State and Outlook for Europe’s Environment Report 2020 and EEA contribution to SDGs

Regional Conference on environmental Data, Geneva, 8 May 2019
Introduction – SOER has a long history at the EEA

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<td>1996</td>
<td>- addresses 5 EAP targets</td>
<td>- addresses environmental trends</td>
<td>- focus on DPSIR, core set of indicators</td>
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<td>- focus on the need for systemic transitions</td>
<td>- stakeholder process (2019/2020)</td>
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- Problem focused
- Solution oriented
Introduction – national level SoE reporting in parallel

1972 First national SoE-report by Finland

1998 Concern for tomorrow initiated the first Dutch National Environmental Policy Plan

1999 Bulgaria publishes the quantitative information in their SoE-report as open data

1999 Sweden launches the Environmental Quality Objectives, valid until today

1995 The EEA first SOER addresses the 5th Environment Action Programme targets

2008 Montenegro adopts its first environmental law with the obligation to publish a SoE-report

2017 Flanders produces a Systems based SoE-report

2018 Switzerland produces a systemic challenges and sustainability transitions focussed SoE-report
In striving to be **credible, salient and legitimate**, integrated environmental assessments aim for the following characteristics:

1. provide an assessment **across thematic issues**
2. assess issues **across geographical scales**
3. address the **past, present and future**
4. include **stakeholder perspectives**
5. be **multidisciplinary** in their analytical approaches
6. be for the benefit **for decision-making**
7. be **transparent** (re: values, assumptions and uncertainties)
Key messages from SOER 2015

• **Policies have delivered substantial benefits** for the environment, economy and people’s well-being, yet major challenges remain

• **Europe faces persistent and emerging challenges** linked to production and consumption systems, and the rapidly changing global context

• **Achieving the 2050 vision requires system transitions**, driven by more ambitious actions on policy, knowledge, investments and innovation

• **Doing so presents major opportunities** to boost Europe’s economy and employment and put Europe at the frontier of science and innovation
Continuity from SOER 2015

SOER 2015: The long-term outlook is not as positive as recent trends suggest, because of:

1. Interdependences with global developments
   Pressures from outside Europe/Global Megatrends
   World pushing up against planetary boundaries

2. Systemic characteristics of environmental challenges
   Complexity and uncertainties, interdependencies within and across systems, lock-ins, feedbacks, trade-offs

Living well within the planet’s ecological limits in 2050 will require fundamental transitions in systems of production and consumption (e.g. energy, mobility, food) that are the root cause of environmental and climate pressures.
SOER 2020 overall project structure

**Integrated Assessment report** (2019)
- State of Europe’s environment (context: drivers and policy responses)
- Sustainability prospects (systems perspective, transitions to long-term policy goals)

**Stakeholder interaction process** (2019-2020)

**EEA Knowledge to action report** (2020)

**EEA/Eionet strategy 2021–2030** (2020)

**SOER 2020 outreach activities** (2020 onwards)

Stakeholder contributions, consultations
### Development principles

1. Matching structure and evidence
2. Integrated assessment across all sections
3. Summary assessments developed where feasible
4. Three overarching integration foci:
   - **Environment**: natural capital
   - **Economy**: resource efficient, low-carbon, circular & bio-economy
   - **People**: health, well-being, cities
5. Integration of country information (data, case studies)
6. Visibility of EEA-Eionet work in synergy with other EU work (e.g. JRC) and some international organisations
## SOER 2020 Integrated Assessment – overview of contents

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<tr>
<td>Setting the scene</td>
<td>Environment and climate trends</td>
<td>Sustainability prospects</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
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<td>• 10 thematic assessments</td>
<td>• Sustainability through</td>
<td>• Overall assessment of</td>
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<td>European context and trends</td>
<td>• Environmental pressures and sectors</td>
<td>systems lenses</td>
<td>outcomes and reflections on</td>
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<td>• Europe’s policy</td>
<td>• Summary assessment of progress to 7th</td>
<td>• Understanding sustainability</td>
<td>implications</td>
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<td>frameworks and long-</td>
<td>EAP objectives</td>
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### PART 1
- Setting the scene
  - Assessing the global-European context and trends
  - Europe’s policy frameworks and long-term sustainability goals

### PART 2
- Environment and climate trends
  - 12 chapters, addressing:
    - 10 thematic assessments
    - Environmental pressures and sectors
    - Summary assessment of progress to 7th EAP objectives

### PART 3
- Sustainability prospects
  - 3 chapters, addressing:
    - Sustainability through systems lenses
    - Understanding sustainability challenges
    - Responding to sustainability challenges

### PART 4
- Conclusions
  - 1 chapter, addressing:
    - Overall assessment of outcomes and reflections on implications
Overall SIP aims and process

• Reflect on SOER 2020 outcomes and implications with key stakeholders (share ideas, explore challenges, opportunities & pathways for action)

• Support key EU Policy processes and actions (strategic priorities of next Commission, 8EAP, FP9, EU SDG strategy)

• Generate inputs to ‘Knowledge-to-Action’ report and move towards implementation-oriented assessments

• Inform the new EEA strategy

• Strengthen/build stakeholder networks through SIP events:
  – Five interconnected stakeholder events that build on each other with keynote, interactive sessions & plenaries
  – Professionally designed & facilitated events co-organised in collaboration with EEA’s stakeholders to maximise the added-value
Overview of planned SIP events

- **Sep 2019**: Policy-making for sustainability transitions (ENV, CLIMA)
- **Oct 2019**: Knowledge for the XXI century (SC, RTD, JRC, ENV, CLIMA)
- **4 Dec 2019**: Long-term policies (ENV, CLIMA)
- **Feb 2020**: The role of civil society (ENV, EESC, EEB)
- **Mar 2020**: Synthesis & input into EEA/Eionet Strategy (MB, SC, Eionet)
Annual NRC-SoE meeting (April 2019) – SDGs & SoE reporting

• The usage of SDGs in published SoE-reports is very limited. There is a common acknowledgement that linkage with SDGs is an important development in SoE-reporting.

• SDGs and SOER processes are split among various governmental departments in the EEA countries; particularly SDG indicators and SoE indicators (except in France where both are in the same department). Cooperation in the environmental domain varies and is shaped based upon the national set-up.

• On the level of indicators currently some mapping exercises are undertaken to look if SoE and SDG indicators can be harmonized (e.g. Germany, North Macedonia). In the integrated environmental assessments that are currently produced the SDGs are mainly used to underline the need for an integrative approach and frame the mid-term (2030) perspective (e.g. Ireland).

• There is a need for knowledge exchange – among EEA countries – to gain knowledge of current and planned approaches/processes for the harmonization (maybe integration) of SDG and SoE-reporting, on how to make use of and incorporate SGDs into SoE-reports and the development of relevant indicators.
Place of SDGs in the SOER2020

- Importance of the SDGs as one of the three key long-term frameworks/agreements that provide directionality towards sustainability for Europe, along with the 7th EAP vision and the Paris Agreement (Chapter 2)

- Reference to the relevant SDGs (at goal or target level) in each of the thematic chapters

- Use of the SDGs framework to illustrate the need to address broader sustainability, systemic issues when dealing with persistent environment problems, and hence the need to address them in SOE reporting – which means a different kind of knowledge base, methodological and assessment approaches

- Highlighting the importance of using and integrating more strongly the SDGs framework in the upcoming European policy cycle (tentative)
EEA contribution to SDGs

• Fundamental role to play in contributing to the evidence and knowledge base that support informed decision-making on sustainability transitions

• Act as a `science-policy interface` in the range of SDG governance mechanisms at EU level

• Since 2016, EEA has been supporting the development and review of EU SDG indicators and the EU SDG Monitoring Report, led by Eurostat, and providing knowledge support to the European Commission on the environmental dimension of the SDGs

• In 2017, EEA initiated a study on the SDG implementation in 33 EEA member and 6 co-operating countries (final draft and country profiles presented to the network)

• In January 2019 EEA contributed to a workshop on the use of Copernicus in support of the UN SDGs

• In the course of 2019, EEA is co-organising with JRC and DG ENV a series of participatory workshops on the future of environmental policies in the context of ENV internal reflection process on the post 7thEAP, with clear reference to the SDGs process
Implicit order?
Challenge of 21st century: 10 billion people, 1 planet

Water, forests, oceans, biodiversity, climate, resources

Within limits of the planet

Education, health, food, housing, safety

(Global Footprint Network, 2012; UNDP, 2014)
This could be our **best** century ever, or our **worst**

Dr James Martin, founder Oxford Martin School
THANK YOU!

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Coordination and Strategy Programme

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