

**Committee on Environmental Policy****Conference of European Statisticians**

*(Geneva, 29-30 June 2017)*

**DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE JOINT TASK FORCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL  
STATISTICS AND INDICATORS AT ITS THIRTEENTH SESSION****I. Attendance**

1. Environmental experts and statisticians from the following countries attended the meeting: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
2. Representatives of the European Environment Agency, the Group on Earth Observations, the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the International Telecommunication Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (via video conference), the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Statistics Division also attended the meeting.
3. Furthermore, the University of Geneva, the Vienna University of Economics and Business, Zoï Environment Network and Institute Cadaster also participated in the meeting.

**II. Organizational matters**

4. The meeting was chaired by Ms. A. Yepbayeva (Kazakhstan).
5. The Joint Task Force adopted the agenda for its thirteenth session, as contained in document ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2017/1.
6. The following substantive topics were discussed at the meeting:
  - (a) Implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the twelfth session of the Joint Task Force;
  - (b) Data quality in Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) reporting: methodological considerations;
  - (c) Revision of biodiversity indicators;
  - (d) Implementation of recommendations on energy indicators;
  - (e) Nexus approach on energy, water and agriculture;
  - (f) Pilot data collection on water quality by the United Nations Statistics Division;
  - (g) Waste statistics;
  - (h) Capacity-building needs;

- (i) Updates on developments related to the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (j) Other relevant developments relating to:
  - (i) Meetings of the UN Expert Group on Environment Statistics,
  - (ii) The twelfth meeting of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting,
  - (iii) Green Economy,
  - (iv) Modernization of Statistics.

### **III. Decisions and recommendations for further work**

7. The secretariat informed the Joint Task Force that a request would be submitted to the twenty-third session of the Committee on Environmental Policy (Geneva, 14-17 November 2017) to renew the mandate of the Joint Task Force for 2019-2021. It was suggested that the new mandate should take into account the mid-term review of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (ECE/CEP/2017/2).

8. The Joint Task Force asked the secretariat to include a glossary in the SEIS Assessment Framework (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2017/5). The glossary should provide clear definitions for each of the questions. It was further agreed that the term “statistics” used in the SEIS Assessment Framework will be changed to “statistics/data”.

9. The following countries agreed to pilot the SEIS Assessment Framework and its associated reporting application: Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The European Environment Agency will also take part in piloting the SEIS Assessment Framework. For the pilot testing, the secretariat will prepare a guidance document and clarify which indicators from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe set of environmental indicators will be used.<sup>1</sup> It was also agreed that there will be a paper-based questionnaire, in addition to the online reporting application, which can be shared with other relevant agencies. The secretariat will establish a timetable for the piloting and completion of the questionnaire, identify expected inputs from countries and clarify the agencies to be involved.

10. The secretariat will prepare revised production tables for biodiversity indicators D1, D2, D3 and D6, and energy indicators. Simple validation rules will be integrated for testing. The revised production tables will be made available to the members of the Joint Task Force in advance of the next, fourteenth session that will take place in October 2017. This will allow consultation with subject matter experts and providing feedback to the secretariat at the fourteenth session of the Joint Task Force.

11. The issue of water quality will be further discussed in upcoming meetings of the Joint Task Force.

12. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Nations Environment Programme expressed their interest to participate in the work of the Conference of European Statisticians Task Force on Waste Statistics, whereas Ukraine was interested in reviewing documents produced by the Task Force. The secretariat invited the interested countries and international organizations to nominate experts.

13. Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan expressed their interest in national capacity-building workshops. They interested countries will contact the

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.unece.org/env/indicators.html>.

secretariat to discuss possible support. The members of the Joint Task Force suggested the organization of regional and subregional capacity-building activities for groups of countries with common interests and needs. In addition, participants highlighted the importance of translating technical materials into Russian.

#### **IV. Next meeting of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators**

14. The next meeting of the Joint Task Force will be held on 2-3 October 2017 in Rome, Italy (hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). To benefit from the FAO expertise, the Joint Task Force proposed to focus the meeting on issues related to agriculture and climate change.

#### **V. Adoption of the report of the meeting**

15. The present report was adopted during the closing session.

16. A summary of the discussion in the substantive sessions of the meeting will be presented in an annex to this report, to be prepared by the secretariat after the meeting.

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