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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Eleventh session

Geneva, 2–3 September 2010

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda of the eleventh session*

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday,
2 September 2010[†]

I. Provisional Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the tenth session.
3. Outcomes of the sixteenth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy and of the meeting of the Extended Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy of concern to the Working Group.
4. Coordination of environmental monitoring and assessment activities at the regional level:
 - (a) Support to the preparation of the Assessment of Assessments report for the Seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Astana, 2011);

* The present document is issued on the above date for technical reasons.

[†] According to the accreditation procedures for meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to complete the registration form (available at www.unece.org/meetings/practical_information/confpart.pdf) and to transmit it to the secretariat **no later than two weeks prior to the meeting**, by fax (+41 22 917 0107) or by e-mail (elizabeth.james@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map at www.unece.org/meetings/UN_Map.pdf). In case of difficulty, please telephone the secretariat on +41 22 917 6307.

- (b) Joint intersectoral task force on environmental indicators;
- (c) Assessment and data-collection activities in other forums of relevance to the Working Group.
- 5. Implementation of recommendations on monitoring and information management from country environmental performance reviews:
 - (a) Azerbaijan;
 - (b) Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - (c) the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- 6. Latest developments in environmental monitoring and assessment at the national, subnational and company levels.
- 7. Draft guidelines for developing national strategies to use water-quality monitoring as an environmental policy tool.
- 8. Reporting to the Committee on Environmental Policy.
- 9. Other business.

II. Annotations

According to its revised terms of reference (ECE/CEP/148, annex III), the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment is open to all member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and includes the European Environment Agency (EEA). Members of the Working Group are officials in the UNECE countries responsible for environmental monitoring and assessment. The Working Group will involve in its activities experts from statistical agencies and compliance control authorities and sanitary services, as well as representatives of major groups, especially business and industry, the scientific community and environmental civil society organizations.

Other international forums and networks — such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD); the World Health Organization (WHO); the European Centre for Environment and Health (ECEH); relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), especially those of UNECE; the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS); and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) — are also invited to participate.

In its operation, the Working Group will be guided by the procedures established by the UNECE Executive Committee for teams of specialists (ECE/EX/2006/L/3). In addition to circulation through the normal channels, meeting documentation will be posted on the Working Group's website (www.unece.org/env/europe/monitoring/).

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group will be invited to adopt the agenda for its eleventh session.

2. Adoption of the report of the tenth session

The Working Group will be invited to adopt the report of its tenth session, contained in document ECE/CEP/AC.10/2009/2.

3. Outcomes of the sixteenth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy and of the meeting of the Extended Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy of concern to the Working Group

The Working Group will be informed about discussions held and decisions taken at the Committee's sixteenth session, in October 2009, and at the meeting of the Extended Bureau of the Committee in March 2010 on: (a) implementation of the work programme on environmental monitoring and assessment; (b) the preparation of an assessment report for the Seventh Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe"; and (c) the selection of the themes for that Conference.

4. Coordination of environmental monitoring and assessment activities at the regional level

(a) Support to the preparation of the Assessment of Assessments report for the Seventh Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Astana, 2011)

The Working Group will be informed about progress made in the preparation of the Assessment of Assessments (AoA) report by the Steering Group on Environmental Assessments that was established by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its sixteenth session. The mandate of the Steering Group and outcomes of its first meeting, held in Geneva on 25 and 26 March 2010, are available online at: www.unece.org/env/efe/Astana/SGEA.html.

The Working Group is expected to consider, inter alia, ways and means that its members from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia could facilitate the submission of national environmental assessment reports and country communications to MEAs under the AoA process.

(b) Joint intersectoral task force on environmental indicators

The Working Group will be informed about the results of two meetings of the Joint intersectoral task force held in 2010.

The Working Group may wish to comment on the implementation by the task force of its mandate and possible follow-up.

(c) Assessment and data-collection activities in other forums of relevance to the Working Group

Representatives of EEA, UNEP, WHO/ECEH, UNSD, the MEAs and other international forums will be invited to report on ongoing and planned environmental assessment and data-collection activities of relevance to the Working Group.

The Working Group may wish to comment on the information provided and consider practical ways and means to support the above activities.

5. Implementation of recommendations on monitoring and information management from country environmental performance reviews

The Working Group will continue reviewing progress made in and/or plans developed for the implementation by selected countries of recommendations on environmental monitoring and information management emanating from environmental performance reviews (EPRs) of those countries. Discussions will be based on the relevant sections of the country reviews and the presentations made at the session by members of the Working Group from the countries concerned. The Working Group is expected to provide comments and guidance to these countries to aid better implementation of the EPR recommendations.

In accordance with the decision of the Working Group taken at its tenth session (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2009/2, para. 33), the discussion at the present session will cover the following countries:

(a) Azerbaijan

Sections of the review report dealing with environmental monitoring and information management in the country will be reproduced under document symbol ECE/CEP/AC.10/2010/5.

(b) Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sections of the review report dealing with environmental monitoring and information management in the country will be reproduced under document symbol ECE/CEP/AC.10/2010/3.

(c) the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Sections of the review report dealing with environmental monitoring and information management in the country will be reproduced under document symbol ECE/CEP/AC.10/2010/4.

6. Latest developments in environmental monitoring and assessment at the national, subnational and company levels

Members of the Working Group, experts from national statistical agencies and other central and subnational (e.g., municipal) authorities, as well as representatives of major groups will be given an opportunity to briefly report on major ongoing and planned actions in their countries, agencies, companies and organizations since September 2009, regarding:

(a) Modernization and upgrading of national monitoring networks, especially those on air, water and soil quality (in terms of number of stations, automated measurements and parameters measured);

(b) Development of inventories of air emissions, wastewater discharges and waste;

(c) Expanding monitoring of biodiversity, including forests;

(d) Improvement of data handling, including data quality assurance and control standards and norms and database management;

(e) Enhancement of institutional mechanisms for data sharing and data exchange between environment ministries, environmental information institutions, institutes of ecology, hydrometeorological services, statistical offices, ministries of health, water, agriculture, industry, transport and energy;

(f) Publication of environmental assessments at the subregional, national, subnational and project-based levels and the indicators used therein;

(g) Environmental reporting to the international community, especially to MEAs.

Written contributions (in English and/or Russian) on the above subjects should be provided to the secretariat before 10 August 2009 so as to ensure their distribution to all registered participants before the meeting.

7. Draft guidelines for developing national strategies to use water-quality monitoring as an environmental policy tool

In accordance with its work programme to the end of 2010 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2008/2, Annex I, task 1.1), the Working Group is expected to develop guidelines to help countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, as well as interested South-Eastern European countries, to revise their water-quality monitoring programmes to make monitoring a practical tool for environmental policy development, target-setting and pollution abatements strategies. A further goal is assessing progress in achieving policy targets and effectiveness of abatement measures. To facilitate the discussion, the secretariat will circulate a set of draft guidelines prepared with the assistance of a consultant (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2010/6).

8. Reporting to the Committee on Environmental Policy

The Working Group will discuss the main results of its activities during the period 2008–2010, including accomplishments and difficulties met. The Bureau will then be invited to report those results to the Committee on Environmental Policy at its November 2010 meeting, in the context of the discussion on the implementation by the Working Group of its mandate. Members of the Working Group are expected also to share examples of impacts, if any, that the Working Group has made on country situations through its environmental monitoring and assessments. The Working Group may also consider amendments to its current terms of reference, which it would then refer to the Committee for approval.

9. Other business

At the time of writing, the secretariat had no points to propose under this item.

III. Organization of work

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item of the Agenda</i>
Thursday, 2 September 2010	
2.30–2.40 p.m.	1
2.40–2.50 p.m.	2
2.50–3.10 p.m.	3
3.10–4.10 p.m.	4 (a)

4.10–4.40 p.m.	4 (b)
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4.40–5.30 p.m.	4 (c)
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Friday, 3 September 2010

9.30–10.30 a.m.	5 (a)
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10.30–11.30 a.m.	5 (b)
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11.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	5 (c)
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2.30–3.40 p.m.	6
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3.40–4.30 p.m.	7
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4.30–5.20 p.m.	8
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5.20–5.30 p.m.	9
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