

**Working Paper on Energy, Minerals and Environment**

**32nd Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC)**

Drafted by the ECO Secretariat

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The subject Working Paper for the 32nd RPC Meeting comprises three major chapters – energy, minerals and environment as well as the supporting documents. All major chapters of the Working Paper were structured to decouple priority areas from the routine activities and ECO’s outreach. Each of these sub-chapters (priority areas, routine activities and international engagements) is composed of the ECO Vision approach and target, background information, status of activities, recent progress since the preceding RPC, and proposed/recommended activities to be focused in 2022. The sub-chapters also entail the new project proposals, decisions and documents, as well as the relevant events required for undertaking those activities within the framework of expected outcomes of “ECO Vision 2025”.

The paper is sought to facilitate the proceedings of RPC Meeting and help the Member States to formulate its final outcome documents. Beyond the uptake of priority areas, routine sectoral activities and international engagements, the paper encompasses the supporting documents, notably the Priority Project Proposals, Draft Calendar of Events for 2022 and the Implementation Status of “ECO Vision 2025”. For more perceptivity and concordance, the Member States are kindly advised to review
Working Papers consistently, along with the aforementioned components.

As regards the role of specific sectors outlined in the major chapters, “ECO Vision 2025” reaffirmed energy as a priority area of cooperation and laid down the “enhancement of energy security and sustainability through wider energy access and trade” as one of ECO’s core strategic objectives. Over the past few years, ECO continued to mainstream the sustainable energy and electricity sectors in its overall energy agenda in pursuance with “ECO Vision 2025”, and recent regional energy trends and developments. This focus was reflected in advancement of two flagship ECO Projects, namely the Establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market and Establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center, both of which are flagged in the subject Working Paper.

The recent global developments in the minerals markets are interrelated with various sectors, particularly its environmental impact, sustainability in resource use, as well as advanced use of technologies within spatial data infrastructure and geographic information system. ECO needs to leverage its huge potential for minerals cooperation. This potential, along with the available frameworks and agreed initiatives provides ample opportunities for promoting ECO cooperation in this area.

Meanwhile, the environment and impacts of climate change was designated as a cross-sectoral priority of ECO to be seriously considered by all ECO activities and events at different levels. Over the past few years, ECO’s environmental profile has increased steadily. ECO has been granted the Observer Status in the respective UN organizations/entities, namely UNFCCC, UNEA, UNCCD, IPCC, UNFF, and UNCBD, and thus it has been contributing to their agenda. The Working Paper highlighted the Project to Combat Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region as the pivotal and meantime, only operational project in the subject dimension in the past three years.

# ENERGY

# Overall status

ECO is attributed as a suitable platform and regional node for mobilizing policy-makers and other relevant stakeholders across the region to formulate the coherent, equitable and sustainable frameworks needed to achieve the long-term regional energy sustainability. Nevertheless, in its third decade of evolution, ECO`s potential for advancement of the regional energy agenda still remains fully untapped.

The adoption of “ECO Vision 2025” set out the long- and mid-term regional objectives and expected outcomes in the energy sector, while Vision’s Implementation Framework identified the required action, timeframes, result areas and accountabilities.

The new “ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation/Plan of Actions 2030” adopted on June 24, 2021 at the 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting addresses policy coherence and crafting its linkages to realize “ECO Vision 2025” objectives.

Over the past few years, ECO energy agenda has been undergoing the paradigm shift towards transformation to sustainable energy. This regional mainstream predominantly targets on unlocking ECO Region’s tremendous cooperation opportunities in renewables and energy efficiency and create an enabling environment for robust sustainable energy markets and investments.

 In pursuance of “ECO Vision 2025”, institutionalizing the transformation to renewable as well as sustainable energy sources have been conducted throughout establishment process of ECO Clean Energy Center with partnership of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). 25th Meeting of Council of Ministers adopted The Charter on establishment of the Centre with its headquarters in Baku and agreed to establish the Ad-Hoc mechanism for assisting operationalisation with participation of Member States and international partners. During 2022, operational phase of the Center will necessitate enhanced partnership among all stakeholders to contribute fully-fledged functioning of the Center as one of the strategic objectives of regional energy cooperation agenda in ECO.

The regional electricity trade and connectivity are conceived to generate maximum benefits to all ECO Member States, whether producer, consumer or transit countries, as well as other stakeholders beyond. In the past period, ECO made certain headway in consolidating electricity trade initiatives in our region and the Project on establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM). Constituting one of the flagship project initiatives of the Organization, ECO-REM could be instrumental in contributing to the long-term regional energy sustainability but still needs to be promoted through coherent approach and complementarities.

 The new ECO Energy Strategy and Action Plan 2030 have focused on the exact key areas to introduce policy coherence to achieve the targets serving to establish regional electricity market.

One of the important steps is launching the feasibility study which is also supported by 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting through the Roadmap for its realization. In this regard, having clear outcomes in Iran-Turkey and ECO-REM Expert Group Meetings are key factors to move forward in subject project.

 The role of international partners is instrumental in exploriby 4tng best international practices and in attracting financial and technical support to the ECO-REM Project.

Meanwhile, a number of relevant formats and platforms exist within the ECO framework for unleashing huge partnership opportunities in hydrocarbons and enhancement of ECO cooperation in the fields of oil, gas and petrochemicals. Based on the new ECO Energy Strategy and its Action Plan 2030 has introduced valuable opportunity for Member States how to best streamline oil and gas cooperation within ECO and focused on new initiatives and projects in realization of ECO Vision 2025 in lieu with national agenda.

The Secretariat continues its proactive cooperative policy and dialogue with the International Energy Charter, UNIDO, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and other partners with a view to identify possible strategic partnership frameworks, to get their financial/technical support to ECO projects and activities, as well as to expand ECO outreach and visibility.

# Priority area 1: Implementation of ECO Strategy For Energy Cooperation/Plan of Actions 2030, Decisions of 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting.

# ECO Vision approach and target

Achieving strategic objective in energy, requires a supportive policy environment which shall include, among others, broad political consensus and involvement of all stakeholders from public and private sectors. Expected Outcome III, in Energy part of Vision document stipulates that “Enhanced policy coherence for mainstreaming objectives of the SDGs and ‘UN sustainable energy for all’ will be encouraged”.

## Background information

In pursuance of the decisions of the 28th, 29th, 30th and 31th Meetings of RPC, the Secretariat coordinated with the Member States to organize the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy and 4th HLEG on Energy in 2021.

The relevant sectoral ECO platforms are expected to extensively deliberate the details of the new PoA/Strategy on Energy Cooperation for the next multi-year period. Most notably, the 4th High Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting on Energy has sought, inter alia, to map out the sustainable energy and electricity-related components of this new multi-year ECO PoA/Strategy for Energy Cooperation, and mainstream the sustainable energy in the regional energy agenda of ECO. The 4th HLEG has served to be as senior officials meeting in making preparations for the 4th Ministerial Meeting on Energy, hosted virtually by Azerbaijan in 2021 to finalize and endorse the sustainable energy and electricity-related components of the PoA/Strategy.

The 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy provided a timely decision-making platform for streamlining energy agenda of ECO with the strong focus on sustainable energy and electricity. The Meeting stimulated high-level policy dialogue with a view to enhancing regional synergies, promoting ongoing/expected activities and projects in the energy field, as well as developing policy guidelines for realization of energy-related components of “ECO Vision 2025”.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

 The preparation of new ECO Energy Strategy and its Action Plan had been elaborated through small size project by hiring consultants from Member States and introduced for reviewing and discussion at the 1st Meeting of the ECO regional network of research institutions/centers and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies, held virtually by the Secretariat on April 27, 2021.

4th High Level Expert Group (HLEG) Meeting finalized and proposed said document for approval by the 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan on 24th June, 2021. The document had been approved by the ECO Energy Ministers.

The Declaration adopted by the 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting serves as decisions to be followed up until the 5th Meeting.

## Expected outcome and focused issues/events for 2022.

The relevant sectoral ECO platforms are expected to extensively deliberate the

details of the new ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation/Plan of Actions 2030 for the next multi-year period.

 ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation/Plan of Actions 2030 which focuses on the following key components/pillars/clusters, all of which are interlinked with each other to certain degrees:

1. Mainstreaming Sustainable Energy Transition
2. Energy Security
3. Regional Electricity Market
4. Investment in Energy Sector
5. Downstream energy sector: Consolidating regional cooperation and raising competitiveness
6. Energy Research, development, innovation and technologies
7. Energy Access and Energy Poverty Eradication
8. International cooperation on energy
9. Monitoring mechanisms

The implementation of this new Strategy and Action Plan 2030 shall be the responsibility of the concerned authorities in the member states. In order to facilitate the implementation, each member state shall designate a national focal point to coordinate and oversea the implementation of its in-country components. The management and coordination of the program shall be pursued by the ECO Secretariat, in collaboration with national focal points and relevant institutions/authorities in Member states, and coordinate and closely monitor the activities of the action program.

Within the period of realization of 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting, the Secretariat will endeavour to provide to its member states possible support and promote to attract best international practices to address other points indicated in the declaration as a conclusion of aforesaid Meeting such as in following issues:

* Production operations and distribution of oil and natural gas, petrochemical and petroleum products, expansion energy transit, swap and to develop electricity networks;
* Sustainable energy, low carbon economy, transitional fuels, renewables, energy efficiency etc.;
* Green economy and positive impact on climate change efforts.

Taking into consideration 14th and 15th ECO Summit, 25th Meeting of Council of Ministers, 4th Energy Ministerial conclusions and adopted documents, particularly ECO Energy Strategy and Action Plan 2030, ECO Vision 2025 Midterm review, The 5th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting may play crucial platform to monitor and decide for further actions for the development of regional energy cooperation to contribute to the overall sustainable development of ECO countries.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may recommend to all Member States complement the ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation and Action Plan 2030 to their national programs/strategies for the development of regional energy cooperation and ask Member States to submit developments in their interests and needs in regional energy landscape for further assessment of progress in ECO Energy Strategy.
* The Council may request Member States to review ECO Energy Action Plan 2030 and propose projects to the Secretariat with the view of its implementation.
* The Council may encourage Member States to convey ideas/proposals/recommendations for the stocktaking that the Secretariat would prepare project proposals to follow up the decisions of 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy.
* The Council may invite volunteer Member State to host 5th HLEG and 5th Energy Ministerial Meeting taking into consideration 14th and 15th ECO Summit, 25th Meeting of Council of Ministers, 4th Energy Ministerial conclusions and adopted documents, particularly ECO Energy Strategy and Action Plan 2030, ECO Vision 2025 Midterm review, in order to monitor and decide for further actions on the development of regional energy cooperation.

## Area conclusion

 To address supportive policy environment and policy coherence the 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting held in 2021 adopted fundamentally new ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation and its Action Plan 2030. Along with it, the Ministerial conclusion has set up directions of priority areas as a target for further regional energy cooperation particularly in fossil-fuels, sustainable energy development, power trade and green economy with impact on climate change.

# *C. Priority area 2:* Sustainable Energy Transition and Establishment of the ECO Clean Energy Centre.

# ECO Vision approach and target

ECO Member Countries will be encouraged for deployment of environmental-friendly energy technologies in order to mitigate adverse environmental footprints of the energy transfer and trade.

More diverse and resilient energy architecture in the Region will be supported through transformation to renewable, as well as cleaner and sustainable energy sources. ECO Clean Energy Centre will be established.

To the widest extent possible, relevant energy efficiency goals and objectives will be achieved at the ECO regional level.

*(As outlined in Expected outcomes (iv), (v) and (vii) respectively of "Section C. Energy" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

## Background information

ECO Experts Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources (EGRES) is main expert level structure to discuss development of regional cooperation agenda in renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. The last - 3rd Meeting of ECO Experts Group on RES was held on 15-16 September 2014 in Kabul, Afghanistan. This Meeting resolved on boosting cooperation among the ECO Member States in the field of RES, as well as raising awareness and enhancing involvement of key stakeholders to overcome the challenges/obstacles confronted by the ECO Member States. The Meeting also agreed on the need for concrete project proposals on RES and energy efficiency. It was also proposed to establish of Virtual University Network (VUN) among the relevant academic circles of the Member States, which would contribute to awareness raising and knowledge sharing. I. R. Afghanistan expressed its readiness to coordinate VUN`s activities. The Republic of Tajikistan supported this idea at the meeting.

According to the last 5 years’ decisions in RPC several countries, particularly Iran, Pakistan and Azerbaijan had volunteered to hold subject meeting, but mostly due to lack of quorum, it had to be postponed.

The rationale behind the proposal of holding 4th EGRES may predominantly focus on current situation of RES in Member States, along with discussing new possible initiatives, as well as taking precise actions emanating from Vision 2025, new ECO Energy Strategy and Its Action Plan 2030, as well as developments in regional and global scene, notably in the activities in line with the global trends and UN 2030 Agenda, within the relevant energy and environment-related SDGs.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

31st RPC had proposed Member States to volunteer on hosting 4th EGRES, within particular appeal for consideration either by Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan. Attempts of Secretariat to hold by itself have resulted in lack of quorum in May and June of 2021. The Republic of Uzbekistan has expressed a desire to hold the 4th Expert Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources (EGRES), on October 26, 2021. The event was postponed again, due to the need for enriching the program and convening more stakeholders from Member States, as well as international partners. (Secretariat’s Note Verbale No. EME/2021/1143 dated 26 October 2021). The Republic of Uzbekistan has expressed readiness to hold it in 2022. Meantime, new ECO Energy Strategy and Its Action Plan 2030, along with conclusions of 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting has given an impetus to initiate and put forward new projects for the development of clean energy agenda in Member States.

## Expected outcome and focused issues/events for 2022.

Volatility in price of fossil-fuels with drastic increase during 2021 once more proved commercial viability and affordability of renewables. Latest development in the national energy agenda of Member States reaffirmed their interest and need to develop renewable energy sources. It is right time to reap the high potential in renewables in ECO region through putting forward bolder targets in attaining regional cooperation. Holding of 4th EGRES meeting, discussing and deciding on deployment of public-private partnerships can play catalytic role to contribute regional cooperation agenda in renewables. Project financing scheme proposed via ECO Secretariat should be utilized maximum way for making a progress in the needs and interests by Member States.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may encourage Member States to actively participate in the ECO Experts Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources (EGRES) to address their regional cooperation agenda for mainstreaming sustainable energy transition to the cleaner sources.
* The Council may request the Republic of Uzbekistan to confirm the date(s) and other details for the 4th Meeting of the ECO Experts Group on Renewable Energy Sources (EGRES), to be organized preferably in the first half of 2022.
* The Council may consider that Member States would submit project proposals/conceptualized papers for stocktaking of the Secretariat to follow up the needs and interests Member States in regional cooperation on renewables to conduct project-oriented deeds of the Organization.

**Establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center**

## Background information

 The idea of establishment of the ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) was pioneered by the ECO Secretariat as the outcome of the ECO-UNIDO over the past few years. ECO Clean Energy Centre is widely considered as a promising future element of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC) (coordinated by UNIDO) being implemented across the globe.

The subject initiative was reflected in the “ECO Vision 2025” and its Implementation Framework, which stipulate the establishment of the Centre up to 2025 by ECO Secretariat/Member States. The UN-ECO Resolutions on Cooperation adopted by UNGA sessions in 2014 and 2016 respectively welcomed the idea of establishment of the Centre with possible assistance of UN agencies. ECO decision-making bodies, including 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th RPC Meetings mandated ECO Secretariat to continue and double ECO-UNIDO dialogue. Dushanbe Communiqué of the 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting (17th April 2018) emphasized inter alia the ongoing initiative of establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre. The First Draft Project Document on “Preparatory Phase for the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO)”, jointly elaborated by UNIDO and ECO Secretariat was circulated via Secretariat’s Note Verbale No. EME/CECECO/2018/654 dated 4 June 2018 among the Member States for their views and comments in terms of launching the preparatory phase of the project. The 233rd CPR Meeting (11 September 2018, Tehran) decided to launch the Preparatory Phase of the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre and approved the allocation of 50000 USD from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) as a partial financing of the Preparatory Phase. In view of the aforementioned, the 29th RPC Meeting (17-20 December 2018, Tehran) noted with satisfaction the steady progress/ development of the Project. Most recently, Antalya Communiqué of the 24th and 25th COM Meetings supported the steady progress in promoting the subject Project in view of the launching and implementation of its preparatory phase, as an explicit endeavour to contribute to the sustainable energy transition in the ECO Region and tasked the Secretariat to map out and implement the first operative phase of the Project. 30th Working Programme of RPC supported Secretariat’s active engagement to undertake necessary actions for preparatory phase and encouraged Member States to render all possible cooperation to implement it. The project deliverables for preparatory phase such as Baseline and Needs Assessment, as well as Feasibility Study Reports have been validated at the virtual meeting jointly organized by ECO Secretariat and UNIDO.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting reaffirmed its support on the establishment of the Center and decided to finalize applications on candidate countries to host the Center till august 2021. The Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkey have submitted their official nominations for hosting the Center. Technical assessment conducted by UNIDO has given to the Republic of Azerbaijan highest point as a nominee to host the Center. 259th CPR meeting decided to include in the agenda of 25th SOM to consider adoption of the Charter of Center and seeking consensus amongst Member States to select host country at the 25th Council of Ministers of ECO. The 25th Council welcomed the offers by the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkey for hosting the ECO Clean Energy Center and congratulated the Republic of Azerbaijan being selected as host of the Centre, and adopted its Charter. The COM also agreed to establish the Ad-hoc Mechanism for Assisting Operationalization of the Center with participation of abovementioned three countries, other interested Member States, the ECO Secretariat and with possible collaboration of UNIDO, and other relevant international organizations, to expedite preparatory work for early operationalization of the Center.

## Expected outcome / Focused issues for 2022.

ECO Secretariat will continue its deep engagement with UNIDO as well as other ongoing and potential international donors/institutions in launching the process of first operational phase on establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO). If successfully launched following tasks should be undertaken:

* Signing of Center’s Charter by host and interested Member States, as well as other regulatory procedures to enable launching of operational phase;
* Fund-raising among interested stake-holders from Member States and other international partners, particularly for seed-funding;
* To facilitate work of ad-hoc mechanism composed of Member States and international partners agreed at 25th COM for assisting operationalization of the Center;
1. **Secretariat's recommendations**
* The Council may request Member States actively collaborate with the Secretariat, the project partners and other potential international partners with a view to move forward successfully for launching of First Operational Phase of Project on Establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center.
* The Council may encourage host country – the Republic of Azerbaijan and other interested Member States to consider signing and soonest ratification of Charter of ECO Clean Energy Center in a view to timely operationalise the functioning of the Center.
* The Council may task the Secretariat to undertake necessary actions to follow up 25th COM decisions on establishment of CECECO and request Member States for active cooperation accordingly.

## Area conclusion

Over the past few years, the ECO energy agenda has been undergoing the paradigm shift towards transformation to sustainable energy in pursuance of “ECO Vision 2025” and global trends. This process continued in 2021 in view of the steady progress of the Project on establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO).

In case of favorable circumstances, subject center may be opened as soon as three Member States will sign and ratify the Charter of CECECO and fully operational. ECO Member States can avail the opportunities proposed from ECO projects financing schemes to conduct projects in regional energy cooperation for the development of renewable energy sources, as well as transition to sustainable energy. 4th EGRES meeting should also be used to move the process forward.

# Priority area 3: Establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM)

## ECO Vision approach and target

**Efforts will be made for harmonization and alignment towards regional power/electricity market within the ECO Region for harnessing benefits of larger integrated systems.**

*(As outlined in Expected outcome (i) of "Section C. Energy" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

## Background information

While representing an ECO’s flagship energy project, the establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) aims at harmonizing and merging the electricity markets in our Region. It could hence be instrumental in contributing to the long-term regional energy sustainability but still needs to be promoted through coherent approach and complementarities.

The initiative of establishment of ECO-REM was made at the 2nd High Level Experts Group Meeting on Energy (September 2012, Ankara) by I.R. Iran, which proposed to host a Meeting/Workshop on the subject issue in 2013. The 23rd RPC Meeting (6-8 May 2013, Tehran) emphasized the importance of establishment of ECO REM and requested the Member States to organize relevant events to realize the subject idea.

The 1st Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM, hosted by I.R. Iran, was held on 5-6 November 2013 in the ECO Secretariat. Beyond the ECO Member States, the representatives of the Nord Pool Spot, IsDB, ECO-TDB and ECO-CCI also participated at the Meeting. The major outcome and recommendation of the Meeting was the implementation of the initiative on establishment of ECO REM as a pilot project, initially with the participation of Iran and Turkey and later with other interested ECO Member States for the maximum benefit of the ECO Region.

Since the inception of the ECO-REM Project at the 1st Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM, the following notable achievements have been made:

* ECO Secretariat was engaged in bilateral consultations with Iran and Turkey in May 2014 in Ankara and Tehran;
* 1st Trilateral Meeting between Iran, Turkey and ECO Secretariat on ECO-REM was held in Ankara on 25-26 September 2014. The Meeting agreed to continue regular consultations at experts/managers levels within the existing framework, as well as, through new platforms for dialogue to be introduced by the ECO Secretariat;
* The 2nd Iran-Turkey Bilateral Meeting on ECO-REM was organized on 10-11 May 2016 in Shiraz, which has produced following key recommendations:
* Identification of criteria and guidelines for hiring 3 consultants (2 local and one international) to prepare Feasibility Study on establishment of ECO-REM;
* Getting approval of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives for funding the Feasibility Study from ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund, with possibility of Iran and Turkey providing additional seed funding for hiring local consultants.
* Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for hiring international and local consultants for preparation of a feasibility study on establishment of ECO-REM has been developed and circulated by the Secretariat via the Note Verbale No: EME/ECO-REM/TOR/2017/526 dated 18 April 2017.
* ECO Secretariat in cooperation with the Energy Charter Secretariat and the World Bank Group co-organized the Roundtable on Stimulating Energy Investments on 12 October 2016 on margins of the 23rd World Energy Congress in Istanbul.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

* To promote this project, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for hiring international and local consultants for preparation of a Feasibility Study on establishment of ECO-REM is sought to be approved. The Secretariat has been exploring suitable mechanisms with the Member States and the international partner – Energy Charter to define the roadmap for expediting the launch of the project. These mechanisms notably entail parallel uptake of this project in both bilateral and multilateral platforms as well as capacity building activities on the relevant international experience. The Secretariat conveyed the Note Verbale No. EME/ECO-REM/2019 dated 28 November 2019 recalling the importance of the Project and inviting all Member States to be actively involved in mapping out its future roadmap.
* For introducing best practices in the various regions of the globe, the Virtual Capacity Building Technical Workshop titled “Perspectives and Challenges of Regional Electricity Markets: Harnessing Trade and Investment Opportunities” was jointly organized by the Secretariat and International Energy Charter on 14 October 2020. As for multilateral dimension Secretariat in collaboration with Energy Charter developed ToR for hiring consultants. It is distributed amongst Member States and introduced it at this technical workshop. None of Member States expressed objection on the said document.

 The 3rd Iran-Turkey Bilateral Meeting on launching pilot project of ECO-REM was organized in May 2021, (Azerbaijan also was invited as an observer for possible contribution in the future to the project). The Sides agreed to task Secretariat to update the ToR of the Project. By Note Verbal EME/Energy/3rd ECO-REM/2021/1174 the Secretariat conveyed updated ToR and requested to review it till certain time period stipulating by no response as an approval of updates.

* 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting on June 24, 2021 has adopted roadmap on realisation of the ECO-REM project assigning concrete steps to achieve the goal. Also, declaration of ministerial meeting emphasizes the need for expanded efforts towards electricity market.
* ECO avails another format to discuss ECO-REM initiative, which is the Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM. Tajikistan expressed its readiness to host the 2nd Experts Group Meeting and the Secretariat’s consultations with the relevant Tajik authorities are underway to organize this possibly landmark event. Specifically, the Secretariat conveyed several Note Verbales reminding the subject meeting.

## Expected outcome for 2022

* The Secretariat is expected to encourage and coordinate organization of the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM respectively in 2022 with a view to approve the ToR of Iran-Turkey pilot project with its possible expansion and define the roadmap for further action.
* The Secretariat is supposed to explore the possibilities of funding the subject ToR with the possibility of providing equal seed financing by the Member States, ECO Secretariat from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF), as well as possible regional/international donors. Subject to the needs and requirements, the Secretariat may also appeal the relevant financial/development agencies for additional fund-raising.
* One of the dimensions of project either bilateral or multilateral can be launched upon availability of funds.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may call on the Member States to enhance their partnership within the Project on establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market and invite them to render all necessary support on implementation of flagship Project.
* The Council may request the Republic of Tajikistan to confirm the dates and other details of the 2nd Experts Group Meeting virtually on establishment of ECO-REM, suggested to be organized in the first half of 2022.
* The Council may recommend validation of Iran-Turkey Bilateral pilot project at the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM for further smooth and partial financing procedure through ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund

## Area conclusion

* The electricity sector has been mainstreaming in the overall energy agenda of ECO in parallel with the sustainable energy in recent years. This focus on the electricity sector was manifested in initiation and advancement of the ECO’s flagship project, namely the Establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM). It is evident that the regional electricity trade and connectivity is expected to generate maximum benefits to all ECO Member States, whether producer, consumer or transit countries. In this vein, ECO Member States have recognized the vast untapped potential for increased electricity trade on regional and inter-regional levels.
* ECO made certain headway in consolidating electricity trade initiatives in our region and the ECO-REM Project. To make the project realistic and efficiently implemented step by step approach will be less costly and easier to implement. The first step towards realization of the project should be following objectives to explore and achieve: analyze the existing conditions in the ECO region for establishing the ECO-REM through harmonizing and merging electricity markets of interested member countries given a possibility of further expanding it onto the ECO region; advise the ECO Member States on optimal approaches to facilitate electricity trade exchange via relevant trading arrangements and, develop a set of recommendations on the enabling framework, institutional enhancements, policy and regulatory environment as well as capacity building; identify the least-cost energy development options, including line routing, dispatch and control scheme, project cost, implementation plan, functional specifications, operations and maintenance plan and associated risks.

# E.: Other priorities/activities on energy

## ECO Vision approach and target

**Energy trade, production, consumption and transit patterns will be enhanced**

*(As outlined in Expected outcome (ii) of "Section C. Energy" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

## Background Information

* ECO Region contains one third of the global oil and gas resources. Therefore, diversification of energy connectivity plays a fundamental role in our region taken the unique geostrategic location and the land-locked status of the majority of ECO Member States. Intra- and inter-regional connectivity in ECO Region is enhancing through implementation of large-scale inter-regional energy infrastructure projects under different multilateral formats. All these efforts will consequently boost trade across the wider region, which will also have a multiplying effect for ECO Member States. In this vein, through contributing to these endeavours, ECO may thereby find its niche in this complicated regional energy architecture, based on the realistic re-assessment of its advantages.

* ECO enjoys a number of relevant formats and platforms for enhancement of ECO cooperation in the fields of oil, gas and petrochemicals. Among them are the High Level Experts Group Meeting and the Meeting of ECO Public and Private Sector Energy/Petrochemical Consortiums. Their activities target on developing sustainable frameworks, particularly in energy trade and investments for enhanced contribution of regional energy cooperation to the existing patterns in the ECO Region. Furthermore, focusing ECO resources on key connectivity projects would demonstrate our robustness and resilience as a whole.
* The Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) is initiator of framework of “ECO Public and Private Sector Energy/Petrochemical Consortium/Companies”. 1st meeting were held in 16-17 August 2016, Tehran, by conclusion to propose “Roadmap for Establishment of the ECO Energy Consortium” and establishment of “ECO Refinery Association”. 2 member states Kyrgyz Republic and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have provided their feedbacks on the draft roadmap on for Establishment of the ECO Energy Consortium
* Due to lack of quorum and impact of global pandemic in succeeding years, the second meeting was not held.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

* I.R. Iran expressed its readiness to host the 2nd Meeting of the ECO Public and Private Sector Energy/Petrochemical Consortium/Companies on 21-22 September 2021. The event was postponed with regard to increase more increased participation from Member States and international partners.
* 4th ECO Energy Ministerial and new ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation and its Action Plan 2030, has put forward refreshed cooperation agenda on trade in fossil fuels, as well as mid-stream and downstream. One of the key matters was putting sustainability at the core of every decision-making.
* Latest development at the sidelines of Ashgabat 15th ECO Summit, gas swap deal among Member States - Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkmenistan have proved that ECO platform can play significant role to contribute to the energy security of the region, as well as to leave good practice for expansion it further. It has shown huge potential of the region to deliver new developments in hydrocarbons’ trade.
* For upcoming period of time, the Secretariat will encourage Member States to intensify their efforts for addressing fossil-fuel related regional energy agenda to follow up their decisions made during 15th ECO Summit, 25th COM and 4th Energy Ministerial Meetings.

**Recommended Actions**

* The Council may invite the relevant authorities of I.R. Iran or other interested Member States to consider proposing, in consultation with the Secretariat, the new dates for the meeting in 2022 of ECO Public and Private Sector Energy /Petrochemical Consortium/Companies;
* The Council may request Member States (except I.R. Pakistan and the Kyrgyz Republic) to provide their views and comments on the draft “Roadmap for Establishment of the ECO Energy Consortium” with a view to following up implementation of the key outcomes of the 1st Meeting ECO Public and Private Sector Energy /Petrochemical Consortium/Companies (16-17 August, 2016).
* The Council may call for intensified actions by Member States to introduce in regular base their needs and interests in regional energy cooperation in upstream, mid-stream and downstream for stocktaking by the Secretariat’s follow up to generate project-oriented

### 1st Meeting on establishment of ECO Refinery Association (ERA)

In line with the decision of the 28th RPC Meeting, Oil Refining Industry Cooperative Association of the Islamic Republic of Iran (ORICA) has confirmed its readiness to host the 1st Meeting on establishment of Refinery Association (ERA) in the ECO Region on 22-23 October 2018 in Tehran. ECO Secretariat circulated the Draft Agenda, Annotated Draft Agenda, Tentative Programme of the Meeting and draft Project Profile on ERA accordingly via its Note Verbale No. EME/1st Meeting/ERA/2018/939 dated 26 August 2018. Personal invitation letters were transmitted through the Secretariat’s Notes Verbales on 6 September 2018. The revised Draft Agenda and Annotated Draft Agenda prepared by the Secretariat were conveyed via its Note Verbale No. EME/1st Meeting/ERA/2018/1078 dated 25 September 2018. However, the Meeting was re-scheduled to a later date(s) via the Secretariat’s Note No. EME/1st Meeting/ERA/2018/1137 dated 15 October 2018.

The 29th RPC Meeting lays down that the subject meeting will be hosted by
I. R. Iran in the second half of 2019. The Meeting is expected to discuss, inter alia, the draft “Project Profile on Establishment of Refinery Association in ECO Region”, prepared by the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) and circulated among Member States.

**Recommended Action**

The Council may invite the Islamic Republic of Iran or any other volunteer Member State to consider and resolve on the possibility of hosting the combined meeting of the ECO Public and Private Sector Energy/Petrochemical Consortium/Companies, and establishment of ECO Refinery Association (ERA) from 2022 onwards. This combined meeting would encompass both petrochemical and refinery agendas with participation of all relevant stakeholders. The Member States will ensure high-level participation at the subject meeting and extend their invaluable contribution to its outcome.

### 2nd Meeting of the ECO regional network of research institutions/centres and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies.

The idea of convening the meeting of the ECO regional network of research institutions/centres and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies arose at the meeting between ECO Secretary General and Director of the Iranian Institute of Energy Studies (IIES) on 3 June 2019.

Effective management of energy knowledge is critical for ECO, given the pivotal role of energy sector for the ECO Region. There is a growing demand to capture and present the regional experiences and lessons in the energy sector. Therefore, the establishment of an ECO regional network of research institutions/centres and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies is considered as a promising initiative to contribute to this goal. The network may brainstorm and consolidate information from different streams and provide a platform for the Member States to share their experiences. The network may thus conduct the state-of-the-art analyses of global and regional trends to contribute to the regional energy decision and policy-making.

1st Meeting of the ECO regional network of research institutions/centers and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies, held virtually by the Secretariat on April 27, 2021. The Secretariat introduced together with project consultants new ECO Energy Strategy 2030 for discussions and stocktaking.

Ministry of Petroleum of Islamic Republic of Iran has proposed regional cooperation on science and research in the field of hydrocarbons for exchange of experience, learning best international practices and to consider application of common ECO standards for petroleum products

**Recommended Action**

The Council may invite volunteer Member States to host 2nd Meeting of the ECO regional network of research institutions/centres and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies aimed at discussing possible regional cooperation in science and research in the field of hydrocarbons for exchange of experience, learning best international practices and to consider application of common ECO standards for petroleum products

*Area conclusion*

The establishment of an ECO regional network of research institutions/centres and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies will not only contribute exchange of experience, but also discuss and give recommendations for the strategic documents, as well as on advanced projects to be applicable in energy sector of ECO region.

# Cooperation with international organizations

**I. ECO Vision approach and target**

**Promotion of energy investments through advocating innovative incentives and close engagements with regional and global IFIs and development banks will be encouraged**

**Institutional advisory mechanism will be established for crafting policy linkages**

*(As outlined in the Expected outcomes (vi) and (viii) respectively of "Section C. Energy" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

* The Secretariat has maintained regular interactions with the international organizations on the basis of mutual interest, most notably with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Energy Charter, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) with a view to identify/develop possible strategic partnership frameworks, to get their financial/technical support to ECO projects and initiatives, as well as to expand ECO’s outreach and visibility.

### United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

* In pursuance of 1994 Agreement, UNIDO is a long-standing partner of ECO in promotion of cleaner and resource efficient production practices, as well as renewable energy and industrial energy efficiency. Driven by UNIDO’s interest and close involvement in developing a number of regional sustainable energy centers across the world, the ECO Secretariat appealed UNIDO in June 2017 to consider the possibility of joint implementation of the Project on establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO).
* In September 2017, the First Draft Project Document “Preparatory Phase for the establishment of CECECO” was jointly elaborated by UNIDO and ECO Secretariat and agreed upon as an indicative paper. The subject document contemplated the launching of the preparatory phase of the project, the revised budget of which is estimated at 223000EUR (including support costs). The required budget for the Preparatory Phase of the CECECO Project has been galvanized through the active engagement of donors – UNIDO, ECO and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and their financial commitments were made in 2018. In particular, on 28 March 2018 UNIDO informed the ECO Secretariat that the preparatory project for the Centre had been approved by the UNIDO Executive Board and UNIDO was therefore ready to start the process of development from its side. On 15 May 2018, UNIDO and ADA signed the funding agreement on the preparatory phase on margins of Vienna Energy Forum 2018, which envisages ADA’s co-funding with the financial contribution of 50000EUR. The 233rd CPR Meeting (11 September 2018) decided to launch the preparatory phase of the establishment of CECECO and approved allocation of 50000USD from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) as a partial financing of this phase.
* In view of the regulatory and financial developments, the “Terms of Reference (ToR) for the provision of services to assess the added value, feasibility and financial sustainability of an ECO Clean Energy Centre” was jointly elaborated with UNIDO and agreed upon in January 2019. UNIDO announced a bid in February 2019 through its Procurement Portal for the provision of international consultancy services. The joint UNIDO-ECO Evaluation Team undertook the examination and evaluation of the international bidders applied for the subject consultancy. ECONOLER – the Canada-based company specialized in energy efficiency and renewable energy programs/projects was selected as an international consultant for the subject assignment. As a result of these consistent actions, the Preparatory Phase of the Project has been finalized in September 2020.
* In pursuance of the mandate of the 28th, 29th and 30th RPC Meetings, ECO Secretariat doubled its strong engagements with UNIDO. The Secretariat attended the 4th Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC), held on 25 October 2019 in Accra, Ghana. The Meeting marked the involvement of ECO to the GN-SEC platform and process as a new member. The GN-SEC represents an innovative south-south and triangular multi-stakeholder partnership to accelerate the energy and climate transformation in developing countries. The GN-SEC is currently becoming a formalized global platform to advocate for SDG-7, SDG-9 and SDG-13 and joint interests in international policy processes, and is hosted by UNIDO in Vienna, Austria. Meanwhile, ECO Secretariat delivered the presentation on the Preparatory Phase of CECECO Project at the 4th Meeting and had the consultations on the sidelines with the GN-SEC members and supporting partners on collaboration opportunities as well as on the ways and means of supporting the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre, its fund-raising aspects, institutional and technical design.

### Energy Charter

* The consultations between the ECO and Energy Charter Secretariats over the past few years revealed huge cooperation opportunities between two Organizations, specifically in view of policy advice and international consultancy with respect to the Project of establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM), as well as on capacity building and experience sharing.
* ECO Secretariat in cooperation with the Energy Charter Secretariat jointly organized the Roundtable on “Stimulating energy investments in an era of low oil prices and de-carbonization” (12 October 2016, Istanbul) on the margins of the 23rd World Energy Congress. As an outcome of deliberations held on the sidelines of the Roundtable between the Secretaries General of ECO and Energy Charter, it was proposed to consider assuming reciprocal Observership Status.
* The 27th Energy Charter Conference (ECC) held on 25-26 November 2016 in Tokyo (Japan) granted ECO an observer status with the ECC – key decision-making body of this Organization. The 22nd ECO Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting, held on 28 February 2017 in Islamabad, granted the Energy Charter the observer status within ECO and approved the reciprocal observer status between ECO and ECC.
* As per the invitation by the Government of Turkmenistan and the Energy Charter, the ECO delegation participated in the “Ashgabat International Energy Charter Forum: Towards a Multilateral Framework Agreement on Transit of Energy Resources", held on 30-31 May 2017, and in the 28th Energy Charter Conference (ECC), held on 28-29 November 2017 in Ashgabat as an observer. Furthermore, the Energy Charter Secretariat participated as observer at the 23rd ECO COM Meeting, held on 17 April 2018 in Dushanbe. Energy Charter Delegation headed by Dr. Urban Rusnak, Secretary General of Energy Charter Secretariat visited the ECO Secretariat on 18 June 2018 and held a consultation with the ECO Secretariat. On the margins of these events and during the aforementioned visit, both sides held fruitful consultations, which paved the way for building up new joint initiatives. In particular, the Energy Charter expressed its readiness to support launching the ECO-REM Project through establishment of a consortium for joint coordination of this Project based on the previous experiences of the Energy Charter. Meantime, both sides agreed to continue coordination on optimal framework for cooperation, including continuation of previous practice of organizing joint ECO-Energy Charter events, as well as mutual participation in the relevant events. In 2019, the ECO Secretariat attended Baku International Energy Charter Forum on “Enabling Energy Transformation through Technology and Policy Innovations”, held on 24 October 2019 in Baku and delivered a presentation as a panelist in the Ministerial Session. Lately, the ECO Secretariat participated in Baku International Energy Charter Forum jointly organized by the Ministry of Energy and International Energy Charter under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which was held virtually on 28 October 2020. During 2021, by the invitation of Energy Charter Secretariat, EME director from ECO Secretariat has participated the First EU-Central Asia Economic Forum High-Level Side Event: “Promoting sustainable energy and clean energy transition in Central Asia” 4 November 2021. Apart from it, the Secretary-General of Energy Charter Secretariat has delivered statement at the 14th ECO Summit, as well as representative of Energy Charter participate 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting and 4th High Level Expert Group Meeting in Energy by delivering presentation on regional electricity market models.
* The Secretariat in collaboration with the Energy Charter Secretariat jointly organized the Capacity Building Technical Workshop on "Perspectives and Challenges of Regional Electricity Markets: Harnessing Trade and Investment Opportunities", which was held virtually on 14 October 2020. The key overarching goal of the workshop was to provide a platform for the participants to discuss best practices and lessons learnt on integration of electricity markets across the globe.

### International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

* As per the mandate of the 28th, 29th and 30th RPC Meetings, calling upon the strong cooperation with IRENA in the light of the ongoing prioritization of sustainable energy in ECO’s energy agenda, the Secretariat continued its dialogue with IRENA to explore the possibility of IRENA’s involvement in supporting sustainable energy undertakings of ECO. ECO Secretariat met with Mohamed Al-Farnawany, Director of Strategic Management and Executive Direction of IRENA on 23 February 2018 in Serhetabad, Turkmenistan, and discussed the ways and means of streamlining ECO-IRENA collaboration agenda.
* The ECO Secretariat participated in the 9th session of the IRENA Assembly and the related meetings, held from 10 to 13 January in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. On the sidelines of the 9th Assembly session, ECO Secretariat networked with the representatives of the ECO Member States, IRENA and other stakeholders in the field of renewable energy (EU, REN21, etc.) on the ongoing and potential areas of cooperation. The Secretariat held the consultation meeting with Mr. Gurbuz Gonul, Director of Country Support and Partnerships and his team. The consultation meeting streamlined priorities for cooperation between ECO and IRENA while both sides resolved on continuing result-oriented interactions and building strong institutional linkages, particularly consideration of possibilities for assuming the permanent observer status between two Organizations and ways/means for further enhanced engagement through policy framework documents. IRENA emphasized its encouragement by the ongoing prioritization of sustainable energy in ECO’s energy agenda and forthcoming launch of the preparatory phase of the CECECO Project. ECO invited IRENA to consider the possibilities for becoming one of the partners of the subject project and supporting it in its preparatory and operational phases, as well as for conducting study on establishment of ‘Clean Energy Corridor’ in the ECO Region that could target, among others, the identification of potential coherence, synergies and complementarities among the CECECO Project, ECO-REM and the possible establishment of ‘Clean Energy Corridor’ in the ECO Region. Both sides also expressed their willingness in designing and implementation of joint on-demand and tailor-made bankable projects and programmes that could contribute to energy transformation in ECO Region, as well as in subsequent supporting ECO Member States in renewable energy financing and risk mitigation. Likewise, IRENA invited ECO to support the process of implementation of the “Regional Action Plan unlocking Renewable Energy Potential in Central Asia”.

### Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

* In pursuance of recommendation of the 1st Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market (5-6 November 2013, Tehran), and the 24th RPC Meeting (23-26 February 2014, Tehran) to explore the possibility of funding the feasibility study on establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market, the Secretariat approached IsDB. The IsDB responded that it welcomes the initiative of studying the electricity market in ECO Region, however, due to its large deficit for grant resources and current over-commitments, it may consider such financing in future, pending the availability of grant resources and provision of a bankable proposal.
* In July-August 2017, the Secretariat also launched consultations with IsBD to get a financial support for the Preparatory Phase of the Project of establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO).

### OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID)

* ECO Secretary General and Director-General of OFID held the meeting on
26 August 2014 in Tehran on the sidelines of the 10th Tehran International Energy Conference. They discussed the possibility of elaborating the long-term comprehensive ECO-OFID programme and rendering OFID’s support to energy-related ECO projects. OFID expressed interest in cooperation and both sides concurred that ECO Secretariat’s high-level delegation may visit OFID to continue discussions on cooperation opportunities.
* As per the mandate of the 28th RPC Meeting, the Secretariat continued its dialogue with OFID to explore the possibility of ECO-OFID cooperation in the mutually interested areas. On the sidelines of the High-Level Conference on Energy Sustainability and Development and the related energy events (1-3 October 2018, Vienna), the ECO Secretariat met with Dr. Fuad Siala, Acting Director of Strategic Planning & Economic Services of OFID. During the course of the meeting, both sides discussed the possibilities for building strong and continuous ECO-OFID institutional linkages, OFID’s possible engagement in the CECECO Project, as well as proposals for study projects/surveys in ECO Region. ECO Secretariat underscored ECO’s readiness to contribute to OFID’s “Energy for the Poor” initiative (EPI) and support OFID’s efforts towards eradication of energy poverty in the ECO Region. Both sides also shared views on collaboration opportunities in the framework of the Water-Energy-Food Nexus.

### ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECO TDB)

* During the course of the 3rd HLEG Meeting on Energy (25-26 May 2015, Tehran), the representative of ECO TDB expressed the initial interest and readiness of ECO TDB to consider providing support for a Trust Fund for financing ECO energy projects and related ECO endeavors.
* The representative of ECO TDB has participated at the 1st Meeting of the ECO Public and Private Sector Energy/Petroleum Consortia/Companies (16-17 August 2016, Tehran, Iran). ECO TDB delegate briefed the subject Meeting about Bank's activities and the status of its projects, and expressed TDB’s readiness to finance ECO energy projects with a special focus on clean energy, including hydro, solar, wind and other renewables.

**Recommended Actions**

* The Council may request the Secretariat to pursue the cooperation policy and engagements with abovementioned organizations and other interested partners in the relevant fields, after consultation with the Member States and setting out further roadmap for proceeding on it.

The Council may recommend the Secretariat mutually to take part in the relevant events with abovementioned organizations and other interested partners with a view to enhance cooperation for implementation of ECO Vision 2025 and The ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation/Plan of Actions 2030.

* The Council may ask the Secretariat to pursue the strong cooperation with the Energy Charter on the basis of reciprocal observer status and follow-up the aforementioned streamlined proposals with a view to developing joint comprehensive partnership framework, particularly in the context of the ECO-REM Project.
* The Council may recommend the Secretariat to actively interact with UNIDO on the establishment, financing and operationalization of the ECO Clean Energy Center.

# DRAFT CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2022

**Energy, Minerals and Environment**

**Due to global pandemic depending on the situation, the events the time can be adjusted and organized either physically or virtually.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | 4th ECO Experts Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources (EGRES) | Tashkent, Uzbekistan | 2022  |
|  | 2nd Experts Group Meeting on establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM). | Dushanbe, Tajikistan | 1st half 2022  |
|  | 2nd Meeting of the ECO Public and Private Sector Energy/Petrochemical Consortium/Companies – ECO Refinery Association | Tehran, Iran | 2022 |
|  | 4th Iran-Turkey Bilateral Meeting on establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market | Iran | 1st half 2022 |
|  | Meeting of Ad-hoc Mechanism on Assisting to Operationalise ECO Clean Energy Centre | TBD | 1st half 2022 |
|  | Monitoring Mission for hosting ECO Clean Energy Center | Baku, Azerbaijan | 1st quarter 2022 |
|  | Consultative meeting of ECO Member States in the sidelines of 7th Meeting of the Global Network of Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC) Platform | Austria | April 2022 |
|  | 2nd Meeting of the ECO regional network of research institutions/centres and think tanks operating in the field of energy studies  | Tbd | 2022 |
|  | 1st ECO Working Group Meeting on Joint Investment in Construction of Renewable Energy Power Plants/Projects | Iran | 2022 |
|  | 5th ECO Energy/Petrolium Ministerial Meeting | TBD | 2022 |
|  | 5th High Level Experts Group Meeting on Energy | TBD | 2022 |

**Conferences/Seminars/Workshops/Training Courses**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | 6th Workshop on Renewable Energy Sources(proposed to be held back-to-back with the 4th Meeting of ECO EGRES) | ECO Secretariat | 2022, first half |
|  | Training Courses as per the Calendar of ECO Courses on Oil and Gas of OGITC (Oil and Gas International Training Centre of I.R. Iran) | Iran | 2022 |
|  | Training Course devoted to electricity energy offered by Khorasan Regional Electricity Company of Iran Grid Management Company (IGMC)  | Iran | 2022 |
|  | ECO Secretariat – Energy Charter Workshop on Regional Electricity Market | TBD | 2022 |

**Non-ECO Events**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | 12th Session of the Assembly of IRENA | Abu-Dabi |  15-16 January 2022 |
|  | UNIDO Initiative for Circular Economy | TBD | 2022 |
|  | 33rd Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference | Mongolia | 2022 |
|  | 7th Meeting of the Global Network of Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC) Platform | TBD | 2022 |  |
| 5 | UNECE 31st Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy | Geneva, Switzerland | 2022 |  |
| 6 | 14th Microgrid Global Innovation Forum | LondonUK | 12-14 April 2022 |  |
| 7 | 2nd International Sustainable Energy Conference | Graz, Austria | 5-7 April 2022 |  |
| 8 | Sustainable Energy for All Forum | Kigali Rwanda | 17-19 May 2022 |  |
| 9 | UN High-level Dialogue on Energy | New YorkUSA | 2022 |  |
| 10 | 25TH WORLD ENERGY CONGRESS | ST. PETERSBURRussia | 24 - 27 OCTOBER 2022,  |  |

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# MINERALS

# Overall status

ECO Member States are abundant with mineral resources and for some deposits they have the leading positions globally. Notwithstanding the fact that mining sector plays a crucial role in overall macroeconomic development of the ECO Member States, the cooperation potential within the Organization mostly remains untapped.

Since 2001, ECO Member States have been demonstrating deep interest in cooperation in the field of minerals with the establishment of the Minerals Experts Group format. Seven meetings of the subject experts group have so far been held (1st in 2001 in Iran, 2nd in 2003 in Turkey, 3rd in 2006 in Pakistan, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th in Iran).

As an outcome of the 6th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting (17-18 October 2016, Sungun Mine Complex, Varzeghan), several project initiatives in this field were introduced and have been under consideration. The following project proposal drew the particular attention of the Member States: “Preparation of Eco-Environmental Quality Index (EQI) Map (1:5M) of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI)”.

The 7th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting was held on 5-7 August 2018 in Sanandaj. The Meeting, hosted by the Geological Survey of Iran (GSI) generated key proposals for future course of actions, notably initiation of lasting, self-sustainable and efficient network comprising relevant stakeholders of the Member States and beyond; enhancement of intergovernmental and inter-sectoral collaboration in development of ECO minerals policies and strategies in the framework of international fora for boosting mining sector’s contribution to sustainable development in ECO Region; reflection of the UN SDGs in ECO regional policies and programmes in the field of minerals and others. During elapsed period initiated projects has not had sufficient support from Member States and regional agenda on minerals cooperation necessitates to be updated in line with national needs and interests, as well as global developments. To this end, 2022 will be right time seeking to organize 8th ECO Minerals Group Meeting.

In 2021, ECO has conducted two meetings the field of minerals, namely the 3rd Meeting of ECO Geomatics Committee and under this Committee the training course on Global Navigation Network Systems and Data Processing. As an outcome of these events several new project initiatives and proposals on regional cooperation in the field of spatial data infrastructure and geographic information systems were introduced. Furthermore the Secretary of the Geomatics Committee was re-elected, as well as above meetings discussed possible regional cooperation in establishing regional spatial data network, ECO Geoportal, revamping work of ECO Economic Atlas and few other issues. The meeting also highlighted key contributions of ECO Geomatics Committee in implementation of the UN Agenda 2030.

As regards the future cooperation opportunities in minerals, it is noteworthy that the current global outlook demonstrates continuous pressure on resource production systems, rising environmental concerns, and fierce competition over resource access. The global use of mineral resources has drastically increased and supply chains have become more complex. Prices have been fluctuating over the past decade; supply and demand are highly concentrated in many markets with localized and fragmented deposits. The abundant minerals resources of the ECO Region, along with the available frameworks and initiatives may enable to identify the pragmatic ways and means for enhancing project-oriented ECO cooperation in minerals and mining industry.

While emphasizing on the cross-sectoral nature of minerals sector, which combine economic policy, trade, investments, environmental protection, and development, the Member States may consider the need in crafting the production and distribution chain in raw materials at the regional level. Finding efficient ways and means to achieve this production chain will evidently play a catalyst role in increasing the economic attractiveness of minerals market in the ECO Region.

In this vein, the establishment of solid connectivity and transportation networks for minerals trade among ECO Member States and beyond could be explored. These endeavors could also increase the transit potential of our Member States, making ECO Region more competitive vis-à-vis neighboring regions and the outside world. Therefore, the Member States may wish to consider this “minerals-trade-connectivity nexus”, given the tremendous opportunities that the strong interlinkage among these three phenomena may create.

# Priority area: Streamlining project-oriented cooperation in the field of minerals

## ECO Vision approach and target

## To achieve long term high level growth, knowledge and information based production through increased contribution of research and development (R&D), entrepreneurship, involvement of private sector. To increase standard of living, quality of life, economic welfare and well being of people through adopting social protection and environment preservation policies in the region.

(E. ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PRODUCTIVITY, F. SOCIAL WELFARE AND ENVIRONMENT)

## Background information

1. ECO avails several formats for building cooperation in minerals sector, namely the Minerals Experts Group Meeting (MEGM), Meetings of the Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations, and the Geomatics Committee Meetings. To the moment, 7 ECO MEGM Meetings have been convened – the 1st in 2001 in Iran, 2nd in 2003 in Turkey, 3rd in 2006 in Pakistan, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th in Iran.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

1. In reply to the ECO Secretariat's request in pursuance with the Paragraph 25 of “Sector C: Energy, Minerals and Environment of the Work Programme 2017” of the 27th RPC Meeting (Tehran, 5-8 December 2016), the Geological Survey of Iran (GSI) expressed its readiness to host the 7th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting (MEGM).
2. The 7th ECO MEGM was held on 5-7 August 2018 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province of I. R. Iran. During the course of the meeting, the participants from the Member States deliberated on the current potential project proposals in the relevant area, which were under consideration by that period of time viz. Geodynamic and present-day Crustal Stress (ECO-GeoDyS) Map of the ECO Region; Preparing ECO-Environmental Quality Index Map of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI); Preparation of Mineral Deposit Types and Metallogenic Map of the ECO Region; Spiroclast Map of mobile belt between Gondwana and Eurasia. GSI of Iran also put forward two new project proposals, namely, Landslide Hazard Zonation (LHZ) of ECO Region; and Geochemical Exploration of Precious and Industrial Minerals in Desert lands in the ECO Region.
3. The meeting also reviewed the latest developments, implementation of the related activities, and future regional cooperation opportunities among the ECO Member States in the field of minerals, and streamlined the emerging initiatives and partnership frameworks for regional synergy. The participants also expressed their readiness and interest to contribute to the ECO sectoral cooperation frameworks. The Report of the 7th ECO MEGM was circulated among the Member States through the Secretariat’s Note Verbale No. EME/7th EGM/Minerals/2018/897 dated 13 August 2018.
4. Following the 31th RPC meeting the Secretariat through the Note Verbale No. EME/Minerals/Spiroclast Map/2020/178 dated 12 March 2020 remind the Member States (except Iran, Pakistan and Tajikistan) to convey their views and comments on the Concept Paper of the Project Proposal on Spiroclast Map of mobile belt between Gondwana and Eurasia. Since the subject project has prolonged about 4 years for the views of the MSs, Iran GSI as the coordinating organization and financial contributor announced the closure of the subject project as it is no longer in the priorities of the organization.
5. The 3rd Meeting of the ECO Geomatics Committee was held in Tehran on 20-21 October 2021. The Meeting appointed the Secretary of the Committee for the term of 2 years. The Meeting also deliberated on the issues of the ECO Economic Atlas, ECO Geomatics Journal, ECO Geomatics Committee and appointment of Editorial Board for the ECO Geomatics Journal, as well as proposed the establishment of 3 working groups for proper implementation and follow-up of the key actions agreed at the 1st ECO Geomatics Committee Meeting. The Meeting also identified the thematic areas for regular capacity building activities and training courses.

## Expected outcomes and focused issues for 2022

1. Follow up and realization of the proposals raised at 3rd Meeting of Geomatics Committee will ensure sufficient progress in the field of SDI, GIS, as well as in the field of mapping and surveying.

### Regular meetings of the ECO Geomatics Committee are one of instrumental steps to keep momentum of up to date regional cooperation interests for all parties. To this end, follow up of results and reflecting it through project oriented deeds are key to move forward in the activity of Geomatics Committee.

1. **The Secretariat will regularly facilitate interests of Member States in the subject area to bring to the agenda of regional platform through project proposals and necessary regional dialogue among them by possible participation of other international partners.**
2. In reply to the enquiry of the MFA of I.R. Iran, ECO Secretariat in its Note Verbale No. EME/Minerals/2019/665 dated 18 August 2019 commented that the relevant authorities of the I.R. Iran may wish to implement the ECO-EQI Project with the limited number of the Member States, in pursuance of the “Functional Methodology of ECO”, stipulating that the project shall be identified with ECO if at least four Member States participate in it. As of today, four Member States namely Afghanistan, Iran (initiator), Pakistan and Tajikistan, supported launching of the Project Proposal on Preparing ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI).
3. With the view to engage more Member States for regional cooperation and gain more benefit for the favor of ECO region. The Secretariat prepared and sent to Member States Note Verbale No. EME/Minerals/ECO-EQI/2021/2021/400 dated 18 August 2021 has propose holding Virtual Validation Meeting hosted by project initiator side for attracting more support of the ECO Member States through obtaining consent on ToR of the Project on Preparation of ECO-EQI Map (1:5M)
4. The Project Outline on the Preparation of ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map (1:5M) of the ECO Region is enclosed in the end as a part of “Priority Project Proposals” Chapter of the subject Working Paper.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may request Member States submitting their opinions and project proposals to the Secretariat in relation to implement results of 3**rd** Geomatics Committee Meeting.
* The Council may request the interested Member States to organize the 8th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting in 2022. This Meeting will review the outcomes of the 7th ECO MEGM (5-7 August 2018, Sanandaj, Iran) and the latest developments, particularly in terms of the achieved progress in promoting the project proposals.
* The Council may invite initiator authority, Geological Survey of I. R. of Iran to consider organization of validation meeting on the ToR of ECO EQI project aimed at increasing regional cooperation through more participation in the number of Member States; and Council may request the Secretariat to appeal one of the next CPR meetings for consideration of allocation of 50000USD from the ECO FGPF for the subject Project, according to the resolution of the Member states during the abovementioned validation meeting for launching the Project on Preparation of ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map (1:5M).

## V. Area conclusion

1. The Minerals Experts Group Meetings represent the highest level format in the field of minerals, whereas no ministerial platform exists in this area. The 31th RPC welcomed the streamlining of the project-oriented cooperation in the field of minerals. During the last ECO MEGM. The proceedings and outcomes of the 6th and 7th ECO MEGMs were tangible in view of the initiation of 6 new project proposals in the field of minerals. One of them drew the attention of some ECO Member States. The ECO-EQI project is on the verge of launching. The realization of this project will open up the new avenues for regional cooperation within ECO in the field of minerals, as well as streamline the emerging initiatives and partnership frameworks.

# Other activities in the field of minerals and capacity building efforts

## Background information

 The 1**st**Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations was held on 26-27 September, 2011 in Tehran, and generated the following major outcomes:

1. Establishment of an "ECO Geomatics Committee";
2. Publication of a technical journal, namely "ECO Geomatics Journal";
3. Appointment of the National Focal Points for the Working Groups on "ECO Economic Atlas" and "ECO Geomatics Committee".
4. The 2nd Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations was held on 8-9 May 2014 in Ankara. One of the key recommendations of the 2nd Meeting, among others, was the organization of the 1st Meeting of the ECO Geomatics Committee with a view to facilitate the implementation of the relevant decisions in the field of surveying and mapping.
5. The 2nd Meeting of the ECO Geomatics Committee, hosted by the National Cartographic Center (NCC) of Iran was held on 27-28 August 2018 in Tehran. The Meeting made amendments and approved the revised ToR of the ECO Geomatics Committee and elected Dr. Ali Soltanpour, General Manager of Hydrography & Tidal Analysis of NCC of Iran as the new Secretary of the Committee, who will assume this position till convening of the 3rd Meeting of the ECO Geomatics Committee. The Meeting also reviewed the ongoing initiatives within the ECO Geomatics Committee, notably designing of ECO Geomatics Publication/Journal, appointment of National Focal Points, establishment of special Working Groups and organization of the regular thematic capacity building activities and training courses. The Report of the 2nd Meeting of the ECO Geomatics Committee was circulated among the Member States via the Secretariat’s Note Verbale No. EME/2nd GC/2018/988 dated 3 September 2018.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

1. Training Course on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNNS) and Data Processing was held virtually on 24-26 June, 2021. The participants were introduced Coordinate System and Reference Frame, Geodetic Datum, Iranian Permanent Geodynamic and GNSS Networks and Geodetic Datum, GPS Concept, functions of GNSS Observations, Modeling the observation and limits of GNSS accuracy.

## Expected outcomes and focused issues for 2021/2022

### According to 3rd ECO Geomatics Committee Meeting particularly Iran and Pakistan expressed readiness further to contribute to the capacity building of ECO region in the areas covered in geomatics.

### Islamic Republic of Pakistan has proposed to host "Establishment of ECO-SDI to combat the challenges of food security in the member states"(possible dates: 14-16 March 2022)

### 3rd Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations

1. Subject to the needs of the Member States and progress in ongoing activities in the field of surveying and mapping, the Secretariat will follow up in due course with the volunteer Member States the hosting of the 3rd Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations in 2022. None of the Member States has so far expressed its willingness to host the Meeting.

### National Focal Points on Minerals

1. For better coordination and implementation of ECO commitments in the field of minerals, the Member States are requested to regularly renew/update or confirm their relevant NFPs.

###  National Focal Points on ECO Geomatics Committee and ECO Economic Atlas

1. 3rd meeting of the ECO Geomatics Committee resolved to establish online contact group (in whatsapp) with purpose of setting up swift and fast-track communication amongst the Secretariat and Member States. All Member States are encouraged to inform relevant contact person to be member of online group which will facilitate addressing needs and interests of member states in regional cooperation of subject area.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may offer the volunteer Member States to hosting/co-hosting the training courses for capacity building and sharing best practices in the ECO Region on various pertinent topics, such as Spatial Data Infrastructure; Scientific GNSS Data Processing; Local Geodetic Datum; Regional Deformation Study of the Earth; Orthophoto Generation; Cadastral, and Cartographic Maps and Atlas, in accordance with the outcomes of 3rd ECO Geomatics Committee.
* The Council welcomed proposal of Pakistan to host workshop on "Establishment of ECO-SDI to combat the challenges of food security in the Member States and requested all Member States to consider active participation with the view to enhance regional cooperation in subject area
* The Council may appreciate Islamic Republic of Iran in hosting 3rd Geomatics Committee Meeting with active participation of Pakistan and Azerbaijan and called for other Member States to consider intensification of their efforts in implementation of outcomes of said meeting
* The Council may encourage volunteer Member States to host 4th Meeting of ECO Geomatics Committee aimed at exploring project oriented opportunities in regional cooperation on geomatics and requested participating Member States to ensure active participation at the meeting.
* The Council encouraged the Member States to provide the Secretariat with the requisite information on the ECO Economic Atlas, ECO Geomatics Journal, ECO Geomatics Committee, national focal points and working groups agreed upon at the 3rd Geomatics Committee Meeting.

## Area conclusion

1. The 32nd RPC welcomed the streamlining of the project-oriented cooperation in the field of minerals during the last Geomatics Committee Meeting. Within the framework of the platforms, namely the Meetings on Geomatics Committee, and Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations, as well as capacity building training courses in the field of geomatics, the Member States contribute not only to capacity-building and awareness raising through information sharing and exchange of experiences, but also generate ideas and initiatives for building on cooperation, strong institutional linkages, stimulating dialogue among the relevant agencies/institutions. The Member States have so far expressed their interest in collaborating within the subject platforms, which led to formulating comprehensive agendas of these formats. The Member States are expected to play a proactive role in providing the necessary inputs for advancement of these agendas.

## CONCLUSION

COVID-19 restrictions since 2020 have impacted the way of working, space requirements and consumer demand. There is also a rising demand for geospatial information and more rapid adoption of technology. Global construction will be critical in the economic recovery, and spatial planning and development, cadastre and land management, valuation and the management of real estate, hydrography, engineering surveys, and construction economics and management will all play an important role. This will not be possible without effective positioning and measurement and spatial information management, underpinned by professional standards and practice and professional education.

Looking ahead to a post-COVID world, the key technological drivers are likely to include smart cities, Building information modeling BIM, digital twins, autonomous surveying techniques, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning and big data, blockchain, augmented reality, automated feature extraction and change detection. While these are having a big impact in the global scale, they also can be further discovered to be driving advancement in the ECO region’s future geomatics landscape.

The minerals cooperation in the field of minerals advanced through emergence and evolution of several sector-specific project initiatives in the field of minerals and mining industry, which consequently contributed to streamlining project-oriented regional cooperationin this area.

The Working Paper envisages the insight and intention of the Member States for collaboration in the fields of energy, minerals and environment in the backdrop of rapidly changing global agenda and challenges being confronted in the socio-economic realm. The paper was prepared to facilitate RPC deliberations and formulate a Work Programme for 2022. The Implementation Status of energy and environment-related components of ECO Vision 2025 has been incorporated in the Working Paper as an annual review and monitoring mechanism. The Working Paper thus serves a guideline and instills clarity for working out the roadmap for enhancement of regional cooperation in the relevant fields.

# DRAFT CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2022

**Minerals**

**Due to global pandemic depending on the situation, the events can be organized either physically or virtually.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | 8th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting  | TBD | 2022 |
|  | 4th ECO Geomatics Committee | TBD | 2022 |
|  | Validation Meeting on ToR of the Project on Preparation of ECO Environmental Quality Index Map | Tehran | 2022 |
|  | 3rd Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations | TBD | 2022 |

**Conferences/Seminars/Workshops/Training Courses**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | "Establishment of ECO-SDI to combat the challenges of food security in the Member States | Pakistan | 14-16 March, 2022 |

**Non-ECO Events**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | Twelfth International Mining Geology Conference | Brisbane, Australia | 22-23 march, 2022 |
|  | International Conference on Spatial Analysis and Data Science | Dubai, United Arab Emirates | December 20-21, 2022 |

# ENVIRONMENT

# Overall Status

Global environment and climate change-related challenges have induced the need for enhanced cooperation in the ECO Region through integrating regional and global approaches in developing projects and initiating partnership frameworks. The ECO Member States are undergoing the tremendous socio-economic transformation which has an impact on the environment and their natural resources. In this regard, the ECO Region is confronting with a variety of environmental challenges negatively affecting the economic and social welfare of the Member States.

Given these growing challenges, designation of the environment and impacts of climate change as a cross-sectoral priority of ECO, and despite being a relatively new sector for collaboration, ECO’s environmental profile has increased steadily over the past few years. “ECO Vision 2025” and its Implementation Framework has a certain reflection and uptake on environment, notably it envisages the support to environmental sustainability of the region; implementation of regional projects in climate and biodiversity areas; and ECO’s recognition as a regional group/partner in the global environment community.

ECO Secretariat strives for streamlining the environmental agenda to the needs and aspirations of ECO Member States, and stimulating policy debates for developing partnership frameworks with a view to address the environmental challenges/concerns in the ECO Region. The implementation of the “Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2016-2020)” – which serves a policy framework for the Organization’s all-inclusive cooperation in different fields/segments of environment – and the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)” are ready for implementation by member states. If the he next – 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment in Turkey and the 7th Working Group Meeting on Environment in Pakistan hold, during year 2022, it can provide suitable platforms for consolidation and advancement of ECO’s environmental agenda in the light of the rapidly evolving global environmental and climate agenda.

In the past few years, “The Regional Project to Combat Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region” has represented the only operational and meantime, flagship project in the subject dimension. Its Project Development Phase was finalized in April 2018 with the support of ECO Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ECO-IEST) and ECO’s international consultant from Australia. As an outcome of its implementation, the Project Proposal on “ECO LandCare: A Collaborative Programme by the ECO Member States to combat land degradation, sand and dust storms” has been elaborated. The Republic of Turkey recommended some changes at the draft project which was circulated between member states and approved by "no objection situation by 25 October 2021. The implementation of the 1st phase of ECO LandCare Programme is standing high on ECO’s agenda and the Secretariat will undertake further steps for launching of this Programme, which envisages the necessary assessment and survey of dryland conservation and solutions across the ECO Region.

Addressing threats and challenges to biodiversity and sustainability of ecosystems in the ECO Region has been another priority area of cooperation within ECO. The Secretariat continued its efforts in promoting conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its components in pursuance with the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)”. The 4th ECO Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity and biodiversity-related ECO events (in Turkey and Iran) in 2022 may complete this Work Plan in an efficient manner accomplishing its goals.

In parallel, ECO Secretariat maintained its collaboration and consultations, and expanded its outreach with the relevant UN agencies and conventions, namely UNEP, UNCBD and UNFF in particular for preparation of the first state of environment report (SoE) for the ECO Region, better implementation of the aforementioned Work Plan on Biodiversity, promoting a possible ECO regional strategy on sustainable forest management, and continuation of capacity-building activities within ECO Region.

# Priority area 1: Implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2016-2020)

## ECO Vision approach and target

**Environmental sustainability of the region will be supported through environmentally friendly regional economic and social cooperation**

*(As outlined in the Expected Outcome (iv.) of "Section F. Social Welfare and Environment" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

## Background information

1. The 1st ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (December 2002, Tehran) formulated the first Plan of Action (PoA) on Environment with a view to tackle with multiple environmental challenges. The subject PoA comprised the human, natural and marine environment, education and sustainable legal framework development as the major components. This PoA was effective from 2003 to 2007 and was further extended up to the end of 2010.
2. In view of the new emerging environmental challenges at the regional and global levels, the 4th Ministerial Meeting on Environment (June 2011, Tehran) approved the second PoA, namely “Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States” (2011-2015), which served a policy framework for the Organization’s all-inclusive cooperation in different fields/segments of environment. The new PoA encompassed the environmental management, global warming & climate change and means of implementation, as well as the areas indicated in Paragraph 112 hereinabove within the first PoA, as key chapters/components.
3. Driven by the guidelines of the ECO Summit Meetings, the project-oriented approach of ECO, and the lack of proper mechanism for implementation of the PoA, the Secretariat prepared the Project Profile for implementation of this PoA. The 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (7-9 June 2011, Tehran) adopted the Project Profile prepared by the ECO Secretariat and entitled it “Preparation of a regional program for implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2011-2015)”.

The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (15-17 December 2014, Istanbul) decided to extend the “Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States” till the end of 2020. The Meeting mandated the ECO Secretariat and the ECO Institute for Environmental Science and Technology (ECO-IEST) to make, in consultation with the Member States, necessary adjustments in the priority areas of this PoA, and continue with its implementation using the available funds, taking into account the need for its updating in line with the recent and ongoing developments at the global and regional levels.

1. In line with the ministerial decisions and in order to monitor implementation of the PoA, the National Focal Points regularly provide the Secretariat the National Progress Reports (NPRs) on implementation of the PoA as well as on the state of environment in their countries.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31st RPC

1. National Progress Reports (NPRs) have proved to be useful in evaluating the implementation status of the subject PoA and thus helping to identify the weaknesses or areas needed to be meticulously addressed by both the Secretariat and the Member States. Turkey, I.R. Iran, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan provided the Secretariat with their NPRs for 2018. The subject NPRs were circulated among the Member States via the Secretariat’s Notes Verbales No. EME/ENV/NPR/2019/279 dated 7 April 2019, No. EME/ENV/NPR/2019/666 dated 18 August 2019, No. EME/ENV/NPR/2019/1033 dated 28 November 2019, No. EME/ENV/NPR/2020/46 dated 27 January 2020 respectively. Earlier, Turkey and I.R. Iran have also provided the relevant NPRs for 2016 and 2017. Furthermore, Azerbaijan conveyed its NPRs for 2015 and 2017, the Kyrgyz Republic for 2015-2016, and Afghanistan for 2014-2015.
2. In 2021, the ECO Secretariat requested the MSs to share their respective views and comments regarding the revision of the framework Plan of Action on Environment and Global Warming for updated/revised regional program for implementation of the POA. The views received from Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Islamic Republic of Iran have been circulated while Iran has proposed to form a working group of member countries to share the points of view and make final decision by consensus.

## Expected outcomes and focused issues for 2022

### Preparation of a regional program for implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States

1. The implementation of the “Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2016-2020)” has reached its final stage and has emphasized by 31st RPC Meeting need in revisiting/revising this PoA.
2. The Secretariat is expected to examine, in cooperation with ECO-IEST, the subject Framework Plan of Action in view of “ECO Vision 2025”, recent global and regional environmental patterns, rapidly evolving global environmental agenda, notably the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in lieu with COP26 Glazgow conclusions, 2030 Agenda, SDGs. The Secretariat will submit its proposal on the revised/new Framework Plan of Action prior to the relevant sectoral decision-making body, i.e. Ministerial Meeting/Working Group Meeting on Environment.
3. 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 have been prepared by the ECO Secretariat (for details please see Paragraph 112-114 hereinabove). The project aims at translation of the PoA to national and regional projects through the above-mentioned regional program. In other words, in order to translate the PoA to action, the regional program would contain specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound projects in the areas identified in the PoA.

The total budget of the project is estimated at 250000USD. The 169th CPR Meeting (20 July 2011) approved the allocation of 50000USD from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) for the Project. The rest may be provided by the voluntary contribution of the Member States and available funds from the international organizations such as GEF, GCF, GiZ, IsDB, UNEP, etc.31st RPC proposed to take necessary actions by the Secretariat and relevant partners on launching project through step by step approach within 50000USD budget allocated through FGPF during the relevant meeting of CPR. Though the Secretariat approached to Member States and international organizations, project commencement is still pending.

1. The Project Outline on the Preparation of a regional program for implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States is enclosed in the end as a part of “Priority Project Proposals” Chapter of the subject Working Paper.

### ECO Regional Adaptation Programme (ERAP)

1. The 6th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment (1-2 June 2016, Islamabad, Pakistan) recommended the establishment of Ad Hoc Group/Task Force to formulate and develop the ECO Regional Adaptation Programme.
2. ECO Secretariat via its Note Verbale No: EME/ENV/ERAP/2018/577 dated 7 May 2018 requested the Member States to provide the Secretariat with their National Adaptation Programmes. So far, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan and Turkey have submitted their relevant Programmes to the Secretariat.
3. The 31st RPC Meetings also called upon the Member States, which have not done so, to expedite providing the Secretariat with their National Adaptation Programmes enabling the ECO Secretariat to craft in collaboration with ECO-IEST the draft proposal for developing ECO Regional Adaptation Programme (ERAP).
4. The Member States (except Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan and Turkey) are requested to provide the Secretariat with their National Adaptation Programmes; ECO Secretariat and ECO-IEST will then be set to prepare the draft proposal for developing ERAP.

### 6th Ministerial Meeting on Environment

1. The 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment is expected to stimulate the high-level policy dialogue with a view to promoting ongoing ECO activities/projects in environment, addressing the regional and global environmental challenges, and streamlining ECO environmental agenda in conformity with “ECO Vision 2030” and UN 2030 Agenda. The Meeting will focus, among others, on the outcome decisions of 5th Ministerial, state of play in ECO environmental agenda, national environmental policies to enhance regional synergy, strengthening ECO cooperation with relevant international organizations, and promoting environmentally-friendly projects and programs of common interest.

### 7th Working Group Meeting on Environment, back to back with the 2nd Experts Meeting on Climate Change and Biodiversity

1. The 7th Working Group Meeting on Environment (if takes place) is sought to review the status of implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the previous environment-related ECO events, PoA on Environment, Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020) and the relevant ECO projects. The 7th Meeting will also streamline the regional cooperation on environment in the light of new emerging and rapidly evolving environmental and climate change agenda at the global level..

### ECO-UNEP Inception Workshop on modalities of the First State of Environment (SoE) Report for ECO Region

1. The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (15-17 December 2014, Istanbul, Turkey) resolved on the significance of a State of Environment (SoE) Report for the ECO Region and mandated the ECO Secretariat to introduce, in cooperation with UNEP and ECO-IEST, the most appropriate outline/format for ECO SoE.
2. The 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th RPC Meetings noted the importance of SoE Report in advancement of ECO`s environmental agenda and requested the Secretariat to explore the possibilities of organizing in cooperation with ECO-IEST and UNEP the Inception Workshop on Modalities of First State of Environment (SoE) Report for ECO Region (based on UNEP Live Model).
3. On the margins of the 22nd COP of the UNFCCC (November 2016, Marrakesh, Morocco), ECO delegation held the meeting with UNEP Director for Early Warning and Assessment. UNEP Director expressed readiness to support ECO in developing the relevant SoE Report for the region and recommended to follow up the above issue with the UNEP Regional Office for Europe in Geneva; both sides agreed to jointly organize the subject Workshop in due course.

1. The 29th and 30th RPC Meetings tasked the Secretariat to continue its efforts for organizing the ECO-UNEP Inception Workshop on modalities of the First State of Environment (SoE) Report for ECO Region, in cooperation with UNEP and ECO-IEST.
2. The 31st RPC recommended the Secretariat to explore the need for reviewing the existing ECO-UNEP MOU for wider cooperation. The Secretariat has continued its consultations with UNEP officials to follow up agenda for bilateral cooperation, in particular the preparation of SoE report for ECO Region

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may consider inviting volunteer Member State to host 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment with a view to promoting ongoing ECO activities/projects in environment, addressing the regional and global environmental challenges, and streamlining ECO environmental agenda in conformity with “ECO Vision 2030” and UN 2030 Agenda.
* The Council may urge the Member States to express their views and comments to the Secretariat regarding the revision of the “Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States”; for updated/revised regional program for implementation of the subject PoA.
* Upon this revision and adoption of the PoA, the Council may request the Member States to consider allocation of the remaining 200000USD 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”. The Secretariat has already allocated 50000USD through the CPR from the ECO Feasibility Studies and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) which can be used as a successful commencement of the project in necessary key issues;
* The Council may encourage the Member States, which have not submitted their NPRs to expedite providing them (the annual NPRs are requested to be submitted to ECO Secretariat during the first quarter of each calendar year).
* The Council may ask the Member States (except Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan and Turkey) to provide the Secretariat with their National Adaptation Programmes; enabling the ECO Secretariat to prepare the draft proposal for developing ERAP.
* The 31st RPC recommended the Secretariat to explore the need for reviewing the existing ECO-UNEP MOU for wider cooperation. The Secretariat has continued its consultations with UNEP officials to follow up agenda for bilateral cooperation, in particular the preparation of SoE report for ECO Region
* The Council may propose the member states to voluntarily host the 7th Work Group Meeting on Environment, back to back to with the 2nd Expert Meeting on Climate Change and Biodiversity as a main deliverables to bring to the agenda of 6th Environmental Ministerial Meeting.

## Area Conclusion

1. ECO Framework Plan of Action on Environmental Cooperation and Global Warming (2011-2015)”, extended till the end of 2020, is on the verge of finalization. The subject PoA needs to be revised / revisited. The Secretariat is expected to examine, in cooperation with ECO-IEST, the PoA in view of “ECO Vision 2025”, as well as recent global and regional environmental patterns. Meanwhile, the preparation of a Regional State of Environment (SoE) Report was also highly emphasized by the ECO Ministers of Environment. The advancement of all above activities needs the concerted efforts by the Member States.

# Priority area 2: Combating Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the Region

## ECO Vision approach and target

**Regional projects in climate/biodiversity areas through partnership with relevant international stakeholders with available regional and global funding will be implemented**

*(As outlined in Expected Outcome (v.) of "Section F. Social Welfare and Environment" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

## Background information

1. The 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (9 June 2011, Tehran) welcomed the proposal for developing a regional project to combat desertification with a special emphasis on dust haze and sand storm in the ECO Region. The ECO-IEST was subsequently requested by the 24th RPC Meeting (23-26 February 2014, Tehran) to provide the Secretariat with the detailed project proposal on the subject issue with a view to enable the Secretariat to embark on necessary preparations. In October 2014, the ECO-IEST provided the Secretariat with the draft outline for the subject project, which was circulated among the Member States for their comments.
2. The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (15-17 December 2014, Istanbul) requested the ECO Secretariat to allocate 50000USD from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) for implementing the subject project aimed at preparation of a detailed needs assessment along with the design of the pertinent training/capacity buildings programs and contents. The CPR in its 209th Meeting allocated 50000USD from the FGPF for the implementation of the Project Development Phase of the subject Project.
3. Consequently, on 22 September 2016, the Contract was signed between ECO Secretariat and ECO-IEST for Project Development Phase of the “Regional Project to Combat Desertification with a special emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region". The major tasks of the contractor, i.e. ECO-IEST for the Project Development Phase were: Hiring international consultant(s) for development of the Project Proposal; preparation of a Feasibility Study and/or needs assessment of the Regional Project, inter alia, by the use of national reports of the Member States; conducting workshop(s) for consideration of the draft Project Proposal; and finalization of the Project Proposal for submission to donor agencies.
4. ECO-IEST has submitted the feasibility study and initial project proposal, prepared by Mr. Peter Hunnam, the International Consultant from Australia to ECO Secretariat and Member States, and made initial preparation for organizing the Consultation Workshop.
5. The Project Development Consultation Workshop on Combating Desertification with a special emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region was jointly organized by ECO Secretariat and ECO-IEST on 5-6 July 2017 in ECO Secretariat with active participation of the Member States. The purpose of the workshop was the consultation among experts of the Member States and the designated international consultant on the state of land degradation and biodiversity conservation in ECO Region with the ultimate goal of development of a draft project proposal.
6. During the Workshop, the International Consultant of the Project made a detailed presentation on “ECO LandCare: A Collaborative Programme by the ECO Member States to combat land degradation, sand and dust storms”, having elaborated on various aspects of the Project Outline. ECO Secretariat has transmitted the Report of the Workshop prepared by ECO Secretariat and the Project Proposal prepared by ECO-IEST, which entailed the recommendations proposed by the Member States during the Workshop (Note Verbale No. EME/ENV/RPCD Workshop/2017/1134 dated 18 September 2017).

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

1. The ECO Secretariat in its Note Verbale No. EME/ENV/RPCD Workshop/2018/477 dated 12 April 2018, extended the deadline of 18 February 2018 set by 28th RPC Meeting for receiving views and comments on the subject Project Proposal, i.e. ECO LandCare Initiative and requested the Member States to convey their views/comments latest by 1 May 2018. The Secretariat also notified the Member States that in case of non-receipt of subject views/comments by the new deadline, the Development Phase of the aforementioned Project would be considered as finalized.
2. As the new deadline – 1 May 2018 for receiving views and comments on the subject Project Proposal, elapsed without any feedbacks from the Member States, the Project Development Phase was thus considered as final.
3. As proposed, vide Note Verbal EME/Environment/LandCare/2021/10 Dated 5 January 202, the 31st RPC 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 apeal one of the next CPR meeting by the Secretariat for allocation of 50000USD from the ECO FGPF;
4. The Republic of Turkey proposed some amendments, along with comments on some parts of the LandCare Project document, to update the project. The Republic of Turkey Also proposed that "the feasibility of the activities and coordination works (to be carried out under the coordination mechanism mentioned in the project) should be evaluated through the RCU and national focal points which are currently involving ECO countries to save both time and budget.
5. The comments and mentioned proposal was circulated between member states and since "no objection" was received from Member States on the relevant document, therefore the document was considered as no objection position and the ECO Secretariat along with the circulation of updated project, is due to apply (with interested Member States) for financing of the "First phase of the project" from ECO FGPF in one of upcoming CPR Meetings.

## Expected outcomes and focused issues for 2022

 **i. Implementation of the 1st Phase of ECO LandCare Programme**

1. Major overall objective of the Programme is to halt and reverse land degradation and associated impacts in the ECO Region through establishment of collaborative LandCare Program across multiple sectors in the participating ECO Member States. The First Phase of the Programme envisages putting in place the necessary assessment and knowledge of dryland conservation issues and solutions in each country and across the ECO Region.
2. The ECO LandCare Program is planned in 2 phases: a 3-year Establishment Phase focused on identification of issues and solutions, and putting in place the regional collaboration and exchange mechanism; and a 10-year Program of LandCare Actions, which will undertake replication and scaling-up of the most effective dryland conservation solutions in each of the participating ECO Member States, through a collaborative Decade of LandCare across the region. Through building upon both phases, the LandCare Program will enhance scientific knowledge, understanding and capacities of stakeholders, and sharing among the ECO Member States, of both the trends in land degradation and the availability of effective long-term solutions – in sustainable land-use, drylands conservation and restoration.
3. The indicative total budget for the Project is US$10.8 million, to be implemented over 3 years, in the 10 Member States. The Project Outline on the Establishment Phase (First Phase) of ECO LandCare Programme is enclosed in the end as a part of “Priority Project Proposals” Chapter of the subject Working Paper.

 **ii. Workshop on "Combating Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storms in the Region"**

1. This Workshop could make a breakthrough in defining the future roadmap for launching the 1st Phase of this flagship collaborative Program of ECO in the field of environment. The Workshop could act as a multi-stakeholder interagency event for mobilization of financial and technical support from the potential relevant international organizations/financial institutions/ instruments, particularly UN System, and their engagement as potential project partners.
2. The Republic of Turkey hosted the Workshop on Development of the Project of "Combating Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storms in the Region" on 14-16 December 2021 in Antalya whereas delegates from ECO Member States and Representatives from relevant International and Regional Organization took part. (If the workshop not held by Turkey) Despite the subsequent follow-up through multiple informal channels, the feedback on the dates, venue, format of hospitality and tentative programme is awaited.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* (If the workshop is not held) The Council may request the Republic of Turkey of other member states to confirm hosting the Workshop on Development of the Project. Its feedback on the date and details of the workshop will be highly appreciated.
* The Council may invite the ECO Secretariat in cooperation with the relevant partners (as the project manager) to take further steps for launching of the 1st phase of the ECO LandCare Programme. In this regard, ECO Secretariat in cooperation with the relevant partners will explore the best possibilities for approaching the relevant international organizations and financial institutions/instruments, particularly UN System for their engagements as potential project partners as well as for subsequent financial and technical support.
* The Council welcomed the proposal, raised by APDIM to hold a joint meeting on "Combating Desertification, Sand Storm and Dust Haze" in first quarter of the year 2022, to be host by any interested Member States of ECO Headquarters.

## The Council may recommend the Member States to be actively involved in this flagship collaborative Program of ECO in the field of environment.

## Area Conclusion

1. “The Regional Project to Combat Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region” has represented the only operational and flagship project in the environmental dimension over the past four years. Its Project Development Phase was finalized in April 2018 and as an outcome of its implementation, the Project Proposal on “ECO LandCare: A Collaborative Programme by the ECO Member States to combat land degradation, sand and dust storms” has been elaborated. The implementation of the 1st phase of ECO LandCare Programme is standing high on ECO’s agenda and the Secretariat will undertake further steps for launching of this Programme.
2. Increased frequency and severity of droughts during the last few decades along with the challenges related to development agenda and population growth have aggravated land degradation in several parts of the Region and increased dust haze and sand storm, which overall threatens the livelihood and welfare of people across the region. All these challenges necessitate the elaboration and early launching of the ECO LandCare Programme with a view to halt and reverse land degradation and associated impacts in the ECO Region through long-term collaborative efforts.

# Priority area 3: Addressing serious threats to biodiversity and sustainability of ecosystems in the ECO Region

## ECO Vision approach and target

**Regional projects in climate/biodiversity areas through partnership with relevant international stakeholders with available regional and global funding will be implemented**

 *(As outlined in Expected Outcomes (v.) of "Section F. Social Welfare and Environment" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

## Background information

1. The 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment, held in June 2006 in Almaty (Kazakhstan), tasked to start the development of an ECO Regional Plan of Action for Protection and Conservation of Biodiversity (Biological Diversity) at the earliest and welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the first experts meeting on biodiversity. Accordingly, the First Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity was held in Islamabad on 24-25 April 2007 succeeded in reaching consensus and adopting the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in the ECO Region for 2007-2015”, as well as the Calendar of Events on Biodiversity.
2. The 2nd Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity, held on 4-5 November 2014 in Antalya (Turkey), decided to extend the subject Work Plan on Biodiversity and approved the revised “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)”. In this regard, an initial draft of the revised “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)” was prepared by the Meeting and communicated to the Member States by the Secretariat for their views/comments.
3. ECO organized, together with the Turkish host authorities, the ECO Biodiversity Week in Antalya, Turkey in March 2016, notably the Workshop for Capacity Building and Sharing Best Practices on Biodiversity, 2nd ECO Pre-COP Meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the 3rd Experts Group Meeting (EGM) on Biodiversity (6-7 March) respectively. The 3rd ECO EGM on Biodiversity designated the Republic of Turkey as a new Coordinating Country for follow-up and implementation of the subject Work Plan. Meantime, the Meeting requested the Member States to appoint/update their National Focal Points on Biodiversity.
4. The 3rd ECO EGM on Biodiversity finalized and approved in principle the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)” along with its Calendar of Events. The Meeting recommended submitting the Work Plan to the ECO decision making bodies for final approval and urged the Member States to collaborate in the course of implementation process with a view to address serious threats to biodiversity and sustainability of ecosystems in the Region in a coherent and resilient manner. The Second ECO Consultative Ministerial Meeting on Environment, held on 27 May 2016 in Nairobi (Kenya) on the sidelines of UNEA-2 approved the subject Work Plan, while having mandated ECO Secretariat and Member States to take coherent and synergic measures to implement the outcomes of the ECO Biodiversity Week in Antalya (1-7 March, 2016), including the subject Work Plan. The 6th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment (1-2 June 2016, Islamabad) endorsed the subject Work Plan and requested ECO Secretariat for timely implementation of the Calendar of Events as specified in the Work Plan.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

1. The RPC 31, requested the MSs to voluntarily host the 4th Expert Group Meeting on Biodiversity in 2021 to review and discuss the progress and achievements if the implementation of the work plan on biodiversity and its Calendar of Events.
2. The Secretariat requested the Member States, which expressed their willingness to host relevant events envisaged in the ECO Calendar of Events for 2021, to communicate the dates, venue and the format of hospitality.
3. The ECO Coordination Meeting titled “ECO Contribution to the CBD Agenda: Implementation of the Work Plan on Biodiversity in the ECO Region 2016-2020” (12 December 2016, Cancun, Mexico) held on the sidelines of COP13 of UNCBD, prioritized cooperation on “Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)” within the Work Plan on Biodiversity. Turkey expressed its readiness to host the Experts Meeting on ABS. Consequently, ECO has organized, together with the Turkish host authorities, the 1st ECO Experts Group Meeting on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) on 11-13 March 2019 in Antalya. The Meeting discussed issues pertaining to the ABS Framework on Traditional Knowledge; Material Transfer Agreements; Prior Informed Consents; Clearing-House Mechanism; Bottlenecks, as Trans-Boundary Cooperation and Global Multilateral Benefit-sharing Mechanism. The Meeting highlighted the importance of monitoring export and import of species, particularly endangered species, integrated genetic resources management, combating illegal wildlife trade and transnational organized wildlife crime, use, registry and access to traditional knowledge and sharing of the benefits arising from its utilization. Furthermore, the Meeting finalized the ToR for ECO ABS Experts Pool. The Meeting also discussed the possibilities for ECO contribution to the activities within the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The Meeting resolved on supporting CITES – through ECO’s biodiversity cooperation – in the illegal trade in wildlife; regional wildlife enforcement cooperation and information enforcement support; ongoing and potential role of ECO Member States in CITES process and common procedural mechanisms for an effective regulation of international trade.
4. The secretariat requested the relevant authorities of the Republic of Turkey as the Coordinating Country (through the Note Verbale No. EME/Environment/Biodiversity /2020/146 dated 24 February 2020) to share on their activities undertaken for the follow up and implementation of the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)”.

## Expected outcomes and focused issues for 2022

### “Work plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)

1. The implementation of the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)” has reached its final stage and is expected to be finalized in 2022.
2. The 4th Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity along with biodiversity-related meetings in 2022 may complete the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)” in an efficient manner accomplishing its goals.

### 4th Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity

1. The 4th Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity is expected to review and deliberate on the Member States’ national policies in the field of biodiversity; status of implementation of Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020) and the roadmap for future regional biodiversity cooperation in view of the forthcoming finalization of this Work Plan. Any interested Member state is requested (through the Note Verbale No. EME/Environment/4th EGM-Biodiversity/2021/401 dated 18 March 2021 followed by Note Verbal No. EME/Environment/4th EGM-Biodiversity/2021/691dated 1 July 2021) to specify the date(s) and venue of the 4th Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity. No feedback reached to ECO Secretariat.

### Meeting on Sustainable Pastoralism

1. During the 28th RPC Meeting (11-14 December 2017, Islamabad), the delegation of the Republic of Turkey proposed to host the Meeting on Sustainable Pastoralism back-to-back with the 3rd ECO Pre-COP Meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held before October 2018. The 29th and 30th RPC Meetings kept the subject Meeting in ECO Calendar of Events for 2019 and 2020.
2. ECO Secretariat in two Note Verbales namely, No. EME/ENV/Biodiversity/2018/103 dated 21 January 2018 and EME/Environment/Pastoralism/COP/2020/2020/175 dated 8 March 2020, requested the relevant authorities of Turkey to communicate to the Secretariat the proposed dates, venue and format of hospitality of the subject events. The feedback is awaited. The Republic of Turkey is requested to specify the date and venue of the subject Meeting.

### Experts Meeting on Conservation of Fauna and Flora in the ECO Region

1. During the 28th RPC Meeting (11-14 December 2017, Islamabad) the delegation of I.R. Iran expressed readiness to host the subject Meeting. The RPC Meeting requested Iran to communicate to the Secretariat the exact date, venue and hospitality details for the subject Meeting in 2018.
2. ECO Secretariat in two Note Verbales, namely No. EME/ENV/EGMCFF/2018/486 dated 15 April 2018 and No. EME/Environment/Fauna and Flora/2020/167 dated 3 March 2020, requested I.R. Iran to communicate to the Secretariat the proposed dates, venue and format of hospitality to be extended for the participants of the subject event. The feedback is awaited. I. R. Iran is kindly requested to specify the date and venue of this Experts Meeting.

### Biodiversity Workshops, namely:

* **Second ECO Workshop for capacity building and best practices on Biodiversity issues;**
* **Workshop on Protected Areas Systems; and**
* **Workshop on Ecosystem Services**
1. One of the major principles of the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)” is to develop capacity building and public awareness programs for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its components at national and regional levels.
2. The First ECO Workshop for Capacity Building and Sharing Best Practices on Biodiversity was held on 1-2 March 2016 in Antalya, Turkey. The key objectives of the workshop were to generate recommendations and explore opportunities for synergy impacts, sharing best practices and capacity building of the ECO Member States in the fields of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, as well as to identify ways and means for effective implementation of ongoing and future joint initiatives within the existing ECO frameworks.
3. The Republic of Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot State, in its capacity as the Observer in ECO, have expressed their readiness to co-host three subject biodiversity workshops back-to-back on 9-12 October 2018 in Nicosia - Lefkoşa. ECO Secretariat through its Note Verbale No. EME/Environment/Biodiversity/2021/191 dated 24 February 2021 requested the hosts to consider holding this event in-person or virtually. The Republic of Turkey gave a positive response to said Note Verbal vide Note Verbal No. Z/2021/99530379/32565090 dated 2 April 2021 along with the particulars of the national Focal points to organize the "LefKosa Biodiversity Week". All meetings were postponed by Turkey due to pandemic Situation via Note Verbal No. Z-2021/99530379/33047379 dated 15 July 2021.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may request the Member States for hosting the 4th Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity in 2022 in order to review and discuss the progress and achievements of implementation of the Work Plan on Biodiversity and its Calendar of Events. These Meetings may wish to propose the extension of the Work Plan on Biodiversity to a new multi-year term or elaboration of a new Work Plan. Instead of the aforementioned extension/ elaboration, the Secretariat proposes to develop the strong biodiversity component, to be incorporated to the new/revised Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States for the next multi-year period (please see subchapter B. of Chapter “Environment” of this Working Paper). This incorporation will consequently streamline ECO environmental activities within one framework document in a coherent and cohesive manner addressing the nexus approach among multiple cross-cutting components of environmental cooperation.
* The Council may request the Republic of Turkey, as the Coordinating Country to inform the Secretariat and Member States on their arrangements for the follow up and implementation of the Work Plan.
* The Council may invite interested member States to consider hosting of biodiversity-related events planned for 2022 The Council may recommend the Secretariat and Member States the subject events will be sought to be held virtually.

## Area Conclusion

1. The biodiversity-related cooperation has been standing high in ECO’s environmental agenda over the past few years. This interest has been manifested in implementation of the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020)”, which has reached its final stage and is expected to be finalized in 2021. The Secretariat in cooperation with the Member States will continue its efforts and activities, including under the ECO Work Plan on Biodiversity, towards ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, access to genetic resources, fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization across the ECO Region; as well as promoting technology transfer, capacity building and enhanced cooperation in conservation and sustainable use and management of biodiversity at the national and regional levels.

# Cooperation with the environment-related international organizations/entities /instruments

## ECO Vision approach and target

**ECO will be recognized as a regional group/partner in the global environment community**

*(As outlined in Expected Outcomes (vi.) of "Section F. Social Welfare and Environment" of the “ECO Vision 2025”)*

## Background information

1. The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (15-17 December 2014, Istanbul, Turkey) mandated ECO Secretariat to:
* Seek observer status, where applicable, in environmental conventions to which ECO Member States are parties;
* Participate in the relevant environmental fora as observer, including UNEP, UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, UNFF, UNESCAP, etc.
1. The 26th RPC Meeting (13-17 December 2015, Tehran) appreciated the Secretariat for vigorous follow up of the implementation process of outcome decisions of the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment, inter alia, enhancing ECO’s cooperation with International Organizations and Conventions as UNEP, UNEA, UNFCCC, IPCC, UNCCD, UNCBD, UNFF, UNESCAP, etc., and urged it to explore further possibilities of enhancing synergic cooperation with these organizations and actively engaging in the important environmental fora.
2. The Second ECO Consultative Ministerial Meeting on Environment on the sidelines of UNEA-2 (27 May 2016, Nairobi, Kenya) also mandated ECO Secretariat to continue strengthening its cooperation and expanding its relationship with relevant international organizations and conventions.
3. The Secretariat has expanded its outreach through active engagement in the important environmental fora. Since 2015, ECO has been granted Observer Status at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), Conference of Parties (COP) process of the UN conventions, namely, UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) as well as UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
4. The 30th RPC Meeting (14-16 January 2020, Tehran) tasked the Secretariat to continue its interactions/efforts and enhance cooperation with the international environment-related organizations/entities/conventions/instruments.

## Recent developments, latest decisions and progress since the 31th RPC

1. ECO Secretariat maintained its collaboration and consultations, and expanded its outreach with the relevant UN agencies and conventions, namely UNEP, UNCBD and UNFF in particular for preparation of the first State of Environment Report (SoE) for the ECO Region, better implementation of the Work Plan on Biodiversity, and promoting the possible ECO regional strategy on sustainable forest management respectively.

## Expected outcomes and focused issues for 2022

1. The Secretariat's efforts for expansion of its cooperation and outreach through active engagement with important environmental fora in line with the mandates of the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment will continue in 2022. It may particularly seek the support of UNEP, UNCCD and UNFF in galvanizing financial resources available through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Adaptation Fund (AF) and Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN).

### Preparation of a State of Environment (SoE) report for ECO Region in Cooperation with UNEP

1. The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (15-17 December 2014, Istanbul, Turkey) mandated the Secretariat to introduce, in cooperation with the UNEP and ECO-IEST, the most appropriate outline/format for the ECO SoE taking into account the existing national, regional and international models. In the course of elaboration of the first SoE report for ECO Region based on the above-mentioned outline/format, ECO-IEST is sought to use the national SoEs of the Member States, as well as their regular national progress reports transmitted to the Secretariat.

1. The Second ECO Consultative Ministerial Meeting on Environment on the sidelines of UNEA-2 (27 May 2016, Nairobi, Kenya) tasked the Secretariat to finalize the SoE Report for the ECO Region in close collaboration with UNEP, ECO-IEST and other relevant entities, along with concrete recommendations for further actions. The 6th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment (1-2 June 2016, Islamabad, Pakistan) also highlighted the need in preparation of a regional SoE report.
2. On the sidelines of the Second United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2, May 2016, Nairobi, Kenya) ECO delegation met the Acting Regional Director of UNEP for Asia and the Pacific, and discussed the preparation of SoE Report for ECO Region. The ECO Secretary General in his Letter addressed to UNEP Executive Director dated 24 October 2016 retreated some areas of mutual cooperation including on preparation of a State of Environment (SoE) report for the ECO Region. On the sideline of the 22nd COP of UNFCCC (November 2016, Marrakesh, Morocco), ECO delegation held the meeting with UNEP Director for Early Warning and Assessment. UNEP Director expressed readiness to support ECO in developing the relevant SoE Report for the region and recommended to follow up the above issue with the UNEP Regional Office for Europe in Geneva.
3. The Secretariat continued its consultations with the relevant authorities of UNEP for joint cooperation for preparation of SoE Report for the ECO Region. The consultations were held in September 2017 in Geneva and in December 2017 in Nairobi on the sideline of the 3rd Session of UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA-3). On the sidelines of UNEA-3, the Secretariat held meetings with the officials of UNEP, notably with Chief Scientist and Director of Science Division, as well as the Director of Europe Office and his fellows from the Europe Office. During the course of the meetings, ECO Secretariat and UNEP deliberated on UNEP’s possible contribution to the elaboration of the first SoE Report. It would also be the task of ECO Secretariat to develop the relevant SoE Report in collaboration with the UNEP as both sides are keen to consider the possibility to jointly organizing the Inception Workshop on Modalities of the First SoE Report for ECO Region in 2022.

### Preparation of ECO Regional Strategy on Sustainable Forest Management

1. ECO has initiated mutually beneficial cooperation with the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in preparation of a regional strategy on sustainable forest management.
2. ECO and UNFF are actively collaborating with each other since 2014 and have co-organized two Workshops in April/May 2014 and October 2015 in Tehran on regional capacity building, as well as held in-length consultations in March 2015 on project proposals on the Regional Strategy for mobilizing climate financing for Sustainable Forest Management in the ECO Region. These two workshops demonstrated common understanding between two organizations and strong interest of UNFF in building on sustainable forest management agenda for ECO Region.
3. The Secretariats of UNFF and ECO jointly organized the Expert Meeting on Enhancing Regional and Sub-Regional Involvement in the Work of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) on 26-28 September 2016 in the ECO Secretariat. The Meeting identified 13 priority actions for enhancing involvement of regional and sub-regional organizations and processes in the UNFF and IAF Strategic Plan for 2017-2030.
4. ECO Secretariat attended the 12th Session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF12) which was held on 1-5 May 2017 at UN Headquarters in New York and held bilateral consultations with UNFF Secretariat on ways and means of promoting the ECO regional strategy on sustainable forest management, institutionalization of inter-regional coordination mechanism, and the continuation of capacity-building activities within ECO Region.
5. In pursuance of the ECO Regional Strategy on Sustainable Forest Management, and ECO cooperation with the UNFF and other forest-related entities to achieve the Global Forest Goals, the 30th RPC Meeting (14-16 January 2020, Tehran) welcomed and supported the campaign called “Breath for the Future” or “11/11” initiated by the Republic of Turkey, which provided 11 million saplings together with soil on 11 November 2019 and invited all the Member States to cooperate with Turkey for promotion of this campaign across ECO Region.
6. The 30th RPC Meeting (14-16 January 2020, Tehran) tasked the Secretariat to enhance its cooperation with UNFF, particularly in preparation of an ECO Regional Strategy on Sustainable Forest Management, and conducting capacity-building workshops for the Member States on developing actions/strategic plans. The Secretariat will seek UNFF's technical assistance in utilizing the financial resources available through the global environmental instruments. The Secretariat will also continue its efforts in contributing to the process of regional and sub-regional inputs to UNFF aimed at achievement of the Global Forest Goals and the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030. The 15th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), which was supposed to be held in New York on 4-8 May 2020, was postponed due to the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic.
7. Both the Preparation of a State of Environment (SoE) report for ECO Region in Cooperation with UNEP and preparation of ECO Regional Strategy on Sustainable Forest Management is ready to launch subject to the resolve and active engagement of the Member States. The next – 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment and the 7th Working Group Meeting on Environment, due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and Member states situations, hope to be held in 2022 and could be decisive in terms of launching both projects in collaboration with the international partners.

## Secretariat's recommendations

* The Council may recommend the Secretariat to explore the need for revisiting the existing ECO-UNEP MoU for wider cooperation. The Council may request the Secretariat to continue substantive consultations with UNEP officials to follow up agenda for bilateral cooperation, in particular the preparation of SoE Report for the ECO Region.
* The Council may called upon the Secretariat to continue its efforts to further enhancing cooperation with UNFF and other forest-related regional, sub-regional organizations and processes for soliciting technical and financial support and enhancing its visibility in forest-related issues. ECO Secretariat will continue cooperation and coordination with UNFF for the benefits of the Member States, including the preparation of an ECO regional strategy on sustainable forest management, organization of capacity building workshops for the ECO Region.
* The Council welcomed the proposal, raised by APDIM to hold a joint meeting on "Combating Desertification, Sand Storm and Dust Haze" in first quarter of the year 2022, to be host by any interested Member States or the ECO Headquarters. The Council may invite the Secretariat to continue interactions with UNCCD to benefit from its capacities and experiences to address desertification challenges in the Region, particularly in the context of UNCCD’s technical support to the launching and implementation of the ECO Land Care Programme.
* The Council may ask the Secretariat to continue its dialogue and communication with UNCBD for enhancement of mutual partnership, specifically in the context of implementation of the “Work Plan on Biodiversity in the ECO Region 2016-2020”.
* The Council may request the Secretariat to establish working relationship with leading universities and environmental research centers within and outside of the ECO region to fulfill the task given by the ECO Vision 2025 (and its midterm review) on environmental issues.

**ECO Calendar of Events for 2022**

**C. SECTOR: ENVIRONMENT**

**ECO Events**

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| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
| 1 | 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment | Turkey | 2022 |
| 2 | 7th Working Group Meeting on Environment | Pakistan | 2022 |
| 3 | 4th Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity  | TBD | 2022 |
| 4 | Joint ECO-APDIM meeting on combating Sand Storm and Dust Haze  | Member States/ECO Secretariat (Tehran) | 2022 |
| 5 | High-Level Consultative Meeting on Environment on the sidelines of the 27th COP of UNFCCC  | Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt | 7-18 November 2022 |

**Conferences/Seminars/Workshops/Training Courses**

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| **No** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | ECO-UNEP Inception Workshop on modalities of the First State of Environment (SoE) Report for ECO region | TBD |  |
|  | Conception/Capacity Building Workshop for Developing Future Roadmap on the Development and Management of Biosphere Reserves in the ECO Region  | Pakistan |  |
|  | Second ECO Workshop for capacity building and best practices on Biodiversity issues | Turkey/Nicosia |  |
|  | Workshop on Protected Areas Systems | Turkey/Nicosia |  |
|  | Workshop on Ecosystem Services | Turkey/Nicosia |  |

**Non-ECO Events**

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| No | Event/Activity | Venue | Date |
| 1 | UN Climate Change Conference 2022 (UNFCCC COP 27) | Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt | 7-18 November 2022 |
| 2 | Fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) | Nairobi, Kenya | 28 Feb - 02 Mar 2022 |
| 4 | UN Forum on Forests – 17th session | New-York | 9-13 May 2022 |
| 5 | Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity | Kunming, China | 25 April-8 May 2022 |

**PRIORITY PROJECT PROPOSALS**

**The List of ECO Projects and Programmes**

**In Energy, Minerals and Environment (EME)**

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| **Energy /Clean Energy Centre** | **1. Project Category:** |
| **EME1/I/Pr/2019** | **2. Project Code:**  |
| **Preparatory Phase of the Project of establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO)**  | **3. Project Title:** |
| Key overall objective of the project is to contribute 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 energy and energy efficiency markets and investments. The Preparatory Phase of the project envisages the elaboration of the consultative needs assessment/feasibility study, organization of validation meeting, and consideration and approval of the detailed Project Document. | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| 223000EUR | **5. Project Budget (Euro):** |
| Preliminary estimation for the pledged funding of the Preparatory Phase:* 50000EUR by UNIDO
* 56500EUR by the Austrian Development Agency
* 50000USD from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF)
* European Union (tbd)
 | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| ECO Secretariat in collaboration with UNIDO | **7. Coordinating Country/Organization:** |
| UNIDO, Austrian Development Agency, possibly EU, IRENA, international environmental instruments (GEF, GCF, etc.) | **8. International/Regional Partner(s):** |
| 7 months | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| July 2019 | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| approximately 50% | **11. Project Progress Ratio (%):** |
| October 2020 | **12. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| Due to Covid19 outbreak Regional Validation Meeting was held virtually, thus allocated budget for the meeting was not used | **13. Project Budget Released (%):** |
| **14. Background:**The idea of establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) was pioneered by the ECO Secretariat as the outcome of ECO-UNIDO consultations held in Vienna and Tehran over the past few years. “ECO Vision 2025” and its Implementation Framework stipulate the establishment of an ECO Clean Energy Centre up to 2025 by the ECO Secretariat/Member States. This joint endeavour is also a result of UNIDO’s long-lasting cooperative relationship with ECO, based on a 1994 Agreement, pertaining to the promotion of cleaner and resource efficient production practices, as well as renewable energy and industrial energy efficiency. Furthermore, the 69th UN GA Resolution A/RES/69/111 (10 December 2014) and 71st UN GA Resolution A/RES/71/16 (21 November 2016) on Cooperation between UN and ECO welcomed the idea of the development of a joint programme by UN and ECO for sustainable energy and, as its outcome, the establishment of a regional energy centre, and called upon the relevant UN agencies and international financial institutions to consider extending their financial and technical support for the development and implementation stages of this programme. On 22nd June 2017, ECO Secretariat submitted its official request on the subject proposal to UNIDO. In June 2017, ECO Secretariat submitted to UNIDO the Indicative Concept Paper on establishment of CECECO for consideration. In July 2017, UNIDO responded positively to collaborating with ECO on that initiative. In September 2017, the First Draft of Project Document “Preparatory Phase for the establishment of a potential ECO Clean Energy Centre" was jointly elaborated by UNIDO and ECO Secretariat and agreed upon as an indicative paper. The financial commitments by UNIDO, ECO and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) were made in 2018. The 233rd Meeting of CPR, held on 11 September 2018 decided to launch the Preparatory Phase of the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre and approved the allocation of 50000USD from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) as a partial financing of this phase.“Terms of Reference (ToR) for the provision of services to assess the added value, feasibility and financial sustainability of an ECO Clean Energy Centre” was jointly prepared and agreed upon in January 2019. UNIDO announced a bid in February 2019 through its Procurement Portal for the provision of international consultancy services. Joint UNIDO-ECO Evaluation Team undertook the examination and evaluation of the international bidders applied for the subject consultancy.ECONOLER – the Canada-based company specialized in energy efficiency and renewable energy programs/projects was selected as an international consultant for the subject assignment. **15. Current Status:**The Preparatory Phase of the Project was launched in July 2019 and is currently in the finalization process, once the host country will be selected in order to launch operationalization phase of the project. The international consultant submitted project deliverables such as the Inception Report, Baseline and Needs Assessment Report, Feasibility Study Report and Project Document for 1st operation phase. The documents have been reviewed and contributed by ECO Secretariat in particular with Member States. The matters such as financing of first operational phase, drafting legal document and commencing host country selection are on the agenda to determine further steps**16. Necessary Actions and Assistance Needed:**1. All Member States are requested to be actively involved in host country selection, allocation of voluntary funds, technical and political support for successful launch of operational phase.2. Fund raising among key stake-holders such as ECO, UNIDO, host country and international donors3. ECO Secretariat will continue its engagement with UNIDO and other potential partners for successful completion of the Preparatory Phase of the Project and proceeding to the 1st Operational Phase.4. Financial and technical support of interested international financial institutions/donors for the 1st Operational Phase will be explored jointly by ECO Secretariat, UNIDO and the international consultant. |
| **17. a. Expected Outcomes of the Project of establishment of CECECO:**1. Effective regional sustainable energy promotion agency created and efficiently managed;
2. Enabling policy, legal and incentive frameworks are created and under implementation;
3. Effective sustainable energy qualification, innovation, certification and accreditation frameworks for sustainable energy are created and implemented;
4. Effective knowledge and data management, as well as awareness raising and advocacy;
5. Investments in sustainable energy infrastructure and manufacturing and servicing industries mobilized.

**b. Expected Outcomes of the Preparatory Phase:**1. Develop the Baseline and Needs Assessment Report to set a quantifiable benchmark, identify the added value of the centre and the priority needs of various stakeholders; 2. Based on the results of the Baseline and Needs Assessment, elaborate a Feasibility Study Report with a view to determine the most effective/optimal institutional and technical design/set-up of the Centre and its financial sustainability; 3. Endorsement of the Feasibility Study Report at a Regional Validation Meeting; 4. Map out the CECECO Project Document on the first operational phase, discuss and approve this document at one of the ECO decision-making body meeting; 5. Publish the outline of the Feasibility Study and Project Document as a brochure/pamphlet for, *inter alia,* promotion and wider publicity among the ECO Member States and beyond, prior to launching the first operational/start-up phase.  |

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| 1. **Project Category**
 | Manufacturing and Marketing Opportunities for Promotion of the Sustainable and Advanced Phase Change Material-based Renewable Energy Technologies |
| 1. **PROJECT TITLE:**
 | Feasibility Study on Manufacturing and Marketing Opportunities for Promotion of the Sustainable and Advanced Phase Change Material-based Renewable Energy Technologies (ECO-PCM) |
| 1. **Project objective**
 | * 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.
 |
| 1. **Project Budget**
 | 10000 USD |
| 1. **Coordinating Country/Organization**
 | ECO Secretariat, Directorate for Energy Minerals and Environment |
| 1. **International/Regional Partner(s):**
 | Possible partners: IRENA, UNIDO, Energy Charter |
| 1. **Duration of the project**
 | 3-6 months  |
| 1. **.Project Starting Time (M/Y):**
 | tbd |
| 1. **Project Progress Ratio (%):**
 |  |
| 1. **Expected Project Completion Time**
 |  |
| 1. **Project Budget Released (%):**
 |  |
| 1. **Target Beneficiaries**
 | * Public agencies/authorities;
* Manufacturers, dealers and suppliers;
* End-use industries;
* Feedstock suppliers;
* Business associations;
* Large infrastructure companies;
* Consulting Companies/Consultants in chemical and material sectors;
* Consumers/End-users of the relevant technologies/ industries;
* Academia (research institutions, think tanks), etc.
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| **Energy /Electricity** | **1. Project Category:** |
| **EME2/E/REM/2017** | **2. Project Code:**  |
| **Feasibility Study on establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM)** | **3. Project Title:**  |
| * To study prerequisites and existing conditions in the ECO Region for establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market through harmonizing and merging the electricity markets of Iran and Turkey with the possibility of its further expansion to other Member States.
* To advise the ECO Member States on the optimal approaches to increase electricity trade via improving policy and regulatory environment, undertaking relevant arrangements, and building institutional capacities.
* To find synergies and complementarities among the fragmented bilateral and multilateral electricity grids existing/expected in the ECO Region and mobilize them under the ECO-REM platform.
 | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| Estimated cost is 300000 – 400000USD | **5. Project Budget (US$):** |
| Seed financing by the interested Member States, ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF), as well as financial institutions and donors | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| I.R. Iran, Turkey and ECO Secretariat/To be further developed within other Member States | **7. Coordinating Country/Organization:** |
| International Energy Charter | **8. International/Regional Partner:** |
| 8 months | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| -2022 | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **11. Project Progress Ratio (%):** |
| -2022 | **12. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **13. Project Budget Released (%):** |
| **14. Background:**3rd Expert group meeting between two countries was held in May 31, 2021 and the Republic of Azerbaijan was also invited with the view to contribute to the project as a country which has power trade and exchange with both countries. The Meeting decided that the Secretariat will review the Terms of References (ToRs) of the project to be updated based on the recent developments if necessary. The Secretariat will distribute at its earliest the updated ToR amongst participated sides During the 2nd High Level Experts Group Meeting on Energy (September 2012, Ankara), I.R. Iran proposed the establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) and hosting a Meeting/Workshop on the subject matter in 2013. The 23rd RPC Meeting (6-8 May 2013, Tehran) emphasized the importance of establishment of ECO-REM and requested the Member States to organize relevant events with a view to realize that idea. The 1st Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO REM hosted by Iran was held on 5-6 November 2013 in ECO Secretariat. Apart from the ECO Member States, the representatives of Nord Pool Spot, ECO-CCI, IsDB and ECO TDB also participated at the subject Meeting. The major outcome and recommendation of the Meeting was the implementation of ECO-REM as a pilot project initially with participation of I.R. Iran and Turkey and later with other interested ECO Member States for maximum benefits of ECO Region. * Following key recommendations are necessary :
* Identification of criteria and guidelines for hiring 3 consultants (2 local and one international) to prepare Feasibility Study on establishment of ECO REM;
* Getting approval of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives for funding the Feasibility Study from ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund, with possibility of Iran and Turkey providing additional seed funding for hiring local consultants.
* Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for a feasibility study on establishment of ECO-REM has been updated and circulated by the Secretariat in October 2021;

5. ECO Secretariat in cooperation with the Energy Charter Secretariat co-organized technical workshop to introduce best international practices in electricity market issues 14 October 2020.6. As an outcome of consultations between ECO and Energy Charter Secretariat, the Latter expressed its readiness to support launching the subject Project through establishment of a consortium for joint coordination of this Project based on the previous experiences of the Energy Charter.**15. Current Status:**By the Note Verbal of the Secretariat No: EME/Energy/3rd ECO-REM/2021/1174 dated October 31, 2021, updated ToR of the project has been asked for comments of the Member States with deadline of 2 weeks. Iran and Turkey had some minor additions to the ToR which has been reflected in the document. The 29th , 30, 31st RPC Meetings reaffirmed the promotion of electricity trade in the ECO Region and ECO-REM Project as one of the most promising undertakings within ECO, and highlighted the importance of advancement of ECO-REM, in particular with endorsed roadmap during 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting. **16. Necessary Actions and Assistance Needed:**1. 4rd Iran-Turkey Bilateral Meeting and the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM with a view to approve the aforementioned ToR, and define the roadmap for further action and accelerate the implementation of the project in line with the “ECO Vision 2025” are one of key actions that Member States should actively involve in.2. Member States should follow up possibilities to implement roadmap on realization of the project adopted at the 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting held in 2021.3. The Republic of Tajikistan is expected to confirm hosting the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM in 2022.4. Hiring consultants for preparation of the feasibility study in cooperation with the Energy Charter and other interested international financial institutions/donors.  |
| **17. Expected Outcomes of the Project**1. Electricity trade among the interested Member States will transform into the multilateral character through integrating the fragmented bilateral and multilateral projects and initiatives existing/expected in the ECO Region;2. ECO Region will harness its full regional electricity potential;3. The long-term regional electricity exchange and region-wide cooperation will be enhanced; 4. ECO-REM will be expanded towards the integrated non-ECO electricity markets;5. ECO-REM will contribute to the long-term regional energy sustainability through multiplier effects. |

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| **Environment /Landcare**  | **1. Project Category:** |
| **EME4/Landcare /2021** | **2. Project Code:**  |
| “Soil and land pollutions for ECO Region” | **3. Project Title:** |
| Soil conservation is fundamental for the sustainable development and preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity. The major opportunities for regional cooperation are in cooperation in the management of shared environmental resources, which directly or indirectly can impact soil pollution. Another natural area for regional cooperation is in institutional strengthening to mechanisms to share information and undertake joint environmental monitoring. | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| 10 000 USD | **5. Project Budget (US$):** |
| the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| ECO-IEST | **7. Coordinating Country/Organization:** |
| Possibly the Secretariat of UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UN CCD) | **8. International/Regional Partner(s)** |
| 3-6 months  | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| 2022 | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **11. Project Progress Ratio (%):** |
| - | **12. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **13. Project Budget Released (%):** |
| **14. Background**The international community recognized the role of soils in providing ecosystem services, enabling life on Earth and ensuring human well-being. In particular, the reduction of soil pollution and the restoration of polluted sites can contribute to achieving food security (SDG 2), increasing the provision of clean water (SDG 3 and 6), sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12), strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters (SDG 13), preventing marine pollution from land-based activities, combating desertification, achieving a land degradation neutral world, and halting biodiversity loss (SDG 15), and it is related to technology development and land use and urban planning (SDG 9 and 11).In many countries, there is significant public concern about health problems from exposure to trace elements (often including heavy metals) and to organic pollutants in the soil. Increasing releases of potentially harmful trace elements (also known as heavy metals) to soil has led to a growing concern worldwide, particularly in rapidly developing countries, where regulation, management and mitigation have struggled to keep pace with the rate of pollutant release to the environment. However, developed and developing nations are not immune to threats to soil function imposed by trace elements. The long legacy of improper hazardous waste disposal, emissions and releases from industrial activities and metal in soils presents grave challenges for use and reclamation of polluted land.The countries are expected to call the attention of the Governments, NGOs and private sector working on agricultural inputs production and distribution, pollutant management, and technology development for measuring and controlling soil pollution.The 31st RPC appreciated the initiative of Secretariat to address mitigation of pollution in the ECO region by introducing and following up Small Size Projects entitled “Natural Measures to combat soil pollution by using photo-remediation”.The Secretariat has prepared necessary conceptual paper to introduce to the Member States for comments to enrich the document, which further will result in elaboration of ToR and launching the project.  |
| **15. Current status**The Secretariat has prepared justficiation of the project and needs to enrich it with active contribution by Member States and international partners. The Republic of Turkey is expected to host the Workshop on Development of the Project of "Combating Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storms in the Region" in December 2021, initiated by Turkey per se to define the roadmap for development of the subject Programme. The The 30th RPC Meeting (14-16 January 2020, Tehran) decided that the best possibilities should be explored for approaching the relevant international organizations and financial institutions/instruments, particularly UN System for their engagements as potential partners as well as for subsequent financial and technical support.  |
| **16. Necessary actions and assistance needed** 1. Comments of Member States on the concept paper and possible proposals of making it bankable
2. To explore by Secretariat cooperation of international partners
3. To find capable group of at least 3 experts for hiring as consultants
 |
| **17. Expected Outcomes of the Programme:** **-** supply of adequate quantities of nutritious food products, medications, and for their assistance in developing the human immune system.- Some of the environmental effects of soil conservation can be improved soil quality and productivity, reducing erosion, increasing water infiltration and storage, improving air and water quality and providing food and shelter for wildlife.it is expected that improved regional cooperation will rapidly become a key factor in the development of the emerging green economy, which relies *inter-alia* largely on the sustainable management of land resources. |

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| **Environment /Desertification/Dust Haze and Sand Storm**  | **1. Project Category:** |
| **EME3/1stP/Landcare /2019** | **2. Project Code:**  |
| **“Establishment Phase (First Phase) of ECO LandCare Programme”**  | **3. Project Title:** |
| Major overall objective of the Programme is to halt and reverse land degradation and associated impacts in the ECO Region through establishment of collaborative LandCare Program across multiple sectors in the participating ECO Member States.The First Phase of the Programme envisages putting in place the necessary assessment and knowledge of dryland conservation issues and solutions in each country and across the ECO Region. | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| USD 3 million for the first phase (USD10.8 million (total budget for two phases to be further distributed)) | **5. Project Budget (US$):** |
| FGPF/ Member States / UN and other international sources, as the global environmental instruments (GEF, GCF, etc.) | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| ECO-IEST | **7. Coordinating Country/Organization:** |
| Possibly the Secretariat of UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UN CCD) | **8. International/Regional Partner(s)** |
| 36 Month (First phase)  | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| 2022 | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **11. Project Progress Ratio (%):** |
| - | **12. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **13. Project Budget Released (%):** |
| **14. Background**The 209th CPR Meeting allocated USD50000 from ECO Feasibility Study and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) for the implementation of the Project Development Phase of the Regional Project to Combat Desertification with a special emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region. In pursuance of the subject decision, the Contract was signed on 22nd September 2016 between the ECO Secretariat and ECO Institute for Environmental Science and Technology (ECO-IEST) for implementation of the Project Development Phase. Under the above contract, the Project Development Consultation Workshop on “Combating Desertification with Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region” jointly organized by ECO Secretariat and ECO-IEST on 5-6 July 2017 in the ECO Secretariat with active participation of Member States, UN CCD Secretariat and other international stakeholders. The goal of the workshop was the consultation among experts of Member States and the designated international consultant on the state of land degradation and biodiversity conservation in the ECO Region with a view to develop a draft project proposal. ECO Secretariat transmitted in September 2017 the Report of the Workshop prepared by this Secretariat and the Project Proposal prepared by ECO-IEST, both of which entailed the recommendations proposed by the Member States during the Workshop. The 28th RPC Meeting (11-14 December 2017, Islamabad) requested the interested Member States to expedite providing the Secretariat with their views and comments on the aforementioned Project Proposal by 18 February 2018 for incorporation by Project Manager - ECO-IEST. The ECO Secretariat in its Note Verbale dated 12 April 2018, extended the deadline of 18 February 2018 set by 28th RPC Meeting for receiving views and comments on the subject Project Proposal and requested the Member States to convey their views/comments latest by 1 May 2018. The Secretariat also notified the Member States that in case of non-receipt of subject views/comments by the given date, the Development Phase of the aforementioned Project would be considered as finalized. As the new deadline – 1 May 2018 elapsed without any feedbacks from the Member States, the Project Development Phase thus considered as final. |
| **15. Current status**The Republic of Turkey proposed some amendments, along with comments on some parts of the LandCare Project document, to update the project. The Republic of Turkey Also proposed that "the feasibility of the activities and coordination works (to be carried out under the coordination mechanism mentioned in the project) should be evaluated through the RCU and national focal points which are currently involving ECO countries to save both time and budget. Due to an early explenatory report, received from the Republic of Turkey vide NV Z-2021/99530379/32274666 dated January 27,2021, the project was postponed to consider the comments and reservations of Republic of Turkey. The amended document was circulated and confirmed by Member states as per ECO NV No. EME/Environment/LandCare/2021/1154, dated 27 October 2021. The Republic of Turkey is expected to host the Workshop on Development of the Project of "Combating Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storms in the Region" in December 2021, initiated by Turkey per se to define the roadmap for development of the subject Programme. The 30th RPC Meeting (14-16 January 2020, Tehran) decided that the best possibilities should be explored for approaching the relevant international organizations and financial institutions/instruments, particularly UN System for their engagements as potential partners as well as for subsequent financial and technical support.  |
| **16. Necessary actions and assistance needed** The ECO LandCare Program is planned in 2 phases: a 3-year Establishment Phase focused on identification of issues and solutions, and putting in place the regional collaboration and exchange mechanism; and a 10-year Program of LandCare Actions, which will undertake replication and scaling-up of the most effective dryland conservation solutions in each of the participating ECO Member States through a collaborative Decade of LandCare across the region.The 1st Phase is designed to put in place the necessary assessment and knowledge of dryland conservation issues and solutions in each country and across the ECO region. The 2nd Phase will be designed and developed as a significant extension and scaling-up of specific LandCare Actions over a further 10 years based on review of the 1st Phase performance and lessons drawn. Through both phases, the LandCare Program will enhance scientific knowledge, understanding and capacities of stakeholders, and sharing among the ECO Member States of both the trends in land degradation and the availability of effective long-term solutions – in sustainable land-use, drylands conservation and restoration through following Strategic Actions:

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| 1. Actions that enhance and extend policies and practices for sustainable and climate resilient dryland management
 | 1. Actions that limit or phase-out damaging land-use practices, especially in the most vulnerable dryland parts of the region
 |
| 1. Actions to significantly scale-up dryland ecological restoration activities, particularly in priority localities
 | 1. Actions to support expansion of effective long-term protection of healthy dryland ecosystems
 |

 |
| **17. Expected Outcomes of the Programme:** **Outcome 1**: Collaboration and Synergy in LandCare:1.1.Regional and national leadership and participation in the ECO LandCareProgram.1.2. LandCare Awards and Champions for exemplary contributions to LandCare. 1.3. International collaboration and support for the ECO LandCare Program**Outcome 2:** 2.1. Knowledge Management for enhanced LandCare in multiple sectors2.2. Enhanced knowledge and reformed attitudes and behavior about land degradation and conservation.Strengthened capacity through sharing of knowledge about land conservation issues and solutions.2.3. Increased communication and awareness of land degradation and climate impacts, consequences and solutions.**Outcome 3**. National and Regional LandCare Action Plans3.1. Development and promotion of LandCare Demonstration sites and events.3.2. Preparation of LandCare Action Strategy (LCAS) Plans – Sectoral, National and for the ECO Region. |

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| **Environment** | **1. Project Category:**  |
| **EME4/Env/PoA/LP/2019** | **2. Project Code:** |
| **“Preparation of a regional program for implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States”**  | **3. Project Title:** |
| Implementation of the subject Plan of Action (2016-2020) upon the decision of its revision and extension to the next multi-year period | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| USD250000 | **5. Project Budget (US$):** |
| USD50000 was pledged from ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF).The project thus requires galvanizing the remaining USD200000 from other possible sources, i.e. Member States / international partners.  | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| ECO Secretariat | **7. Coordinating Country/Organization:** |
| ECO-IEST | **8. International/Regional Partner:** |
| 6-12 months | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| 2022 | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **11. Project Progress Ratio (%):** |
| - | **12. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **13. Project Budget Released (%):** |

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| **14. Background:**Driven by the guidelines of the 11th ECO Summit Meeting (December 2010, Istanbul), growing uptake of environmental agenda within the Organization and the lack of proper mechanism for implementation of the Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2011-2015), the 21st RPC Meeting (17-19 May 2011, Tehran) requested the Secretariat to design a project profile for preparation of the subject regional program and submit it to the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment.The 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (7-9 June 2011, Tehran) adopted the Project Profile prepared by the ECO Secretariat and entitled it “Preparation of a regional program for implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2011-2015)” with the budget of USD250000. The 169th CPR Meeting (20 July 2011) approved the allocation of USD50000 from the Feasibility Study and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) for the subject Project. Meantime, I.R. Iran pledged to contribute USD100000 to this Project.The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment (15-17 December 2014, Istanbul) decided to extend the term of the subject Framework Plan of Action until the end of 2021. Having acknowledged the contributions by the ECO Secretariat and Iran (USD50000 and USD100000 respectively) out of total USD250000 USD budget of the project, the ECO Secretariat and ECO-IEST were mandated to make, in consultations with the Member States, necessary adjustments and requirements for the priority areas of the Plan of Action, and continue with its implementation using the available funds, taking into account the need for its updating in line with recent developments at the global and regional levels. The above-mentioned Ministerial Meeting further concurred to consider allocation of more funding, including the remaining USD100000 for the implementation of the Plan of Action from the ECO Member States, which would be the basis for exploring funding by donors from outside the Region. The 6th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment (1-2 June 2016, Islamabad) requested the ECO Secretariat to engage with the concerned authorities of Iran in settling the funding modalities and requested other Member States to consider allocation of remaining USD100000 for early implementation of the project profile.The 27th RPC Meeting (5-8 December 2016) requested the Secretariat to draft a trilateral contract (ECO Secretariat, ECO-IEST and Department of Environment of Iran) for preparation of a regional program for implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2016-2020). The 27the and 28th RPC Meetings (11-14 December 2017) requested the Member States (except Iran who has pledged USD100000) to consider allocation of the remaining USD100000 for early implementation of the project. Meantime, it was decided that Iran will release the pledged amount upon signing the contract. During the 29th RPC Meeting (17-20 December 2018), I.R. Iran informed that it refuses to contribute USD100000 to this Project.  |
| **15. Current Status:**The ECO Ministerial and Working Group Meetings on Environment and subsequently the decision-making bodies are expected to decide on the revision of the subject Framework Plan of Action and its extension to the next multi-year period. This extension will enable the ECO Secretariat to maintain the momentum of cooperation in the field of environment availing the inclusive roadmap for environmental cooperation and proceed to revising the Project Profile for preparation of a relevant regional programme for the implementation of this Plan of Action. The ECO Secretariat will then be expecting for volunteer countries/organizations that may be interested in being involved in the subject programme with contribution of the rest of the required budget (USD200000) for its early launching.  |
| **16. Necessary Actions and Assistance Needed:**1. The subject Framework Plan of Action is expected to be revised and extended to the next multi-year period;2. Upon this revision and extension, the Member States will be requested to consider the possibility of involvement in the subject project via contribution of the rest of the required amount (USD200000);3. The multilateral project contract with participation of ECO-IEST will be drafted after allocation of the remaining USD200000.  |
| **17. Expected Outcomes of the Project:**1. Preparation of ten comprehensive analytical and informative national reports and a consolidated regional report;
2. Organization of three regional workshops and two HLEG Meetings;
3. Revision of the Regional Program, to be submitted to the ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment for final approval and implementation. The Regional Program will include national and regional bankable projects;
4. Establishment of a modern and fully equipped unit for monitoring of implementation of the Regional Program in the Secretariat;
5. Establishment of fully equipped national focal points for implementation of the Regional Program with due connection to ECO Secretariat;
6. Building of the required capacity in the ECO Secretariat and of the national focal points for implementation of the Regional Program;
7. Publication of the results of the project in a book/booklet format and distribution to the Member States and partner regional/international organizations;
8. Fulfillment of any other mandates of the Secretariat and project team within the subject project, which may be assigned by the ECO decision-making bodies or the Secretariat leadership.
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| **Minerals\Mapping** | **1. Project Category:**  |
| **EME5/M/LP/Map/2020** | **2. Project Code:**  |
| **Preparation of Eco-Environmental Quality Index (EQI) Map (1:5M) of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI)** | **3. Project Title:** |
| Specific regional challenges related to natural and man-made disasters confronted by the ECO Member States necessitate addressing environmental issues. Most of the Member States faced numerous long-term negative consequences of the lack of country-wide environmental vulnerability assessment maps and environmental regulation for national planning on their economics and health. Therefore, the subject Project aims at evaluation and analysis of environmental conditions in the regional scale. It is designed to evaluate ecological qualities of environment over the ECO Region through collaborative efforts of the Member States. Environmental quality index data contain information that directly leads to making ecological and environmental decisions in mining, industries, agriculture, forestry, watershed management, biodiversity and human health issues, waste burial and land use management. These data could be a powerful tool for evaluating the environmental challenges and providing appropriate solutions. Ecological-environmental quality assessment is useful in connecting regional economic to social sustainable development. | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| USD 300 000 | **5. Project Budget:** |
| USD 250 000 is expected to be covered by the Geological Survey of Iran (GSI) USD50000 may be allocated from the ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FSGPF) | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| Geological Survey of Iran (GSI) / ECO Secretariat | **7. Coordinating Country/Organization:** |
| Presumably the relevant UN System organization/entity  | **8. International/Regional Partner:** |
| 12 months | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| 2021 | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **11. Project Progress Ratio (%):** |
| - | **12. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| - | **13. Project Budget Released (%):** |
| **14. Background:**The subject project proposal was first initiated by GSI following the 6th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting, held on 17-18 October 2016 in Sungun Mine Complex in Varzeghan Area, Tabriz, I.R. Iran. As per the recommendations of this Meeting, the relevant authorities of I.R. Iran provided the Secretariat with the Concept Papers on (i) Geodynamic and present-day Crustal Stress (ECO-GeoDyS) Map of the ECO Region; (ii) Preparing Eco-Environmental Quality Index (EQI) Map (1:5M) of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI); (iii) Preparation of Mineral Deposit Types and Metallogenic Map of the ECO Region; and (iv) Spiroclast Map of mobile belt between Gondwana and Eurasia, which were accordingly circulated among the Member States for their views and comments.The 28th RPC Meeting (11-14 December 2017, Islamabad, Pakistan) requested the Member States (except Tajikistan) to expedite providing the Secretariat with their views/comments on the Concept Paper of project proposal on Preparing ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map of the ECO Region.The 7th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting, held on 5-7 August 2018 in Sanandaj, I.R. Iran, noted that in response to aforementioned relevant concept papers, Afghanistan, while noting the importance of the project, has provided comments and suggestions on Preparing ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map of the ECO Region; whereas the Republic of Tajikistan has supported the subject project. 7th Meeting also reflected that most recently, Pakistan, while supporting four project proposals, has also made views and comments and notable suggestions for pragmatic implementation of these projects.  |
| **15. Current Status:**Following the circulation of the concept paper, the Secretariat regularly requested the Member States through its Notes Verbales, as well as during 28th and 29th RPC Meetings and 7th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting to expedite providing with their views and comments on the referred concept paper. As of today, 4 Member States, namely, Afghanistan, Iran (initiator), Pakistan and Tajikistan have supported launching of the project on Preparation of Eco-Environmental Quality Index (EQI) Map (1:5M) of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI). In reply to the enquiry of the MFA of I.R. Iran, ECO Secretariat in its NV No. EME/Minerals/2019/665 dated 18 August 2019 commented that the relevant authorities of the I.R. Iran may wish to implement the ECO-EQI Project with the limited number of the Member States, in pursuance of the “Functional Methodology of ECO”, stipulating that the project shall be identified with ECO if at least four Member States participate in it. The Secretariat reckoned that the designing of the EQI Map/thematic maps as an outcome of the project requires the participation and collaboration of a greater number of the Member States. In this regard, the Secretariat expected from the relevant authorities of the I.R. Iran to advice their approach on the subject matter. During the 30th and 31st RPC meeting, the Member States resolved to start the procedures for launching the Project on Preparation of Eco-Environmental Quality Index (EQI) Map (1:5M) of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI). In this vein, all Member States will render their utmost support to launching and efficient implementation of the subject project, which targets on evaluation of ecological qualities of environment across the ECO Region through collaborative efforts of the Member States. The initiator country together with the Secretariat, after some internal coordination, may wish to appeal one of the next CPR meetings for consideration of allocation of 50000USD from the ECO FGPF for the ECO-EQI Project. **With the aim to increase participation from more Member States, the Secretariat has proposed to initiator country for organizing validation meeting to attract them and approve validity of ToR****16. Necessary Actions and Assistance Needed:**1. Alternatively, once the relevant authorities of I.R. Iran would agree to launch the Project with four Member States, the initiator country together with the Secretariat may appeal one of the next CPR meetings for consideration and allocation of 50000USD from the ECO FGPF for the said project. In this scenario, upon allocation of the required budget by GSI and ECO Secretariat, the preparation of the contract will be undertaken by ECO Secretariat and the project manager – GSI.2. Initiator country may host validation meeting for attracting more member states for participation and approve ToR which will facilitate allocation of necessary fund by CPR. |
| **17. Expected Outcomes of the Project:**1- Prepare national scale environmental risk assessment maps for strategic national planning;2- Develop a standard method to assess ecological-environmental quality in regional scale;3- Identify and prioritize vulnerable areas using cost effective methods, as remote sensing and GIS for detailed studies;4- Identify natural and anthropogenic factors affecting the vulnerability of ecological areas and to develop solutions to reduce the impact of harmful factors;5- Periodic monitoring of ecological areas over time through updating of EQI maps;6- Identification of appropriate areas for development of population centers and agriculture lands through codification of land use strategies;7- Providing basic data for improving mining activities, forestry and farming compatible with environmental standards;8- Provide basic information for regional ecological area conservation through codification of protective laws;9- Improvement of human habitats via development of environmental conservation policies on a regional scale;10- Employing quantitative assessment methods instead of traditional qualitative ones for regional planning;11- Empowerment of member states in protecting the human habitat, natural resources, biodiversity, forests, pastures, soil and water resources;12- Integrating the scattered data in different organizations to design a regional database;13- Facilitate the access to information needed by decision-makers and researchers through establishing a regional data bank. |

**Restructured and closed projects:**

Project titled: “**Preparation of the Spiroclast Map of Mobile Belt between Gondwana and Eurasia**” (**Project Code: EME8/M/Map/2020**) has been discussed for progress in implementation during 2020. After careful consideration, the Coordinating Webynar Meeting suggested it for closure based on non-prioritizing it by the project initiating country.