

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Eighty-seventh Meeting
Geneva, 18 November 2016

Item 8

Informal Document No. **2016/58**

Mapping of inter-sectoral and inter-divisional activities in UNECE

MAPPING OF INTER-SECTORAL AND INTER-DIVISIONAL ACTIVITIES IN UNECE

November 2016

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

The Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS-IED) conducted a programme evaluation of UNECE in 2015/2016. The overall evaluation objective was to determine the relevance and effectiveness of UNECE's work, and the extent to which it is prepared to support member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The OIOS report¹ concluded, *inter alia*, that UNECE has the necessary expertise to support member States, but faces the challenge of weak inter-sectoral collaboration. OIOS therefore recommended² that the UNECE secretariat should conduct a mapping of inter-sectoral and inter-divisional initiatives and activities in order to identify opportunities to strengthen the linkages and collaboration between its main functions and sub-programmes. This note identifies and briefly describes inter-sectoral and inter-divisional activities in UNECE as asked for in the recommendation.³

MODALITIES

There are different types of inter-divisional collaboration. Broadly speaking, a distinction can be made between ad hoc forms of collaboration and those that are underpinned by institutional structures or organizational arrangements and are clearly reflected in work programmes.

More specifically, we can distinguish between:

- Joint Programmes of Work and associated governance structures
- Joint inter-governmental groups
- Activities involving ad hoc forms of collaboration, including publications, capacity-building activities, joint workshops and different forms of information exchange
- Cooperation related to external initiatives, including coordination of inputs to be submitted to third parties.

There is also ongoing cooperation related to gender mainstreaming. In addition, the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division services different subprogrammes, which are engaged in a number of intra-divisional cooperation activities.

The degree of collaboration, including at the institutional/organizational level, varies across these different modalities. In particular, some forms of collaboration may take place quite regularly but do not find expression in programmes of work or are not supported by stable arrangements. In other cases, such as the submission of inputs to an external client by a particular Division, the activity can only be considered a joint one in a very loose way.

Regular exchanges of information are the basis for more complex forms of collaboration, including those that are underpinned by stable institutional arrangements. This mapping of inter-divisional activities includes examples of these positive dynamics. The adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, with its emphasis on cross-sectoral linkages, will enhance the significance of inter-divisional activities and open new areas for collaboration.

¹ EXCOM Informal Document No.2016/33

² Recommendation 2 of the OIOS Report

³ This mapping does not include issues or processes of a cross-sectoral nature serviced by other UN entities or international organisations in close collaboration with UNECE, e.g. the European Environment and Health Process.

ACTIVITIES

1. JOINT PROGRAMMES OF WORK

THE PEP – the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme

THE PEP is supported by the Sustainable Transport and Environment Divisions of UNECE and WHO Europe. It looks at the links between Transport, Health and Environment.

THE PEP Steering Committee is the principal decision-making body for the implementation of THE PEP. The first session of this Committee took place on 10–11 April 2003. It operates under the authority of the High-level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health to promote, coordinate and monitor the implementation of THE PEP work plan. The Steering Committee reports, on an annual basis, to the Regional Committee of WHO/Europe and to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It informs the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy. The five-year THE PEP workplan details a number of priorities and activities. Areas of work include sustainable urban transport, institutional arrangements for policy integration, health impact of transport, cycling and walking and the green economy.

United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)

This Programme supported by UNECE and ESCAP, promotes regional cooperation among Central Asian countries with a holistic, cross-sectoral approach. It has six Thematic Working Groups that deal with trade, transport, water, energy, environment, knowledge-based economy, statistics and gender. The work of these Groups is coordinated by the SPECA Governing Council which reviews strategic issues of regional cooperation and develops cross-sectoral work plans to strengthen such cooperation. Thanks to this broad, comprehensive approach UNECE projects can effectively address inter-linked issues like water, energy, the environment and climate change or trade and transport. Annual SPECA Economic Forums have broad discussions on regional cooperation and make recommendations, the implementation of which often requires cooperation by several Thematic Working Groups, such as development of Eurasian Transport Corridors or the development of economic ties between Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. A two-year cross-sectoral project in support of the implementation of the SDGs in SPECA was launched by UNECE with funding from the Russian Federation in June 2016.

2. JOINT INTER-GOVERNMENTAL GROUPS

Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings

The seventy-fifth session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) in October 2014 endorsed a proposal by the Committee Bureau for the development of a study on standards related to energy efficiency in buildings and disaster risk reduction. In line with the CHLM, the Committee on Sustainable Energy, at its twenty-third session on 19–21 November 2014 agreed on the importance of standards and normative instruments in the housing, transport and industry sectors, to guide and increase the impact of energy-efficiency approaches. It requested collaborative work with the CHLM to distil possible measures that could be included in a matrix on best-practices in energy efficiency.

The Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency, jointly with the Committee on Housing and Land Management, explored the potential for activities on energy efficiency standards in buildings. The Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) and the Committee on Sustainable Energy (CSE) organized an Expert Consultation on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings in April 2015.

A proposal was made to create a Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings, including experts from the CHLM, the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Working Party 6 on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies.

The outcomes of the survey on building standards and building regulations in the UNECE region were published in 2015. CHLM and the Committee on Sustainable Energy at their annual sessions in 2015 endorsed the proposal to establish a joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings of the ECE Region with participation of WP.6, other ECE bodies and international partner organizations. Terms of reference for the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings of the ECE Region for 2016–2017 were developed and approved.

Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistic and Indicators

The Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators (JTF) was set up in 2009 jointly by the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) with the aim to improve environmental statistics and strengthen environmental reporting in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia (EECCA) and South-Eastern Europe. The JTF held 11 meetings in the period 2009–2015. During this time, it revised all indicators covered by the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (Indicator Guidelines) prepared by the CEP Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment and endorsed at the Belgrade (2007) Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference. The JTF updated the Guidelines and added important indicators that were initially not included.

During the last two years, the focus of the work of the JTF has shifted from reviewing the indicators to the production and online sharing of data. The terms of reference of the JTF were revised in 2015 and now the aim of the JTF is to assist the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in their efforts to correctly apply the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) data methodologies in line with statistical standards, analyze and communicate environmental data, implement the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) and apply environmental indicators in the context of sustainable development and green economy initiatives. This supports also the establishment of regular data flows for effective reporting under international monitoring and assessment requirements, including the obligations under the relevant UNECE multilateral environmental agreements.

3. ACTIVITIES WITH AD HOC FORMS OF COLLABORATION

(a) Publications and other written outputs

Some of the recent publications which have benefited from inter-divisional work include:

Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs)

EPRs are carried out by the Environment Division but staff from other Divisions (in particular, Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Energy, Environment and Forests) are increasingly participating as authors of chapters on the sectors in which they work. The conclusions and recommendations of the EPRs on particular sectors are sometimes presented in the relevant committee.

Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management

The Country profiles are a flagship product of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. They are coordinated by the Housing and Land Management Unit, with the collaboration of the Innovative Policies Development Section for the chapter on Smart Sustainable Cities.

The pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy

The main background document on greening the economy in the pan-European region as well as the Pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy (adopted by the Committee on Environmental Policy and endorsed by the Batumi Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference) were developed by the Committee on Environmental Policy with support from the UNECE and UNEP and in cooperation with OECD and EEA.

From the UNECE secretariat all Divisions nominated representatives who participated in the development of these documents.

Studies on Regulatory and procedural barriers to trade

These studies are carried out by the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division building on the work undertaken by UN/CEFACT, WP.6 and WP.7. The studies also address a number of areas related to Transport. The Sustainable Transport Division is regularly consulted for comments and advice which is reflected in the studies, and the recommendations are presented during events organized by the Division.

Publications on transport statistics

The Sustainable Transport and the Statistics Divisions collaborate regularly in the preparation of the Glossary of Transport Statistics and in general publications like "UNECE Countries in figures". Development and implementation of internationally recommended standards and practices to improve the quality and comparability of statistics are shared goals for the two Divisions.

Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide

The Trade Facilitation Section and the TIR secretariat in the Sustainable Transport Division coordinated transport-related aspects of the Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide site. The Trade Facilitation Section has also uploaded information on new publications and tools on TIR to the Guide, including the recently released leaflet on the benefits of the TIR Convention.

OECD Study on International Regulatory Cooperation

A UNECE case study is included in an OECD study on International Regulatory Cooperation as a major function of International Organizations (IOs). The UNECE case study presents the work of UNECE in the field of international regulatory cooperation. The UNECE contribution has been managed and compiled by the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division (WP.6) in close cooperation with all UNECE sub-programmes.

Sustainable Development Briefs

These short research digests cover topics that have often cross-sectoral implications. They are produced by the Sustainable Development and Gender Unit but reflect the inputs received by Divisions working on the areas covered by these notes.

(b) Capacity-building activities

Trade and transport facilitation

The UNECE Trade and Transport Divisions organized, in Odessa, Ukraine, a joint capacity building event on 31 May 2016, on trade facilitation, Single Window and corridor development. The event built understanding on the basics of step-by-step establishment of a Single Window and corridor development, making a link to the UNECE transit and transport conventions and the UN/CEFACT recommendations.

Cooperation in the implementation of UNDA projects

A recent example of this cooperation is the development of the ForFITS tool (For Future Inland Transport Systems) in a global project led by the UNECE (Sustainable Transport Division, with the input of other Divisions, including Sustainable Energy, Statistics and Environment). The ForFITS tool assesses CO₂ emissions from transport and simulates the impact of policies intended to mitigate them.

(c) Joint workshops

Joint UNECE Workshop on safety and land-use planning

This workshop, which took place in Geneva on 13 April 2016, was organized jointly under the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol of Strategic Environmental Assessment to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, in cooperation with the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management and the European Investment Bank. The workshop focused on relevant experiences, good practices and challenges encountered by Parties and stakeholders in the field of safety and land-use planning, in particular with respect to the siting and modification of industrial hazardous activities.

(d) Information exchanges

Staff from different Divisions routinely make presentations in the sessions of Sectoral Committees and other groups serviced by other Divisions. This is done primarily for information purposes. In some cases these exchanges have an ad hoc character, in others they are quite regular and well-established.

Cooperation on transport statistics

The Sustainable Transport Division gathers transport statistics which are then disseminated through the UNECE online database managed by the Statistics Division. The secretariat of the Inland Transport Committee Working Party on Transport Statistics is participating regularly in the meetings related to the UNECE statistical database. The transport secretariat also participates in relevant sessions of the Conference of European Statisticians and other meetings organized by the Statistics Division and provides information on transport statistics as necessary. Similarly, the Statistics Division participates in the meetings of the Inland Transport Committee's Working Party on Transport Statistics.

The energy-water nexus

Within the context of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes adopted in 1992, the Sustainable Energy Division and the Environment Division are cooperating in various activities, in particular for the participatory assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus of the Drina River Basin, aimed at fostering transboundary cooperation and intersectoral coordination. In this project, renewable energies are considered in close correlation with cross-cutting areas (including climate change), taking into account trade-offs related to development of hydropower in particular with environment and other water uses. Within the context of its work plan, the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy considers renewable energies taking into account the potential of renewable energies to contribute to sustainable development in the energy sector and beyond, provided that intersectoral effects and possible synergies, as well as environmental impacts are taken into account.

Renewable energy and forestry

The UNECE Group of Experts on Renewable Energy is tracking the renewable energy progress made in the region. Data and information complement the data collection and analysis on wood energy which is addressed in many aspects, including from a cross-cutting angle, in the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section's work.

Energy efficiency and UN/CEFACT

The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) currently has two projects to support energy efficiency: "Reutilization of data from utility management

systems" and "Alignment of master data for metering point and of measured data in the deregulated energy market". Information on these projects have been shared with the Sustainable Energy Division and the Housing and Land Management Division in order to explore collaboration based on the UN/CEFACT standards.

4. COOPERATION RELATED TO EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

Support to the UN work in support of landlocked developing countries

UNECE and the United Nations Office of the High-Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) consistently work together to realize the objectives of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries. UNECE regularly gives account of its activities supporting the land-locked developing countries and transition economies including relevant results from the work of the Inland Transport Committee and the Trade Steering Committee, as well as UN/CEFACT.

Transport of Dangerous Goods and GHS

The Sustainable Transport Division cooperates closely with quite a number of specialized agencies or UN entities but also with other UNECE divisions that are involved in activities related to the transport of dangerous goods and GHS, notably the Environment Division in relation to the Convention on industrial accidents. UN/CEFACT has also relevant projects on the development of electronic messages for transport documentation (transboundary movements of waste, etc.)

Cooperation in the framework of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition

UNECE has been a partner in the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) since 2015. The Sustainable Energy Division and the Environment Division are coordinating cooperation in the framework of the CCAC on short-lived climate pollutants, focusing on methane management, black carbon as a component of particulate matter, and a number of ozone precursors.

Coordination of inputs and preparation of documents for international conferences and other intergovernmental processes

On different occasions, a particular Division has taken the lead in coordinating the UNECE response to the demands put by an International Conference or another major event, including the preparation of substantive outputs. This has been the case for example regarding the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Economic Cooperation and Trade) or COP 21 (Energy). Routinely, this coordination function is performed by the Sustainable Development and Gender Unit in the Office of the Executive Secretary.

Representation of UNECE in different fora

On some occasions, representation of UNECE in a meeting or the channelling of communication is carried out by a particular Division. This concerns, for example, the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee, where UNECE is represented by the secretariat of WP.6. This representation facilitated the participation of the UNECE sustainable transport programme (WP.29) in the Committee's work – notably through a presentation of their activities at a Workshop on "Regulatory Cooperation in Energy Efficiency" (June 2016).

5. COOPERATION RELATED TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Cross-sectoral activities include the reflection of the gender dimension in the UNECE sub-programmes. Gender mainstreaming is used as a strategy for reaching gender equality and the empowerment of women in all activities and in human resources in line with the UNECE Policy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, including the Gender Action Plan for 2016–17.

A project on Women in Trade Facilitation has recently been launched under the UN/CEFACT framework. For this, the Trade Facilitation Section has reached out to the Sustainable Development and Gender Unit.

At its November 2016 session, the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies will be hosting a discussion on gender mainstreaming in standards and technical regulations.

6. COOPERATION BETWEEN SUBPROGRAMMES SERVICED BY THE SAME DIVISION

UN/CEFACT Cooperation on Public-Private Partnerships with the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme

There is close cooperation and collaboration between the Trade Facilitation Section and the Cooperation and Partnerships Section in the development of recommendations and organization of meetings.

UN/CEFACT also cooperates with WP.6 in the organization of joint events and technical cooperation projects. An example of prospective cooperation is the project to develop an electronic data exchange document between market surveillance agencies in different jurisdictions.

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