



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Conference of European Statisticians

### Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

#### Eleventh session

Geneva, 30 June and 1 July 2016

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

#### Adoption of the agenda

## Annotated provisional agenda for the eleventh session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 9:30 a.m. on  
Thursday, 30 June 2016

### I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
3. Adoption of the report of the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Joint Task Force.
4. Revised Terms of Reference of the Joint Task Force.
5. Environmental indicators in the context of current policy initiatives.
6. Implementation of the recommendations for the production and online sharing of the selected environmental indicators.
7. Waste statistics.
8. Measuring the Green Transformation.
9. Other business.

### II. Annotations

According to its revised terms of reference (ECE/CEP/2015/12, Annex II), the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators assists the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (target countries) in their efforts to: (a)



correctly apply the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) data methodologies in line with statistical standards; (b) analyse and communicate environmental data; (c) implement the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA); and (d) apply environmental indicators in the context of sustainable development and green economy initiatives. The Joint Task Force should also assist the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in evaluating the application of internationally accepted methodologies and statistical standards in SEIS data production.

The 'Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators' was renamed to 'Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators'. The new name takes into account that environment statistics and the United Nations Framework for Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) provide the fundamental basis for the work on environment-related indicators, SEEA and other environment-related information products. The Joint Task Force is open to environmental experts and statisticians from all United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) countries.

The work is supported by the European Environment Agency, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Representatives of other international organizations dealing with environment statistics are welcome to participate in the meetings of the Joint Task Force.

The meeting documentation, including country contributions, will be posted online on a web page dedicated to the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

## **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The Joint Task Force will be invited to adopt the agenda for its eleventh session as contained in the present document.

## **2. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Joint Task Force is expected to elect its Chair and Vice-Chair for its current mandate.

The members of the Joint Task Force are invited to start consultations on possible candidates prior to the meeting.

## **3. Adoption of the report from the tenth session of the Joint Task Force**

The secretariat will summarise the outcomes of the tenth session of the Joint Task Force (see ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2015/2) and invite the Joint Task Force to adopt the report.

## **4. Revised Terms of Reference of the Joint Task Force**

At its meeting on 28-31 October 2014, Committee on Environmental Policy requested the Secretariat to present a proposal to streamline the work of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) and the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators, and identify the advantages and disadvantages of merging the two bodies.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35518#>.

The secretariat prepared a proposal for the Committee on Environmental Policy meeting on 27-30 October 2015 (document ECE/CEP/2015/12). It was proposed that the two bodies continue to operate under separate mandates. The new terms of reference of both bodies addressed the Committee request to streamline the work.

There were several reasons provided by the secretariat for not merging the two bodies: differences in geographical coverage, the involvement of different national agencies and the fact that there were no overlapping tasks. The Working Group targets all UNECE countries while the Joint Task Force targets the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe with a strong capacity building component. Members of the Working Group are mainly the representatives of Environment Ministries and environmental agencies in countries, while Joint Task Force includes also representatives of national statistical offices.

The Terms of Reference of the Joint Task Force were approved by the Committee for a period of two years and by the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) for a period of four years.

The new Terms of Reference of the Joint Task Force took into consideration new and emerging issues such as the implementation of SEEA and supporting measurement of sustainable development and green economy initiatives. The Joint Task Force will also assist the Working Group in evaluating the application of the internationally accepted methodologies and statistical standards in SEIS. The timeframe of the Joint Task Force activities is aligned with SEIS which is planned to be fully operational for the Environment for Europe meeting in 2021.

## **5. Environmental indicators in the context of current policy initiatives**

Several important global and regional policy initiatives have implications on the work of the Joint Task Force. These include the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the COP 21 Paris Agreement, the recently adopted ECE Strategic Framework on Green Economy and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework). All of these policy initiatives use specific indicator sets to monitor progress towards their targets.

The Joint Task Force will be informed about the latest developments on SDG indicators and other important policy initiatives as noted above.

The Secretariat will also inform the Joint Task Force about the outcomes of the seventeenth session of the Working Group of Environmental Monitoring and Assessment as regards to relevant indicator production and sharing.

This agenda item will address how the 14 core indicators relate to the mentioned policy initiatives. It will also discuss how important environment-related statistical frameworks (such as the UN Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)) support the production of the needed environment statistics and indicators.

The Joint Task Force will be invited to discuss proposals for other indicators from the agreed Indicator Guidelines to expand the original core set to address the need to monitor progress towards the SDGs and other related policy initiatives.

## **6. Implementation of the recommendations for the production and online sharing of the selected environmental indicators**

At its ninth session (Geneva, 4-5 November 2014), the Joint Task Force agreed on the following 14 core indicators from the Indicator Guidelines for production and online sharing: emission of pollutants into the atmospheric air (A1), ambient air quality in urban areas (A2), consumption of ozone-depleting substances (A3), greenhouse gas emissions (B3), renewable freshwater resources (C1), freshwater abstraction (C2), total water use (C3), biochemical oxygen demand and concentration of ammonium in rivers (C10), nutrients in freshwater (C11), protected areas (D1), threatened and protected species (D4), fertilizer consumption (F2), passenger transport demand (H1) and waste generation (I1).

This agenda item will address progress in the implementation of these 14 indicators. The Joint Task Force will analyse in more detail selected indicators that are needed for measuring the SDGs and other policy initiatives as identified under agenda item 5.

## **7. Waste statistics**

At its tenth session (Geneva, 12-13 May 2015), the Joint Task Force acknowledged that countries would require additional support in producing waste statistics. It was requested to continue addressing the challenges related to waste statistics.

It was furthermore recommended to develop an international process in close cooperation with the United Nations Statistics Division, Eurostat and other relevant agencies from which a framework for waste statistics might emerge.

This agenda item will address the status of implementation of waste statistics and waste indicators. The related methodological challenges will be discussed and existing standards and recommendations will be presented.

International organisations will be invited to share their experience in collecting waste statistics and to present most recent activities to enhance the production of these data.

The Joint Task Force will be invited to consider how to address conceptual and methodological problems related to waste statistics.

## **8. Measuring the Green Transformation**

At the 10th session of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators (12 and 13 May 2015, Geneva) the participants discussed the outcomes and recommendations from a workshop on the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) and Green Growth (organised by OECD with support of ECE, UNEP and EEA for countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia on 10 and 11 March 2015 in Paris).

The workshop concluded that SEIS could serve as a good basis to produce a number of green-growth indicators (GGI) related to environmental, resource and material productivity, the environmental dimension of the quality of life, and the risk to economic development from depleting the natural asset base. The workshop recommended that countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia should be provided with a platform at the international level for discussing the production and use of environmental data in connection with economic and social data and how to interpret the green growth and environmental indicators. It was further recommended that the national network for SEIS should be expanded to include ministries of economy.

This agenda item aims to expand the discussion on the practical implementation of GGI in the EECCA region. It will include presentations of the *OECD Guide for EU Eastern Partnership countries: Measuring the Green Transformation of the Economy and selected country experience in implementing green growth indicators*. The presentations will be followed by an open discussion about further regional and country specific work and the role of the Joint Task Force in this process.

## **9. Other business**

The Joint Task Force will be informed about activities related to the implementation of the System of Environmental Accounting.

## **III. Organization of work**

The information on a detailed organization of work will be released closer to the meeting time.

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