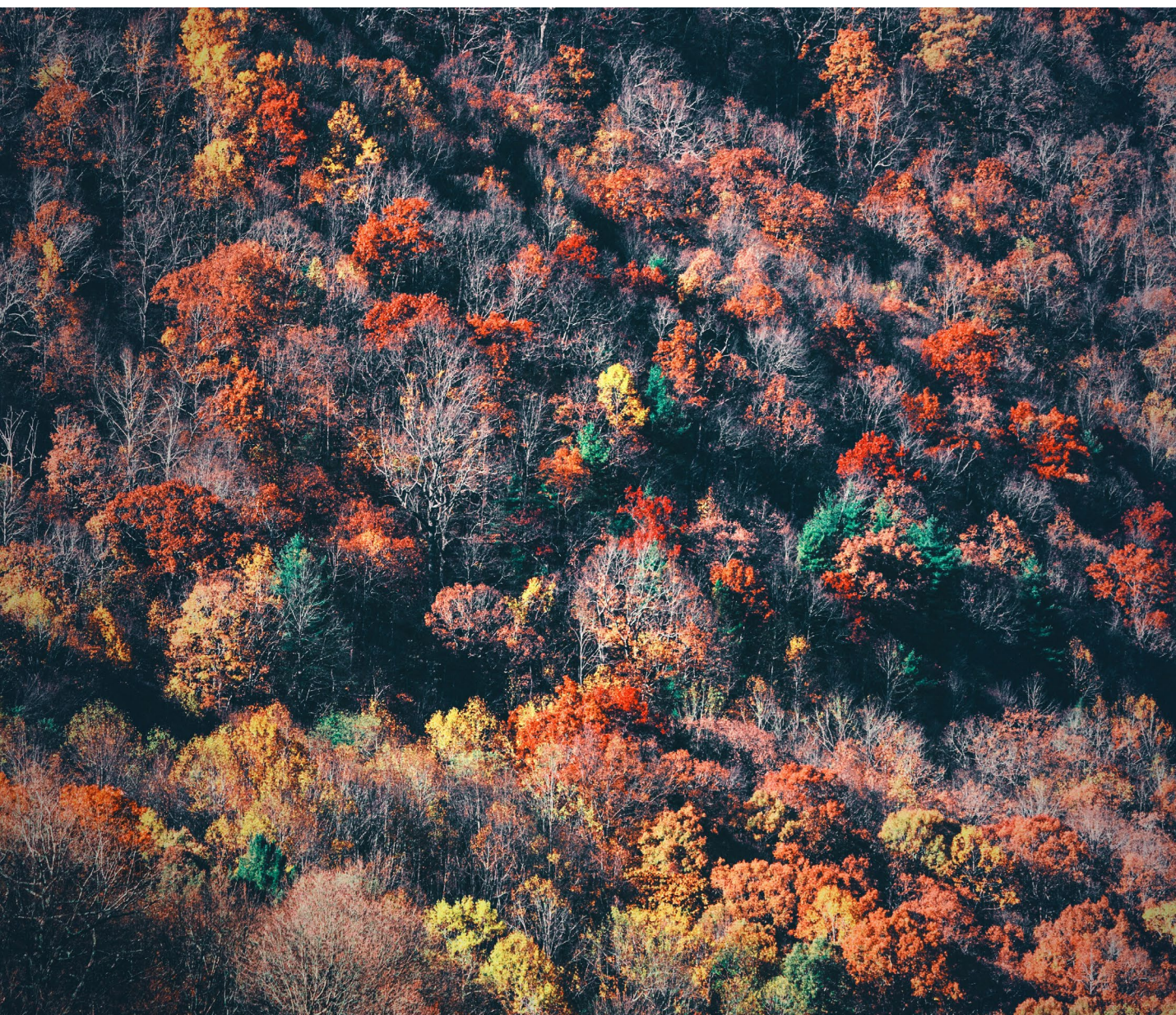


UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

LESSONS LEARNED on producing, sharing and using environmental data

WITHIN THE PROJECT

*Improved environmental monitoring and assessment
in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda
in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus*



With financial support from the United Nations
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ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AUSTRIA

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PREFACE

The present report presents initial general conclusions from the co-operative work undertaken in partnership between UNEP, UN-ECE, Environment Agency Austria and project-participating countries within the UN Europe region in an UNDA-financed Project within the programme entitled “improving data and understanding of environment related indicators for sustainable development” in Europe.

Environment Agency Austria engages itself to develop and specify this draft further in dialogue with UNEP, UN-ECE and the National Focal Points of the seven participating countries from South-East Europe (Bosnia and Hercegovina, North Macedonia), Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia) and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) towards a policy-relevant information product for the pan-European Ministerial „Environment for Europe” Conference 2022 in supplement to the final report on establishment of SEIS in the pan-European Region.

A. SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEIS)

High-quality, relevant and up-to-date environmental information is an effective tool for successful environmental governance. On the one hand, having in place timely and integrated environmental information and data guarantees transparent, reasonable policy and decision making. On the other hand, easily accessible and reliable environmental information provides citizens with a fundamental right to know about the state of the environment, which is crucial for the well-being and health of every person.

Nevertheless, the lack of such information at the national, regional and international levels creates significant barriers to proper environmental monitoring, reporting and assessment. Therefore, in 2008, the European Commission decided to develop a policy instrument known as Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) in order to create a knowledge-based digital system, which would assist countries in raising public environmental awareness and improving environmental data production.

Assuming the need and advantages of environmental information systems, at the Seventh Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Nur-Sultan, 2011), the Ministers decided to establish a regular process of environmental assessment and to develop SEIS across the region to keep the pan-European environment under review (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2/Add.1, para. 14). Furthermore, ministers emphasized that SEIS should serve multiple policy purposes, taking into account the needs of the multilateral environmental agreements. The work on SEIS and its development should include support and capacity-development for countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The governance of the Shared Environmental Information System involves a high degree of cooperation between international organizations, regional agencies, member States, national environmental authorities and other relevant stakeholders. The European Environment Agency (EEA), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) play a leading role in implementing SEIS jointly across the pan-European region collaborating with national authorities.

The Shared Environmental Information System is a set of principles, operationalized as a distributed environmental information system that is connected and integrated with the help of modern technologies.

The goal of SEIS is to create an improved, decentralized system for the simplification, streamlining and modernization of existing environmental information-gathering systems. In order to guarantee a smooth transition to such a system, the European Commission developed a list of seven principles underpinning the SEIS framework and operating mechanism. According to these principles, information relating to the environment should be:¹

- Managed as close as possible to its source
- Collected once and shared with others for many purposes

1 European Commission, 2008.

- Readily available to easily fulfil reporting obligations
- Easily accessible to all users
- Accessible to enable comparisons at the appropriate geographical scale and the participation of citizens
- Fully available to the general public and at the national level in the relevant national language(s)
- Supported through common, free, open software standards.

Besides, apart from seven principles, effective and functional SEIS is also sustained by three pillars: content, infrastructure and cooperation.

Content refers to the type of content required and the identification of potential sources to acquire such content. It also comprises information necessary to understand the changes in the state-of-the-environment as per specific thematic areas (for example, air, water and waste) and the interlinkages between them (as also addressed under the multilateral environmental agreements). Such data are available from various institutions at various levels and are crucial in terms of policymaking, but also awareness-raising. They need to follow agreed, common format requirements, at least for those data and information constituting international flows.

Infrastructure refers to an effective, web-enabled technical infrastructure, taking full advantage of pioneering information and communication technologies, including web services, to provide easy access to a wide range of environmental information and data flows so that they can be accessed by users, including experts, who can analyse the information and share it for further use.

Cooperation refers to the need for positive interaction between relevant actors at the various levels in the country and the designation of governance structures to manage human resources, inputs and networking. This pillar includes issues such as development or amendment of the legal framework and data policy agreements and protocols to enable data exchange, cooperation and coordination, while ensuring trust building and confidence between various data providers and between them and users.

The Shared Environmental Information System operates based on data flows belonging to particular environmental indicators compliant with international standards. In collaboration with the European Environment Agency, the ECE Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment agreed in 2007 upon a set of environmental indicators and their guidelines for application, eventually falling under 10 environmental thematic areas and comprising 49 indicators – the ECE Environmental Indicators.

A.1. STATUS AND MANDATE OF SEIS IMPLEMENTATION

SEIS was established in 2008 and went through a decade of development. The European Commission created it, however, since then, UNECE, UNEP and the European Commission through EEA are jointly contributing to SEIS establishment and operationalization in the pan-European region. For instance, the European Commission-funded several SEIS related projects such as ENI SEIS East I and II and the European Union Water Initiative plus programme. Furthermore, when it comes to UNEP, it often provides countries with “in-field” technical and capacity-building assistance to improve their environmental monitoring, reporting and assessment capacities through different initiatives such as Environment Live Platform, a series of Pan-European Global Environment Outlooks or technical aid for dissemination of environmental data.

UNECE figures prominently in implementing SEIS in the pan-European region through several processes, tools and bodies dedicated to environmental policy and, more specifically, environmental monitoring and assessment. These include the Committee of Environmental Policy; the Environment for Europe Ministerial process; the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment; the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators; projects dedicated to environmental monitoring and capacity development on environmental statistics and indicators, SEIS and the Sustainable Development Goals, funded through the United Nations Development Account and implemented together with UNEP; and the use of UNECE environmental indicators in the harmonization of environmental data across the UNECE region. In addition, multiple UNECE Conventions and Protocols, including the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), together with regular Environmental Performance Reviews complement SEIS establishment in the Pan-European region.

In order to evaluate the progress achieved by the countries in the establishment of SEIS, there have been three rounds of progress reviews of the SEIS establishment in the Pan-European region to the present day.

At its twentieth session (October 2014), the Committee on Environmental Policy requested the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment to prepare an evaluation report on progress made in developing SEIS for consideration at the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in 2016.

The first 2016 SEIS progress review report was presented to the Batumi Ministerial Conference (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/8). Given the limited resources available, it didn't address internationally accepted standards for data-set production or data quality. The 2016 progress report assessed 67 data sets in different thematic areas: air pollution and ozone depletion (25 data sets); climate change (4 data sets); water (20 data sets); biodiversity (4 data sets); land and soil (2 data sets); energy (4 data sets); and waste (8 data sets). The report concluded that 32 out of the 50 countries reporting had increased the online accessibility of their data flows since the beginning of the process in 2015. The report served as a basis for evaluating future progress archived by the countries in SEIS implementation. Besides, the report showed ample prospects of SEIS as a policy tool. However, it revealed incomplete countries' participation and gaps in data production, collection, monitoring and assessment.

The following progress assessment, the mid-term review on the establishment on SEIS following the Batumi Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, occurred throughout 2018 and was presented by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment to the Committee on Environmental Policy in January 2019. The Committee on Environmental Policy welcomed the mid-term review report (ECE/CEP/2019/7) and expressed appreciation for the progress achieved in Europe and Central Asia since the Batumi Conference.

The mid-term review report addressed shortcomings of the 1st progress report. It was based on the assessment framework (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2018/5), developed by the Working Group, in close cooperation with UNECE, UNEP and EEA. The report was based on the self-assessments submitted by 34 of the 53 UNECE member States in Europe and Central Asia. Self-assessment questions covered seven SEIS principles. In addition, considering three SEIS pillars-content, infrastructure and cooperation- was a hallmark of the mid-term report. The mid-term review report put forward the quality of data production and use of the UNECE environmental indicators. Besides, it was limited to seven data flows, covering three of the UNECE environmental indicators, and concluded that countries were on the right track in developing SEIS since Batumi Conference.

In 2019, during its 24th session the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy requested the Working Group to lead a further review of progress in establishing SEIS in Europe and Central Asia in advance of the ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, to be held in Nicosia in October 2022.

This final progress review report, conducted in 2020, aims to inform the ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference on the status of establishment of the Shared Environmental Information System in Europe and Central Asia.

The final report presents the results of collected data for 22 data flows underpinning the 18 ECE core environmental indicators and covering 9 environmental themes and is based on an assessment framework (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2019/3) developed by the Working Group in close cooperation with ECE, UNEP and the European Environment Agency.

A.2. BENEFITS OF SEIS IMPLEMENTATION

Throughout the process of SEIS establishment, UNECE member States could largely benefit from developing the Shared Environmental Information System for informing the state of environment reporting, national and regional environmental policymaking, the SDGs and regional and global environmental assessments.

First of all, establishing SEIS allows the collection of environmental information and data coming from different sources in one place in a harmonized way. As a result, information is more comparable and easily accessible for various stakeholders, including for civil society. Having a well-established and functioning environmental information system in place means having regularly updated information with long time series. It implies that regularly produced and collected data could be used to analyze the current state of the environment, identify gaps and needs of a country correctly, anticipate environmental trends.

Furthermore, SEIS helps countries identify and address institutional, policy, technical and budget challenges. SEIS enhances national, regional and international cooperation. Environmental reporting and assessment often engage multiple stakeholders, given the cross-cutting nature of SEIS which enhances interaction between data providers and users.

Finally, SEIS plays a crucial role in monitoring progress achieved by the countries in reporting towards Sustainable Development Goals, as it provides support for reporting.

One of the projects that supported the establishment of SEIS is a UN Development Account Project funded project on Improved environmental monitoring and assessment in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus implemented from 2018-2021.

A.3. UNDA FUNDED PROJECT AND PARTNER COUNTRIES

Comprehensive, transparent, and harmonized environmental data and well-established cooperation of the environmental and statistical national authorities are essential for effective decision-making, environmental management, and monitoring progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development. Therefore, the United Nations support countries of South-Eastern, Central Asia and the Caucasus to advance their national capacities to produce, collect and disseminate environmental information and data through the UN Development Account project. The project was launched in 2018 and focused on developing the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS), environmental indicators, and Sustainable Development Goals in the target countries: Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, and Tajikistan. The project is led by the UNECE Environmental Monitoring and Assessment team in partnership with UNEP and supported by the Environment Agency Austria (EAA). The project's main objectives are to strengthen the capacities of national environmental and statistical authorities to produce and collect data; improve accessibility and use of environmental indicators and strengthen the target countries' capacities in the production of environmental and health-related indicators.

Within the framework of the project, multiple products have been delivered. For instance, the production of gap analysis and road maps provided a solid foundation for the future implementation of the project because they identified existing national gaps and suggested strategic and technical measures to be taken to boost the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) establishment and reporting, including the 2030 Agenda, in the target countries.

Besides, a series of capacity-building webinars and two regional conferences provided a fruitful discussion, knowledge and experience-based platform for the target countries. Furthermore, the pan-European perspective on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SEIS, environment and health-related assessments were discussed.

These events resulted in the development of four policy briefs on specific environment and health issues, a self-paced e-learning course and a knowledge-sharing platform. These products are based on the materials and lessons learned from the organized webinars and conferences. It targets both government officials and interested members of the public who want to progress in their knowledge on data and information issues related to environment-related SDG indicators and environmental policy-relevant data use.

In addition, it should be mentioned that environmental indicators are an essential part of SEIS establishment because they enable countries to track the state of the environment, identify existing gaps and inform environmental public policy. The UNDA project contributed to the revision of the UNECE list of environmental indicators, including updating the indicator methodologies and descriptions. It is vital to review environmental indicators due to changes in methodologies, national environmental priorities and international environmental policy, and updates in production and sharing of the environmental indicators. Based on the revised environmental indicators, training materials are being developed to provide national environmental and statistics agencies with sufficient knowledge on how to produce and evaluate environmental indicators.

B. SEIS IMPLEMENTATION IN PROJECT COUNTRIES

SEIS establishment requires a certain extent of institutional, economic and technological development, depending on the country and the region, where there were different capacities in SEIS implementation since the very beginning.

In order to analyze the process of implementation of SEIS and the current state of affairs in the target countries, the final SEIS review report (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2021/6), gap analyses reviews and recent UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were analyzed.

The final SEIS review report provides an overview of the status of SEIS establishment in Europe and Central Asia. Only four out of seven target countries participated in the self-assessment of the final review report. It assessed 22 data flows underpinning the 18 ECE core environmental indicators and covered nine environmental themes. The self-assessment questionnaire was pillars-centered (content, infrastructure and cooperation) and evaluated the data quality. As for content and infrastructure pillars, the report concluded that information on the majority of the data flows is published regularly (80 per cent) and are readily available and accessible online for users on national platforms (72 per cent) in Europe and Central Asia. Besides, when it comes to the cooperation pillar, more than half of the countries (67 per cent) have reported having institutional arrangements for the regular production and sharing of data at the national level. The report summarized that all member States have, to varying degrees, made progress regarding the establishment of a national system during the past years and in making environmental information available and accessible. National Shared Environmental Information Systems vary in form and regularity regarding their updates and content, and gaps remain that need to be addressed.

All UNECE member States significantly advanced in establishing environmental information systems and making environmental information available and accessible online. However, given incomplete participation in the self-assessment, it cannot be fully confirmed if all the national environmental information systems comply with all SEIS principles and pillars.

B.1. SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina has participated in all three rounds of progress review. In general, it is possible to say that it has improved its monitoring and reporting capacities over time. However, the gap analysis revealed that Bosnia and Herzegovina still faces challenges related to SEIS establishment due to insufficient collaboration and data exchange between relevant institutions. There are still gaps regarding policy or measures taken to strengthen SEIS implementation. There are multiple laws on environmental data monitoring, reporting and dissemination. Nevertheless, environmental information is often published in the form of publications and partly outdated, and there is no database for environmental data management. During the final SEIS review Bosnia and Herzegovina achieved an overall performance score of 68%. Besides, also in the framework of the recent UNECE Environmental Performance Review, it was recommended that Bosnia and Herzegovina should implement integrated environmental monitoring systems, ensure timely and efficient access to environmental data and information and enhance national capacities to collect environment data.

NORTH MACEDONIA

Since the beginning of the SEIS implementation, North Macedonia has been an active participant in this process. It has achieved clear progress in implementing the SEIS pillars: content, infrastructure and cooperation. According to the gap analysis review, North Macedonia committed itself to promote and strengthen the implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System. It reports regularly environmental information, data and indicators, which are easily accessible online on the official websites and for many purposes. It enables easy data comparability, exchange and management. During the SEIS final progress review North Macedonia achieved an overall performance score of 89%.

The most recent UNECE Environmental Performance Review has also recommended North Macedonia continue supporting the implementation of Shared Environmental Information System principles, produce regularly national and regional environmental indicators, fill in data gaps where they exist. Besides, it should identify relevant environmental indicators to report towards Sustainable Development goals.

B.2. CAUCASUS

ARMENIA

Armenia has actively participated in the establishment of the Shared Environmental Information System. It has achieved clear progress in implementing SEIS pillars and principles. It has a high SEIS performance score, which can be explained by the availability of the key UNECE environmental indicators. The information and data are regularly updated and published for public access for many purposes. Information is presented in the form of publications, tables and graphs. The metadata is available too. However, the gap analysis review has revealed that environmental data collection, development of policies and regulations require improvement.

Armenia has not participated in the self-assessment for the SEIS final review report.

GEORGIA

Georgia has been making clear progress in establishing SEIS and is on the right track to ensure full implementation of SEIS in the near future. It has been an active participant in different projects related to SEIS establishment and implementation. Besides, it took part in all SEIS progress reports, which show the gradual progress of Georgia in the implementation of three SEIS pillars: content, infrastructure and cooperation. According to the gap analysis review, there is an increasing trend of publishing UNECE environmental indicators on various national websites. Georgia produces indicator-based reports, which are supplemented with graphs, tables, charts and etc. Information is regularly published and accessible online. During the SEIS final progress review Georgia achieved an overall performance score of 81 %.

B.3. CENTRAL ASIA

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan has definitely advanced in establishing the Shared Environmental Information System. Kazakhstan has been an active participant in the process and participated in all SEIS review reports. SEIS review reports show that it has been gradually progressing over the last decade in implementing SEIS principles and pillars and is on the right track to ensure the full establishment of an environmental information system in the near future. According to the gap analysis review conducted under the UNDA project, Kazakhstan has been involved in a series of events organized by the United Nations and the European Union to progress in SEIS. As a result, it takes one of the most advanced positions in producing and sharing environmental information. During the SEIS final progress review Kazakhstan achieved an overall performance score of 92 %.

The recent UNECE Environmental Performance Review has recommended Kazakhstan to improve the availability of environmental information on public websites, enhance the use of air quality information, etc.

KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyzstan has participated in two SEIS review reports, which revealed that Kyrgyzstan is slowly progressing in establishing a Shared Environmental Information System. However, there are still many gaps to be filled in the production, collection and dissemination of environmental information and data. The National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040 highlights that better environmental data management is the basis for efficient environmental activities². According to the gap analysis review, the paper-based reporting approach still is mainly used in Kyrgyzstan however progress has been noted. Besides, there are still gaps regarding the availability of information and the use of information for many purposes and primarily published in Russian, creating additional obstacles to accessing the information.

TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan participated in two rounds of the review process in the framework of SEIS establishment in the pan-European region. Tajikistan is progressing in creating an integrated environmental information system, at its own pace. According to the gap analysis review, the departments of the Committee for Environmental Protection are responsible for e-reporting, however, paper-based reports are still more often used rather than electronic ones, which creates still obstacles for environmental data exchange and access. A limited amount of information is regularly reported and available for many users for multiple purposes.

The most recent UNECE Environmental Performance Review has recommended Tajikistan to improve environmental monitoring networks, ensure production, and use key environmental indicators, especially for state-of-the-environment reports, etc.

B.4. CONCLUSIONS

Building upon the results of the activities carried out in the framework of the UNDA project, the following could be concluded:

- Insufficient cooperation, communication, conflict of interests and data exchange between interested stakeholders/institutions, to varying degrees, prevent the target countries from full SEIS implementation.
- Lack of national legislation and institutional arrangements, the inaction of policy and decision-makers has adverse implications on SEIS performance
- There is a lack of funding and trained human resources and the target countries could benefit from further capacity-development activities such as a series of webinars and conferences beyond the UNDA project to follow the last developments and changes (new policy frameworks, new reporting requirements, new indicators, new methodologies, new technologies, techniques and etc)
- Continued work on the development of environmental indicators is required, including collection, production and dissemination of environmental data (methodology gaps, lack of technical equipment, better quality of national reports and reports under MEAs and etc)
- International efforts are required to motivate countries to continue the implementation of environmental information systems and to participate in self-assessments on SEIS implementation beyond 2021.

C. VOLUNTARY REPORTS OF PROJECT COUNTRIES ON ENVIRONMENTAL SDG INDICATORS

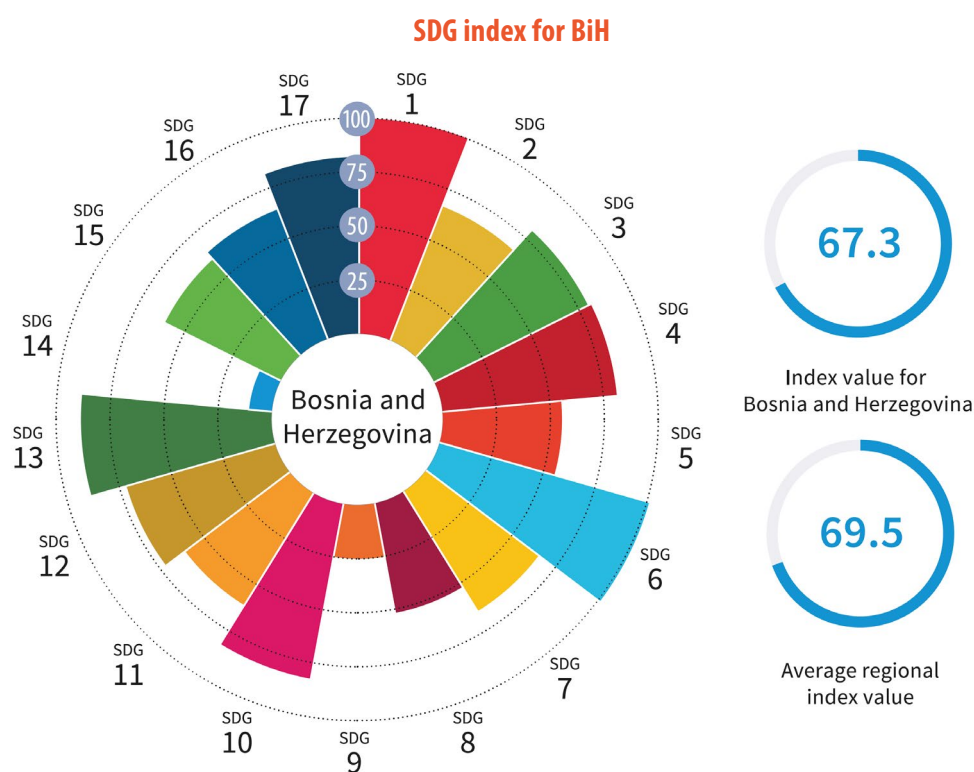
All UN Europe region countries participating in the project have submitted at least one Voluntary National Report (VNR) on SDG indicators in the period 2016 to 2020, as documented on <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates>

| Sub-Region | Country | VNR / year |
|----------------------|--|------------|
| South-Eastern Europe | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 2019 |
| | North Macedonia | 2020 |
| Caucasus | Armenia | 2018, 2020 |
| | Georgia | 2016, 2020 |
| Central Asia | Kazakhstan | 2019 |
| | Kyrgyzstan | 2020 |
| | Tajikistan | 2017 |

C.1. SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA

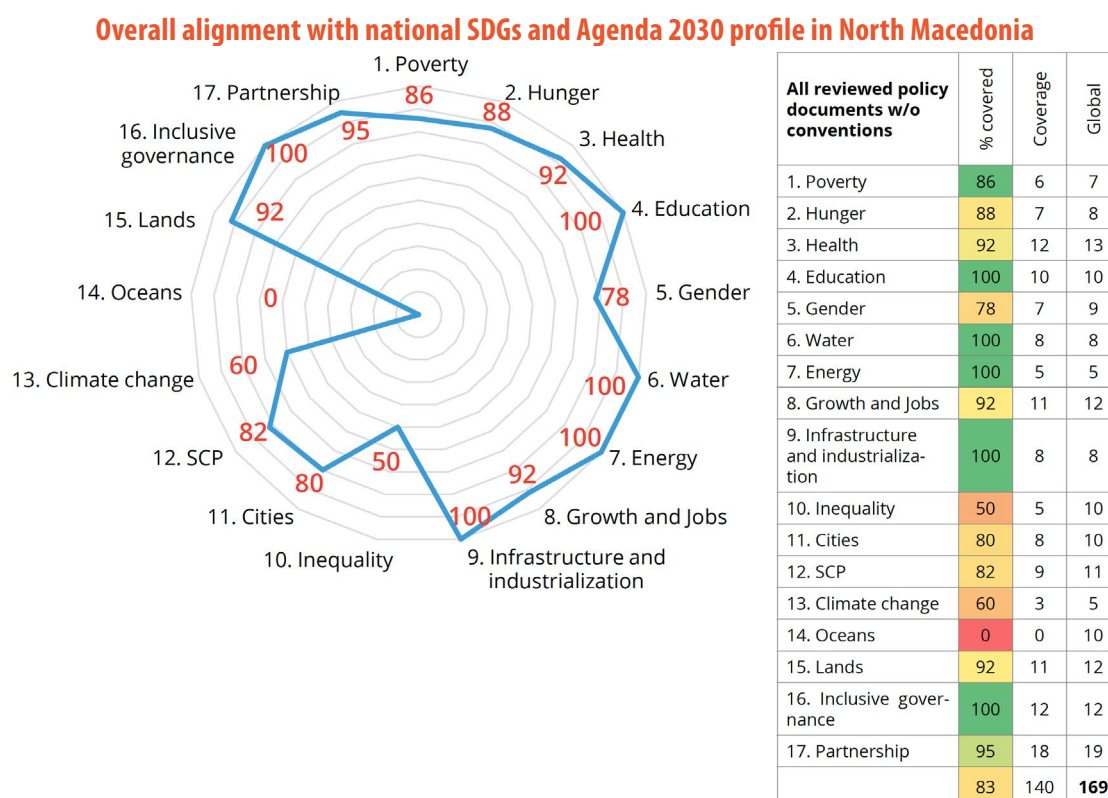
In spite of complex federal structures and competencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina which cause huge challenges both for co-ordinated governance and policy monitoring including for SDG Indicators, the national Institute of Statistics managed to co-ordinate and submit a Voluntary National Report in 2017 covering all SDGs.



Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23345VNR_BiH_ENG_Final.pdf

NORTH MACEDONIA

The Voluntary National Report of 2020 shows the following overall alignment with national SDGs and Agenda 2030 profile in North Macedonia:



Source: RIA working matrix, summary of alignment

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26387VNR_2020_Macedonia_Report.pdf

C.2. CAUCASUS

ARMENIA

Of the two Voluntary National Reports submitted in 2018 and 2020, the first focuses more on data reporting, the second one on outlook and strategic orientation.

A good progress towards achieving the SDG targets is observed in the areas: (ii) access to safe and reliable water supply in urban and rural areas; (iii) improved sanitation in urban areas, (iv) universal access to reliable energy, (v) promotion of renewable energy, (v) environmental protection, in terms of enlargement of protected areas and biodiversity.

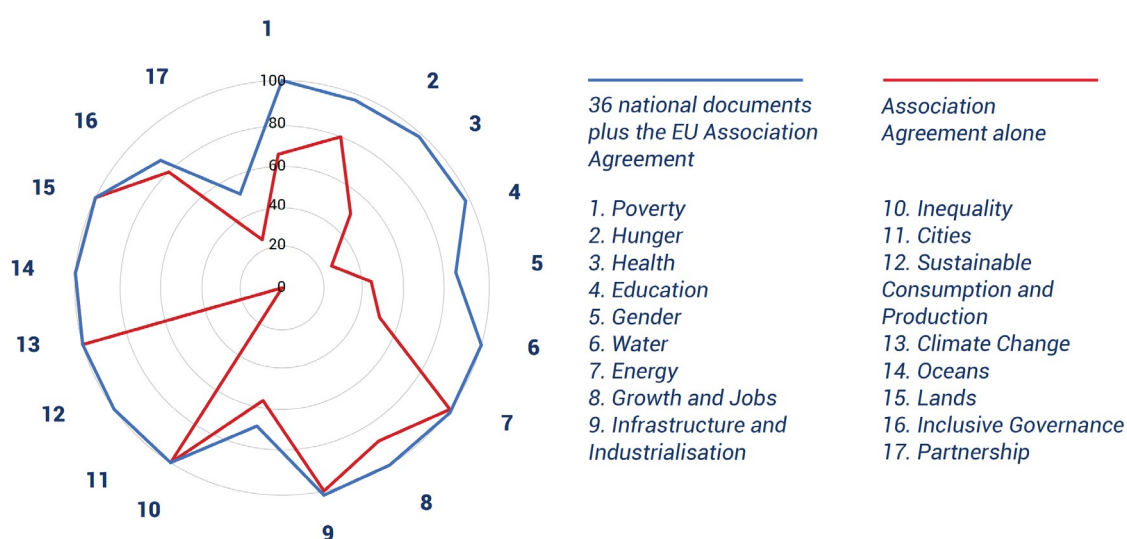
However, need for action is identified regarding the following challenging areas: (iv) inefficient use of water: >50% loss of irrigation water, (v) environment, due to deforestation risks, land degradation; (vi) low access to sanitation in rural areas; (viii) lack of sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices.

GEORGIA

Since 2014, Georgia is closely associated to the EU via an Association Agreement which includes a detailed programme of approximation in the environment sector towards EU legislation and best practice.

At the same time, Georgia actively follows the global agenda, and undertook - in addition to two Voluntary National SDG Indicator Reports in 2016 and 2020 – with support by UNDP Georgia also a MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for the 2030 Agenda) study on the state of SDGs in the country. The study showed that on 11 of 17 SDGs the respective national strategies go beyond the engagements under the EU Association Agreement alone:

Alignment of national strategies with SDG targets for each SDG



Source: https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/documents/26390VNR_2020_Georgia_Report.pdf

C.3. CENTRAL ASIA

Each of the project participating countries Kazakhstan (2019), Kyrgyzstan (2020) and Tajikistan (2017) have submitted between 2016 and 2020 one Voluntary National Report.

For the final version of this report, they will be analysed – as the ones of the other four countries – in early 2022 regarding the data provided for selected policy-relevant environmental SDG indicators, chosen on basis of the most discussed issue in the thematic webinars organised under this project.

D. LESSONS FROM CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIONS

D.1. THEMATIC WEBINARS

The active involvement of Environment Agency Austria in the UNDA project started with the co-organisation of a series of thematic webinars on policy-relevant data management and information issues regarding the themes:

- Health-relevant air quality data informing policy and the public
- Towards clean, renewable and efficient energy use
- National Waste Management Indicators and Policies
- Freshwater management indicators and policies
- Informing biodiversity restoration policies

The webinars – all online events due to the Covid-19 related travel restrictions – managed to present and discuss environmental policy and data issues balancing the interests of both thematic experts and policy officers.

The active engagement of the European Environment Agency as a lead presenter in all webinars strengthened the cooperation links with UN-ECE, and allowed an update also on the newest developments at European Union level.

D.2. DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE SHARING PLATFORM AND ONLINE LEARNING TOOL

At the time of writing, both Knowledge Sharing Platform (organising content addressed in the thematic webinars) and the related online learning tool are being implemented in the UN-ECE web server structures – the Knowledge Sharing Platform close to the traditional UN-ECE website design, the online learning tool in a more experimental design. Feedback from a user perspective can be available from early 2022, and lead to improvement of both tools.

D.3. FOLLOW-UP ON PREVIOUS GAP ASSESSMENTS AND ROADMAP DEVELOPMENT

Gap assessments regarding SEIS development were undertaken in 2019, and roadmaps for follow-up actions proposed to the participating countries. The status of acceptance, implementation, relevance and usefulness of the proposed actions will be evaluated in spring 2022 as part of the dialogue with project national focal points to validate the content/findings of the present report.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

On sharing and using data in support of reporting and assessment processes, taking into account the three essential SEIS pillars, would include the following

SEIS core recommendations to Governments in the UN Europe region

To ensure

- definition and implementation of environment and health/climate policies
- based on transparent and fact-based information
- shared at different levels depending on stakeholder needs
- between Governments, Science, Civil Society/Citizens and Businesses

To promote and implement

- management of such information according SEIS principles

Balancing

- institutional, human and technical requirements for SEIS implementation

Strengthening

- all three necessary SEIS pillars – content, infrastructure and co-operation, as well as
- public access to environmental data to allow effective participation of well-informed citizens in environmental matters (Aarhus Convention principles)

SEIS core recommendations to Governments in the UN Europe Region will be further developed and specified for awareness-raising in the context of the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in October 2022.