

Manual of European Environmental Policy

The following pages are a section from the Manual of European Environmental Policy written by the Institute for European Environmental Policy.

The Manual was published by Earthscan/Routledge from 2010 to 2012. It was designed as an on-line interactive reference work and annual printed versions were also produced.

This section is the text of the Manual as published in 2012. It is therefore important to note the following:

- The contents have not been updated since 2012 and no guarantee is given of the accuracy of the contents given potential subsequent developments.
- The sections include links to external websites (e.g. to legal texts). These links continue to work as long as those links are not broken by those websites.
- The sections also include the original links that enabled interactivity within the published on-line version of the Manual. These links no longer work.

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The EU agencies

Agencies of the European Union (EU) are distinct from its institutions, having their own legal personality and dealing with specific scientific, technical, legal or managerial tasks. The role of the Agencies that deal with the environment is to gather environmental information, evaluate environmental policy measures and coordinate the national agencies dealing with environmental issues. A list of all EU agencies is provided at http://europa.eu/agencies/index_en.htm

The European Environment Agency

The [European Environment Agency \(EEA\)](#) was established with the task of providing the EU and the Member States with independent information at a European level as a basis for environmental protection measures. In addition, it is tasked with assessing the results of such measures and ensuring that the public is properly informed about the state of the environment. This information takes the form of European, pan-European and regional integrated environmental data and indicator sets, assessments and thematic analyses. Regulation (EEC) No [1210/90](#) establishing the EEA was adopted in 1990, and the agency's work began in 1994. It has 32 member countries (the 27 EU Member States, plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Turkey and Switzerland) as well as six cooperating countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). The EEA is overseen by a management board, an Executive Director and a scientific committee and has its headquarters in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The Agency operates on the basis of five-year, multi-annual work programmes (MAWPs). The third MAWP – ‘EEA Strategy 2004–2008’ led to a significant expansion in the provision of direct support to the development and evaluation of the EU's environmental policy. Under this action plan, the EEA moved away from a pre-dominant focus on environmental data collection towards policy review and analysis, especially regarding the implementation and effectiveness of environmental measures. The fourth MAWP – ‘EEA Strategy 2009–2013’ aims to, as a broad theme, foster much wider use of the environmental information that is being collected. Communication and dissemination of information to Decision makers and citizens is to be improved, and critical environmental priorities are to be addressed more urgently.

The Agency produces a European Environment State and Outlook Report (SOER) every five years with the last such report published in November 2010. The [SOER 2010](#) provides an assessment of the most recent environmental information and data from 38 countries in Europe. In terms of Europe's environmental performance, the report noted that while there had been improvements in key areas, such as reductions in the concentration of certain air and water pollutants, increased designation of important sites for nature conservation and improvements to waste management, the underlying trends pointed to increasing burdens on the environment and natural ecosystems. The report also emphasised that environmental problems in Europe cannot be examined or resolved in isolation, noting that Europe's consumption already exceeds its own renewable natural resource production by approximately a factor of two. In response to these challenges, the report identified the following emerging future priorities: better implementation and further strengthening of current environmental priorities; dedicated management of natural capital and ecosystem services; coherent integration of environmental considerations across the many sectoral

policy domains; and transformation to a green economy that addresses the long-term viability of natural capital within Europe and reduces dependency on natural capital outside Europe.

The EEA seeks to cooperate with other Community and international bodies, and especially with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) (on measurement methods) and the Statistical Office (on statistical information). Other bodies from which cooperation is sought include the European Space Agency, the OECD, the Council of Europe, the International Energy Agency, the United Nations (particularly the United Nations Environment Programme), the World Meteorological Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Countries which are not EU members may cooperate with its work if they share the Agency's objectives, under agreements made with the EU.

In 2004, the EEA launched the CORINE Land Cover 2000 (CLC2000) database, which is the first digital map of the multiple changes that have occurred in Europe's landscapes since 1990. The CLC2000 serves as an input to the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive ([2007/2/EC](#)), which provides for a database of consistent geographical information to support environmental protection policies, infrastructure development, agriculture and maritime navigation (see section on [CORINE](#)).

The EEA has a formal role in developing coordinated systems of reporting by Member States concerning their environmental measures, and may provide advice and peer reviews to individual Member States – at their specific request – in relation to establishing systems for the monitoring of such measures. It coordinates a network consisting of Member States' environmental information and observation bodies (EIONET), comprising the EEA itself, five European Topic centres, and numerous national environmental agencies, known as national focal points and national reference centres. EIONET delivers nationally validated environmental data from individual countries.

The EEA has responsibility for five of the ten EU environmental data centres: air, climate change, water, biodiversity and land use. The 2005 agreement to set up these data centres took place between DG Environment, Eurostat, the JRC and the EEA. The aim of these data centres is to make access and use of environmental data across a specific thematic area easier for a wide audience and also to provide supporting information and expertise.

In February 2008, the European Commission published a Communication ([COM\(2008\)46](#)), announcing its intention to create a single online system for collecting, reporting and analysing environmental information. The Commission proposed to improve the present information systems by establishing a European 'Shared Environment Information System' (SEIS). The SEIS will integrate current EU initiatives such as INSPIRE and EIONET. The information will be stored throughout the EU and would be interconnected virtually through a web-based system.

European Chemicals Agency

The [European Chemicals Agency \(ECHA\)](#) was established by Regulation (EC) No [1907/2006](#). It carries out or coordinates the registration, evaluation, authorization and restriction processes for chemical substances known as REACH (see section on Registration, evaluation and authorization of chemicals). It aims to ensure consistency of implementation of REACH at Community level, and to provide Member States and the European institutions with scientific advice on questions related to the safety and the socio-economic aspects of the

use of chemicals. The Agency started work in June 2007 and has its headquarters in Helsinki, Finland. The Agency is made up of three committees: a Member State Committee, a Risk Assessment Committee and a Committee for Socio-Economic Analysis, one forum: the Forum for Exchange of Information on Enforcement, a board of management and administrative divisions.

The tasks of the Member State Committee are to seek agreement when Member States propose amendments to draft decisions concerning testing proposals, to seek agreement in cases where more than one Member State has expressed an interest in evaluating the same substance, and to seek agreement on the substances to be included on the list for eventual inclusion in Annex XIV (the list of substances subject to authorization).

The Risk Assessment Committee assesses the risk of a substance to human health and/or the environment that arise from the uses for which authorization is being sought. This includes an assessment of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the risk management measures as described in the authorization application. It also evaluates whether restrictions on manufacture, placing on the market or use of a substance are appropriate in reducing the risk to human health and/or the environment. Finally, it evaluates proposals from Member States and in certain circumstances from industry for harmonized classification and labelling of a substance.

The Committee for Socio-Economic Analysis assesses the socio-economic factors and the availability, suitability and technical feasibility of alternatives associated with the use of a substance. It also evaluates the socio-economic impacts of restrictions suggested by a Member State or the ECHA.

The Forum for Exchange of Information on Enforcement coordinates a network of Member States' authorities responsible for enforcement, and is composed of members appointed by Member States together with co-opted members chosen for their specific competence.

The Agency also organizes substance information exchange forums (SIEFs) to help companies registering the same substance to share information and avoid duplication of testing. It has an online platform called REACH-IT for submission of data and dossiers on chemicals, to allow the Agency and Member States authorities to review the dossiers, and to make non-confidential information on chemicals accessible to public on its website.

The Regulation on [Classification, labelling and packaging of chemical substances and mixtures](#) (CLP) requires chemical companies operating on the EU market to notify the classification and labelling of substances placed on the market to a central database, called the Classification & Labelling Inventory. The database is established and maintained by ECHA. The first deadline for notification is 3 January 2011. Key information from this Classification and Labelling Inventory will be made publicly available on ECHA's website.

Community Fisheries Control Agency

The [Community Fisheries Control Agency \(CFCA\)](#) was established by Regulation (EC) No 768/2005 and has the task of coordinating fisheries control and inspection activities by the Member States and to assist them in complying with the EU [Common Fisheries Policy](#). It aims to make enforcement both more effective and more uniform by pooling EU and national

means of fisheries control and monitoring resources, and coordinating enforcement activities. This is to tackle the shortcomings in enforcement resulting from the disparities in means and priorities of the Member States. The Agency has horizontal responsibilities in the area of training of inspectors and development of inspection techniques and methodologies. Established in 2005, the CFCA is governed by an administrative board consisting of six representatives of the Commission and one representative for each of the 27 Member States, with its headquarters in Vigo, Spain.

In 2007 the Agency began coordinating the first joint deployment plan (JDP) on North Sea cod fisheries. The focus of this JDP was to monitor the cod stock recovery programme that had begun in 2005. In late 2007 there were seven inspection campaigns at different locations focusing on inspection and surveillance of vessels which caught cod as their main catch or as by-catch, and on transport and marketing. From 2007 to 2009 the CFCA coordinated a similar process for cod fisheries in the Baltic; the Joint Inspection and Surveillance Programme (JISS). This is a forerunner to a future Baltic JDP. In 2008 it coordinated the JDP on Mediterranean bluefin tuna. Its priority for the 2010 work programme was to prevent illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing across the EU in a uniform manner.

The Statistical Office of the European Communities

The [Statistical Office of the European Communities \(Eurostat\)](#) is a Directorate General of the European Commission, but has been included here as it provides horizontal support across the Commission in a similar way to other agencies. Its main responsibilities are to provide the EU with European level statistical information and to promote the harmonization of statistical methods across Member States, EFTA countries and Candidate Countries. However, it does not collect data itself; this is done by the statistical bodies of the Member States. The organizations in the different countries which actively cooperate with Eurostat are brought together by the European Statistical System (ESS). This is the partnership between Eurostat, and the national statistical institutes and other national authorities responsible in each Member State for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. Eurostat covers seven activity sectors:

- Resources.
- Dissemination and statistical methods and tools.
- National and European Accounts.
- Economic and regional statistics.
- Agriculture and environment statistics and statistical cooperation.
- Social and information society statistics.
- Business statistics.

Eurostat was established in 1953 to meet the requirements of the Coal and Steel Community. Over the years its tasks have broadened and when the European Community was founded in 1958 it became a Directorate General of the European Commission. Areas of increased importance today are collecting data for the monetary union and developing statistical systems in EU Candidate Countries, with EU statistical requirements increasingly the subject of legislation to ensure comparability at a European level. In relation to the environment, Eurostat works closely with the EEA providing statistics for environmental policy and gathers information on indicators related to overarching EU strategies such as the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Sustainable Development Strategy (see section on The Sustainable Development Strategy, the Lisbon Strategy, and the Europe 2020 Strategy). It also has

responsibility for three of the ten EU environmental data centres: natural resources, products (supporting the integrated product policy) and waste. In 2007 it adopted the currently valid five-year Statistical Programme 2008–2012. It has its headquarters in Luxembourg.

Joint Research Centre

The [Joint Research Centre \(JRC\)](#) is a Directorate General of the European Commission, but has been included here as it provides horizontal support across the Commission in a similar way to other agencies. It provides independent scientific and technical advice to the European Commission and Member States in support of EU policies. It was originally established under the EURATOM Treaty of 1957 as a research organization focusing on nuclear energy. Since then it has moved towards being more of a research-based policy support organization, also dealing with other fields important to policy making such as life sciences, energy, security and consumer protection. It is highly integrated with the European Research Area and the EU legislative process. The JRC Directorate General is based in Brussels, and oversees seven institutes:

- The Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements, in Geel, Belgium.
- The Institute for Transuranium Elements, in Karlsruhe, Germany.
- The Institute for Energy, in Petten, the Netherlands and Ispra, Italy.
- The Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen, in Ispra, Italy.
- The Institute for Environment and Sustainability, in Ispra, Italy.
- The Institute for Health and Consumer Protection, in Ispra, Italy.
- The Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, in Seville, Spain.

The JRC has around 200 operational collaboration agreements with public and private research organizations, universities and national and international bodies. The majority of these agreements are bilateral, concern joint research, information sharing and sometimes personnel exchange. This collaboration is called for by the nature of the JRC's work which includes the harmonization and validation of methods and measurements, establishment of common standards, and the provision of scientific and technical support in the implementation of European legislation. In addition, the JRC has responsibility for two of the ten EU environmental data centres: soil and forestry.