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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment

Twenty-eighth session

Geneva, 23 and 24 April 2026

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-eighth session

**To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m.
on Thursday, 23 April 2026**

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the twenty-seventh session.
3. Implementing the mandate and terms of reference.
4. Resource requirements.
5. Developments in environmental monitoring.
6. Regular pan-European environmental assessment and environmental reporting to strengthen environmental policy.
7. Enhancement of environmental information systems.
8. Progress in environmental monitoring and assessment at the national level.
9. Sharing and integration of economic, social and environmental data.
10. Other business.
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II. Annotations

According to its terms of reference, the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment is open to all member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). Members of the Working Group represent the national institutions responsible for environmental monitoring and assessment. The Working Group also involves representatives of programmes and policies and multilateral environmental agreements dealing with the collection of environmental data and information and the generation of environmental assessments – whether covering the environment as a whole, or only certain themes – as well as expert teams.¹

Also invited to participate are representatives of international and regional organizations, such as the European Commission, the European Environment Agency, the Group on Earth Observations, the European Space Agency, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Statistics Division, the International Telecommunication Union, the World Meteorological Organization and the World Health Organization European Centre for Environment and Health.

The twenty-eighth session of the Working Group is expected to be held on 23 and 24 April 2026.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair, Ms. Gayane Shahnazaryan (Armenia), will open the twenty-eighth session. The Working Group will be invited to adopt the agenda for the session, as set out in the present document.²

2. Adoption of the report of the twenty-seventh session

The Chair or a Vice-Chair will summarize the outcomes of the twenty-seventh session of the Working Group (Geneva, 10–11 April 2025) as contained in the report of that session (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2025/2) and invite the Working Group to adopt said report.

The secretariat will inform the Working Group about the status of implementation of the decisions and recommendations made at the twenty-seventh session, including the consideration of the Working Group's activities by the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy.

3. Implementing the mandate and terms of reference

The secretariat will report on the decisions made by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its thirtieth session (Geneva, 26–28 November 2025) regarding the activities, mandate and terms of reference of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment and the related body working on environmental statistics and indicators.³ The secretariat will also provide a brief overview of the conducted mid-term review of the main outcomes of the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, 5–7 October 2022) that relate to the implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System. Members of the Working Group will be invited to express interest in leading or co-leading an activity or area of work of the Working Group.

¹ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2023/2/Add.1, paras. 18–19.

² Documentation for the meeting and other relevant information will be posted on the web page for the meeting on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website:
http://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/28th_WGEMA.

³ Decisions of the thirtieth session (as adopted on 28 November 2025), pp. 3–4, available at
<https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/30th-session-committee-environmental-policy>.

The Working Group's terms of reference require that it prepare an annual timetable of activities.⁴ The Chair or a Vice-Chair will present the draft annual timetable of activities for 2027 (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2026/3), which the Working Group will be invited to approve.

The Working Group may also wish to discuss developments and next steps in enhancing the visibility and outreach of its work.

4. Resource requirements

The secretariat will provide information on the financial resources available to support the Working Group's meetings and its other activities.

5. Developments in environmental monitoring

The Working Group serves, among other things, as a knowledge-sharing platform. During its previous sessions, the members of the Working Group suggested sharing, during regular sessions of the Working Group, recent developments and good practices in monitoring, including on the collection of local and Indigenous knowledge, citizen science, the use of crowdsourced data and the monitoring of chemicals and a circular economy. Furthermore, the Working Group included in its annual timetable of activities for 2026⁵ the provision of recommendations on institutional strengthening and legislative improvement through showcasing good practice examples at its regular sessions.

The secretariat, representatives of international and regional organizations, as well as member States, will be invited to present the latest developments, good practices and initiatives related to environmental monitoring, institutional strengthening and legislative improvements, as well as on the use and limitations of new technologies such as Earth observation and use of artificial intelligence.

The Working Group will also be invited to discuss the latest developments related to the revision of the publication *Environmental Monitoring and Reporting: Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia*,⁶ in anticipation of an updated version thereof being issued, likely in late 2026 or 2027.

6. Regular pan-European environmental assessment and environmental reporting to strengthen environmental policy

The Working Group's mandate and terms of reference foresee support to the development of regular pan-European environmental assessments.⁷ At its twenty-seventh session, the Working Group welcomed the revised concept of the eighth pan-European environmental assessment (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2025/4) and requested the secretariat to forward it to the Committee on Environmental Policy. The Working Group furthermore requested the secretariat to prepare a further elaborated concept as an official document for consideration by the Working Group at its next session.⁸ The Committee on Environmental Policy at its thirtieth session welcomed the revised concept for the eighth pan-European environmental assessment and selection of indicators, requested the secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme to start the preparation of the assessment and encouraged its members to provide the necessary extrabudgetary resources to support the production of the assessment.⁹

The secretariat will introduce the revised concept of the eighth pan-European environmental assessment, including a revised list of indicators (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2026/4), as approved at

⁴ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2023/2/Add.1, para. 14.

⁵ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2025/3, table, programme area 1 (i).

⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.E.33.

⁷ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2023/2/Add.1, para. 9 (b).

⁸ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2025/2, para. 57 (a) and (c).

⁹ Decisions of the thirtieth session, p. 3.

the thirtieth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy. The Working Group will then be invited to consider the information and agree on next steps.

The Working Group's mandate and terms of reference furthermore envisage assistance regarding the streamlining of environmental reporting in support of environmental policymaking.¹⁰ The secretariat of one or more multilateral environmental agreements under which reporting is required will be invited to present the template for the upcoming reporting cycle and to provide any necessary guidance, or to share lessons learned from recently conducted reporting, as appropriate.

The secretariat and representatives of international and regional organizations will provide an overview of activities they support related to environmental assessment and reporting at the national level.

The Working Group will be invited to consider the information and discuss issues related to environmental reporting.

7. Enhancement of environmental information systems

The terms of reference for the Working Group specify that it shall “regularly evaluate the performance of environmental monitoring and information systems in line with the principles and pillars of open data and the Shared Environmental Information System, and provide recommendations on how environmental monitoring and information systems can be further strengthened”.¹¹

The Working Group at its twenty-fourth session (Geneva, 11–12 April 2022) agreed to annually review a limited number of environmental themes and indicators based on the Shared Environmental Information System assessment framework and on the revised ECE indicator guidelines.¹² At its twenty-sixth session (Geneva, 18–19 April 2024), members of the Working Group agreed to review the theme “biodiversity” in 2025.¹³ At its twenty-seventh session, they confirmed that the next Shared Environmental Information System review would be on the theme “energy” in 2026.¹⁴ In addition, the Working Group at its twenty-fifth session (Geneva (hybrid), 2–3 May 2023) suggested sharing good practices on open data platforms.¹⁵

The secretariat launched a call for the submission of national reports on the environmental theme “biodiversity” in December 2025. Members of the Committee on Environmental Policy were invited to send national reports to the secretariat by 21 January 2026.

The secretariat will provide an overview of the report on the review of the environmental theme “biodiversity” (ECE/CEP/AC.10/2026/5). The Working Group will be invited to discuss and approve the report. This review may also contribute to the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Yerevan, 19–30 October 2026).

Further to the decision of the Working Group at its twenty-seventh meeting, a review of the theme “energy” will be initiated, supported by a regional training event on the revised ECE energy indicators, tentatively scheduled to take place in the second half of 2026, back-to-back with the first session of the Joint Working Group on Environmental Statistics and Indicators (Geneva, 20–21 October 2026, to be confirmed). The Working Group will also be invited to discuss next steps for future reviews on the implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System principles.

¹⁰ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2023/2/Add.1, para. 11 (b) (ii)–(iii).

¹¹ Ibid., para. 11 (a) (iii).

¹² ECE/CEP/AC.10/2022/2, para. 33 (b).

¹³ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2024/2, para. 45 (g).

¹⁴ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2025/2, para. 45 (k).

¹⁵ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2023/2, para. 50 (a) (viii).

The Working Group may also wish to discuss the role of information systems and open data principles in countering misinformation and disinformation and in ensuring information integrity in support of policymaking.

Representatives of international and regional organizations, as well as member States, will be invited to present the latest developments and good practices related to environmental information systems.

8. Progress in environmental monitoring and assessment at the national level

Members of the Working Group, including those representing countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, will each be invited to make a short presentation on major actions taken since the previous meeting regarding, as appropriate:

- (a) The production of environmental reports, analyses and assessments based on environmental information and indicators, including through the use of the Shared Environmental Information System;
- (b) The modernization and upgrading of national monitoring networks, in particular, those on air, biodiversity, water and soil;
- (c) Improvements in data quality assurance and control, as well as in data management;
- (d) Improvements in data policy and institutional and regulatory mechanisms and technical solutions for data exchange between various ministries and agencies (ministries of environment, environment agencies and ministries of agriculture, energy, health, industry, transport and water) and with other users, including the public;
- (e) The implementation of recommendations regarding environmental monitoring and assessment made in national environmental performance reviews;
- (f) Developments related to the use of new technologies, big data, artificial intelligence and Earth observation for environmental monitoring;
- (g) Cross-cutting developments such as integrating a gender perspective into environmental monitoring and assessment activities.

The secretariat will prepare and circulate a template to support oral presentations, as needed.

9. Sharing and integration of economic, social and environmental data

One objective of the Working Group is to discuss interlinkages between environmental, economic and social considerations regarding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a circular and green economy and other related areas of work.¹⁶

Representatives of international organizations and the European Environment Agency will be invited to present global and regional environmental policy events in 2026 relevant for the work of the Working Group.

Representatives of international partners will also be invited to present recent developments and key messages pertaining to data integration, in particular related to the transition to a circular and green economy, sustainable infrastructure, chemicals and waste, biodiversity, just transition and activities related to gender to support implementation, monitoring and reporting of Sustainable Development Goals.

The Working Group will be invited to discuss the relevance of the work and examples presented and which other activities should be prioritized to ensure the sharing and integration of economic, social and environmental data.

¹⁶ ECE/CEP/AC.10/2023/2/Add.1, para. 11 (c).

10. Other business

The Working Group will be invited to discuss any other business that might be brought to its attention, including priority themes for the twenty-ninth session of the Working Group. Members of the Working Group wishing to propose items are invited to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

11. Closure of the meeting

The Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will sum up the conclusions and decisions of the Working Group and close the meeting. The report of the meeting and the list of participants will be finalized by the secretariat for circulation to the Working Group after the meeting. Those documents will be posted on the meeting web page.

III. Organization of work

Detailed information on the organization of work will be released closer to the meeting date and will be posted on the meeting web page.
