

**ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE
ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE****GREEN Action Task Force****DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD of the 2018 GREEN Action Task Force BUREAU
MEETING****19 April 2018, Paris**

Agenda Item 1

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2018 Bureau Meeting of the GREEN Action Task Force

Draft Summary Record

19 April 2018, Paris

1. The Bureau of the Task Force for the Implementation of the GREEN Action Programme (GREEN Action Task Force) met in Paris on 19 April 2018. It was organised back-to-back with meeting of the OECD Environment Policy Committee (EPOC) (16-18 April 2018).
2. Ms. Martine ROHN-BROSSARD (Switzerland) and Mr. Mykola KUZIO (Ukraine) served as co-Chairs of this particular Bureau meeting, deputising for the usual co-Chairs (Mr. Jürgen Keinhorst and Mr. Gani Sadibekov). The list of participants is presented in Annex A.

Item 1: Welcome and adoption of the draft agenda

3. The Bureau adopted the Summary Record of the previous Bureau meeting [ENV/EPOC/EAP/M(2017)1] without further amendments and took note of the draft Summary Record of the 2017 annual meeting of the GREEN Action Task Force [ENV/EPOC/EAP/M(2017)2], without comment.
4. The Bureau adopted the meeting agenda [ENV/EPOC/EAP/A(2014)2].

Item 2. Progress report on the implementation of the 2016-2018 programme of work

5. The Bureau took note of the highlights presented by the Secretariat on the main activities implemented as part of the Task Force Work Programme 2016-18 since the Almaty meeting, the plans for the rest of 2018 and the list of events and documents [ENV/EPOC/EAP/RD(2018)1].
6. In the discussion, the Bureau:
 - Highlighted the relevance of ongoing work (water, finance and investments, policies at environment-economy nexus), the importance of bringing in new topics and links to regional initiatives, such as environmental consideration in the extractive industry operations and the Belt and Road Initiative;
 - Recognised progress made in several countries on greening their economies¹ and welcomed concrete impacts of the Task Force activities as recognised at the annual Task Force meeting in Almaty;
 - Welcomed funding provided already to the Task Force work (EU, Finland, Germany, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland) and appreciated efforts to ensure the financial stability and continued funding for planned and future work, including the advanced discussions with EU, Germany and Kazakhstan for new grants to support the Task Force work;
 - Welcomed proposal of the Slovak Republic to providing support to the Task Force;

¹ The Programme for the Promotion of Green Economy in the Republic of Moldova was adopted in January 2018.

- Supported further alignment of Task Force work with country priorities and demand, including linking policies with project preparation and investment (links to the EU External Investment Plan) and work on a regional level;
- Supported proposal to engage more financial institutions and further strengthen the co-operation with UN partners;
- Welcomed information from the European Commission about a planned meeting of the EaP Panel on Environment and Climate Change to be organised possibly on 12 June 2018 in Kiev, Ukraine.

Item 3. Reporting back from the OECD Environment Policy Committee (EPOC) (16-18 April 2018)

7. The Bureau took note of the feedback by the Secretariat on two items from the OECD Environment Policy Committee (EPOC) meeting (16-18 April 2018) of relevance to the GREEN Action Task Force:

- Towards green growth in Eurasia: Enabling green finance and strengthening water management (9:30 - 10:30, 17 April);
- Presentation on self-assessment by Kazakhstan (10:30 - 11:05, 17 April).

8. In conclusion, the Bureau:

- Welcomed the report from the Secretariat that 14 OECD countries (Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Israel, Hungary, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, and UK), as well as two non-members/partners (Colombia and Lithuania) expressed their support to, and/or interest to engage in, the Task Force;
- Requested the Secretariat to follow up with countries who proposed or confirmed financial support and technical assistance, including its work on capacity building;
- Welcomed the report about the participation of Kazakhstan in the meeting, and a significant interest in its presentation and a positive recommendation by the EPOC to the OECD Council to approve the proposed “Participant” status of Kazakhstan.

Item 4. Lessons learned from past Task Force annual meetings and looking to the future

9. The Bureau took note of the key findings by the Secretariat of the analysis of the past five Annual Meetings of the Task Force which aimed to facilitate discussion on the future direction of Annual Meetings (objectives, format, participation, costs and locations).

10. The analysis showed an increased participation on the high-level representatives, relatively higher costs of meetings in the region and limited participation of international financial institutions.

11. During the discussion, the Bureau:

- Reiterated interest to hold meetings in the region despite relatively higher cost;
- Welcomed close relations with the Environment for Europe process, the EU frameworks and general policy progress in the countries;

- Welcomed possibilities of widening the participation in the Task Force by the Visegrad Group, international financial institutions (IFI)² and development co-operation partners;
- Agreed to explore how to trigger interest of high-level participants, noting that concise and attractive agenda setting is key;
- Agreed to keep the balance between: (i) high-level participants and experts (capacity building/experience sharing); (ii) thematically focus discussion and activity coordination;
- Agreed to consider carefully a possibility that making the Task Force “too thematic” may trigger countries sending technical experts rather than higher-level participants with wider interest;
- Agreed on the need to maintain sessions for monitoring programme implementation to demonstrate the impact of the Task Force;
- Agreed to consider carefully the impact of parallel or break-out sessions in the context of peer learning, sharing of information across different programme areas of the Task Force and the language barriers (it was noted that countries are unlikely to increase the numbers of participants to attend all parallel sessions);
- Agreed to invite “inspirational” key notes speakers, allocate more time for networking and incorporate a regional donors meeting;
- Agreed to consider more formal outputs from Task Force Annual Meetings which would engage high-level participation, e.g. Statements, Declarations, Memoranda or press releases related to the Task Force outputs;
- Requested the Secretariat to consider the received feedback in planning/designing the upcoming Annual Meeting of the Task Force in Bratislava and beyond.

Item 5. Developing programme of work and budget (PWB) for 2019-2020 (and beyond)

12. The Bureau took note of the highlights by the Secretariat on: 1) activities that will be implemented as a continuation of projects for which funding (including multi-year grants) has already been received, negotiated or approved for implementation in 2019-20; 2) summary of ideas from the Task Force members on priority areas to be considered in the future programme development as presented in the discussion document [ENV/EPOC/EAP(2018)1]. In its presentation, the Secretariat acknowledged contribution of donors for the next programming period (regular annual support and multiyear grants).³

13. In the discussion, the Bureau:

- Agreed to maintain the structure of the current PWB, with four Programme Areas as in 2017-2018;
- Stressed that possible new topics require further reflection/discussion⁴ by: 1) linking them to existing activities instead of multiplying areas; 2) not being too ambitious and maintain focus of the Programme; 3) work should be done where we

² Finance project may trigger IFIs interest.

³ EU, Finland, Germany, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland.

⁴ Environmental compliance, water, sustainable energy, transport, green labour, infrastructure, green finance, investments, mining, standards (mining, industry, social), eco labelling, capacity building, enforcement, monitoring, smart regulations, procurement.

find a nexus among country interest, donors interest and OECD expertise/value-added;

- Agreed to have further reflection on the multiple roles of Task Force Annual Meetings, i.e. reporting on its work implemented by the OECD, providing a forum for discussion of new/emerging policy issues and possibly also for discussing work done by other parties;
- Called for solutions to closing the funding gap for work on water in the Central Asia and suggested to consider inviting Swiss Development Bank to the closing workshop on the work on water security;
- Called on the Secretariat to explore possible cooperation with other Central Asian countries (Uzbekistan recently demonstrated interest to be engaged);
- Agreed that the Task Force meeting in Bratislava can be an opportunity for countries to announce more BIG-E actions/commitments;
- Reminded the need to align Task Force work with SDGs;
- Requested the Secretariat to present at the Bratislava meeting an updated PWB for approval which incorporates responses to ideas collected in Almaty (indicating work done by OECD and others / helping to direct countries to appropriate Intergovernmental Organisations).

Item 6. Building together the agenda for the GREEN Action Task Force annual meeting (22-23 October 2018, Bratislava, Slovakia)

14. Thanked the Slovak Republic for offering to host the annual meeting of the GREEN Action Task Force on 22-23 October 2018, Bratislava.

15. Took note of some considerations and possible elements of the Task Force meeting by the Slovak Republic for constructing the draft agenda, in particular possible role of the Visegrad Group.

16. Took note of invitation by the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) for the GREEN Action Task Force to prepare a mid-term review report, and proposal to include the discussion on a draft report on the agenda of the next Annual Meeting.

17. In conclusion, the Bureau:

- Welcomed widened participation and invitation to high-level representatives of the Visegrad Group;
- Reminded not to include too many issues in the agenda;
- Requested the Secretariat to consider ample opportunities to get feedback from participants, via e.g. “question-answer” sessions, open discussions and break-out sessions;
- Welcomed an offer from Slovak Republic to invite high-level key notes speakers (from Energy Union and the EIB), and requested the Secretariat to further reflect on topics to be presented by key speakers;
- Welcomed an idea of a press briefing (with presence of keynote speakers);
- Requested the Secretariat to reflect further on possible formal meeting outcomes, e.g. in the context of “From Batumi to Bratislava” (e.g. declaration, common press statement);
- Requested the Secretariat to circulate to Bureau members a first draft agenda shortly after the Bureau meeting for comments and consider how to address the invitation by the UNECE CEP for the Task Force to prepare a mid-term report

(about 8 pages; to be submitted by mid-October or mid-December) for review at the next CEP meeting in early 2019.

Item 7. Other business

18. The Bureau took note of a proposal by the Secretariat to use the term “Eurasia” instead of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) with a rationale to: 1) align with the OECD terminology (e.g. the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme, the OECD Eurasia Week), and 2) take into account the UNECE constraints with using “EECCA” acronym.

19. After a discussion the Bureau agreed to come back to this issue in Bratislava.

Annex A. List of participants

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