

**Twenty-second session**

Geneva, 27 October 2020

Palais des Nations

Meeting room: TPS2

Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Agenda Item 3: Implementing the renewed mandate and terms of reference

Revised draft mandate and Terms of Reference of the Working Group for the period 2022–2026





Economic Commission for Europe
Committee on Environmental Policy
Working Group on Environmental
Monitoring and Assessment

Twenty-second session
Geneva, 27 October 2020
Item 3 of the provisional agenda
Implementing the mandate and terms of reference

**Revised draft mandate and terms of reference of
the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring
and Assessment for the period 2022–2026**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The present document provides background for the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment to discuss, during its twenty-second session, its future mandate and terms of reference. The Working Group will be invited to consider the draft set out below, agree on changes and determine next steps. Those steps could begin with a survey among members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on Environmental Policy. Upon receiving feedback from members of the Committee, the draft terms of reference would be revised, approved by the Working Group and submitted for consideration by the Committee and subsequently to the ECE Executive Committee for approval. The present draft was prepared based on the current terms of reference, outcomes of past sessions of the Working Group, written feedback provided by member States in May 2020 and the questionnaire and publication *Sharing our vision for the pan-European region: Setting strategic goals and objectives for the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment*, which emphasizes strategic goals and objectives up to 2030.*

* United Nations publication, ECE/CEP/187.

- The current mandate and terms of reference of the Working Group (ECE/CEP/2017/2, annex II) are valid until the end of 2021.
- The Secretariat prepared a draft new mandate & ToR for the Working Group for the period 2022-2026 & shared it with members of the Working Group for written feedback in May 2020
- The proposed revised draft mandate and ToR (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2020/4/Rev.1) are available on the meeting webpage.





Revised draft mandate & ToR for period 2022-2026 to take into account:

- Recommendations made during recent meetings of Working Group and Committee on Environmental Policy
- Current mandate and terms of reference
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 
- Outcomes of 9th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, *but problem of timing*
- Other relevant policies such as multilateral environmental agreements incl. UNECE Conventions, Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and transition to a circular economy
- Questionnaire & publication *Sharing our vision for the pan-European region: Setting strategic goals and objectives for the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, up to 2030*
- Feedback received by UNECE member States and international partners in May 2020
- Common approach of UNECE-EEA-UNEP



Mandate:

- Working Group shall serve as the environmental knowledge and assessment network for whole UNECE region, to aid informed decision-making in support of the transition to sustainable development (SD) & a green & circular economy (GE & CE) in the UNECE region.

Overall Objective (in cooperation with partners):

- **to enable informed environmental decision-making through regular monitoring, assessment and reporting** to support sustainable development and a green and circular economy.





Specific objectives in cooperation with partners & Joint Task Force & under oversight of CEP:

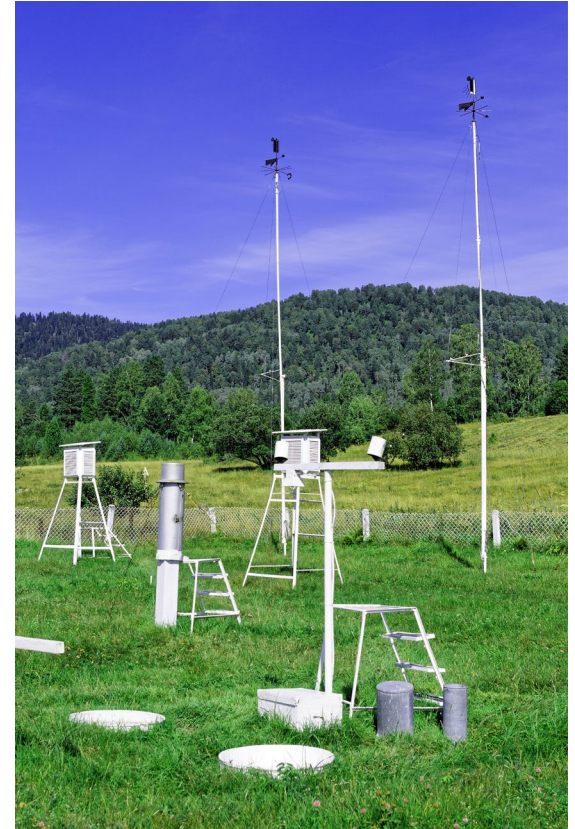
- a) Support **development of environmental monitoring & information systems** and their alignment with SEIS principles
- b) Enable a **consultative process on regular pan-European environmental assessments & streamlining of regular state-of-the-environment reporting** by 2026 in support of **SD, GE & CE** & implementation of **outcomes of 9th EfE Ministerial Conference**
- c) Facilitate consultation between ECE member States, partner organizations and other institutions & networks with relevant expertise in the area & **provide an inclusive platform for countries to discuss developments in monitoring and assessment** and integration of environmental, economic & social information & data with regard to **SD, GE & CE**





Specific objectives (continued):

- a) Enable **development of capacity** to tackle challenges in environmental monitoring and assessment (incl. development & improvement of environmental monitoring systems, their technical specifications & modernization, financing, collection of environmental knowledge through national monitoring systems & other mechanisms & technologies) in support of SD, GE & CE
- b) **Engage as partners** UNEP, its network & other organizations and programmes within UN, institutions of the EU, incl. the European Commission and EEA & its EIONET, OECD etc.



ENVIRONMENT



Development of environmental monitoring & information systems & alignment with SEIS principles

Institutional strengthening & legislative improvement

Promote the use of new technologies & tools (such as big data, Internet of Things & artificial intelligence) & data integration

Continue cooperating with Joint Task Force

Regularly evaluate performance of environmental monitoring & information systems

Contribute to implementation of main outcomes of Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in 2021–2026 **(2022-2027?)**

Review implementation of SEIS, as appropriate

Provide recommendations on how to strengthen environmental monitoring & information systems

Lead a process of consultation on regular pan-European environmental assessment & streamlining of regular state-of-the-environment reporting

Bring together experts (partner organizations & others) to discuss & oversee regular pan-European environmental assessment

Discuss and detail regional priorities concerning the streamlining of regular state-of-the-environment reporting

Oversee implementation of proposed recommendations & guidance provided through consultation process



ENVIRONMENT



Continue consultation between UNECE member States, partners & other institutions & networks, incl. MEAs, IFIs, private sector & provide an inclusive platform for countries

Cooperate with JTF & other relevant UNECE bodies incl. Housing & Land Management, Population, Sustainable Energy & Transport, to ensure that activities are synergetic & streamlined

Engage with other communities & networks for enhanced integration of socio-economic & environmental data & utilization in decision-making & presentation of environmental information on geospatial platforms

Publish outcomes from Working Group's collaborative activities (e.g. best practices, guidelines & lessons learned)

Engage in capacity-development assistance on environmental monitoring and assessment & environmental knowledge

Detailing regional and national capacity gaps, in collaboration with Joint Task Force (gaps in monitoring, data availability for indicator production)

Supporting countries in development & implementation of regional & national indicator frameworks

Engaging & liaising with other knowledge-sharing actors working on capacity-development in related areas of work

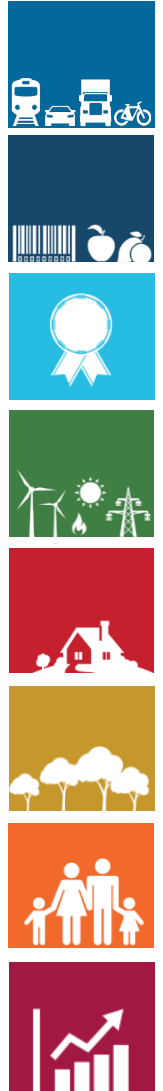
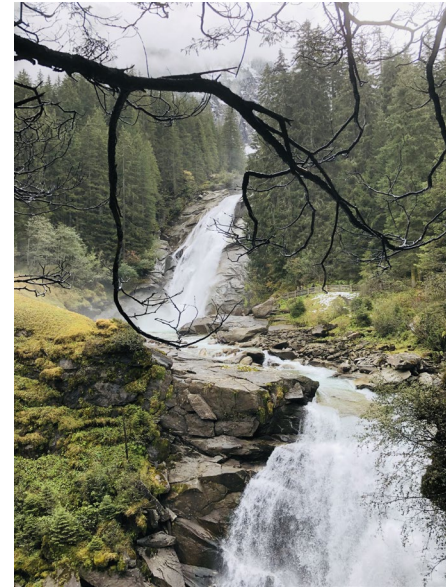
Implementing capacity-development activities



ENVIRONMENT



Thank you!





Discussion:

- Any suggested changes to the proposed programme areas and activities?
- Any new activities/outputs to include?
- Suggestions on which countries could take the lead on certain activities and programme areas?
- To conduct a survey among CEP members on draft mandate and ToR?

Next steps (in 2020-2021)

- Revision of draft ToR upon feedback from CEP in late 2020
- Approval of revised ToR by Working Group in May 2021
- Endorsement by CEP in November 2021
- Approval by UNECE Executive Committee



Proposed Decisions:

The Working Group:

- a) Suggests the revision of xxx
- b) Proposes following member States to take the lead for programme area xxx/activity, xxx
- c) Requests the secretariat to inform the Committee on Environmental Policy of the outcomes of the Working Group's discussion on the Working Group's draft mandate and terms of reference for 2022-2026 and invite the Committee's comments
- d) Also requests the secretariat to prepare a revised version of the document ECE/CEP/AC.10/2020/4/Rev.1, amended as necessary, for the Working Group's next session

