

**Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in the field of
Sustainable development between
the Ministry of Ecological Transition of the Italian Republic
and
the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

The Ministry of Ecological Transition of the Italian Republic (IMET) and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan (MENR), hereinafter jointly referred to as “the Participants”;

Taking into account the United Nations General Assembly resolution n. A/RES/70/1 *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as interlinked under the “Planet” pillar;

Considering the Sustainable Development Goal n. 17 as a platform for strengthening and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development by enhancing international cooperation;

Considering the relevance of some particular SDGs and targets which represent the priority for IMET mandate (particularly, inter alia, *SDG 6, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 15, SDG 17*);

Considering that the Italian Republic and the Republic of Azerbaijan are Parties to the following Conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), done at Rio de Janeiro on 5 June 1992; the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), done at New York on 9 May 1992; and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), done at Paris on 17 June 1994;

Recalling that, to combat climate change, the UNFCCC, on its 21st Meeting of the Parties, has adopted the Paris Agreement, done at Paris on 12 December 2015 which entered into force on 4 November 2016;

Considering that Article 4 of the Paris Agreement, and Decisions 1/CP.19, 1/CP.20 and 1/CP.21 of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, invite all Parties to identify and communicate their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the UNFCCC;

Taking also into account National Strategies, Plans or Programmes (NBSAPs) developed according to Article 6 of the CBD and National Action Programmes (NAPs) developed according to Articles 9-15 of the UNCCD;

Recognizing that the 17 SDGs are multidimensional and closely interlinked and that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls upon Member States and their Partners to explore connections across goals and targets by developing synergies;

Convinced that enhanced action and international cooperation on sustainable development is urgently required to enable and support the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the abovementioned Conventions;

Have entered into the following Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter “MoU”):

Paragraph 1

Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 This MoU aims at strengthening bilateral cooperation for sustainable development.
- 1.2 Within the competences of the Participants, this MoU mainly operates in accordance with the following SDGs and objectives under the CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD:
- improve water resource management and to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (SDG 6),
 - encourage sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12),
 - strengthen and coordinate the efforts to combat global climate change and address its adverse effects (SDG 13),
 - promote sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources (SDG 14),
 - protecting, restoring and enhancing sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, land degradation and biodiversity loss (SDG 15),
 - enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all sustainable development goals (SDG 17).
- 1.3 Within the scope and limits of this MoU, the Participants may consensually identify further objectives.

Paragraph 2

Joint Initiatives

- 2.1 The Participants, in accordance with art.1, will undertake the following joint initiatives:
- a) Development of effective mitigation and adaptation measures, by enhancing resilience to climate change and supporting the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the NDC;
 - b) Collection, analysis and dissemination of the methodology for observing and measuring the impact of climate change on potentially vulnerable sectors;
 - c) Protection of biodiversity and reduction of environmental degradation;
 - d) Promotion of sustainable forests management;
 - e) Ensure the sustainable and integrated management of water resources;
 - f) Sustainable waste management and development of circular economy;
 - g) Development of public education and awareness campaigns on global climate change and sustainable development;
 - h) Strengthening public participation and exchange of good practices on environmental assessments.

2.2 Within the scope and limits of this MoU, the Participants may consensually undertake further initiatives.

Paragraph 3

Cooperation Activities

3.1 Cooperation will be based on principles of impartiality, equality, reciprocity and common interest.

3.2 Joint initiatives will be carried out particularly through:

- realization of joint projects and programs;
- promotion of projects, programs and activities, giving high consideration to the participation of public, and non-profit sectors, also including, where appropriate, universities, scientific and technical research bodies, non-governmental organizations pertaining to both countries of the Participants;
- promotion of capacity building (e.g. on monitoring and evaluation procedures), capacity development, capacity strengthening, technology transfer and technical assistance;
- exchange of information and relevant documentation, including publications, expertise and study results;
- exchange of experts, delegation visits and trainees, also involving universities, research centers, and university and inter-university consortia;
- organization of joint workshops, seminars and other meetings;
- promoting the participation of the private sector and Public Private Partnership initiatives;
- realization of common research and development programs/projects;

3.3 Within the scope and limits of this MoU, the Participants may consensually identify further activities of cooperation.

Paragraph 4

Coordination

4.1 In order to ensure the effective and full implementation of the provisions of this MoU, the Participants, within 30 days from the signature of the present MoU, will establish a Joint Committee.

4.2 The Joint Committee will be composed by the delegation of IMET and the delegation of MENR.

4.3. Each Participant will nominate a Head of Delegation, who represents the Participant. Members of delegations may be assisted by experts.

4.4 The Joint Committee will provide general direction and guidance for the implementation and supervision of the cooperation activities and will adopt the relevant decisions for their realization.

4.5 Over the course of its first meeting, to be convened within 6 months after the signature of the present MoU, the Joint Committee will adopt:

- (its) Rules of procedure;
- Guiding principles for bilateral cooperation mechanism, including the financial procedures and a monitoring system to evaluate ex ante, ongoing and ex post

project's implementation, with appropriate indicators, with the aim to guarantee ownership, ensure accountability, result-oriented approach, efficiency, transparency and accountability of the initiatives.

- 4.6 Guiding principles for bilateral cooperation mechanism will also establish procedures for the implementation of the approved projects and initiatives still ongoing at the date of termination of the present MoU.
- 4.7 The first Joint Committee will also establish the frequency of the meetings, taking into consideration that the Joint Committee may also be organized in the form of virtual meetings (e.g. Videoconferencing).
- 4.8 The Joint Committee will also approve a mid-term Work Plan that includes projects and activities with references to SDGs and targets to which they contribute.
- 4.9 In the subsequent meetings, the Joint Committee will approve detailed activities and projects, including project budget and schedule as well as appropriate indicators to monitor their realization, under the framework of this MoU; coordinate the implementation of the activities and systematically review and assess the status, progress, results achieved, and lessons learned from the cooperation activities.

Paragraph 5

Means of implementation

- 5.1 Any costs regarding the implementation of this MoU including the programs, activities, and projects will be borne by the Participants, within the limits of their ordinary budget availability and without any additional costs for the State Budgets of the Italian Republic and of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- 5.2 The proposals for the implementation of projects and activities, including their respective financial support, are approved by the Joint Committee.
- 5.3 The Participants will jointly submit project proposals, after a prior approval by the Joint Committee, to International Institutions and Multilateral Organizations (inter alia the United Nations, the European Union, International Financial Institutions, the World Bank Group), in order to mobilize additional funds to support the **Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources** in implementing relevant commitments set under the Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

Paragraph 6

Reporting

- 6.1 The Participants will establish a mechanism, under the provisions of their respective national laws, in order to guarantee transparency of expenditures, financial reporting and audit.
- 6.2 All financial resources allocated by IMET to the programs, projects and activities, developed under the provisions of this MoU, may be subject to tax exemption, in accordance with the relevant laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan or any other applicable laws.

Paragraph 7

Law in force

- 7.1 This MoU does not constitute an international agreement which may lead to rights and obligations under international law. No provision of this MoU is to be understood and performed as a legal obligation or commitment of the Participants.
- 7.2 This MoU will be implemented in accordance with the legislations of the Italian Republic and the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as applicable international law and, as for the Italian Participant, the obligations arising from Italy's membership of the European Union.

Paragraph 8

Intellectual property

- 8.1 Intellectual property rights will be respected and enforced by the Participants throughout the cooperation activities implemented under this MoU. Should any joint activity involve intellectual property rights, the Participants, in accordance with their respective internal legislations, will reciprocally determine and specify in writing in advance as to what constitutes intellectual property right as well as the adequate and effective protection of those intellectual property rights.

Paragraph 9

Confidentiality

- 9.1 No Participant will transmit any confidential information that has been qualified as such and was obtained in pursuance of this MoU, to any third party without written consent of the Participants from which such information was received.
- 9.2 No information regarding a person or information enabling his/her identification shall be transmitted to any third party or processed in a manner, which is incompatible with the original purposes, without the prior written consent of the data processor, which provided such information.

Paragraph 10

Final provisions

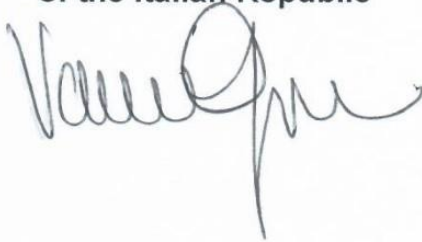
- 10.1 The present MoU takes effect on the date of signature and will remain valid for a period of five (5) years, unless one of the Participants notifies the other of its intention to terminate it at least six (6) months prior to the intended date of expiration.
- 10.2 The Participants may extend this MoU for additional period of five (5) years in writing and by mutual consent.

10.3 The provisions of this MoU may be amended in writing by mutual consent of the Participants.

10.4 Any difference in the interpretation and/or implementation of this MoU will be settled amicably through direct consultation or negotiations between the Participants.

Signed in Baku on the 1st day of June 2022 in two originals in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

**For the Ministry of Ecological Transition
of the Italian Republic**



**For the Ministry of Ecology and
Natural Resources of the Republic of
Azerbaijan**

