

**2nd ENI SEIS II East Steering Committee Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**12–13 December 2017, Minsk, Republic of Belarus**

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**2<sup>nd</sup> ENI SEIS II East Steering Committee meeting**  
**12-13 December 2017, Minsk, Republic of Belarus**

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This document was approved through a written procedure and integrates comments from the Steering Committee members. The agenda, list of participants, presentations and other relevant documents are available at the following link: <https://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/east/areas-of-work/communication/events/project-related-events/2nd-eni-seis-ii-east-steering-committee-meeting>. An Action list from the meeting is included at the end of the minutes.

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## Highlights

The project Steering Committee evaluates project results, provides guidance, and is convened on annual basis. The second Steering Committee meeting took place in Minsk, Republic of Belarus, the 12-13 December 2017. It was attended by the National Focal Points from the six partner countries, the European Commission (DG NEAR and EU Delegation to Belarus), high-level representatives from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus, as well as representatives of UNECE, UN Environment, Zoi Environment Network, and the European Environment Agency (EEA).

The Steering Committee:

- Took stock of progress achieved in 2017 and discussed relevant developments linked to the key priority areas and governance structure(s) at national level;
- Endorsed the regional plan of activities of the ENI SEIS II East project for the 2018-19 period with particular focus on project activities in 2018;
- Took note of the project's linkages and contribution towards the pan-European commitment from Batumi Ministerial (2016) on reporting progress in establishing SEIS (UNECE/UN Environment SEIS Assessment Framework);
- Acknowledged the need to put a strong emphasis on implementation to achieve tangible results, in particular in the context of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Declaration on Environment and Climate Change adopted in October 2016 and related activities foreseen in 2018;
- Discussed relevant logistical issues and agreed to pursue the establishment of the SEIS National Implementation Teams (NIT) and appointment of SEIS National Assistants, where not yet done, in order facilitate communication between relevant institutions and promote the project's outputs;

## Project background

As part of the European Union's regional cooperation efforts with the EaP framework, the European Environment Agency (EEA) started implementing phase II of the SEIS project in February 2016. The project covers all six EaP countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and will be carried out over four years. The project aims to help the countries in defining and putting in practice solutions that would enable compliance with regional/international commitments related to environmental reporting. This includes better management and use environmental information to support a regular process of environmental assessment and evidence-based decision-making. At national level, the project is coordinated by two National Focal Points (NFP), representing the Ministry of Environment and the National Office of Statistics respectively.



## Meeting objectives

The objectives of the 2nd ENI SEIS II East Steering Committee meeting are as follows:

- To take stock of progress achieved in 2017 and capture relevant developments linked to the key priority areas and governance structure(s) at national level;
- To present and endorse the regional plan of activities of the ENI SEIS II East project for the 2018-19 period with particular focus on project activities in 2018;
- To identify synergies/actions for joint implementation in the coming period with relevant projects, partners and other existing initiatives in the context of the SEIS mandate and objectives of the ENI SEIS II East project.

The meeting was structured in three plenary sessions. Each session was co-chaired by representatives of the EEA, the European Commission, and/or the Republic of Belarus as host country. Bilateral meetings with country representatives and various partners took place in the margins before and after the plenary sessions.

A background note outlining the meeting's objectives, structure and focus of the sessions, as well as a set of guiding questions to prepare the countries' interventions was circulated to the participants in advance of the meeting.

## Session 1. Project activities and achievements in 2017 and lessons learned

### *1.1 Opening and welcome remarks*

The meeting was opened by Ms. Iya Malkina, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus, who welcomed the participants and expressed her gratitude for conducting the meeting in Minsk. Ms. Malkina referred to the signing of the Letter of Intent (see point 1.2. below) as a milestone in the cooperation, necessary for formalisation of the project at national level, and reiterated the commitment from the Republic of Belarus to work on the identified components. In this context, the project on SEIS helps focus efforts to harmonise and share environmental indicators and streamline actions towards a common environmental information platform to assess the state and trends on the environment and add transparency to the process.

Ms. Irina Kanhro, First Deputy Chairperson of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (Belstat) welcomed participants to the Republic of Belarus and underlined advantages of the cooperation from a statistical perspective, mainly through capacity building on economic-environmental accounting and assessments. Belstat is committed to apply the new knowledge gained and plan to produce annually water supply use accounting tables. In Belarus, Belstat together with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and National Research Centre on integrated use of water resource have started an environmental economic accounting programme with focus on the



UN SEEA water implementation in 2016. This pilot is part of the National Statistical Work programme led by Belstat. The demonstrated level of commitment from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, as well as from the National Statistical Committee, place high importance of the further cooperation with EEA in the framework of the ENI SEIS II East project and the continued effort in providing more transparent and user-friendly environmental data and statistics to both policy-makers and the wider public.

In her introduction, Ms. Bella Nestorova, Team Leader for Transport, Environment and Energy at DG NEAR referred to the 5<sup>th</sup> Eastern Partnership (EaP) Summit that took place the 24 November 2017 and the countries commitment to the EaP's 20 Deliverables by 2020. Ms. Nestorova informed of the Action Plan to implement the provisions in the 2016 Eastern Partnership Ministerial Declaration on Cooperation on Environment and Climate Change (Luxembourg Declaration) was being finalised. The European Commission are considering to organise a meeting of the Panel on Environment and Climate Change early 2018, and possibly another Ministerial meeting towards the end of 2018.

Mr. Philippe Bernhard, Sector Manager for Environment and Climate Change at the EU Delegation in the Republic of Belarus highlighted the start of the project “Strengthening Air Quality and Environmental Management in Belarus” (SAQEM) and the expected synergies to be explored with the SEIS project.

Mr. David Stanners, Head of the Partnerships and Networks Programme at the EEA, provided insights to frame the project and the cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries in the setting of the EEA and the working practices within Eionet. The EEA cooperates with 54 countries and strives to apply the same principles with all to facilitate the sharing of experiences within networks. Mr Stanners made reference to the Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting of EU Environmental Policy and the related proposed actions to streamline environmental reporting. Finally, the trilateral EEA-UNECE-UN Environment agreement to align approaches was mentioned.

## *1.2 Signing ceremony of the Letter of Intent between the Republic of Belarus and the EEA*

A Letter of Intent, describing modalities of cooperating on SEIS under the ENI SEIS II East project was signed between the two key partner institutions in Republic of Belarus: the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and the National Statistical Committee on one side, and the EEA on another.

## *1.3 Overview of progress in 2017*

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Poussart, Project Coordinator for the ENI SEIS II East project reminded the group of the Decisions from the 1<sup>st</sup> Steering Committee (29-30 Nov. 2016) and how these have been reflected in the 2017 regional and national work plans.



- **Targets and deliverables** of the ENI SEIS II East project vis-à-vis the Batumi Declaration (pan-European ambition “to have SEIS in place by 2021”).
- **Governance and coordination**, including the establishment of National Implementation Teams, the appointment of National Focal Point (NFP), the signing of Letters of Intent, and the appointment of SEIS National Assistants.
- **Regional thematic priorities**, including capacity developing in environmental assessments and accounting, the production of the agreed regional set of environmental indicators, harmonisation with methodologies of Eionet/EEA with a focus on water, biodiversity (Emerald Network), land cover mapping (CORINE Land Cover), air, waste.
- **Environmental Assessment and Accounting**, including implementation of the UN SEEA/FDES and EEA methodologies and their applications for integrated assessments.
- **Information systems and infrastructure**, including the creation of thematic portals, National Integrated Environmental Information Systems, etc.
- **Communication**, including the development of the project website, publication of the project newsletter, sharing of national news, and visibility at key regional events.
- **Synergies with other initiatives and projects**, including participation in the UNECE JTFEIS and WGEMA groups, synergies with regional projects such as EUWI +, UNDP GEF, UNDA and twinning projects, national cases to demonstrate SEIS in practice.

#### 1.4 Country perspectives

Each country presented on their developments, reflecting on the following four issues:

1. State of play/progress linked to the sustainability of the governance structure;
2. 2017 implementation of SEIS national and regional work plans;
3. Project and SEIS visibility;
4. National priorities in the 2018-19 work plan.

#### Armenia:

- (1) By Order of the Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia, an inter-institutional coordinating group was established in 2017, to act as the SEIS National Implementation Team. A draft law "on environmental policy" has been developed, addressing various aspects related to the principles of SEIS. The Ministry of Nature Protection has established the Centre for Environmental Monitoring and Information, that will become a central entity to develop SEIS in Armenia. An electronic reporting system for environmental payments was introduced in the Republic and an electronic system for licensing emissions into the atmospheric air is under development. The Letter of intent was signed with EEA in 2017.



- (2) Armenia has established a unified system for monitoring surface and groundwater and the tables of economic-environmental accounting for water resources. Seminars were held with partners on water resources, in the Ararat Valley, and the installation of automated water meters. The process of expanding the network of specially protected areas continues, and software products for automatic and semi-automatic remote sensing of forests were introduced. In the context of a two years twinning project 2015-2017 with Statistics Denmark, the Department of Social and Environmental Statistics of the Armenian Statistical Service started the compilation and development of water accounts in Armenia. Basic methodological documents were developed based on the UN SEEA CF, UN SEEA Water, and EUROSTAT's "Manual for Physical Water Flow Accounts". The "Physical Supply and Use Tables" (PSUT) have been compiled and expanded to monetary supply and use tables used in the System of National Accounts, specifically to accommodate physical flows between the economy and the environment. Three key indicators have been calculated: Water consumption, Water use and Net emissions. These indicators were combined with monetary information such as Gross Value Added and Output Production in order to measure water efficiency and water productivity. The final results was published in 2017 on the website of the National Statistical Service. The report "Environment and natural resources in the Republic of Armenia" and the Bulletin "Statistics of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia" were also published.
- (3) For the visibility of project, sections on the ENI SEIS II East Project will be created on the websites of the Statistics Service and the Ministry of Nature Protection.
- (4) The priority areas for the Republic of Armenia are the improvement of environmental databases and the establishment of the national environmental portal of Armenia, the development of performance indicators for the implementation of the project in Armenia. The translation of EEA's General Multilingual Environmental Thesaurus (GEMET) definitions into Armenian, the operationalisation of the SEIS National Implementation Team and the preparation of a national report on the impacts of the environmental on public health are important.

#### Azerbaijan:

- (1) In 2017, the Letter of Intent was signed with the EEA to support the national project activities and the National Implementation Team of SEIS was created, consisting of representatives of 12 institutions. The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources has appointed [a new] National Focal Point and the National SEIS Assistant.
- (2) In November 2017, the two-day thematic workshop on the implementation of the water component of the ENI SEIS II East project took place. Representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources took part in the Emerald Network Biogeographical evaluation seminar. Representatives of the country participated in the regional workshop on waste statistics, in the training on environmental accounts





in Montpellier and the regional workshop on developing national state of environment reports organized by EEA and the Slovak Environment Agency. The representative of the State Agency for Geodesy and Cartography participated in the 2017 Annual meeting of the Eionet National Reference Centres on land cover (NRC/LC) and preparatory meeting for the implementation of the CORINE Land Cover (CLC) pilot projects in the Eastern Partnership countries in Copenhagen, the Absheron Peninsula was chosen as the pilot area. Data and statistics for approx. 85% of the UNECE environmental indicators are produced and publicly available. A bulletin on waste statistics was prepared. The State Statistical Committee developed and approved the method for calculating emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases in households, and created the database on statistical indicators of green growth. In Azerbaijan, since 2016, the State Statistical Committee with participation of experts from energy and environment statistics and national accountants have produced two tables of energy accounts that were filled on the basis of the conventional Energy Balance. The programme started in 2015. These accounts of "Production of energy resources" and "Use of energy products" in physical terms (terajoules) are posted on the national website and facilitated the compilation of the UNECE environmental indicator on energy.

- (3) Information on all activities related to the project shall be posted on the official websites.
- (4) The main priority for the country is the implementation of activities on water, including those related to the introduction of information systems. Capacity building and implementation of the CORINE Land Cover pilot project, capacity building for the production of national environmental reporting, expansion of the national set of indicators and the creation of a national Catalogue of Environmental Indicators, the production of environmental accounts using big data sources and satellite observation programmes with modern data processing tools and technologies are also important tasks.

#### Belarus:

- (1) The implementation of the project takes place in close cooperation between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and the National Statistical Committee and other institutions, the Letter of Intent with EEA was signed.
- (2) Together with EEA experts, a thematic workplan on water statistics was developed in 2017, representatives of Belstat and the Ministry of Natural Resources participated in the training on environmental accounting in Montpellier and the regional workshop on state of environment reporting (SoER) in Bratislava. In 2017, work on revising approaches to present and disseminate environmental data and statistics on the Belstat website was carried out. Today, 23 environment indicators are publicly available in Russian, as well as in English. Except of these 23 indicators 4 indicators





on Energy are directly linked to the MEA website. Work on water accounts is on process. Together with Eurostat experts, the questionnaire on waste statistics was filled.

- (3) Information on the ENI SEIS II East Project in Belarus is presented on the official Belstat website.
- (4) The priorities for further work include: the national registration of the ENI SEIS II East project component in the Republic of Belarus, in particular in order to the creation of a unified environmental information platform (National project); the pilot project for the preparation of the National Report on the State of the Environment in the Republic of Belarus; based on SEIS indicators, such as C1-C5, C10, C11, D1 and some SDG indicators, connected with water and biodiversity and published on national websites; continuing the development of economic-environmental accounts including further work on water accounts in the Republic of Belarus; and other.

#### Georgia:

- (1) In Georgia, since November 2017, institutional reforms have taken place, during which the power of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources will be divided between the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia and the Ministry of Protection Environment and Agriculture of Georgia. The SEIS National Focal Points have been appointed, the Letter of Intent has been signed, and the National SEIS Assistant has been appointed. The National Implementation Team has not yet been established, but there is interaction and data exchange with all institutions.
- (2) According to Georgian legislation, the National report on the state of the environment for 2014-17 is to be prepared in 2018. During the previous SEIS cooperation, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources prepared a chapter on air pollution for the state of the environment report. A two-day thematic workshop on the implementation of the water component of the ENI SEIS II East project was held in November 2017 in Georgia, the Emerald Network biogeographical evaluation seminar was held as well. The statistical publications "Natural resources and environmental protection in Georgia" and "Statistical Yearbook of Georgia" were prepared. By 2017, the number of automated air monitoring stations increased to 7.
- (3) Environmental information is placed on several online sites, including the website of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and the National Statistics Office of Georgia.
- (4) The country's main priorities are the introduction of an effective system for the exchange of environmental information and the strengthening of coordination among public authorities at the national level, improving reporting, ensuring access to environmental information, introduction of new data collection software and



development of effective mechanisms to verify environmental information. Important tasks are to improve the existing air quality system, to improve the system for water monitoring and reporting, to carry out a nationwide forest inventory, to implement a system of collecting information on wastes, the collection of information on damage related to climate change, and the development of a national geo-information system for land use.

#### Moldova:

- (1) By a joint Order of the Ministry of Ecology and the National Bureau of Statistics, the SEIS National Implementation Team (NIT), consisting of 21 representatives including NGOs, was established in March 2017. A meeting of NIT dedicated to the implementation of the CORINE Land Cover pilot project was held. The Republic of Moldova has initiated a process to establish an Environmental Protection Agency, which will perform the functions of environmental impact assessments, permitting, the management of environmental monitoring systems, and the collection and reporting of environmental information. Due to the governmental reform, the SEIS NIT needs to be re-confirmed.
- (2) A visit of EEA experts to the Republic of Moldova dedicated to the implementation of the CORINE Land Cover pilot project took place in 2017. In October, representatives of the country participated in the 2017 Annual meeting of the Eionet National Reference Centres on land cover (NRC/LC) and preparatory meeting for the implementation of the CORINE Land Cover (CLC) pilot projects in the Eastern Partnership countries. The experts completed work on the UNSD/UNEP questionnaire on waste statistics and participated in the regional workshop on waste statistics in Kiev. Representatives of the country participated in the training on environmental accounting and the regional workshop on state of the environmental reporting. Together with the Statistical Bureau of Sweden, air emission accounts were developed. A statistical compendium on the environment, a bulletin on air quality and a national state of the environment report are published annually.
- (3) Publication of information about the project is done primarily through the websites of the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of the Republic of Moldova.
- (4) Priority areas for the Republic of Moldova for 2018-19 is the creation of an integrated environmental monitoring information system, and capacity building in the area of air quality reporting. The National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of the Republic of Moldova are planning joint activities on the implementation of indicators of sustainable development and green economy, the further development of agri-environmental indicators, transition to use of the European Waste List and the introduction of environmental accounts into practice.



## Ukraine:

- (1) During the reporting period, Ukraine signed the Letter of Intent between the European Environmental Agency, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine and the State Statistical Service of Ukraine. An Order of the Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine created the SEIS National Implementation Team. The SEIS National Assistant and the new National Focal Point from the Ministry of Ecology were appointed.
- (2) Within the framework of the project, national experts took part in the meeting of the nineteenth session of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA), the training on environmental accounting in Montpellier, the 2017 Annual meeting of the Eionet National Reference Centres on land cover (NRC/LC) and preparatory meeting for the implementation of the CORINE Land Cover (CLC) pilot projects in the Eastern Partnership countries in Copenhagen, the regional workshop on waste statistics in Kiev, the regional workshop on state of the environment reporting in Bratislava, the training on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Central Framework (SEEA-CF). Ukraine carried out an assessment of its environmental indicators and developed additional methodological guidelines for calculating environmental indicators, and developed a draft concept note for a unified electronic environmental information system and a pilot version of a portal for environmental indicators for local level. An information system for the Donbass region, with the component for surface water quality, was developed. In 2017, the National State of the Environment for 2015 was prepared. During the year, the draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On approval of the procedure of state monitoring of waters" on the basis of the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) was prepared. The Order of the State Statistical Service of Ukraine "Methodological provisions on the dissemination by the State Service of Statistics of environmental indicators in accordance with international standards" was prepared.
- (3) Information on the progress of the project is shared during various activities of the Ministry of Environment (e.g. roundtables, meetings, public meetings). Information on the project is placed on the website of the Ministry of Ecology and on the pilot website of the SEIS portal.
- (4) Priority areas for 2018-19 are the establishment of the national portal for environmental indicators, the implementation of the CORINE Land Cover pilot project for several areas. The development of the draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on atmospheric air monitoring based on the requirements of Directive 2008/50/EC on the quality of atmospheric air and clean air for Europe and the Directive 2004/107/EU on arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in atmospheric air are also important tasks. In 2018, further improvements are planned for national assessments and reporting and the



development of an indicator-based state of the environment report, and the continuation of work on the implementation of environmental accounts. The representative of the Ministry of Ecology also informed about Ukraine's interest in deepening cooperation with the EEA.

## Session 2. Project targets and work plan 2018-2019

### 2.1 Detailed overview of project activities

The session focused on presenting and discussing in detail the activities included in the 2018-2019 work plan. Presentations and discussions were led by the EEA project staff in charge of the respective areas of work.

The regional work plan 2018-2019 is available in the project website at <https://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/east/areas-of-work/work-plans>.

The main discussion points revolved around the following deliverables/expected outcomes:

#### **Area of water**

EEA lead and/or main contact point: Nihat Zal

- The production of regionally comparable water indicators in accordance with EEA and UNECE implementations, with focus on indicators C1-C5 on water quantity (Renewable freshwater resources; Freshwater abstraction; Total water use; Household water use per capita; Water supply industry and population connected to water supply industry), and C10-C11 on water quality (BOD and concentration of ammonium in rivers; Nutrients in freshwater);
- Supporting the further development of national water portals/water information systems in line with the SEIS principles, including hands-on training to look into aspects related to online data management (data preparation, data collection, QA and QC and data dissemination) and procedures for manual and predefined quality checks and assurance.
- Possibilities for working jointly to develop national state of water reports, based on the indicators produced and developed.

#### **Area of biodiversity**

EEA lead and/or main contact point: Nihat Zal

- The production of regionally comparable biodiversity indicators in accordance with EEA and UNECE implementations, with focus on the indicator on Protected Areas (D1);



- Supporting work to improve the coverage of Emerald Network sites as a response to the Aichi Strategic Goal C Target 11 and SDG Goal 15, through Biogeographical seminars on sufficiency assessment of proposed and candidate Emerald sites;
- Supporting national authorities in reporting data on species and habitats to respond to reporting on the conservation status of species and habitats of European importance to the Bern Convention by 2019.

### **Area of land cover mapping**

EEA lead and/or main contact point: Jean-Nicolas Poussart

- The capacity building programme to apply the Corine land cover (CLC) methodology to pilot areas in each of the ENI partner countries aiming to produce a recent CLC dataset, a CLC dataset for the past (e.g. 5-6 years before recent dataset), and a CLC-change dataset (i.e. changes over time).
- Possibilities to link the results of the CLC pilot activities, as CLC is a key data source for environmental accounting and assessments.

### **Area of air**

EEA lead and/or main contact point: To be confirmed (presented by Jean-Nicolas Poussart)

- Project support for translating into Russian language the recent EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook 2016 - technical guidance to prepare national emission inventories
- Possible project support to evaluation/assess capacities for air quality reporting in view of designing, and supporting the implementation of, pilot projects to increase the accessibility of data and apply the EEA's Air Quality Index tools and methodologies as applicable.

### **Area of Open data/e-governance**

EEA lead and/or main contact point: Adriana Gheorghe (presented by Jean-Nicolas Poussart)

- A proposal (currently being developed) to assist countries to develop a roadmap and identify feasible and practical means for integrating environmental information in national e-governance/Open Data processes and platforms

### **Area of assessments and environmental accounting**

EEA lead and/or contact point: Jana Tafi

- Supporting the further development of regular reporting on the State of the Environment (SoE) based on considerations of the EEA study of efficiency and



effectiveness of the recent environmental SoE and assessments reports in the Eastern Partnership countries;

- Capacity building via the sharing of knowledge on environmental assessment tools and methodologies of the EEA and Eionet partners best practices;
- Reviewing and updating a core set of environmental indicators in response to the pan-European “Environment for Europe” process requirement, as well as the SDG reporting, under UNECE lead. Implementing in practice and bridging national indicators to the UNECE/WGEMA indicators and indicator-based assessment methodologies;
- Environmental accounting as a tool for integrated assessments is highly relevant. The Eastern Partnership countries are ready to start activities on SEEA with an integrated assessment perspective including spatial analysis based on the interest expressed by environmental authorities to support in that way their environmental reporting process, incl. to UNFCCC, UN CBD, UN CCD, etc. The EEA assessment of self-assessments of the SEEA progress identified priorities and a regional road map. The regional road map provides some basic recommendations and further steps in which the SEEA can be built. For SEEA, land cover information and data are usually important point of departure in particular considering ecosystems and a basic building block of integrated environmental information. In addition, development of non-traditional data sources/Big Data and satellite observation programmes/Copernicus provides opportunities to put online regular reporting process on environment using modern tools and technologies available today. The EEA has capacities and knowledge in using the satellite information to monitor the state of the environment by means of available different assessment technics to provide services in producing indicators from integrated information platform.

### **Area of communication and visibility**

EEA lead and/or contact point: Victoria Goncharova

- Visibility and communication actions in 2018-2019 will focus on visibility of the project activities including synergies with other thematic areas;
- Continued production of bi-annual newsletters, further development and update of the information on the country pages on the project website and drafting of the press releases and case study.
- Countries are supportive in publishing press releases and displaying project information on national websites. Guidance and drafts press releases will be provided.
- Key steps in the delivery of the relevant and timely information to the policy makers and the public is communication. In 2018-2019, the focus is to support the countries in building national capacity in communicating environmental reports, including SOER and reporting to Conventions and online accessibility of the environmental





information. This work package will be delivered together with the assessments and environmental accounting as well as a stand-alone module for communication professionals from the countries. Countries will be asked for nomination of the experts to develop this work.

- Recommendations from the EEA study of efficient and effectiveness of the recent environmental SoE and assessment reports in the Eastern Partnership countries provided considerations and way forwards to develop the outreach of these reports.

## *2.2 The waste statistics project led by Eurostat and potential follow-up activities*

Ms. Galina Georgieva (EEA) presented the outcomes of the cooperation on waste statistics on behalf of the Team Leader, Mr. Wim Van Breusegem. The two-year (2016-2017) project led by Eurostat with technical support from consortium led by ADE S.A. is coming to an end. The EEA, the European Commission and Eurostat are looking into various possibilities to have a follow-up phase. Follow-up activities would build on country reviews and results of the ENI SEIS II East waste project, and aim at harmonisation with EU standards and focus on the key issues that have been identified during the project.

## *2.3 Reporting progress in establishing SEIS (SEIS Assessment Framework)*

UNECE and UN Environment representatives jointly presented on the outcome of the Batumi Ministerial Conference & overview on milestones in SEIS establishment in the pan-European region since 2016; the timeline for the mid-term review on establishing SEIS (Batumi mandate); a project supporting the production and regular update of the regional set of indicators and strengthening environmental statistics and accounting in the six Eastern Partnership countries under ENI SEIS II East Project, and project events and milestones in 2018 and 2019 that support the establishment of SEIS and a regular assessment process in the pan-European region.

In 2018, the mid-term review of progress in establishing SEIS in the pan-European region based on revised SEIS assessment framework and online reporting tool must be completed. The calendar of events and milestones is being designed accordingly to have a draft report for consideration by the 20th Session of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) the 3-4 September 2018. The final report would be submitted to the UNECE committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) for consideration in January 2019.

Synergies in capacity building are envisaged with other related ongoing projects, including; EU-funded (GPGC-ENRTP) project led by UNEP on SEIS Capacity Building; UNDA-funded joint UNECE/UNEP project to strengthen capacity in environmental statistics and accounting to measure, monitor and report SDG indicators; GEF-funded UNEP CCCD project in Bosnia and Herzegovina (incl. IRIS tool); and UNEP technical support to Montenegro and Serbia on testing of IRIS tool for managing environmental data flows (as related to SEIS & SDGs).





## Session 3. Actions and way ahead

### *3.1 Adoption of the work plan 2018-2019*

Session 3 was chaired and facilitated by Mr. David Stanners, Head of Programme, Partnerships and Networks, EEA, and focused on the adoption of the work plan. The countries agreed on the work plan, and were asked to provide eventual written comments, together with any relevant facts and details that may influence the implementation at national level, by the end of January 2018.

See Action list as Annex.

In closing, the country representatives were invited to consider hosting the next project Steering Committee in 2018.



Annex: Action list from the 2nd ENI SEIS II East Steering Committee meeting

Action	Timing	Lead	Comments
Countries to provide <b>comments on the regional work plan 2018-19</b> (and communicate to the EEA any relevant facts and details that may influence the implementation at national level).	31 Jan. 2018	Partner countries	Work plan available on the project website
National Focal Points to ensure that <b>national experts are nominated</b> for each of the thematic/expert activities, as described in the thematic-specific planning documents.	As per the thematic planning documents	Partner countries	
<b>Lists of national experts/networks involved in project activities</b> , for each of the thematic areas, will be compiled to ensure good communication, coordination and awareness.	31 Jan. 2018	EEA/ Partner countries	This builds on the model of Eionet "National Reference Centres".
To advance the creation of the <b>SEIS National Implementation Teams</b> (if not yet in place) and identify the steps and procedures to make it fully operational.	Continuous	EEA/ Partner countries	
To work towards the appointment of <b>SEIS National Assistants</b> for Armenia, Belarus, Moldova.	28 Feb. 2018	EEA/ Partner countries / Zoi	National Focal Points and related governance aspects must be (re)confirmed before Assistants can be appointed.
Further, develop activities and roadmap for <b>capacities building in environmental assessments</b> and accounting with spatial approach and use modern technologies in data collection, processing and dissemination of environmental assessment reports on regular basis.	Continuous	EEA/ Slovak Env. Agency/ Partner countries	



<b>National support:</b> countries to develop proposals for possible project support to implement national pilot projects in line with the work plan and national priorities. The EEA will review case-by-case the proposals and follow-up with countries individually.	Continuous	Partner countries	A template to describe proposals for national support is available.
Coordination around the continuation of support to the <b>waste component</b> , led by Eurostat in 2016-2017.	31 Jan. 2018	EEA/EC/ Eurostat	Current project led by Eurostat is ending in early 2018.

