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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Fourteenth session

Geneva, 7–8 November 2013

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the fourteenth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 2:30 p.m.
on Thursday, 7 November 2013*

I. Provisional Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the thirteenth session.
3. Outcomes of the nineteenth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy of concern to the Working Group.
4. Development of guidelines on monitoring of chemical contamination of soil.
5. Support to establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing the Shared Environmental Information System:

* In accordance with the accreditation procedures for meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to complete the registration form available on the website of the Working Group (<http://www.unece.org/wgema-14.html>) and to transmit it to the secretariat as soon as possible but no later than two weeks prior to the meeting, by fax (+41 22 917 0107) or by e-mail (ludmila.boichuk@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, avenue de la Paix (see the map on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website: www.unece.org/meetings/UN_Map.pdf). In case of difficulty, please telephone the secretariat at +41 22 917 2364.

- (a) Latest developments in environmental monitoring at the national and subnational levels;
 - (b) Progress in the activities of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators;
 - (c) Preparation of Indicator-based Environment Assessment Reports;
 - (d) Practicalities of using the methodology of the Europe's Environment — An Assessment of Assessments report at the national level;
 - (e) Use of modern technologies for better dissemination of environmental information.
6. Assessment and data-collection activities in other forums of relevance to the Working Group.
 7. Other business.

II. Annotations

According to its revised terms of reference (ECE/CEP/2012/6, annex), the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment is open to all member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and includes the European Environment Agency (EEA). Members of the Working Group are officials in ECE countries dealing with environmental monitoring and assessment. The Working Group is mandated to involve experts from statistical agencies, relevant services and major groups in its activities.

Other international forums and networks — such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the United Nations Statistics Division; the World Health Organization (WHO); the European Centre for Environment and Health (ECEH); relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), especially those of ECE; the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS); and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development — are also invited to participate.

In addition to circulation through the normal channels, meeting documentation will be posted on the Working Group's website (<http://www.unece.org/wgema-14.html>).

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group will be invited to adopt the agenda for its fourteenth session, as set out in the present document.

2. Adoption of the report of the thirteenth session

The Working Group will be invited to adopt the report of its thirteenth session, contained in document ECE/CEP/AC.10/2012/2.

3. Outcomes of the of the nineteenth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy of concern to the Working Group

The Working Group will be informed about the discussions held and decisions taken at the Committee's nineteenth session in October 2013 regarding implementation of the work programme on environmental monitoring and assessment.

4. Development of guidelines on monitoring of chemical contamination of soil

Following the decision at the thirteenth session (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2012/2, para 17), with the assistance of a consultant the secretariat has prepared draft guidelines on monitoring of chemical contamination of soil (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2013/6). The Working Group will be invited to consider the draft guidelines.

5. Support to establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing the Shared Environmental Information System

The Working Group will further consider efforts that it could undertake to strengthen or to contribute to the development and establishment of a regular assessment and reporting process, including developing the Shared Environment Information System (SEIS), as decided by ECE ministers at the Seventh "Environment for Europe" (EfE) Ministerial Conference (Astana, September 2011).

The Working Group will also consider improving cooperation and coordination of all relevant partners in the process of development of SEIS and establishment of regular assessment throughout the pan-European region.

(a) Latest developments in environmental monitoring at the national and subnational levels

Members of the Working Group, experts from national statistical agencies and other central and subnational (e.g., municipal) authorities, as well as representatives of major groups, are expected to submit brief written reports on major actions initiated **since October 2012** in their countries, agencies and organizations, regarding:

- (a) Modernization and upgrading of national monitoring networks, in particular those on air, water and soil;
- (b) Development of monitoring of biodiversity;
- (c) Development or improvement of inventories;
- (d) Improvements to data quality assurance and control, as well as databases management;
- (e) Improvements in institutional mechanisms for data exchange and sharing (between ministries of environment, their agencies and services and ministries of agriculture, energy, health, industry, transport and water).

The reports should be submitted to the secretariat by 28 October 2013.

(b) Progress in the activities of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators

The Chair of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators will inform the Working Group about the progress made in helping countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus,

Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe to produce internationally agreed environmental indicators underpinning regular environmental assessments at the national level.

(c) Preparation of Indicator-based Environment Assessment Reports

The Working Group at its thirteenth session decided to establish a network of national focal points responsible for preparing of national state of the environment (SoE) reports, taking into account, in particular, the experience gained in this respect within the EEA networks (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2012/2, para. 62). A meeting of these focal points was held on 16 and 17 April 2013 in Geneva to share good practices in preparations of the SoE reports and to review progress made in the production of the reports (see ECE/CEP/AC.10/2013/2).

Based on the information exchanged at the April meeting, as well as the responses by countries to a questionnaire circulated by the secretariat on the topic, the secretariat has prepared an analytical report to present progress made in production of the SoE reports and lessons learned and recommendations for preparation and/or improvement of such reports (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2013/5).

The Working Group will be invited to discuss the report, endorse the recommendations and call for their application in the countries concerned.

(d) Practicalities of using the methodology of the Europe's Environment — An Assessment of Assessments report at the national level

At its thirteenth session, the Working Group welcomed the proposals from two Regional Environmental Centres to undertake pilot projects on assessment of assessments: in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia; and in the Republic of Moldova by the Regional Environmental Centre Moldova. The Regional Environmental Centres will present reports on the implementation of the pilot projects to the Working Group (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2013/7 and ECE/CEP/AC.10/2013/8).

The Working Group will be invited to discuss the reports.

(e) Use of modern technologies for better dissemination of environmental information

Members of the Working Group will continue to exchange good practices on the use of modern technologies, such as online geographic information system-based systems and software, for better dissemination of environmental data, indicators and assessments.

6. Assessment and data-collection activities in other forums of relevance to the Working Group

EEA, UNEP, WHO/ECEH, MEAs and other international forums will be invited to report on ongoing and planned environmental assessment and data-collection activities of relevance to the Working Group.

The Working Group may wish to comment on the information provided and consider practical ways and means to support the above activities.

7. Other business

At the time of writing, the secretariat had no points to propose under this item.

III. Organization of work

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item of the Agenda</i>
Thursday, 7 November 2013	
2:30–2:40 p.m.	1
2:40–2:50 p.m.	2
2:50–3:20 p.m.	3
3:20–4:20 p.m.	4
4:20–5.30 p.m.	5 (a)
Friday, 8 November 2013	
9:30–10:15 a.m.	5 (a) (continued)
10:15–10:45 a.m.	5 (b)
10:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	5 (c)
2:30–3:30 p.m.	5 (d)
3:30–4.30 p.m.	5 (e)
4:30–5:15 p.m.	6
5:15–5:30 p.m.	7
