

Concept Note

Workshop on Air Related Indicators

Quality assurance and quality control aspects of data and indicators on air quality and emissions to air

**3 November 2014
Geneva, Switzerland**

I. Background

1. At the fifth session of the UNECE Joint Task Force (JTF) on Environmental Indicators, the members agreed on the production of eight core environmental indicators as basis for national and regional regular state of the environment reporting. The indicators are based on the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (Guidelines) and their selection is in line with the ENPI – SEIS thematic priorities.

2. The JTF uses the eight core indicators as a starting point for developing a regular indicator-based assessment and reporting process, underpinned by sustainable data flows. The core indicators cover the following themes: air pollution, depletion of the ozone layer, climate change, waste and water. A series of thematic workshops are planned in this respect to support the work of the JTF and address specific challenges encountered in the production process in terms of quality and availability of data, comparability and consistency, etc.

3. The first thematic workshop is focussing on quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) aspects related to air quality and air emissions data as the basis for the production of four indicators from the initial eight selected. It is a response to the request addressed by the JTF members in learning more about these aspects, on what is available, what is reported and the different international players involved in this area. The event is planned to take place on 3 November 2014, ahead of the JTF meeting (4-5 November 2014).

II. Workshop objectives and target audience

4. The main objective of the workshop is to discuss with the participants what data exist in the countries in the air related area, where it is available, by whom is it reported and with the support of the experts from different conventions, what methodologies and procedures are in place for data validation and quality assurance. The work aims to build up a regular environmental assessment and reporting process in the pan-European region and in doing so assist the countries from Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe in applying in practice the SEIS principles, in this case in the area of air. The discussions will focus specifically on four air quality and air emissions indicators, namely emission of pollutants into the atmospheric air; ambient air quality in urban areas;

consumption of ozone-depleting substances; and greenhouse gas emissions – and consequently the QA/QC of reported data behind these indicators.

5. The workshop targets both statisticians and environment experts, members of the JTF. Both participants and international experts are invited to share their knowledge and experience on, what are frequent data quality problems, what methodologies are already available and used, what networks for data processing and sharing between different national agencies/bodies/structures in the countries are involved, etc. In addition, the participants will be able to share their country experiences in environment data collection, compilation and dissemination of air related data.

6. The workshop aims in the long term to harmonize the national approaches across the countries and improve comparability of data at the region and at international level. It is important that the participants are updated on the international efforts, e.g. requirements, guidelines, and reviews currently undergoing in the air related area. Representatives of UNFCCC, LRTAP Conventions, Montreal Protocol and the Joint Research Center of the European Commission will be invited to contribute in substance. In addition, experts from the Eurostat and OECD Statistics Directorate will share their latest work on standardizing emission data and on the use of statistical classifications for aggregation of emission data.

7. The international experts will be invited to present their analysis and views on the current data gaps in air quality and air emissions reporting, the most common quality control problems of inventories and the role/responsibilities of both national statistical offices and the environmental authorities in the preparation of the emission inventory. In addition, the participants will be given the opportunity to share their country experiences in ensuring QA/QC of air related data from the monitoring networks as well as to discuss the challenges they face in applying international and national methodologies.

III. Organizers of the Workshop and participants

8. The Workshop on QA and QC aspects concerning Air Quality and Air Emissions Indicators is organized by UNECE with financial support and substantive support from the European Environment Agency and in collaboration with the UN Statistics Division and Eurostat.

9. The workshop participants are the countries from Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia, which include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Interested countries from South-Eastern Europe are also invited to participate and include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

IV. Topics to be covered during the Workshop

10. During the workshop the following topics, amongst other possible topics, will be covered:

- Quality, consistency and comparability of air related data flows;
- Challenges in applying methodologies and data validation procedures on air related statistics and indicators;
- Country experiences with respect to the themes of the workshop.

11. The following background materials, amongst other possible materials to be made available by partners and participants, will be provided to the participants for consideration:

- "Emission inventory and air quality monitoring in the ENPI East countries" – an analysis containing key findings/outputs¹ in ENPI East countries; the document also addressed aspects related to emission inventories and quality monitoring;
- Contribution from United Nations Statistics Division on current work in relation to their Manual on the Basic Set of Environment Statistics;
- Survey of National Statistical Offices' involvement in climate change related statistics;
- CES Recommendations on Climate Change Statistics

12. More information will be soon available at the UNECE website:
<http://www.unece.org/stats/environment.html>.

V. Expected Outcomes

13. The workshop should contribute to:

- Increasing understanding on the QA and QC, validation aspects in the area of air quality and air emissions;
- Increased collaboration among the National Statistical Offices, Ministries of Environment, and other stakeholders in this area;
- Improved capacity to assess quality of data; and
- Establishing a sustainable data flow on air quality and air emissions as input to the indicator production process carried out under the Joint Task Force (used for national and regional reporting).

14. The conclusions and recommendations of the workshop will provide input to the JTF meeting discussions on the same topic.

¹ Air Governance project: <http://airgovernance.eu/index.php?a=main&pid=25&lang=eng>