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Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Ninth session
Geneva, 4–5 September 2008

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND
ASSESSMENT ON ITS NINTH SESSION**

INTRODUCTION

1. The ninth session of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment was held on 4 and 5 September 2008 in Geneva.
2. The meeting was attended by delegations from Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
3. A representative of the European Environment Agency (EEA) attended the meeting.
4. Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) European Centre for Environment and Health (ECEH) attended, as did representatives from major groups, namely, environmental civil society associations (European Eco-Forum), business and industry (Joint Stock Companies KazMunaiGaz, Kazakhstan and Khimprom, Russian Federation) and the scientific community (Research Institute “Cadastre”, Russian Federation).
5. Mr. Yuri Tsaturov (Russian Federation) chaired the meeting.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Working Group adopted the agenda as contained in document ECE/CEP/AC.10/2008/1.

II. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE EIGHTH SESSION

7. The Working Group adopted the report for its eighth session as contained in document ECE/CEP/AC.10/2007/2.

III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

8. The Working Group took note that Ms. Irina Atamuradova (Turkmenistan) and Mr. David Stanners (EEA), Vice-Chairpersons of the Working Group, had retired from their posts. Two delegations referred to a decision taken by the Committee on Environmental Policy in 2000 when establishing the Working Group (ECE/CEP/74, para. 27 (a)), asserting that Mr. Yuri Tsaturov (Russian Federation) should continue as Chairperson of the Working Group. A number of other delegations proposed Mr. Nariman Umarov, a delegate from Uzbekistan as Chairperson of the Working Group. Pending the clarification by the Committee regarding the composition of the Working Group's Bureau, the Working Group elected Mr. Nariman Umarov (Uzbekistan) as Vice-Chairperson.

IV. OUTCOMES OF THE SIXTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE” AND OF THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

9. The Chairperson informed the Working Group about the statement he had made at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007) and about the discussions on environmental monitoring and assessment at the Conference. Representatives of the secretariat made a presentation on the decisions by the Belgrade Ministerial Conference on environmental monitoring and assessment, on decisions taken by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its fifteenth session (Geneva, 21–23 April 2008), on the focus and main directions of the Committee's future work on environmental monitoring and assessment (ECE/CEP/2008/6), and on the revised mandate of the Working Group (ECE/CEP/148, annex III) as well as on the Committee's ongoing discussions on the reform of the “Environment for Europe” process.

10. The secretariat informed the Working Group, in particular, that according to its revised mandate it should:

- (a) Provide assistance to both countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and interested countries of South-Eastern Europe (SEE) by helping them: (i) to implement guidelines on indicators, indicator-based assessments and enterprise monitoring; (ii) to modernize and upgrade monitoring networks and information systems; and (iii) to implement recommendations on environmental monitoring and assessment in environmental performance reviews;

- (b) Appraise international monitoring and assessment requirements;
- (c) Support the pan-European assessment reports and related assessments, as well as data collection.

11. The Working Group took note of the information provided and agreed to keep it in mind when discussing relevant agenda items.

V. PAN-EUROPEAN ASSESSMENT REPORTS ON THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES

A. Lessons learned from the preparation of the Belgrade Assessment report

12. A representative of EEA introduced its report on lessons learned from working with countries in EECCA on the preparation of the Belgrade Assessment report (EC/CEP/AC.10/2008/3). According to his presentation, the main difficulties encountered had come when collecting data on EECCA countries, and included the following:

- (a) Some EECCA countries either not being parties to relevant international conventions or not fulfilling their reporting obligations in a timely manner;
- (b) Differences in the standards and methodologies used for data collection and reporting;
- (c) Certain environmental parameters (e.g. small particulate matter, e.g. PM_{2.5}) not systematically monitored in the EECCA subregion;
- (d) Many environmental information sources in the subregion, if available, being sparse and, in many cases unknown to international partners;
- (e) Most information being available only in Russian, which entails considerable effort for translation and use;
- (f) Lack of a continuous system of environmental information exchange between EEA and EECCA.

13. During the ensuing discussion, members of the Working Group thanked EEA for its report and presentation, proposed that national experts and the regional environmental centres in EECCA should be actively involved in the preparation of pan-European assessments in the future, and commented that a similar evaluation by EEA of difficulties encountered in data collection in countries covered by EEA networks would have been useful in comparing situations between various subregions.

B. Possible approaches to the preparation of the next assessment report

14. The EEA representative presented the Agency's views on future cooperation with the EECCA countries, UNECE and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as well as on an approach to preparing the pan-European assessment for the next "Environment for

Europe” Ministerial Conference. EEA cooperation in the period 2009–2011 with its eastern partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) would be supported by the European Union (EU) funding from mid-2009 (€2.5 million) and would include:

- (a) Gradual expansion of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) concept to these countries;
- (b) Continuation of the work on production and use of the indicators;
- (c) Expansion of the partnership with statistical offices in the subregion;
- (d) Input on indoor air, human health and quality of life to the WHO Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in 2009;
- (e) Support to EEA reporting activities with extended coverage of the preparation of an EEA state-of-the-environment assessment report for 2010 (SOER 2010).

15. The EEA representative informed the Working Group that the SOER 2010 report was expected to be published end-November 2010 and that it would cover 32 EEA member countries and 7 western Balkan countries. The report would contain a strategic integrated assessment of cross-cutting issues, a thematic indicator-based assessment of main environmental trends and outlooks, and a country-level comparative analysis. The report might be supplemented by Mediterranean and EECCA assessments in two additional parts of SOER 2010. The EECCA assessment part could address issues such as transboundary waters, pollution in urban areas, biodiversity and subregional problems with tailored solutions. The SOER 2010 report and an EECCA assessment part could be submitted to the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference as a pan-European assessment contribution. He added that no EU funds had been earmarked so far for EEA cooperation with Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation.

16. EEA would focus its cooperation with UNECE on preparing the second Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, and with UNEP under EEA-UNEP/GRID-Arendal partnership on Sustainability Assessment of Energy Security Strategies in Eastern Europe.

17. Delegations participating in the discussion thanked EEA for its presentation. While support was expressed for the planned involvement of national statistical offices in the preparation of SOER 2010, the need to extend cooperation with countries’ public health institutions was underlined. The Working Group expressed concern over the lack of clarity regarding its participation in the preparation of pan-European assessment for the next “Environment for Europe” Conference, the lack of earmarked funding for Central Asian countries and the lack of provisions for the translation of the pan-European assessment report into Russian.

C. Assessment and data collection activities in other forums

18. A representative of UNEP/GRID-Arendal informed the Working Group about the creation

of an interactive website on the preparation of national integrated environmental assessment reports. The representative also noted the UNEP/GRID-Arendal support for the publication of a Moldovan report on environment and health and the publication of local indicator-based assessment reports in the Donetsk Oblast of Ukraine as well as on data management activities on the Dniestr River and the Caspian Sea.

19. A representative of WHO/ECEH made a presentation on: (a) the development of the Environment and Health Information System; (b) data collection on environment and health indicators; (c) preparations for the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, to be held at the end of 2009 in Italy; and (d) the launching of a programme of environment and health performance reviews. She expressed her organization's strong interest in cooperating more closely with the Working Group.

20. The UNECE Regional Adviser on Environment reported on the results of the UNECE project, Capacity-building for air-quality management and the application of clean coal combustion technologies in Central Asia (CAPACT), and on development of a water project in Central Asia, which covered the creation of a website and cooperation on water-quality parameters.

VI. DEVELOPMENTS IN IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATIONS, DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

A. Implementation of recommendations from environmental performance reviews

21. The Working Group considered progress made in and plans developed for, the implementation by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Serbia of recommendations on environmental monitoring and information management emanating from the second cycle of Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) of these countries (one-by-one). Discussions were based on relevant sections of the chapters on information, public participation and education of the EPRs on Belarus (informal paper), Kazakhstan (issued as ECE/CEP/AC.10/2008/5), and Serbia (issued as ECE/CEP/AC.10/2008/4), introductory statements by the secretariat and presentations made by members of the Working Group from the countries concerned.

22. In the ensuing discussions, delegations posed questions to the authors of presentations, made comments and provided some practical guidance to Belarus, Kazakhstan and Serbia to help them better implement the EPR recommendations. The needs were stressed: (a) to improve cooperation between environmental authorities and statistical agencies, especially on emission inventories and statistical reporting on emissions; (b) to resolve limitations posed by confidentiality of some statistical data; and (c) to improve statistics on communal wastes. The importance of the following was highlighted:

- (a) A gradual transition to automatic monitoring of ambient environmental quality;
- (b) The application of a systematic approach when covering new parameters (e.g. PM₁₀) by air-quality monitoring in cities;
- (c) The reintroduction, where it had been discontinued, of monitoring of biological parameters in water;

- (d) Improving monitoring of transboundary waters;
- (e) Starting monitoring in the Aral Sea area;
- (f) Expanding monitoring of natural resources, e.g. forests and biodiversity.

23. The three countries concerned were advised to raise the cost-effectiveness of environmental monitoring, to improve public access to monitoring data including access online to data from automatic measurements, and to close the loop between monitoring experts and web managers handling monitoring data. Particular efforts were required to be taken in these countries to link governmental monitoring of ambient environmental quality with environmental monitoring by enterprises and to promote interaction between monitoring experts and policymakers.

24. The Working Group thanked the delegations of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Serbia for the information provided and invited them to inform the relevant authorities in their countries of the comments made and guidance provided during the discussions held.

B. Round table on latest developments in environmental monitoring and assessment

25. Members of the Working Group, experts from national statistical agencies and other central institutions as well as representatives of business and industry reported on major recent, ongoing and planned actions in their countries, agencies, companies and organizations, regarding: (a) modernization and upgrading of national monitoring networks; (b) improvement of data management and use in decision-making; (c) the use of indicator-based environmental assessments; and (d) the strengthening of environmental monitoring and reporting by enterprises.

26. A number of participants introduced their written reports circulated among the members of the Working Group prior to the meeting. Others made short oral interventions presenting latest developments in their countries.

27. Some delegations reported on recent preparations in their countries of governmental programmes or action plans to modernize environmental monitoring networks. These included the Government Action Programme for the Modernization of State Environmental Monitoring in 2007-2011 in Armenia; the elaboration of a draft action plan to upgrade the Hydrometeorological Service in Kazakhstan; and the adoption of a Task Programme on Environmental Monitoring for 2008-2011, supported by national budget up to some US\$ 31.4 million, in Ukraine. Information was provided on the completion of the harmonization in Bulgaria of national environmental monitoring with the requirements of the EU and on the creation of an inter-agency commission on environmental monitoring in Azerbaijan to strengthen coordination of monitoring activities.

28. Certain delegations informed the Working Group about the expansion of national monitoring networks and a transition to automatic measurements. Examples included: the gradual introduction in 10 cities of 20 automatic stations of air monitoring in Armenia; the recent creation of three automatic air-monitoring stations in Kazakhstan; the reintroduction of lead monitoring in ambient air and the creation of a transboundary monitoring station in Georgia; and the creation of a first automatic air-monitoring station as well as some new monitoring points for surface water-quality and soil quality in the Republic of Moldova.

29. Several delegations reported on the developments in statistical data collection and environmental indicators. Information was provided on:

- (a) Revision of statistical data reporting in Azerbaijan to cover reporting of greenhouse gas emissions and improve waste data collection;
- (b) Harmonization of environmental statistics with international indicators in the Republic of Moldova;
- (c) Development of a classification of environmental activities harmonized with that of Eurostat and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and development of indicators on natural capital and on environmental performance in the Russian Federation;
- (d) Introduction of statistical reporting on emissions of greenhouse gases and persistent organic pollutants, harmonization of waste and environmental expenditures statistics with that of Eurostat and OECD, and the development of environmental accounts in Ukraine.

30. Examples were provided of an improved indicator-based environmental reporting and data use for decision-making and communication to the public. These included the preparation of a new type of environment assessment report in Poland that would allow to compare the state of environment between 16 voevodships and with other EU countries on 36 indicators; the publication of indicator-based environmental assessment reports and maps; the creation of the information centre at the national environmental authority in Uzbekistan; and the creation of a bathing water-quality interactive website at EEA.

31. Representatives of business and industry provided information on the introduction of a corporate environmental information system to report on emissions, discharges, waste generation, storage and use and treatment of polluted soil (KazMunajGaz), and the introduction of the UNECE *Guidelines for strengthening environmental monitoring and reporting by enterprises* in a chemical company (Khimprom).

32. The Working Group thanked the delegations for the information provided and agreed to organize similar round tables at its next meetings.

C. Appraisal of international monitoring and assessment requirements

33. A member of the UNECE secretariat reported on environmental monitoring and assessment activities under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. Reference was made, in particular, to data reporting by Parties according to relevant guidelines and manuals including the *EMEP/CORINAIR Emission Inventory Handbook*, the Emission Reporting Guidelines, the EMEP¹ Monitoring Manual and the Joint Effects Reporting Guidelines.

¹ The Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe.

34. A member of the UNECE secretariat made a presentation on reporting under the Convention on the Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and pollutant registers under its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. Specific reference was made to the *Guidance on implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers*, released in June 2008.

35. A member of the UNECE secretariat made a presentation on the results of the first *Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters* under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, on the preparation of the second Assessment, and on monitoring and assessment activities under the Protocol on Water and Health to this Convention.

36. The Working Group took note of the information provided and invited the secretariat units to keep the relevant meetings under the UNECE environmental conventions informed about the Working Group activities, especially those regarding building observation and reporting capabilities in EECCA and interested SEE countries.

VII. PREPARATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2008–2010

37. The secretariat had introduced a draft work programme (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2008/6) and indicated that by the time of the meeting the Government of the Russian Federation had made a contribution to UNECE, amounting to some \$86,000, to support Working Group activities.

38. The Deputy Director of the UNECE Statistics Division introduced a proposal that the secretariat prepared following up the decision taken by the Committee on Environmental Policy, at its fifteenth session to invite the Conference of European Statisticians to consider cooperating with the Working Group on methodological issues of environmental indicators. The proposal submitted to both the Working Group and the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians, aimed at the creation of a joint intersectoral task force on environmental indicators, to be composed of environmental statisticians and experts in state-of-the-environment reporting.

39. The secretariat informed the Working Group of a proposal by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) to organize, jointly with UNECE, a workshop on environmental indicators in 2009 in an EECCA country. The workshop would be open to all interested countries to broaden the exchange of experiences and approaches. It would provide a forum for presenting the latest development on relevant methodologies and classifications available at the international level. UNSD would provide some \$40,000- to support the participation of EECCA experts in the workshop.

40. A representative from EEA made a statement indicating that the funds (€2.5 million) that EEA was expected to receive from the EU for cooperation with the six East European countries would not be used to support the Working Group's activities.

41. The delegation of the Republic of Moldova voiced its strong support for cooperation between environmental authorities and statistical agencies, and expressed the readiness of its country to consider hosting the proposed UNECE/UNSD workshop on environmental indicators. It stated that the designation of national experts for the proposed joint intersectoral task force

would be at the discretion of relevant national authorities. Many other delegations also supported the establishment of a joint task force.

42. Some delegations proposed that the Working Group continue developing general guidelines and recommendations that would be applicable to as many interested countries as possible. They called, for instance, for the completion of the work on preparing guidelines on linking air monitoring with decision-making.

43. Several delegations expressed a deep concern that the EU was not providing funds to support monitoring and assessment activities in Central Asia and that EEA was, in fact, distancing itself from cooperation with the Working Group. In view of these developments, these delegations invited EECCA and SEE members in the Working Group to help ensure their countries' contributions to Working Group activities.

44. Some delegations proposed that the Working Group should play an active role in promoting further environmental monitoring by enterprises and reviewing methodologies for ecosystem assessments.

45. A representative of UNEP/GRID-Arendal informed the Working Group that her organization was having difficulties raising funds for a proposed activity to support the publication of in national indicator-based environmental assessment reports by interested countries.

46. A representative of Khimprom expressed the readiness of her company to consider organizing a workshop for interested chemical, oil, gas and petrochemical companies in cooperation with relevant national authorities on model environmental monitoring programmes for enterprises.

47. The draft work programme as prepared by the Working Group and supplemented by the assessment of the requirements in extrabudgetary resources is annexed to the present report (annex 1). The Working Group recommended that the Committee on Environmental Policy support the proposal to establish, jointly with the Conference of European Statisticians, a task force on environmental indicators as contained in annex II to the present report.

48. The Working Group noted that its tenth session is scheduled to be held on 3 and 4 September 2009.

49. Documentation for this ninth session, including informal papers and presentations, is available on the Working Group's website (www.unece.org/env/europe/monitoring/current_meeting.html).

Annex I

WORK PROGRAMME ON ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING FROM END-2008 TO END-2010

Task 1: Improving environmental observations, data collection and reporting

Work accomplished

In 2007, the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) reviewed the situation with respect to urban air-quality monitoring networks in countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA). WGEMA, at its ninth session, organized a round table on latest developments in environmental monitoring and assessment at the national, subnational and company levels. It also appraised the latest developments in international monitoring and assessment requirements, especially obligations under the UNECE environmental legal instruments.

At its ninth session, WGEMA also considered progress made in and/or plans developed for the implementation by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Serbia of recommendations on environmental monitoring and information management emanating from the second cycle of Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) of these countries.

Work to be undertaken

1.1 Review of developments in environmental monitoring and assessment at the national and international levels

At WGEMA sessions in 2009 and 2010, delegations will exchange information on major recent, ongoing and planned actions in their countries to modernize and upgrade monitoring and information networks, with a particular focus on:

- (a) Monitoring points and their location and densities;
- (b) Parameters measured;
- (c) Technical capacities, particularly automated measurements;
- (d) Reliability of measurements and analysis;
- (e) Data management.

Delegations will also appraise, at these instances, international monitoring and assessment requirements, including obligations under the relevant UNECE environmental legal instruments, and consider opportunities for supporting relevant international monitoring and data collection activities. Guidelines will be completed to help interested countries developing national strategies for the use of air-quality monitoring as environmental policy tool. Elements for similar guidelines on water- and/or soil-quality monitoring will be considered.

1.2 Implementation of recommendations on monitoring and information management in the Environmental Performance Reviews

WGEMA will follow up recommendations on monitoring and information management emanating from the EPR programme of the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP), helping the

individual countries reviewed to implement the reforms needed. This will help the interested countries in revising their monitoring programmes by making monitoring a practical tool for policy target-setting, pollution abatement strategies and measuring progress in achieving policy targets and in effectiveness of abatement measures. At its session in 2009, WGEMA will consider the recommendations in the second EPRs of Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and in 2010, those of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uzbekistan.

Task 2: Production of environmental indicators and indicator-based reporting

Work accomplished

WGEMA prepared the *Guidelines for the application of environmental indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia* (Indicator Guidelines) and the *Guidelines for the preparation of indicator-based environment assessment reports in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia* (ECE/CEP/140). To promulgate the implementation of both Guidelines, the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007) endorsed the Recommendations to Governments of East European, Caucasian and Central Asian countries for the application of environmental indicators and the preparation of indicator-based environment assessment reports (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/11/Add.1).

Work to be undertaken

2.1 Training in indicator production

WGEMA, in cooperation with the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), will train experts responsible in the interested countries for state-of-the-environment reporting and the publication of environmental statistical compendiums in producing the indicators included in the Indicator Guidelines. A workshop will be organized for this purpose in 2009. It will be open to all countries to broaden the exchange of experiences and approaches. It will provide a forum for presenting the latest development on relevant methodologies and classifications available at the international level.

2.2 Joint Intersectoral Task Force on Environmental Indicators

A Task Force, to be established jointly by the CEP and the CES, will:

- (a) Review the indicators covered by the Indicator Guidelines to provide practical recommendations on the necessary adaptation of statistical classifications and data collection forms and procedures for the production of indicators;
- (b) Propose additional environmental indicators that may be important but are currently not included in the Indicator Guidelines (e.g. environmental expenditure, environmental taxes and subsidies, production of and trade in environmental goods and services and hazardous substances, and resource productivity) and provide, and adapt to the needs of the countries concerned, relevant guidance materials to be made available at the international level;
- (c) Recommend modern presentation formats and tools for effective dissemination of environmental indicators including the use of modern information technologies;
- (d) Assist in the organization of a workshop on environmental indicators (see 2.1 above).

The Task Force will meet back-to-back with the 2009 workshop and the WGEMA session in 2010.

2.3 *Ecosystem-based assessments*

At its session in 2009, WGEMA will review the state-of-the-art and countries' experiences with ecosystem-based assessments. Countries and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, UNEP, and the secretariats of the Convention on the Protection of the Alps and of the Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians will be invited to share their methodologies and approaches. On the basis of this review, WGEMA will initiate the preparation, by interested countries or relevant international institutions, of case studies to test the successful methodologies and approaches on other selected ecosystems that are typical for the region. These case studies accompanied by general recommendations will be considered by WGEMA at its session 2010.

Task 3: Environmental monitoring and reporting by enterprises

Work accomplished

WGEMA prepared the *Guidelines for strengthening environmental monitoring and reporting by enterprises in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia* (Enterprise Monitoring Guidelines, ECE/CEP/141). These Guidelines were the result of active cooperation of environmental monitoring experts with representatives of pollution control authorities, statisticians, and representatives of business and industry and their associations as well as civil society environmental organizations. The Belgrade Ministerial Conference endorsed and called for the adoption and full implementation these Guidelines.

Work to be undertaken

3.1 *Enterprise environmental monitoring programmes in selected industries*

To promote the implementation of the general Enterprise Monitoring Guidelines, WGEMA will, taking into account available manuals and reference materials at the international level, help interested countries to develop practical guidance on model enterprise environmental monitoring programmes in selected major polluting industries, including methodologies for measurement, calculation and estimation of emissions, environmental quality and impacts, and the production of indicators which are meaningful for improving environmental performance and resource efficiency. This will be done with the active involvement of pollution control authorities, the national authorities responsible for setting technical regulations for industries, interested large polluting enterprises, and relevant business and industry associations. Case studies will be prepared for consideration by a workshop to be organized in 2009, followed, if appropriate, by the development of model environmental programme(s) to be considered by WGEMA at its session in 2010.

3.2 *Promotion of corporate environmental and sustainability reporting*

At its session in 2009, WGEMA will review country experiences with specific legal approaches, incentives and inducements to promote the publication of open corporate environmental and sustainability reports. For this purpose, WGEMA will attempt to strengthen and enlarge its already established initial network of large polluting enterprises, which committed themselves to the United Nations Global Compact principles in order to better understand enterprises' concerns and make use of their expertise and resources. WGEMA will invite the Global Reporting

Initiative, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and business and industry associations of interested countries to cooperate on the project. A workshop will be organized in early 2010 to report the results to the WGEMA session in autumn 2010.

Task 4: Support to environmental assessment(s) for the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference and related initiatives

Work accomplished

WGEMA considered the initial structure and the extended outline of the assessment report for the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” facilitated data collection for the report by interested countries, reviewed the draft report and made specific comments on each chapter. These efforts helped the European Environment Agency (EEA) to complete the report for submission to the Conference. This ensured synergies between environmental data collection and assessment activities of important international players. At its ninth session, WGEMA considered lessons learned from the data collection for the Belgrade Assessment report and proposals by EEA on the preparation of its contribution to the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference.

Work to be undertaken

4.1 Support to environmental assessment(s) for the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

At its sessions in 2009 and 2010, WGEMA will consider reports by EEA on the preparation of an EEA contribution to the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference. WGEMA will be prepared, if so invited, to provide EEA with overall comments and guidance, to facilitate data collection in interested countries and to discuss draft report sections. Depending on the outcome of the “Environment for Europe” reform and final arrangements made by EEA for country coverage in its contribution to the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference, WGEMA may prepare its own assessment contribution (e.g. on Central Asia or on selected ecosystems as referred under sub-task 2.3 above) for the next Ministerial Conference.

4.2 Coordination with related assessments and data collections

At its sessions in 2009 and 2010, WGEMA will consider progress made in other international environmental assessments and data collection activities, e.g. the second transboundary waters assessment under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, the fifth Global Environment Outlook of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the development of a pan-European environment and health information system by the World Health Organization European Centre for Environment and Health, the Questionnaire on Environment Statistics of UNSD and UNEP, and a third Environment Outlook of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. WGEMA will explore the synergies between the various reports and provide comments.

**Table. Donor support needs for the activities of the Working Group
on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment**

(in United States dollars)

Expenses	number of units	Unit rate	Costs ¹
Sub-task 1.1			
1.1.1 Experts' travel (two WGEMA meetings)	36	1,500	54,000
1.1.2 Experts' per diems	72	430	30,960
1.1.3 Consultancy (fee and travel)	2	7,000	14,000
Subtotal			98,960²
Sub-task 1.2			
1.2.1 Experts' travel (two WGEMA meetings)			
1.2.2 Experts' per diems			
Subtotal			
Sub-task 2.1			
2.1.1 Travel and per diems for statisticians	18	2,200	39,600 ³
2.1.2 Sub-contract with workshop host (travel and per diems for environmental experts and workshop logistics)	1	28,800	28,800 ⁴
2.1.3 Staff travel	2	2,200	4,400
2.1.3 Consultancy (fee and travel)	1	7,000	7,000
Subtotal			79,800
Sub-task 2.2			
2.2.1 Experts' per diems	18	430	7,740
Subtotal			7,740
Sub-task 2.3			
2.4.1 Experts' travel (two WGEMA meetings)			
2.4.2 Experts' per diems			
2.4.3 Consultancy (fee and travel)	1	7,000	7,000
Subtotal			7,000
Sub-task 3.1			
3.1.1 Pollution control expert travel to two WGEMA meetings	16	1,500	24,000
3.1.2 Pollution control expert's per diem	32	430	13,760
3.1.3 Consultation (expert's travel and per diem)	2	15,000	30,000
3.1.4 Staff travel	1	2,200	2,200
3.1.5 Consultancy (fee and travel)	2	7,000	14,000
Subtotal			83,960

Expenses	number of units	Unit rate	Costs¹
Sub-task 3.2			
3.2.1 Experts travel (2 WGEMA meetings)	Covered under sub-task 1.1		
3.2.2 Experts per diems			
3.2.3 Consultancy (fee & travel)	1	7,000	7,000
3.2.4 Sub-contract with workshop host (travel and per diems for experts and workshop logistics)	1	32,000	32,000
3.2.5 Staff travel	2	2,200	4,400
Subtotal			43,400
Sub-task 4.1			
4.1.1 Experts travel (two WGEMA meetings)	Covered under sub-task 1.1		
4.1.2 Experts per diems			
4.1.3 Consultation (travel & expert per diem)	1	15,000	15,000
4.1.4 Staff travel	4	2,200	8,800
4.1.5 Consultancy (fee & travel)	2	7,000	14,000
4.1.6 Computer equipment	1	2,940	2,940
Subtotal			40,740
TOTAL COSTS			361,600

¹ Including United Nations administrative costs and contingency reserves.

² The Russian Federation contributed U\$57,600 towards these costs.

³ UNSD pledged to cover these costs.

⁴ The Russian Federation contributed this amount.

Annex II

PROPOSAL FOR TERMS OF REFERENCE OF A JOINT INTERSECTORAL TASK FORCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS²

I. BACKGROUND

1. The involvement of the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia (EECCA) and South-Eastern Europe (SEE) in the preparation of the assessment reports for the Ministerial Conferences “Environment for Europe” triggered their interest in the development of a set of environmental indicators and practical recommendations on their application. The Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) under the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) prepared *Guidelines for the application of environmental indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia* (Indicator Guidelines)³, that were endorsed at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007). The Guidelines cover 36 key indicators highlighting, for each indicator, the importance of the environmental issue for which it has been designed; international targets, where available; requirements for measurements and data collection; internationally agreed methodologies for the indicator development; and references to useful literature and Internet sites.

2. The Conference of European Statisticians (CES) was active in developing environmental statistics in the 1980s and early 1990s. It developed several environmental statistics classifications and a pan-European compendium of environmental statistics. At present, it is supporting a Joint UNECE/OECD⁴/Eurostat Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development in its efforts to develop a broad conceptual framework for measuring sustainable development including some best practices to assist national governments and international organizations in the design of sustainable development indicator sets and in the development of official statistics in the area.

3. Further to initial discussions between the Environment, Housing and Land Management Division and the Statistics Division of UNECE, CEP, at fifteenth session in April 2008, invited CES to consider cooperating with WGEMA on methodological issues of environmental indicators (ECE/CEP/148).

² This proposal, prepared by the secretariat, was supported by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment at its ninth session. It will be considered by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians at its meeting to be held on 20 and 21 October 2008 in Washington, D.C..

³ Published as United Nations publication, Sales No. E 07.II.E.9.

⁴ Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development.

II. OBJECTIVE

4. Against this background, it is proposed that a joint intersectoral task force on environmental indicators be created. The purpose of the task force would be to assist national statistical agencies and institutions responsible for the production of national state-of-the-environment reports in EECCA and SEE countries to improve environmental data collection, further strengthen environmental reporting and promote comparability of environmental statistics and indicators in the region.
5. The joint intersectoral task force on environmental indicators would report to its parent bodies, CEP and CES, and to their Bureaux. The task force would work closely with WGEMA and inform it on progress made and on outcomes.
6. The joint intersectoral task force on environmental indicators would:
 - (a) Review the indicators covered by the Indicator Guidelines to provide practical recommendations on the necessary adaptation of statistical classifications and data collection forms and procedures for the production of indicators;
 - (b) Propose additional environmental indicators that may be important but are currently not included in the Indicator Guidelines (e.g. environmental expenditure, environmental taxes and subsidies, production of and trade in environmental goods and services and hazardous substances, and resource productivity) and provide, and adapt to the needs of the countries concerned, relevance guidance materials available at the international level;
 - (c) Recommend modern presentation formats and tools for effective dissemination of environmental indicators including the use of modern information technologies;
 - (d) Assist in the organization of a workshop on environmental indicators, to be jointly organized by UNECE and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in 2009. The workshop would be open to all interested countries to broaden the exchange of experiences and approaches. It would provide a forum for presenting the latest development on relevant methodologies and classifications available at the international level.

III. MEMBERSHIP

7. Members of the task force would be nominated by country focal points in the Conference of European Statisticians and WGEMA. UNSD, Eurostat, the European Environment Agency (EEA) and OECD would be invited to designate their representatives. The Statistical Division and the Environment, Housing and Land Management Division of UNECE would jointly service the task force.

IV. TIMETABLE

8. The mandate of the task force would cover the period from 2009 to September 2010. Once the terms of reference of the task force have been agreed upon by CEP and CES, these terms of reference would be submitted to the UNECE Executive Committee, for endorsement.

V. OUTCOME

9. The joint intersectoral task force on environmental indicators would submit, through the WGEMA and CES Bureaux, a final report on its accomplishments and a proposal for follow-up, if any, to both UNECE Committees.
