TOWARDS A SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEIS) IN THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD

INCEPTION REPORT

25 January 2011



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REPORT COVER PAGE

Project Title: Towards a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) in the

European Neighbourhood

Project Number: C-210629

Country: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan,

Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, occupied Palestinian territory, Russian

Federation, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine; EC Consultant

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The authors take full responsibility for the contents of this report. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

L	ST OF ACRONYMS	5
1.	PROJECT SYNOPSIS	8
	Project Background:	8
	Project Intervention Logic:	8
2	INTRODUCTION	11
	Presentation of the project	11
	Main Partners and Stakeholders	11
	Policy context	12
	EEA previous work beyond EEA member countries	13
	Geographical area and target groups to be covered	13
	Contracting Authority	14
	Organisation of the work	14
3.	INCEPTION PHASE	16
	Timetable of the activities carried out in the inception period	16
	Activity 0.1: Expert Recruitment	17
	Activity 0.2: EEA and UN Headquarters on FAFA	17
	Activity 0.3 Selection of SEIS Framework Contractors for East and South	18
	Activity 0.4: First project Management Group (MG) meeting of the ENPI-SEIS project	19
	Activity 0.5: Preparation of the East and South State of Play Reports/Inventory report	19
	Activity 0.6: Establishing national networks on Environment and Statistical Stakeholders	22
	Activity 0.7: Establishing the ENPI-SEIS web-portal	23
	Activity 0.8: Kick-off meeting for Framework Contractors	24
	Activity 0.9: Organising the first Steering Committee meeting (Consultation meeting)	25
	Activity 0.10: Drafting Inception Report	28
	Activity 0.11: Overall coordination and dialogue with Commission Services and international Partners	
	Activity 0.12: Participation in other related meetings	28
4.	IMPLEMENTATION PHASE	29
5.	MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2011-2014	29

ENPI-SEIS Project - Service Contract ENPI/2009/210-629

6.	PROJECT LOGFRAME	30
Exp	pected Results	31
7.	LIST OF CONTACT PERSONS	35
ENI	P Coordinator	35
Key	/ Experts	35
ENI	PI-SEIS National Focal Points (NFP)	36

LIST OF ACRONYMS

2007 Belgrade report	Fourth pan-European assessment report for the Belgrade Conference in 2007
CEDARE	Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe
CISTAT	Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States
CP/RAC	Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production
CRLTAP	Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution
EEA - CSI	Core Set Indicators (EEA)
DABLAS	Danube and Black Sea Task Force
DG ESTAT	European Commission - DG Eurostat
DG MARE	European Commission - DG Maritime Affairs
DG ENV	European Commission - Direction General Environment
EEA	European Environment Agency
EECCA	Countries from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan)
EfE	Environment for Europe process
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ETC	European Topic Centre
EU	European Union
EUWI	EUWI - European Water Initiative
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environmental Outlook

GEO	Global Earth Observation
GEOSS	Global Earth Observation System of Systems
GMES	Global Monitoring for Environment and Security
H2020	Horizon 2020
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMS	Indicator Management Service (EEA)
INSPIRE	Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe
JRC	European Joint Research Centre
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MED	Mediterranean region
MEDPOL	Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean Region
MEHSIP	Mediterranean Hot Spot Investment Programme
MEHSIP-PPIF	Mediterranean Hot Spot Investment Programme - Project Preparation & Implementation Facility
MSSD	Mediterranean Sustainable Strategy of Development
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAP/RAC	Priority Action Programme Regional Activity Centre
QA/QC	Quality Assurance/Quality Control
REC	Regional Environmental Centre
Reportnet	Eionet's infrastructure for supporting and improving data and information flows.
RMR	Review, Monitoring and Research sub-group
SEIS	Shared Environment Information System
RAC/SPA	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas
TACIS	EU assistance programme Technical Assistance Community of Independent States
ToR	Terms of Reference

ENPI-SEIS Project - Service Contract ENPI/2009/210-629

UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP/MAP	United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
WB	World Bank
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WGEMA	Working Group for Environment Monitoring and Assessment
WSSD Johannesburg	The World Summit for Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2002

1. PROJECT SYNOPSIS

TOWARDS A SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL

INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEIS) IN THE EUROPEAN

NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNTRIES

Project Number: C-210629

Date Financing 27/11/2009

Agreement:

Project Title:

Country: REGION NEIGHBOURHOOD

Typology of

Regional HYBRID REGIONAL

Programme:

Configuration of

Regional 9+7 COUNTRIES

Programme:

Start Date – actual: 09/12/2009

End Date - planned: 09/06/2014

End Date - likely: 09/06/2014

Primary €5.746.500

Commitment:

Project Background:

The Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) is an EU initiative to modernise and simplify the collection, exchange and use of the data and information required for the design and implementation of environmental policy.

The ENPI-SEIS project was launched to improve capacities of the relevant authorities in the ENP East countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and Russia and in the ENP South countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, occupied Palestinian territory, Syria and Tunisia) in the domain of monitoring, data management, assessment and indicator-based reporting on the environment.

Good and timely information is needed to support policy development and implementation, guide allocation of financial resources, support environmental democracy and implementation of international agreements dealing with transboundary environmental issues. These issues are on the agendas of both the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership.

Project Intervention Logic:

Overall Objective (OO):

Promote the protection of the environment in the countries of the ENP area.

Specific Objectives (SOs):

- 1. Identify or further develop environmental indicators and scorecards suitable for the design and review of environmental policies, supporting the monitoring and compliance with various national, regional and international obligations and targets.
- Improve capacities in the field of monitoring, collection, storage, assessment, and reporting of environmental data in the relevant environmental authorities including the national statistical systems, in compliance with reporting obligations to international agreements and in coordination with relevant regional initiatives.
- 3. Promote the basis for the future setting up of National and Regional Environmental Information Systems in line with the EU SEIS principles.
- 4. Track progress of the regional environmental initiatives (ENP, Eastern Partnership, Horizon 2020).

Main Activity Areas:

- 1. INDICATORS
- 2. DATA FLOWS
- 3. SEIS INFRASTRUCTURE
- 4. ASSESSMENT
- 5. COMMUNICATION
- 6. MANAGEMENT, NETWORKING AND COORDINATION

Outputs for ENP East and Russia:

- 1. Core Set of updated and refined regional Indicators (CSI).
- 2. Regular data flows established for a selected number of topics.
- 3. Building SEIS through gradual integration of existing data and information systems.
- 4.1. Trained experts in the field of environmental reporting and indicators in line with EU/EEA methods and tools.
- 4.2. Reporting contribution covering the identified priority areas as part of EEA reporting cycle.
- 5.1. Newsletters.
- 5.2. Indicators and reports produced available on line.
- 6.1. Environment and statistics networks engaged.
- 6.2. Improved partnerships with regional and international institutions and bodies.

Outputs for ENP South:

- 1. Core Set of updated and refined regional Indicators (CSI).
- 2. Regionally agreed lists of indicators for the priority areas of Horizon 2020 (CSI for H2020).
- 3. Regular data flows in place for the priority areas of H2020.
- 4. Building SEIS through gradual integration of existing data and information systems.
- 4.1. Trained experts in the field of environmental reporting and indicators in line with EU/EEA methods and tools.
- 4.2. Biennial synthesis progress report.
- 4.3. 5-year progress report under H2020.
- 5. 1. Newsletters.
- 5.2. Indicators and reports produced available on line.
- 6.1. Environment and statistics networks engaged.

6.2. Improved partnerships with regional and international institutions and bodies.

Target groups: The ministries, government agencies and statistical offices responsible for the production, storage, dissemination and assessment of environmental data.

Project duration: 54 months

2. INTRODUCTION

Presentation of the project

The extension of the SEIS principles to the Neighbouring countries "ENPI-SEIS" project is designed to improve the capacities of relevant authorities in ENP countries and in Russia in the domain of monitoring, data management, indicator-based assessment and reporting on the environment. In particular the project will

- advance processes for developing environmental indicators harmonised among the countries and with EU practices;
- establish regular data flows to support selected indicators, fulfil national assessment reporting needs and compliance with key environmental agreements;
- gradually develop elements for a Shared Environmental Information System in ENP countries and Russia, and integrate their national and regional data and information nodes into an extended SEIS;
- support assessment and reporting processes on the state of the environment (indicator-based) at various levels;
- develop regular information and communication about the process and its outputs.

The project aims at developing and strengthening ownership of the SEIS vision, activities and content among the participating countries.

Terms of Reference of the ENPI-SEIS project is attached as **Annex 1**.

Main Partners and Stakeholders

The main partners for cooperation at the national level during the project implementation are the environmental and statistical organisations leading in the field of environmental information. Improving cooperation, communication and data exchange among the environmental and statistical networks in the countries and the regions is a major goal of the ENPI-SEIS project. Other partners could also be involved case by case depending on the specificity of each national environmental information network.

At the international level, UNEP/MAP and UNECE were identified as key partners based on their long-standing experience in working in the regions; there will be close collaboration with other important stakeholders, such as the Black Sea Commission. During the inception period, intense collaboration with UNEP/MAP and UNECE was developed further towards the production of a SEIS State of Play reports. Their role, potential inputs and considerations for the long term activities is being discussed with UNECE and UNEP/MAP, with a view to establishing strong cooperation with the EEA beyond the inception phase of the project.

The project will be implemented in 2010-14 by the European Environment Agency, with the support provided by the "Group of Four" (DG Environment, EUROSTAT, Joint Research Centre and the European Environment Agency) and DG AIDCO, in close cooperation with the countries in the EU neighbourhood, UNECE and UNEP/MAP.

The EEA is supported by international consortia with strong regional networks, led by Zoï environment network in Geneva for the countries of ENP-East and Russia

(the EAST) and by Umweltbundesamt GmbH in Vienna for the countries of ENP-South (the SOUTH).

The Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) is an initiative to modernise and simplify the collection, exchange and use of the data and information required for the design and implementation of environmental policy¹. The current, mostly bespoken centralised systems for reporting are progressively replaced by systems based on access, sharing and interoperability. The overall aim is to maintain and improve the quality and availability of information required for environmental policy, in line with better regulation, while keeping to a minimum the associated administrative burdens. Consequently SEIS is based on a set of principles which can be generalised as follows:

- information should be managed as close as possible to its source;
- it should be collected once and shared for many purposes;
- it should be readily available and easily accessible;
- it should enable users to make comparisons at the appropriate geographical scale (e.g. countries, cities, catchment areas);
- it should be fully available to the general public at the national level in the relevant national languages;
- it should be supported through common, free open-source software standards.

EEA conceptual Framework for SEIS is detailed in Annex 2.

Policy context

The activities under the project are closely linked to the EU external policy priorities:

- for the ENP East countries the planned SEIS activities lie within the context
 of the Eastern Partnership, Black Sea Synergy and other relevant legal
 instruments covering the region (such as the Bucharest Convention, UN or
 UNECE relevant conventions).
- For the Russian Federation the work lies within the EU-Russia Dialogue on the Environment and will link with the Bucharest Convention and the recently adopted Strategic Partnership for Modernisation concluded with EU.
- For the ENP South countries the planned activities will support the Horizon 2020 initiative, the Euro-Mediterranean Process and the implementation of the Barcelona Convention.

As many of the countries are negotiating their association agreements with the EU, the project will strive to support approximation with the respective EU legislation, such as the selected part of the *acquis communautaire* including framework directives and instruments (e.g. the EU Water Framework Directive, the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the INSPIRE Directive etc.).

¹ cf. COM(2008) 46 final. Communication from the Commission " Towards a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS)." Brussels, 1.2.2008.

EEA previous work beyond EEA member countries

<u>EAST</u>: The EEA has a long-standing record in working with the EU neighbouring countries and beyond. Under the TACIS programme, activities in the field of assessment and indicators with countries to the East, date back to the year 2000. The work led, among others, to the production of two pan-European assessment reports (Kiev 2003 and Belgrade 2007) as well as to the production of a methodological guide for the production of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) core set of indicators. A wide network of governmental organisations and experts from EECCA countries was involved in this cooperation. The areas addressed ranged from water, air, waste areas to assessment and reporting. No direct contacts were established with the statistical networks from this region, the focus being kept on environmental related networks.

EEA will now continue work with ENP East partner countries and Russia through the ENPI-SEIS project, building on previous results (indicators, assessment, networking, capacity building etc) and focusing in particular on the gradual and consistent extension of SEIS concept and principles.

SOUTH: Concerning the ENP South cooperation, of particular relevance are the two already published EEA-UNEP/MAP joint reports published in 2000 and 2006². As a result of these assessments, three priority areas have been recognized as causing the majority of pollution in the Mediterranean Sea, namely municipal waste, urban waste water and industrial emissions. In 2006, EEA, in cooperation with relevant partners, particularly UNEP/MAP and the Parties to Barcelona Convention was requested to build an indicator process and monitor the progress of the Commission-led Horizon 2020 initiative. Furthermore EEA was requested to produce a biennial synthesis report focusing on progress in the three priorities as well as to develop a five-yearly reporting process on the state of the environment in the Mediterranean Sea. The work will now be taken further under the ENPI-SEIS project.

Geographical area and target groups to be covered

The geographical area covered by the project is laid out in regulation EC/1638/2006 establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), namely the following countries: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, occupied Palestinian territory, Russian Federation, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine.

The target groups will be the ministries, government agencies and statistical offices responsible for the production, storage, and dissemination of environmental data and information.

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² EEA n.5/2000 "State and pressure of the marine and coastal Mediterranean environment" EEA n.6/2006 "Priority issues in the Mediterranean environment"

Contracting Authority

The Contracting Authority is the European Commission, DG EuropeAid (AIDCO), Unit A.3 – Centralised Operations for Europe, the Mediterranean and Middle-East – in close coordination with concerned EC Delegations and Directorates General: DG External Relations (RELEX), DG Environment (ENV), DG Eurostat (ESTAT), DG Joint Research Centre (JRC), DG Maritime Affairs (MARE), DG Research (RTD).

Organisation of the work

The overall project coordination will be ensured by the following groups:

- Management Group (MG): bringing together nominated representatives from relevant EC services (AIDCO, RELEX, ENV, ESTAT³, MARE, JRC⁴ and RTD). UNEP/MAP⁵ and EEA project coordination team. The MG is expected to assess at least two times a year the status of project implementation, to discuss the main challenges and difficulties encountered and to decide on the future activities. The preparation of the annual Steering Committee meetings (where the beneficiary countries are invited) will also be a responsibility of the MG.
- Steering Committee (SC): bringing together the Management Group members and representatives of the beneficiary ENP countries and Russia. The SC is expected to meet once per year, preferably back to back with the last MG meeting (tentatively November). The SC meetings will facilitate dialogue and communication with the ENP countries on issues of common interests for the execution of the project and will, at the same time bring the countries' perspective in the implementation process. SC is expected to have an active role in the identification of priorities to be addressed, in mobilising national capacities for project execution as well as in commenting and endorsing the various outputs so they would better respond to country specific needs.
- Operational groups: concerning the ENP South component of the project, the H2020 Review, Monitoring and Research sub-group (RMR) will serve as the platform for the annual dialogue and review with the countries. The costs of the RMR meetings however, will be covered by the ENPI Mediterranean Environment Programme, MEP.

Concerning the ENP East and Russia component of the project, EEA will identify together with UNECE/Committee of Environment Policy the relevant institutional forum which can be used for the annual discussion and assessment of progress under the project. Particularly relevant to this end could be the **Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators.** Although the Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation participate it is still a

³ Eurostat: Statistical Office of the European Communities - http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat

⁴ Joint Research Centre - http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm

⁵ As agreed during the project coordination meeting on 23 March 2010

relevant institutional forum established ⁶ under the UNECE/Committee of Environment Policy. This forum can be used for regular discussion and assessment of progress under the Eastern Partnership project. Close links will be also maintained with UNECE/WGEMA group in order to streamline efforts and complement activities carried out in the region.

Based on the experience of the meeting held in Brussels on 11-12 November 2010 and the UNECE intervention when discussing the work programme, it will be important to continually emphasise that this project component is an Eastern Partnership project as distinct from the wider work of the UNECE.

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⁶ Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Bureau of the Conference of the European Statisticians by a decision of the Executive Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe taken at its meeting of 27 February 2009.

3. INCEPTION PHASE

Timetable of the activities carried out in the inception period

Types of Activities	1 January 2010– 30 November 2010	2010											
	INCEPTION PHASE ACTIVITIES (January 2010 - November 2010)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Activity 0.1	Expert recruitment												
Activity 0.2	EEA and UN Headquarters on FAFA												
Activity 0.3	Selection of SEIS FWCs for East and South												
Activity 0.4	First Management Group meeting			A									
Activity 0.5	Preparation of the East and South State of Play / Inventory Report												
Activity 0.6	Establishing national networks on Environment and Statistical Stakeholders												
Activity 0.7	Establishing ENPI-SEIS web-portal												
Activity 0.8	Kick-off meeting for FWCs									A			
Activity 0.9	Organising the first Steering Committee meeting											A	
Activity 0.10	Drafting Inception Report												
Activity 0.11	Overall coordination and dialogue with Commission Services and international Partners												
Activity 0.12	Participation in other related meetings												

Activity 0.1: Expert Recruitment

The process started in 2009 with preparation of job profiles and was launched in December 2009 (open: 15 Dec 2009–close: 29 Jan 2010).

Position	Starting date	Names
Project Manager – Environmental statistics in ENP countries, Contract Agent (FG IV)	1 September 1010	Selma Guven
Project Manager – Extension of EU Shared Environment Information System to ENP countries, Contract Agent (FG IV)	16 October 2010	Dezso Mikus
Project Officer – ENP South/East initiative support, Contract Agent (FGIII)	1 January 2011	Saila Kumputie
Project Manager – Mediterranean Area Cooperation Contract Agent (FG IV)	16 March 2011	tbc

The position for a fifth Project manager will be ensured through Detached National Experts, currently being considered by the national members of the Management Board.

Activity 0.2: EEA and UN Headquarters on FAFA

UN bodies like UNEP/MAP, UNECE, UNDP etc. are partners and in some cases key holders of the environmental information, with a crucial role in the execution of the ENPI-SEIS project.

In order to ensure UN bodies' involvement, DG AIDCO and EEA identified the application of the FAFA Agreements⁷ as the best legal way to ensure a simplified procedure for contractual arrangements.

Therefore EEA initiated a dialogue with the UN in a preferential partnership similar with EU-UN partnership. The process was unique in its nature since up till now no other EU agency has requested to systematically apply the provisions of FAFA.

An exchange of messages between EEA/EC and UN was formalised. The following main steps were completed (see **Annex 3**):

- i. A letter of request was sent from JMC to Mr. Costas Stathopoulos (AIDCO) on the 4 February 2010;
- ii. A positive answer from AIDCO was received on the 17 February 2010;

⁷ Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement on 29 April 2003 between the European Communty and the United Nations

- iii. A letter was sent from JMC to Jun Yamazaki (UN Controller) on the 24 February 2010;
- iv. A positive reply of the UN controller was sent on the 29 April 2010.

As a follow-up, the announcement was published on AIDCO website completing the EU internal procedure.

After getting the necessary approvals UN Headquarter agreed that the provisions of the FAFA would apply mutatis mutandis to the arrangement between the EEA and the UN. EEA applied for the first time the FAFA provisions on June 2010 through the grant agreements made with UNECE and UNEP/MAP for mutual work carried out during the inception phase (SEIS State of Play).

Activity 0.3 Selection of SEIS Framework Contractors for East and South

In December 2009 the EEA started to prepare technical specifications for two framework contracts dedicated to support SEIS related activities in the ENP regions, Russia, Western Balkans and Turkey. The call for tenders was opened on 8 February and closed on 24 March 2010 and the evaluation took place in May 2010. UNEP/MAP was invited to the evaluation for the ENP South Region as observer. Contracts were awarded in June 2010 to two international consortia with good experience in the regions and good local networking and will run for a maximum period of four years (similar with the duration of the ENPI-SEIS project).

The call for tender is available at the following link of the EEA Web-site.

Contract	Link
EEA/SES/10/001 – Framework contract for support on implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System	

The two SEIS framework contracts were awarded to the following consortia:

Lot 1: SEIS support ENP East and Russia:

- Zoi Environment network, Switzerland lead
- Umweltbundesamt Austria- partner
- Eau de Web Romania partner
- In association with Regional Environment Center for Caucasus (Tbilisi- Yerevan-Baku)

Lot 2: SEIS support ENP South, Western Balkans and Turkey:

- Umweltbundesamt Austria lead
- ZOI environment network, Switzerland partner
- CEDARE, Egypt partner
- Milieu, Belgium partner
- Eau de Web, Romania partner

Activity 0.4: First project Management Group (MG) meeting of the ENPI-SEIS project

A dedicated launch meeting was organised with the Commission services and UNEP/MAP in Brussels on 24 March 2010.

DG AIDCO requested EEA to officially kick-off the project within the Commission services and introduce the planned activities and outputs. Members of the Management Group would meet at least twice a year to assess progress. Relevant Commission services were invited (DG ENV, MARE, RELEX, RESEARCH, ESTAT) and possible synergies and interlinkages identified. It was agreed that UNEP/MAP, because of its key role in the South, would join also the Management Group.

The first MG meeting was held back to back to meeting of the "Eastern Partnership Panel on Environment and Climate Change" which took place in Brussels on 23 March 2010. It was an opportunity to present the ENPI-SEIS project within the context of the Flagship initiative for the Eastern Partnership. The project got the support of the the partner countries participating to the meeting.

Activity 0.5: Preparation of the East and South State of Play Reports/Inventory report

In order to assess the SEIS compliant status in the ENP regions at the start of the ENPI-SEIS project, and better identify the priorities for action, it was decided to conclude agreements with UNECE and UNEP/MAP respectively. Both UN entities are long-standing players in the region and established good partnership with institutions and experts from these countries. The two activities were part of the inception period. Diagnostic assessments were delivered by UNECE and UNEP/MAP, for better understanding the current status of the various SEIS components (indicator and data flows, information systems, responsible players etc.) and based on this draw a realistic road map for the future implementation of the ENPI project components.

Key findings of the SEIS start-up projects were discussed with the ENP countries during the official "ENPI Shared Environmental Information System Consultation meeting" of the project as a whole, scheduled for the 11-12 November 2010 (at the end of the inception phase). Based on these findings and on the additional input to be provided by the recipient countries, a concrete road map for implementation of various SEIS components can be agreed.

Findings from the SEIS Start-up projects will assist the experts during the planned SEIS country visits. Concrete actions on the country/regional/sub-regional levels will be discussed and agreed in the course of the visits that are scheduled primarily for 2011. A tentative timetable is currently being identified, based on previous discussion at the November Consultation meeting in Brussels as well as through bilateral dialogue with the partners. A draft calendar of the missions is expected by the H2020 Steering Committee Meeting in February 2011. Country

visits will be undertaken with the participation/input of UNEP/MAP in the South and with relevant actors (UNECE, RECs, Black Sea Secretariat etc.) in the East. DG ENV will also join for the mission to Syria, which at the moment has got no Association Agreement.

The ToRs and related reports are attached as Annex 4.

Although similar in structure, the two draft reports and consequently the two UN partners are bringing different approaches to the country-based perspective. UNECE is adding to the report individual SEIS country profiles for Eastern neighbours and Russia, while UNEP/MAP gave a more in depth regional view, providing further detailed information on Morocco SEIS status based on the SEIS pilot visit.

CONCLUSIONS SEIS state of play East report (contracted under specific agreement with UNECE); July/November 2010

Concerning the State Environmental Administrations:

- All countries have ministries explicitly responsible for environment
- Certain competencies are given to others (e.g. water management is often under ministries of agriculture)
- Statistical services play important role in collecting, treating and publishing environmental data
- All countries have legal framework for environmental monitoring and assessment and majority of them has special programs for development of environmental monitoring
- More centralized systems are in place in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and Ukraine and less centralized systems in Armenia, Georgia and Moldova.
- All countries have specialized institutions for data management (e.g. information analytical departments)

Concerning Assessments:

- all countries publish several different types of environmental reports
 - national SoE reports
 - environmental statistical yearbooks
 - special reports (air, water, biodiversity)
- Reports are focused on data presentation rather than on data interpretation and assessment
- Use of environmental indicators is at the beginning
- None of countries has produced an indicator-based assessment report

Concerning data:

- Basic statistical and monitoring data are available for GHGs, air, water, waste, soil, forests, protected areas and biodiversity in all countries.
- Quality, completeness and time coverage varies between countries
- Certain important data are not available (e.g. PM10, PM2.5, ground level ozone) – with the exception of Belarus and big Russian cities
- Certain emission, discharge and waste inventories are incomplete

Concerning Infrastructure:

- Use of ICT is not well advanced in all countries and many data do not exist in electronic form;

- No integrated environmental databases
- No integrated environmental information systems
- No established procedures for data exchange in most countries

Concerning Institutional cooperation

- Almost all countries are parties to major regional MEAs but not to all protocols, especially those to CLRTAP;
- Reporting to MEAS is often inconsistence, incomplete and depend on donor support

Gaps and Bottlenecks:

- Integrated monitoring systems are not in place in majority of countries
- Monitoring is generally not carried out in accordance with international standards, methodologies and procedures
- Monitoring equipment is often insufficient or obsolete
- The number of automated monitoring stations is very limited
- Data quality control is often insufficient
- There is no fully integrated environmental information system
- Data collection is carried out by various institutions under different ministries with insufficient coordination
- Self-monitoring by enterprises is rare with data generally reported on the basis of simple calculations
- Data transfer from monitoring stations and laboratories to analytical centres is often done via hardcopies or telephone
- Environmental reports include data and measured values without detailed interpretation and assessment
- The application of environmental indicators is at the very beginning

Recommendations - What

- Systems of collection of environmental statistical data should be improved and harmonized with international classifications and definitions
- Legal requirements related to self-monitoring and reporting by enterprises should be introduced or strengthened
- All environmental data should be available in electronic form (using data standards)
- Integrated environmental databases and information systems should be established
- Environmental information analytical centres should be strengthened (if exist) or established
- Information management staff should be trained in use of modern technologies
- Central environmental portals and web-sites should be modernized and expanded

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SEIS state of play South report (contracted under specific agreement with UNEP/MAP) July/November 2010

Gaps and Bottlenecks:

 Regular pollution monitoring still not recognized in all countries as an indispensable managerial tool and as an obligatory activity (Art.13 of the LBS Protocol)

- No link at present exists in the countries between the MED POL programme implementation and the data and activities of the national water agencies that exist practically in all countries;
- Many countries still do not have a system to regularly collect data on pollution sources;
- Need for assistance in terms of training and provision of laboratory equipment;

Concerning Governance:

- A policy related to the use and diffusion of monitoring data and information should be formally adopted by the Contracting Parties;
- In parallel, the sharing of information should be organized in the best way
 possible between the Mediterranean partners and the European partners
 (UNEP/MAP, Eurostat, EEA.) through the signature of conventions related to
 the accessibility of data inside/outside the country and also between privileged
 partners;
- Enhance data sharing between monitoring and statistics in the countries but also when planning regional activities;
- Develop a common understanding on the process "data-indicators-assessment" and therefore develop an appropriate governance model.

Concerning Infrastructure:

- Develop capacity to cooperate/interoperate between InfoMAP regional node and other regional nodes to share information of interest;
- Build ICT systems based on:
 - user-driven development
 - use of common standards and data definition as a basis for data sharing and interoperability (i.e. data dictionaries, meta data definition, catalogue, development of consistent data models;
 - use of open source software when practical and reuse of ICT solutions proven to be effective;
- Start creating in the country the national node based on SEIS principles
- A thorough analysis at the national level should investigate how to:
 - Improve national monitoring networks,
 - "intercept" national data flows produced on the basis of national legislation and initiatives,
 - Improve existing infrastructures for data flows management, data storing and data access
 - Need for development and use of harmonised data standards and metadata

Activity 0.6: Establishing national networks on Environment and Statistical Stakeholders

In preparation of the Consultation meeting with all ENP beneficiary countries on the priorities for implementation of the ENPI Shared Environment Information System (SEIS) project, held in Brussels on the 11-12 November 2010, countries were requested to nominate two NFPs representing the two key networks involved in the project implementation: Ministries of Environment and National Statistical Offices. Their cooperation will be essential for actively engaging their respective networks in all activities related to the project, from content to project management.

In order to achieve a high level of cooperation with the countries, the project cooperation team needs to keep track of progresses and have regular contacts with the countries.

Each National Focal Point (NFP) is nominated by a collaborating country / organisation to be the primary link and contact with the EEA on the matters related to the ENPI-SEIS project. Within the limits of their national institutional mandates, NFPs coordinate contributions to the project and support relevant activities in the country. The organization and working methods may differ from country to country, reflecting the diverse nature of the national structures established for the environmental and statistical administration and the related national information systems and networks. A National Focal Point has a number of tasks, activities and responsibilities, some of which belong to the everyday routines whereas others are less frequent. The description of NFP role and tasks is attached as **Annex 5.**

Activity 0.7: Establishing the ENPI-SEIS web-portal

An important element during the ENPI-SEIS project implementation will be the regular communication and exchange of data and information with countries and project partners. See tasks and related budget allocated in the ENPI-SEIS Terms of Reference for the South component (5.5.2 – "systematic maintenance of the H2020 portal") and East component (6.4.2 - IT portal).

EEA has developed for many years a SEIS compliant Envirowindows platform and made available or hosted dedicated portals for international activities and projects such as Phare, Tacis, Belgrade assessment, H2020, European Environment Assessment of Assessment (EE AoA), Environmental Technologies Atlas and SMAP-CH.

Since 2008 EEA is developing and maintaining as part of its core budget a dedicated H2020 portal⁸ under EEA website. The aim is to benefit from the existing EEA technologies and software and offer a unique platform for dialogue for all H2020 sub-groups.

As agreed at the trilateral meeting held in Brussels on 26 February 2010, the H2020 portal has two entry levels: one for internal communication within the SG, SC and partners herewith called Coordination 'Component', and one common page for the wider public called Communication 'Component'. The EEA is currently managing the Coordination component, while the CB/MEP project is managing the Communication Component, given its mandate for the external communication/visibility for the H2020 Initiative. The hosting of the web site, originally to be provided by the EEA, was shared with the CB MEP project. CB MEP would host the Communication part of the portal at www.h2020.net while the EEA would

⁸ http://coordination.h2020.net/

contribute to the Coordination part of the portal trough the Envirowindows⁹ platform http://enpi-seis.ew.eea.europa.eu/.

During the inception period the ENPI Team developed a specific ENP web platform¹⁰, with the aim of streamlining many previous entry points (including the H2020 portal), providing a wide range of communication and publication tools and ultimately a "single place" where stakeholders can jointly work on documents and review individual inputs.

The ENPI-SEIS portal will also be dedicated to data sharing and mapping activities. Eye on earth 11 could represent a potential area of collaboration. The choice of the communication tools will be proposed for discussion and agreement with the ENP countries, in order for the relevant target groups to be properly addressed and effectively engaged in the process. The portal is designed to provide multilingual tools to eventually accommodate possible communications with ENP regions in Russian and French. An entry point for the existing glossary (GEMET) will also be made available. GEMET is currently available on the EIONET Portal (http://www.eionet.europa.eu/gemet).

Activity 0.8: Kick-off meeting for Framework Contractors

The first meeting with the consortia representatives took place on 22 September 2010 in EEA. UNECE and UNEP/MAP representatives were also attending the meeting for good coordination of the work.

A kick-off meeting was organised by EEA with the two consortia on 22 September 2010 to fully explain and discuss the ENPI-SEIS project and the expected support from the consortia partners as well as to link the future work under the framework contract with the activities carried out together with the UN partners. To help develop linkages and partnership, UNEP/MAP and UNECE representatives were also invited to attend.

During the meeting UNECE and UNEP/MAP briefly presented the key findings of the draft SEIS state of play report for ENP East countries and Russia. The final State of Play Report, would be made available for the November meeting in English, Russian and Arabic.

As follow up of the meeting, an "action list" was agreed and circulated, with the main action points & outputs from the kick-off meeting:

- The development of a "ENP-SEIS guideline/cook book" could be considered, based on available information from the countries.
- Consortia from Lot1 and Lot2 were requested to identify in detail country support representatives in each of the ENP-countries.

⁹ EnviroWindows makes available the web technologies of the EEA to facilitate collaboration on projects, organise partnership activities, and connect geographically distributed users working on research, policymaking, and eco-innovation. http://www.ew.eea.europa.eu/

¹⁰ http://enpi-seis.ew.eea.europa.eu/

¹¹ Eye on Earth: a two-way communication platform for environmental issues developed by the EEA in cooperation with Microsoft. The portal is accessible at the following link: http://www.eyeonearth.eu/

- Linkage would be made between the newly established ENPI-SEIS web portal and the existing H2020 portal. Both lots will have to provide input/support/translation to the regular update of the information available.
- The Agenda of the November consultation meeting (Brussels in 11-12 November 2010) was discussed. Zoi (lot 1 leader) would support the EEA with the preparation both in terms of logistics, visa and also content—wise.

The Agenda of the meeting and the action list issued are available in **Annex 6**.

Activity 0.9: Organising the first Steering Committee meeting (Consultation meeting)

The inception phase concluded with a high level consultation meeting with partner countries on the priorities to be addressed in the context of the four year project. The consultation meeting took place in Brussels on 11-12 November 2010.

Agenda and Invitation letter are available in **Annex 7**. The Agenda included both the presentations on the project objectives and in-depth discussions with national representatives on the thematic focus of the work, including the priorities for action over the coming four years and in particular in 2011.

To take into account regional differences and needs, discussions were organised in two parallel tracks for the countries of the EAST and the SOUTH. In each regional track, the discussions focused on three separate but interconnected "building blocks" of SEIS: content – infrastructure – institutional cooperation.

In order to make the discussions more focused, two regional studies of SEIS-relevant issues and developments in the neighbourhood countries were extensively used as background material. The studies (SEIS "state-of-play" analysis¹²) were carried out by UNECE for the EAST and Russia and by UNEP / MAP for the SOUTH based on the available information, activities and experience of the said organisations, discussions with country experts, and fact-finding missions to selected countries (e.g. Morocco, Armenia). The "state-of-play" reports were presented at the meeting and, together with the discussions in Brussels, served as the basis for planning the ENPI-SEIS project activities in the coming years, including the detailed planning of country visits and follow-up actions.

At the consultations in Brussels the countries endorsed the approach for the ENPI-SEIS project and agreed to cooperate in its implementation. The conclusions from the regional discussions, presented at the closing plenary session of the Brussels

UNEP/MAP 2010. State of play and specific needs of ENP South countries with regard to main SEIS components focusing on Horizon 2020 priorities. Final draft report prepared by UNEP MAP Secretariat as part of the European Commission project "Towards a Shared Information system in the European Neighbourhood". With annexes.

¹² UNECE 2010. "SEIS state of play in the ENP East region" as part of the European Commission ENPI/SEIS project "Towards a Shared Environment Information System (SEIS) in the European Neighbourhood". Consists of:

Current situation and specific needs of six ENP East countries and the Russian Federation with regard to main SEIS components. Summary report by the UNECE secretariat

Individual profiles of the ENP East countries and Russia

meeting, are summarised below¹³. The conclusions and items common for both regions are highlighted in bold.

Conclusions of the regional discussions of the Consultation meeting

SEIS EAST and Russia	SEIS SOUTH						
Content and thematic priorities							
Immediate focus: • Freshwater (possibly with groundwater), both quality and quantity; the Black Sea • Municipal and possibly hazardous waste • Air emissions, GHG, possibly air quality	Immediate focus: • Urban Waste Water • Municipal waste • Industrial emissions into water and air • Fresh- and marine water, quality and quantity						
Longer-term perspective: biodiversity and forests, soil, agrochemicals	Longer-term perspective: desertification, climate change, biodiversity, air quality						
Actions in the content domain							
Define scope of shared data, indicators, and classifications	Aim at comparable methodology and parameters, define indicator reference framework (SD, ecosystems)						
Ensure and support quality control and assurance of the data	Emphasise quality (data, validation, state of the environment reporting)						
Aim at tangible results and users	Support better access to geospatial data						
Infrastructure							
Define SEIS content and derive technological needs from there	Help complete existing databases and optimise reporting following SEIS principles						
Support access to tested SEIS technologies and solutions for monitoring, data processing and control, exchange and communication	Support the development of near-real time monitoring and data systems and exchange mechanisms						
Help develop sustainable environmental information systems	Help make informed choices: continuity in monitoring by structural measures, centralised versus distributed system						
Cooperation							
National level: Enhance inter-institutional cooperation as one of the main outputs of the project. Explore countries' needs and experience with MOUs / 'declarations of intent' with EU facilitation; interagency working groups for SEIS; agreements on international data exchange within the SEIS project.	National level: The project will bring partners together with focus on the regional dimension. Reinforce horizontal cross-cutting cooperation between department. Consider the further elaboration of legislation and data policy (access, sharing vs. confidentiality).						

 13 For details please see the final conclusions of the regional sessions (East and South) of ENPISEIS consultation meeting in Brussels, 11-12 November 2010

Vis-à-vis the EU:

Build synergies / partnerships with EU Governance projects [waste, air, water], country-specific instruments and special facilities [e.g. TAIEX]. Link to national priorities and talks with the EU.

Regional/ global level:

Build synergies with **conventions**, UNECE, OECD, WB, RECs, bilateral activities. Build on existing processes (e.g. continue the work of JTF) and **obligations**. Bring SEIS to the **EfE conference** in Astana in 2011 and explore interaction with the Assessment of Assessments.

Vis-à-vis the EU:

Focus on Horizon 2020 priorities (within those, the countries have sufficient scope to emphasize their own issues). EEA with the European SEIS experience; Eurostat / MEDSTAT.

Regional / global level:

Wider regional / European cooperation, Union for the Mediterranean as a political initiative. UNEP/MAP with its legal obligations and framework.

First-line actions

Detailed discussions of expectations, country needs and priority actions (country visits)

Prioritise **training** (discuss and fine-tune to the needs of the countries / regions) **and methodology** (SEIS cookbook)

Work on a few well-defined indicators, walk through the information chain and towards common entries for open access to SEIS

Help raise public awareness

Prioritise knowledge transfer, training & capacity building; address the lack of human resources

Better coordination among on-going processes to fill the existing gaps

The project will provide capacity building and technical assistance (including ad-hoc support and short term experts) both at national and regional level, to increase competence and enhance technical cooperation covering a range of activities. Training on the following subjects will be provided:

- Data reporting techniques, included MED-Reportnet, quality assurance and quality control of data flow;
- Use of EEA/ETC tools, infrastructures and methods Indicators: Indicator Management System (IMS);
- Other specific training request from the Partner Countries.

Activity 0.10: Drafting Inception Report

The inception report was prepared by the project coordination team from 1 November 2010 to 14 January 2011.

Activity 0.11: Overall coordination and dialogue with Commission Services and international Partners

Extensive dialogue on a regular almost daily basis was brought forward with various EU (DG Eurostat and DG ENV in particular) and with international partners (UNEP, UNEP/MAP and its structures, UNECE and its relevant conventions' secretariats, RECs, OECD etc.). Dialogue with UNEP/MAP and UNECE included initial discussions on work they could carry out after the consultation meeting in November 2010 where initial priorities were confirmed. The details of their contribution to the implementation plan in 2011 and beyond will be provided when available.

The overall coordination work required substantial effort from the EEA core staff during the inception period.

Building on the agreements reached in November 2010 in Brussels and moving step-wise towards implementation, EEA is now planning to organise with DG Environment and financial support from the Capacity Building (CB-MEP) project ¹⁴ a first meeting of the revamped and enlarged RMR sub-group.

The meeting will discuss the activities/actions needed for streamlining the available indicators, assessing them against H2020 priorities and building a process of bringing together these initiatives into a SEIS sustainable system.

Therefore the actual members of the RMR sub-group will be notified about this development and ENP South countries invited to confirm and expand their nominations by embracing also the statisticians, alongside the existing target groups attending. It is the EEA aim to organise the next meeting of RMR close to the November event, tentatively scheduled for February 2011.

Activity 0.12: Participation in other related meetings

Throughout the whole ENPI-SEIS project preparation and inception period, EEA participated in several international events relevant for the project activities involving the ENP countries as well as main partners and stakeholders.

A full list of events is available in **Annex 8**.

¹⁴ As foreseen in the CB contract with DG AIDCO as well as in the EEA service contract with DG AIDCO

4. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The detailed updated timetable for the implementation phase of the project is included as **Annex 9.**

5. MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2011-2014

Types of Activities				20 1	11				2	2012	2				201:	3			20	014	
Activity 6.6	Organise Annual Steering Committee meetings																				
Activity 6.7	Organise Management Group meetings (two times in a year)																				
Activity 6.8	Organising annual H2020 & RMR Meetings and provide support to JTF meetings																				

6. PROJECT LOGFRAME

Overall objectives and specific objectives	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Goal / Overall objective	To promote the protection of the environment in the countries of the ENP area.	Reduced pollution and environmental risks	National regional statistics plus data, Information and reports	Willingness to develop monitoring and SEIS Active participation
Purpose / Specific objective	 Identify or further develop environmental indicators and scorecards – suitable for the design and review of environmental policies, supporting the monitoring and compliance with various national, regional and international obligations and targets. Improve capacities in the field of monitoring, collection, storage, assessment, and reporting of environmental data in the relevant environmental authorities including the national statistical systems, in compliance with reporting obligations to international agreements and in coordination with relevant regional initiatives. Promote the basis for the future setting up of national and regional Environmental Information Systems in line with EU SEIS principles. Track progress of the regional environmental initiatives (ENP, Eastern Partnership, Horizon 2020). 	Number of joint meetings per year (according to the meetings calendar);	the project's web site (eg.: time sequence of list of indicators and scorecards) - Signed list of participants from trainings	

Expected Results

Outputs / Expected	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable	Sources and means	Assumptions
results		indicators of achievement	of verification	•
Activity area 0: Inception period: State of play Report (Inventory report)	To assess the current status of the potential SEIS components (information systems, content and networks) in the ENP East and South countries and the Russian Federation as basis for a tailor made implementation of the various ENPI/SEIS project components.	Draft state of play reports made available	Approval of state of play reports by SC	Contractors are able to complete the State of play reports according to the technical specification given and to the highest level of quality
Activity area 1: INDICATORS East and South: ENP indicators methodological guide	Updated and refined CSI for the East region (including the assessment part) alongside the development of the EEA CSI for agreed priority areas (fresh water, air, greenhouse gases, waste).	Methodological guide prepared	Approval of methodological guide by SC Minutes of consultation meetings provided	Willingness to cooperate and agree between environmental and statistical networks in the region in the development and production of the agreed indicators
ENP CSI produced for the ENP regions and Russia and regular updates for priority thematic issues Scorecards' methodologies developed and scorecards produced Experts trained in the field of SEIS components including data, indicators, SEIS infrastructure and other funding mechanisms	To organise the national training workshops for local stakeholders of SEIS implementation in order to straighten their capacity buildings	Common CSIs produced progressively on priority areas and available by early 2014. Scorecards based on CSI produced and available by early 2014 Number of experts trained	Approval of the common CSI and scorecards by the SC Common CSI and scorecards on the ENPI-SEIS portal Lists of participants of national workshops in the workshop reports	Access to available data and information as basis for streamlining indicators under H2020 Resources and commitment at national level to support this process Willingness to attend the training workshops

Outputs / Expected	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable		Assumptions
results		indicators of achievement	of verification	
Activity area 2: DATA FLOWS	Establish regular data and information flows for	Regular data flows in place for priority areas	Priority data flows on the ENPI-	Access to available data provided
East and South:	a) production of the CSI indicators	for countries and regions progressively through to early 2014	SEIS portal	Cooperation and partnership in the
Priority data flows produced for the ENP regions and Russia	b) production of scorecards			process ensured by the national structures (environment and statistics)
and regular updates for priority thematic issues	c) preparation of assessment reports			Agreement reached between various
	d) fulfilling the national reporting needs			national and regional institutions in the selected thematic areas for data and
	e) compliance with the key environmental agreements.			information exchange
Signed bilateral agreements for	ag. comerne.		SEIS country reports as well as	
data and information exchange (between national		Signed bilateral agreements	SEIS country visits	
stakeholders)				

Outputs / Expected results	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Activity area 3: SEIS INFRASTRUCTURE East and South:		SEIS country reports	SEIS country reports populated to	Stakeholders willingness to active
SEIS country reports SEIS "cookbook" for the ENP region	Gradually integrate available data and information nodes of the ENP regions and Russia into the extended shared environment information system	SEIS "cookbook"	SEIS country reports populated to ENPI-SEIS portal SEIS "cookbook" populated to ENPI-SEIS portal	contribution to country visits and contribution to the preparation of cookbook
Local experts trained in managing and shaping INSPIRE basic reference data according to Annex 1/Inspire during national training workshops		National/regional training workshop report		Willingness to attend and actively participate into the national workshops
Output 4: ASSESSMENT East and South: First biennial synthesis progress report for the Mediterranean First 5-year Mediterranean ecosystem report Regional assessment contribution for EEA reports	Develop a regional reporting process on the State the Environment for Mediterranean and provide contribution about East neighbours and Russia to EEA reports	First biennial synthesis progress report for the Mediterranean published First 5-year Mediterranean ecosystem report published Contribute to regional assessment on East neighbours and Russia	report for the Mediterranean populated to ENPI-SEIS portal First 5-year Mediterranean ecosystem report populated to	Country support in regular assessment work based on SEIS Relevant monitoring data flow and indicators available.
Output 5: COMMUNICATION East and South: Web-portal launched ENPI-SEIS Newsletters every 6 months Input to H2020 newsletters quarterly	Regular update of the countries/relevant networks about the project implementation, outputs, relevant contacts or events.	ENPI-SEIS portal launched. Number of users of web portal ENPI-SEIS Newsletters published on a regular basis Input to H2020 newsletters provided on	ENPI-SEIS portal operational Newsletters populated to ENPI-SEIS portal	Available resources and information flow to feed regular communication.

Outputs / Expected results	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Visibility of the project products	The project outputs will be presented whenever possible to major international events relevant for the regions.	quarterly basis Project outputs presented in the relevant international events	Mission reports	
Translation of all project outputs to the relevant languages for the regions (FR, AR, RU)			Outputs in relevant languages populated to ENPI-SEIS web portal	
Activity area 6: MANAGEMENT, NETWORKING & COORDINATION East and South: Inception report Country visit reports Interim progress reports Conclusions and recommendations of ENPI-SEIS project developed during concluding regional workshops Steering Committee and the Management Group meeting reports Final report Stakeholder networks established and well-functioning		Inception report produced and approved Country visits in all beneficiary countries successfully carried out according to the calendar; Interim progress reports produced Conclusions and recommendations of ENPI-SEIS project adopted Steering Committee and the Management Group meeting reports produced and respective meetings successfully organised Final report produced	Final inception report, country visit reports, interim progress reports, final report and concluding regional workshop meeting report populated to ENPI-SEIS web portal Signed list of participants of Annual Steering Committee meetings	Cooperation and agreement with Commission Services and International Institutions (UNEP/MAP, UNECE,-CEDARE, CIS-STAT etc) Continuity of staffing in the EEA Coordination Team. Stakeholders willingness to active contribution to country visits

7. LIST OF CONTACT PERSONS

(Status in January 2011)

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ENPI-SEIS Project - Service Contract ENPI/2009/210-629

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