Review of the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators

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Work is based on decisions taken at the 17ᵗʰ session of the Joint Task Force

- Joint Task Force agreed with using the United Nations Framework for Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) as the overall framework and structure

- Importance of harmonizing the indicators with the EEA/EIONET indicator system

- Follow up in two parallel ways:
  - Update of metadata of indicators for which comments have been received
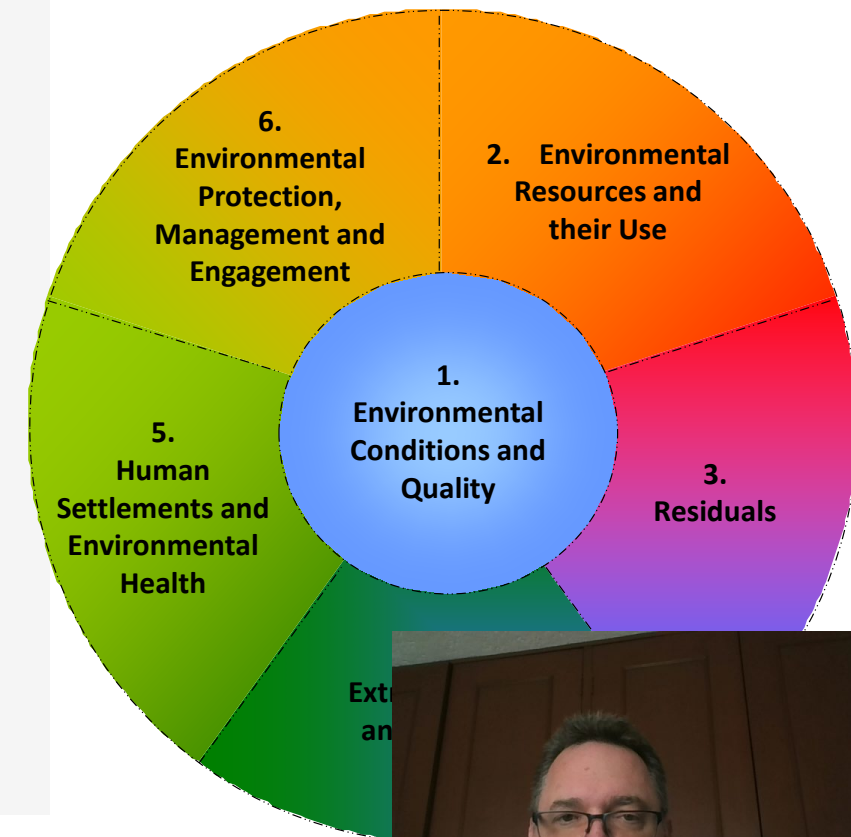 - Review of the list of indicators

Benefits of aligning indicator framework it with the UN FDES

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Some benefits of using the structure of the FDES for the list of recommended UNECE Environmental Indicators:

1. Using a globally agreed structure
2. FDES defines environmental indicators, data and statistics
3. FDES is broad, comprehensive and integrative. It defines the overall scope of environment statistics, thus can be used to identify information gaps and to set priorities
4. It can handle cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, COVID-19 or circular economy
5. New indicators can easily be added
6. Supports implementation of environmental statistics
7. Methodological guidelines are available

How did we involve members of the Joint Task Force, and how did we consider other indicator frameworks?

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- Consultants working with experts from ECE Secretariat:
  - Dimitrios Meimaris: reviewed the entire set of indicators
  - Dr. Tobias Garstecki: Focused on biodiversity-related indicators and also reviewed the related metadata
- ECE Secretariat and consultants carefully reviewed comments received from Joint Task Force members
- Indicator frameworks considered: EEA, OECD, global and EU sets of SDG indicators, CES Set of Core Climate Change-related Statistics
- Also considered: Ongoing discussions on indicators needed for Pan-European Environmental Assessment
- Joint Task Force members were asked for their expert opinion (informal consultation)
- ECE Secretariat revised the draft list of indicators after the informal co and outcomes of discussions of 18th Joint Task Force session
- A list of priority indicators was agreed upon

Examples of proposed changes of indicators

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1. Number of indicators (185 have been reviewed, which includes proposals for 24 additions and 27 to be discarded)
   - Example for indicator proposed to be discarded:
     - **C-9.6: Share of population using untreated groundwater).** This indicator is considered in the newly proposed indicator *C-6.2: Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (SDG indicator 6.1.1)*
   - Examples for newly proposed indicators:
     - Some environment-related SDG indicators, e.g., **D-1.5 Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type (SDG indicator 15.1.2)**
     - **J-1.4: Share of energy and transport taxes in total taxes and social contributions**. This is a tier I indicator in the CES Set of Core Climate Change-related Indicators
     - **D-8.1: Landscape fragmentation pressure and trends.** This is an indicator of the EEA indicator framework

2. Some proposals for modifying existing indicators
   - Example:
     - **B-1.1 Average annual deviations from average temperature.** Proposal is to modify nam concept to WHO recommended indicator **Mean temperature anomaly (compared to clim – 1990)**

Main feedback received from Joint Task Force members

- Respondents were in agreement with
  - 143 proposals for keeping, discarding or modifying indicators
  - 13 newly proposed indicators (e.g., *H-3.3 New registrations of electric vehicles*)

- One or more countries disagreed with
  - 3 indicators proposed to be discarded (e.g., *D-1.2 Share of total protected areas (national categories) in the country area*)
  - 4 indicators to be modified (e.g., *A-1.17: Share of PM10 emissions from stationary or mobile sources* (proposal was to disaggregate by certain activities)
  - 12 indicators to be kept (e.g., *B-3.15: Net emissions/removals of carbon dioxide by forest land*; no explanation was provided)
  - 7 indicators to be added:
    - Not relevant in all countries (e.g., *C-12.1: Chlorophyll in transitional, coastal a...*
    - Calculation methodology is needed (e.g., *A-3.2 Hydrofluorocarbon phase-dow...*
    - Not considered as relevant in the near future (e.g., *G-4.4 Use of renewable en... in Europe*)

Joint Task Force agreed on 68 priority indicators for finalization of metadata and indicator production

Environmental conditions and quality (9):

- Air quality: 2
- Atmosphere, climate and weather: 3
- Ecosystems and biodiversity: 1
- Forests: 2
- Soil characteristics: 1

Environmental resources and their use (15):

- Abstraction, use and returns of water: 6
- production, trade and consumption of energy: 5
- Use of forest land: 3
- Water resources: 1

Residuals (33)

- Consumption of ozone depleting substances: 1
- Discharge of wastewater to the environment: 2
- Emissions of GHG: 15
- Emissions of other substances to air: 5
- Generation of waste: 4
- Management of waste: 2
- Release of chemical substances: 4

Human settlements & environmental health (9):

- Access to selected basic services: 5
- Environmental concerns specific to urban settlements: 4

Environmental protection, management and engagement (2):

- Environmental protection management expenditure:
- Environmental regulation a

Next steps

- Metadata of priority indicators will now be gradually updated and released

- Next draft of indicator guidelines presented for comments and approval to Joint Task Force at its 19th session in November 2022

Thank you!

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