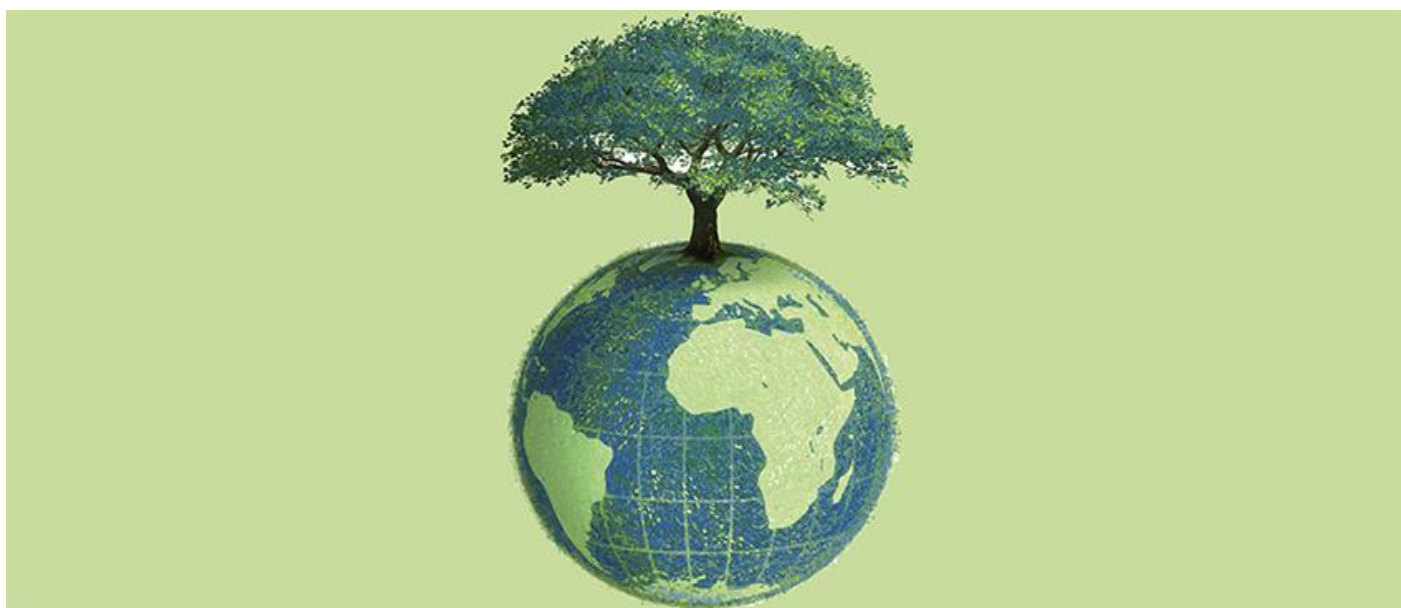


United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

**EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS
BASED ON REVIEWS CARRIED OUT IN THE PERIOD 2015–2019**

Commissioned by UNECE



Source: UNSD

Prepared by: Dusan ZUPKA, Independent Consultant and Evaluator

Final Report

September 2019

Contents

I. Executive summary	3
II. Introduction	5
III. Findings	9
IV. Conclusions and recommendations	25
V. Annexes	27
Annex 1: Terms of Reference	27
Annex 2: List of reviewed documents	31
Annex 3: Electronic Questionnaire	33
Annex 4: List of interviewees	37
Annex 5: Main phases of an Environmental Performance Review Process	38
Annex 6: Environmental Performance Review Programme	39
Annex 7: SDGs relevant to EPRs	41

ABBREVIATION AND TERMS

CEP	Committee on Environmental Policy
EEA	European Environment Agency
EPR	Environmental Performance Review
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OARS	Operational Activities and Review Section
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PMU	Programme Management Unit
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
WHO	World Health Organizations

EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS BASED ON REVIEWS CARRIED OUT IN THE PERIOD 2015–2019

I. Executive summary

This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the external independent evaluation of the Environmental Performance Review (EPR) process based on the country reviews carried out in the period 2015–2019. Both the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and UNECE conduct EPRs. While the EPRs are mandatory for OECD Member Countries, they are voluntary for the interested UNECE Member States, which are not Member Countries of OECD. UNECE has also carried out EPRs for countries outside of the its region. Morocco was reviewed by UNECE in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in 2014 and Mongolia – in cooperation with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)¹ in 2018.

An independent evaluation consultant was hired by the UNECE to conduct the external evaluation of the EPR process, which includes all steps from the preparatory mission to the publication and launch of the EPR report. The overall objective of this evaluation exercise was to conduct an external independent assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the EPR in supporting the UNECE Member States to reconcile their environmental and economic targets and meeting the international environmental commitments. The evaluation involved an assessment of the entire EPR process in 2015–2019 based on the reviews undertaken during this period.² It involved a consultative process generating views and comments collected among the EPR key stakeholders through questionnaires, interviews and focus group meetings. The evaluation activities were carried out by an external evaluator in May-June 2019.

KEY FINDINGS:

1. The EPRs focus was highly relevant with regard to specific needs/priorities of the beneficiary countries, UNECE/UNESCAP overall mandate/priorities, UNECE Subprogramme 1 “Environment” objectives and collaboration with other international organizations.
2. In the EPR process, consideration was given to the gender equality and empowerment of women through their meaningful participation in the EPR activities organized by UNECE under the EPR Programme (workshops, appointment of EPR national coordinators, composition of international expert teams, etc.).
3. EPRs were successful in delivering the expected outcomes. The evaluation rating for **effectiveness was high** considering that the accomplishment rate of the planned activities was highly satisfactory and the EPR process contributed to the improved environmental performance of the beneficiary countries.
4. EPR unit was diligent in seeking out cost efficiencies. The evaluation rating for efficiency of the EPR process is high.
5. The sustainability of the EPRs and attention to impact related aspects varied from country to country. For example, some countries (Belarus, Georgia, Mongolia), have regularly referred to the EPR process in public statements, others (Montenegro, Romania) have requested to host EPR capacity building workshops. No similar evidence is available for other countries.
6. The relationship between human rights and environment was addressed, to a certain extent, in the EPRs of Kazakhstan, Mongolia and North Macedonia. However, this issue was not addressed fully and systematically throughout the EPRs as no country ever asked for it.

¹ Three countries reviewed are members of both UNECE and UNESCAP: Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. Another reviewed country – Mongolia – is a Member State of UNESCAP.

² While the period for this evaluation is 2015–2019, in some places, references are made to a broader range of third cycle reviews. This is however not meant to position this evaluation exercise as an evaluation of the third cycle. The 3rd EPR of Uzbekistan being carried out in 2019 is not part of this evaluation exercise.

7. EPRs faced challenges in covering the green economy approach because of the lack of legal and policy framework for green economy and the shortage of specific green economy initiatives in almost all reviewed countries.
8. Other issues which presented a challenge for implementation of EPRs was the lack of awareness and a clear understanding of environment-related SDGs among government officials at national and local level in some reviewed countries.

KEY CONCLUSIONS:

1. The EPR unit should continue to align the future EPRs with the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries, by integrating sectors, such as agriculture, energy and transport.
2. The EPR unit should increase the role of EPRs in supporting the achievement and monitoring of EPR-relevant SDGs.
3. The EPR unit should seek advice from the Expert Group on EPRs on the need and modalities for deeper coverage of human rights and environment in EPRs in future EPRs.
4. UNECE should extend cooperation with other UN entities and other international organizations for organization of the future EPRs since the EPR Programme covers several fields that are beyond the expertise of UNECE, such as industry, health, agriculture, waste management and environmental risk management. This should include WHO, UNEP, UNIDO.
5. Future EPRs need to continue supporting the beneficiary countries in developing/refining legal and policy framework for green economy together with putting in place specific green economy initiative and financing.
6. UNECE in collaboration with CEP, EPR Expert Group, donors and relevant UN and other international organizations should increase the awareness and readiness of reviewed countries to provide all necessary data and information facilitating a smooth incorporation of relevant SDGs into the reviews.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The UNECE should continue aligning EPRs with the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries and with an emphasis on greater sectoral integration.
2. Future EPRs should provide greater guidance to the beneficiary countries in development or refining of legal and policy framework for green economy and putting into place of specific green economy initiatives and financing. This approach is in line with the UNECE mandate.³
3. The role of EPRs in supporting the achievements and monitoring of SDGs in the pan-European region should be boosted.
4. Taking into account the increased attention to the relationship between human rights and environment, EPRs should continue to provide the reviewed countries with recommendations for pursuing the relevant aspects of SDG 16 and on procedural environmental rights such as access to information, public participation and access to justice. The EPR unit should seek advice from the Expert Group on EPRs on the need and modalities for deeper coverage of human rights and environment in EPRs.
5. UNECE should extend cooperation with other UN entities and other international organizations for organization of the future EPRs since the EPR Programme covers several fields that are beyond the expertise of UNECE, such as industry, health, agriculture, waste management and environmental risk management.
6. The UNECE EPR core team should be strengthened to address in greater depth SDGs and sectoral integration by adding an economist or capacity building expert to the team. Such an addition could greatly enhance the usefulness of EPRs to beneficiary countries, especially in the sectors other than environment. An enhanced team could provide more post-review support and ownership building through tailored capacity building.

³ <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2011/ece/cep/ece.cep.s.2011.3.e.pdf>,
<https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2011/ece/ece.astana.conf.2011.2.add.1.e.pdf>,
<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=48040> <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/environment-for-europe/initiatives/greening-the-economy-in-the-pan-european-region.html>

II. Introduction

An EPR is an external assessment of the progress a country has made in reconciling its environmental and economic targets and in meeting its international environmental commitments. EPRs have their genesis in the work of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In 1991, the Environment Ministers of OECD launched a programme for environmental performance review to help OECD Member countries improve their individual and collective performances in environmental management.

In 1993, the second Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Lucerne, Switzerland) mandated UNECE to carry out EPRs for those UNECE member States that are not members of the OECD. In a follow-up, the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) at its third session decided to make the Environmental Performance Review Programme a part of the regular programme of the UNECE in 1996.⁴ The main objectives of the EPR Programme are:

- To assist countries to improve their management of the environment and associated environmental performance by making concrete recommendations for better policy design and implementation;
- To promote the exchange of information among countries about policies and experiences;
- To help integrating environmental policies into sector-specific economic policies, such as agricultural, energy, transport and health policies;
- To promote greater accountability to the public;
- To strengthen cooperation with the international community; and
- To contribute to the achievement and monitoring of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, held in Astana, Kazakhstan, in 2011, the Ministers decided that building upon the success of the UNECE EPR Programme, UNECE has to conduct its third cycle of EPRs, which should include environmental governance and financing in a green economy context, countries’ cooperation with the international community and environmental mainstreaming in priority sectors.

At the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, held in Batumi, Georgia, in 2013, the environmental ministers acknowledged the important contribution of the UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme over the past 20 years as an effective and practical policy tool, and highlighted the role it can play in supporting the achievement and monitoring of SDGs in the pan-European region. Since 2017, EPRs include the review of relevant goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Moreover, the efficiency and effectiveness of the EPR methodology have attracted the attention of countries outside of the UNECE region, leading to requests for a transfer of know-how from UNECE to other UN regional commissions. Morocco was reviewed by UNECE in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa and Mongolia – in cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific.

The EPRs target mainly decision- and policy-makers, but they are also directed to a wider audience (general public, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, business and government at different levels) in the reviewed country as well as in other countries interested to learn from the EPR experience. In addition, EPRs are of interest to donors wishing to know how best to direct their support of countries with economies in transition.

The main steps of the EPR process (annex 5) are:

- 1) Preparation, including a preparatory mission to agree with the country on its EPR structure, development of the terms of reference (TOR), and assembling a review team of experts.
- 2) Review Mission, by an expert team that travels to the country under review and meets with representatives of the Government at national and local levels, NGOs, academia, the private sector and the international community. The review mission is followed by the preparation of draft report.
- 3) Expert Review by the UNECE Expert Group on EPRs.

⁴ CEP/R.18, 11 March 1996

- 4) Peer Review, the Member States in the Committee on Environment Policy (CEP). The peer review concludes with the adoption the EPR recommendations. The reviewed country commits to implementing the adopted recommendations.
- 5) Publication of the report.
- 6) Launch, when requested by the reviewed country, organized to present the EPR findings to the governmental authorities, international community, NGOs and other stakeholders.

As an integral part of the EPRs, recommendations on ways to improve areas of concern are presented to the government of the reviewed country. Since 2017, EPRs include the review of relevant Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

EPRs are carried out by the EPR unit in the Operational Activities and Review Section (OARS) of the UNECE Environment Division. The EPR unit works with experts in other UNECE divisions and other international organizations, as well as with experts provided by countries.

In 2012, a self-evaluation of the EPR Programme was carried out. It assessed procedural steps for the preparation and conducting of the EPRs. The main purpose of the evaluation was to examine the strengths and gaps to be filled in by the program. The objective was to identify possible measures that could be taken to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of implementing the program. This evaluation was a tool for internal use by the EPR unit. It was based on the experiences made in the course of implementing seven country reviews during the period 2009–2011. The evaluation involved views and comments collected through specific questionnaires and/or interviews from key stakeholders in the EPR review process. However, the relevance, sustainability and impact of EPR Programme was outside the scope of that evaluation report.

- **Purpose**

The purpose of this external evaluation is to analyze the current arrangements for carrying out EPRs (EPR process). This evaluation assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the EPRs in supporting countries to reconcile their environmental and economic targets and in meeting their international environmental commitments. The results of the evaluation are expected to contribute to a long-term vision for the reviews in order to further strengthen the impact of the EPR Programme in order to further reinforce its impact. The results of the evaluation will be used to improve the EPR process and, to a certain extent, the visibility of EPRs.

- **Scope**

The scope of the evaluation focused at systematic reviewing and analyzing the documents/reports produced in the framework of the EPR process during the period 2015–2019. During this period EPRs focused on environmental governance and financing in a green economy context, countries' cooperation with the international community and environmental mainstreaming in priority sectors, and since 2017, additionally on the relevant SDGs (EPR-relevant SDGs) (annex 7). In this time period EPRs were carried out in Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Tajikistan. Therefore, the evaluation focused on the processes and arrangements for carrying out EPRs in these countries. The UNECE staff who participated in these EPRs, members of the EPR Expert Group as well as major international partners (WHO, UNECE) were consulted during the evaluation process. All available information, documents, brochures and EPR progress reports were reviewed by the evaluator.

- **Methodology**

The methodology of the evaluation followed the Terms of Reference which were prepared by the EPR unit and cleared by the UNECE Programme Management Unit (PMU) (see Annex 1). The final evaluation report's structure was designed in compliance with the UNECE evaluation policy and evaluation guide and reflecting the United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards. The evaluation involved the assessment of the entire EPR process based on the reviews carried out in the period 2015–2019. The evaluation methodology was established in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy and Guide in order to provide answers to questions like:

- Is the EPR process focusing on the relevant issues?
- Is the management of the EPR doing it right regarding the effectiveness and efficiency?
- Is the EPR process sustainable?
- Is the EPR process generating a desired impact in the target countries?

The evaluation matrix facilitated the evaluation process and equipped it with an overall evaluation tool (Table 1). The matrix contained evaluation criteria, key questions related to each criterion, data sources, data collection and analysis methods and indicators of success.

Table 1: Evaluation matrix

<i>Evaluation criteria</i>	<i>Data sources</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Indicators of success</i>
Relevance	EPR reports, internal monitoring documents, stakeholders' opinions – from beneficiary countries, international experts, UNECE, UNEP WHO	Review of key documents related to EPR, individual interviews, focus groups session, electronic questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation of views expressed	Extent to which expected results or outputs are consistent national priorities and the needs of beneficiary countries and the UNECE mandate. Degree of congruence between the perception of what is needed by the EPR planners and the perception of what is needed as seen by beneficiaries and partners
Effectiveness	EPR reports, internal monitoring documents, stakeholders' opinions – from beneficiary countries, international experts, UNECE, UNEP	Review of key documents related to EPR, individual interviews, focus groups session, electronic questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation of views expressed	Extent to which the expected accomplishments of the EPR activities have been achieved. Extent to which the EPR process have contributed to the overall objective of the EPR and what were the obstacles faced in this process.
Efficiency	EPR reports, internal monitoring documents, stakeholders' opinions – from beneficiary countries, international experts, UNECE, UNEP, WHO	Review of key documents related to EPR, individual interviews, focus groups session, electronic questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation of views expressed	Extent to which human and financial resources have been used wisely to achieve expected results. Extent to which activities have been implemented according to planned schedule.
Sustainability	EPR reports, internal monitoring documents, stakeholders' opinions – from beneficiary countries, international experts, UNECE, UNEP	Review of key documents related to EPR, individual interviews, focus groups session, electronic questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation of views expressed	Extent to which beneficiary countries and partners participated in the EPR process and "own" the outcomes of the EPR accomplished work/measured by the degree of implemented recommendations. Extent to which it is likely that the EPR stakeholders in beneficiary countries will sustain its benefits.
Impact	EPR reports, internal monitoring documents, stakeholders' opinions – from beneficiary countries, international experts, UNECE, UNEP, WHO	Review of key documents related to EPR, individual interviews, focus groups session, electronic questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation of views expressed	Extent to which the EPR process has led to new policies or policy changes in the beneficiary countries and have been use by other international organizations to substantiate their own analysis. Extent to which the EPR's proposed recommendations have been implemented. Extent to which the EPR process contributed to the application of gender mainstreaming principles and to meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups.

In order to obtain the appropriate answers to the above-mentioned questions, the evaluation methodology integrated five main criteria:

1. Review of the relevance of the EPR activities in light of the specific needs of the beneficiary countries and the UNECE mandate as expressed in the Programme of Work and the Subprogramme 1 “Environment.
2. Assessment of the effectiveness of the EPR activities in achieving expected accomplishments and challenges faced in the process.
3. Assessment of the efficiency with which these activities were implemented.
4. Review of the sustainability and ownership of the EPR process in the reviewed countries.
5. Assessment of the impact of the implemented work in the beneficiary countries.

These criteria reflect OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, which offers for them the following definitions:

- **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
- **Efficiency:** A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.
- **Relevance:** The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.
- **Impacts:** Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
- **Sustainability:** The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.⁵

For each of the evaluation criteria a cluster of questions was established, including the assessment of the levels of accomplishment: high, partial, little and not at all (see Annex 3).

The relevance of the EPRs activities with regards to gender equality, empowerment of women and incorporation of the perspective of the most vulnerable groups was reviewed as well. The approach was guided by the gender-inclusive and gender-sensitive methodology and consideration of specific conditions/needs of the most vulnerable groups, in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards.

A variety of evaluation tools were used. Desk review included reading and analysis of available UNECE Biennial Performance Reports of the Subprogramme 1 “Environment”, EPR country reports, documents related to EPR Expert Group sessions, UNESCAP Strategic Program, EPR 2012 self-evaluation report, data and information collected during the interviews and others. Interviews included face-to-face sessions as well as telephone interviews applying both, focus groups and individual sessions approach. Prior to the interviews, an electronic questionnaire was developed by the consultant. The questionnaire was circulated to the EPR key stakeholders: experts, national coordinators, the EPR Expert Group members, relevant staff from UNECE and other international organizations (UNEP, WHO) involved in EPR process in order to canvass their views about the EPR process relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The feedback received from the completed questionnaires was integrated into the evaluation report after a careful analysis and triangulation process. The research methods applied were be predominantly qualitative, with a quantitative element limited to descriptive statistics. The outcomes generated by desk reviews, interviews, focus groups meetings and electronic survey were synthesized and aggregated by main issues. The data and information received were triangulated considering carefully the issues of convergence and divergence. The list of all documents reviewed is in Annex 2.

The evaluation process encountered a few obstacles. One of them was stakeholders’ low response rate to the electronic questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent out to 50 stakeholders, but a completed questionnaire was received only from 17 of them (success rating was only 34%). Similar difficulties were faced in organizing interviews, since many stakeholders were not available due to other duties and/or travel. Another limiting factor was the fact that, due to budgetary constraints, the evaluator was not able to visit any of the beneficiary countries

⁵ OECD-DAC, Paris 2002

to make direct observations of issues linked to the EPR process. And finally, the recollections of some consultees of the EPR process were not fresh or complete since many had participated in reviewing only one country or had drafted just one single chapter for an EPR report.

III. Findings

The information for identification of a list of findings related to the EPR process, its design, implementation and accomplishment achieved during the period 2015–2019 was generated through the reading and analysis of the pertinent EPR-related documents, the results of the electronic questionnaire, face-to-face and telephonic interviews, and focus group sessions. These activities provided information about the EPR process, its activities and accomplishments attained. Based on information, data and reports available the evaluation findings are discussed under five headings, Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Impact. For each of the evaluation criteria a set of 3–7 specific questions was designed in harmony with the EPR background and its expected results. Descriptive assessment and analysis based on the feedback received from the contacted stakeholders was the categorized according to the qualification ratings for each individual question (Table 2).

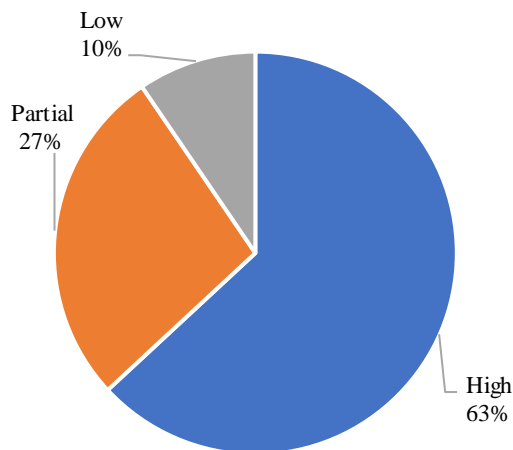
Table 2: Qualification ratings

<i>Rating</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>
Highly/Fully	H
Partially	P
Little	L
Not (relevant) at all	N

The responses to the questions established for the evaluation were then organized in five big topics related to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Pie charts were drawn to illustrate a proportion of responses in each of the specific evaluation ratings H, P, L, and N given by the interviewed stakeholders for each of the five topics.

RELEVANCE

- 1) **How relevant were the EPR activities to the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries/cities in sectoral integration, such as climate change, energy, industry, transport and media management, i.e. water, air, waste, biodiversity?**
- 2) **To what extent were the EPR activities related to the UNECE mandate as expressed in the programme of work?**
- 3) **To what extent were the EPR activities consistent with global and regional priorities and the programme of work of the UN Regional Commissions?**
- 4) **How relevant were the EPR activities with regards to gender equality and empowerment of women?**
- 5) **Did the EPR Programme incorporate vulnerable groups perspective in the design of the recommendations?**
- 6) **To what extent were the EPR activities' intervention relevant for meeting the objective of the UNECE Subprogramme 1 "Environment" and beyond?**
- 7) **How relevant was the collaboration with other entities in the UN system and other international organizations?**



Note: Survey responses on Relevance

Relevance in the context of this evaluation is defined as consistency of EPRs with needs, priorities, policies and mandates relevant to its main stakeholders. Based on the feedback received from the stakeholders and analysis of the main EPR-related reports and documents, EPRs focus in the period 2015–2019 was **highly relevant** with regard to specific needs/priorities of the beneficiary countries, UNECE/UNESCAP overall mandate/priorities, the objective of the UNECE Subprogramme 1 “Environment”, and the priorities of other international organizations that collaborated with the EPR Programme. Even though, in a few areas (gender equality/empowerment, incorporation of vulnerable groups perspective) EPR was partially relevant, its overall relevance was high. “A particular challenge for the reviews conducted in 2015–2019 has been to remain relevant and useful in the context of different pathways taken by the reviewed countries, while accommodating their specific preferences. For example, Kazakhstan has requested that its third review refer to the practice of OECD member countries, while Albania saw its third review as an instrument to assist the country in the process of European Union accession”.⁶

The geographical region covered by UNECE has one of the world’s largest ecological footprints and it is facing multiple challenges linked to water and air pollution, management of waste and the loss of biodiversity. Therefore, and in line with the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries, one of the main priority areas of the EPR process was an agenda of transformation and structural change leading to the integration of economic and social development with environmental sustainability and security.

The EPR Programme was well aligned with the UNECE mandate as expressed in its strategic framework/biennial programme plans 2016–2017⁷ and 2018–2019⁸. EPR appears as an output under the Subprogramme 1 “Environment” in the proposed programme budgets since 1996⁹, originally “for countries with economies in transition”, which was changed in 2016 to “non-OECD member countries” and modified again in 2018 to “interested countries”. EPR activities focused on enhancing existing synergies and linkages between sectors falling under UNECE eight subprogrammes (environment, transport, statistics, economic cooperation and integration, sustainable energy, trade, forestry/timber, and housing/land management/population) but also other sectors. The EPR promoted regional cooperation and integration as a means of accelerating the process of sustainable development in the UNECE region. Increased importance was attached to assisting countries in the implementation of the recommendations from these reviews and to monitoring the impact of the EPRs’ recommendations on national strategies and policies. All reviews conducted in 2015–2019 focused on the issues identified by the Astana Ministerial Declaration¹⁰ as key topics for the third cycle:

- (a) Environmental governance and financing in a green economy context;
- (b) Countries’ cooperation with the international community;
- (c) Environmental mainstreaming in priority sectors.

- **Sustainable Development Goals**

Since 2017, in line with the outcomes of the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Batumi, 2016) and building on the experience with assisting countries in the achievement and monitoring of MDGs, EPRs have been assisting countries with achievement and monitoring of EPR-relevant SDGs. EPRs do not cover the

⁶ ECE/CEP/2019/8

⁷ <https://undocs.org/en/A/69/6/Rev.1>

⁸ <https://undocs.org/en/A/71/6/Rev.1>

⁹ ece.cep.30.e.pdf

¹⁰ ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2/Add.1, para. 13

whole range of issues addressed by the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, they can support the achievement and monitoring of those goals and/or targets from the 2030 Agenda that are relevant for the particular EPR content requested by the country under review. These EPR-relevant goals and/or targets differ from one review to another depending on the thematic structure of the EPR report agreed with the country under review.

Five reviews conducted in 2017–2018, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mongolia, Kazakhstan and North Macedonia included the assessment of EPR-relevant SDGs and targets and recommendations linked to those targets (Table 3).

Table 3: Integration of the targets from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into EPRs, number

	<i>Albania</i>	<i>Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	<i>Mongolia</i>	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	<i>North Macedonia</i>
Targets covered in the main text	44	44	42	58	52
Targets addressed in recommendations	38	39	38	10	8
Sustainable Development Goal-related recommendations, of which in:	60	46	76	32	33
Boxes	35	36	41	24	26
Recommendations	25	10	35	8	7

Note: third reviews except for Mongolia.

Considering that several beneficiary countries, whose environmental performance was reviewed during the period 2015–2019, are members of UNESCAP the evaluation assessed also the consistency with global and regional priorities of this regional commission. The EPRs contributed significantly to both the global and regional priorities (balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development with focus on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) of UNESCAP in all four countries belonging to the UNESCAP region. In accordance with the UNESCAP Subprogramme 4: “Environment and Development”, the EPR Programme promoted environmental sustainability, the safeguarding of natural resources, including water and land, climate change action and resilience, sustainable agriculture, as critical factors for achieving sustainable development.

- **Gender**

Consideration was given to the gender equality and empowerment of women through their meaningful participation in the EPR Programme (workshops, as EPR national coordinators or international experts. And in EPR Expert Group). EPR Expert Group had 9 members and 5 of them were women. Women were always well represented also in the review teams visiting beneficiary countries. Among 11 EPR national coordinators responsible for the third cycle EPRs there were 6 women.

Concerning the situation inside the countries reviewed, gender and environment aspects were addressed in the EPRs when IT was considered by the expert teams as highly important (Tajikistan) or quite important (Kazakhstan, Mongolia and North Macedonia) for the countries reviewed. The most prominently highlighted issues were the gender aspects of access to water and sanitation and access to land and finance. In many beneficiary countries the absence of gender disaggregated data on environmental issues presented an important challenge for stronger integration of the gender and environment perspective.

EPRs also incorporated gender aspects in the recommendations. Two examples from the 3rd EPR of Tajikistan can be provided: the Recommendation 15.3: “The Committee on Emergency Situations and Civil Defense should strengthen its approach to risk management by: (c) Collecting gender-disaggregated data”; and the Recommendation 15.4: “The Government should build on the work and experiences of other countries on risk management by participating in the work of the Search and Rescue Advisory Group and by increasing the number of women in search and rescue work”.

- **Vulnerable groups**

The EPRs incorporated vulnerable groups’ perspectives in the design of some recommendations when this issue was relevant for specific sector and/or recommendation. The majority of EPRs conducted in 2015–2019 addressed the needs of vulnerable groups in the relevant recommendations (Table 4).

Table 4: Addressing the needs of vulnerable groups in EPR recommendations, 2015–2019, selected examples

<i>Reviews</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Issue</i>
3 rd EPR of Albania	8.2	Support of vulnerable consumers when designing tariff schemes for waste management
3 rd EPR of Belarus	8.1	Protection of socially vulnerable groups during the restructuring of electricity tariffs
3 rd EPR of Bosnia and Herzegovina	7.4	Protection of socially vulnerable groups when establishing cost-reflective pricing of water supply services
3 rd EPR of Bulgaria	2.9	Increase in household electricity tariffs taking into account the need for support to vulnerable consumers
	2.10	Adequate access for vulnerable consumers to utility services
3 rd EPR of Georgia	2.2	Raising water supply and sewerage tariffs taking into account issues of affordability
3 rd EPR of Kazakhstan	5.5	Introduction of carbon taxation taking into account the needs of poor and vulnerable groups
3 rd EPR of North Macedonia	3.2	Implementation of cost-reflective waste tariffs taking into account the need to protect poor and vulnerable groups
	9.2	Application of water-user and polluter-pays principles, taking into account the needs of poor and vulnerable groups
3 rd EPR of Serbia	3.2	Increasing the cost-effectiveness of public utility companies while providing targeted social assistance for vulnerable groups
3 rd EPR of Tajikistan	11.1	Protection of socially vulnerable groups during the restructuring of electricity tariffs

- **Improved response to environmental challenges**

The expected accomplishments of the UNECE Subprogramme 1 “Environment” for the biennium 2018–2019 included improved response to environmental challenges by UNECE constituencies, increased geographical coverage, strengthened national capacity for environmental monitoring and assessment systems in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe as well as improved environmental performance of interested countries. During the period 2015–2019, EPRs were very well aligned with all these priorities. All implemented EPRs worked on enhancing environmental governance and strengthening the integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies with major focus on energy, forestry, health and transport sectors and the activities implemented were directly contributing to the UNECE Subprogramme I “Environment” expected accomplishment (d) Improved environmental performance of interested countries of the Subprogramme 1 “Environment”. EPRs improved environmental performance in the countries under review. Evidence is provided by a high rate of the EPRs implemented recommendations. The average rate of implementation of EPR recommendations was above 70 per cent.

The EPR process was similarly highly relevant in supporting achievement of the objectives of the UNECE subprogrammes covering “Transport” and “Sustainable Energy” in the cases when the EPR process included the chapters addressing transport and energy.

- **Collaboration**

Collaboration with the relevant UNECE divisions, other entities of the UN system and other international organizations was the foundation block to build and maintain a comprehensive and integrated approach of EPRs. In the period 2015–2019 such collaboration and cooperation were highly relevant. UNECE Environment division closely collaborated with Sustainable Transport and Sustainable Energy divisions. Closer collaboration with Forests, Land and Housing division should be sought in the future, mainly at the EPR Expert Group level.

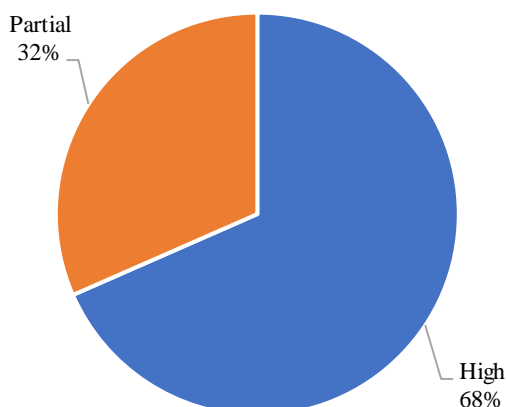
In 2015–2019, WHO-Europe, UNEP, OECD and UNEP-UNOCHA Joint Environment Unit provided expertise to the EPR Programme. This enhanced the level of expertise and increased the quality and relevance of the EPR reports. The memorandum of understanding signed between UNECE and UNEP covers EPR-related matters as well. Usually, UNEP provided 1 or 2 experts for EPR and participated in 8 EPRs in the period 2015–2019. When EPR included chapter concerning risk management, UNEP-UNOCHA Joint Environment unit provided an expert depending on their availability (in 2 EPRs during the reviewed period). So far, there is not any formal agreement with WHO. When EPR included chapter concerning health and environment, WHO-Europe was invited to provide expertise, which was provided only when an appropriate expert was available (in 3 EPRs during the reviewed period). The Memorandum of understanding between UNECE and WHO-Europe covering EPR-related matters should be sought in the future to make this collaboration more systematic.

At the same time, the collaboration with adequate partners improved opportunities for implementation of the EPR recommendations through support from the local offices of these collaborating organizations in the beneficiary countries. EPRs provided, on several occasions, useful inputs/ideas for the future environmentally oriented projects and related fund-raising efforts of the international partners, mainly for UNEP. E.g. in Uzbekistan, EPR opened door to UNEP’s closer cooperation with UNDP. Nevertheless, the level of collaboration with other entities of the UN system and other international organizations have a room for improvement, especially if EPRs are conducted outside the UNECE region. Since EPR Programme covers several fields beyond the expertise of UNECE, such as industry, agriculture, waste and chemicals management additional avenues for collaboration should be explored, namely with UNIDO, FAO, Basel Convention secretariat for waste management, and Stockholm and Rotterdam Convention secretariat on Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, for chemical management.

Last but not least, the European Environment Agency has used EPR recommendations as a basis for recommending actions in some of the EU Eastern Partnership countries (e.g. in Georgia) under its projects, notably on “Implementation of the principles and practices of the shared environmental information system (SEIS) in the Eastern Partnership countries”, funded by the European Commission.

EFFECTIVENESS

- 8) To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the EPR activities achieved?**
- 9) What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the EPR activities objective and expected accomplishments?**



Note: Survey responses on Effectiveness

Overall EPRs were successful in delivering the expected accomplishments of the specific logical framework for the EPR Programme, which were defined in table 5.

The evaluation rating for **effectiveness was high** and the EPR process contributed to the improved environmental performance of the beneficiary countries.

For the biennium 2014–2015, the target set for the subprogramme indicator of achievement for EPR was defined as “21 beneficiary countries showing progress in environmental performance”. The actual result achieved in this biennium was 23 countries with progress in environmental performance.

A majority of target countries improved environmental monitoring and made progress in enhancing environmental assessment systems. Against the target 2016–2017 which was 50 per cent rate of implementation of UNECE

recommendations on environmental monitoring, 54 per cent of UNECE recommendations were implemented already in 2016. Moreover, 15 out of 17 countries improved online accessibility of environmental indicators and associated datasets (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan, Northern Macedonia and Ukraine), 14 out of 17 countries improved national methodologies for the majority of UNECE indicators (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan, Northern Macedonia and Ukraine)).¹¹

An indicator of achievement demonstrating high effectiveness of EPRs was the percentage of EPR recommendations implemented by countries reviewed during the period 2015–2019 in the period between the second and third reviews of those countries. The average implementation rate of the recommendations was 68,8 per cent. Generally, recommendations involving many actors and those requiring considerable financial resources, usually took longer time to implement.

High effectiveness results were achieved during the 3rd cycle, in spite of a larger number of chapters covering integration of environmental considerations into sectoral policies than the reviews in previous cycles. This expansion also resulted in a larger number of recommendations.

Tables 6 and 7 present some characteristics of individual 3rd cycle reviews and the sectors most commonly covered:

Good results were achieved in spite of budgetary limitations related to environment action in the countries of the UNECE region. High relevance of recommendations played a positive role in this respect. The financially challenging recommendations required a longer period of time to be implemented.

¹¹ Biennial performance report of the Environment Subprogramme for 2016–2017, ECE/CEP/2017/8

Table 5: Expected accomplishments

<i>Biennium</i>	<i>Link</i>	<i>Expected accomplishment</i>	<i>Indicators of achievement</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
2018–2019	http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DA/M/OPEN_UNECE/02_Programme_Planning_and_reporting/SF_2018-2019_-_reissued.pdf	(d) Improved environmental performance of interested countries	Percentage of environmental performance review recommendations implemented by countries reviewed during a biennium	17.12 The subprogramme will continue to conduct EPRs, assist member States in the implementation of the recommendations from those reviews and monitor the impact of the recommendations on national policies. The subprogramme will also strengthen the capacity of member States to implement ECE guidelines and recommendations for environmental monitoring and assessment.
2016–2017	http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DA/M/OPEN_UNECE/02_Programme_Planning_and_reporting/SF_Prog17_2016-17_ECE_FINAL_Issued_HQ.pdf	(d) Improved environmental performance of interested countries	(d) Percentage of environmental performance review recommendations implemented by countries reviewed during a biennium	15. The subprogramme will continue to conduct EPRs, assisting countries in the implementation of the recommendations from their national reviews and monitoring the impact of the recommendations on policy formulation and implementation. It will also strengthen countries' capacity to provide timely and accurate environmental data, thus contributing to improved environmental monitoring and reporting. The subprogramme will further promote the use of the ECE guidelines for environmental monitoring and assessment by member States.
2014–2015	http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DA/M/OPEN_UNECE/02_Programme_Planning_and_reporting/A.67.6.prog.17_e_ECE-SF-2014-2015.pdf	(d) Improved environmental performance in countries with economies in transition	(d) Increased number of countries showing progress in environmental performance	17.14 The subprogramme will continue to conduct environmental performance reviews and assist countries to implement the recommendations of their national environmental performance reviews. Furthermore, it will monitor the impact of such recommendations on policy formulation and implementation. The subprogramme will also assist to build capacity for environmental observation and reporting, which will contribute in providing timely and accurate environmental data to improve monitoring and assessment in these countries. The ECE guidelines on the application of environmental indicators will be further promoted for use by member States for environmental monitoring and assessment.

Table 6: Main features of the third cycle EPRs and the EPRs of Mongolia and Morocco, 2013–2018

	<i>Country (in chronological order)</i>	<i>Chapters (number)</i>	<i>Recommendations (number)</i>	<i>Language version produced</i>	<i>National language</i>
Third cycle reviews	Republic of Moldova	10	41	Russian	
	Montenegro	8	32		
	Serbia	8	33		
	Georgia	14	67		
	Bulgaria	10	49		
	Belarus	14	64	Russian	
	Tajikistan	15	82	Russian	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	12	71		√
	Albania	11	58		
	Kazakhstan	13	84	Russian	
	North Macedonia	11	71		
Other reviews	Morocco	13	60	French	
	Mongolia	15	81		√

Table 7: Sectors covered by dedicated chapters in the third cycle EPRs and the EPRs of Mongolia and Morocco, 2013–2018

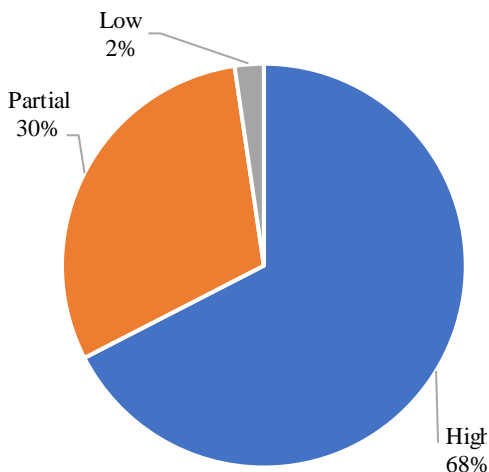
	<i>Country (chronological order)</i>	<i>Agri-culture</i>	<i>Energy</i>	<i>Forestry</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>Tourism</i>	<i>Transport</i>	<i>Disaster management</i>
Third cycle reviews	Republic of Moldova	√								
	Montenegro									
	Serbia									
	Georgia		√	√	√		√	√	√	√
	Belarus		√	√	√	√		√	√	
	Bulgaria		√							
	Tajikistan	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
	Albania		√	√			√		√	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina				√					
	North Macedonia				√					
	Kazakhstan	√	√		√		√			
Other reviews	Morocco	√	√		√		√			
	Mongolia			√	√					√
Total		4	7	7	6	2	5	2	4	3

The following interconnected challenges impacted the implementation of EPR activities in all beneficiary countries to varying degrees:

- Changing political circumstances: Changing political situation in the reviewed countries made it difficult to implement the EPR process and ensure continuity of commitments to the EPR process and implementation of its recommendations.
- Environment’s low priority in the national development agenda: Almost in all beneficiary countries environmental issues are low priority and the national environmental authorities do not have a strong position.
- National counterparts often unable to meet deadlines: This was quite common challenge in relation to the deadlines established for the completion of country specific questionnaires distributed prior to EPR review mission.
- Variations in institutional and individual capacities in countries participating in EPR: Several countries demonstrated limited capacity to effectively participate in all phases of the EPR process. National authorities in those countries did not have enough human resources to support the EPR review missions and in several cases the staff assigned to support the EPR process had limited capacity to adequately respond to the needs of EPR review teams.
- Sharing information and expertise among different stakeholders/authorities in beneficiary countries, as well as with EPR mission team: In some countries the EPR process could have been an opportunity for good inter-sectoral communication and collaboration, but neither the coordinating environmental authority nor any of the ministries/authorities from participating sectors was able to fulfil this responsibility properly. It was quite challenging for EPR review team to receive all the data/information required on time given the lack of access and even reluctance of authorities to release data even if available.
- Cultural and language differences. This challenge was less important, since it was raised only by 3 interviewed stakeholders.

EFFICIENCY

- 10) Did the EPR activities achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
- 11) Were the resources (financial and human) for EPR appropriate?
- 12) Were the EPR activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?



Note: Survey responses on Efficiency

The relatively low level of funding in relation to the expected outcomes in any of the beneficiary countries involved in the EPR Programme required careful use of funds. EPR unit was diligent in seeking out cost efficiencies. The evaluation rating for **efficiency** of the EPR process is definitely **high**. EPRs were highly efficient based on the impact of its implemented recommendations on environmental performance of the beneficiary countries. During the period 2015–2019, all EPR substantive activities were implemented within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources. The financial budget for a single EPR was between US\$150,000 to US\$250,000. The exact amount for specific EPR depends on a number of factors, such as EPR review mission cost, number of EPR report chapters, number of EPR mission members, fluctuations in currency exchange rates, supporting delegation to participate to the EPR expert Group and to the CEP. The EPR unit worked with limited resources to achieve well the expected results.

The overall EPR expenditures involved and contributions received for the period 2015–2019 are indicated in table 8. There is no direct link between annual contributions and expenditures since a review process may last between 12 months and 18 months.

Since 2017 the integration of SDGs into EPRs was achieved without any additional financial resources. Further strengthening of the incorporation of SDGs into EPRs would require bringing additional resources and expertise to both EPR unit and the review teams. If the EPR unit is strengthened, it could address in greater depth SDGs as well as sectoral integration aspects.

The regular budget resources available for the EPR Programme were covering mostly the UNECE staff costs. The EPR unit currently comprises the team leader (P4), two professionals at P3 level, a research assistant at G6 level and a programme assistant at G5 level. In addition, the OARS chief guides and supports the EPR Programme. Occasionally, limited regular budget funds were available for consultancy purposes in the period 2015–2019. This situation creates doubt concerning the adequacy of the UNECE regular budget allocations for EPRs. All other costs (e.g. travel, cost of experts on review missions, rent of venues, interpretation, translation etc.) had to be raised through extrabudgetary funding. All extra-budgetary resources were earmarked for country-specific activities. The EPRs longer-term sustainability depends heavily on extrabudgetary resources.

Table 8: Contributions and expenditures for the period 2015–2019, US\$

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Regular budget		1 738	11 953	1 104	8 001
Extrabudgetary					
Contributions		222 000	254 209	380 683	18 6161
Expenditures	355 320	223 555	307 238	310 433	226 185

Note: As of June 2019. 2015 is not completed due to the change of accounting system.

Table 9 displays the distribution of expertise by “source” for the review missions for drafting chapters. In average, for the period 2015–2019, the composition of the EPR review team was: 15 per cent were part of the EPR unit, 23.2 per cent from international organizations, 22.9 per cent in kind contribution and 38.8 per cent were consultants. Members of the EPR review team not part of the EPR unit consider that they work on a specific EPR chapter for between 1 and 2 months, depending on the availability of information and data.

Table 9: EPR expert distribution

Reviewed country	EPR	ECE*	UNEP	WHO	OECD	In kind	Consultants	Total
3rd Review								
Albania	2	1	3			3	5	14
Belarus	2	4	1			1	6	14
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	2	1			6	3	14
Bulgaria	2	1				5	4	12
Georgia	1	2	2			3	7	15
Kazakhstan	2	1	2	1	1	4	4	15
Montenegro	2	1				1	4	8
North Macedonia	2		2			3	5	12
Serbia	2	1				2	4	9
Tajikistan	2	1	1	2		2	8	16
Uzbekistan	2	2	3	1	1	3	6	18
1st Review								
Mongolia	2	2	1			4	6	15

Note: *: staff not part of the EPR unit. In kind: experts provided by countries

The EPR Programme funding is also vulnerable to the priorities of donors. This evaluation showed that it was especially challenging to raise sufficient funds for the EPRs to be conducted in South-Eastern European countries

and in particular it was difficult to raise financial resources for the EPRs in the EU member countries Bulgaria and Romania because these countries are not in the priority list for donors.

The successful fund raising from extrabudgetary sources by the EPR unit, covering the costs of EPRs during the period 2015–2019, is evidence that the donors see EPRs as an important tool for environmental governance and that the high-quality work of the EPR unit and the participating experts is delivered efficiently.

In the period 2015–2019, all EPRs activities were implemented almost according to the planned timetables. There were a few minor delays (up to a week) in deliveries of certain steps. The only more considerable delays referred to provision of environmental information/data by the reviewed countries. On a few occasions, delays of the scheduled activities were experienced during the preparatory stage. Also, the speed of the responses by the beneficiary countries to questionnaires distributed prior to review missions was often far from optimal, and in several countries, no responses to questionnaires were received.

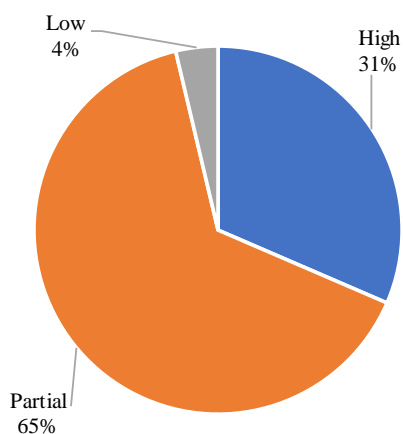
In the period 2015–2019, all required EPRs were delivered on time to those meetings of CEP for which they were planned.

In comparison to previous EPR cycles the EPR Programme improved considerably the delivery of the Russian versions of EPRs. Starting from 2015, all Russian versions were produced, consulted and published simultaneously with the English ones. Moreover, in the three Russian-speaking countries the EPR process was conducted fully in Russian language.

Meetings of CEP and the EPR Expert Groups meeting took place according to the planned schedule and at least two EPR reports were finalized each year, which was considered as optimal approach by CEP.

SUSTAINABILITY

- 13) How is the EPR stakeholders' involvement likely to continue in the beneficiary countries?
- 14) To what extent did partners and beneficiaries participate in and "own" the outcomes of the work?
- 15) Was the capacity being developed adequate to ensure that institutions/organizations will take over EPRs and sustain the benefits?



Note: Survey responses on Sustainability

for other countries.

The evaluation of EPR process in the period 2015–2019 found that, overall, the several factors were in place to sustain partially the project outcomes and for the results to be replicable. The evaluation rating for this area was “**partially sustainable**” however several stakeholders believed (UNECE staff and some members of the EPR expert group) that a propriate rating could be “highly sustainable”, at least in some countries. The rating reflects the continuing internal and external political support and interest. Moreover, regular budget resources available for the EPR programme cover the UNECE staff costs.

In the period 2015–2019 the sustainability aspects varied from country to country. In several countries, a very high ownership of the EPR was felt. For example, Belarus¹² had repeatedly referred to the EPR process in public speeches and media, other countries (Montenegro, Romania) have requested to host EPR capacity-building workshops. No similar evidence is available

¹²<https://web.unep.org/environmentassembly/documents-second-session-un-environment-assembly>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY2hEB1QQao#t=283>

<http://greenbelarus.info/articles/09-06-2016/pervyy-den-konferencii-ministrov-okruzhayushchey-sredy-v-batumi-top-10-glavnyh>

<https://www.belta.by/society/view/polozhitelnaja-otsenka-tretjego-obzora-rezultativnosti-ekologicheskoy-deyatelnosti-belarusi-pozvolit-169121-2015/>

In general, stakeholders are committed in the EPR process. The methodology itself resulted in a sound ownership. In all countries, people participating in the process wanted to be credited in the list of contributors to the EPR. Positive sign was that during the 3rd cycle of EPRs in many beneficiary countries the national stakeholders repeated proudly “I have participated in the previous EPR(s).”

In most recipient countries, institutional memory from the previous EPR cycles was present and contributed to good ownership. However, in some countries the EPR missions had to build knowledge and capacity for the EPR process from the scratch. E.g., in Georgia the national structure supporting the 3rd cycle had an ad-hoc nature and there was no formal and EPR-specific structure set up which could then ensure an adequate level of the stakeholders’ involvement to continue. Some countries experienced difficulties to effectively organize meeting schedules for international experts during the review missions and had to learn by doing. Frequent changes of personnel and organizational structures of the governmental bodies influenced negatively the degree of ownership and sustainability of the EPR results. Limited national resources for environmental activities represented another barrier in achieving more sustainability and ownership.

On a positive side, recent experience related to the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project on evidence-based environmental governance and sustainable environmental policies in support of the 2030 Agenda in South-Eastern Europe¹³ aimed at implementation of the recommendations stemming from their EPRs aligned with EPR-relevant SDGs. This new project has a potential to boost the sustainability of EPRs and to serve as evidence that the EPR stakeholders continue to be committed to implementation of the EPRs recommendations.

Environmental authorities of the recipient countries are keen to participate in EPR process. In most cases the outcomes of the work are well “owned” at the technical expert levels. However, the level of “ownership” at political and decision-making levels varies depending on current political and economic priorities.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were actively involved in all EPRs. Plenary meetings with NGOs were part of official EPR Programme and have gathered good participation: Albania (38), Belarus (16), Bosnia and Herzegovina (11), Bulgaria (4), Kazakhstan (18), Mongolia (20), North Macedonia (15), Serbia (12) and Tajikistan (7). In addition, in every country follow-up meetings of individual international experts with selected NGOs were organized. In Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, NGOs were also given the opportunity to comment on the draft EPR report, upon consent of the respective Government. In general, NGOs could play a role in the future advocacy efforts directed towards a more sustained involvement of different ministries in the EPR process and in supporting the implementation of EPR recommendations.

Until 2017, the main focus of EPR process was on analyzing and assessing the environmental performance of the beneficiary countries. Since 2017, the EPR Programme started assisting the beneficiary countries in implementation of EPR recommendations to improve the sustainability of results. Several events supporting these efforts were organized in the framework of EPR Programme (e.g. 4 peer-learning workshops in Minsk, Astana, Tbilisi and Budva)¹⁴ and UNDA Project. This approach was aimed at developing national capacities so that the national institutions would be better positioned to follow up on and to implement the EPR recommendations. In order to assist the beneficiary countries in taking over EPRs and sustain its benefits several capacity building events were organized. It would not be realistic to believe that all capacity-building needs could be fully covered by the EPR’s limited financial and human resources. Therefore, enhancing partnerships with important international players in the field of environment for implementation of EPR recommendations is crucial to achieve a long-term effect. Collaboration with UNEP-Europe based on Memorandum of Understanding proved effective during the period 2015–2019 at all stages of the EPR process. Similar, closer partnerships should be sought with WHO, UNOCHA and UN agencies country offices present in the reviewed countries (e.g. UNDP, FAO).

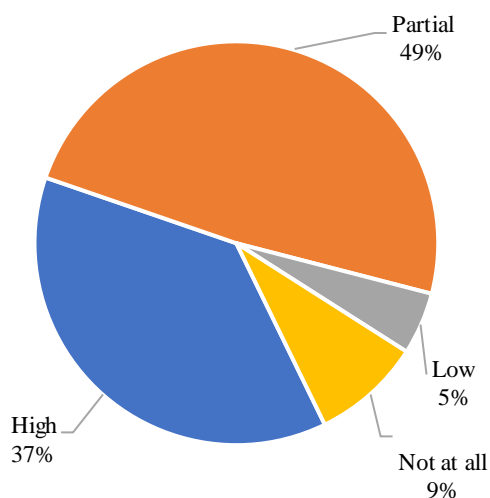
Capacity building focusing on the environmental performance can play a positive role vis-a-vis sustainability if it is a long-term process during which national ownership evolves positively from cycle to cycle. It can be fully successful only if the beneficiary countries are reviewed and supported for many years (several EPR cycles).

¹³ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/da/project-view-public/>

¹⁴ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=51891>
<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=50448>

IMPACT

- 16) Have the EPRs been used and/or results led to new policies or policy changes in the beneficiary countries / cities?
- 17) Have the EPRs been used by other international organization to substantiate their own analysis?
- 18) Is there any evidence that measures have been taken to implement recommendations following the publication of EPR reports?
- 19) Did the EPRs help to strengthen the application of gender mainstreaming principles and contribute to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups?
- 20) Were any unintended positive or negative impacts of the EPR Programme observed?
- 21) Are specific actions needed from UNECE, or its government counterparts, to address unintended negative consequences on human rights as a result of our EPR related work?



Note: Survey responses on Impact

A majority of feedbacks received during the evaluation process opted for a “partial impact” however, the voices calling for a “high impact” were also numerous.

Based on evaluation findings and inputs received from the EPR stakeholders, it was particularly challenging to assess the degree of EPRs impact on the environmental issues as well as gender mainstreaming and the situation of the most vulnerable people in the beneficiary countries. Partiality of the EPRs’ impact was felt in the majority of situations with regards to the level of strengthening of the application of gender mainstreaming principles and empowerment of women, and its contribution to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable people. This can be explained by the fact that almost all beneficiary countries attach a high priority to rapid economic and political transition while issues like gender mainstreaming and the situation of the most vulnerable groups are of secondary importance. This is also due to the fact that

EPRs per se are not the tools to promote gender equality and empowerment of women; they involve gender mainstreaming when this is relevant to specific environmental problems such as access to water, energy or land, or participation in decision-making on these issues in the reviewed countries.

EPR high impact was felt in development of new policies or policy changes in the beneficiary countries as well as with regard to EPRs replication effects in the programmes and analysis of other international organizations. Seven countries made improvements to the legislative frameworks related to environmental monitoring and assessment in 2016–2018 (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine).¹⁵

Based on discussions with experts in the course of this evaluation, outcomes related to EPRs are:

- In Bulgaria the EPR process triggered policy changes and installed a good practice in the implementation of environmental performance measures in the environmental sector but there was no evidence of similar impact on policies in other sectors like for instance energy, agriculture, forestry etc.
- Outcomes from the 3rd EPR cycle in Georgia were used as one of the policy reference tools for the development of the national environmental policy framework along with many others international strategic documents.
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the 3rd cycle of EPR was used to identify environmental challenges and this independent assessment definitely affected the process of developing a new environmental policy.

¹⁵ Biennial performance report of the Environment Subprogramme for 2016–2017, ECE/CEP/2017/8

- In Montenegro, the EPR recommendations triggered adoption of new methodology for development, implementation and reporting on the policy documents. In accordance with EPR, Montenegro ratified several international agreements and improved implementation of already ratified documents.
- In Albania, fuel policy was changed and in Mongolia, the methodology for air quality index was improved in response to EPR recommendations.
- Kazakhstan set up an institutional framework for SDGs in 2018 after the EPR Programme flagged the gap during the preparatory mission and review mission.
- EPR was able to bring policy changes to uranium tailings in Tajikistan. The country adopted a national policy that prioritized the tailings in terms of their environmental risks and urgency of rehabilitation. In general, the majority of EPR recommendations are acted upon however their meaningful reflection in new policies and policy changes would take longer time. All in all, EPR process provided environmental authorities as well as the Government as such with a lever facilitating the changes in policies.

In general, the majority of EPR recommendations are acted upon. However, their meaningful reflection in new policies and policy changes takes more time. All in all, the EPR process provided environmental authorities as well as the Government as such with a lever facilitating the changes in policies.

Some of the interviewed stakeholders felt that several international organizations, in particular those represented in the reviewed countries, were not sufficiently aware of the EPRs. This situation could be resolved by a better communication and dissemination strategy supported by relevant budget. However, there were exceptions to this lack of awareness and dissemination.

- One of them was the approach by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture in Georgia which invited the international organizations to use the results of the 3rd EPR cycle as a policy source and a good reference. The European Commission country delegations often used EPRs to complement environmental management country profiles of countries participating in the accession process for new European Commission membership applicants. European Environment Agency (EEA) used the results of some EPRs in its publication “Europe’s Environment”¹⁶. UNEP-UNECE publication “Global Environment Outlook”¹⁷ made also references to EPR Programme.
- In Mongolia and EPRs recommendations provided inputs for UNEP and UNCCD assessment activities. Positive feedback was received from several donors (Germany, Switzerland, Portugal) that they used EPRs to prioritize their donor activities and interventions in foreign affairs domain. Useful linkages between EPR Programme and OECD “Green Action Program” were also noted. Some EPR reports were used by international organizations in the preparation of new country-based projects (UNEP in Uzbekistan).

Available evidence showed that the measures were taken to implement recommendations following the publication of EPR reports. For example, Mongolia reported during the EPR report launch event that they had already changed the air quality index. One week after the launch of EPR of Kazakhstan, the Government announced the re-establishment of a ministry responsible for the environment, one of the key EPR recommendations. Implementation rate concerning the EPRs’ recommendation during the 3rd cycle was quite high (68,81 per cent). More importantly, some recommendations were implemented even prior to the publication of EPR report. On many occasions, beneficiary countries reported during the EPR report launch event that some recommendations were already implemented. Some beneficiary countries prepared road maps to facilitate the work of responsible institutions in the implementation of EPR recommendations. It is important that EPR unit carefully monitors the status of implementation and that the CEP continues to receive information from the reviewed countries on implementation of their EPR recommendations.

For increasing the impact of EPRs for the achievements and monitoring of the SDGs the EPR Expert Group, with support from the EPR unit prepared a document¹⁸ providing the possible options for incorporating EPR-relevant SDGs s in the reviews, which was endorsed by the CEP.

¹⁶ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/europes-environment-aoa>

¹⁷ http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7735/unep_geo_regional_assessments_europe_16-07513_hires.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

¹⁸ ECE/CEP/2017/11

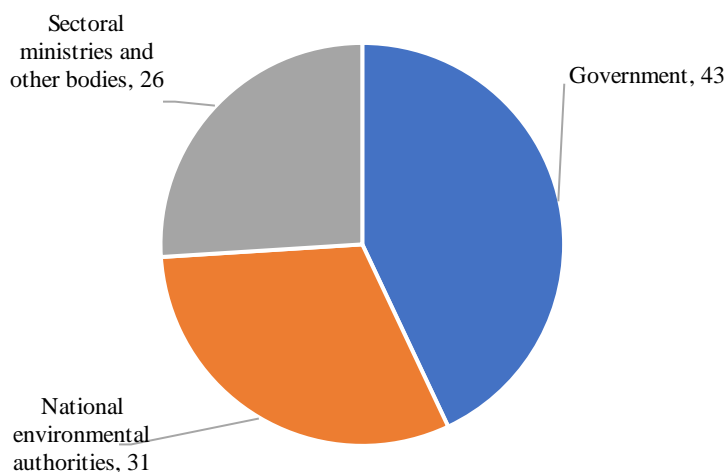
In 2017 the EPR Programme began assisting reviewed countries in the implementation of recommendations from the EPRs. To this end two technical cooperation workshops were organized in 2017, in Astana on energy and environment and in Tbilisi on transport and environment, both including a peer-learning component. A peer-learning workshop on policies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was held in Minsk in 2018. Another peer-learning workshop was organized in Budva in 2019 with donor support to the EPR Programme.

Since 2018, the EPR Programme has been implementing a project funded by United Nations Development Account in five countries, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the North Macedonia, to assist them to implement some of their EPR recommendations related to SDGs.

These ongoing initiatives are expected to play a positive role in strengthening the impact of the EPR Programme.

The impact of EPRs was enhanced by targeting with the relevant recommendations not only the national environmental authorities, but also sectoral ministries and the Government in general. The evidence of this approach is shown in figure 1:

Figure 1: Recipients of recommendations of third cycle EPRs and the EPR of Mongolia and Morocco, 2013–2018, percentage



Note: Percentages are averages. The third review of Bosnia and Herzegovina was not considered because the categories used in the figure do not closely correspond to the institutional arrangements in the country.

Gender mainstreaming, empowerment of women and the most vulnerable groups perspective was addressed in the EPRs of those countries, where it was relevant and meaningful within the scope of EPR (Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan). EPRs directly encouraged gender mainstreaming policies when they provided recommendations on gender and environmental issues; however, this was not done in all EPRs. There is room for improvement in the future. On a positive side, EPRs raised awareness of the importance of gender mainstreaming into environmental issues in the countries reviewed, especially in the countries facing unequal access opportunity of men and women to water, energy and land resources. Some EPRs strengthened awareness about the importance of the gender-responsive environmental risk management. EPRs also incorporated gender aspects in the recommendations. Two examples from the 3rd EPR of Tajikistan can be provided: the Recommendation 15.3: “The Committee on Emergency Situations and Civil Defense should strengthen its approach to risk management by: (c) Collecting gender-disaggregated data”; and the Recommendation 15.4: “The Government should build on the work and experiences of other countries on risk management by participating in the work of the Search and Rescue Advisory Group and by increasing the number of women in search and rescue work”.

A significant contribution to empowerment of women was provided also during the peer-learning workshops. The information concerning the participation of women and men in these workshops is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Participation of men and women in the peer-learning workshops

<i>Focus</i>	<i>Venue of the conference/workshop</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Total participants/ Female participants</i>
“Policies for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: exchange of best practices on the basis of UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews”	Minsk, Belarus	21–22 Nov. 2018	35/21
Strengthening national capacity of Central Asia and Caucasus countries in transitioning to sustainable energy policy and practices based on the recommendations of the Environmental Performance Review	Astana, Kazakhstan	29–30 Nov. 2017	37/16
Transitioning to sustainable transport policy and practices based on the recommendations of the Environmental Performance Reviews	Tbilisi, Georgia	14 December 2017	11/6

In several countries the EPR Programme contributed partially to changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups through mainstreaming these considerations during the analysis of current environmental conditions and in the EPRs’ recommendation sections (see examples in Table 4). This was observed in relation to children, women, elderly, low income groups of population, informal waste collectors and rural population. EPRs stimulated new approaches that resulted in changes of the situation of the most vulnerable groups through improved policies on environmental health, water supply and sanitation, energy services, waste management and others. Contribution to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups is hard to measure. However, it can be said that by addressing environmental pollution and related problems, which tend to disproportionately affect disadvantaged groups, the EPR contributed indirectly to improving the situation of the most vulnerable groups.

Impact of the EPR Programme on boosting the green economy and actual implementation of SDGs was during the evaluated period taking just initial roots.

In the period 2015–2019, the interviewed stakeholders did not observe any unintended negative impacts of EPR process. Opinion of the interviewees was triangulated during the evaluation process by reviewing key EPR documents related to the period 2015–2019.

According to discussions between the evaluator and a few consultees, there were no unintended impacts (positive or negative) of the EPR Programme at all. However, majority of consultees was convinced that there were several positive unintended impacts of the EPR Programme observed, as follows:

- EPRs opened the doors for new project initiatives in the beneficiary countries to facilitate achievements of the SDGs
- Independent international evaluation of the environmental performance meets with a better acceptance than a national one from the point of view of both, national and international stakeholders
- The EPR Programme facilitated creation of new partnerships focusing on environmental performance
- The EPR Programme raised awareness about the importance of the environmental performance and its interconnectedness with green economy and SDGs
- The EPR Programme created, on some occasions, positive spin-offs for future cooperation of environmental ministries with international organizations (e.g. for UNEP in Uzbekistan)

EPRs have always paid significant attention to procedural environmental rights such as access to information, public participation and access to justice on environmental matters, have provided recommendations to the countries with regard to these rights and, since 2017, have included the analyses of the relevant aspects of SDG 16. EPRs have also been strong in raising attention to and providing recommendations about environmental human rights defenders (Belarus, Mongolia, Kazakhstan). In some EPRs (e.g. Mongolia, Kazakhstan), the reports

produced by the special rapporteurs (Special Rapporteur on human rights and environment, Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes) were referred to and used to substantiate the conclusions. However, EPRs have not deliberated on the human rights and environment situations in the countries reviewed. The main reason is that this was never requested by the UNECE countries. Another reason might be that there are still many questions about this relationship which remain unresolved, even though in recent years, the recognition of the links between human rights and the environment has greatly increased, especially when in 2012 the Human Rights Council decided to establish a mandate on human rights and environment.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

CONCLUSIONS:

1. EPRs played an important catalytic and advisory role in addressing the specific needs and priorities of beneficiary countries in mainstreaming environmental considerations into sectoral policies.
2. EPRs are in line with UNECE mandate and UNECE Subprogramme I “Environment” objectives, in full consistency with global and regional priorities.
3. EPR recommendations addressed gender aspects and special needs of vulnerable groups when these issues were identified as a matter of concern for the countries reviewed.
4. EPRs completed in the period 2015–2019 were successful in achieving expected accomplishments. Related activities achieved their objectives within the anticipated budget and according to the planned timeframes, thanks to the EPR unit’s diligent approach in seeking out cost and performance efficiencies, choosing the right partners in the beneficiary countries and among international experts.
5. The principal challenges or obstacles to achieving the objectives of the EPR activities, which were faced in some beneficiary countries, were: changing political directions, low profile attached to environmental agenda, limited institutional and individual capacities, and information sharing barriers.
6. EPRs have integrated green economy aspects and the SDGs (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17) in line with the mandates provided by the Astana (2011) and Batumi (2016) Environment for Europe Ministerial Conferences.
7. The overall sustainability and ownership of the EPRs in the reviewed countries was partial during the period 2015–2019. The EPR unit has limited capacity for accompanying countries in follow-up and implementation of recommendations. Nonetheless, sustained efforts were put in place by the reviewed countries to ensure a sound level of implementation of recommendations following the publication of EPR reports. In recent years, the EPR unit started to provide assistance to the reviewed countries in implementation of recommendations.
8. The impact of EPRs during the period 2015–2019 was judged by the interviewees as partial. Nevertheless, in many countries positive results leading to new policies or policy changes in the beneficiary countries were achieved. Equally, the replication effects in the programmes and analysis of other international organizations were very good.
9. Content wise, a challenging task during the period 2015–2019 was to devote adequate attention in the EPRs to environmental governance and financing in a green economy context and to specific green economy initiatives.
10. Considering the commitment taken by the UN member States to implement SDG 16, which applies across the 2030 Agenda, the reviewed countries could benefit significantly if the EPR Programme would also address the relationship between human rights and the environment to a greater extent.
11. Technical cooperation workshops held in the period 2017–2019 strengthened the beneficiary countries capacities in the implementation of the EPR recommendations. Similar positive impact is expected from a recently initiated capacity building project funded from the United Nations Development Account.
12. During the period 2015–2019 there were several unintended positive and no unintended negative impacts of the EPR Programme observed. All but one 3rd cycle reviews included the evaluation of the recommendations in the second cycle reviews, with clear indication of implemented, not implemented and partially implemented recommendations.
13. Considering increased calls to align EPRs with SDGs and green economy, additional expertise might be needed for the future EPR activities, requiring more funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The EPR unit should continue to align the future EPRs with the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries, by integrating sectors, such as agriculture, energy and transport.
2. The EPR unit should increase the role of EPRs in supporting the achievement and monitoring of EPR-relevant SDGs.
3. The EPR unit should seek advice from the Expert Group on EPRs on the need and modalities for deeper coverage of human rights and environment in EPRs in future EPRs.
4. UNECE should extend cooperation with other UN entities and other international organizations for organization of the future EPRs since the EPR Programme covers several fields that are beyond the expertise of UNECE, such as industry, health, agriculture, waste management and environmental risk management. This should include WHO, UNEP, UNIDO.
5. Future EPRs need to continue supporting the beneficiary countries in developing/refining legal and policy framework for green economy together with putting in place specific green economy initiative and financing.
6. UNECE in collaboration with CEP, EPR Expert Group, donors and relevant UN and other international organizations should increase the awareness and readiness of reviewed countries to provide all necessary data and information facilitating a smooth incorporation of relevant SDGs into the reviews.

V. Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Evaluation of Environmental Performance Review

I. Purpose

The purpose of the 2019 evaluation is to analyze the current arrangements for carrying out environmental performance reviews (EPR). This evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the EPR in supporting member States to reconcile their environmental and economic targets and in meeting their international environmental commitments. The results of the evaluation are expected to contribute to a long-term vision for the reviews in order to further strengthen the impact of the EPR programme. The results of the evaluation will be used to improve the EPR process and its visibility with donors and the civil society of the country under the review. The outcomes of the evaluation can also be used to better coordinate the EPR Unit's work with the Expert Group on EPRs and the Committee on Environment Policy (CEP).

II. Scope

The evaluation will involve an assessment of the EPR process based on the reviews carried out in 2016–2018. Experts provided lately by international organizations, i.e. UNEP and WHO, will also provide inputs to the evaluation. UNDP offices, where the EPRs were carried out during this period, as major partners for substantive and logistics matters will be also involved. The UNECE staff of the transport and energy division will be also involved, since they participated to various reviews.

The universally recognized values and principles of human rights and gender equality need to be integrated at all stages of an evaluation, in compliance with the United Nations Evaluation Group's revised gender-related norms and standards. Therefore, the evaluation will assess how gender considerations were included in the process and it would make recommendations on how gender can be better included in the process.

All relevant information, brochures, progress reports, will be made available.

III. Background

An EPR is an external assessment of the progress a country has made in reconciling its environmental and economic targets and in meeting its international environmental commitments. EPRs have their genesis in the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In 1991, the Environment Ministers of OECD launched a programme for environmental performance review to help OECD Member countries improve their individual and collective performances in environmental management.

After the Dobris Assessment had drawn a first overall picture of the state of the environment in Europe in 1993, the Environment Ministers decided that countries would be reviewed individually in much more detail. The aim was to examine not only these countries' environmental conditions, but also the strategies, policies and tools that they used to manage the environment.

At the second Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe", held in Luzern, Switzerland, in April 1993, the Ministers decided that the Environmental Performance Review Programme would be gradually extended to the whole region of Europe and mandated UNECE to carry out this extended programme. In 1996, at its third session, the Committee on Environmental Policy decided to make the Environmental Performance Review Programme a part of the regular programme of the ECE.

Since 1996, Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries have been reviewed by UNECE, in addition to a few countries that were reviewed in cooperation with OECD (Poland (1995), Bulgaria (1996), Belarus (1997) and the Russian Federation (1999)).

At the seventh Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe", held in Astana, Kazakhstan, in September 2011, the Ministers decided that building upon the success of the UNECE EPR Programme, UNECE has to conduct its third cycle of EPRs, which may include environmental governance and financing in a green

economy context, countries' cooperation with the international community and environmental mainstreaming in priority sectors.

At the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, held in Batumi, Georgia, environmental ministers acknowledged the important contribution of the UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme over the past 20 years as an effective and practical policy tool, and highlighted the role it can play in supporting the achievement and monitoring of SDGs in the pan-European region. Since 2017, EPRs include the review of relevant goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Moreover, the efficiency and effectiveness of the EPR methodology have attracted the attention of countries outside of the ECE region, leading to requests for a transfer of know-how from ECE to other UN regional commissions. Morocco was reviewed by ECE in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa and Mongolia – in cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific.

The EPRs target decision- and policy-makers but are also directed to a wider audience (general public, NGOs, academia, business and government at different levels) in the country under review as well as in other countries interested to learn from the EPR experience. In addition, EPRs are of interest to donors wishing to know how best to direct their support of countries with economies in transition. The EPR process comprises the following main steps:

- (1) Preparation, including a preparatory mission to agree with the country on its EPR structure, development of the terms of reference (ToR) assembly of a review team of experts.
- (2) Review Mission, by an expert team that travels to the country under review and meets with representatives of the government at national and local levels, NGOs, academia, the private sector the international community.
- (3) Expert Review, by the ECE Expert Group on EPRs.
- (4) Peer Review, the member States in the Committee on Environment Policy (CEP). The peer review concludes with the adoption the EPR recommendations. The reviewed country commits to implementing the adopted recommendations.
- (5) Publication of the report by the ECE secretariat.
- (6) Launch organized to present the EPR findings to the governmental authorities, international community, NGOs and other stakeholders.

The main objectives of the ECE EPR Programme are:

- (1) To assist countries to improve their management of the environment and associated environmental performance by making concrete recommendations for better policy design and implementation;
- (2) To promote the exchange of information among countries about policies and experiences;
- (3) To help integrating environmental policies into sector-specific economic policies, such as agricultural, energy, transport and health policies;
- (4) To promote greater accountability to the public;
- (5) To strengthen cooperation with the international community; and
- (6) To contribute to the achievement and monitoring of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As an integral part of the study, recommendations on ways to improve areas of concern are extended to the government of the reviewed country. Since 2017, third-cycle EPRs include the review of relevant SDGs and their targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

EPRs are carried out by the EPR Unit in the Operational Activities and Review Section (OARS) of the ECE Environment Division. The EPR Unit works with experts in other ECE divisions and other international organizations, as well as with member States.

In 2012, a self-evaluation was carried out. It evaluated the process of carrying out the UNECE EPR Programme. The main purpose of the evaluation was to examine the strengths and gaps to be filled in by the programme. The objective was to identify possible measures that could be taken to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of implementing the programme. This evaluation was a tool for internal use by the UNECE EPR secretariat. It was based on the experiences made in the course of implementing seven country reviews during the period 2009–2011. The evaluation involved views and comments collected through specific questionnaires

and/or interviews from key stakeholders in the EPR review process. However, the quality and impact of EPR was outside the scope of this evaluation report.

IV. Issues

The evaluation will answer the following questions:

Relevance

1. How relevant were the activities to the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries/cities in sectoral integration, such as in climate change, energy, industry, transport and in media management, i.e. water, air, waste, biodiversity?
2. To what extent were the activities related to the UNECE mandate as expressed in the programme of work?
3. To what extent were the activities consistent with global and regional priorities and the programme of work of the UN Regional Commissions?
4. How relevant are the EPR activities with regards to gender equality and empowerment of women?
5. Does the programme incorporate vulnerable groups perspective in the design of the recommendations?
6. To what extent were the activities intervention relevant for meeting the objective of the UNECE Subprogramme 1 “Environment” and beyond?
7. How relevant is the collaboration with other entities in the UN system and other international organisations?

Effectiveness

8. To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the activities achieved?
9. What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the activities objective and expected accomplishments?

Efficiency

10. Did the activities achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
11. Were the resources (financial and human) appropriate?
12. Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?

Sustainability

13. How is the stakeholders’ involvement likely to continue in the beneficiary countries?

Impact

14. Have the EPRs been used and/or results led to new policies or policy changes in the beneficiary countries / cities?
15. Have the EPRs been used by other international organization to substantiate their own analysis?
16. Is there any evidence that measures have been taken to implement recommendations following the publication of EPR reports?
17. Have the EPRs help to strengthen the application of gender mainstreaming principles and contribute to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups?
18. Were any unintended positive or negative impacts of the programme observed?
19. Are specific actions needed from UNECE, or its government counterparts, to address unintended negative consequences of human rights as a result of our work?

Evaluation criteria and questions are designed in a way that ensures Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women data will be collected.

V. Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted on the basis of:

1. A desk review of all the relevant documents obtained from EPR activities files including:
 - Programmes and materials (presentations, background documents) developed for review missions, and workshops and related list of participants;
 - Project documents from the first and second cycles
 - Reports of workshops;

- 2012 Self-evaluation.

2. An electronic questionnaire will be developed by the consultant to assess the views of EPR stakeholders, both experts, national coordinators, EPR Expert Group, members of the Committee on Environment Policy and staff from UNECE and other international organizations involved in the process. Other stakeholders might be also be invited to answer the questionnaire in order to assess the perception of EPRs from outsiders and experts. Potential names to be added to the list of interviewees would be provided by the UNECE project manager. The results of the survey will be disaggregated by gender.

3. This questionnaire will be followed by selected interviews (methodology to be determined by the evaluator in consultation with UNECE). The interviews will take place via phone and Skype, or face-to-face when possible.

The report will summarize the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. An executive summary (max. 2 pages) will summarize the methodology of the evaluation, key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

All material needed for the evaluation, will be provided to the consultant: EPR activities documents and reports, meeting reports and publications, list of involved experts that can be interviewed by telephone. UNECE will provide support and further explanation to the evaluator as needed.

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy. A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data techniques are selected. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis.

VI. Evaluation Schedule

<i>Time schedule</i>	<i>Tasks</i>
15 March 2019	Terms of Reference finalized, and evaluator selected
1 April 2019	Desk review of all documents provided by UNECE to the evaluator
12 April 2019	Delivery of inception report including design of survey
19 April 2019	Feedback on inception report by the project manager
29 April 2019	Launch of data gathering
27 May 2019	Analysis of collected information
10 June 2019	Draft report sent to Programme Manager
28 June 2019	Comments back to the evaluator after review by the project manager and the PMU
19 July 2019	Final report

VII. Resources

An independent consultant will be engaged for a period of 30 days to conduct the evaluation, within a budget of US\$10,000. The evaluator will be managed by the OARS. Ms. Angela Sochirca and Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia, Project managers, will manage the evaluation in consultation with the P-4 Mr. Antoine Nunes and the OARS Section Chief, Mr. Nicholas Bonvoisin. The Programme Management Unit (PMU) will provide guidance to the Project Manager and evaluator as needed on the evaluation design, methodology and quality assurance of the final draft report.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The EPR Unit will review the results of the evaluation and report the results to the Committee on Environmental Policy. The results will be used in determining whether revision of the EPR process may be necessary. If so, the results of the self-evaluation will be reflected in a review of the EPR process for subsequent consideration by the CEP.

IX. Criteria for Evaluators

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in relevant disciplines
- Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, project management, social statistics, advanced statistical research and analysis.
- Demonstrated relevant professional experience in design, management and conduct of evaluation processes with multiple stakeholders, survey design and implementation, and project planning, monitoring and management.
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations.
- Fluent in written and spoken English. Knowledge of another language (for example Russian) may be desirable depending on the countries included in the project (for the purpose of being able to seek inputs from national authorities in their native tongue).

Evaluators should declare any conflict of interest to ECE before embarking on an evaluation project, or at any point where such conflict occurs.

Annex 2: List of reviewed documents

1. Environmental Performance Reviews, Albania, Third Review, 2017, UNECE
2. Environmental Performance Reviews, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Third Review, 2017, UNECE
3. Environmental Performance Reviews, Albania, Third Review-Highlights, 2018, UNECE
4. Environmental Performance Reviews, Belarus, Third Review-Highlights, 2016, UNECE
5. Environmental Performance Reviews, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Third Review-Highlights, 2018, UNECE
6. Environmental Performance Reviews, Bulgaria, Third Review-Highlights, 2017, UNECE
7. Environmental Performance Reviews, Georgia, Third Review-Highlights, 2016, UNECE
8. Environmental Performance Reviews, Kazakhstan, Third Review-Highlights, 2019, UNECE
9. Environmental Performance Reviews, Mongolia, Third Review-Highlights, 2018, UNECE
10. Environmental Performance Reviews, Serbia, Third Review-Highlights, 2015, UNECE
11. Environmental Performance Reviews, Tajikistan, Third Review-Highlights, 2017, UNECE
12. Environmental Performance Reviews, Albania, Third Review Synopsis, 2018, UNECE
13. Environmental Performance Reviews, Belarus, Third Review Synopsis, 2016, UNECE
14. Environmental Performance Reviews, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Third Review Synopsis, 2018, UNECE
15. Environmental Performance Reviews, Bulgaria, Third Review Synopsis, 2017, UNECE
16. Environmental Performance Reviews, Georgia, Third Review Synopsis, 2016, UNECE
17. Environmental Performance Reviews, Kazakhstan, Third Review Synopsis, 2019, UNECE
18. Environmental Performance Reviews, Mongolia, Third Review Synopsis, 2018, UNECE
19. Environmental Performance Reviews, Serbia, Third Review Synopsis, 2015, UNECE
20. Environmental Performance Reviews, Tajikistan, Third Review Synopsis, 2017, UNECE
21. Self-evaluation report – Assessment of procedural steps for the preparation and conducting of the environmental performance reviews, 2012, UNECE
22. Environmental Performance Reviews: progress made in conducting the third cycle, ECE/CEP/2019/8
23. Role of Environmental Performance Reviews in supporting the achievements and monitoring of SDGs in the pan-European region, UNECE, 2016
24. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Albania
25. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Belarus
26. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Bosnia and Herzegovina
27. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Bulgaria
28. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Georgia

29. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Kazakhstan
30. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Mongolia
31. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Montenegro
32. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Serbia
33. Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Tajikistan
34. UNECE Evaluation Policy, UNECE, 2014
35. UNECE Evaluation Guide, UNECE, 2014
36. 20 years of Environmental Performance Reviews: Impacts, lessons learned and potential to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals, ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/5
37. Programme of work of the Environment subprogramme for the biennium 2014–2015, ECE/CEP/2013/3
38. Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016–2017, Programme 17-Economic development in Europe, A/69/6
39. Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018–2019, Programme 17-Economic development in Europe, A/71/6
40. Report of the committee on Environmental Policy on its twenty-second session, 2017, ECE/CEP/2017/2
41. Manual for EPR international experts, CEP/2001/5, Annex IV
42. Biennial performance report of the Environment Subprogramme for 2016–2017, ECE/CEP/2017/8
43. Draft proposed strategic framework of the Environment Subprogramme for 2020–2021, ECE/CEP/2017/10
44. Programme of work of the Environment subprogramme for the biennium 2018–2019, ECE/CEP/2017/7
45. Reform of the UN planning and budgeting process, UNECE, CEP, 2019
46. Report of the Eight Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, 2016, ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/2/Add.1
47. Report of the Eight Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, 2016, ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/2/Add.2

Annex 3: Electronic Questionnaire

External evaluation to assess the environmental performance reviews (EPR) process based on the national reviews carried out in 2015–2018 by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Prepared, in cooperation with UNECE EPR Unit, by Dusan ZUPKA, UNECE independent consultant and evaluator

Note to the respondents:

The data collected with from the responses to this questionnaire will be used to analyze and assess the entire EPR process based on reviews undertaken in 2015–2018 period and coordinated by the UNECE, Geneva. The evaluation is commissioned by the UNECE EPR secretariat in order to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the current arrangements carrying out an EPR. The analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations based on information collected through this questionnaire will be presented in an external evaluation report. This evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the EPR in supporting member States to reconcile their environmental and economic targets and in meeting their international environmental commitments. The results of the evaluation are expected to contribute to a long-term vision for the reviews in order to further strengthen the impact of the EPR Programme. The results of the evaluation will be used to improve the EPR process and its visibility with donors and the civil society of the county under the review. The outcomes of the evaluation can also be used to better coordinate the EPR Unit’s work with the Expert Group on EPRs and the Committee on Environment Policy (CEP).

The list of respondents to the questionnaire will be given in the Annex to the evaluation report, but the information provided will be treated as confidential.

Personal data and contact details of the respondent:

Family name:

First name:

Full name of institution where you work:

Your present position:

Your e-mail:

Your SKYPE address:

Your telephone:

Relevance

1. How relevant were the EPR activities to the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries/cities in sectoral integration, such as in climate change, energy, industry, transport and in media management, i.e. water, air, waste, biodiversity?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....

.....

.....

2. To what extent were the EPR activities related to the UNECE mandate as expressed in the programme of work?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not consistent at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

3. To what extent were the EPR activities consistent with global and regional priorities and the programme of work of the UN Regional Commissions?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

4. How relevant were the EPR activities with regards to gender equality and empowerment of women?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

5. Did the EPR Programme incorporate vulnerable groups perspective in the design of the recommendations?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

6. To what extent were the EPR activities' intervention relevant for meeting the objective of the UNECE Subprogramme 1 "Environment" and beyond?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

7. How relevant was the collaboration with other entities in the UN system and other international organizations?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

Effectiveness

8. To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the EPR activities achieved?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

9. What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the EPR activities objective and expected accomplishments?

EXPLAIN INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

Efficiency

10. Did the EPR activities achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

11. Were the resources (financial and human) for EPR appropriate?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

12. Were the EPR activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

Sustainability

13. How is the EPR stakeholders' involvement likely to continue in the beneficiary countries?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....
.....

14. To what extent did partners and beneficiaries participate in and “own” the outcomes of the work?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOICE IN WRITING.....
.....
.....
15. Was the capacity being developed adequate to ensure that institutions/organizations will take over EPRs and sustain the benefits?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOICE IN WRITING.....
.....
.....
- Impact**
16. Have the EPRs been used and/or results led to new policies or policy changes in the beneficiary countries / cities?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOICE IN WRITING.....
.....
.....
17. Have the EPRs been used by other international organization to substantiate their own analysis?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOICE IN WRITING.....
.....
.....
18. Is there any evidence that measures have been taken to implement recommendations following the publication of EPR reports?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOICE IN WRITING.....
.....
.....
19. Did the EPRs help to strengthen the application of gender mainstreaming principles and contribute to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....

20. Were any unintended positive or negative impacts of the EPR Programme observed?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE INWRITING.....

.....
.....

21. Are specific actions needed from UNECE, or its government counterparts, to address unintended negative consequences on human rights as a result of our EPR related work?

EXPLAIN INWRITING.....

.....
.....

Annex 4: List of interviewees

Ms. Lasha Akhalaia
Mr. Viktor Badaker
Mr. Nicholas Bonvoisin
Mr. Matthew Billot
Mr. Cornelis Braams
Mr. Leilei Cheng
Ms. Irina Davis
Mr. Frank George
Ms. Vanya Grigorova
Mr. Andras Guti
Mr. Hans-Joachim Hermann
Ms. Olivera Kujundzic
Mr. Harry Liiv
Mr. Tomas Marques
Mr. Antoine Nunes
Ms. Marika Palosaari
Ms. Kaja Peterson
Ms. Sylvia Rangelova
Ms. Oksana Rott
Ms. Gordana Ruklic
Mr. Pedro Serra
Ms. Angela Sochirca
Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia
Mr. Xavier Tschoumi Canosa
Mr. Andre Peeters Weem
Ms. Irina Zastenskaya

Annex 5: Main phases of an Environmental Performance Review Process

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Main activities</i>	<i>Main actors</i>	<i>Duration (average)</i>
1. Preparations	Nomination of national coordinator	Government	3 – 4 months
	Preparatory mission Implementation plan	ECE EPR unit, Government.	
	Nomination of national focal points	ECE EPR unit	
	Establishment of EPR review team	ECE EPR unit	
	Collection of information and data	Government; ECE EPR unit; EPR review team.	
2. Review mission	Planning of meetings with local experts during the review mission	EPR review team	10–12 days
	Plenary meeting	EPR review team; national experts	
	Plenary meetings with NGOs and international organizations		
	Individual meetings (Consultation with national experts)		
	Site visits		
3. Preparation of draft report	Teamwork and coordination		4-6 months
	Preparations of draft chapters	EPR review team	
	Consolidation; checking; restructuring	ECE EPR unit; EPR review team	
	Editing (English)	ECE EPR unit	
4. Expert review / Peer review	Submission of draft for comments to national authorities of reviewed country	Government experts	Some 4 weeks before the meeting
	Submission of draft for preparation of review	ECE EPR unit	
	Expert review meeting	ECE EGEP; Government;	
	Peer review meeting	CEP, ECE EPR unit	
5. Publication and dissemination	Finalization of report		5-8 months
	Translation (Russian/national language)		
	Printing		
	Posting of report on ECE web-site	ECE EPR unit	
6. Launching of publication	Distribution of printed copies	ECE; UNOG; UNHQ; Government.	6-12 months
	Launching of the EPR report in the reviewed country	Government; ECE EPR unit	
Total time			19 - 30 months

**Annex 6: Environmental Performance Review Programme
Implementation plan of the 3rd EPR of Belarus**

(as of 10 January 2015)

<i>Step</i>	<i>Related task</i>	<i>Implemented by</i>	<i>Time schedule</i>
Pre-mission (2 days)	Organization of meetings	ECE Secretariat and Belarus	19–20 January 2015
Information gathering	Transmission of paper and electronic-based documentation, background information on selected EPR issues to the ECE secretariat	Belarus	January–March 2015
International expert team setting		ECE Secretariat	31 January 2015
National focal points appointed	List of national focal points responsible for each chapter	Belarus	31 January 2015
Questions and requests for interviews sent to national focal points	A list of questions and requests for interviews and field visits for all chapters prepared by international experts and sent through ECE secretariat to national focal points	International Experts	13 February 2015
Answers to the questions by Belarus	Answers sent back by the national focal points	Belarus	6 March 2015
Annexes	Annexes I (implementation of recommendations of previous EPR), II (international agreements) and III (environmental indicators) sent to ECE secretariat	Belarus	6 March 2015
Schedule of meetings per expert	Schedule based on questionnaires and requests for interviews and field visits	Belarus	10 March 2015
Mission (11 days)	Individual interviews, group meetings, field visits and other activities by experts	EPR review team and Belarus	16–26 March 2015
Report drafting	Submission of chapters by EPR international experts to the ECE secretariat	International Experts	24 April 2015
Compilation and finalization of the report	Review by ECE secretariat	ECE Secretariat	May–June 2015
Editing	Editing of English version of the draft report	ECE Secretariat	15 June – 31 July 2015
Translation	Translation of the draft chapters into Russian	ECE Secretariat	1–31 August 2015
Submission of the draft report to Belarus and Expert Group on EPR	The draft report is submitted for comments to Belarus Team before the Peer review	ECE Secretariat	11 September 2015
Feedback from Belarus	Response from Belarus experts expected before the Expert Group meeting	Belarus	6 October 2015
Expert Group on EPR meeting (in Geneva)	Discussion of the EPR report, conclusions and recommendations	ECE Secretariat Expert Group on EPR; Belarus delegation	12–13 (pm) October 2015
Peer Review Meeting (in Geneva)	Presentation of the review at the CEP session and adoption of the recommendations	Committee on Environmental	27–30 October 2015

External independent evaluation of EPR process in the period 2015–2019

<i>Step</i>	<i>Related task</i>	<i>Implemented by</i>	<i>Time schedule</i>
		Policy; Belarus high-level representative	
EPR publication	Publication prepared in English and Russian. Posting on the UNECE website	ECE Secretariat	Spring 2016
Launch event	Press briefing in Geneva and possible launch in Minsk	ECE Secretariat and Belarus	Spring 2016

Annex 7: SDGs relevant to EPRs

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental development	Human settlements and environment	Land degradation and environment	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management	Trade and environment
1																									
1.1	X																								
1.2	X																								
1.4			X												X										
1.5			X			X																	X		
1.a			X																						
1.b	X																								
2.																									
2.1												X							X						
2.2												X													
2.3												X													
2.4												X													
2.5											X	X		X											
2.a			X									X													
2.b			X									X													
3																									

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and human settlements	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
3.1																			X					
3.2																			X					
3.3																			X					
3.4																			X					
3.5																			X					
3.6																		X	X					
3.7																			X					
3.8																			X					
3.9							X	X	X										X					
3.a				X															X					
3.b																			X					
3.c																			X					
3.d																			X					
4.																								
4.1				X																X				
4.2				X																X				
4.3	X			X																X				
4.4				X																X				

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and development	Human settlements and environment	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
4.5	X				X															X					
4.6	X				X															X					
4.7					X															X					
4.a					X															X					
4.b					X															X					
4.c					X															X					
5																									
5.1	X																								
5.2	X																								
5.3	X																								
5.4				X																					
5.5	X																								
5.6																			X						
5.a	X	X		X							X				X										
5.b	X																								
5.c	X	X																							
6																									
6.1	X							X											X		X				

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and development	Human settlements and environment	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
6.2	X						X												X		X				
6.3							X																		
6.4	X						X				X	X	X	X			X	X				X			
6.5					X		X																		
6.6							X			X			X												
6.a					X		X																		
6.b				X			X																		
7.																									
7.1												X													
7.2												X													
7.3												X													
7.a				X								X													
7.b												X													
8.																									
8.1	X		X																						
8.2			X								X	X	X	X				X							
8.3			X																						
8.4			X																						

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework work	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments for greening the economy	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and human settlements	Development and environment	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
8.5	X		X																						
8.6	X																								
8.7	X																								
8.8	X																						X		
8.9		X															X								
8.10			X																						
8.a			X																						
9.																									
9.1														X			X								
9.2														X											
9.3			X																						
9.4														X											
9.5														X											
9.b														X						X					
9.c				X																					
10																									
10.1	X																								
10.2	X																								

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and human settlements	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
10.3	X	X																						
10.4		X																						
11																								
11.1																							X	
11.2																		X				X		
11.3																						X		
11.4						X					X													
11.5																							X	
11.6									X	X												X		
11.7																						X		
11.a		X		X																		X		
11.b		X					X															X	X	
12.																								
12.1						X																		
12.2		X																						
12.3																								X

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments for greening the economy	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and development	Human settlements and environment	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
12.4					X					X															
12.5										X															
12.6			X	X																					
12.7				X																					
12.8				X																					
12.a				X																X					
12.b															X										
12.c			X																						
13																									
13.1						X																			
13.2	X					X																			
13.3			X	X																X					
13.a				X	X																				
13.b					X																				
14																									
14.1										X	X	X		X	X	X	X						X	X	
14.2										X													X	X	

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and human settlements	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
14.3																							X	X
14.4																							X	X
14.5											X												X	X
14.6			X																				X	X
14.7																								
14.a																				X				
14.b																								
14.c						X																	X	X
15.																								
15.1											X												X	
15.2											X		X										X	
15.3																X							X	
15.4											X					X							X	
15.5											X												X	
15.6											X		X										X	
15.7						X					X												X	
15.8											X												X	
15.9	X										X												X	

Goals	Introduction: environmental conditions and pressures	Legal, policy and institutional framework	Compliance and enforcement mechanisms	Economic instruments for greening the economy	Environmental monitoring, information and education	Implementation of international environmental agreements	Climate change	Water management	Air protection	Waste management	Biodiversity and protected areas	Agriculture and environment	Energy and environment	Forestry and environment	Industry and environment	Land management	Tourism and environment	Transport and environment	Health and environment	Environmental education and development	Human settlements and environment	Land degradation	Risk management of natural and technological hazards	Environmental management and sustainable use of the seas	Trade and environment
15.a			X								X											X			
15.b			X								X		X									X			
15.c			X		X						X														
16																									
16.3				X																					
16.6				X																					
16.7				X																					
16.10				X																					
16.b	X	X																							
17																									
17.1			X																						
17.2	X																								
17.14	X																								
17.15																									
17.16	X					X																			
17.17			X	X																					
17.19	X		X																						