

EEA indicators



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EEA indicators

EEA indicators are designed to answer key policy questions and support all phases of environmental policy making, from designing policy frameworks to setting targets, and from policy monitoring and evaluation to communicating to policy-makers and the public. The indicators are classified as follows:


- Descriptive indicators (Type A) responding to the question: *What's happening?*
- Performance indicators (Type B): *Does it matter? Are we reaching targets?*
- Efficiency indicators (Type C): *Are we improving?*
- Policy effectiveness indicators (Type D): *Are the measures working?*
- Total welfare indicators (Type E): *Are we, on the whole, better off?*

The Digest of EEA indicators 2014 provides a comprehensive guide to EEA indicators.

The EEA's Indicator Management System (IMS) currently contains 127 indicators, covering 22 environmental topics. The Core Set of Indicators (CSI), which is currently under revision, aims to prioritise improvements in the quality and coverage of data flows, streamline contributions to other international indicator initiatives, and provide a manageable and stable basis for indicator-based assessments of progress against environmental policy priorities. Many of the core set indicators are used in other international indicator processes implemented elsewhere, notably at the European Commission, OECD, WHO and UNECE. The set is often used as a model for indicator sets at country level.

EEA indicators belong to the following thematic sets:

- **APE (Air pollutant emissions)**

This set provides information on European emissions trends and the sources of selected air pollutants. It has recently been revised to better align it with current policy priorities and the EEA's  Multi-annual Work Programme 2014-2018.

- **CLIM (Climate state and impact indicators)**

The development of this indicator set has been driven by demands for developing and assessing climate change mitigation and adaptation policies.

One group of indicators in this set provides information on the progress towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions reported under the EU Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Mechanism and the UNFCCC. These indicators consider past and projected

greenhouse gas emissions by country as well as a sectoral breakdown and an assessment of the performance related to agreed mitigation policy targets.

Another group of indicators in this set provides information on past and projected climate change as well as the observed and projected impacts of climate change on ecosystems and society. Some of these indicators describe global climate change, thereby raising awareness and informing climate change mitigation policies and actions. Others trace climate hazards or assess the sensitivity of ecosystems and society, thereby informing adaptation policies.

- **ENER (Energy indicators)**

This set provides information on trends in energy production and consumption and their environmental relevance. The indicators are organised around policy questions, and inform regular energy and environment reporting as well as assessments of the expected environmental benefits and pressures resulting from these trends.

- **INDP (Industrial pollution indicators)**

This set currently provides an overview of trends associated with the burning of fuel in large combustion plants in Europe and the associated emissions to air. The EEA plans to expand the set of INDP indicators further to include an overall overview of trends in industrial pollution and the associated impact on human health and the environment.

- **LSI (Land and soil indicators)**

The set has been created so that land and soil indicators become more prominent in the EEA evidence base. This is in line with the increased policy attention that land and soil are receiving, both globally and in Europe.

- **MAR (Marine indicators)**

The set was established in 2012 with the purpose of providing an umbrella for previously existing EEA indicators on the marine environment and for the development of new ones. The current set includes indicators that focus on the state and pressures acting on Europe's seas, and contains five EEA core set indicators related to fishing and pollution. The set has recently been revised to be better aligned with the current European marine and maritime policy framework, in particular with the objectives and methodological standards of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

- **Outlook indicators**

- **SEBI (Streamlining European biodiversity indicators)**

- **SCP (Sustainable consumption and production)**

This set is based on an Indicator Reporting Framework developed by the European Topic Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production for the EEA in order to measure progress on sustainable consumption and production in Europe. The framework aims to provide European and national policy makers with information that enables strategic decisions to promote sustainable consumption and production. It is structured around a vision for sustainable consumption and production and 35 policy questions covering three areas: Headline indicators; status and trends in consumption and production; and a framework for change. The set of indicators answer the 35 policy questions. It includes both indicators that can be produced today and indicators that cannot currently be produced due to lack of data or methodology.

- **TOUR (Tourism)**

The indicator set is meant to allow assessments on socio-economic drivers, pressures, impacts as well as sustainability trends of tourism related activities, as a contribution to monitoring progress towards a resource efficient, green and low carbon economy as recalled in the 7th Environment Action Plan of the European Union.

The specific indicators, some of which are developed so far as proxies, aim at covering a wide range of topics related to tourism such as attractiveness of places, water abstraction, biodiversity disturbance, spread of sustainability practises by the adoption of environmental certification schemes and labelling, potentials for ecotourism and - to some extent, initially - land take by development of specific tourism and recreational related facilities (ski area, marina and golf courses).

Several indicators rely on EUROSTAT database, showing also consistency with the European Commission's European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS). Whenever gaps in the available statistical databases were found, national statistics or sectoral yearbooks were used to fill the data gaps. Other indicators are based on available spatial data or big data sources providing evidence of the intensity of tourism activities. In combination with protected areas and other areas of environmental interest, indicators about potential pressure of tourism activities can be deduced.

The indicator set addresses also the integration of socio-economic information, usually aggregated at administrative level, with environmental data which has a spatial dimension beyond administrative boundaries and is scale dependent.

- **TERM (Transport and environment reporting mechanism)**

The set includes 40 indicators used for tracking the environmental performance of the transport sector and measuring progress in meeting key transport-related policy targets. Transport is a favourable area for assessing the transitional processes towards sustainability. The EEA has been monitoring progress in integrating environmental objectives in transport since 1998, and has been providing this information to EEA member countries, the European Union and the public

- **WAT (Water indicators)**

These sets (WAT and WREI) provide information on the status of and pressures on freshwater. This thematic area is a focus of indicator development with relevant directives, including the Water Framework Directive, Bathing Water directives, Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and Nitrates Directive, and new indicators along with the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe.

- **WREI (Water resource efficiency indicators)**

See above

- **WST (Waste indicators)**

Waste indicators address relevant policy questions associated with the objectives and targets of the 2008 EU Waste Framework Directive and other relevant directives, the 2011 Roadmap on a Resource Efficient Europe and the 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP). These policy questions are expected to be relevant also in the coming years at least until 2020. Following the latest revision of the EEA Core Set of Indicators, newly proposed waste indicators reflect on the elements of waste hierarchy, in particular on waste prevention (i.e. waste generation), waste recycling and the diversion of waste from landfill.

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Related content

Related publications

Digest of EEA indicators 2014 [<https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/digest-of-eea-indicators-2014>]

See also

Environmental topics [<https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes>]

Indicators [<https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators>]

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