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English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Conference of European Statisticians

Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

Eleventh session

Geneva, 30 June – 1 July 2016

Report of the 11th session of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

Note by the secretariat

I. Attendance

1. Environmental experts and statisticians from the following countries attended the meeting: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
2. Representatives of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC), International Center for Environmental Research (ICFER), Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme Tajikistan, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) also attended the meeting.
3. The non-governmental organization Covalence was also represented at the meeting.

II. Organizational matters

4. The Joint Task Force (JTF) elected Ms. Aigul Yepbayeva (Kazakhstan) as Chair and Ms. Natalia Shashlova (Russian Federation) as Vice-Chair of the Task Force. Ms. Yepbayeva chaired the meeting.
5. The Joint Task Force adopted the agenda for its eleventh session, as contained in document ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2016/1, as well as the report of its tenth session (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2015/2).
6. The following substantive topics were discussed at the meeting:
 - a) Revised Terms of Reference of the Joint Task Force;
 - b) Implementation of the recommendations for the production and online sharing of the selected environmental indicators;
 - c) Waste statistics;
 - d) Environmental indicators in the context of current policy initiatives;
 - e) Measuring the Green Transformation;
 - f) Other business.

III. Decisions and recommendations for work in the next period leading up to the 22nd Session of the Committee on Environmental Policy

7. The Joint Task Force agreed to propose to the Committee on Environmental Policy at its next session to extend the mandate of the JTF to bring the timing of the work in line with the decision of the Conference of European Statisticians. This should be done at the same time as a proposal for an extended mandate for the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment is submitted.
8. Countries are encouraged to use the UNSD Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool (ESSAT) for self-assessment of the progress in implementing the ECE core set of environmental indicators and their underpinning statistics. The Eurasian-Economic Commission offered to translate ESSAT into Russian.
9. Subject to the availability of funding, the Joint Task Force proposed to organise sub-regional and national training workshops to exchange experiences and get guidance on the development of online databases, sharing of environmental information and SEIS data production methodologies. UNECE and UNEP are looking for funds for such activities (e.g. via UN Development Account). These capacity building activities should be aligned with the recently launched ENI-SEIS II (2016-2020) project of the European Environment Agency in the 6 countries of the EECCA sub-region, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.
10. The Joint Task Force encouraged all member countries to provide the possibility of downloading data for the ECE core set of indicators using the production tables of the *UNECE Online Guidelines for the Application of*

*Environmental Indicators*¹. In addition to the national language the data should also be made available in English. Provision of more detailed information, metadata, download possibilities in different formats and use of interactive tools is also encouraged in accordance with SEIS performance indicators and the recommendations made by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment.

11. The need for specific guidelines for quality assurance (QA) of environment statistics and metadata as part of the SEIS self-assessment was highlighted. The Joint Task Force called for further action towards producing such guidelines, which should complement existing QA frameworks used in countries and by international bodies. Countries asked for case studies and examples of good practices in quality assurance of environment statistics. The integration of simple validation tools into the UNECE production table (similar to validation tools already used by Eurostat and UNSD) could be a first practical step to support quality assurance.

12. The Joint Task Force will bring conceptual and methodological problems related to waste statistics to the attention of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES Bureau). Waste is one of the two SEIS priority areas for the current Joint Task Force activities period.

13. It was proposed to harmonise all UNECE waste tables with the current version of the UNSD waste statistics tables, taking into account regional aspects.

14. As information on energy supply and consumption is important for several indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals and for some of the OECD Green Growth Indicators, the Joint Task Force decided to add the following energy indicators to the list of 14 core indicators for priority production and sharing:

- G1. Final energy consumption
- G2. Total primary energy supply
- G3. Energy intensity
- G4. Renewable energy consumption

15. The JTF agreed to continue to work on Green Economy in this forum.

IV. Next meeting of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

16. The next meeting of the Joint Task Force will be held from 17-18 November in Geneva.

V. Adoption of the report of the meeting

17. The present report was adopted during the closing session.

¹ See <http://www.unece.org/env/indicators.html>

11. A summary of the discussion in the substantive sessions of the meeting will be presented in an annex to this report, to be prepared by the secretariat after the meeting.
