

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Twenty-fifth session

Geneva, 13–15 November 2019

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting

Information paper No. 23

5 November 2019

Annual timetable of activities for 2020 of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Note by the secretariat

Summary

At its twenty-second session (25–27 January 2017), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on Environmental Policy renewed the mandate and terms of reference of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment for a five-year period (2017–2021). The terms of reference require the preparation of annual timetables of activities, taking into account the financial and human resources available.

At its twenty-first session (6–7 May 2019), the Working Group adopted its annual timetable for 2020 as set out in the present document. It complements the revised outline of activities leading up to 2021 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2019/3).

The Committee on Environmental Policy is invited to take note of the annual timetable of activities for 2020.

Introduction

1. The present document sets out a timetable of activities to be carried out by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in 2020.
2. The timetable set out below is based on the renewed mandate and terms of reference of the Working Group (ECE/CEP/2017/2, annex II) and the revised outline of the Working Group's activities leading up to 2021 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2019/3).
3. The Working Group will implement the activities in close collaboration with national and international governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, including youth organizations, research institutes and academia, and with other relevant United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) bodies such as the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators.
4. With the assistance of the ECE secretariat, member States and organizations that agree to lead any of the activities outlined below will need to facilitate their implementation and report to the Working Group on the progress made and challenges faced.
5. The Working Group will support the secretariat in its continuing efforts to mobilize resources and assistance from regional and international organizations and member States in order to enable the Working Group to operate fully.

Timetable of activities in 2020

<i>Main overall objective and activity^a</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Task or event</i>	<i>Timing (to be confirmed)</i>	<i>Indicator of achievement</i>	<i>Other activities^a</i>
A.1. Continue supporting the establishment of SEIS with regard to its specific content and principles in support of regular environmental assessment processes and reporting	High	Capacity-building activities at annual sessions of the Working Group and Joint Task Force in support of SEIS establishment and regular monitoring and assessment, including on environment-related SDGs	May and October 2020	Holding of the capacity-building activities	B.3
		Development of a SEIS e-learning platform (ECE with UNEP)	Throughout 2020	Draft e-learning platform	–
A.2. Continue cooperating with the Joint Task Force in its work on environmental statistics and indicators, associated data sets and accompanying environmental information and data necessary to establish SEIS	High	Annual session of the Joint Task Force	October 2020	Report on the session	A.1, A.5, C.2, D.1, D.2, D.3
A.5. Prepare a mid-term and a final report for the Committee on the establishment and implementation of SEIS leading up to 2021	High	Initiate final reporting on the establishment of SEIS	Throughout 2020	Compilation of completed questionnaires on the establishment of SEIS	A.3, A.4

<i>Main overall objective and activity^a</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Task or event</i>	<i>Timing (to be confirmed)</i>	<i>Indicator of achievement</i>	<i>Other activities^a</i>
A.6. Provide annual recommendations on how SEIS can be further strengthened in European and Central Asia countries	Medium	Annual sessions of the Working Group and Joint Task Force	May and October 2020	Recommendations and advice provided to ECE countries in order to improve their SEIS performance	A1, A.2, A.5
B.1. Bring together experts involved in the UNEP Global Environment Outlook process and the EEA European Environment Information and Observation Network to discuss and oversee the regular pan-European environmental assessment	High	Annual sessions of the Working Group and Joint Task Force and meetings between ECE, UNEP and EEA, as appropriate	Throughout 2020	Oversight described in the reports on Working Group and Joint Task Force sessions	C.3, D.3
		Support the preparation of a pan-European environmental assessment, supported by SEIS, with its nature, scope and leadership to be determined by the Committee on Environmental Policy	Throughout 2020	Draft pan-European environmental assessment	–
B.2. Discuss and detail regional priorities concerning the streamlining of regular state-of-the-environment reporting	High	Annual session of the Working Group	May 2020	Regional priorities described in the report on the Working Group session	–
B.3. Oversee the implementation of proposed recommendations and guidance provided through the consultation process on the regular pan-European environmental assessment and the streamlining of regular state-of-the-environment reporting	Medium	Annual session of the Working Group and preparation of an overview of recommendations made and how they were addressed	May 2020	Implementation of recommendations supported, including through capacity-development activities and guidance	–
		Capacity-building and advisory missions conducted in order to assist in the streamlining of regular state-of-the-environment reports	Throughout 2020	Capacity-building activities implemented and advisory missions conducted	–

<i>Main overall objective and activity^a</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Task or event</i>	<i>Timing (to be confirmed)</i>	<i>Indicator of achievement</i>	<i>Other activities^a</i>
C.5. Publish outcomes from the Working Group's collaborative activities	Low	Publication of other guidelines as appropriate	Second half of 2020	Publication	–
D.4. Implement capacity-building activities to provide assistance in accordance with priority areas of action	High	Regional capacity-building workshop or conference on environmental data	May 2020	Holding of the conference	–
Cross-cutting		Presentation of the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Programme in general at the twenty-six session of the Committee on Environmental Policy	November 2020	Expressions of support for the Programme by the Committee	–
		Annual session of the Working Group, including capacity-building and support for the development of regional and national indicator frameworks	May 2020	Report on the session	A.1, A.2, A.5, B.2, C.2, C.3, C.4, D.1, D.2
		Drafting of an annual timetable of activities for 2021	First half of 2020	Approval of the timetable by the Working Group	C.2

Abbreviations: EEA = European Environment Agency; OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; SDG = Sustainable Development Goal; SEIS = Shared Environmental Information System; UNDA = United Nations Development Account; UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme.

^a These are listed in the revised outline of activities of the Working Group leading up to 2021 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2019/3), which is based on the objectives and activities set out in the terms of reference of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment for a five-year period (2017–2021) (ECE/CEP/2017/2, annex II).

^b “Improved environmental monitoring and assessment in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus”.