

ECO SMALL SIZED PROJECTS under consideration

2020/21

6/17/2021

Projects under consideration

PMS



ECO SMALL SIZED PROJECTS 2020/21

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ECO: Economic Cooperation Organization	COM: Council of Ministers of ECO
RPC: Regional Planning Council of ECO	CPR: Council of Permanent Representatives of ECO
UNESCAP: United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific	UNECE: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
IsDB: Islamic Development Bank	UNIDO: United Nations Industrial Development Organization
Exp: expected	
FAO: United Nations Food Agriculture Organization	KTI: Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran
ITI: Islamabad, Tehran, Istanbul	KTAI: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Iran
EGM: Expert Group Meeting	HLWG: High Level Working Group
SSP: Small Sized Project	PMG: Project Monitoring Group
CECECO: ECO Clean Energy	TTCC: Transit Transport Coordination Council
ABN: Agricultural Biotechnology Network	ICT: Information Communications Technology
MS&LP: Medium Sized and Large Projects	OSJD: Organization for Cooperation of Railways
GIS: Geographic Information System	ECD: Economic Corridor Development
ITU: International Telecommunications Union	LDCs: Landlocked Developing Countries
ECOTA: ECO Trade Agreement	CMM: Common Management Mechanism
SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats	INSTC: International North-South Transport Corridor

Projects in the Economic Cooperation Organization have the extensive history of bringing economic growth and development in the vast ECO region. These have, since onset, been in the economic activity areas such as Energy, Industry, Transport, Agriculture, Trade and the social sector. Infrastructure developments are represented by medium sized and large-scale projects and are mainly designed to trigger growth in infrastructure and technology.

The servicing infrastructures that mainly focus on the facilitating of the sustainable development in the ECO region and provide comprehensive policy & institutional support to such activity areas as Trade and Investment, Communications, Tourism, and Human Resources & Sustainable Development are being shouldered through small sized projects.

The project cycle of overall ECO projects is guarded by the *Functional Methodology of ECO* (1998), the main document of the Organization guidelining its project operations.

The projects which target the development of and support to the servicing infrastructures and institutional capacities are steered by the *Updated Guidelines of ECO Small Sized Projects* (2020).

The by-sector profile of the ECO projects can be observed in the following core cooperation areas of the Organization as laid down in the *ECO Vision 2025* (Chapter 3: Co-operation Areas. p.2):

- A. Trade**
- B. Transport and Connectivity**
- C. Energy**
- D. Tourism**
- E. Economic Growth and Productivity**
- F. Social Welfare and Environment**

The projects in the ECO's core activity areas are being implemented by various Directorates of the ECO Secretariat: Trade & Investment, Transport & Communications, Energy, Minerals & Environment, Agriculture & Industry, Human Resources and Sustainable Development (HRSD) and Tourism.

The information that has been reflected in the present booklet focuses on small sized projects that are currently under consideration to provide the ECO Member States with an insight of where each such project stands at a glance.

The projects reflected hereafter represent small sized projects that are currently under consideration.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

“STUDY ON THE GUIDELINES AND JOINT ACTION PLAN FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ECO REGIONAL NETWORK OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES/FREE TRADE ZONES (SEZS/FTZS) IN THE ECO MEMBER STATES”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS	SSP	Project proposal has been prepared in January 2021 by the I. R. of Afghanistan.
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OBJECTIVES

At strategic level: to develop a set of investment policy priorities to maximize the SEZs’ development contributions. National and international investment policies, as they apply to the SEZs should be geared towards the realization of national development goals. Such goals will be grounded in a country’s overall development strategy and linked to the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **At policymaking level:** to shape up the rules to foster synergies and support sustainable development objectives. Examples include: the fostering of synergies between International Law and the SEZ’ objectives; synergies between National and International Law and Policies.

- **At policy implementation level:** to strengthen the cooperation among relevant entities to ensure the transparency, due process and policy coherence in the governance, management and administration of the SEZs.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

To be identified
 START DATE: 2021
 COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: Fulfillment of SWOT analysis on investment in the ECO region for the last five-year period, focusing on Intra-Regional Investment and FDI.

Output: Designing of the Roadmap and setting up a Digital Network of the ECO

SEZs/FTZs; Recommending on the draft legal, regulatory and administrative frameworks of the Roadmap.

RECOMMENDATION

THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARCH 2021, ANKARA)

“We should develop an integrated transport network to facilitate both, intra-ECO trade and regional transport connectivity as a pathway for trade between major economies in the East and West, North and South”. “The Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad commercial cargo train and the proposed Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan railway links are the important regional connectivity projects. In addition, the linking of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with Afghanistan and beyond is vital” (I. R. of Pakistan).

“Afghanistan’s socio-economic development remains as a topical issue within the framework of our Organization” (Republic of Tajikistan).

“We have been providing and will continue to assist this brotherly country in the restoration of its economy, energy supply, transport and communications systems, and in the construction of social facilities” (Turkmenistan).

ENDORSEMENT

ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN)

The 31st Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council appreciated project titled “*Study on the preparation of the guidelines and Joint Action Plan for establishment of ECO Regional Network of Special Economic Zones/Free Trade Zones (SEZs/FTZs) in ECO Member States*” and “requested the Secretariat to follow-up with the study and share the outcome of it with the Member States for their views and comments” (paragraph-44, A. Sector: Trade and Investment, Work Programme 2021).

“STUDY ON THE PREPARATION OF THE ROADMAP FOR FORMULATING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMONG THE SOVEREIGN AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS OF THE MEMBER STATES”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS

SSP

The concept project proposal has been prepared in January 2021.

The Terms of reference for hiring the project Specialist have been prepared on 5 April 2021. Selection of a Specialist is expected.

OBJECTIVES

- Obtaining the financing by ECO countries’ Sovereign Welfare Funds (SWFs) and by other interested public and private investment agencies of mega projects in the ECO region through a diverse range of financial instruments. An example of mega

projects will be: financing the missing links in ECO's transit transport corridors/routes using ECO's regional connectivities with the Eurasian mainland, Persian Gulf, Oman Sea, Indian Ocean and Caspian Sea. In this, the service infrastructures, including in Health Care and Agriculture & Industry will be given due attention along with ECO's core activity areas envisaged in the Antalya Communiqué.

- As a tool of obtaining the much required investment financing, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) like the "Mutual Fund of SWFs of ECO" that is J.I.S. will be established for the purposes of the subject project. The project, for which the small sized study will be carried out as a pre-feasibility justification, will then directly focus on J.I.S.
- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will also be addressed, including SDG-1 (No Poverty); SDG-7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG-8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); SDG-9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure); SDG-10 (Reducing Inequalities) and SDG-11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2021
COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: Roadmap for investments in the ECO region.
Output: Development of the Comprehensive Plan of the ECO Sovereign National Development Funds in the ECO region.
Output: Fulfillment of the prefeasibility study on the Joint Investment Scheme (J.I.S), that is, the Mutual Fund of the ECO Sovereign National Development Funds.

DECISIONS

THE 24TH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING (8-9 NOVEMBER 2019, ANTALYA)

The 24th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of ECO, held on 8-9 November 2019 in Antalya, Republic of Turkey, "encouraged the Member States, relevant international organizations, financial institutions, national development funds and other stakeholders to actively support the inclusive, multi-dimensional connectivity projects and associated infrastructure in energy, transport, communications and industry that could potentially transform into economic corridors in the long-term perspective" (paragraph-24, *Antalya Communiqué 2019*).

ENDORSEMENT

ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN)

The Regional Planning Council of ECO at its 31st Meeting held on 12-21 January at ECO Secretariat in Tehran expressed its appreciation to the Heads of Sovereign and National Development Funds (SNDF) of the ECO Member States for initiating the project: "Study on preparation of a Roadmap for Formulating a Comprehensive Plan among the Sovereign and National Development Funds of the Member States" (paragraph-43, Sector: Trade and Investment, Work Programme 2021). In this regard, the Council instructed the ECO Secretariat to see to the fulfillment of the study and to then share the study's findings with the Member States, for feedback.

“STUDY ON FORMING ECO CLEARING UNION”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS	SSP	<p>The 30th Regional Planning Council of ECO (11-14 January 2020, Tehran), the Council requested the Member States to announce hosting of the Experts Group Meeting (EGM) on Banking and Financial Matters and Forming of ECO Clearing Union at earliest.</p> <p>The 233rd and 234th Meetings of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) of ECO held on 11 September 2018 and 5 November 2018, respectively, deliberated on the ECO Clearing Union and instructed the Secretariat to explore the possibilities of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Expanding the mandate of the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB) to strengthen preparing the study on Forming of ECO Clearing Union in 2020 to discuss the said vital issues and develop trade among Member States, andEstablishing an ECO Clearing Union to clear payments for trade among Member States and <p>The Terms of reference for hiring the project Specialist have been prepared on 7 January 2021. Selection of a Specialist is expected.</p>
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OBJECTIVES

- The project’s key objective is to ensure that regulatory and technical groundwork for establishing the clearinghouse-type ECO Clearing Union is laid down. Such groundwork is to consist of the core constituting documents. The latter will be designed to ensure that the ECU is established and the offsetting of debits and credits in a clearinghouse or a common balance sheet is prepared for actual real time operations. While banking currency swaps will operate as *modus operandi* in their existing state, a common unit of account (potentially a regional optimal value currency) may be defined within ECU using the ECU-inherent market mechanism.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2021
COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULTS

- Fourfold (vs. 8% of total in 2020) increase in intra-regional trade during the near future four-year period, as envisaged in ECO Vision 2025;
- Mutual settlement of transactions (*to be set up under proposed ECU*) by a target year (*to be determined by the study*);
- Improved debit-and-credit balances of ECO member countries;
- Improved current accounts balances of ECO Member States during period 2021-2025, commensurate to ECO’s intra-trade by target year 2025;
- Capital flows stability to be ensured by 2025 and the stabilizing role of proposed ECU in restoring a balance between surplus and deficit of ECO countries resulting in ECU, and
- Use of credit balances of ECO countries for the purchase of assets within ECO (i.e. ECO’s direct or portfolio investment) but the size of such purchases will be limited by the size of a surplus country’s credit balance with the ECO clearing house.

DECISIONS

THE 24TH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING (8-9 NOVEMBER 2019, ANTALYA)

The 24th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of ECO, held on 8-9 November 2019 in Antalya, Republic of Turkey, encouraged the Member States and the Secretariat consider ways **for establishing a system of clearing payments** through means such as developing cooperation with the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) or, where appropriate, **by establishing the ECO Clearing Union**, taking into consideration the existing models, experiences and challenges.

In paragraph-38 of *Antalya Communiqué 2019*, the 24th COM “encouraged all Member States to participate in the Ministerial Meeting on Economy planned to be held in the Republic of Tajikistan in the first half of 2020 to discuss regional economic challenges and opportunities, address financial and banking system in the region and, to consider the Draft Document on the ECO Clearing Union”.

ENDORSEMENT

ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN)

The Regional Planning Council of ECO at its 31st Meeting held on 12-21 January at ECO Secretariat in Tehran requested the Member States to announce hosting of the Experts Group Meeting on Banking and Financial Matters and Forming of ECO Clearing Union at an early date (paragraph-3, A. Sector: Trade and Investment, Work Programme 2021).

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

“NEEDS-BASED FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT FOR INSTALLING THE TRANSSHIPMENT FACILITIES, INSTRUMENTS AND TOOLS IN TAFTAN-ZAHEDAN RAILWAY STATION”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS	SSP	The concept proposal was discussed, at full length, at the Meeting of the Committee for Transport and Communications in the framework of the 31st Regional Planning Council (12-21 January 2021).
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OBJECTIVES

- To financially assess the existing transshipment capacities at the Taftan-Zahedan railway station in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for possibility of installing effective transshipment facilities.

IMPLEMENTING
AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2021
COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: Financial assessment of installation of transshipment facilities at Taftan-Zahedan railway station.

Output: Technical assessment of transshipment facilities at Taftan-Zahedan railway station.

Output: Employment generation assessment at Taftan-Zahedan railway segment.

Output: Alignment with TTFA of sustainability targets of the ITI Railway (at cross border).

Output: Validating the Final Report.

RECOMMENDATION

THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARCH 2021, ANKARA)

“In transit transport, some latest developments during last year are (i) Commercialization of Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran (KTI) railway (ii) Finalization of study reports of Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI) and Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) road corridors, (iii) **Resumption of ITI cargo train** and (iv) Development of ECO Guidelines under COVID conditions to facilitate trans-border movement of essential food and medical stuff” (Secretary General of ECO).

“The Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad commercial cargo train and proposed Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan railway links are important regional connectivity projects” (I.R. of Pakistan).

“The work on the resumption of the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad freight train services has reached its final phase” (Republic of Turkey).

ENDORSEMENT

ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN)

The 31st Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council mandated the ECO Secretariat to initiate a small sized study project on “*Needs-based financial and technical assessment for installing the transshipment facilities, instruments and tools in Taftan railway station*”, and recruit a specialist for implementation of the said Study Project in the first half of 2021 (paragraph-19, B. Sector: Transport and Communications, Work Programme 2021).

“DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC CORRIDOR ALONG THE KAZAKHSTAN-TURKMENISTAN-IRAN RAILWAY”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS SSP Project concept has been discussed at the Inception Meeting which, while discussing matters of the preceding project on the commercialization of the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran Railway Corridor, has pointed out the key highlights of the presently initiated one (10-11 April 2019, ECO Secretariat, Tehran) (paragraphs-2, 12 and 27, Report of the Inception Meeting).

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that all pre-requisite study and relevant arrangements for establishing the economic corridor be in place, based on the example of ECO's existing Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran (KTI) Railway.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY To be identified.
START DATE: 2021
COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: Phase I. Preparation of feasibility reports for the ECO Economic Corridor Development (ECD). Review of commercial operations of the KTI railway to justify ECO-ECD.

Output: Quantification of commercial operations of the KTI Railway (scope/volume/typology/topology of commercial transport services adequate for generation of additional employment in human settlements KTI).

Output: Review of results of testing of the KTI Railway's common Corridor Management Mechanism (CMM) for CMM's feasible utilization as an operational tool of the ECO-ECD.

Output: Modeling of the KTI Railway-patterned ECO-ECD.

Output: ECO Economic Corridor Policy.

Output: Master Plan of institutionalizing a Center for Integrated Transit-Transport Infrastructure and Logistics in the ECO region (to handle actual works on the ECO-ECD).

Output: Phase II. Consolidation of deliverables into a bankable project document for TA. Presenting the bankable project document.

RECOMMENDATION **THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARCH 2021, ANKARA (TURKEY))**

“We intend to work with our partners to create the conditions for a further intensification of trade and economic relations between our countries. We aim to increase the volume of trade turnover and develop it through diversification. To this end, Turkmenistan proposes to initiate the establishment of economic corridors in the ECO region” (Turkmenistan).

“In 2021 under the Chairmanship of Turkmenistan, we plan to turn the major ECO transit corridors into Economic corridors, single window on main ECO Border Crossing

points would be established, ECO dry ports would be linked up with the region's main sea ports and ECO Sea Hubs would be created" (Turkmenistan).

14th ECO Summit has also foreseen economic corridors "as a system of sustainable main routes designed for the movement of goods, services and investments and, in that regard, noted that "the most important component of the prospective system of economic corridors is the industrial cooperation, integration of production and technological potentials of the ECO countries and access to the joint major infrastructure projects" (Turkmenistan).

ENDORSEMENT

24TH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING (8-9 NOVEMBER 2019, ANTALYA (TURKEY))

"Encourage the Member States, relevant international organizations, financial institutions, national development funds and other stakeholders to actively support the inclusive, multi-dimensional connectivity projects and associated infrastructure in energy, transport, communications and industry that could potentially transform into economic corridors in the long-term perspective" (paragraph-24, Antalya Communiqué 2019).

ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN (Iran))

The ECO Regional Planning Council, at its 31st Meeting, "requested the Secretariat to conduct a small sized study project on "Development of Economic Corridor along the ECO KTI Railway Corridor" in 2021 and recruit a specialist for implementation of the said Study Project in the first half of 2021 (paragraph-12, B. Sector: Transport and Communications, Work Programme 2021).

"WAYS AND MEANS TO ESTABLISH AND DEVELOP ECO REGIONAL FIBER OPTIC NETWORK"

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS	SSP	Project concept was discussed at the 2 nd Meeting of Ministers of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) held on 4 December 2017, in Baku (Azerbaijan).
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OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To explore opportunities of establishing the ECO regional fiber optic network.
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IMPLEMENTING
AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2021
COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: Assessment of the existing capacities of the ECO member countries' fiber optic networks.
Output: Developing a model of the ECO regional fiber optic network.

RECOMMENDATIONS

THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARCH 2021, ANKARA (TURKEY))

“We see the ECO as a space network of convenient, cost-effective, high-tech transport and communication centers and routes in the Eurasian continent. Our countries have a number of successfully implemented projects in this sector. As the most recent examples we can mention commissioning of a power transmission line Kerki (Turkmenistan)- Shibergan (Afghanistan), opening of 30-km railway section between Akina-Andkhoy stations in Afghanistan, launching International fiber-optic communication system on the route Imamnazar (Turkmenistan) - Akina (Afghanistan) and Serhetabat (Turkmenistan) - Turgundi (Afghanistan), which were held in January this year” (Turkmenistan).

“To remain competitive, we must promote knowledge-based economies; expand expenditures on research and development; and focus on rapid digitalization especially extension of broadband to all parts of our countries” (I. R. Pakistan).

ENDORSEMENT

ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN (IRAN))

The ECO Regional Planning Council at its 31st Meeting “requested the Secretariat to implement, in consultation with the International Telecommunications Union (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” (paragraph-69, B. Sector: Transport and Communications, Work Programme 2021).

“ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMON GATEWAY AMONG ECO COUNTRIES–ECO GATE”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT

SSP

Project concept was presented to the 5th Meeting of the Heads of Reference Maritime

STATUS	<p>Organizations of the ECO Member States on 6 March 2019 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran.</p> <p>The concept proposal was consulted with project all parties involved. The Member States have been shared with the outcome of the project-pertinent consultations.</p>
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To link the dry ports with sea ports of the ECO region to provide easy access to landlocked countries to the deep sea international outlets.
IMPLEMENTING AGENCY	<p>Coastal countries and seven ECO landlocked developing countries (LDCs)</p> <p>START DATE: 2021</p> <p>COMPLETION DATE: 2021</p>
PROJECT RESULTS	<p>Output: Modeling of the demand-supply value chains, to increase intra-trade, improve Cross-border Trade Index (Cost & Time) and Business environment by logistics clustering.</p> <p>Output: Developing practical solutions for linking ECO countries' Free Trade Areas (FTAs) by logistics clustering and forming ECO Zones via a common entry at ECO gateways.</p> <p>Output: Drafting a comprehensive Master Plan for implementing ECO Gate Strategy and Plan of Action.</p> <p>Output: Consolidate the fulfilled project deliverables into a consolidated bankable Project Document to be presented to potential project partners.</p>
RECOMMENDATION	<p>THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARCH 2021, ANKARA)</p> <p>“In 2021, under the Chairmanship of Turkmenistan, we plan to turn the major ECO transit corridors into Economic corridors, single window on main ECO Border Crossing points would be established, ECO dry ports would be linked up with the region’s main sea ports and ECO Sea Hubs would be created” (Turkmenistan).</p>
ENDORSEMENT	<p>ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN)</p> <p>The 31st Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council “requested the Secretariat to hire a consultant/specialist for the 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-57, B. Sector: Transport and Communications. Work Programme 2021).</p>

“WAYS AND MEANS TO ESTABLISH DIRECT FLIGHTS AMONG CAPITAL CITIES AND MAJOR TOURIST DESTINATIONS WITHIN THE ECO REGION WITH A PRIORITY TO CHARTER FLIGHTS”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS SSP Project concept was discussed

OBJECTIVES • To develop tourism transport through direct flights among capital cities of the ECO countries and major tourist destinations.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY To be identified.
START DATE: 2021
COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULTS **Output:** Prefeasibility study on establishing direct charter flights among ECO countries capital cities.
Output: Prefeasibility study on establishing direct flights between major tourist destinations in the ECO region.

RECOMMENDATION **THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARCH 2021, ANKARA (TURKEY))**

“Along with Turkestan, we have **identified TOP-10 tourist destinations** in Kazakhstan that may be of interest to investors and tourists from your countries. Projects in these destinations will enjoy various forms of support from the government and municipalities” (Republic of Kazakhstan).

ENDORSEMENT **ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN (Iran))**

The ECO Regional Planning Council at its 31st Meeting “requested the Secretariat to implement a small sized study project on *“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-64, B. Sector: Transport and Communications, Work Programme 2021).

ENERGY, MINERALS AND ENVIRONMENT

“MANUFACTURING AND MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION OF THE SUSTAINABLE AND ADVANCED PHASE CHANGE MATERIAL-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES” (ECO-PCM)

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS SSP ECO-PCM project was initiated in 2021 to conduct it as a small sized project. The Secretariat, during 30th RPC Meeting (January 14-16, 2020, ECO Secretariat, Tehran) emphasized ECO-PCM to promote renewable energy cooperation in the ECO Region and invited Member States to closely cooperate with the Secretariat on the project. Project proposal has been prepared in March 2021 with a view to explore feedback of Member States.

The subject project is in pursuance of “ECO Vision 2025” towards increased access to modern, affordable, reliable and sustainable energy services, energy security and mitigation of negative externalities of the energy system (e.g. local pollution and GHG emissions) by creating an enabling environment for renewable and sustainable energy sources and robust energy efficiency markets and investments.

OBJECTIVES

- To explore the prerequisites and existing conditions in the ECO Region for the purposes of manufacturing and marketing of the sustainable and advanced phase change material-based renewable energy technologies (ECO-PCM), and
- To introduce the optimal approaches for the segments, applications and geographic distribution of the aforementioned.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

I.R. Iran
START DATE: March 2021
COMPLETION DATE: 2021

PROJECT RESULT

Output: Inception Report - Preliminary analysis of the project scope in strict adherence to ToR; adjusted Work Plan with self-explained time-schedules of each activity/project milestone, and additional (if any) project methodology to be employed in analyses.

Output: Baseline and Needs Assessment Report of the ECO-PCM Project.

Output: Feasibility study report of the ECO-PCM project.

RECOMMENDATION

ECO VISION 2025, IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

“ECO will focus on renewables and energy efficiency/conservation with a view to contribute to regional energy sustainability and resilience” (p.15, Table: Implementation Framework, Section Expected Outcomes: Enhanced policy coherence for mainstreaming objectives of the SDGs and UN sustainable energy for all, column 2, item (3)).

The 31st Regional Planning Council Meeting “appreciated the initiative of the Secretariat to conduct as Small Size Project on Manufacturing and Marketing Opportunities for Promotion of the Sustainable and Advanced Phase Change Material-based Renewable Energy Technologies and invite Member States to closely cooperate with the Secretariat and selected specialist” (paragraph-9, C. Energy, Minerals and Environment, Subsector: Energy, Work Programme 2021).

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY

“INDUSTRIAL ZONES/PARKS WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF ECO INDUSTRIAL ZONE”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS

SSP

Project concept was initiated in July 2020 as follows:

The **ECO Industrial Zone** will assign land slots up to an estimated area of 10 hectares to each of the ECO Member States under its auspices. Such allocations may be used by involved countries for their industrial activities to increase trade among the ECO trading partners.

Afghanistan is one of LDCs. As such it receives special and preferential treatment for a wider range of products. Most importantly, it obtains deeper trade tariff cuts under the General System of Preferences (GSP) and other preferential trade arrangements.

All ECO countries are linked to the GSP scheme at varying degrees. In this regard, the GSP serves as a catalyst of the prospective integrated growth in trade in industrial goods.

Through the proposed project, Afghanistan may strengthen its current standing in GSP while at the same time other countries of ECO will improve theirs. Else, it may share the greater rated advantages it receives from GSP with ECO countries in order to indirectly enhance ECO intra-regional trade exchange in industrial goods. In this, ECO countries will undoubtedly benefit in their capacities of beneficiaries of the proposed project’s impacts by using trade tariff advantages of GSP. Table 1 describes ECO Member States as the main beneficiaries of each of impacts to result from the GSP schemes that currently is in operation.

OBJECTIVES

The **objectives** to be pursued under the project are to: (i) set up the ECO Industrial Zone, (ii) integrate ECO countries’ special industrial zones under ECO’s framework to allow benefits through a single window to the involved countries; (iii) increase intra-regional trade among ECO countries with a focus on enhancement of Afghanistan’s export potential, (iv) ensure the trade benefits for ECO countries from the project in the form of re-vitalization of their intra-industries activities at cross border trade of industrial production goods through the ECO Industrial Zone.

IMPLEMENTING
AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2020
COMPLETION DATE:

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: Study on feasibility of the ECO Industrial Zone in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (EIZA).

Output: Complete set of the analyses containing (a) economic justification, (b) social justification of the ECO Industrial Zone's establishment and (c) bankability arrangements for the ECO Industrial Zone's operation. Market analysis on the increase intra-regional trade among ECO.

Output: Cost benefits analysis of ECO countries from EIZA. Concluding summary report.

ENDORSEMENT

THE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING (12-21 JANUARY 2021, TEHRAN (IRAN))

"The 31st ECO Regional Planning Council **invited Member States to support the ECO Industrial Zone in Afghanistan and requested the Secretariat the develop idea in close collaboration with Afghan authorities.** The Council requested the Government of Afghanistan to provide a feasibility study report as well as a detailed report on the facilities and advantages provided to the investors on this park. The Council appreciated the offer of The Ministry of Industry and Technology of Republic of Turkey's readiness to share its knowledge and experience in the area of Industrial Zones/Parks with the management of ECO Industrial Zone" (paragraph-34, C. Sector: Agriculture and Industry, Subsector: Industry, Work Programme 2021).

TOURISM

"ECO REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT"

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT
STATUS

SSP

Project proposal was initiated in 2018.

It was approved by 5th HLG and 3rd Ministerial on Tourism in 2019.

It was considered and approved by the 24th COM and the budget for implementation of the project was allocated.

The 29th and 30th and 31st RPCs endorsed the project. Thus, the project had been included in the ECO Work Programme 2019, 2020, 2021, for implementation.

PROJECT

Following the 13th ECO Summit, during the first quarter of 2017, all ECO Members welcomed the **ECO Vision 2025**, in which they stressed on the need to develop peaceful

BACKGROUND

and green tourism.

The project proposal was approved by the **5th High Level Expert Group Meeting (HLWGM) on Tourism** and by **3rd Ministerial Meeting on Tourism** in Khujand in 2019. Henceforth, the project proposal was also considered and endorsed by the 24th ECO Council of Ministers on 8-9 November 2019 in Antalya (Turkey).

OBJECTIVES

- To draw up a Roadmap to meet strategic objectives set forth in the ECO Vision 2025.
- To align with the ECO principles of Sustainable Tourism Development.
- To contribute towards sustainable socioeconomic development of the ECO countries focusing on the realization of natural and cultural tourism resources of the region as well as vast unexploited relevant potential of the Member States.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2019
COMPLETION DATE: exp. 2020

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: "ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development"

RECOMMENDATION

THE 24TH ECO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING (COM) (8-9 November 2019, Antalya(Turkey))

"To implement ten bankable projects within the period of three months during 2020 with the budget of up to 10,000USD from the ECO Reserve Fund" (paragraph-28, Report of the 24th COM).

"Acknowledge the efforts of the Secretariat in developing ECO Regional Strategy on Tourism; and Encourage the Member States to play an active role in the activities of the Secretariat aimed at promoting regional Tourism" (paragraph-34, Antalya Communiqué 2019).

ENDORSEMENT

THE 29th REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (17-20 December 2018, Tehran (ECO Secretariat))

The 29th ECO Regional Planning Council "welcomed the offer of two new Projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of full implementation of the expected Strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing a peaceful and green tourism destination, namely; (i) ECO Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development and (ii) Tour operators network in ECO region"

THE 30TH ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (14-16 January 2020, Tehran (ECO

Secretariat))

ENDORSEMENT

The 30th ECO Regional Planning Council “welcomed the offer of new Projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of full implementation of the expected Strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing a peaceful and green tourism destination 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 Tours operators network and (iii) ECO Tourism Visa” (paragraph-3, E. Sector: Tourism, Work Programme 2021) .

ENDORSEMENT

THE 31ST ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 January 2021, Tehran, ECO Secretariat))

The 31st ECO Regional Planning Council Meeting “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 (paragraph-8, E. Section: Tourism, Work Programme 2021).

“ECO TOURISM ROUTES AND PACKAGES”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS

SSP

Project proposal was initiated in 2018.

It was approved by 5th HLG and 3rd Ministerial on Tourism in 2019.

It was considered and approved by the 24th COM and the budget for implementation of the project was allocated.

The 29th and 30th and 31st RPCs endorsed the project. Thus, the project had been included in the ECO Work Programme 2019, 2020, 2021, for implementation.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Following the 13th ECO Summit, during the first quarter of 2017, all ECO Members welcomed the **ECO Vision 2025**, in which they stressed on the need to develop peaceful and green tourism.

The project proposal was approved by the **5th High Level Expert Group Meeting (HLWGM) on Tourism** and by **3rd Ministerial Meeting on Tourism** in Khujand in 2019. Henceforth, the project proposal was also considered and endorsed by the 24th ECO Council of Ministers on 8-9 November 2019 in Antalya (Turkey).

OBJECTIVES

- To develop tourism routes in the ECO region.
- To develop tour packages in the ECO region.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2019
COMPLETION DATE: exp. 2020

PROJECT RESULTS

Output: Development of the “ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development”

RECOMMENDATION

24TH ECO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING (8-9 November 2019, Antalya(Turkey))

“To implement ten bankable projects within the period of three months during 2020 with the budget of up to 10,000USD from the ECO Reserve Fund” (paragraph-28, Report of the 24th COM).

ENDORSEMENT

THE 29TH ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (17-20 December 2018, Tehran (ECO Secretariat))

The 29th ECO Regional Planning Council “welcomed the offer of two new Projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of full implementation of the expected Strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing a peaceful and green tourism destination, namely; (i) ... and (ii) **Tour operators’ network in ECO region**”.

THE 30TH ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (14-16 January 2020, Tehran (ECO Secretariat))

ENDORSEMENT

The 30th ECO Regional Planning Council “welcomed the offer of new Projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of full implementation of the expected Strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing a peaceful and green tourism destination which were considered by the 24th Meeting of Council of Ministers on November 2019 in Antalya namely; (i) ... (ii) **ECO Tours operators network** and (iii) ...” (paragraph-3, E. Section: Tourism, Work Programme 2020).

ENDORSEMENT

THE 31ST ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 January 2021, Tehran, ECO

Secretariat))

The 31st ECO Regional Planning Council Meeting “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) ..., (ii) **ECO Tourism Routes and Packages**, (iii).... (paragraph-8, E. Section: Tourism, Work Programme 2021).

“TOUR OPERATORS CHAIN AND CONNECTIVITY”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS	SSP	Project proposal was initiated in 2020. The project concept was endorsed by the 31 st RPCs endorsed the project. Thus, the project was included in the ECO Work Programme 2021, for implementation.
OBJECTIVES		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To develop tour operators’ product chains,• To map tour operators’ connectivity routes.
IMPLEMENTING AGENCY		To be identified. START DATE: 2021 COMPLETION DATE: exp. 3 months in 2021.
PROJECT RESULTS		Output: Development of the ten top competitive tour operators’ products. Output: Development of tour operators’ intra-ECO regional connectivity routes.
DECISION		24TH ECO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING (8-9 November 2019, Antalya(Turkey) “To implement ten bankable projects within the period of three months during 2020 with the budget of up to 10,000USD from the ECO Reserve Fund” (paragraph-28, Report of the 24 th COM).
RECOMMENDATION		THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARH 2021, ANKARA (TURKEY)) “Along with Turkestan, we have identified TOP-10 tourist destinations in Kazakhstan that may be of interest to investors and tourists from your countries. Projects in these destinations will enjoy various forms of support from the government and

municipalities” (Republic of Kazakhstan).

ENDORSEMENT

THE 31ST ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 January 2021, Tehran, ECO Secretariat))

The 31st ECO Regional Planning Council Meeting “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**. (paragraph-8, E. Section: Tourism, Work Programme 2021).

“ECO TOURISM VISA”

UNDER CONSIDERATION

PROJECT CURRENT STATUS

SSP

Project concept was initiated in January 2020.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The 30th ECO Regional Planning Council (14-16 January 2020, Tehran) “welcomed the offer of new Projects in line with ECO Vision 2025 proposed by ECO Secretariat with the aim of full implementation of the expected Strategic objectives of the Vision and establishing a peaceful and green tourism destination 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 Tours operators network and (iii) ECO Tourism Visa” (paragraph-3, E. Sector: Tourism, Work Programme 2020).

The Council also “suggested the Secretariat to work in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Member States to implement the project on ECO Tourism Visa” (ibid).

OBJECTIVES

- To facilitate tourism in the ECO region by providing a common ECO visa sticker.
-

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

To be identified.
START DATE: 2020
COMPLETION DATE: exp. 2020

PROJECT RESULT

Output: Ensuring prerequisite arrangements for the introduction of a single ECO tourist visa.

RECOMMENDATION

THE 14TH ECO SUMMIT (4 MARCH 2021, ANKARA (REPUBLIC OF TURKEY))

“In the tourism sector, the ECO tourism action plan as well as ECO major tour operators’ networks, ECO tourism routes and destination chains, and ECO single visa for inbound tourists as well as designing virus free tourism system are in preparation process to be launched in post COVID situation” (Secretary General of ECO).

ENDORSEMENT

THE 31ST ECO REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (12-21 January 2021, Tehran, ECO Secretariat))

The ECO Regional Planning Council “requested the Member States to consider hosting the ECO High Level Expert Meeting on Visa Facilitation virtually in 2021. The Council also suggested the Secretariat to work in coordination with the Member States to implement the project on **ECO Tourism Visa**” (paragraph-27, E. Sector: Tourism, Work Programme 2021).

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Small Sized Project initiation is currently under process in the aftermath of one, which has been completed in March 2021.

The HRSD Directorate has duly prepared the project proposal, which was considered in the 15th Meeting of Project Monitoring Group of ECO on June 14th, 2021. The title of the project is “Feasibility Study on the Risk Reduction in Information Systems”.