The Final Conference of the BSEC-HDF research project “Green Cluster of Knowledge Institutions of Black Sea: A Roadmap on Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency for Research and Academic Institutions” was held on July 23, 2012, in Midtown Hotel Taksim Istanbul, Turkey. BSEC-HDF Management, the main project partners i.e. ICBSS, TÜBİTAK MAM, HSE; Energy and Natural Resources Ministry of Turkey Renewable Energy General Directorate representatives; delegates from Green Cluster Members institutions such as Panteion University, University of Macedonia, Ege University, Yıldız Technical University, Yıldız Technical University Technopark and some private sector consultancy companies in Turkey constituted the 23 participants of the meeting. The meeting started with the welcome speeches by TUBITAK Project Team (Senior Researcher Dr. Çiğdem Karadağ and Business Development Responsible Gülniyaz Tahralı), Director General of ICBSS Dr. Zefi Dimadama, BSEC-HDF Manager Mr. Kostas Zaimis and Sustainability Advisor to ICBSS George Kazantzopoulos.

ICBSS Director General, Dr. Zefi Dimadama, emphasized on the importance of the project for it addresses to the new primary target of ICBSS which is “turning the Black Sea green”. She noted that the Green Cluster project is a successful reflection of prioritization of energy efficiency, climate change and renewable energy issues with the aim of the establishment of a Green Cluster of Knowledge Institutions, by supporting a regional partnership of academic and research institutions of the Black Sea countries. She finally expressed her thanks to BSEC-HDF and to project partners (TUBITAK MAM and HSE) for the fruitful cooperation and their active support for the implementation of the project.

The BSEC-HDF Manager, Mr. Kostas Zaimis, expressed his pleasure about the Green Cluster project which has been awarded for a grant together with other 5 projects among 20 applications. He stressed that the establishment of a network was one of the most important criteria to fund the projects, and the Green Cluster project is well formed and organized to achieve this aim. He also noted the importance of disseminating the project and in this respect, he suggested another event to be held in Athens that would help the further enlargement of the cluster and a better sharing of the project results with members from the private sector, techno-parks, NGOs, associations etc.. He also proposed to present the Green Cluster and its outcomes in the BSEC Working Group on Environment which is planned to be held until the end of this year.

Sustainability Advisor of ICBSS, Mr. George Kazantzopoulos, noted that climate change is an issue to be among the priorities. He mentioned the Olympic Games as a major event which can bring forward energy and climate change issues and as an opportunity of policies to complement green practices. Additionally, the 20-20 target of UK is expected to be much easily achieved through the 2012 Olympics.
In the first session, participants from the three countries, Alexia Timotheou from ICBSS-Greece, Liliana Proskuryakova from HSE-Russia, Yusuf Korucu from Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources-Turkey and Namik Ünlü from TUBITAK MRC- Turkey gave information about the national energy strategies in their countries and noted some important points of the legal national frameworks on energy efficiency/renewable energy. Haydar Livatyalı from TUBITAK MRC made a general evaluation of the three countries' energy overview. He noted that despite the close geographic distance, the three countries, Greece, Russia and Turkey, have significant differences in size, scale, population, climate, energy and mineral resources. All three countries have specific targets addressing to the reduction of dependence on traditional high risk energy sources and increasing the share of energy from renewable sources. However this share as a target is quite low in Russia's strategy which emphasizes more on energy efficiency than renewable energy.

In the case studies session successful green practices were presented by the participants. George Kazantzopoulos presented the case of the University of Macedonia as one of the knowledge institutions with good green practices. Although being a social science based university, the University of Macedonia has an entire commitment and strategy for being “green”. The University has developed an environmental management system (EMS), which is active since 2005 and certified with EMAS. The University aims at reducing the material, energy and water consumption, decreasing emissions, increasing the rate of recycling, enhancing formal environmental education and increasing environmental awareness within the University and the local society. The Panteion University practices were presented by Gerasimos Rodotheatos. Gerasimos Rodotheatos pointed out that Panteion University already has a special focus on environmental education which is well observed in the education programme of the university. Like University of Macedonia, Panteion University is a social science based university. However, a variety of green courses are being taught, like International Environmental Protection, International Development Law, European Environmental Protection and Marine Environment Protection. He stressed that through the mechanism of European Centre for Environmental Research & Training (EKePEK,) events are being organized that gather many experts from different disciplines so that there occurs the opportunity to understand different approaches of particularly engineering/social science disciplines. The university also procures educational trips, participates in open-ended consultations and networks and engages in International Initiatives.

Dr. Çiğdem Karadağ presented the green practices of TUBITAK MRC, which is the governmental research institution of Turkey. TUBITAK MRC implements the ISO 14001 Environment Management System and certain obligatory practices that derive from being a governmental institution. She explained that the center has a specific policy aimed at the reduction of electricity consumption, efficient use of natural gas, emission management, efficient cooling-heating, water consumption management and waste management. She emphasized that it is difficult to implement standardized rules regarding energy efficiency /RE in such a big R&D Center with 7 institutes conducting several projects of varying scale. So, it is a bold step of the Center to adopt ISO 14001 standard, and implement practices of energy efficiency /RE. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Atilla Ersöz mentioned the renewable Energy&Hydrogen Demonstration Park Project of TUBITAK MRC, which has completed the demonstration phase and plans to provide energy for the MRC campus partially. Dr. Mete Çubukçu and Kerem Odabaşı presented the solar and other renewable energy practices in the campus of Ege University. Dr. Mete Çubukçu explained the solar and other renewable energy projects and noted that YETMER project for a Net Zero Energy Building is being conducted for two years and a feasibility study is now being conducted. Kerem Odabaşı informed the participants about the activities of some students of the Ege University’s Renewable Energy Team dedicated to implement renewable energy technology practices. He mentioned the
development of the solar car project and the team’s collaboration with media and the municipality. Other good green practices were the “Smart House” project presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Savş Selamoğulları from Yıldız Technical University and the “Green Roofs” project presented by Dr. Serdar Çelik from Southern Illinois University.

In the closing session Alexia Timotheou gave information about one of the most important deliverables of the project; the **“Roadmap for awareness and implementation of energy efficiency and use of RES schemes in the Black Sea”**. The roadmap will be the main guide for the Green Cluster members who have the willingness to implement energy efficiency and RE practices in their institutions. The roadmap includes no technical details and is very easy to understand from non-experts. It is a voluntary tool designed to transfer knowledge and know-how to the BSEC Member States from international, European and Black Sea best practices, and therefore, to guide potential beneficiaries in the implementation of simple and soft green practices, in order to become more energy efficient and cost-savers.

In the closing discussion panel, Dr. Dimadama, Mr. Kazanzopoulos and Assoc. Prof. Livatyalı made their final evaluation of the conference. Dr. Dimadama pointed out that it is very important to explore new ideas for the dissemination of the project. She requested all participants to send their ideas to ICBSS about dissemination of the project aims and results. Mr. Livatyalı noted that funding is a crucial issue for the maintenance of all practices. He also pointed out that the next conference/event can be held in an institution which is among the ones implementing best practices (in one of the university or center), therefore a good impact can be achieved. The panelists also discussed that the Ministry of Education may also be interested in the project and representatives could be invited to the conference along with representatives from the Ministries of Energy and Environment. Web-based discussion panels can be developed to promote interactive dialogue and communication of the participants and cluster members. On the other hand, interest in green energy issues can be stimulated by the development of a competitive atmosphere among institutions that have already implemented green practices and those that have not or even the development of evaluation standards. Another issue that was touched upon is that a timeframe for the implementation of the roadmap can be determined to ensure its more effective adoption by the institutions. Other participants highlighted the importance of investing in students’ fresh ideas and cooperating with techno-parks and the private sector for the development of new innovative products.

In the end, all participants thanked the hosts of the Final Conference for its excellent organization and expressed their aspiration to meet again in the next event.