

Samarkand Declaration on Regional Environmental Cooperation

**6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment
Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan
3 June 2026**

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), meeting in Samarkand on 3 June 2026 for the 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment under the overarching theme “New Horizons for Enhanced Regional Environmental Action through Collaborative Solutions”,

Recalling the foundational commitments of the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment held in Istanbul in 2014, which designated environment and climate change impacts as cross-sectoral priorities of the Organization,

Further recalling the ECO Vision 2025 and its Implementation Framework, as well as the ECO Strategic Goals of Economic Cooperation 2035, which highlight environmental protection, resilience, and the transition to a low-carbon development model as a priority area and policy focus,

Recognizing that our shared geography binds our nations together, and that environmental degradation in one Member State can swiftly become an economic, and humanitarian challenge in another,

Taking note of the outcomes of the Regional Ecological Summit held in Astana in April 2026 as a significant mid-year milestone for aligning our regional environmental ambitions,

Welcoming the ongoing and past successful leadership of ECO Member States – Türkiye and Azerbaijan, respectively in global climate negotiations and hosting 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Baku and COP31 in Türkiye,

Noting the importance of strategic engagement with global partners, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), as well as active participation in international platforms such as the Conferences of Parties (COPs) of environmental conventions,

Emphasizing the critical need for enhanced regional environmental coordination,

collaborative policy making, shared innovation, and inclusive multilateralism to safeguard our common future,

Having considered the recommendations of the Senior Officials Meeting/8th Working Group on Environment held on 2 June 2026, and the outcomes of the first meeting of the High-Level Dialogue Platform on Environmental Cooperation held on 23 April 2026,

Hereby resolve to:

1. **Adopt** the ECO Cooperation Framework on the Environment (2026-2030) as the overarching non-binding regional strategic document to guide environmental cooperation over the coming years, and its two thematic annexes: the Work Program on Climate Change in the ECO Region (2026-2030) and the Work Program on Biodiversity in the ECO Region (2026-2030).
2. **Reaffirm** our commitment to the implementation of these frameworks, recognizing that national action plans are essential, but their effectiveness is magnified when aligned with a cohesive regional strategy.
3. **Support** the continuation and consolidation of the High-Level Dialogue Platform on Environmental Cooperation, initiated by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as a vital mechanism for bringing together all relevant stakeholders to brainstorm, exchange knowledge, and drive regional environmental action.
4. **Call upon** the Member States to explore and support concrete steps within the national capacities to advance the Regional Initiative on Resource Efficiency, Sustainability, and Circular Economy (RESCUE), with a focus on implementation timelines, resource mobilization, and tangible, measurable results.
5. **Recognize** that land degradation and desertification are longstanding and intensifying environmental challenges in the ECO region, severely affecting human health, agricultural productivity, infrastructure, and socio-economic well-being. We therefore underscore the significance of further coordinated regional cooperation to address these challenges through integrated land management, early warning system for dust and sand storms, reforestation and afforestation, water use, and knowledge sharing, while also leveraging relevant international frameworks and financing mechanisms.
6. **Call upon** the Member States within the national capacities to focus their contributions on the implementation of the existing frameworks and initiatives,

providing concrete plans, expertise, technical assistance, and financial resources to accelerate progress, subject to voluntary funding by international partners, while avoiding overlaps and duplications.

7. **Encourage** the Member States to proactively engage in the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) to the UNFCCC and participate at the COP31 at the highest possible level and collectively push for positive outcomes that can align the ECO region's development with the targets of the Paris Agreement.
8. **Urge** the ECO Secretariat to continue strategic engagement with UNEP, UNIDO, and other international partners to foster green development, energy transition, effective resource management, circular economy practices, including the Zero Waste approach and to take the concerted actions in global environmental fora.
9. **Decide** to issue this Samarkand Declaration as a unified political statement of our commitment to action, and to transmit it to relevant ECO policy-making bodies for follow-up and integration into the broader ECO work program.
10. **Express** our profound gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the people of Samarkand for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangements, which have contributed significantly to the success of the 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment.
11. **Agree** to convene the 7th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment at a date and venue to be determined through the ECO Secretariat in consultation with Member States.

Adopted in Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan, on 3 June 2026.