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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Conference of European Statisticians

Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

Fifteenth session

Geneva, 25–26 October 2018

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the fifteenth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10.00 a.m. on
Wednesday, 25 October 2018


I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the fourteenth session of the Joint Task Force.
3. Progress in establishing a Shared Environmental Information System to support a regular process of environmental assessment.
4. Amendment of the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators.
5. Progress of the Task Force on Waste Statistics.
6. Ongoing and planned capacity-development activities.
7. Progress in production of environmental indicators and statistics at the national level.
8. Training session on the status of production, sharing and use of the regional set of environmental indicators and environmental statistics.
9. Other business.
10. Closure of the meeting.

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II. Annotations

According to its terms of reference (ECE/CEP/2017/12, annex)¹ the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators assists the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in their efforts to:

(a) Apply the Shared Environmental Information System principles and methodologies for UNECE core environmental indicators and data production in line with international statistical standards;

(b) Analyse and communicate environmental data;

(c) Develop capacity to implement the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting;

(d) Develop capacity for the compilation and integration of environmental data in support of measuring progress in the context of sustainable development and green economy initiatives.

The Joint Task Force also assists the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in evaluating the application of internationally accepted methodologies and statistical standards in data production and provides a forum for sharing experience on the communication of environmental information to users, in line with the ECE recommendations on statistical communication and the recommendations made by the Working Group.

The Joint Task Force is open to environmental experts and statisticians from all member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

The work is supported by the European Environment Agency (EEA), 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 webpage dedicated to the meeting.²

The fifteenth session of the Joint Task Force will be a two-day event. The session will include a training session (item 8) in the afternoon of 26 October.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair will open the session and invite the Joint Task Force to adopt the agenda for its fifteenth session as set out in the present document.

2. Implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the fourteenth session of the Joint Task Force

At its fourteenth session (Rome, 2–3 October 2017), the Joint Task Force made several decisions and recommendations for future work in its report (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2017/6). The secretariat will inform the Joint Task Force on the status of implementation of these decisions and recommendations, including the consideration of the

¹ Available from <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45618>.

² See <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47527>.

Joint Task Force's activities by the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy at its twenty-third session (Geneva, 14–17 November 2017). The Committee adopted the renewed mandate and terms of reference of the Joint Task Force for 2018–2021 and requested the secretariat to submit the renewed mandate to the ECE Executive Committee for approval. The Conference of European Statisticians had already adopted the mandate of the Joint Task Force until 2021.

3. Progress in establishing a Shared Environmental Information System to support a regular process of environmental assessment

The secretariat will briefly summarize the progress made on the development of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) assessment framework (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2018/5) and the carrying out of the mid-term review of the development of SEIS, as discussed during the Joint Task Force's previous sessions. The secretariat will also present the draft mid-term review report on the establishment of the System (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2018/6), which will have been reviewed by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment at its twentieth session (3–4 September 2018) and will be finalized by the secretariat and then considered by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its twenty-fourth session (29–31 January 2019).

The members of the Joint Task Force will be invited to discuss the benefits of the SEIS as well as technical challenges faced in reporting on progress in establishing the Shared Environmental Information System in their countries and to make recommendations as appropriate.

4. Amendment of the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators

At the previous session, the Joint Task Force expressed satisfaction with the good progress made on draft revised energy and biodiversity indicator production templates and decided to take more time to review and test the templates by the time of the current session. The Joint Task Force also agreed to review in future sessions the current practice of using Excel-based templates in the data production and sharing process.

The Joint Task Force will be invited to consider the draft templates, including the need to introduce further validation rules for data and references to indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, the Joint Task Force, at its previous session, decided to keep the ECE guidelines for the application of environmental indicators under review and work towards the alignment of the guidelines with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

To support these discussions, Guidelines on National Mechanisms for Providing Data on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, prepared by the Task Force on Reporting Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Using National Reporting Platforms, under the Conference of European Statisticians, will be made available (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2018/3). In addition, the secretariat will present a document comparing the methodologies of selected ECE indicators with the ones of the corresponding Sustainable Development Goal indicators (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2018/4).

5. Progress of the Task Force on Waste Statistics

As requested by members of the Joint Task Force in earlier sessions, a report will be given on the progress of work by the Conference of European Statisticians Task Force on Waste Statistics.

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) will inform the Joint Task Force on the chapter on waste statistics in the Manual on the Basic Set of Environment Statistics (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/fdes/manual_bses.cshtml) which will contribute to developing technical capacity in the EECCA countries.

6. Ongoing and planned capacity-development activities

The secretariat and UNEP will report on ongoing and planned capacity-development activities related to environmental statistics, the Shared Environmental Information System and Sustainable Development Goal indicators. Members of the Joint Task Force will be invited to present national capacity development activities and identify concrete capacity-development needs.

7. Progress in production of environmental indicators and statistics at the national level

The secretariat will inform about the outcome of an EEA-funded project, including a series of summaries of country assessments developed to support the production and regular update of the ECE core set of environmental indicators, their integration into national, regional and global reporting, including reporting on Sustainable Development Goals, and strengthening environmental statistics and accounting in the countries of the Caucasus and Eastern Europe.

The secretariat will report on the holding of a joint ECE/OECD seminar on the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (Geneva, 21–22 February 2018). The Joint Task Force will be invited to reflect on the outcomes of the seminar and on the development of national and regional strategies for the environmental-economic accounting system.

The Joint Task Force will be invited to examine and discuss the Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool³ and present and discuss its application in ECE member States.

The Joint Task Force will also be invited to consider recommendations on and examples of how to streamline the production of indicator-based assessments. In addition, countries may describe the development of national reports on progress towards Sustainable Development Goals.

8. Training session on the status of production, sharing and use of the regional set of environmental indicators and environmental statistics

The training session will be organized within the framework of an EEA-funded project to support the production, regular update and use of the ECE set of environmental

³ Available in the official languages of the United Nations at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/fdes/essat.cshtml>.

indicators and strengthening environmental statistics and accounting in the six countries in Eastern Europe and Caucasus. Though focused on the six countries, all members of the Joint Task Force are encouraged to participate actively in the agenda item. The session will examine the status of production, sharing and use by the six countries of the set of environmental indicators and provide concrete examples of how the target countries can improve and streamline the production of indicator-based assessments. The session will contribute to the target on regular reporting based on SEIS and provide an opportunity to review, discuss and test the recommendations made for the six countries within the project. It will also include support to the countries in their development of strategies for the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and guidance on the Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool in support of integrated assessments.

UNSD will inform the meeting about the results of the UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire 2016 on Environment Statistics (Waste and Water) and the initial responses to the UNSD/UN Environment Questionnaire 2018 on Environment Statistics (Waste and Water) being sent out to countries mid to late 2018. UNSD will also provide information about the ongoing development of the Manual on the Basic Set of Environment Statistics focusing on various topics of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics which will contribute to technical material and capacity building to support the development of environment statistics in the EECCA countries.

9. Other business

Delegates may bring up other relevant information to be shared with the Joint Task Force.

10. Closure of the meeting

The Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will sum up the conclusions and present the decisions of the Joint Task Force and close the meeting. The report of the meeting will be finalized by the secretariat after the meeting and will be posted on the web page of the meeting in due course.

III. Organization of work

A detailed timetable will be released closer to the meeting time.
