

ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/6

ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE
UN ENVIRONNEMENT POUR L'EUROPE
ОКРУЖАЮЩАЯ СРЕДА ДЛЯ ЕВРОПЫ
ЕУРОПА ҮШІН ҚОРШАҒАН ОРТА



ASTANA, 21–23 September 2011

Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

**Astana, Kazakhstan
21–23 September 2011**

“Green Bridge” Partnership Programme



UNITED NATIONS



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 September 2011

English
Original: English and Russian

Economic Commission for Europe

Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

Astana, 21–23 September 2011
Items 2 and 5 of the provisional agenda

The “Environment for Europe” process: 20 years of pan-European cooperation

Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development

“Green Bridge” Partnership Programme*

Note by Kazakhstan

Contents

| | <i>Paragraphs</i> | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------------|-------------|
| I. Rationale | 1–12 | 3 |
| II. Goals and principles of the Programme | 13–17 | 4 |
| III. Keys Areas of the Programme..... | 18–44 | 5 |
| A. National and international governance strengthening..... | 19–21 | 5 |
| B. Informational infrastructure of partnership, awareness raising and education | 22–25 | 6 |
| C. Promotion of green business and green technologies | 26 | 6 |
| D. Financial and economic mechanisms..... | 27–28 | 7 |
| E. Improving standards for a green economy..... | 29–30 | 7 |
| F. Sectors | 31–44 | 8 |
| IV. Management of the Programme | 45–59 | 10 |
| A. Governing bodies..... | 47–52 | 10 |
| B. Finance mechanism | 53–54 | 11 |

* This document was not formally edited.

| | | | |
|-------|--|-------|----|
| C. | Integration with other regional processes | 55-56 | 12 |
| D. | Monitoring and reporting | 57-59 | 12 |
| V. | Road Map for the “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme | 60 | 12 |
| VI. | Expected outcomes of the Programme | 61-65 | 14 |
| Annex | | | |
| | Statement on the Green Economy Partnership for Europe, Asia and the Pacific | | 16 |

I. Rationale

1. Back in 1992, 1680 scientists from 70 countries among them 104 Noble Prize winners declared: “Human beings and the natural world are on a collision course. Its ability to provide for growing numbers of people is finite. And we are fast approaching many of the earth's limits”.
2. On the eve of the WSSD in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, the ministers of Asia and the Pacific region stress: “Natural resources are dwindling, and the demand for energy, water and other key natural resources is continuing to grow fast while the basic human needs of millions of people remain unmet. Current economic models heralding the reduction of a natural capital and ecosystem services shall not be further maintained”¹.
3. The UNEP report sees a Green Economy as not only relevant to more developed economies but as a key catalyst for growth and poverty eradication in developing ones too, where in some cases close to 90 per cent of the GDP of the poor is linked to nature or natural capital such as forests and freshwaters².
4. In May 2001 the G8 Group pointed out: “We firmly believe that green growth is an essential element to ensuring sustainable global growth, notably to promote resource efficiency and sound water management, fight climate change and conserve biodiversity, and that it contributes to sustainable development”³. And UN: “We acknowledge that the response to the crisis presents an opportunity to promote green economy initiatives.”⁴
5. Today a fundamental transformation of the existing “brown” economy is far more urgent than in any time in the past. Investments and innovations into a natural capital, renewable energy and environmental efficiency give an opportunity to create the economy of the future that is a green economy providing for new and long-term employment and social development, open for everyone.
6. For the development of a world community, the transition to a green economy which is **“equitable and resilient, providing a better quality of life for all, within the ecological limits of one planet”**⁵ today is a number one priority.
7. At present, concepts of a green economy are widely discussed at all international forums including UN, G8, OECD, BRICS, APEC, and others.

G20 Framework Agreement to secure sustainable and balanced economic growth (12 November 2010), in its article 68 declared: “We recognize that sustainable green growth, as it is inherently a part of sustainable development, is a strategy of quality development, enabling countries to leapfrog old technologies in many sectors, including through the use of energy efficiency and clean technology. To that end, we will take steps to create, as appropriate, the enabling environments that are conducive to the development and deployment of energy efficiency and clean energy technologies, including policies and practices in our countries and beyond, including technical transfer and capacity building”⁶

¹ Documents to the Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific,

Astana, 2010., http://www.unescap.org/esd/mced6/documents/Documents/MCED6_11E.pdf

² <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=659&ArticleID=6902&l=en>

³ Declaration G-8 (May 27, 2011)

⁴ <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/399/83/PDF/N0939983.pdf?OpenElement>

⁵ Green Economy Coalition: <http://www.greeneconomycoalition.org>

⁶ http://www.g20.org/Documents2010/11/seoulsummit_declaration.pdf

8. It is obvious that the transition from the brown economy to green will demand a lot of changes and cooperation between the countries, as well as private sector and civil society. The goals of a green economy are consistent with strategic needs of Asia and the Pacific and European regions representing 95 countries and accounting for over 70% of the planet's population and over 90% of all anthropogenic GHG emissions.

9. The Republic of Kazakhstan is located in the heart of Eurasia at the cross of economic, trade and cultural ties. It is the host country of Asian and the Pacific and Pan-European Ministerial Conferences on the Environment and Development. It initiated the networking of these two largest regions to shift towards greener, more competitive and more inclusive development.

10. This Initiative has been duly recognized by countries in those regions as they realized that:

(a) Joint efforts are crucial to protect globally important ecosystems in Asia, the Pacific and Pan-European region, and countries also confirmed that global economy needs fundamental changes which are beyond the capacity of individual countries;

(b) Long-term, stable and multilateral nature of the "Green Bridge" Programme should become the necessary prerequisite for long-term sustainable investments to replace short-term and fragmentary approaches present in many current development efforts and policies;

(c) The "Green Bridge" will facilitate the regional energy and food security and promote the renewal of other green economy sectors given that a developing world rich in natural capital needs new generation of technologies while a vast majority of highly technological products is concentrated in northern countries;

(d) Cross-sectoral and multilateral in nature, the "Green Bridge" Programme, in the context of financial and other shortages, can make a substantial contribution increasing efficiency of existing programmes based on the information exchange, neutral, systemic and professional expertise and recommendations.

11. The countries of Asia, the Pacific and Europe support this Initiative as it creates new opportunities for cooperation and addresses urgent green development needs. Following the decisions adopted by MCED6⁷, ESCAP⁸ and UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy⁹, the Government of Kazakhstan in cooperation with international partners have developed this "Green Bridge" Partnership Programme.

12. The "Green Bridge" Partnership Programme is also viewed as an interregional contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro.

II. Goals and principles of the Programme

13. "Green Bridge" Partnership Programme's goal is to join efforts of the states, international organizations, public and business sectors from Europe, Asia and the Pacific for the transition to a green economy.

14. To achieve this goal, the Programme envisages a continuous implementation of consistent measures to green regional, national policies and key economic sectors and to

⁷ http://www.unescap.org/esd/mced6/documents/Documents/MCED6_13E.pdf

⁸ Resolution at the 67 Commission Session for Asia and the Pacific (2011)

⁹ <http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2011/ece/cep/ece.cep.s.2011.1.5.e.pdf>

facilitate the preparation and implementation of regional and national projects to support a green economy.

15. The Programme shall be built upon the **following principles**:

(a) **The leading role of states** in creating enabling conditions for the transition to a green economy.

(b) **A long-term and multilateral approach** to programmes and projects as the necessary prerequisite for fuelling innovations and investments into a green economy and ecosystem services.

(c) **The stakeholders' engagement.** Industries, private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations and general public should be fully engaged in the Programme development and implementation.

16. **Joint efforts and integration with existing processes.** The Programme will provide for the maximum application of best practices from countries and organizations as well as currently implemented programmes and processes.

17. **Good governance.** Governance should be representative and multinational, professional and transparent, predictable and stable, reported and verified, result-oriented and focused on practical implementation.

III. Keys Areas of the Programme

18. Based on the MCED and ESCAP decisions, the "Green Bridge" Astana Initiative included 5 thematic areas.¹⁰ In consultations with the European partners, these areas were further specified and expanded in this Programme to cover the following:

A. National and international governance strengthening

19. The transition to a green economy requires the involvement of numerous stakeholders, but the key prerequisite is the leading role of national governments in creating management systems and conditions to facilitate innovative activities and a changing attitudes and behavior of business, organizations, households and individuals in favor of the sustainable development.

20. The governments have to:

(a) Create a legal framework to phase out inefficient production and consumption, and to promote eco-efficiency;

(b) Incorporate green procurement and prioritize the channelling of government investments and incentives to sectors that facilitating the greening of energy, industry and agriculture;

(c) Reduce support for spending in the areas that deplete natural capital;

(d) Improve the use of strategic and integrated environmental assessments at the level of national planning;

(e) Apply taxes and market instruments for encouraging a choice of green activities and facilitating green investments and innovations;

¹⁰ http://www.unescap.org/esd/mced6/documents/Documents/MCED6_13E.pdf

(f) Provide support for capacity building and green projects in priority sectors, such as: sustainable energy, agriculture, urban infrastructure and transport, and enhancement of ecosystem services and promotion of sustainable human settlements.

21. In addition, institutional and professional support is much required also **at a regional level**, in order to:

(a) Create long-term sustainable investments into green economy. They should be secured by the multilateral and long-term nature of the Programme preventing sharp turns and steps back in policies and commitments in certain countries or organizations;

(b) Establish a governing body - International Steering Committee and an executive body of the Programme - International Secretariat, selected through the procedure adopted by the international organizations;

(c) Establish a transparent decision-making process, open for everyone providing a basis for trust and involvement of all potential stakeholders, and the civil society in particular.

B. Informational infrastructure of partnership, awareness raising and education

22. The transition to green economy requires joint efforts of all parties. The development of a Programme's common information infrastructure for partnership on the basis of digital technologies, an easily accessible database, internet-TV and multilingual website "Green Bridge", will make a significant contribution to support green economy initiatives in Europe and Asia and the Pacific.

23. The Programme will be able to arrange internet-conferences with famous specialists, political and community leaders, and to engage leading experts in addressing practical tasks.

24. The Programme will support development of information exchange, eco-labelling and sustainable green advertising as tools of the informed consumer society and transparent decision-making process.

25. The transition to green economy will require new educational programmes, staff retraining in various sectors. The "Green Bridge" Programme will use best training and audio-visual materials developed in various countries available for wider use, and support a free access for all target groups, including distant learners.

C. Promotion of green business and green technologies

26. The Programme will be especially focused on the access, distribution and implementation of green technologies and innovations:

(a) The Program will support development of an enabling environment and relevant mechanisms to promote green technologies and investments in innovation at the national and international levels;

(b) On the basis of EU and other experience in best available techniques (BAT), the Programme will assist stakeholders in applying and implementing these approaches at national and international levels, including recommendations concerning BAT-based incentives, effective subsidizing and government procurement mechanisms;

(c) Current outdated environmental regulatory systems including those in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus can be also improved in relation to BAT;

(d) Promotion of eco-efficient innovation through public investment in research and development;

(e) Further develop and apply eco-efficiency indicators for policy formulation stimulating eco-efficient productivity;

(f) Networking will be established with existing technology transfer and clean technologies centres such as the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and others, on the basis of which a mechanism of the free dissemination and transfer of green technologies will be established and made available to any of the stakeholders in the region.

D. Financial and economic mechanisms

27. Measures to prevent environmental degradation will provide for a significant reduction of economic losses, and in many cases will bring economic benefits.

28. The “Green Bridge” Programme will support independent and joint efforts of governments, business and civil society to:

(a) Use a huge potential of Asia, the Pacific and Europe to raise eco-efficiency, create new markets for environmental goods and services;

(b) Transferring tax burden from the traditional areas of taxation such as labor and capital taxes to unsustainable activities such as wastes generation and inefficient use of natural resources;

(c) Shift the subsidies away from environmentally hazardous activities to support new sectors and other areas of green economy; with government procurement, for instance in the fields of energy, education, health, transport and other sectors, making up to 20% GDP and representing a huge market. The Programme contains specific governments’ actions to adopt certain eco-efficiency rules and criteria within government procurement of goods and services, strongly supporting the transition to a green economy;

(d) Make use of international trading system that can support the transfer of green technologies and investments and foster development of new markets for ecosystem goods and services. Countries and regions with water deficit can reduce a pressure on water ecosystems considerably by signing interregional agreements on the import of water-intensive products (for instance, rice and cotton) from other regions where significant water withdrawal from natural ecosystems is not required. Such win-win agreements («debt-for-nature swaps», «trade in virtual - water and energy») will require an inclusive and sustainable framework, which is to be addressed during implementation of the “Green Bridge” Programme.

E. Improving standards for a green economy

29. The Programme will support reforms of standardization and hazardous activities regulation systems in order to reduce business risks and increase investors’ confidence. Often the private sector prefers dealing with specific and real standards rather than working in conditions of uncertainty and unfair competition with those who do not meet the standards.

30. The “Green Bridge” Programme in collaboration with partners will consolidate best experience and give governments practical recommendations on how to apply green economy standards in priority sectors, including energy production and consumption, water and mineral resources, emission standards, discharges and wastes, urban construction and transport et al. For many reasons, including low capacity, such actions are not always implementable at a level of an individual country. Besides, reforms of standards agreed at a regional, and sub-regional levels make trade and economic cooperation more effective.

F. Sectors

Conservation of water, mountain and other ecosystems, eco-efficient use of natural resources

31. Legislation and management systems in many countries of Asia, the Pacific and Europe still undervalue ecosystem services, and this requires a fundamental and urgent change. The “Green Bridge” Initiative will support the elaboration of joint decisions and practical steps for applying the available international experience to change planning, legislation, economic mechanisms and other instruments for the purpose of ecosystems and biodiversity conservation;

32. Huge possibilities are offered by the emerging markets of ecosystem services (water supply, recreation, climate, biodiversity etc.) at the level of regional and sub-regional agreements and investments into ecosystem services. The Programme will support win-win mechanisms of regional cooperation and trade within the region and between regions in relation to ecosystem services, with a special attention given to water and water-related ecosystems, including glaciers, mountain and forest ecosystems;

33. Application of payments for ecosystem services methods agreed by countries through demonstration projects will also help mitigate potential and existing conflicts in transboundary waters;

34. Promotion of economic instruments for biodiversity protection, including sustainable fisheries, and for pollution prevention of land, water and ocean ecosystems, in particular in the context of small islands;

35. Promotion of best practices for integrated ecosystem management and implementation of new models of ecosystem management and efficient use of natural resources;

36. Development of a monitoring system for efficient use of natural resources, to be applied in international trade agreements;

37. Development and implementation of sustainable management practices for nature reserves and parks of global environment significance, together with international organizations and other partners.

Sustainable energy, its availability and efficiency

38. The Programme’s long-term goal is the comprehensive use of a huge, but not yet duly tapped potential of Asia, the Pacific and Europe in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy. To address this, the Programme will help countries to use the available vast experience in:

(a) Designing comprehensive plans/road maps for the transition to low-carbon development and renewable energy, reduction of GHG emissions;

(b) Reducing considerable energy losses at production, transmission and consumption, including gas flaring and associated gas reduction;

(c) Low-carbon housing construction within the framework of state green procurement and international programmes;

(d) Implementing cost-efficient and adoptable technologies for sustainable energy supply to remote areas in order to reduce poverty;

(e) Labelling energy efficiency of technologies, equipment and materials, other measures.

Food security and sustainable agriculture

39. Countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Caucasus, Asia and the Pacific have a huge potential for developing organic farming, saving water resources and sustainable land use.

40. The Programme will:

(a) Support transition of countries to organic and sustainable farming, through the exchange of best practices, mutually beneficial and implementation of demonstration projects;

(b) Support regional cooperation and trade by utilizing regional differences in natural conditions to increase total land and water productivity, reduce degradation of lands, pastures, forests and other natural ecosystems;

(c) Distribution of inexpensive and cost-effective food production, transportation, and conservation technologies which is crucially important in light of climate change.

Sustainable urban infrastructure and transport and green construction

41. The Programme will assist stakeholders, municipalities and human communities to:

(a) Disseminate best practices of sustainable urban planning and architecture, technologies and materials, low-carbon construction, provide information, consulting and other support;

(b) Develop proposals to introduce new construction codes, standards for new structures and upgrade for old houses, including those in zones prone to natural disasters, earthquakes and consequences of climate change;

(c) Assist governments in their transition to state procurement based on sustainable urban planning, attracting green investments into the urban infrastructure;

(d) Support measures to increase a share of public and alternative transport and new technologies;

(e) Promotion of an eco-efficient water infrastructure and a “wastewater revolution”;

(f) Study and promote best practices used in sustainable cities and settlements and concepts of ‘smart cities’;

(g) Facilitate the development of interregional transport corridors, including water transport corridors, to increase economic and environmental efficiency of transportations.

Adaptation to climate change and preparedness to natural disasters

42. The Programme will support the development of efficient and consistent measures at regional and sub-regional levels to adapt to climate change and their integration into development programmes.

43. The Programme will support the promotion and dissemination of innovations helping mitigate damages caused by natural disasters, namely such innovations as:

(a) Energy efficient, mobile and floating houses for the countries and regions with permanent flood threats and other natural disasters;

(b) Construction of dams made of more advanced and cheap materials;

(c) Use of airships to extinguish hard-to-reach fires, evacuation of population and property, delivery of engineering equipment and machines into disaster areas;

- (d) Development of eco-settlements with autonomous livelihood systems.

44. Eco-settlements in ecologically clean areas, using advanced technologies for energy generation, water supply and sewage, and also food products, can form a new industry to face growing threats of natural disasters and climate change. The “Green Bridge” Programme will support pilot projects on creation of eco-settlements and distribution of best practices.

IV. Management of the Programme

45. Governance of the Partnership Programme should be structured to comply with the ideals of good governance for sustainable development. It should be participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follow the rule of law.¹¹ It has suggested that interim governing bodies be established during the initial consultation and planning stage of the Partnership Programme to ensure that the elements of good governance are embedded in the Programme in the long term.

46. The following suggested governance structure includes a Governing Board and Secretariat. It is typical of many multi-lateral initiatives and is suitable for both interim and longer-term stages of the Programme. Other models could be followed, but any model that is adopted should be analyzed and considered carefully, with appropriate consultation, before being adopted.

A. Governing bodies

1. Operating entry – Governing Board

47. *Composition:* The Governing Board would be comprised of 12 members representing partners of the “Green Bridge” Programme, taking into account fair and balanced representation among stakeholders. Members would be nominated and elected by the partners of the Programme.

48. *Chairmanship:* The Governing Board would elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair with one being a representative of the UNECE and the other from ESCAP region, and the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair alternating annually between the UNECE and ESCAP. The Chair/Vice-Chair positions would be held for a term of two years, with the possibility of re-election for a subsequent two years.

49. *Functions:* The functions of the Governing Board might include the following and any others assigned to it by the partners to the Programme (during the initial consultation and planning phase):

- (a) Review and approve strategy and annual work plan of the Partnership Programme and approval of secretariat’s progress and annual report, budget and audits;
- (b) Facilitate integration of the “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme with regional policies, strategies, plans and initiatives;
- (c) Review and endorse regional projects and initiatives (against a set of principles devised by the Programme partners) for consideration by donors and investors;
- (e) Establish an independent monitoring system for the Partnership Programme;
- (e) Commission independent reviews of the Partnership Programme.

¹¹ <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp>

50. *Decision-making authority:* Decisions of the Governing Board should be taken by consensus; if all efforts at reaching a consensus have been exhausted, and no agreement has been reached, decisions would be taken by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the meeting on the basis of one member, one vote.

51. *Meeting schedule:* The Governing Board would convene its first meeting soon after the election of its members. Thereafter, the Governing Board would meet at least twice a year, retaining the flexibility to adjust the number of meetings to suit its needs, and meet in the country hosting the Secretariat except when meeting in conjunction with sessions of ESCAP or UNECE.

2. Administrative entity – International Secretariat

52. Secretariat services should be provided to the Governing Board in order to support and facilitate its activities. The International Secretariat can be located at the heart of Eurasia in the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Astana, and a dedicated team of officials should be identified to render these services to the Governing Board in a functionally independent and effective manner. The head of the International Secretariat responsible for rendering the services will be accountable to the Governing Board.

Functions of the International Secretariat: The functions of the Secretariat might include the following and any other ones assigned to it by the Governing Board:

- (a) Prepare a multi-year rolling strategy, annual work plans, progress reports, annual work and expenditure reports for the Partnership Programme;
- (b) Review National Green Economy Strategies and assist in identifying possible regional and trans-boundary projects and investment opportunities; facilitate regional and trans-boundary collaboration where required;
- (c) Provide support to countries in developing national project proposals and business and investment plans;
- (d) Advise and provide technical support on possible sources of funding for Green Economy projects and investment opportunities;
- (e) Administer regional/transnational projects and programmes as required;
- (f) Organize regional workshops, e.g. on Green Economy awareness raising, writing of proposals and business-plans;
- (g) Commission analysis and co-ordinate preparation of reports, including synthesis of policy lessons learned, case studies of successful Green Economy initiatives;
- (h) Provide administrative and communications support to thematic advisory groups; and
- (i) Establish a communications strategy (including website, newsletters, information materials, media relations, etc).

B. Finance mechanism

53. The Partnership Programme can add value by not only linking projects and businesses with potential sponsors, but also endorsing green economy initiatives against a set of principles developed in the 1st consultative year by Programme partners. This would serve to focus the project developers and businesses seeking funding, while at the same time sharpening up the criteria and principles of the donors and investors seeking to fund green economy projects and business ventures.

54. The decision on finance mechanisms for the Programme should be made during the consultations and planning phase in Year 1 (see section on Road Map below). The decision

should be based on robust economic analysis and broad consultation, including with representatives of the existing finance mechanisms, such as the World Bank, EBRD, the International Finance Corporation, the Asian Development Bank, the UN agencies, the Global Environment Facility, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, private investors and other interested partners.

C. Integration with other regional processes

55. The “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme will not duplicate or replace other on-going programmes, but it will help fill gaps by integrating them with emerging long-term sustainable economic programmes and green objectives. The Programme will provide all stakeholders with additional opportunities for cooperation, exchange of experience, synergy and practical implementation of recommendations and instruments developed earlier.

56. The Programme supports the creation of an on-going database, monitoring and delivery of regular and systematic reviews on completed or current programmes and projects, and this will help avoid duplication and ensure a more efficient use of limited resources.

D. Monitoring and reporting

57. The Partnership Programme will be monitored and reviewed by the Steering Committee, which will ensure that principles of open management in accordance with international reporting and transparency standards are met.

58. Indicators of the Partnership Programme will be elaborated to assess the progress in various areas and projects.

59. The “Green Bridge” Programme will also provide a support for countries and organizations of the regions in developing and applying agreed and indicators of a green economy which will be also harmonized with other systems enforced and applied at an international level.

V. Road Map for the “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme¹²

60. For the practical steps on implementation of the Partnership Programme it was proposed the Road Map for the period 2011-2020 with an inception period that focuses on studying good practice, networking, developing pilot projects, as well as developing the management and funding mechanisms.

Year 1 – funded consultation and planning phase

- Establish an interim steering committee (optimal size 12 individuals) with equitable representation of stakeholder groups across the region, and with neutral authoritative chairperson and vice-chairperson acceptable to all parties. The Committee would be responsible for overseeing the drafting the “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme implementation plan.
- Establish an interim secretariat to support the work of the interim steering committee. Suggested a small team with a director who has broad-based Green

¹² Based on recommendations from the International Institute for Environment and Development (London)

Economy awareness and skills, and 2-3 technical support staff with economic and environmental backgrounds, and two administrative support staff.

- The interim steering committee should oversee Year 1 work, and provide guidance to the interim secretariat in:
- Carrying out a mapping exercise to identify existing Green Economy initiatives in the region, current needs and gaps. One practical outcome of the exercise should be to identify sub-regional hubs with common priorities and challenges;
- Conducting regional consultations to identify regional and subregional priorities for the “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme, collecting materials on the preferred mode of governance of the Programme, including institutional arrangements; modalities and procedures and ways of linking to other international, regional and national-level initiatives (see proposal for Years 2 – 5 below);
- Considering options for financing the initiative. Possible options include creation of a new financial mechanism or tapping into existing funding arrangements at national, regional and international levels;
- Preparing “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme implementation plan including monitoring, evaluation and reporting, for presentation at the 2012 WSSD (Rio+20);
- Developing a budget for years 2-5 (a new budget for years 6-10 will need to be prepared at the time of the mid-term review suggested below, when future directions for on-going Programme might be recommended).

Years 2 - 5 activities

- Establish legal form and status of the Partnership Programme (during Year 2) accompanied by requisite legal documentation.
- Establish permanent Governing Board (during Year 2) with equitable stakeholder representation across the Asia-Pacific and European regions. Agree, inter alia, functions of the board, procedures for election of members, terms of office, definition of authorities to make decisions, modes of decision-making (e.g. consensus or voting), frequency of meetings, and privileges and immunities of board members.
- Establish permanent International Secretariat. Agree, inter alia, functions of secretariat and his composition (e.g. permanent vs ad hoc), identifying sources of funding for secretariat activities. The Governing Board should take independent decisions on Secretariat modalities and required skills.
- Develop a multi-year rolling work plan to be reviewed by Partnership members on a regular basis. This might include, for example, review of principles, planned thematic meetings and capacity building workshops, review of National Green Economy Strategies, review of projects and initiatives, possible endorsement of initiatives by the Governing Board, implementation of research and synthesis of good practice, etc.
- Establishment of an appropriate monitoring, evaluation and reporting process, compatible with existing reporting procedures.
- Invite participating Asia-Pacific and European countries to assign national coordinators for “Green Bridge” Programme, which may be in-country offices, responsible for information dissemination, liaison with national governments, provision of expert advice and support to “Green Bridge” initiatives, etc.
- Invite Programme partner countries to develop (where required) National Green Economy Strategies (International Secretariat to provide advice, help with awareness raising and information, etc.).

- Review and possible endorsement by the Governing Board of proposed Green Economy demonstration projects and initiatives, which should be embedded in national strategies. Establishment of linkages between projects/initiatives and potential donors/investors with a view to securing funding for Green Economy demonstration initiatives. Identification of possible trans-boundary and regional initiatives to be facilitated by the International Secretariat.
- Establishment of a database of case studies of good practice, challenges, lessons learned, and innovation in policy and practice; initiatives endorsed by the Programme should automatically make themselves open to review and inclusion in the database, which would be publicly available online.

Years 6 – 10 activities

- Mid-term conference to exchange good practice, lessons learned and case studies [Year 6]
- Development of further work plans and budgets
- Review of National Green Economy Strategies
- Review and assessment of contents of case-study database
- Ongoing policy development and support for innovation in business and planning
- Publication of think-pieces and analysis for public consumption.

VI. Expected outcomes of the Programme¹³

61. Institutional and capacity building:

- Common information infrastructure to support green economy including awareness raising and education created;
- An international centre and a regional network of industrial parks for unimpeded transfer of green technologies and innovations created. A portal with a free access to databases of green technologies, goods and innovations, created and actively visited;
- Exhibitions of advanced green technologies, equipment and experience with consultations of competent specialists are widely practiced, as well as a tested, approved by international specialists social advertising of best green economy practices;
- Norms and standards for a green economy including technologies, goods and services supported and implemented.

62. Environmental:

- Considerable GHG and pollutant emissions reduced;
- Saline and degraded lands, as well as pastures, polluted lands including tailing and ash dumps are reclaimed and brought back to the economic activity;
- Quality of surface waters is improved, industrial and agricultural discharges are reduced considerably;
- Degradation of mountain and forest ecosystems and glaciers slowed down, partially because of support of investments into ecosystem services;

¹³ Quantitative indicators will be defined at following stages

- Significant (for the protection of hydrological regimes) water saving in agriculture, industry and communal sector, especially in irrigated farming.

63. **Economic:**

- New forms of employment on the basis of green jobs are created in new perspective sectors of a green business: organic and non-exhaustive land use, sustainable energy, transport, sustainable use of bioresources etc.;
- Energy efficiency is increased considerably and renewable energy markets are expanded;
- International and long-term programmes on recruiting and maintaining populations of valuable commercial bioresources implemented;
- Sustainable tourism infrastructure expanded considerably.

64. **Social:**

- Access of a wider population to renewable energy and safe products is ensured. Prime cost of agricultural products reduced considerably through new technologies and new forms of management;
- Country-wide development of sustainable settlements and autonomous livelihood systems adapted to a climate change, including those for poor and population in rural, mountain and remote areas;
- Uncontrolled migration of population decreased considerably through the creation of new green jobs and support of available green technologies.

65. **In general, within the framework of the Programme:**

(a) A wide international and cross-sectoral framework are created for win-win regional and inter-regional cooperation and collaboration among countries of Asia, the Pacific and Europe, international organizations, NGO and business for the transition to a green economy;

(b) New economic, financial and administrative mechanisms are implemented for sustainable use of natural resources, and ecosystems and biodiversity protection and rehabilitation;

(c) Conditions are created to strengthen capacities and transition of a country to new forms of management that move away from short-term and narrow approaches for the purpose of sustainable development, regional and global security.

Annex

Statement on the Green Economy Partnership for Europe, Asia and the Pacific

1. We, the Ministers for environment of the States members of the UNECE and ESCAP, as well as representatives of the EU, UNDP, OSCE, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other international organizations and relevant Business and NGOs:

(a) Pledge to make every effort towards achieving a green economy, as one of the principal approaches to attaining the Millennium Development Goals for the countries of Europe, Asia and the Pacific;

(b) Recognize that the transition to green economy, as appropriately adapted to country-specific circumstances and as understood in the context of sustainable development, is the main prerequisite of environmental sustainability and poverty eradication;

(c) Fully share the precepts of the OECD Declaration on Green Growth, the G20 Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth, and the Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth;

(d) Support relevant global and regional undertakings such as the UNEP Green Economy Initiative, Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment and the Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth) and

(e) Take into account the recommendations of the Ministerial declaration on environment and development in Asia and the Pacific, of 2 October 2010 and G8 Summit of Deauville Declaration, of 27 May 2011.

2. We intend to reach our objectives by:

(a) Establishing a Europe-Asia-Pacific Green Economy Partnership, involving the UNECE and ESCAP, EU, UNDP, OSCE, relevant International Financial Institutions and regional initiatives, as well as businesses and NGOs;

(b) Developing and further improving legal, institutional and financial frameworks for inter-regional, intra-regional and intersectoral cooperation facilitating the transfer to green economy in the participating countries of Europe, Asia and the Pacific;

(c) Developing market conditions and complementary policy and effective and transparent regulatory regimes, aimed at boosting the economic recovery, job creation, foreign trade, and public and private sector investment into green development.

3. We will adhere in all our efforts and activities to the following principles:

(a) Sustainable development whereby environmental protection must constitute an integral part of the development process at all levels;

(b) Precautionary principle by virtue of which where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation;

(c) Intergenerational equity according to which the freedom of action of each generation in regard to the environment is qualified by needs of the future generations;

(d) Polluter- and user pays principle by virtue of which putting a price on pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and on the exploitation of a scarce natural resource

and ecosystems should be a central component of any policy mix regardless of the economic sector;

(e) Maximization of the economic and social benefits of the transition to a green economy while ensuring environmental effectiveness and social equity.

4. We will operationalize our Partnership around the following core areas:

(a) Protection of water, mountainous and other ecosystems and enhancing the eco-efficiency of natural resource use;

(b) Sustainable energy, its availability and efficiency;

(c) Food security and sustainable agriculture;

(d) Sustainable urban infrastructure and transport;

(e) Adaptation to climate change, preparedness to natural disasters.

5. To achieve the objectives of the Partnership, we will provide for effective coordination between the participating States, international and regional organizations and institutions, which have unique knowledge and expertise to contribute to the common endeavour.

6. We emphasize the UN's role is assisting transition to green economy. We rely on UNECE, ESCAP and other UN agencies and institutions in facilitating regional cooperation in all environment and development-related matters, promotion of the green development economic instruments. We count on the active involvement of relevant UN agencies and institutions, in particular UNEP and UNDP, in the Green Economy Partnership.

7. The World Bank, EBRD, GEF and other financial institutions have a most important role to play, in accordance with their specific mandates, in supporting the countries in the regions in achieving economic development and environmental sustainability. We rely on them to design a coherent international assistance strategy for the developing and least developed countries. We call on these international financial institutions to take an active part in the Partnership implementation.

8. We are particularly interested in global, regional, sub-regional organizations and initiatives which foster cooperation in the area of sustainable development, management of natural resources and environmental protection. To avoid costly duplication and to benefit from possible synergies, the Partnership will cooperate with existing initiatives at all stages of its work from planning to monitoring and review.

9. At the national level, the emphasis will be made on the market-based instruments working. They will be complemented by non-market instruments and voluntary approaches.

10. At the inter-regional level, we have agreed to set up a Governance Mechanism, which will act as a catalyst for the activities under the "Green Bridge" Programme. It will enable cooperation undertaken in the core areas and will be responsible for providing assistance in the achievement of the Partnership's objectives within and between the individual countries for transition to a green economy.

11. Interim Governance Mechanism be established during the initial consultation and planning stage of the Green Partnership Programme to ensure that the elements of good governance are embedded in the Programme in the long term.