

Summary report on possible technical assistance missions to be organised by UNEP/MAP MedPol in the ENPI-South Partner Countries under the EU-funded ENPI-SEIS project in view to promote SEIS principles and support the development of national environmental information management capacities
(draft – September 2014)

Algeria

Background

Environmental data are currently collected and managed using excel tables. Although excel is an easy and accessible tool, its data elaboration, integration and display functions are quite limited. In view to reinforce national capacities for managing environmental information, the National Observatory for Environment and Sustainable Development (ONEDD) highlighted the importance of:

- rapidly setting up a national comprehensive database system for managing environmental data,
- developing a web based geographical information system
- improving the visibility and accessibility to environmental information by the wide public.

An EU-funded twinning project has been recently started by the Ministry of the Environment and ONEDD aimed to the design and implementation of a national web based geographical information system.

Proposed ENPI-SEIS technical assistance support

ONEDD suggests organising an expert mission to support the work being done by the EU funded twinning project, in particular on:

- the design of databases,
- the evaluation of the required capacities to work with a web GIS and planning consequent capacity building actions,
- the improvement of visibility of environmental information through the internet as well as the effectiveness of communication products.

The consultancy should be organised in strict coordination with the twinning project in order to avoid duplications and overlapping. In this respect EEA will shortly get in contact with the twinning project coordinator to define possible areas of work.

A possible alternative could be focusing on reviewing existing environmental information data flow and providing recommendations on how to design and establish an environmental data quality assurance system.

The ENPI-SEIS expert mission will also provide the opportunity of illustrating possible future developments of the ENPI-SEIS project and to discuss national priorities in the environmental information management sector to be possibly addressed by the next Programme phase.

Proposed modalities for the TA support:

Expert mission involving a quality assurance expert, an IT expert and a facilitator/coordinator with expertise on environmental communication matters

Experts to be possibly involved:

Consultancy on database and web GIS design: INFO/RAC and/or Marco Montuori

Consultancy on data quality assurance system: Dimitris

Support on communication matters: (Alessandro Caneloro ?)

Proposed Schedule: Three/four day mission in October/November + 4 w/days follow up support in the period November-January.

Action: on the basis of the result of the consultation with the leader of the twinning project a more precise subject will be defined and proposed to Algerian partners (first week of September)

Egypt

Background

The Egyptian Environment Agency (EEAA) receives environmental data from a number of national institutions and organisations. The quality of data provided varies a lot and the Agency considers important a national inter-institutional joint effort to improve environmental data quality.

Unfortunately the national institutional framework for environmental information management doesn't allow EEAA to effectively enforce desired quality standards.

Proposed ENPI-SEIS technical assistance support

EEAA suggests doing a feasibility study on the possible establishment of a data quality assurance system and of data quality controls linked with the data quality standards required by H2020. The study should be preceded by an overall assessment of the national environmental data supply chain. The ENPI-SEIS TA mission should involve both EEAA and the national statistical institute CAPMAS. The study would focus on defining and proposing a data quality assurance system and quality control checks for 1 or 2 of the H2020 indicators. EEAA will then be working on extending the QA system to the other H2020 indicators. A method for pointing out possible data inconsistency to data providers as well as for suggesting possible revisions – in a collaborative manner - will be also investigated and defined.

A report will be produced including guidelines for the replication/extension of the quality assurance system and follow-up support will be provided to EEAA.

The ENPI-SEIS expert mission will also provide the opportunity of illustrating possible future developments of the ENPI-SEIS project and to discuss national priorities in the environmental information management sector to be possibly addressed by the next Programme phase.

Proposed modalities for the TA support:

Expert mission involving a quality assurance expert, an IT expert and a facilitator/coordinator with expertise on inter-institutional coordination mechanisms

Experts to be possibly involved:

Quality assurance on industrial emissions, monitoring, national baseline budget: Dimitris

IT expert: INFO/RAC or Marco Montuori

Facilitator/coordinator: (Alessandro Candeloro ?)

Proposed Schedule: 4 days mission in October + 4 w/days follow up support in November-January.

Action: description of the proposed action including possible option for the dates to be sent to Egyptian partners (first week of September) for comments and validation

Israel

Background:

The environmental information management sector is quite advanced in Israel. The Ministry of the Environment is currently studying mechanisms and facilities to streamline the provision of environmental data by the different entities involved in the national environmental reporting mechanism. The Ministry of the Environment would welcome a general tutoring/mentoring support by European experts on the design and implementation of such mechanisms. During recent discussions, it was pointed out the intention of designing and implementing a national “business to government” reporting and compliance system which would allow industries to comply with existing reporting obligations and to submit applications to get authorisations or qualifications

(labelling) and follow up with the related process. The possible availability of good practices in this sector in Europe was discussed along with the possibility of using ReportNet modules to develop such system.

Israel suggest that further internal discussions are needed before coming out with a concrete proposal

Proposed ENPI-SEIS technical assistance support:

The availability of a qualified expert, for a limited period of time, to provide advice and support on specific environmental information management and reporting aspects upon request by the Ministry could be organised by the ENPI-SEIS project.

Proposed modalities for the TA support:

The expert will be available from home/office and will reply to specific request. The Ministry of the Environment should indicate a well defined field of expertise to allow the ENPI-SEIS project to identify the expert.

Experts to be possibly involved:

It will depend on the specific subject communicated by the Ministry.

Proposed Schedule: 5 expert working days on a three weeks window during October/November

Action: Reminder/request of update to be sent to Israeli representatives on 3 September

Jordan

Background:

The National Statistics Department considers important to reinforce national capacities for working with ReportNet in line with H2020 information requirements and information flows. The ENPI-SEIS National Focal Point for Statistics, Mr. Khaled Suleiman Ragheb Alshatarat, indicated two priorities to be addressed by the ENPI-SEIS technical assistance mission:

- developing skills for using ReportNet reporting tools in order to fulfil H2020 reporting requirements,
- introducing the possible utilisation of GIS tools for environmental data and information management and assess required capacity building actions for developing such tools.

Proposed ENPI-SEIS technical assistance support:

The proposed expert mission will last two to three days (in country) 22-23 or 21-23 September 2014.

The technical support sessions will involve personnel from the Department of Statistics, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

A first session will be dedicated to the illustration on one side of the reporting requirements under H2020 and on the other of the existing capacities, within the three participating institutions, for data generation, exchange, aggregation and elaboration in line with the requirement of the H2020 initiative. A discussion will allow international experts providing recommendations on how to develop national capacities in this field.

A practical hand-on session will guide participants through all the process of data aggregation, preparation and transmission to EEA - using ReportNet tools - according to the H2020 requirements and taking into account the actual availability of required data in the country.

A third session will provide an overview on the possible utilisation of GIS tools for environmental data and information management, including through the provision of examples from UNEP/MAP and the EU. This session may include guidance to installation and use of open source GIS (Quantum GIS). The following open discussion will be aimed to assess required capacity building actions for developing such tools and to provide recommendations for a relevant roadmap.

Expected deliverables:

1. available data for reporting under H2020 prepared and uploaded to ReportNet,

2. Report including recommendations on how to develop national capacities for data generation, exchange, aggregation and elaboration in line with the requirement of the H2020 initiative,
3. Report on existing capacities for geographical information management including recommendations on required capacity building actions and a possible overall roadmap.

Proposed modalities for the TA support:

Expert mission involving a technical IT expert, an expert of environmental reporting (with good understanding of H2020 reporting requirements and of ReportNet tools) and a coordinator.

Proposed experts:

IT expert: Alessandro Amici

Environmental reporting expert: Marco Montuori

Coordinator: Alessandro Candeloro

INFO/RAC experts (Maria Carotenuto and Nico Bonora) will participate and provide support via Skype conference

Proposed Schedule: Two/three day expert mission on 21/23 September 2014. 3 w/days follow up support during October/November

Total expert working days:

9 w/days in case of three days mission 21/23 September 2014 (days of travel are not included)

7 w/days in case of two days mission 22/23 September 2014 (days of travel are not included)

Actions:

	Expected by	Received
Comments and validation by UNEP/MAP MedPol	5 September	
Comments and validation by INFO/RAC and Blue Plan	5 September	
Comments and validation by EEA	5 September	
Comments and validation by the Jordanian National Focal Point for Statistics	8 September	

Morocco

Background

The Moroccan National Observatory on Environment (ONEM) is coordinating the implementation of a national environmental information system with a strong sub-national component. The implementation of the system is in a quite advanced stage, yet collaborative mechanisms, procedures and tools for coordinating and standardising the contributions by regional agencies to the system are still to be defined in detail, put in practice and tested.

Proposed ENPI-SEIS technical assistance support:

The National Observatory suggests organising an expert mission to:

- Evaluating the state of the art of the implementation of the national environmental information system (report)
- Providing suggestions on how to incorporate ReportNet and SEIS principles in the National Environmental Information System, in particular on quality assurance through the establishment of obligations, procedures, templates and data dictionaries, and data quality control mechanisms (report).

- Testing the mechanisms, procedures and tools for coordinating and standardising the contributions by regional agencies (report and recommendations).

The ENPI-SEIS expert mission will also provide the opportunity of illustrating possible future developments of the ENPI-SEIS project and to discuss national priorities in the environmental information management sector to be possibly addressed by the next Programme phase.

Proposed modalities for the TA support:

Expert mission involving an IT expert, a national environmental reporting mechanism expert (including on quality assurance), an expert of ReportNet and SEIS, a coordinator.

Experts to be possibly involved:

IT expert: INFO/RAC or Marco Montuori

National environmental reporting mechanism expert: INFO/RAC or Blue Plan

ReportNet and SEIS expert: to be indicated by EEA

Coordinator: Alessandro Candeloro

Proposed Schedule: 5 day missions during October/November, 3 days in Rabat, 2 days in Tangier.

Action: formulate a proposal in French and send to ONEM for comments (first week of September)

Palestine

Background

Previous discussions with Palestinian Environmental Quality Authority (EQA) focused either on the provision of technical assistance for the identification and installation of a web GIS software platform compatible with the Microsoft Windows Server environment or on the possible utilisation of ReportNet to serve national environmental reporting needs. Investigations have been already made by EEA on a possible web GIS software meeting Palestinian requirements regarding the type of web server and on the installation and usability of ReportNet in a national context. Preliminary results of investigations are positive: Quantum GIS Server provides features required by EQA and ReportNet can be installed and used at national level.

Proposed ENPI-SEIS technical assistance support:

It is proposed to organise a single technical assistance mission to Palestine to cover both subjects identified. A GIS expert will guide Palestinian experts through the installation and configuration of Quantum GIS Server on the EQA servers and train EQA technicians on the utilisation and management of Quantum GIS Server.

A ReportNet expert will show Palestinian experts how to make a pilot installation and configuration of the software for utilisation in the EQA national reporting framework and will train EQA experts on configuration, utilisation and management of the ReportNet software platform.

Existing documentation and manual on the two software platforms will be provided to EQA. Three days of follow-up support will be guaranteed by the web GIS and Reportnet contracted experts to provide remote troubleshooting assistance.

The ENPI-SEIS expert mission will also provide the opportunity of illustrating possible future developments of the ENPI-SEIS project and to discuss national priorities in the environmental information management sector to be possibly addressed by the next Programme phase.

Proposed modalities for the TA support:

3 day expert mission involving a web GIS expert, a national environmental reporting mechanism expert, an expert of ReportNet and SEIS, a coordinator.

Experts to be possibly involved:

Web GIS expert: Dimitris

National environmental reporting mechanism expert: INFO/RAC

ReportNet and SEIS expert: to be indicated by EEA

Coordinator: Alessandro Candeloro

Proposed Schedule: Three day expert mission during October/November. 6 w/days follow up support in November/December

Action: formulate proposal and send to NFP for comments and confirmation (first week of September)

Dr.Khaled, data in raster format, don't know if shp or sql db. Open source sw. Q GIS server. Reply on details of this mission.

Tunisia

Background:

Following previous exchanges between the National Environmental Agency (ANPE) and EEA, information management arrangements in the air quality sector seemed to be the most interesting domain for the provision of technical support by ENPI SEIS. A mission by an expert of the Austrian Environment Agency (UBA) – Johannes Mayer - allowed to assess the state of the art concerning information management in this sector and to further detail the possible aspects to be addressed. The suggestion received by the UBA expert was to focus on developing effective methods and tools for communicating air quality information to decision makers and the general public in particular using the internet. UBA is now preliminary checking the feasibility of the proposed consultancy with the ANPE as the national air quality information system is being upgraded.

It was also suggested to consider implementing a feasibility study on the exchange of environmental and health information between the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Health. However for this aspect a proposal for an ad hoc twinning project has been submitted to the EU Delegation in Tunisia.

During recent exchanges, ANPE also suggested the possibility of organising an expert mission to support national efforts (ANPE and National Statistical Institute) to set up a web based GIS and building the necessary capacities for developing required software application for environmental data management.

Proposed ENPI-SEIS technical assistance support:

It is proposed (option 1) to organise a technical assistance mission to Tunisia to support the efforts of ANPE to develop effective methods and tools for communicating air quality information to decision makers and the general public. The current situation and previous experiences will be reviewed and discussed. European and Mediterranean good practices will be illustrated including with technical specifications. Discussions will allow identifying best options for improving air quality information and communication.

A report will be prepared including detailed specifications of proposed initiatives and products and proper follow up will be made available to ANPE experts in order to implement them.

In case the new national air quality information system won't be available before mid-October. The technical assistance mission will focus (option 2) on a general capacity assessment and technical support mission on the set up of an environmental web GIS and on the development of ad-hoc applications for environmental data management.

Proposed modalities for the TA support:

Option1: A data quality information expert, an IT expert with previous experiences on air quality information management and a communication expert will meet with ANPE experts and provide advice and support for developing innovative and effective methods and tools for effective environmental information and communication.

Option 2: a 3 day expert mission involving a web GIS expert and a national environmental reporting mechanism expert, a coordinator.

Experts to be possibly involved:

Option1: UBA experts under the coordination of UNEP/MAP and EEA

Option 2: Web GIS expert, Dimitris; national environmental reporting mechanism expert,
INFO/RAC

Proposed Schedule: Three day expert mission during September (option 1) or November (option 2) as the new system won't be available before end of September – to be checked - and mid October is election time in Tunisia). 3 w/days (option 1) or 6 w/days (option 2) follow up support in November/December.

Action: contacts with UBA expert, identification of proper schedule, formulating a proposal in French, with the support of the UBA expert and send to ANPE for comments and validation (first week of September).