

Table of Contents

Report of the 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Enviromnet	2
Istanbul Communiqué	11

The 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Environment

Report

(Istanbul, October 6, 2004)

The Second ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment was held on 6 October 2004 in Istanbul, Turkey, preceded by the Meeting of the Senior Officials (4-5 October 2004). The delegations of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey and Turkmenistan participated at the meeting as well as ECO Secretary General with his staff. The representatives of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) also attended the meeting. The list of participants is attached as ***Annex – I***.

Agenda Item No.1

Inauguration of the Meeting

1. The Meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Mr. Osman Pepe, Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey who welcomed the participants and stressed the importance of the regional cooperation to successfully respond to the environmental challenges. The text of his inaugural statement is attached as ***Annex – II***.

2. H.E. Mr. Askhat Orazbay, ECO Secretary General, addressing the meeting, expressed deep gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey, particularly to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, for hosting the Ministerial Meeting in Istanbul in an excellent manner, and wished the Meeting to have useful deliberations and fruitful results on the issues covered by its agenda. A copy of his statement is attached as ***Annex- III***.

Agenda Item No.2

Election of the Chairman

3. H.E. Mr. Osman Pepe, Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey, was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the Meeting.

Agenda Item No. 3

Adoption of the Agenda

4. The draft Agenda of the Meeting, as endorsed by the Senior Officials Meeting held on 4-5 October 2004, was adopted. The adopted agenda is attached as ***Annex-IV***.

Agenda Item No. 4

Appointment of the Drafting Committee

5. The Senior Officials acted as Drafting Committee to prepare the report of the Meeting.

Agenda Item No. 5

Statements by the Ministers/Heads of Delegation

6. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation presented their statements on the state of the Environment in their respective countries covering the national policies and programs concerning environmental issues as well as regional cooperation in the field of environment. The texts of their statements are attached as ***Annex-V***.

Agenda Item No. 6

Implementation of the Plan of Action for Cooperation among ECO Member States on Environment (2003 – 2007)

7. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation took note of the establishment of the ECO Working Group on Environment (WGE) tasked to prepare the implementation plans for cooperation in the different fields of the environment mentioned in the Plan of Action on Cooperation among ECO Member States on Environment (2003-2007), here in after referred to as the Plan of Action, and appreciated the outcomes of its first and second meetings held in 2004.

8. The meeting adopted the modifications to the Plan of Action, which were agreed upon at the first meeting of the ECO Working Group on Environment (Ankara, 7-8 April 2004) and endorsed by the Senior Officials. The text of the agreed modifications is attached as *Annex-VI*. The ECO Secretariat was requested to circulate the approved amended text of the Plan of Action among the Member States at the earliest. The WGE is tasked to consider the possibility of having the Plan of Action as a rolling plan.

9. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation reviewed the implementation of the Plan of Action on the basis of information provided by the ECO Secretariat. In this respect the Meeting noted with satisfaction that National Focal Points on Environment were nominated by all member states to facilitate coordination of the implementation of the Plan of Action with whom the ECO Secretariat commenced direct e-mail communication to enhance and speed up working contacts. It was agreed that they should play more active role in close cooperation with the ECO Secretariat.

10. The Meeting appreciated the implementation of a number of thematic activities as per the Plan of Action, namely the ECO Workshop on Waste Water Management and Treatment Technology, the First ECO Workshop on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and the Second Experts Meeting on Energy Resources Development and their Environmental Impact Assessment and endorsed continuation of the activities/projects in these fields to achieve more tangible results.

11. Taking note of the status of submission of National Progress Reports on the implementation of the Plan of Action and of the elaboration and adoption of the single format for its preparation, the meeting stressed the importance of the timely submission of these reports by the concerned authorities of all member states to the ECO Secretariat.

12. The meeting endorsed proposals/offers made by some Member States for the implementation of the Plan of Action, which are as follows:

- Preparation of an Ecosystems Goods and Services Digital Atlas of Biological Diversity Resources: practical measures for harmonizing of Biodiversity Economic Values among ECO Member States; (Iran)
- Establishment of transboundary protected areas (TBPA) (Iran)
- Assessment of Carrying Capacity of Protected Areas for Eco-tourism and Development of Eco-tourism plans. (Iran)
- Monitoring of marine alien species and combating (Iran)
- Plan for establishing Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centers (Iran)
- Establishing a Monitoring Guidelines for Marine Environment (Iran)
- Organizing a workshop/ training course on environmental management systems ISO 14000 in 2005 (Iran). Pakistan expressed its readiness to support it;
- Establishing of e-mail group for environmental information exchange and creating network between NFPs (Turkey);
- Setting up a task force to consider issues related to formulation of ECO regional Plan of Action for the Protection of the Biodiversity with due account taken of the existing plans and projects. Pakistan would host its meeting. The involvement of GEF may be sought;
- Organizing several training courses on the meteorological issues and water resources management in the period of 2005-2007 (Turkey);
- Considering, by the same task force, the proposed preparation of an Ecosystem Goods and Services Digital Atlas of Biological Diversity Resources;

- Carrying a joint study by Iran and Pakistan on well coordinated management of ecosystems relating to endangered species in the border area;
- Convening a seminar on Eco- tourism in 2005 (Turkey);

13. The meeting took note of the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran inviting the member states to submit a joint statement for ECO region to UNEP as input for formulation of a “Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building” (*Annex. VII*) and suggested that the member states consider the draft of the mentioned statement and inform the ECO Secretariat by October 21, 2004 of their opinions. In case of consensus of all ECO member states on this draft statement, the ECO Secretariat will forward it to UNEP.

14. The meeting also took note of the initiative of the Republic of Kazakhstan submitted to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development for development of a new Global Convention on protection of water resources and its suggestion for ECO member states to support this initiative, and in this connection to convene a workshop to consider this matter and possible joint actions;

15. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation, appreciating the financial assistance of the Department of Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran offered for publishing the first four issues of the ECO Quarterly Bulletin on Environment (electronic and hard versions), requested all concerned authorities of the member states to submit timely their information for the bulletin and extend full cooperation to the ECO Secretariat in this respect through their national focal points on environment.

16. The Meeting, considering the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran on establishing the ECO College of Environment, recommended that a task force consisting of representatives of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey in collaboration with the ECO Secretariat would be set up to carry out a study on this subject covering all the Member States with their cooperation and submit its results for consideration of the WGE.

17. The Ministers/ Heads of Delegation recommended consideration of the possibility of allocating one of the ECO awards for excellence to the works in the field of Environment as ECO Environmental Award by the ECO decision-making bodies as well as study of organizational aspects of the Green Industries Award by the concerned authorities of the member states the results of which should be discussed by the WGE;

18. The Meeting took note of the ECO activities, carried out in the framework of cooperation in the field of Agriculture, of relevance to the environment protection in the region, namely to combat desertification, drought mitigation and management and water management.

19. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation agreed on the need of intensification of activities for further implementation of the Plan of Action and development of annual work plans to implement it. In this respect, the meeting endorsed the Calendar of Events for 2005, reflecting the specific proposals of the member states which is attached as ***Annex-VIII***.

20. The Meeting recommended to convene the 3rd meeting of the WGE in 2004 or before mid January 2005, to follow up the outcome of the 2nd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment, while the timing of convening of next meetings will be proposed by the Working Group as it finds feasible and necessary to ensure the implementation of the Plan of Action. The Member States were requested to consider hosting these meetings.

21. Taking into account the expanding volume of work/activities in the field of environment, the meeting recommended ECO decision making bodies consider the possibility of allocating additional professional staff to the respective directorate of the ECO Secretariat.

Agenda Item No. 7

Cooperation with International Organizations/Financial Institutions in the field of the Environment

22. The Representatives of UNEP, UNESCAP and WMO made the statements on behalf of their organizations and expressed the readiness to promote their cooperation with ECO. The texts of their statements are attached as ***Annex-IX***. The representative of IDB also made his brief statement.

23. While appreciating the signing of MOU with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the progress made towards signing an MOU with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Ministers/Heads of Delegation reiterated the need to further cooperation with the international organizations such as UNEP, UNESCAP, UNDP, UNIDO, WMO, IDB, ADB, World Bank and GEF, especially on project basis, in the field of environment.

24. The participants of the meeting discussed different aspects of cooperation of ECO with International Organizations / Financial Institutions in the field of Environment and recommended to strive to identify specific joint activities, focusing on obtaining support and assistance for the implementation of the Plan of Action for Cooperation among ECO Member States on Environment (2003-2007).

25. The meeting took note with satisfaction of the cooperation of ECO with UNESCAP for the forthcoming 5th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development 2005 for Asia and the Pacific, including the UNESCAP Preparatory meeting to be held on 7-8 October 2004 in Istanbul with the participation of seven ECO Member States, back to back with the 2nd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment.

Agenda Item No. 8

Adoption of the Istanbul Communiqué

26. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation adopted the Istanbul Communiqué on Cooperation in the Field of Environment. The text of the adopted Istanbul Communiqué is attached as ***Annex-X***.

Agenda Item No. 9

Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

27. The meeting appreciated the kind offers of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment in 2006. The exact date and venue of the meeting will be announced through the ECO Secretariat after necessary coordination.

Agenda Item No. 10

Any Other Business

28. No matter was raised under this agenda item.

Agenda Item No. 11

Adoption of the Report of the Meeting

29. The report of the Meeting was adopted unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 12

Vote of Thanks / Closing of the Meeting

30. Ministers/Heads of Delegation expressed their high appreciation to the Chairman of the meeting for his able presiding over the meeting. They also extended their gratitude and high appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Turkey,

in particular to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey, for the warm hospitality provided to the participants and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

The 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Environment

Istanbul Communiqué

(*Istanbul, October 6, 2004*)

Annex-X

1. The 2nd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment was held on 6 October 2004 in Istanbul, Turkey. The meeting was attended by the Ministers/Heads of Delegation of Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan and the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). The representatives of United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) also attended the meeting. The meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Osman Pepe, Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey, and H.E. Askhat Orazbay, ECO Secretary General. It was preceded by the Senior Officials meeting held on 4-5 October 2004.
2. The meeting emphasized the importance of Article 2(m) of the Treaty of Izmir and the Plan of Action for Cooperation among ECO Member States on Environment (2003-2007) adopted at the first ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment held on 15 December 2002 in Tehran as well as other relevant international declarations including the Rio Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development.
3. The meeting, mindful of the trends of environmental degradation and pollution in the ECO region, emphasized the need for the ECO Countries' Environment Ministries/Agencies to work together towards the effective and full implementation of the Plan of Action on Environment.

4. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation reviewed the Plan of Action on Environment, endorsed several amendments to it, and took note with appreciation of the implementation progress of the Plan of Action.

5. While reviewing ECO international cooperation in the field of environment, the participating Ministers/Heads of Delegation expressed their satisfaction over the growing cooperation between ECO and international organizations including UNESCAP, UNEP, WMO and IDB.

6. The meeting appreciated the ECO Secretariat's efforts in promoting ECO international cooperation and appraised the signing Memorandum of Understanding with UNEP on 18th August 2004 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran.

7. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation appreciated the Department of the Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran for rendering its assistance to publish the ECO Quarterly Bulletin on Environment and requested the Member States to fully cooperate with the ECO Secretariat in providing timely information to be published in the Bulletin.

8. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation, while stressing the importance of bi-annual national progress report on environment as an essential instrument for the exchange of information and experiences in the field of environment as well as the promotion of the regional cooperation, urged the Member States to provide regularly the ECO Secretariat with their national progress reports on environment on the basis of the single format already agreed on.

9. The meeting emphasized the need to continue holding experts meetings/workshops or training programs to promote human resource development in the field of environment in the ECO region.

10. In the light of importance of environmental technology support and capacity building in ECO region, the Ministers\Heads of Delegation considered submitting a joint statement to the Intergovernmental Process of formulation of Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity building under the auspices of UNEP taking into consideration their regional priorities and concerns

11. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation, recognizing that the impacts of conflicts on environment have become more severe and expressing their hopes that in the future the environmental consequences of conflicts will be taken into account, are fully cognizant of the need for maintaining of peace and stability in the region.

12. The meeting decided to hold the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment in 2006.

13. The Ministers/Heads of Delegation expressed their profound gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey especially to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey for the warm hospitality and valuable contribution in the arrangement of the 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Environment. The Heads of Delegation also thanked the ECO Secretary General and his staff for their support and hard work to make the meeting a success.