

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

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Environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting

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Informal record of decisions taken by the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators at its eighteenth session

Summary

The Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators met for its eighteenth session in Geneva and online on 18 and 19 October 2021. The report of the session is under preparation. The present document provides an informal record for the Committee on Environmental Policy of the decisions taken by the Joint Task Force at its eighteenth session.

I. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chairs

The Joint Task Force: elected for a period of two years Ms Ševala Korajčević (Bosnia and Herzegovina) as its Chair and Ms Marina Klevakina (Russian Federation) and Mr. Oleg Prokopenko (Ukraine) as its Vice-Chairs.

II. Opening, and adoption of the agenda

The Joint Task Force adopted the agenda of its eighteenth session as set out in document ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2021/1

III. Implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the seventeenth session of the Joint Task Force

The Joint Task Force:

- (a) Took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the 17th session of the Joint Task Force;
- (b) Adopted the report of its seventeenth session (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2020/2).

IV. Implementing the mandate and terms of reference

The Joint Task Force:

- (a) Endorsed the extension of Joint Task Force mandate and terms of reference until mid-2023 (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2021/3);

(b) Requested the secretariat to inform the Committee on Environmental Policy of the Joint Task Force's wish to extend its current mandate and terms of reference until mid-2023;

(c) Decided to consider further whether it might best be converted into a standing body on environmental statistics and indicators, open to all UNECE member States.

V. Ongoing developments with relevance for the work of the Joint Task Force

The Joint Task Force:

(a) Welcomed the draft elements of the next pan-European environmental assessment set out in documents ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2021/5–8;

(b) Took note of the progress made, timeline and next steps for the finalization of the assessment;

(c) Agreed to provide further feedback by 31 October 2021 on the draft elements of seventh pan-European environmental assessment set out in documents ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2021/5–8;

(d) Welcomed the presentations of thematic sections of the assessment by the authors;

(e) Requested the secretariat to inform the Committee on Environmental Policy and its Bureau on the outcomes of this agenda item;

(f) Thanked the presenters for sharing their experience in implementing and sharing environmental statistics and indicators on national and international levels, and encouraged its members to share this information further among national stakeholders;

(g) Took note of the progress made on developing training materials and agreed to provide further feedback by 31 October 2021 on their structure;

(h) Took note also of the information and recommendations presented in the nexus report on *Measuring and Monitoring Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals*, and encouraged its members to review and possibly apply the recommendations of the report nationally.

VI. Review of the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators

The Joint Task Force:

(a) Welcomed the progress made towards reviewing and finalizing the *Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators*;

(b) Pre-approved the finalized parts of the Guidelines and the proposed list of priority indicators, with final approval following after 21 days of silence procedure and taking into account comments received from members of the Joint Task Force;

(c) Agreed that relevant indicators (for example, those needed for the pan-European environmental assessment) may be added at a later stage, after consultation with the Joint Task Force;

(d) Took note on the ongoing work to update and finalize remaining parts of the Guidelines;

(e) Decided that it would follow a silence procedure for lists of indicators;

(f) Agreed that metadata would be completed in English and Russian languages for all the approved indicators and provided to its members under a silence procedure.

VII. Ongoing and planned capacity development activities

The Joint Task Force took note of information provided on ongoing developments with relevance for the work of the Joint Task Force and invited its members and representatives of international organizations and other initiatives and projects to provide it with regular updates on recent developments in the implementation of their activities.

VIII. Data needs, statistics and indicators on environment and health in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The Joint Task Force:

- (a) Welcomed the work of the secretariat and took note of the information provided on data needs, statistics and indicators on environment and health in response to the COVID-19 pandemic related to the activities of the Joint Task Force;
- (b) Thanked the presenters for sharing their knowledge and experience in this field;
- (c) Invited its members, international organizations and partners to provide it with regular updates on recent developments related to environment and health statistics, indicators and data.