



**REPORT**  
**of**  
**the 8<sup>th</sup> ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment,**  
**acted as the Senior Officials Meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO**  
**Ministerial Meeting on Environment**

**2 June 2026**

**Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan**

## REPORT

1. The 8<sup>th</sup> ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment, acted as the Senior Officials Meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment was held on 2 June 2026 in Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan. The delegations comprising senior-level officials from the following eight ECO Member States participated at the meeting: Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Türkiye, Turkmenistan, and Republic of Uzbekistan (Host). The representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) also attended the meeting at the invitation of the Host Authorities. The ECO Secretariat delegation participated throughout. *The list of participants is attached as Annex-I.*

### **Agenda Item No. 1**

#### **Inauguration of the Meeting**

2. Dr. Fuad Farzalibeyov, Director for Energy, Minerals and Environment (EME) of the ECO Secretariat, welcomed the participants and extended his profound appreciation to the Republic of Uzbekistan for its warm hospitality and resolve in regional environmental stewardship. He noted with appreciation the overwhelming participation of the Member States at the meeting, which vividly manifested their resolve and dedication to regional environmental cooperation. While setting the scene for the meeting and briefing on its heavy agenda, he emphasized the importance of the Working Group, acted as the Senior Officials Meeting in laying ground for tangible outcomes of the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment. EME Director further highlighted the progress made since the last Working Group and the urgency of translating regional environmental commitments into actionable frameworks.

### **Agenda Item No. 2**

#### **Election of the Chairperson**

3. In pursuance of the ECO Rules of Procedure, Dr. Doniyor Turgunov, Director of Hydro-meteorological Scientific Research Institute from the Republic of Uzbekistan, was unanimously elected as the Chairperson to preside over the 8<sup>th</sup> Working Group on Environment / Senior Officials Meeting.

4. In his opening remarks, the Chairperson expressed sincere appreciation to the delegates for participation and ECO Secretariat for its diligent efforts in organizing the meeting. He underscored the Host Country's commitment to advancing regional environmental cooperation and called for constructive dialogue to ensure successful outcomes for the Ministerial Meeting.

### **Agenda Item No. 3**

#### **Adoption of the Agenda**

5. The Meeting considered and unanimously adopted the proposed Agenda.

### **Agenda Item No. 4**

#### **Appointment of Drafting Committee**

6. The Meeting assigned the ECO Secretariat to draft a report of the Meeting and disseminate it among the Member States through official channels.

### **Agenda Item No. 5**

#### **Statements and Presentations by Member States**

7. The Chairperson of the meeting gave the floor to the representatives of the Member States under this agenda item to deliver their statements/speeches in alphabetical order. While extending their heartfelt gratitude to the Republic of Uzbekistan for its exceptional arrangements and warm hospitality, the delegates provided updates on their national policies, initiatives and development programs on environment. During the deliberations, several key themes emerged.

8. Delegates **reaffirmed environmental protection as a global responsibility and reported national efforts, most notably the expansion of green spaces and sustainable resource management.** On **national conservation and climate action**, several countries announced the establishment of state nature resorts and sanctuaries, ongoing work on new national parks and a deal based on a world model, as well as the creation of a state commission on climate change and active participation in international environmental organizations.

9. On **circular economy and industrial development**, the Member States highlighted the pursuit of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, called for regional dialogue among key stakeholders to identify concrete initiatives for circular transformation, and stressed resource efficiency and job creation through the green agenda. Regarding regional project implementation and stakeholder engagement, it was noted that a new project is under discussion beginning with stakeholder identification at the regional level, with a consultative approach to identify like-minded countries, and that pilot projects would benefit both individual countries and the region (see paragraphs 23-25 hereinunder for details).

10. Concerns were raised about the **decline of the Caspian Sea's capacity and its ecological implications**, with calls for enhanced cooperation at national and international levels, and a transition to a circular economy with proper resource recognition. A delegate criticized international organizations for failing to defend

peace and security, highlighted the environmental impact of military operations and their carbon footprint, and called for more interaction, trust, and regional cooperation to address the climate crisis.

11. The host country, Uzbekistan, presented its national environmental agenda, including efforts to expand climate change education, its commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2060, and ongoing reforms in waste management and biodiversity conservation.

12. On **land degradation and climate change adaptation**, national efforts in land degradation negotiation and integration, development of national land codes and classification systems, and strong support for regional cooperation were reported. A **concept for a regional early warning system for sand and dust storms among the ECO Member States** was presented by Uzbekistan, including the establishment of a regional center, a coordinating council, and a technical working group, with a call for a unified approach to address the environmental and economic impacts.

13. Finally, emphasis was placed on **capacity building and sharing successful implementation cases**, with support for regional initiatives. The proposals for capacity building and practical application of ecological practices were actively contributed. The Chairperson thanked all delegations for their comprehensive and action-oriented contributions, noting that the rich exchange of national perspectives would inform the deliberations of the Ministerial Meeting.

#### **Agenda Item No. 6**

#### **Endorsement of the ECO Cooperation Framework on the Environment (2026-2030) and its Thematic Annexes**

14. Under this agenda item, the EME Director presented an overview of the ECO Cooperation Framework on the Environment (2026-2030) and its Thematic Annexes, a foundational document designed to strategically address environmental challenges through enhanced regional cooperation. He characterized the Cooperation Framework as an overarching, inclusive document navigating on environmental cooperation, while its Thematic Annexes – Work Program on Climate Change and Work Program on Biodiversity envisage the key priorities for regional action in the field of environment. The Framework underscores the vital role of a healthy environment in sustainable economic development and acknowledges pressing issues such as biodiversity loss and climate change resulting from human activities.

15. Representatives of the Member States conducted a detailed, page-by-page review of the draft Framework and its two thematic annexes – the Work Program on Climate Change (2026-2030) and the Work Program on Biodiversity (2026-2030). A great number of amendments were proposed by delegations, reflecting diverse national perspectives, priorities, and legal frameworks.

16. Following the lengthy discussions, during which each amendment was carefully considered and debated, the meeting reached consensus on a revised set of texts. All proposed amendments that received broad support were incorporated into the final versions of the Framework and the Work Programs. The Meeting concluded that the resulting documents represent a balanced and collectively owned regional strategy.

17. The Senior Officials recommended that the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment endorse the Cooperation Framework and its annexes as finalized.

### **Agenda Item No. 7**

#### **ECO High-Level Dialogue Platform on Environmental Cooperation (HLDPE)**

18. The meeting further focused on the ECO High-Level Dialogue Platform on Environmental Cooperation (HLDPE). The Chair informed the Meeting that the inaugural HLDPE meeting had been successfully held on 23 April 2026 in Astana (Kazakhstan), on the margins of the Regional Ecological Summit.

19. A draft Roadmap for the HLDPE was presented, outlining operational modalities, thematic priorities, and a proposed schedule of at least one in-person or hybrid meeting annually, complemented by virtual thematic sessions. Priority areas envisage air quality management, circular economy practices, land degradation, climate change adaptation, and biodiversity conservation.

20. The chairmanship of the HLDPE will rotate annually among ECO Member States, beginning with Uzbekistan. Anticipated outcomes entail consensus-based recommendations to be presented to the ECO Working Group on Environment and subsequently to the ECO Ministerial Meeting. Thematic working groups will be established to facilitate practical cooperation.

21. While appreciating the National Committee of Ecology and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan for successful convening of the First Meeting of HLDPE, EME Director highlighted this platform as a promising advisory mechanism where national perspectives meet the latest scientific, technical, and policy knowledge through multi-stakeholder approach to find regional solutions to common challenges and explore ways to enhance environmental cooperation.

22. The Working Group / Senior Officials Meeting supported the draft Roadmap and recommended its finalization and endorsement by the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment.

### **Agenda Item No. 8**

#### **Follow-up on the Implementation of the Regional Initiative on Resource Efficiency, Sustainability, and Circular Economy in the ECO Region (RESCUE)**

23. The Meeting conducted a comprehensive review of progress under the RESCUE

Initiative, launched at Climate COP29, held in Baku (Azerbaijan) in November 2024, with the EME Director presenting an update on ongoing efforts to engage Member States and stakeholders in its seamless advancement over the past period. Thanking UNIDO for its unwavering support for ECO's circular transition endeavours, the EME Director briefed that the collaboration with UNIDO progressed toward the elaboration of a detailed project concept titled "Strategic Foresight for Circular Economy Transition in the ECO Region" for launching the needs assessment/feasibility study. This is the critical initial step for: 1. Identification of transition potential of our region to a resource-efficient and circular economy; 2. Establishment of an operational stakeholder network for circular economy foresight and implementation across our region. EME Director thus called upon the Member States to leverage this partnership opportunity and take concrete steps to advance RESCUE Initiative, with a focus on implementation timelines, resource mobilization, and tangible, measurable results.

24. During the discussion, Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya, Industrial Development Expert from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) underscored that UNIDO's mandate on industry greening, resource efficiency, and circular economy overlaps significantly with the objectives of RESCUE. Making a reference to the concept note of the project entitled "Strategic Foresight for Circular Economy Transition in the ECO Region", designed by UNIDO, she highlighted the value of the foresight methodology as a tool to identify specific value chains and industries that can transition toward circularity more easily, more quickly, and with fewer resources. She further explained that UNIDO's pursuit of industry greening not only creates jobs but also delivers economic, social, and environmental benefits. Supporting this initiative through the ECO Secretariat, she emphasized, would allow the region to benefit from UNIDO's expertise accumulated in different parts of the world, bringing best practices and tailored solutions to the ECO region. She expressed appreciation in advance for the support of ECO Member States for this project.

25. Following these interventions, Member States were encouraged for continuous engagement with UNIDO as essential for mobilizing technical assistance and financial resources. The progress on RESCUE was positively recognized, and the meeting recommended that the Ministerial Meeting mandate the ECO Secretariat to proceed with the next phase of the Initiative through finalization of the aforementioned concept note of the project, and paving the way for its implementation.

## **Agenda Item No. 9**

### **Adoption of the Samarkand Declaration on Regional Environmental Cooperation**

26. The Senior Officials thoroughly reviewed the draft Samarkand Declaration on Regional Environmental Cooperation. Similar to the Cooperation Framework on Environment, delegations raised a great number of amendments during the review process. Following extensive and detailed deliberations, the Meeting

worked through each proposed amendment. After lengthy discussions, the text was refined and a consensus version emerged, incorporating the amendments agreed upon by Member States. The final text was approved for transmission to the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Environment.

### **Agenda Item No. 10**

#### **Date/Venue of the Next Meeting on Environment**

27. The meeting concluded that the ECO Secretariat would coordinate and follow up with the potential host countries the date, venue and the format of hospitality of the 9<sup>th</sup> ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment.

### **Agenda No. 11**

#### **Adoption of the Report**

28. The Meeting assigned the ECO Secretariat to prepare the draft report of the meeting and decided that it would be disseminated through diplomatic channels with the adoption of two-week silence procedure. Following the official circulation, in case if, no objection received within the stipulated period, the report will be considered as approved by the esteemed Member States.

### **Agenda No. 12**

#### **Any Other Business**

29. Under this item, EME Director recalled that the 31<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) would be hosted by the Republic of Türkiye in Antalya in November 2026. COP31 will be a celebration of Türkiye's resolve in fostering dialogue and global solidarity for climate action. In this vein, EME Director highlighted that ECO Secretariat is keen on anchoring jointly with the Member States any side events on the margins of COP31. Therefore, the Secretariat would be looking forward to receiving any insights and proposals on the possible side events at the earliest to make smooth preparations, and remains ready to jointly propel such initiatives into the spotlight. The delegate of Türkiye expressed readiness to explore the possibility of organizing a side event within the ECO framework dedicated to the Rio Conventions Synergy on the margins of COP31.

### **Agenda No. 13**

#### **Closing Remarks**

30. The Chair expressed his sincere thanks to all delegates for their active participation, and constructive spirit during the lengthy deliberations. He also thanked the ECO Secretariat and the host country's support staff for their excellent organization.

31. EME Director expressed gratitude on behalf of the ECO Secretariat to the National Committee on Ecology and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan for hosting the meeting and to participants for their fruitful deliberations. He emphasized that the meeting concluded with successful proceedings and streamlined mechanisms to advance the regional environmental agenda. Special thanks were extended to the Chairperson for his able guidance and brilliant moderation. ECO Director also thanked ECO Secretariat colleagues for facilitating the event and reaffirmed commitment to supporting follow-up activities and fostering result-oriented cooperation.

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*Annex-I*

**List of Participants**

**Member States**

**Republic of Azerbaijan**

- Mr. Yashar Karimov, Deputy Head of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

**Islamic Republic of Iran**

- Mr. Arman Khoorsand, Director, Department of International Cooperation and Conventions, Department of Environment

**Republic of Kazakhstan**

- Ms. Shattyk Tastemirova, Deputy Director, Department of Climate Policy, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

**Kyrgyz Republic**

- Mr. Kumar Mambetaliev, Head of Biodiversity Department, Ecology and Technical Supervision, Ministry of Natural Resources

**Republic of Tajikistan**

- Mr. Navruz Khotamzoda, Head of International Relations, Department of the Committee for Environmental Protection Under the Government of Tajikistan

**Republic of Türkiye**

- Prof. Dr. Mustafa Hakkı Aydoğdu, Advisor, General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion, Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change

**Turkmenistan**

- Mr. Serdar Eyeberenov, Head of Hydrometeorology Division, Ministry of Environmental Protection

**Republic of Uzbekistan**

- Dr. Doniyor Turgunov, Director, Hydro-meteorological Scientific Research Institute
- Mr. Makhmud Khaydarov, Chief Specialist of the International Cooperation, Grants and Ratings Department, National Committee on Ecology and Climate Change
- Dr. Bakhridin Nishonov, Head of Environmental Physical and Chemical Processes Research Department, Hydro-meteorological Scientific Research Institute
- Ms. Gavkhar Makhmudova, National Committee on Ecology and Climate Change
- Mr. Abdijalil Torayev, Waste Management and Circular Economy Development Agency
- Mr. Nosirjon Asadov, Waste Management and Circular Economy Development Agency
- Ms. Valeriya Rakhmatova, Head of Educational Process Organization Department at Central Asian University of Environmental and Climate Change Studies (Green University)

**International Organizations**

**United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)**

- Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya, Industrial Development Expert

**ECO Secretariat**

- Dr. Fuad Farzalibeyov, Director for Energy, Minerals and Environment
- Mr. Morteza Khansari Bozorgi, Program Officer