



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
12 August 2014

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Fifteenth session

Geneva, 6 and 7 November 2014

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the fifteenth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 9:30 a.m.
on Thursday, 6 November 2014*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the fourteenth session.
3. Outcomes of the twentieth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy relevant to the Working Group.
4. Support to establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and development of the Shared Environmental Information System:
 - (a) Latest activities for developing the Shared Environmental Information System and related changes in environmental monitoring, institutional and regulatory mechanisms and infrastructure;

* There are accreditation procedures for all delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete an online registration form using the electronic procedure available from the website of the Working Group (<http://www.unece.org/wgema-15.html>) no later than four weeks prior to the meeting. 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.



- (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.
5. Assessment and data-collection activities in other forums of relevance to the Working Group.
 6. Election of the Bureau.
 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 European Centre for Environment and Health (WHO/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-15.html>).

1. Adoption of the agenda

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

2. Adoption of the report of the fourteenth session

The Working Group will be invited to adopt the report of its fourteenth session, contained in document ECE/CEP/AC.10/2013/4.

3. Outcomes of the of the twentieth 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 twentieth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy in October 2014 regarding: (a) implementation of the work programme on environmental monitoring and assessment; (b) adoption of the new mandate of the Working Group; (c) adoption of guidelines on monitoring of chemical contamination of soil; (d) a decision on targets and performance indicators for development of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS); and

(e) a decision on the themes for the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference and related decisions.

The Working Group may wish to discuss the outcomes.

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

(a) Latest activities for developing a Shared Environmental Information System and related changes in environmental monitoring, institutional and regulatory mechanisms and infrastructure

Members of the Working Group are invited to share good practice and experience in developing SEIS. They could inform each other on actions taken since the previous meeting in support of SEIS development 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 in data quality assurance and control, as well as the management of databases;

(e) Improvements in institutional and regulatory mechanisms and technical solutions for data exchange between ministries of environment, their agencies and services and ministries of agriculture, energy, health, industry, transport and water and for online data sharing with the public.

To support the discussion on SEIS development, 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 invited to submit brief written reports on major actions initiated **since October 2013** in their countries, agencies and organizations. The secretariat will prepare and circulate a format for the report.

The reports should be submitted to the secretariat by **17 October 2014**.

(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 assisting countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to produce internationally agreed environmental indicators to underpin regular environmental assessments at the national level.

(c) Preparation of Indicator-based Environmental Assessment Reports

At its fourteenth session (Geneva, 7–8 November 2013), the Working Group discussed and welcomed several recommendations to countries for further enhancing the content of environmental assessment reports so as to make them more useful to policymakers and better understood by the general public. The Working Group invited the countries to consider the recommendations and make efforts to implement them. Furthermore, the Working Group agreed that the countries should be supported in their efforts, through capacity-building, and invited the secretariat to explore possibilities with partners and donors to do so.

In view of the Working Group's request, the secretariat will organize, in cooperation with partners and donors, a hands-on segment on environmental assessment report writing within the fifteenth session. The segment will contain presentations on indicator-based environmental assessment report writing as well as case studies highlighting concise but informative and policymaker-oriented descriptive sections of environmental assessment reports.

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

At its fourteenth session, the Working Group discussed two reports from pilot projects on assessment of assessments (AoA) undertaken by the Regional Environmental Centres: 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 reports provided insight into shortcomings in the national systems of the three countries for environmental monitoring, data handling and reporting as well as recommendations on how to address those shortcomings.

The Working Group invited the three countries to implement the recommendations and to report on progress made at future meetings. To that end, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Moldova will be invited to present the progress achieved.

5. 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 these activities.

6. Election of the Bureau

The Working Group is expected to elect its Chair and two Vice-Chairs who will constitute the Groups' Bureau for the period of the new mandate expected to be adopted by CEP in October 2014.

The members of the Working Group are invited to start consultations on possible candidates prior to the meeting.

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, 6 November 2014	
9.30–9.40 a.m.	1
9.40–9.50 a.m.	2
9.50–10.20 p.m.	3
10.20 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	4 (a)
2.30–3 p.m.	4 (b)
3–5.30 p.m.	4 (c)
Friday, 7 November 2014	
9.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	4 (c) continuation
2.30–3.30 p.m.	4 (d)
3.30–4.45 p.m.	5
4.45–5.15 p.m.	6
5.15–5.30 p.m.	7
