



Streamlining the work on environmental monitoring and assessment

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Ivonne Higuero
Chief, Operational Activities and Review Section
Environment Division, UNECE





Background

- I. CEP-20 renewed the mandates of the Working Group on Environmental Management and Assessment (WGEMA) and the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators (JTF) for one year
- II. New task for the WGEMA: to review progress in establishment of SEIS
- III. Secretariat asked to prepare proposal to streamline the work of the two bodies, with pros and cons of merging the two bodies





Main responsibilities of the WGEMA until now

From the beginning, WGEMA was created to serve national institutions of all ECE member States

- Exchange good practice, develop action plans and strengthen initiatives in environmental monitoring
- Environmental assessment and streamlining international environmental reporting in the pan European region (2003)
- Assist countries of EECCA and SEE in monitoring and assessment for environmental policymaking and improve international environmental reporting (2007)
- Later on also supporting the efforts in establishing SEIS in those countries
- Support the establishment of the pan European SEIS and review SEIS progress (2014)

WGEMA has been a platform for countries to analyse and assess their national environmental policies using the indicators produced for improved capacity in producing good quality SOER





Main responsibilities of the JTFEI until now

Created in 2009 jointly by CEP and CES to support the WGEMA by assisting target countries with methodological challenges

- Assist national statistical agencies and institutions responsible for environmental data to improve collection, processing and validation of environmental data using internationally accepted methodologies
- Improve production and sharing of the agreed UNECE environmental indicators
- Focused on statistical methodologies and analysing the availability and quality of the data produced by the target countries

Platform to assist the target countries on incorporating indicator methodologies and applying them to produce and share indicators and data





New tasks and strengthened mandate for the WGEMA

- Support the establishment of the pan European SEIS
- To review SEIS progress based on the targets and indicators adopted by CEP and prepare a progress report for Batumi
- And, as a result of yesterday's decision on the regular reporting process, to coordinate/lead the consultation process for the regular pan European environmental assessment as a network of networks to be able to adapt SEIS to emerging needs; assess at regular intervals the production and sharing of SEIS datasets; and evaluate the application of accepted methodologies.





New tasks for the JTFEI

- Building capacity for overcoming gaps in the application of data production methodologies in EECCA and SEE
- Communication of environmental indicators and information to decision-makers and the public, in particular through SOERs
- Implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)
- Application of environmental indicators in the context of sustainable development and green economy indicators

**If the functions are expanded it is suggested to rename to
Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators**





Analysis of the Pros and Cons for merging the WGEMA and the JTFEI

- Differences in geographical coverage of the two bodies
- Involvement of national agencies in the work of both bodies
- Organization of meetings back to back for savings
- Governance of JTFEI is both CEP and CES, if merged, CES would also govern WGEMA
- Inefficiencies in addressing specific challenges in the target countries under one body because of relevance to some countries and not others
- Capacity-building activities would also be less relevant for some countries, especially where there are dedicated platforms for some issues (SEEA, GE, etc.) in other sub-regions
- If WGEMA remains as the sole body with its current functions, the support of the JTFEI on SEIS would be lost which could impact aspirations for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development





Recommendations

- **Achieve the SEIS related mandate with a strengthened WGEMA as an environmental knowledge and assessment network for the entire pan European region, assuming also the tasks of the Group of the Friends of SEIS**
- **Maintain the JTF as a body to provide a platform for target countries to address their specific challenges in establishing the necessary environmental knowledge, and to discuss interlinkages between environmental and economic considerations in the context of sustainable development and green economy, in partnership with CES**

