

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

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Environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting

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Annual timetable of activities for 2019

Note by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Summary

At its twenty-second session (Geneva, 25–27 January 2017), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on Environmental Policy renewed the mandate and terms of reference of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment for a five-year period (2017–2021). The terms of reference require the preparation of annual timetables of activities, taking into account the financial and human resources available. At its nineteenth session, while considering the approval of the annual timetable of activities for 2018 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2017/3), the Working Group agreed that the secretariat would develop indicators of achievement to be included in the next annual timetable of activities.

At its twentieth session (3–4 September 2018), the Working Group considered a draft annual timetable of activities for 2019 and asked the secretariat to add a column to the main table to indicate priorities. In addition, the expected achievements should be toned down. As requested by the Working Group, the secretariat circulated the revised timetable and gave two weeks for concrete changes to be suggested. Once further revised, the secretariat sent it again to participants for approval by a written silence procedure. The written silence procedure was completed on 26 October 2018.

Introduction

1. The present document sets out a timetable of activities to be carried out by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in 2019.
2. The timetable set out below is based on the renewed mandate and terms of reference of the Working Group (ECE/CEP/2017/2, annex II) and the draft revised outline of the Working Group's activities leading up to 2021 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2018/3).
3. The Working Group will implement the activities in close collaboration with national and international governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, including youth organizations, research institutes and academia, and with other relevant United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) bodies such as the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators.
4. With the assistance of the ECE secretariat, member States and organizations that agree to lead any of the activities outlined below will need to facilitate their implementation and report to the Working Group on the progress made and challenges faced.
5. The Working Group will support the secretariat in its continuing efforts to mobilize resources and assistance from regional and international organizations and member States in order to enable the Working Group to operate fully.

Timetable of activities in 2019

<i>Main overall objective and activity^a</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Task or event</i>	<i>Timing (to be confirmed)</i>	<i>Indicator of achievement</i>	<i>Other activities^a</i>
A.1. Continue supporting the establishment of SEIS with regard to its specific content and principles in support of regular environmental assessment processes and reporting	High	Capacity-building activities at annual sessions of the Working Group and Joint Task Force in support of SEIS establishment and regular monitoring and assessment, including on environment-related SDGs	7-8 May and 28–29 October 2019	Holding of the capacity-building activities	B.3
		Initiation of the development of a SEIS e-learning platform (ECE with UNEP)	Second half of 2019	Concept for the e-learning platform	–
A.2. Continue cooperating with the Joint Task Force in its work on environmental statistics and indicators, associated data sets and accompanying environmental information and data necessary to establish SEIS	High	Review and amendment of the <i>ECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators</i>	Throughout 2019	Publication of revised guidelines in print or online	–
		Annual session of the Joint Task Force	28–29 October 2019	Report on the session	A.1, A.5, C.2, D.1, D.2, D.3
A.3. Regularly evaluate the performance of ECE countries in establishing and implementing SEIS against the SEIS targets and performance indicators adopted by the Committee	High	Initiation of the next round of reporting on the establishment of SEIS	First half of 2019	Compilation of completed questionnaires on the establishment of SEIS	–
		Publication of the SEIS assessment framework	Second half of 2019	Publication	–

<i>Main overall objective and activity^a</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Task or event</i>	<i>Timing (to be confirmed)</i>	<i>Indicator of achievement</i>	<i>Other activities^a</i>
A.4. Prepare a mid-term and a final report for the Committee on the establishment and implementation of SEIS leading up to 2021		Presentation of the report on the mid-term review of the establishment of SEIS at the twenty-fourth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy	29–31 January 2019	Approval of the report by the Committee	–
B.1. Bring together experts involved in the UNEP Global Environment Outlook process and the EEA European Environment Information and Observation Network to discuss and oversee the regular pan-European environmental assessment	Medium	Drafting of a concept for the next regular pan-European environmental assessment	First half of 2019	Approval of the draft concept by the Working Group	–
C.5. Publish outcomes from the Working Group’s collaborative activities	Low	Publication of other guidelines as appropriate	Second half of 2019	Publication	–
D.1. Detail regional and national capacity gaps in information and data needed for producing the ECE set of environmental indicators, the EEA core set of indicators, OECD green growth indicators and SDG indicators	Medium	Completion of national gap analyses on environmental data and information needs and SEIS establishment in selected countries under the UNDA project	First half of 2019	National gap analyses	–
D.2. Support countries in the development of regional and national indicator frameworks to monitor the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, and activities to support its implementation	Medium	Capacity-building and training sessions in support of SEIS establishment and regular monitoring and assessment, including on environment-related SDGs: seven national training workshops under the UNDA project ^b	Throughout 2019	Holding of the workshops	B.3
D.4. Implement capacity-building activities to provide assistance in accordance with priority areas of action	High	Regional capacity-building workshop or conference on environmental data	6 May 2019	Holding of the conference	–
Cross-cutting		Presentation of the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Programme in general at the twenty-fourth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy	29–31 January 2019	Expressions of support for the Programme by the Committee	–

<i>Main overall objective and activity^a</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Task or event</i>	<i>Timing (to be confirmed)</i>	<i>Indicator of achievement</i>	<i>Other activities^a</i>
		Presentation of the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Programme in general at the twenty-fifth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy	12–14 November 2019	Expressions of support for the Programme by the Committee	–
		Annual session of the Working Group, including capacity-building and support for the development of regional and national indicator frameworks	7–8 May 2019	Report on the session	A.1, A.2, A.5, B.2, C.2, C.3, C.4, D.1, D.2
		Drafting of an annual timetable of activities for 2020	Second quarter of 2019	Approval of the timetable by the Working Group	C.2

Abbreviations: EEA = European Environment Agency; OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; SDG = Sustainable Development Goal; SEIS = Shared Environmental Information System; UNDA = United Nations Development Account; UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme.

^a These are listed in the outline of activities of the Working Group leading up to 2021 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2018/3), which is based on the objectives and activities set out in the terms of reference of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment for a five-year period (2017–2021) (ECE/CEP/2017/2, annex II).

^b “Improved environmental monitoring and assessment in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus”.