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Meeting of ENPI-SEIS East National Focal Points on the implementation of data flows and country-level work plans, 9-10 April 2013, Copenhagen

The objective of the meeting was to allow the partner countries and EEA to discuss the proposed ENPI-SEIS work plan for 2013-2014, to agree on the country-specific activities and the set of actions needed to implement targeted data flows for selected data sets for the agreed indicators for the ENPI East region.

During the meeting, the representatives of the ENPI East partner countries had the opportunity to present relevant developments around the implementation of SEIS and the ENPI-SEIS project at national level, including reflections on coordination through the ENPI-SEIS National Focal Points (NFPs) and network developments.

In terms of necessary steps on implementing the data flows and country-specific capacity building needs, the meeting offered the participants the opportunity to discuss challenges in sharing data of the proposed datasets on air quality, water quality and municipal waste generation. The issues touched upon were existing monitoring systems, procedures for data quality assurance, storage and processing, necessary legislative and institutional arrangements for delivering actual data flows, as well as highlighting possible areas for further support. Some countries indicated that the implementation of data flows to the EEA would require an additional formal request to the respective Ministries.

Moreover, during the meeting the participants were offered hands-on training on Reportnet, which covered the system's general structure, basic functionalities and the ways of uploading data files in various formats.

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The project is funded by the European Union

Bilateral discussions with the countries were held in parallel to the training with the aim to refine the ENPI-SEIS East work plan 2013-2014 with country specific actions. One of the common national activities discussed during the bilateral meetings was the proposal to conduct national workshops with the aim of strengthening the coordination needs and institutional cooperation around environmental data and information reporting and sharing. It would be expected that the outcomes of this workshop would lead to a more formalised institutional framework defining the roles and concepts around environmental data management and sharing, reflected through the implementation of the SEIS principles, and inspired by the general setting and functioning of the Eionet-like structure. Letters summarising these bilateral discussions were expected to be the next step in the dialogue with the national authorities and in support to the country-specific activities.

The meeting was concluded with a summary of follow-up actions that would be reflected in the project work plan and are to be implemented in the coming months:

- Regional thematic activities will be identified, in cooperation with other on-going regional EU projects on air, water and waste governance and other key partners, to ensure optimum synergies between different EU efforts.
- Letters detailing the highlights of the bilateral discussions, including the next steps proposed for country-specific activities, will be sent to all counties after the meeting. National workshops to strengthen the coordination needs and institutional cooperation around environmental data and information reporting and sharing are proposed for all countries with exact timing and objectives to be specified through further dialogue. In line with the requests from several countries, formalisation of data sharing and data exchange with EEA needs to be addressed in further correspondence.
- To start a data flow for air-related data sets, the EEA will provide an updated overview of air emissions data covered by international and regional reporting obligations available at national level.
- The EEA will propose an activity to follow up on the waste statistics workshop conducted in 2012 and explore synergies with other relevant activities for organising it.
- To initiate the data flows of water quality related data sets, the EEA will provide in written form further documentation to guide and formalise the process.

*SEIS aims to simplify
the reporting and
accessing of
environmental
information*



Preparation of the first Horizon2020 Regional Report assessing progress in depolluting the Mediterranean Sea

"Horizon 2020 Initiative" aims to de-pollute the Mediterranean by the year 2020 by tackling the main sources of pollution

The objective of the joint EEA-UNEP/MAP regional report under the Horizon 2020 Initiative, which is currently under preparation, is to assess progress in depolluting the Mediterranean Sea with a focus on three priority areas (i.e. municipal waste; water (fresh and waste water, inland and marine waters); industrial emissions). These three sources of pollution contribute to 80% of the overall pollution in the Mediterranean.

This first *H2020 Regional Report* will be built around 3 main parts:

1. **Synthesis** that will include a summary of H2020 priority areas, state of the environment, cross-cutting issues, as well as reflections on policy implications and overarching conclusions.
2. **Indicator-based thematic assessment** that will be the regional assessment of the H2020 issues, using the selected H2020 indicators, subject to data available, as well as include selected Pilot Studies to illustrate specific issues.
3. **Country-level assessment part** that will be compiled on the basis of the information provided by eight ENP South partner countries, which will cover the H2020 Priority Areas as well as specific country situations, referred to as the country profiles. The country profiles will include contextualization of national and local stories, highlighting diversity in the form of distinguishing features such as geography, climate, major societal developments and key environmental pressures.

This first indicator based report will, together with other H2020 technical assessments (e.g. assessment of H2020 investments portfolio, review of MEDPOL National Action Plan) and evaluation of specific project implementation (e.g. mid-term evaluation of H2020 capacity building project) support a wider mid-term review of the H2020 initiative and recommendations for the second phase in 2013-2020.

Indicators in support of H2020 Regional Report

In order to make a concrete progress on the development and population of the H2020 indicators from the national sources, a series of National Workshops in each of the ENPI-SEIS South partner countries were organised in March-June 2013. The eight National Workshops on Indicators (for more information see on page 5) held to support the process, where draft factsheets for the selected H2020 indicators, developed by the ENPI-SEIS Working Group on Environmental Indicators with the support of the EEA/ETC and UNEP/MAP, were discussed in depth. The available information would be used to comply with the H2020 obligation to regularly monitor progress of the H2020 thematic challenges, performances and to assess cross-cutting issues, as well as to make reflections on policy implications, including the development of a sustainable knowledge base on H2020 and implementation of the SEIS principles.

4th H2020 Review, Monitoring and Research (RMR) Sub-Group Meeting, 11-12 June 2013, Copenhagen

The 4th meeting of the H2020 RMR sub-group, held on 11-12 June 2013 in EEA, Copenhagen, gathered a number of experts from the Southern Mediterranean and West Balkan partner countries, as well as key partners from international organisations and other projects. In light of the fact that H2020 Initiative was at a point of a mid-term review, the participants recognised the need to analyse the current H2020 context, recent development and steps towards setting-up of a regular reporting mechanism to feed into the regional report. The EEA is undertaking this first reporting exercise within the framework of the ENPI-SEIS project jointly with UNEP/MAP and in close coordination with the two other H2020 components (Capacity Building and Pollution Reduction) and the Union for Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat ensuring a proper streamlining of efforts. The report, expected to be published in late 2013, will be an input to the tentatively planned for 2014 Environment Ministerial Conference for the region, where the results of the mid-term review will be presented and the way forward agreed.

The first H2020 reporting exercise provides the appropriate ground to implement the SEIS principles and enhanced effort in designing integrated national environmental information system through using in an efficient way the available data and information on the H2020 priority areas.

H2020 RMR sub-group objective is to contribute to a coherent indicator process and regular indicator based analyses in order to compare and measure progress in protecting the environment

What is the progress in depolluting the Mediterranean?

"By focusing effort here and comparing performance across the region, the aim is to encourage learning and improve the effectiveness of actions taken and investments made...."

Cairo Declaration



The participants of the 4th RMR meeting took note of relevant developments on the reporting process itself, covering reporting tools, templates and specifications, as well as the current status of data delivery from the countries. As of end of June, five out of 9 partner countries set in place the network with the identification of the data reporters and one country delivered the requested data sets. It was recognised however that all countries are showing strong interest in implementing environmental information systems. The national network set-up in most of the countries includes the ENPI-SEIS National Focal Points, as well as members of the working groups on indicators and IT together with relevant thematic experts. The national workshops have been an important step in the process (both in terms of content development and coordination among partners), but challenges remain in terms of human resources available, ensuring sustainability of the process and the necessary policy support to a regular reporting. One of the main achievements is the development of the common set of indicators and institutional arrangements put in place to elaborate the country contributions to the H2020 report. The RMR participants recognised the fact that the activities put in place are progressing well but ensuring sustainability of the cooperation is crucial.

Overview of the National Workshops on Indicators, May-June 2013, ENPI South



Organised by the ENPI-SEIS National Focal Points, the National Workshops gathered key stakeholders at national and local levels involved in the indicators development process related to the H2020 priority areas (see <http://enpi-seis.ew.eea.europa.eu/project-activities/data-and-indicators/enp-south-national-workshop-indicators/>). During the workshops the team of experts from EEA, UNEP/MAP-MEDPOL, Plan Bleu, ETC/ICM and UBA-Vienna shared experience on the preparation and collection of the requested data, calculation and use of the H2020 indicators, setting-up of the relevant data flows as well as explored possibilities to strengthen the cooperation at national level between the Ministry of Environment and the Statistics offices, local authorities, institutions and companies involved in wastewater, waste and businesses related to industrial emissions. The workshops also addressed support to Pollutant Release and Transfer Register development, common structure for reporting, as well as the expected country-level assessments to the H2020 Regional Report. The main issues regarding the data flows are the lack of human resources and the fact that the H2020 geographical coverage doesn't fit with the existing data collection then requiring further development to populate the requested indicators.

The six priority indicators targeted for the region are as follows:

1. Municipal waste generation per capita
2. Amount of collected and treated municipal waste, including collection rate and type of treatment
3. Share of population with access to an improved sanitation system (total, urban, rural)
4. Volume of wastewater collected, of which volume of wastewater treated
5. Nutrient concentrations in transitional, coastal and marine waters of the Mediterranean Sea
6. Release of toxic substances and nutrients from industrial sectors.

Schedule of the National Workshops held

- **Egypt, 28 March 2013**
- **Palestine, 8 April 2013**
- **Lebanon, 16 April 2013**
- **Jordan, 18 April 2013**
- **Israel, 29-30 April 2013**
- **Tunisia, 22 May 2013**
- **Morocco, 29 May 2013**
- **Algeria, 5 June 2013**



Upcoming Events

Below is an overview of the workshops and meetings that will be held until the end of 2013 with relevance to the ENPI-SEIS project implementation (exact dates and venues for some of them are still to be confirmed):

EEA West Balkan Summer School on Integrated Environmental Assessment	27-29 August, Vienna
Working Group on IT, ENPI South	2-3 September, Copenhagen
Waste management workshop, Moldova–with ENPI Waste Governance project	5 September, Chisinau
ENPI- SEIS Steering Committee meeting	17-18 September, Copenhagen
Working Group on Indicators Development, ENPI South (tbc)	Mid-October, Copenhagen
Follow-up workshop on waste statistics, ENPI East and West Balkan countries	4 November, Geneva
7th session of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators (JTF)	5-7 November, Geneva
Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA)	7-8 November, Geneva
National workshops in ENPI East (exact dates and locations tbc)	end 2013 –early 2014

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