

WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

**Thirteenth session
Geneva, 1-2 November 2012**

Items 6 (b), (d), (e) and (f) of the provisional agenda

Submitted by Georgia¹

Members of the Working Group, experts from national statistical agencies and other central and subnational authorities, as well as representatives of major groups, are invited to briefly report on major recently accomplished, ongoing and planned actions initiated in their countries, agencies and organizations, regarding the following:

I. Latest developments in environmental monitoring at the national and subnational levels

(Major actions initiated since October 2011 in the areas listed below (a-c))

A. Modernization and upgrading of national monitoring networks and information systems

The Monitoring Network on air and water quality has not significantly changed since October 2011. The number and measured parameters remain the same.

Some new significant directions in the field of monitoring should be separately noted:

- In the frame of Pilot Project ‘Air Quality Monitoring System in Tbilisi’ (Netherlands) in Tbilisi, near to existing meteorological station (Vashlijvari district), was installed the first automated air quality monitoring station. By the end of 2012 will be provided air quality model for Tbilisi.
- Since 2011 works for expansion of automated network of hydro-meteorological observation have been carried out. In the framework of Czech project, positions for the installation of 3 automated meteorological stations have been prepared (at which atmospheric pressure, air temperature and humidity, amount and intensity of precipitations, wind speed and direction will be measured) and 7 hydrological posts at which the level of water in rivers will be measured.
- In the framework of the Project Adaptation Fund for Climate Change it is envisaged purchase and installment automated: 5 meteorological stations, 20 meteorological and 10 hydrological posts.
- National Biodiversity Monitoring System (NBMS) is being established. NBMS is an indicator-based monitoring system founded on 26 indicators. The indicators follow the thematic areas (protected areas, forest and other wooded land, threatened and protected species, trends in the number and distribution of selected species) defined in UN “Environmental Indicators and Indicator-based Assessment Reports (2007)” elaborated for

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Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia by Economic Commission for Europe. Following the internationally accepted OECD model, 26 indicators are grouped under three categories: Pressure (11), State (6) and Response (9). The list of the indicators, together with the description of the methodologies for 17 indicators has been approved by the order of the minister. Currently the calculation process is ongoing for 10 indicators. The results will be available by the end of 2012 on the biodiversity monitoring web-site: www.biomonitoring.moe.gov.ge. The same results will be later published in an annual biodiversity monitoring report.

B. Strengthening monitoring of specific environmental media

- The automated air quality monitoring station is currently in testing phase that will be finalized by the end of September 2012. This is the first automated station installed in Georgia where is provided measurement of following polluting substances: CO, NOx (NO, NO₂), SO₂, O₃, PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, PM₁, PM₄, Total PM (PM₁₇). In 2012 was started monitoring of such important pollutants as PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, which have never been measured before.
- Biological monitoring of surface waters has been carried out since 2011. At the first stage the selection of samples and identification of macro-invertebrates is being carried out.

C. Improvement of data collection, transfer, treatment and exchange

- Together with the automated air quality monitoring station was built up an information exchange system that supplies on-line connection between the monitoring station and information analysis centre situated in office of the National Environmental Agency. The centre was provided by specific software for better monitoring data analysis.
- Since 2010 the existing historical hydro-meteorological data have been transferred from paper to an electronic format, which contributes to replenishment of databases.
- In 2013 in the frames of Czech-Georgian project, the introduction of modern system for processing of meteorological and hydrological data is planned. It will have high-capacity system of quality assurance and database management.
- Collection and distribution on national and international levels of the data obtained by hydro-meteorological observation points, is conducted in automated regime, applying the modern telecommunication technology introduced in the country in 2009.
- Hydro-meteorological prognoses and warnings concerning the expected natural hydro-meteorological events, in accordance with preliminarily established schemes, shall be immediately communicated to the central and local authorities, all interested ministries and institutions, and mass media.
- The biodiversity monitoring web-site is under construction currently. It will be launched by the end of 2012 and will serve as a platform for information transfer on functioning of National Biodiversity Monitoring System of Georgia.
- The 3rd National Communication has been started at the end of 2011. During the project preparation period the information related to the GHG inventory will be updated and covered the period of time until 2010. The final results will be represented in 2013.

II. Preparation of Indicator-based Environment Assessment Reports

(Progress made since 2007 in implementing the Guidelines for the Preparation of Indicator-based Environment Assessment Reports)

- According to the Georgian legislation, the National Report on the State of Environment should be developed once every three years for the purpose of public information.
- In 2010 “National Report on the State of Environment of Georgia in 2007-2009” was elaborated and approved on 9 December 2011. National Report was prepared and published in Georgian and English languages. The Reports are available on the official web-page of the ministry: www.moe.gov.ge; and web-page of Aarhus Centre of Georgia: <http://www.aarhus.ge>
- For the transparency of the National Report preparation process in January 2010 an Experts Working Group/ Public Council was established. The Council was comprised of the representatives of NGOs, social and scientific organizations. During 2010 several public hearings of the draft Report were arranged, comments and remarks concerning the project were expressed. Based on the recommendations of the Council, the changes to the draft report were made and the Decree of President on the “Rules of Preparation of State of Environment Reports” was amended. Proceeding from these changes, a new chapter: Environmental Impact of Economic Sectors was prepared, which describes the environmental impacts of several economic fields: Agriculture and Forestry, Transport, Energy and Industry.

III. Practicalities of using the methodology of the Europe’s Environment — An Assessment of Assessments report at the national level

(Experiences on initiating assessment of environmental assessments using the EE-AoA methodology at the national level)

IV. Use of modern technologies for better dissemination of environmental information

(Experiences on the use of modern technologies, such as Internet-based tools, online geographic information system-based systems and software and/or other relevant applications)

- The National Report on the State of Environment preparation process was fully highlighted at the web-page specifically created for this purpose: <http://www.soedgeorgia.blogspot.com>. All release versions, received comments and remarks were regularly put at the Ministry’s and the above-given web-pages.

Submissions in English and, if possible, Russian in Times New Roman, font 12, line-spacing Single should be submitted to the UNECE secretariat (nona.iliukhina@unece.org) by 15 October 2012 at the latest.