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**Reporting on the Shared Environmental Information System
to support a regular process of environmental assessment**

Outline of the report on the review of the environmental theme “air” using the revised United Nations Economic Commission for Europe indicators

Note by the secretariat

Summary

At the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, 5–7 October 2023), ministers adopted the Ministerial Declaration (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/L.1), thereby commending the general establishment of the Shared Environmental Information System across the region to support a regular process of environmental assessment, and invited countries to continue their efforts to implement all pillars of the Shared Environmental Information System – content, infrastructure and cooperation – and to address any remaining gaps.

At its twenty-fourth session (Geneva, 11–12 April 2022), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment discussed and agreed on how the System should be used in the future, and suggested checking regularly the implementation of the system for specific environmental themes.

The Working Group agreed to review annually a limited number of environmental themes and indicators, based on the Shared Environmental Information System assessment framework, and agreed to review in 2023 the theme “air pollution and air quality” and that the revised United Nations Economic Commission for Europe indicator guidelines should be implemented and used.

The present document aims to facilitate the Working Group’s agreement on the outline and subsequent oversight of the report preparation on the review of the environmental theme “air” using the revised United Nations Economic Commission for Europe indicator guidelines. The report will contribute to assessing progress in implementing the outcomes of the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference related to the System.



I. Background

1. At its twenty-fourth session (Geneva, 11–12 April 2022), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment discussed and agreed on how the Shared Environmental Information System should be used in the future and suggested regularly checking the establishment of the System for specific environmental themes.
2. The Working Group also discussed the need to develop the System further, including at the national level, and suggested continuing its regular and continuous use, sharing data and exchanging good practice experience and that the System should ideally be linked to the multilateral environmental agreements and should continue to support regular environmental assessment.
3. The Working Group agreed to review annually a limited number of environmental themes and indicators based on the Shared Environmental Information System assessment framework and agreed that the revised ECE indicator guidelines should be implemented and used.
4. Furthermore, the Working Group agreed to review in 2023 the theme “air pollution and air quality.”¹
5. At the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, 5–7 October 2023), ministers adopted the Ministerial Declaration (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/L.1), thereby commending the general establishment of the Shared Environmental Information System across the region to support a regular process of environmental assessment, and invited countries to continue their efforts to implement all pillars of the Shared Environmental Information System – content, infrastructure and cooperation – and to address any remaining gaps.
6. Ministers also recommended that countries make environmental information publicly available, findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable, and encouraged the collection of local and indigenous knowledge, citizen science and crowdsourced data. They also encouraged countries, when developing digitalization of environmental information systems relying on open data, big data and state-of-the-art digital technologies, to improve data availability, transparency and public involvement in decision-making.²
7. The present document aims to facilitate the Working Group’s agreement on the outline and subsequent oversight of the preparation of the report on the review of the environmental theme “air” using the revised ECE indicator guidelines.
8. The report will contribute to assessing progress in implementing the outcomes of the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference related to the Shared Environmental Information System and support countries to understand the System as part of their regular internal environmental monitoring process, assess their capacities related to the availability and quality of air-related data and indicators, and help identify resource needs for regular environmental monitoring and assessment based on the key findings of the report.
9. Therefore, the outline below was prepared based on the final review report on the establishment of the Shared Environmental Information System (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/8) launched at the Conference and the assessment framework of the Shared Environmental Information System (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2019/3).

¹ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2022/2, paras. 27–35.

² ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/L.1, para. 19.

II. Outline of the report on the review of the environmental theme “air” using the revised United Nations Economic Commission for Europe indicator guidelines

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