*

### **Summary:**

The Energy, Minerals and Environment sector has six projects as endorsed by the Midterm Review Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (28<sup>th</sup> July 2021). These are currently in the stage of developing the project proposal documents.

# ***AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRY***

SECTOR "D": AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRY

## **Project 27**

**"Establishment of standardized ECO Network of slaughter houses and reference laboratories"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-16: The small-sized project has been completed and the Report on the project along with summary has been shared with Member States.

*Status: Completed.*

## **Project 26**

**"Support for the Transformation of the ECO-RCC for RPFS"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-3: The Council appreciated the joint initiative of the ECO-RCC, FAO and the ECO Secretariat concerning the project titled "Support for the Transformation of the ECO-RCC for RPFS" from a programme-based organization to a self-sustainable institution of the ECO.

*Status: In-process.*



### Project 28

#### **"Planning Mechanism for Delivering Data and Products"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph 22: The Council requested the Member States to introduce national focal points to prepare the project proposal titled "Planning Mechanism for Delivering Data and Products" for implementing the protocol of "Data Sharing between ECO Member States."

*Status: Under consideration.*

### Project 29

#### **"Climate Change Risk Atlas over ECO Countries"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph 27: The Council took note of project proposal for "Climate Change Risk Atlas over ECO Countries" by ECO-RCRM and requested from ECO-RCRM to send the details to the Secretariat.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### Project 30

#### **"Establishment of the Regional ECO/Green Labeling Systems and Preparation of Technical Requirements and Data Base for Finished Textile Products"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph 42: The Council appreciated the Central Secretariat of ECO-RISCAM for proposing two new projects namely; (i) Establishment of the Regional ECO/Green Labeling Systems and Preparation of Technical Requirements and Data Base for Finished Textile Products (ii) Risk Management of Conformity Assessment Systems in International Trade by ECO Region Countries Food Products for First Step and Building Materials for Second Step.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### Project 31

**"Risk Management of Conformity Assessment Systems in International Trade by ECO Region Countries Food Products for First Step and Building Materials for Second Step"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** The ECO Secretariat has requested the Secretariat of ECO-RISCAM to provide the details of the two aforementioned projects.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### Project 33

**"Support to the organic agriculture production, certification and marketing in the ECO region"**

**PMG:** The 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Project Monitoring Group (ECO/15th PMG/2021)

**Endorsement:** The project has been appraised by 15<sup>th</sup> ECO Project Monitoring Group (14 June 2021) as completed.

*Status: Completed.*

### Project 32

**"Project on the situation of Nanotechnology in the ECO region"**

*RPC: Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph 51: The Council requested the Member States to take necessary actions to facilitate approval of the Project Proposal and allocate the requested amount in due time for its operationalization. In this regard, the Council requested the Member States to increase their cooperation in the field of new Nanotechnology projects in Energy sector.

Paragraph 48: The Council encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran for updating the study project on the situation of Nanotechnology in the ECO region. The ECO Secretariat has required the Islamic Republic of Iran through a Note Verbale to update the study project on the situation of Nanotechnology in the ECO region.

*Status: Under consideration.*



**Summary:**

During the reporting period of January-September 2021, the Agriculture and Industry sector has eight projects endorsed by the Midterm Review Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (28<sup>th</sup> July 2021).

Of those, five are currently under consideration and one is already in the processing stage.

During the aforementioned period, Agriculture and Industry sector has successfully completed two short term projects.

# TOURISM



## SECTOR "E": TOURSIM

### Project 34

#### "Silk Road Tourism Pathway in ECO Region"

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-13: The Council requested the Secretariat to conduct a project on 'Silk Road Tourism Pathway in ECO Region' and invite Member States to provide the Secretariat with relevant information in this regard.

Ibid: Paragraph-13: Since the Council requested the CPR to allocate necessary funds from the ECO Feasibility and General Purposes Fund for implementation of the Projects and due to Financial constraints of the organization, the new project may be started after allocation and full implementation of the 3 previous projects which were mentioned in the Para 8.

*Status: Not processed yet.*

### Project 35

#### "ECO Tourism Routes and Packages"

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-8: The Council welcomed the tourism projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of implementation of the expected strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing nature based tourism destinations which were considered by the 24th Meeting of Council of Ministers on November 2019 in Antalya namely; (i) ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development, (ii) **ECO Tourism Routes and Packages**, (iii) Tour operators chain and connectivity.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### **Project 36**

**"Tour operators' chain and connectivity"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-8: The Council welcomed the tourism projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of implementation of the expected strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing nature based tourism destinations which were considered by the 24th Meeting of Council of Ministers on November 2019 in Antalya namely; (i) ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development, (ii) ECO Tourism Routes and Packages, (iii) Tour operators' chain and connectivity.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### **Project 37**

**"ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-8: The Council welcomed the tourism projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of implementation of the expected strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing nature based tourism destinations which were considered by the 24th Meeting of Council of Ministers on November 2019 in Antalya namely; (i) **ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development**, (ii) ECO Tourism Routes and Packages, (iii) Tour operators chain and connectivity.

*Status: Ongoing.*

### **Summary:**

During the reporting period of January-September 2021, the Tourism sector has been dealing with three projects as those were endorsed in the Meetings of the 30<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council (RPC) and the 31<sup>st</sup> and have been re-confirmed by the Midterm Review Meeting of the RPC held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The fourth project has been endorsed by this summer Midterm Review Meeting of the RPC.

Overall, the four projects are being assigned after the Tourism sector of which one is ongoing and the two are under consideration and one has newly been proposed.

# *HUMAN RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*



## Project 38

**"Establishment of the regional disaster information system"**

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-8: The Council considered that after the ECO-RFDRR is approved, the Secretariat should conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of the regional disaster information system in collaboration of Member States as well as the office of Asia and Pacific Disaster Information Management in Tehran.

*Status: Under consideration.*

### **Project 39**

#### **"ECO intra-regional capacity in pharmaceuticals"**

*RPC: The 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting on 21-26 January 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-18: The Council encouraged the ECO Secretariat to follow up on the outcomes of the ongoing small sized pharmaceutical project and to propose and develop more feasible projects.

**The 15<sup>th</sup> Project Management Group Meeting** (14<sup>th</sup> July 2021) has endorsed the project as completed.

The final report of the project has been shared with Member States.

*Status: Completed.*

#### **Summary:**

The HRSD sector has two projects assigned to it during the reporting period of January-September 2021.

Of these projects, one has successfully been completed in the first half of 2021 as recommended by the 31<sup>st</sup> RPC Meeting (21-26 January 2021).

The other project is currently under consideration.

# ***JUDICIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY COORDINATION AND ECO ADVOCACY PROGRAMME FOR AFGHANISTAN***

**Sector: "J" Judicial & Parliamentary Coordination and ECO  
Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan**



# ECONOMIC RESEARCH & STATISTICS

## Project/Programme 40

"ECO Economic Research Programme"

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-38: The Council recommended that the ECO Editorial Board meet during 2021 to consider the abstracts of the **three projects completed** under the ECO Economic Research Programme (EERP) and share key findings of aforementioned study projects for the purposes of publishing and disseminating them at broad ECO regional level.

*Status: Ongoing.*

## Project 41

"Joint ECO-FAO technical cooperation project on strengthening statistical capacity of ECO countries"

RPC: *Midterm Review RPC, 28th July 2021*

**Endorsement:** Paragraph-20: The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan further noted the importance of the statistical capacity building programme for the regional statistics and, in that regard, suggested that a special programme be designed such as offering fully funded master and PhD degree program to the ECO NSOs staff. Further on statistical capacity building, the NSIA of the I. R. of Afghanistan stated that it will prepare an extensive Concept Note, which will be officially shared with the Secretariat.

*Status: Under consideration.*



Sector: "I" Economic Research & Statistics



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