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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Conference of European Statisticians

Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

Twelfth session

Geneva, 17-18 November 2016

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the twelfth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 9:30 a.m. on
Thursday, 17 November 2016

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the eleventh session of the Joint Task Force.
3. Implementation of the recommendations for the production and online sharing of the selected environmental indicators.
4. Reviewing statistics and indicators on biodiversity.
5. Capacity-building for a Shared Environmental Information System.
6. Other business.

II. Annotations

According to its revised terms of reference (ECE/CEP/2015/12, Annex II)¹ for 2016 the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators assists the countries of Eastern

¹ Available from <http://www.unecce.org/index.php?id=38470#>.



and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (target countries) in their efforts to:

- (a) Correctly apply the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) data methodologies in line with statistical standards;
- (b) Analyse and communicate environmental data;
- (c) Implement the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA); and
- (d) Apply environmental indicators in the context of sustainable development and green economy initiatives.

The Joint Task Force also assists the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) in evaluating the application of internationally accepted methodologies and statistical standards in SEIS data production.

The Joint Task Force is open to environmental experts and statisticians from all member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

The work is supported by the European Environment Agency, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Representatives of other international organizations dealing with environment statistics are welcome to participate in the meetings of the Joint Task Force.

The meeting documentation, including country contributions, will be posted online on a webpage dedicated to the meeting².

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Joint Task Force will be invited to adopt the agenda for its twelfth session as set out in the present document.

2. Implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the eleventh session of the Joint Task Force

At its eleventh session, the Joint Task Force made several decisions and recommendations for work in the period leading up to the twenty-second Session of the Committee on Environmental Policy (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2016/2). Agenda item 2 will present and discuss the status of implementation of these decisions and recommendations, in particular as regards to:

- (a) Bringing conceptual and methodological problems related to waste statistics to the attention of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES Bureau) and feedback received from the CES Bureau;
- (b) Harmonisation of the UNECE waste tables with the current UNSD waste statistics tables, taking into account regional aspects;
- (c) Integration of a simple validation tool into the UNECE production tables as a first step to support quality assurance;
- (d) Translating the UNSD Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool (ESSAT) into Russian.

² See <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=43450#>

3. Implementation of the recommendations for the production and online sharing of the selected environmental indicators

The Joint Task Force has agreed on the following 18 core indicators from the Indicator Guidelines for production and online sharing: emission of pollutants into the atmospheric air (A1), ambient air quality in urban areas (A2), consumption of ozone-depleting substances (A3), greenhouse gas emissions (B3), renewable freshwater resources (C1), freshwater abstraction (C2), total water use (C3), biochemical oxygen demand and concentration of ammonium in rivers (C10), nutrients in freshwater (C11), protected areas (D1), threatened and protected species (D4), fertilizer consumption (F2), passenger transport demand (H1), final energy consumption (G1), total primary energy supply (G2), energy intensity (G3) and renewable energy consumption (G4) and waste generation (I1).

At its eleventh session, the Joint Task Force also 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*³. In addition to the national language the data should also be made available in English.

Agenda item 3 will address the status and progress in the implementation of the 18 core indicators. The Joint Task Force will present and analyse in more detail the status and future plans as regards to the production of energy-related indicators. A specific focus will be on the availability of selected data in the agreed format and in English language (in addition to the national language), as this is important for international users.

4. Reviewing statistics and indicators on biodiversity

The pan-European regional assessment of the Sixth Global Environment Outlook highlighted that biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation continue apace, despite increased conservation and restoration efforts. The main regional pressures are from increased land-use change, particularly agricultural intensification, urbanization and habitat fragmentation by transport infrastructure. In addition, a number of SDGs are biodiversity-related and will require reliable, accessible and timely biodiversity data to track progress in achieving the global targets. It is, therefore, timely to review biodiversity statistics and indicators to address the current needs of the target countries in this area.

The *UNECE Online Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators* include the following six biodiversity indicators: protected areas (D1), biosphere reserves and wetlands of international importance (D2), Forests and other wooded land (D3), threatened and protected species (D4), trends in the number and distribution of selected species (D5) and invasive alien species (D6). The biodiversity indicators protected areas (D1) and threatened and protected species (D4) are among the 18 core indicators for priority production and online sharing. This demonstrates the need to consider biodiversity as a SEIS priority area for the current Joint Task Force activities period.

Agenda item 4 will analyse the status of implementation and discuss conceptual and methodological issues concerning indicators on biodiversity.

Country representatives and international organisations will be invited to present national and international information needs and to share their experience in collecting biodiversity-related data.

³ See <http://www.unece.org/env/indicators.html>

The Joint Task Force will discuss how the production of statistics and indicators on biodiversity can be enhanced.

5. Capacity-building for a Shared Environmental Information System

The Joint Task Force proposed at its eleventh session to organise sub-regional and national training workshops, subject to the availability of funding, to exchange experiences and receive guidance on the development of online databases, sharing of environmental information and SEIS data production methodologies. These capacity building activities should complement the recently launched ENI-SEIS II (2016-2020) project⁴ of the European Environment Agency in the 6 countries of the EECCA sub-region, namely, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

Agenda item 5 will focus on international organisations' plans and funding opportunities as regards to SEIS capacity building. UNEP will report on their new EC-funded project for Central Asia⁵ with a focus on SEIS. UNECE and UNEP will also report on the new UNDA-funded project they will jointly implement in the region on environmental statistics for the SDGs.⁶ The Joint Task Force will be invited to discuss these plans and other relevant topics, such as the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), work on environment statistics and climate change-related statistics, and to identify specific needs and priorities that should be addressed through capacity building in the coming years.

To address the specific request by the Joint Task Force to receive guidance on the development of online databases, it is foreseen that the *SEIS Cookbook* will be presented. Country representatives and international organisations will also be invited to present electronic environmental data management systems as good examples of SEIS, taking into account both legal and technical aspects.

6. Other business

Delegates may bring up other relevant information to be shared with the Joint Task Force at this time.

The secretariat will inform about the outcomes of the Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on the Implementation of SEEA (Geneva, 3-4 October 2016) and the Expert Forum on Climate Change-related Statistics (Geneva, 5-7 October 2016).

III. Organization of work

A detailed organization of work will be released closer to the meeting time.

⁴ See <http://enpi-seis.pbe.eea.europa.eu/>.

⁵ "Capacity building for environmental data sharing and reporting in support of a shared environmental information system (SEIS)", 2016 – 2019, target countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

⁶ UN Development Account 10th tranche programme on Statistics and Data, 2016 – 2019