

WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

**Fifteenth session
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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

Submitted by [Republic of Macedonia]¹

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 improvements and changes in support of Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) development related to recently accomplished or ongoing actions initiated in their countries, agencies and organizations, as follows:

A. Modernization and upgrading of national monitoring networks

1. Please report on your country's major modernization or upgrade actions of national monitoring networks since October 2013 for:

(a) Air:

- Expansion or upgrade of the monitoring network (e.g.: new automated monitoring stations added to the network, new software launched at the stations, etc.);

No upgrade in the reviewed period.

- New parameters added for measurement (e.g. PM_{2,5}, As, Cd, Ni, PAHs, etc.);

No new parameters.

- Implementation of internationally recognized reference sampling and measurement methods, if not done before;

Referent law volume sampler, type Comde-Derenda is currently installed at urban background location in Skopje and used within a campaign organized by IAEA. Reference method EN 14907 is used for sampling and measurement of PM_{2.5} daily concentrations.

- Other relevant issues;

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(b) Water:

- Introduction of advanced monitoring techniques (automatic gauging stations, automated stations for warning of accidental pollution, etc.);

In the frame of the project “Technical assistance for strengthening the Institutional Capacities for Approximation and Implementation of Environment Legislation in the Area of Water Management”, will be developed a River Management Plan of Vardar River Basin. The River Management Plan of Vardar River Basin will be fully in accordance with the new Law on water and the principles of Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM).

Following the provisions of the new Law on water which is fully harmonized with the EU legislation and has transposed all the relevant Directives associated with the management of the water resources, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) with its provisions prescribe the main principles and guidelines for overall water resources planning and management including deterioration prevention of the water bodies, promoting sustainable water use and ensuring enhanced protection and improvement of the aquatic environment.

- New parameters added for measurement;

Within the above mentioned project a monitoring programme for Vardar river basin will be developed. The monitoring programme will be in fully accordance with the requirements of the WFD (transposed in to the national Water law)

- Implementation of internationally recognized reference sampling and measurement (chemical analysis) methods, if not done before;

Within the above mentioned project a monitoring programme for Vardar river basin will be developed. The monitoring programme will be in fully accordance with the requirements of the WFD (transposed in to the national Water law)

- Other relevant issues;

(c) Soil:

- Introduction of a policy-determined definition of ‘contaminated sites’ that present unacceptable risks under local soil contamination monitoring, if not done before;

The new law for soil protection where the contaminated sites is determined is under preparation. There is a first draft version prepared which will be further developed and evaluated before adoption by the Government.

- New sites under monitoring of local soil contamination in accordance with the applied policy-determined definition;

Not applicable.

- New parameters added for measurement under diffuse soil contamination monitoring;

No new parameters.

- Implementation of internationally recognized reference sampling and measurement methods for diffuse soil contamination monitoring, if not done before;

No implementation of internationally recognized sampling and measurement methods.

- Other relevant issues;

No other relevant issues.

B. Development of monitoring of biodiversity

2. Please report on new developments in your country system for monitoring of biodiversity since October 2013:

New biodiversity targets and related indicators (based on sound science and methodological best practice) for measuring the progress on achieving the targets added to the system;

The nomination of Ohrid-Prespa Biosphere Reserve was officially considered at a meeting of the UNESCO MAB Committee in June 2014 and the unanimous decision of the Committee Ohrid-Prespa region was declared a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve. On 13.10.2014 in Korca, Albania inauguration will be held on the Transboundary Prespa-Ohrid reserve.

The revision of NSBAP and Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Macedonia was prepared under the project "Support to the Republic of Macedonia for the revision of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NSBAP) and preparation of the Fifth National Report to the Convention on biodiversity".

Two workshops were held during 2014.

The first workshop was held in Strumica in the period from 02.04.2014 to 06.02.2014 and on this workshop were reviewed 19 national targets in 4 strategic goals and national indicators for the implementation of the National Strategy.

The National targets are related to Global Aichi biodiversity targets (2011-2020).

The second workshop was held in Ohrid in the period from 06.10.2014 to 12.06.2014 on which the draft of the Fifth National Report was discussed.

The last workshop within this project is planned to be held in November 2014 on which the finalized chapters of the NSBAP will be reviewed. Different types of

training on monitoring, research and biodiversity conservation are implemented for different target groups within the various projects implemented by non-governmental organizations and scientific institutions.

Day of Biodiversity 2014 (dedicated to "island biodiversity") was officially celebrated on May 22 in Delčevo, where emphasis was placed on the so-called "ecological islands" and the value of biodiversity in Bregalnica region. The plan for Watershed Management for river Bregalnica was prepared and it will facilitate the implementation of the Law on Water and achieve the protection and sustainable management of water resources, rational use of water, and improve water quality and sanitary services.

For needs of the Project for protection and sustainable use of biodiversity of Lake Ohrid, Lake Prespa and Skadar Lake the final list of selected key species of flora and fauna of Ohrid and Prespa Lake was prepared (joint list of Albanija and Macedonia).

Planning workshop was held in Tirana on 03.10.2014 (German Embassy in Tirana, Albania) with suggestions for preparing new applications for new regional project for water protection and biodiversity of the Drim Basin and finishing workshop for GIZ Project (27.05.2014-29.05.2014) in Ohrid. The project was completed in June.

Lists of establishing strictly protected wild plants, fungi and animals which were prepared on the basis of a comparative review of species in the state who are on international lists of protected species were updated.

Monitoring of biodiversity is regulated by the Law on Nature Protection, Article 154.

Monitoring data are collected in a database that is available to the public. The data is published in the National Biodiversity Information System (NBIS) established in 2010. Due to lack of funds for hardware and software upgrades it's not operational.

Scientific research activities related to ecology and conservation of the Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) in Macedonia and the Balkan were realized and scientific research activities related to the ecology and protection of the Balkan Lynx.

- Other relevant issues;

C. Development or improvement of inventories

3. Please report on new, major developments or improvements in your country's national inventories since October 2013:

- Developments in collection and computerized storage of data (application of new software);

Collection of activity data is improved. The storage of activity data is computerized; in specially prepared excel sheets containing EF and activity data per NFR.

- Development of on-line databases for public access to processed data, especially through interactive map-based visualizations;

New data base which will be used by the industry to fulfill data needed for preparation of the inventory is under preparation within the project financed by UNDP project "First biennial update report (FBUR) for climate change". It is expected that this database containing also map-based visualizations be finalized by end of December and put in operation from 2015.

- Other relevant issues;

D. Improvements to data quality assurance and control, as well as databases management

(a) Developments in data quality assurance and control:

4. Please report on major developments in in the field of data quality assurance and control since October 2013:

- Introduction of new procedures, if any, for collection of data that were assessed as insufficient;

Yes. Collection of activity data from the agriculture (import and production of fertilizers) and traffic sector (national navigation) is improved. Cooperation was establish with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy as well as with the Skopje Alexander the great airport.

- Introduction of new procedures, if any, for using data sets if more than one data set exists or for identifying inconsistencies for considerable changes in time series data;

Some extrapolation procedures were used for fulfilling historical data gaps. Still further improvement is needed.

- Application of software for logical control of data;

- Changes, if any, in procedures for data validation;

E. Improvements in institutional and regulatory mechanisms and technical solutions for data exchange and on-line sharing

5. Please report on changes since October 2013 to legal and regulatory basis, (elaboration of new laws, by-laws, other regulations) for improving data collection, processing and sharing mechanisms.

Rulebooks on the manner on preparation of short-term action plans and plans for air quality protection were prepared and they have been submitted for approval.

Procedures for improving data collection needed for preparation of plans, processing and sharing mechanisms of data and measures on air quality protection are explained in them.

Under the National Programme for Transition Assistance and Institution Building (TAIB) Component for 2009 under the instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) a PPF project has started for "Development of Macedonian National Environmental Information System Plan". The Project purpose is development of a comprehensive concept for the Macedonian National Environmental Information System, covering at minimum technical, organizational and administrative capacity elements, based on a modern technology base, taking into account the best practice from the EU MSs and compliant with the legislative requirements. Based on the approved concept to develop a plan for establishment of a national environmental information system. The project ends at the end of November 2014.

Please report on changes since October 2013 to institutional arrangements adopted in your country for data exchange and sharing, indicating the designated institutions for coordination of the different monitoring networks, data collection, processing and sharing. Please inform how these changes contributed to establishing a more integrated system of monitoring and to establishing a regular data flow.

Within the project “Capacity Building to Put the Aarhus Convention into Action and Support Development of PRTR Systems in SEE Countries”, PRTR web portal was developed and it is available on the following link www.prtr.moepp.gov.mk

Please provide concise answers to the questions; submit in English and, if possible, Russian, using font 12, Times New Roman, single line-spacing.

Please submit to the UNECE secretariat (WGEMASec@unece.org) by 6 October 2014 at the latest.