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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Conference of European Statisticians

Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

Seventeenth session

Geneva, 26 October 2020

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventeenth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on
Monday, 26 October 2020

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the sixteenth session.
3. Ongoing developments with relevance for the work of the Joint Task Force.
4. Review of the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators.
5. Data needs, statistics and indicators on environment and health in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.
6. Other business.
7. Closure of the meeting.

II. Annotations

According to its terms of reference (ECE/CEP/2017/12, annex) the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators assists the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in their efforts to:

- (a) Apply the Shared Environmental Information System principles and methodologies for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) core environmental indicators and data production in line with international statistical standards;
- (b) Analyse and communicate environmental data;



(c) Develop capacity to implement the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting;

(d) Develop capacity for the compilation and integration of environmental data in support of measuring progress in the context of sustainable development and green economy initiatives.

The Joint Task Force also assists the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in evaluating the application of internationally accepted methodologies and statistical standards in data production and provides a forum for sharing experience on the communication of environmental information to users.

The Joint Task Force is open to environmental experts and statisticians from all ECE member States.

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

The seventeenth session of the Joint Task Force is expected to be held on 26 October 2020 as a one-day meeting. The agenda and format of the session may need to be adjusted at a later stage given the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair will invite the Joint Task Force to adopt the agenda for its seventeenth session as set out in the present document.¹

2. Adoption of the report of the sixteenth session

The secretariat will summarize the outcomes of the sixteenth session of the Joint Task Force (Geneva, 28 and 29 October 2019) as contained in the corresponding report (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2019/2) and invite the Joint Task Force to adopt the report.

The secretariat will inform the Joint Task Force about the status of implementation of the decisions and recommendations made at the sixteenth session.

3. Ongoing developments with relevance for the work of the Joint Task Force

The secretariat will summarize the main outcomes of the Fifth Joint OECD/ECE Seminar on Implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (Geneva, 13 and 14 February 2020) and the Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Climate Change-related Statistics (Geneva (online), 28 September – 1 October 2020). It will also provide an update on recent developments within the framework of the United Nations Development Account-funded project “Improved environmental monitoring and assessment in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus” and other capacity-development activities, as appropriate. UNEP and the European Environment Agency will be invited to provide a brief overview of the main outcomes of related capacity-development activities.

The secretariat will also inform the meeting about activities of other related expert groups, such as the Task Force on Measuring Hazardous Events and Disasters, and the Conference of European Statisticians, with its in-depth review of measuring circular economy.

¹ Documentation for the meeting and other relevant information will be posted on the web page for the meeting on the ECE website: www.unece.org/index.php?id=53474.

4. Review of the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators

At the sixteenth session, the secretariat recalled that the Joint Task Force had requested the secretariat to revise the ECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators² to better inform global policies, link them with statistical frameworks and increase the user-friendliness of the metadata (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2018/2, paras. 31–40).

The Joint Task Force agreed to approach the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in order to nominate experts to contribute to the review of the new metadata database and to continue with the revision of water-related indicators at its next session.

With respect to the waste-related metadata, the representatives of the secretariat and the United Nations University proposed to the Joint Task Force changes for indicators I2, I3 and I4a.

The Joint Task Force requested the secretariat to consider plastic wastes and synthetic clothes, reconsider the name of the indicator “non-hazardous waste” and make sure that there was alignment between ECE and the United Nations Statistics Division questionnaire³ on the theme. Furthermore, the Joint Task Force wished to consider the introduction of additional items for the waste indicators, such as e-waste or composition of municipal waste.

The Joint Task Force requested the secretariat to draft metadata for environmental expenditures, share it within the small group of experts and, later, with the Joint Task Force, for feedback. The Joint Task Force agreed to review indicators of environmental expenditures during its next session.

The Joint Task Force requested the secretariat to present the completed parts of the revised Guidelines as an official document at its next session, given the official publication. It also requested the secretariat to address the comments made when amending the Guidelines, and to report on the progress made at the next meeting.

At the current session, the secretariat will therefore present the completed parts of the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators (ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2020/3) for discussion and approval.

Furthermore, the Joint Task Force will be invited to discuss the review process for the remaining indicators, including a discussion on whether certain indicators need to be replaced or added, for example, related to climate change.

5. Data needs, statistics and indicators on environment and health in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic

The secretariat will report on the ECE platform on COVID-19 and official statistics⁴ and the outcomes of the sixty-eighth plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (Geneva, 22–24 June 2020) and related webinars. A representative of the World Health Organization will be invited to present the most relevant environment- and health-related indicators and data requirements in the context of COVID-19.

Country representatives will share their experience in producing environment- and health-related data and indicators and their use for policymaking in the context of the pandemic.

² See <https://www.unece.org/env/indicators.html>.

³ See https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/Questionnaires/2018/q2018Waste_English.pdf.

⁴ See <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/COV/Home>.

6. Other business

The Joint Task Force will be invited to discuss any other business that might be brought to its attention. Members of the Joint Task Force wishing to propose items are invited to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

7. Closure of the meeting

The Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will sum up the conclusions of the Joint Task Force, present the decisions and close the meeting. The report of the meeting will be finalized by the secretariat after the meeting and will be posted on the web page of the meeting in due course.

III. Organization of work

Detailed information on the organization of work will be released closer to the meeting date and will be posted on the web page of the meeting.
