

Initiative “75UN-75Trees UNAI SDG7”

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Structure

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Initiative -1

Invites **governments, municipalities, academic institutions, young people and all types of legal entities** to undertake to plant, care and register

75 trees dedicated to the 75th anniversary of UN
and to the efforts to reinforce the biodiversity of the planet

Initiative - 2

linked to the appeal of the UN Secretary General to governments and simple people of the planet to increase their “ambition” in the combat against Climate Change and the protection of the environment



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1 October 2020

Why We Care - 1 October 2020



This graphic will contribute to the refreshment of the planet (Photo: US Photojournalist Markjames)

Each year, in the week flowing from the International Day for Knowledge on October 2, an international conference on energy and climate change is held in Greece. It is organized by the Energy Policy Development Centre of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, KEPA, UNAI's hub for the sustainable development goal related to energy. The proximity of dates is fitting, for it was Mahatma Gandhi, whose birthday is marked as the International Day, who spoke of our earth being enough for everyone's needs, but not everyone's greed.

It's a thought particularly compelling this week which also saw, on Monday, the International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste Reduction. Nearly 13% of food produced is lost between harvest and the market, or between need and greed, more than a billion and a half tonnes of food is discarded in waste each year, all this while more and more forests, and the trees within them that regenerate our planet, are destroyed to create more and more and more farmland.

Full credit to KEPA, and a remarkable initiative it touched upon some weeks ago an initiative in the modest phrase of its Director, Christina Mavralis, whom "I know especially in global momentum," it began with the institute reaching out to nearby municipalities in Greece to plant 25 trees this year as a "United Nations Grove" on our 70th anniversary. But, like a bamboo sapling, that also grew organically and was soon adopted by the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) with eight of its member countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece, Moldova, Panama, Turkey and Ukraine – expressing interest in taking on the project within their borders this year.

There may, among these countries, be some who have had historically or currently strained relations and it is tragic to KEPA that it identified a theme that so neatly united them and one which will flourish. Thanks go also to BSEC's Secretary-General, Alexander Mikheev, Chikolade, who also journeyed three months ago in regional cooperation centre on sustainable food systems to which the new initiative can well relate, as suggested earlier.

Dr Mavralis, for his part, sees Greece and BSEC only as the beginning. He has already reached out to the University of Manitoba in Canada, UNAI's hub on clean water and sanitation for a collaborative venture in this regard and is also exploring possibilities in Japan and in Central Asia. Dr Mavralis suggests that just as their current carbon dioxide into heating oxygen, trees can turn negative energy into positive, a metaphor for KEPA and Dr Mavralis and their mission to transform destructive energy into that which sustains and is sustainable.

The KEPA-BSEC call to "plant, care for and register" trees could lend itself to the idea of nonviolence itself, particularly at a time when a global ceasefire in every sense is so essential, whether a ceasefire between those in battle, or a ceasing of the flow of burning fossils for energy, or a ceasing of the flow of burning fossil fuels, fuelled by climate change. To plant the need of nonviolence to peace or plant in the human heart, because for a seed to register its presence by gentle action and self-reliance is, after all, what Gandhi would see grow like to.

As our website on the eve of his birthday, took energy from India says a favourite hymn of the Subhanshi, "There is a line in 'land, smelly girl' which reads: 'I do not ask to see the distant scene. One step is enough for me.'" Dimitrios Mavralis, Pigi Koronidi and the other remarkable women and men at KEPA, have taken that step. In the phrase of the African proverb, to plant the seeds of a tree whose shade one will not personally enjoy, its distant scene unseen.

Photo: Christoforos
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UN 75 | UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA EASTERN TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR TREE PLANTING NOVEMBER 2020



BSEC



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

BS/INFO.2020.0025

The Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) presents its compliments to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States and has the honor to inform the latter on the following:

The United Nations will mark its 75th Anniversary in 2020. In celebration of this Anniversary, the UNFCCC parties (*United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*) decided to proceed increasing their *National Determined Contributions (NDCs)* so as to tackle Climate Change.

The *Energy Policy and Development Centre (KEPA)* of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (which is the Coordinator of the *BSEC Green Energy Network* and was selected as *Regional Hub of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)* for the Sustainable Development Goal 7 – *Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all*) has decided to participate in the aforementioned Anniversary with the initiative “75 UN – 75 trees UNAI SDG 7”, described in the documents attached to this Note.

BSEC PERMIS endorses this initiative strongly, believing in its important value, as it offers the possibility to BSEC Member States to demonstrate their willingness for increasing their contribution to the combat against the negative effects of Climate Change.

Given the above, the esteemed Ministries of Foreign Affairs are kindly invited:

a) to inform about the “75 UN – 75 trees UNAI SDG 7” initiative their respective Ministries responsible for Agriculture and Forestry, protection of the environment and energy, and also Municipalities and other entities of both public and private sector that have the capacity to implement the initiative by planting trees in various areas of the territory of the respective Member State;

b) to inform BSEC PERMIS in due course on the national entities that committed themselves to implement the above mentioned initiative.

BSEC PERMIS would appreciate to receive such information from the Member States at the latest by 15 March 2020. Based on this information, BSEC PERMIS will notify directly the United Nations Secretary General about this contribution of the BSEC Member States to the implementation of the decision of the UNFCCC to increase their NDCs for combating the negative effects of Climate Change.

The Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States the assurances of its highest consideration.

Istanbul, 16 January 2020



Encl. As above

To: Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States

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ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

BSEC Urges Member States to Plant 75 Trees in 2020 to Support UN Initiative on Climate Change.

To coincide with the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, BSEC PERMIS is actively supporting the implementation of the initiative “75 UN – 75 trees UNAI SDG 7” proposed by the Energy Policy and Development Center (KEPA) of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA), in its dual capacity as the UN Academic Impact Hub for the 7th Sustainable Development Goal (UNAI Hub SDG7) and as the Coordinator of the Green Energy Network of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Organization (BSEC - GEN).



PERMIS is urging BSEC's 12 Member States to ask appropriate Ministries, Municipalities, and Academic Institutions, both public and private, to plant, care for and register, with the UNAI SDG7 registry, 75 trees – or multiples of 75 – in each country by the end of 2020. The proposal is designed to help raise awareness on issues of green energy, climate change and environmental protection using “simple measures undertaken at the grassroots level”. An overall goal of planting at least 1 million trees is directly connected to an appeal by the UN Secretary-General to governments and ordinary citizens around the world to increase their “ambition” in tackling climate change and to help re-forest the planet with concrete local actions.

Municipalities, agencies and entities from 8 BSEC Member States have expressed their readiness to participate in this symbolic and important undertaking (the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Republic of Turkey, Ukraine) by planting at least 75 trees in various parts of their countries in 2020.

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Results in 2020

- Participation of 9 countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bulgaria, Greece, Canada, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine and Turkey).
- Participation of 29 Hellenic municipalities
- Dynamics of the initiative is the planting of 10,077,625 trees.

Results in 2021

- Plantation and treatment of 75 plants on the islet of Thodorou (or Theodorou) (autumn planting season)
- Preservation of historical olive trees
 - Region: Kastelli Pediadas on Crete, Greece where new airport of Heraklion is being constructed
 - Agreement between local Municipality of Minoa Pediadas and the administration of the New International Airport of Heraklion, under the coordination of the Decentralized Administration of Crete, the state organization for the Forest and Environmental Authorities on the island of Crete
- Participation of almost 60 Hellenic municipalities
 - Small scale funding from the Hellenic Green Fund

Perspectives

Decision to continue and upgrade the Initiative for the coming years (based on results and especially willingness of participants)



Thank you

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