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ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE
ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE
TASK FORCE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION
PROGRAMME FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

"GREENING ECONOMIES IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD" (EAP GREEN) PROGRAMME:

Draft Summary Record of the Third Steering Committee Meeting

8 October 2014, Minsk, Belarus

ACTION REQUIRED: For approval.

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**“GREENING ECONOMIES IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD”
(EaP GREEN) PROGRAMME:
DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRD STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
(8 October 2014, Minsk)**

1. The third meeting of the Steering Committee of the “Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood” (EaP GREEN) was held on 8 October 2014 in Minsk, Belarus. Participants included the National Focal Points from six Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), representatives of the European Commission, and the four implementing organisations: OECD, UNECE, UNEP and UNIDO. The meeting was also attended by experts invited to the special session on Strategic Environmental Assessment and observers from non-governmental organisations (see the list of participants in Annex 1).

2. The main objectives of the meeting were to:

- review progress in the implementation of activities carried out under the EaP GREEN regionally and nationally in the period September 2013 - September 2014;
- discuss and endorse work plans for the remainder of 2014 and for 2015;
- review good practices and the application of Strategic Environmental Assessment in the EaP countries in promoting green economy by mainstreaming environment, social and health considerations into economic development at a national, regional and local level.

Agenda Item 1. Opening remarks, adoption of the draft agenda

3. The delegates:

- Took note of welcoming remarks by Mr Mikhail Kachanovski, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Protection of Belarus and Mr Nicola Di Pietroantonio, European Commission;
- Adopted the Draft Agenda of the meeting without amendment.

Agenda Item 2. Benefit of Strategic Environmental Assessment and its practical application in the EaP GREEN countries

4. According to a decision of the Committee that each meeting features a thematic discussion, the first part of the meeting was devoted to the topics of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment as tools for mainstreaming environment into economic development at a national and local level. During the subsequent discussion the delegates:

- Took note of the introductory remarks by Ms. Aphrodite Smagadi, Secretary of the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context;
- Took note of the presentations by the panel of experts on the main achievements and lessons learned with regard to the development of the national legislative frameworks and practical application of the SEA in different countries, including Poland, Estonia, Belarus, Moldova and the Ukraine;

- Agreed that SEA is a well-established, practical and efficient planning and environmental governance tool/system which allows identifying more sustainable and cost-effective strategic development alternatives for achieving national green economy targets, attracting new investments and improving environment. The SEA also helps strengthen the country's environmental governance through fostering transparency and consultation with relevant stakeholders and the public prior to the approval of plans and programmes. The SEA in a transboundary context also greatly facilitates regional cooperation on environmental matters. The delegates noted that despite its benefits, the SEA is still a rarely used tool in the EaP GREEN countries and discussed a number of challenges to, and opportunities for, wider and more effective application of the SEA. The delegates agreed to draw from the lessons learned identified during the discussion in the implementation of further SEA-related activities under the EaP GREEN.

Agenda Item 3. Relevant developments in the European Union

4. The delegates took note of the presentation by Mr. Andrzej Januszewski, DG Environment, European Commission, "Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe".

Agenda Item 4. Approval of the Agenda of the Third Steering Committee meeting of EaP GREEN and Draft Summary Record of the Second Steering Committee Meeting

5. The delegates adopted the Summary Record of the Second EaP GREEN Steering Committee (16-17 September 2013, Tbilisi) without amendment.

Agenda Item 5. Work plan for 2013-14 and progress

6. This part of the meeting was devoted to the discussion of the implementation of the EaP GREEN Long-term Programme of Work [ENV/EPOC/EAP(2013)1]. Under this agenda item the delegates:

- Noted the presentations of the implementing organisations (OECD, UNEP, UNECE and UNIDO) on progress made and planned activities related to each of the three components of the EaP GREEN;
- Discussed and endorsed the draft Report on Progress in the Implementation of the EaP GREEN Programme [ENV/EPOC/EAP(2014)2];
- Discussed and adopted the Plan of Work of the EaP GREEN Programme for 2014-2015 [ENV/EPOC/EAP(2014)3];
- Agreed that the meeting was an important mid-term milestone in implementing the 4-year EaP GREEN Programme of Work [ENV/EPOC/EAP(2013)1]. It showed that all elements of the Programme were up and running. Some of them already showed early results;
- Expressed their support for further implementation of the activities proposed for 2015 and volunteered for country-specific activities;
- Called for further efforts to develop synergies between related activities carried out by the implementing organisations, for example for closer co-operation between projects that support greening SMEs (implemented by OECD) and projects that promote resource efficient and cleaner production (implemented by UNIDO);

- Called for greater efforts to produce tangible results of specific activities, including regulatory, procedural and institutional reform in areas covered by the EaP GREEN work plan.

Agenda Item 6. EaP GREEN Communication Strategy

7. The OECD is responsible for the implementation of the EaP GREEN Communication Strategy which was presented at the first EaP GREEN Steering Committee meeting on 26 April 2013 in Berlin, Germany. In the subsequent discussion the delegates:

- Took note of the presentation by Ms. Reka Mazur, OECD on progress in implementing the EaP GREEN Communication Strategy;
- Agreed that further efforts are needed to provide regular and detailed information on country specific activities to National Focal Points and the EU Delegations;
- Requested wider dissemination of communication material and information about the results to broader in-country audiences, including to the local level, by working with journalists and the media;
- Requested support to the development and regular updating of dedicated EaP GREEN pages on the web sites of the EaP Ministries of Economy and the Environment.

Agenda Item 7. Other business, next meeting and closing remarks

8. The delegates:

- Noted the information about activities relevant to the EaP GREEN, including a meeting on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns and a study tour on SEA in the Czech Republic;
- Agreed that all the presentations from the meeting would be made available at the dedicated web site (<http://www.oecd.org/env/outreach/eapgreen-steering-committee-oct-2014.htm>);
- Noted the preliminary date for their next meeting of June 2015 and a proposal to hold it in Chisinau or Kiev and invited the OECD to discuss the organisation of the meeting with respective National Focal Points;
- Expressed gratitude to the Belarussian government for hosting the meeting.

ANNEX 1. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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