

NEW EU STRATEGY ON CENTRAL ASIA
PLATFORM FOR ENVIRONMENT AND WATER COOPERATION
The 10th meeting of the EU-Central Asia Working Group on Environment and Climate Change
“Green Recovery: new opportunities for cooperation”
Online, 4-5 October 2021

Speech of Mr Oliviero Montanaro Director General, Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition

HE Ambassador Terhi Hakala, EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Mr Akhmetzhan Primkulov, Vice-Minister of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ms Astrid Schomaker, Director, Global Sustainable Development EU Commission DG ENV, distinguished Delegates, dear participants, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 10th Meeting of the EU-Central Asia Working Group on Environment and Climate Change.

Let me express appreciation for the achievement of the Working Group, which evolved during the years with the continuous presence of the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, now Ministry for Ecological Transition.

As we know, the Working Group is part of the Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation, established at the EU–Central Asia High-Level Conference in Rome in 2009.

We convene for the 10th time, and I regret we cannot meet in person.

Still, at the same time, I am glad to see that, despite the global pandemic and the ensuing challenging moments the world is still experiencing, your activities could continue and evolve with fruitful results.

This 10th Meeting represents a milestone in our process: it is the first after the 2020 adoption of the new Terms of Reference (Brussels 2020), the first since the worldwide pandemic started, and the first trying to react to it by addressing the emergency with a positive approach on “opportunities for a green recovery”.

Italy is a frontrunner in this global effort: we have put the Ecological Transition at the core of our green recovery agenda.

We are strongly committed to transforming our Country and engaging in a considerable endeavour, unprecedented in recent history, to promote renewable energies, low carbon technologies, and infrastructural change.

There is no ecological transition without industrial transition, be it in Italy, Europe or Central Asia.

We must make and implement decisions now that will enhance prosperity and sustainability in the interest of future generations

At the same time, we must allow everyone to adapt, absorb the change and be part of it.

We also promote ecological transition values in international processes, such as the G20 that Italy is chairing this year and the COP26, that Italy is co-chairing in partnership with the UK.

We believe Central Asian Countries and the EU with its Member States can promote new consumption and production models and find diversified answers to common environmental problems.

The activities of the Working Group are a concrete example of how Central Asia and the EU can reflect together around common environmental, social and economic challenges.

The Agenda 2030 now, more than ever, must be the framework for evaluating sustainable development options on the one hand. On the other, it must support the establishment of new or renewed consumption and production patterns, more respectful for the biodiversity and the environment in general, in a changing climate.

May this Meeting bring positive outcomes for our EU-Central Asia strengthened cooperation, also in these difficult times.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me wish you a fruitful meeting.