

7th pan-European Environmental Assessment – A light-indicator based and thematic assessment

Sub-chapter 3.5 on Biodiversity and ecosystems

Note: The proposed indicators will be presented at the 22nd session of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment on 27 October 2020.

Members of the Joint Task Force are invited to provide feedback on the selection/proposed indicators for the sub-chapter on biodiversity and ecosystems of the pan-European environmental assessment to the Secretariat at JTFEISsec@un.org or wgemasec@un.org.

Proposed indicators for Section 3.5

Section 3.5 of the 7th pan-European Environmental Assessment shall consist of a summary of the data and analysis on the environmental state and trends presented based on indicators and stories, using the UNECE core set of environmental indicators and other indicators as appropriate. The chapter will also provide key messages as well as policy recommendations.

As a first step in developing Section 3.5, the Consultant has conducted a rapid appraisal of possible indicators around which the section could be built, examining the UNECE core set of environmental indicators, the SDG 15 indicators, EEA indicators on biodiversity and ecosystems, and OECD “Environment at a Glance” indicators. This appraisal consisted of a pre-screening based on broad geographical applicability throughout UNECE region (exclusion of indicators on marine ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as indicators specific to the Natura 2000 system), and broad thematic applicability (exclusion of various highly specialized indicators), and a systematic comparison of broadly relevant indicators based on the criteria of **(1)** policy relevance, **(2)** sound indicator methodology, **(3)** preference for national data sources and **(4)** data availability including the availability of recent data.

Based on this appraisal, the Consultant proposes the following indicators as main pillars for Section 3 of the assessment:

- **State indicator: UNECE Indicator D3 (Forest and other wooded land).** This is a highly aggregated indicator which focuses on one key terrestrial ecosystem. The indicator shows the total area of forests and other wooded land, the ratio of this area to the country’s total area, and the share of forest areas which are natural and planted, designated for production, as well as designated for the protection of soil and water, ecosystem services and biodiversity (UNECE 2014).
- **Pressure indicator: UNECE Indicator E1 (Land uptake).** This indicator captures a key class of threats for the UNECE region. It shows the amount of land taken up for transport infrastructure, industrial, urban, recreational development, waste disposal and other purposes, as well as the share of total land uptake in the country area (UNECE 2014).
- **Response indicator: UNECE Indicator D1 (Protected areas).** This highly aggregated, well-measurable indicator measures the areas of land, water surfaces protected in compliance with the national legislation (UNECE 2014) and can be further broken down according to IUCN WCPA protected areas categories.

Apart from meeting the above criteria, these indicators should be processable with the available resources and within the required time period. Additional indicators – such as relevant SDG indicators - will also be mentioned and discussed in Section 3.5, without presenting comprehensive data on them.

The indicator-based assessment will be complemented by a more general narrative including a summary of the context, case studies, key messages and policy recommendations.