Support study on the Evaluation of the EEA and Eionet

Final report

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List of abbreviations

AAR	Annual Activity Report
AEIs	Agri-environmental indicators
AoS	Atlas of the Seas
AWP	Annual Work Programme
BEIS	Biodiversity Information System for Europe
BEPA	Bureau for European Policy Advisors
BLO	Brussels Liaison Office
BR	Better Regulation
BWD	Bathing Water Directive
C3S	Copernicus Climate Change Service
CAAR	Consolidated Annual Activity Report
CADA	Common Approach to Decentralised Agencies
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBD	UN Convention on Biological Diversity
CCMs	Copernicus Contributing Missions
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
CIS	Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive
CLMS	Copernicus Land Monitoring Service
CMEF	Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
CMEMS	Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DA	Delegation Agreement
DG	Directorate-General
DG AGRI	Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
DG CLIMA	Directorate-General for Climate Action
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG EMPL	Directorate-General for Employment
DG ENER	Directorate-General for Energy –
DG ENV	Directorate-General for Environment
DG GROW	Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
DG MARE	Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
DG MOVE	Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DG REGIO	Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy
DG RTD	Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
DPSIR	Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Responses
DWD	Drinking Water Directive
EAP	Environment Action programme
EASA	European Aviation Safety Agency
EAV	European Added Value
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
ECHA	European Chemicals Agency
ECMWF	European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts
EEA	European Environment Agency
EEEN	European Environmental Evaluators Network
EGNOS	European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
EKB	Environment Knowledge Browser
EKC	Environmental Knowledge Community
EMA	European Medicines Agency

EMIS Committee	Committee on Emission Measurements in the Automotive Sector
EMODnet	European Marine Observation and Data Network
EMSA	European Maritime Safety Agency
ENCA	European Nature Conservation Agencies
ENI	EEA Technical Report Instrument
ENVI Committee	Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
EPAs	European Network of the Heads of Environment Protection Agencies
EPRS	European Parliamentary Research Service
EPSC	European Political Strategy Centre
EQ	Evaluation question
ESA	European Space Agency
ETC	European Topic Centre
ETC/ACM	European Topic Centre on Air pollution and Climate change mitigation
ETC/BD	European Topic Centre on Biodiversity
ETC/CCA	European Topic Centre on Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation
ETC/ICM	European Topic Centre on Inland, Coastal and Marine waters
ETC/ULS	European Topic Centre on Urban, Land and Soil Systems
ETS	Emissions Trading Scheme
EU	European Union
EU-ANSA	EU Agencies Network on Scientific Advice
FD	Floods Directive
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FLIS	Forward Looking Information Systems
FORENV	Foresight system for the systematic identification of emerging environmental issues
FR	Founding Regulation
FTEs	Full-time employees
GEOSS	Global Earth Observation system of systems
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GISC	The GMES/Copernicus In-Situ Coordination
GMES	Global Monitoring for Environment and Security
GNSS	European Global Navigation Satellite System
GSA	European Global Navigation Satellite Systems Agency
GSA	European Glob-al Navigation Satellite Systems Agency
IAS	International Accounting Standards
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
INSPIRE	Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe
IPA	Instrument on pre-Accession Assistance
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
ISSG	Inter-service steering group
IT	Information technology
IUME	Forum on Integrated Urban Monitoring in Europe
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
JRC	Joint Research Centre
KCTP	Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies
KIPs	Knowledge and Innovation Projects
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LTRAP	Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution
MAWP	Multiannual Work programme
MB	Management Board
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MMR	Monitoring Mechanism Regulation

MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRR	Monitoring and Reporting Refit
MSP	Maritime Spatial Planning Directive
NADEG	Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directives
ND	Nitrates Directive
NFPs	National Focal Points
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NIVA	Norwegian Institute for Water Research
NRCs	National Reference Centres
ODS	Ozone-depleting substances
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPC	open public consultation
PDN	Performance Development Network
PRTR	European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register
QA	Quality assurance
QC	Quality control
SA	Strategic Area
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEIS	Shared Environmental Information System
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SoE	State of the Environment
SOER	State of the Environment Report
STRN	Sustainability Transitions Research Network
SWD	Staff Working document
SYKE	Finnish Environment Institute
T&P	Trends and projections
TEU	Treaty of the European Union
TRAN Committee	Committee on Transport and Tourism
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSD	United Nations Statistical Division
USA	United States of America
UWWTD	Urban Waste Water treatment Directive
WEI	Water Exploitation Index
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WG	Working Groups
WISE	Water Information System for Europe
WMGE	European Topic Centre on Waste and Materials in a Green Economy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (EN)

In 2016, the European Commission initiated an evaluation of the European Environment Agency (EEA) and its European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET) through the publication of an Evaluation Roadmap[1]. This evaluation follows the Better Regulation Guidelines and thus includes analysis of five main themes: Effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and European added value. The scope of the evaluation covers all the work of the EEA and EIONET in the period mid-2012 until end-2016. The European Commission contracted a consortium led by COWI to undertake a study to support the evaluation.

Methodology

In total, 12 evaluation questions (EQs) were addressed by the support study under the above mentioned five themes. The figure presented on the next page illustrates the intervention logic applied in the support study and the interlinkages to the five evaluation criteria. The yellow box indicates the 'intervention', i.e. the elements which are within the control of those involved in implementation in the EEA and EIONET. It shows two main 'layers' reflecting the built-in dynamic nature of the agency and EIONET. The top regulatory level giving a fairly broad mandate by the objectives and tasks set out in Articles 1 and 2 of the Founding Regulation; and the operational level (below), where multi-annual and annual work programmes (adopted by the Management Board of the EEA) set specific priorities and define the activities to be undertaken.

The support study set up judgement criteria and indicators to guide the assessment and data collection for each of the evaluation questions. In addition, a consultation strategy guided the selection of stakeholders and consultation methods to be applied. The support study used the following methods to gather data and consult with stakeholders:

- Review of key documents on the performance and workings of the agency, including annual work programmes, annual activity reports, minutes of Management Board (MB) meetings and documents presented to the MB, outputs produced by the EEA and Eionet (including the EEA web-site) as well as relevant EU policy documents.
- An open public consultation (OPC) which received only 51 responses and was thus of limited value as evidence to answer the evaluation questions.
- Three targeted surveys were conducted during November-December 2017 addressing 1) MB Members, 2) Commission Services, and 3) National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Reference Centres (NRCs).
- Workshops and meeting: A workshop with NFPs was held in conjunction with an NFP meeting in June 2017. A workshop with the United Kingdom Eionet was held in July 2017. In addition, meetings with the Bureau and with the Scientific Committee of the EEA were held during May.
- 83 interviews with stakeholders were carried out, most of them during 2017 and a few in 2018.
- Eight case studies were used to provide an in-depth analysis of the EEA and Eionet in the areas of: Freshwater Directives, Nature Directives, Waste, Trends and Projections Report, EU Emissions Trading System, Fluorinated Gases, State of the Environment Report (SOER) 2015 and Copernicus.

A stakeholder workshop held 5 December 2017. The workshop presented interim findings based on the data collected and consultations carried out. The stakeholders represented included the MB members, NFPs, Commission services, an interest organisation, and the EEA.

Eionet set-up during the evaluation period

Eionet is a partnership network between the EEA member countries and cooperating countries (33 member countries and 6 cooperating countries), established by the EEA founding regulation. The EEA is responsible for developing the network and coordinating its activities. The network consists of the EEA, six European Topic Centres (ETCs) and a network of around 1000 experts in up to 400 national institutions and other bodies dealing with environmental information[2]. These experts and institutions act as National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Reference Centres (NRCs).

European topic centres (ETCs) are centres of thematic expertise contracted by the EEA to carry out specific tasks. The ETCs, working together with Eionet countries, facilitate the provision of data and information from the countries and deliver

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[1] [106] http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2018_env_002_eea_evaluation_en.pdf

[2] [447] https://www.eionet.europa.eu/about

reports and other services to the EEA and Eionet. During the evaluation period, there were six ETCs: 1) Air pollution and climate change mitigation; 2) Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation; 3) Inland, coastal and marine waters; 4) Biological diversity; 5) Urban, land and soil systems; and 6) Waste and material in green economy.

The National Focal Point (NFP) is an expert or group of experts nominated and funded by an EEA Member or cooperating country to be the primary link and contact between the country and EEA, other Eionet members, and other relevant actors. The NFPs coordinate the national contribution to the implementation of the EEA Strategy and its Work Program and support relevant activities in the country. Their organisation and working methods differ from country to country. This partly reflects the diverse nature of the national structures established for the environmental administration and the related national information systems and networks. The NFPs are based in environment Ministries, Agencies or other similar institutions.

National Reference Centres (NFPs) are the main entities to work with the EEA and relevant ETCs in specific environmental areas related to the EEA work programme. These institutions are nominated by the member or cooperating countries for their expertise within the specific areas for the purpose of technical coordination and support to the Agency in terms of data and expertise. They work with the ETCs either directly or through the NFPs.

EU added value

External factors
Priorities and actions by other organisations - private and public

Impacts
Better informed policy proposals
Improved implementation of legislation
EAP achievement
Preventive measures taken / environmental damage avoided
Improved State of Environment

Effects

Needs/problems
The EU and Member countries need information on the state of the environment and the implementation of the environmental and climate policies in order to further development and implement policy - and thus achieve the environmental protection aims laid down in the Treaty and the EAPs

The public needs environmental information to protect human health and to contribute to environmental protection

Other EU policies (key examples)
7th EAP, Juncker priorities, agricultural, regional, maritime policy, INSPIRE, IT policies, etc
Specific legal requirements
Regulations: The Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Mechanism Regulation, the Invasive Species Regulation, the E-PRTR Regulation and the Copernicus Regulation
Directives: Waste Framework Directive

Tasks of other institutions
EKC: ENV, CLIMA, JRC, Eurostat, RTD
Other agencies
Policy DGs

Results/ Outcomes
- **Improved evidence base** for environmental and climate policy-making and implementation
- EU and Members **receiving the right technical and scientific support** in designing and implementing such policies
- Better informed public

Relevance

EEA 'Intervention'

Objectives (art. 1)
Provide the Community and MSs with:
- **Objective, reliable and comparable information at European level** which will enable the Community and members to
o take requisite measures to protect the environment,
o assess the results of such measures
o ensure that the public is properly informed about the environment
- the **necessary technical and scientific support** to the Community and member countries to that end

Tasks (art. 2)
15 tasks of the Regulation (art. 2)
+ tasks following other articles (e.g. to draft multi-annual and annual work programmes and budgets and annual activity reports)
+ tasks from other regulatory documents which mention the EEA

Coherence

Outputs
- A functioning Eionet network
- Information necessary for framing and implementing environmental policy
- Reporting questionnaires and processed reports from Member States
- Advise to Member States on development, establishment and expansion of their systems for monitoring of environmental measures
- records, collations and assessments of data on quality, sensitivity and pressures on the environment; reference centre of information on the environment
- harmonised methods of measurement for environmental data
- European environmental information incorporated in international monitoring programmes
- SOER published every five years
- reliable and comparable environmental information disseminated to the general public

Multiannual and annual work programmes
Multiannual work programme 2014-2018 (extended to 2020)
4 strategic areas:
SA1: Informing policy implementation
SA2: Assessing systemic changes
SA3: Knowledge co-creation, sharing and use
SA4: EEA Management
Each with objectives, sub-components and key outputs identified

Inputs
- EEA **core budget** financed through the European Community + member fees by non-EU member countries (operational and administrative expenses of EEA)
- EEA **non-core budget** financed through the European Community (expenses related to Neighborhood programmes and Copernicus)
- Member country contribution to data, indicators, assessments (time of NFPs, NRCs, ETCs)

Activities
Activities across the MDIAK (Monitoring, Data, Indicators Assessments, Knowledge generation) chain implemented against plans set out in annual work programmes.
Non-core budget financed activities further scoped through specific agreements
Activities of the EEA
Activities of the Member States (including NFPs, NRCs)

Efficiency

Effectiveness

Key findings and conclusions on the evaluation questions

EQ1: To what extent has the Agency and the Eionet network achieved its objectives and implemented the tasks set out in its mandate and in its multi-annual programme? What are the key factors influencing/restricting progress and how do they link to the agency (if at all)? Does it consistently perform the same tasks to the same quality level?

In order to answer this question, the support study focused two key judgement criteria: implementation of the activities and outputs set out in the multi-annual and annual work programmes and achievement of the 15 tasks set out in the Founding Regulation.

The main conclusion is that the agency and the Eionet were effective in both respects during the evaluation period.

In respect to implementation of multi-annual and annual work programmes, the evidence shows that the planned activities and outputs were to a large degree implemented. The strategic area of urban, land use and soil experienced challenges due to staff shortages and lack of available data. The evidence used to assess this was the annual activity reports of the agency as well as records of the publication plans for each year provided by the agency. This evidence is strong as both are reviewed and adopted by the Management Board of the Agency.

In respect to implementation of tasks, the evidence shows that the tasks where the work programmes from the evaluation period defined a substantial level of activity were implemented effectively. The planned activities were in general implemented (evidenced by the review of annual reports as well as other documents produced by the Agency and Eionet) and stakeholders were satisfied with the level of performance. The tasks where some implementation challenges during the evaluation period were identified include: '*Coordination of Eionet*' where the roles of NFPs and NRCs were unclear, the structure of the 24 NRC groups implied challenges in respect to 'silo-organisation' and annual planning of activities at the national level was not sufficiently timely and transparent; '*Data and information systems*' related to reporting where Reportnet was not able to handle large amounts of data as required for some reporting obligations and displayed weaknesses associated with an outdated, aging IT-infrastructure; and 'Diffusion of information on the results of research' where there was limited activity despite intentions in the multi-annual work programme. In respect to the two latter cases, the situation was improving during the evaluation period and also, the lack of performance was not exclusively linked to the Agency, but was also due to external factors (e.g. increasing complexity of reporting requirements, engagement from the Commission in addressing the task).

The study found that four tasks were associated with limited activity during the evaluation period (tasks (d) on advise to individual Member States on the development, establishment and expansion of their systems for the monitoring of environmental measures; (j) on methods for assessing cost of damage; (k) on exchange of information on best available technologies; (n) to support the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies[3]). This reflected priorities made, i.e. not many activities were planned in the work programmes that could be referred to these tasks. Following the logic of the Founding Regulation, the tasks are set out in an open way forming a relatively broad mandate for the Agency (enabling prioritisation by the Agency and its Management Board according to prevailing needs). So a low level of activity in some tasks would not automatically lead to a finding of low performance, it can also reflect a situation of more limited needs in that particular area. Reference is made to EQ3, which analyses the effectiveness of the Agency in dealing with evolving policies and meeting the needs of the stakeholders.

The evidence used to assess task implementation was the annual activity reports supplemented with additional data from other sources including additional reports and studies produced by the Agency, the Eionet or the Commission as well as data on level of satisfaction generated from surveys and interviews undertaken by the support study. Overall, the evidence is strong, however, it was a challenge to assess performance in implementing the tasks, which (as mentioned above) are set out in a way, which provides a broad and general mandate and thus clear benchmarks

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[3] The letters refer to the letters in Article 2 of the Founding Regulation [105], which sets out the fifteen tasks

for successful implementation are not available from the Regulation itself (EQ6 and 7 discuss the relevance of the objectives and tasks).

EQ2: How effective is the EEA's work against its core objectives, across all environmental topics and across all activities?

In answering this question, the support study focused on the achievement of the objectives stated in article 1 of the Founding Regulation. The judgement criteria therefore concerned the performance of the EEA and Eionet in disseminating and providing objective, reliable and comparable information that is used in policy work at EU and national levels as well as serving to inform the public about the state of the environment.

The overall conclusion is that the Agency and Eionet provided objective, reliable and comparable information, which was used extensively in EU and national environment and climate policy work.

It was found that the awareness and reach of the EEA and its products varies depending on the product. For example, the products related to general societal debates have a wider reach. Overall, the EEA engaged a broad range of stakeholders, as seen by the analysis of the subscribers to the EEA mailing list, and respondents to surveys aimed at a broader public. However, stakeholder impressions of the reach to the wider audiences indicate both positive activities and improvements and some limitations. Notably, both industry and NGO stakeholders indicated interest in closer collaboration with the EEA.

In most areas, the work of the agency was crucial or of significant importance to policy work at the EU level – this includes in particular the activities and outputs related to reporting on EU legislation. For example, the work done for GHG emission inventories and the support to implementing the Climate Monitoring Mechanism was highly valued by DG CLIMA and the work in relation to the Nature Directives and Air Quality legislation was crucial in supporting DG Environment. The evidence comes in particular from the case studies, which give a solid and detailed insight in the selected areas of work. They also illustrate that the area of freshwater has been less effective than other areas – for several reasons including staff changes in both the EEA and the Commission, complexities in reporting processes and the difficulties related to Reportnet, which affected in particular reporting on the Water Framework Directive. However, the EEA's input to implementation of the Water Framework Directive is still considered crucial, whereas some difficulties were encountered in relation to the Drinking Water Directive and the Urban Wastewater Directive. This is further supported with data from the survey and interviews with Commission officials, which support a finding that EEA and Eionet overall provided effective support for policy work, although the area of urban environment was also identified as an area with minor shortcomings (in line with the finding in EQ1 above).

National policy makers had more diverse needs reflecting differences between the EEA member countries, nevertheless the evidence from the case studies provides good examples of how EEA information has been used nationally. This is further supported by evidence from surveys and interviews of national members of the EEA's Management Board as well as observations from the stakeholder workshop, which supports the overall finding that EEA and Eionet information and outputs have contributed significantly to national policy work in the environment and climate areas.

When it comes to sectoral policy (transport, energy, agriculture and maritime), the evidence shows that the EEA has supported concrete initiatives on indicators and reporting on integration of environment concerns (transport and environment indicators and agri-environmental indicators). While the EEA played a crucial role in ensuring effective and coherent reporting in related areas, e.g. climate, air quality and industrial emissions reporting, the use of EEA information and outputs in the sectoral policy areas was fairly limited and so was cooperation with the relevant policy DGs, although improvement was seen towards the end of the evaluation period. This is evident from annual activity reports as well as interviews with the relevant sector DGs.

There is some data from interviews with representatives of the EEA Scientific Committee, NGOs and international organisations which illustrate that information and outputs from the EEA had impacts on science, think tanks and civil society and through these also indirect effects on policy making. However, the data is based on interviews and is more indicative and there is thus less solid evidence in this area.

Concerning the wider impacts of the EEA's contribution to enhanced environmental protection and sustainable development in Europe. Here, it was not possible to present 'hard evidence' on the contribution the EEA is making towards enhancing environmental protection in Europe and, ultimately, to progressing on a path towards sustainable development, which are the ultimate aims of the agency. However, the findings presented above indicate that through contributions to policy development and implementation, as well as raising awareness, the EEA was contributing to this goal.

EQ3: How appropriate is the balance of activities in relation to different environmental topics considering the evolving environment and climate policy landscape and the needs of the main stakeholders? (How effective has the EEA been in anticipating and dealing with evolving policies?)

In addressing this question, the support study focused on judgement criteria relating to the extent to which the EEA's multiannual and annual work programmes aligned with and took on board policy developments that happened during the evaluation period as well as the extent to which stakeholders' needs were addressed by the EEA.

In respect to the first item, the study considered how different policies that emerged during the evaluation period were reflected in work programmes, including strategic policies (7th Environmental Action Programme (7th EAP), Sustainable Development Goals, Energy Union and the Circular Economy Package) as well as two concrete new pieces of legislation (Greenhouse gas Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR) Invasive Alien Species Regulation). The main conclusion from analysing the EEA work programmes is that the key strategic policies that came out during the evaluation period were well reflected in the work programmes, including especially the 7th EAP, the Energy Union as well as the Circular Economy Package. For the MMR (adopted in 2013), the Regulation included specific tasks to be performed by the EEA and evidence shows that additional posts were created in the EEA for the purpose. In respect to the Invasive Alien Species Regulation (which entered into force on 1 January 2015), the EEA made a request for additional resources in order to support this Regulation, but it was rejected by the budgetary authorities in connection with the 2015 budget process. As no decisions on de-prioritisation of other tasks were made, the Agency consequently did not work on this during the period. Had the IAS Regulation included a specific task for the EEA (as is the case for other legislation, e.g. the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation), the issue would have been clearer and presumably, the need for additional resources to undertake the task would have been assessed as part of the preparation of the IAS.

In respect to the analysis of meeting stakeholders' needs, the main conclusion is that stakeholders' needs were not uniform and the Agency (and its Management Board) was in a balancing act to seek to meet all needs as far as possible. This challenge was accentuated by resources being cut as happened during the evaluation period. It is therefore not possible to make a simple assessment of whether needs have been met or not. Overall, the fact that multiannual and annual work programmes (expressing the plans and priorities) have been adopted by the Management Board after consultation with Management Board members (representing the Commission, the Member States and the European Parliament) in itself is a strong indicator that the needs of these main stakeholders were met. Further, the evidence from surveys and interviews indicate that the Agency has managed to strike an acceptable balance, however, in a few individual areas the responsiveness of the Agency was questioned. These include, most prominently, the Commission's concerns on the decision of the Agency to discontinue its support to the Drinking Water Directive during the evaluation period.

The Founding Regulation is set up in a way where the objectives, tasks and principle areas of activity set out a fairly broad mandate whereas planning of specific activities and outputs is left for the Agency and its Management Board. This enabled flexibility and allowed the Agency to accommodate to policy developments and needs. At the same time, some specific pieces of environment and climate legislation set out a role for the EEA. For climate legislation, this is done systematically whereas this is not the case for environment legislation, where only eight of the 58 pieces of legislation analysed in the Reporting Fitness Check has some mentioning of the role of the EEA. This brought some degree of clarity in these areas but it also limited the overall room for manoeuvre of the Agency. Evidence shows no clear logic why the role of the EEA is better specified in some areas than in others thus leaving a differentiated picture of where the decisions on priorities are left for the Agency and its Management Board and where they are not.

The evidence to assess whether new policies have been reflected in work programmes is strong as it relies on document review and a concrete assessment of extent to which elements from policies are reflected in planned work. The analysis on meeting stakeholders' needs (and consequently whether the Agency was prioritising and 'doing the right things') was more complicated. Firstly, because stakeholders' needs proved to be quite diverse and thus it was impossible to objectively identify 'the right thing' and to establish what the ideal balance of resources onto different tasks and activities would be. Secondly, because the information on how the EEA's resources were distributed existed only in the framework of the structure of the strategic areas of the Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2018. This did not allow for a detailed assessment whether the level of resources (thus priority) devoted to certain tasks or outputs were in line with the importance assigned to this task or output by the stakeholders. Consequently, the evidence is mostly based on subjective perceptions of stakeholders as whether their needs are met.

EQ4: To what extent have the EEA and Eionet been efficient in implementing the evolving tasks set out in their mandate and programming documents?
In addressing this question, the support study considered costs and benefits of the EEA and Eionet as well as extent to which efficiency gain possibilities have been exploited during the period.

In respect to costs and benefits, the overall conclusion is that benefits are very likely to exceed costs, however, it is not possible to quantify the benefits of the EEA and Eionet and thus this rests on a qualitative assessment. The costs of the EEA and Eionet are assessed to be approximately EUR 66 million per year (the costs of the Member States contributing with seconded national experts, time spent by MB members, NFPs and NRCs are difficult to establish with absolute certainty as data on this is not readily available). Evidence from different sources, including existing studies, surveys and interviews conducted as well the case studies, clearly demonstrate that the work of the EEA and Eionet generated a number of benefits – most importantly the benefits associated with meeting the objectives as demonstrated above under EQ2, i.e. providing input to development and implementation of climate and environment legislation. While there are studies quantifying the benefits associated with implementation of legislation in some areas, it is not possible to determine what share of these benefits would accrue to the EEA and Eionet.

In relation to administrative efficiency, the Copernicus activities, which are managed under a Delegation Agreement led to duplication of work as the EEA had to do accounting and financial management for both the core budget and the Delegation Agreement budget. The Copernicus activities were in some respects quite integrated with other Agency activities thus making this set-up unnecessarily complicated and resource demanding.

For some tasks, it was possible to make a tentative assessment of cost efficiency based on data available. However, this was complicated by imprecise data on resources allocated to those tasks as well as lack of benchmarks against which efficiency in task management could be assessed.

For task a) on coordination of Eionet, it was found that resources allocated were quite stable during the period and so was the level of activity (number of meetings). Hence, the evidence points to an even performance with some scope for efficiency gains. The strength of the evidence is considered to be low-medium as the data on resource allocation for this task is uncertain. Furthermore, the Eionet is a unique constellation not replicated anywhere else. It is thus not possible to determine whether the ratio of costs to activities (e.g. number of meetings and costs associated with these meetings) is comparatively high or low. The judgement therefore rests mostly on qualitative assessments by the involved stakeholders on whether the task is efficiently implemented.

For task c) on reporting, the data from the fitness check of environmental reporting shows that the EEA is more efficient than other actors (the Commission) when handling the reporting obligations as the main service provider. Comparing number of data deliveries against IT costs also supports that efficiency gains were achieved during the evaluation period in this area with the EEA handling increasing amounts of data at stable IT costs. Further, it is likely that the European topic centres (ETCs) have contributed to supporting efficiency in this area. However, this rests on a qualitative assessment.

For task h) on the State of the Environment Report (SOER), it was found that the resource use exceeded the planned amount, which indicates a low level of efficiency. In relation to the SOER, there could potentially be some

options for streamlining in terms of reducing the ambition levels for the report, however, this could compromise stakeholders' expectations with regard to contents of the report. It is noted that the contents of the SOER2015 were thoroughly consulted upon in the MB and Scientific Committee (SC).

For task m) on dissemination, the data comparing resource use and level of activity and outputs indicate that over the period more was accomplished within a stable budget, thus indicating that efficiency gains were achieved. A few additional options for further efficiency gains were identified through interviews.

EQ5: To what extent are the internal mechanisms for programming, monitoring, reporting and evaluating the EEA adequate for ensuring accountability and appropriate assessment of the overall performance of the Agency while minimising the administrative burden of the Agency and its stakeholders? Have the recommendations from the previous evaluation been followed-up and what lessons have been learned since then?

In assessing this question, the support study focused on judgement criteria on the extent which the EEA had followed up on recommendations from the previous evaluation on clarity of objectives, outputs and key performance indicators (KPIs), clarity of priorities in terms of allocation of budget and resources and priority setting in light of shrinking resources.

The main conclusion is that the Agency had followed up on these recommendations but not to an extent which fully enabled improved assessment of the performance and prioritisation of the Agency. A system of KPIs was introduced with the new multi-annual programme covering 2014-2018, however, with a lack of consideration to the practical monitoring of these KPIs with a result that data is not available on performance on a number of them and there was no consistent reporting on them in the annual reports. An activity-based budgeting and accounting system was also introduced and this significantly improved the overview of priorities. However, the system still provides information at a relatively aggregate level and does not provide information on resources allocated to producing key outputs or tasks as it is based on the key strategic areas of the multiannual programme 2014-2018.

While the previous evaluation called attention to the need of prioritising between different tasks and/or areas of activity given the expected budget austerity measures, the review of activity reports and Management Board meeting records showed that while shrinking budget and the constraints faced were mentioned, minutes of meetings indicate that this did not result in major discussions on strategic prioritisation in the Management Board until one meeting at the very end of the period. The few strategic decisions on cutting away certain activities seem not to have been discussed in the Management Board setting, e.g. the decision to discontinue support to the Drinking Water Directive. Data from interviews with members of the Management Board and the stakeholder workshop indicate that making negative priorities is considered a challenge for the Management Board given its size and the diversity of interests represented. However, the review of agendas and background material for Management Board meetings as well as interviews also indicate that meetings have not been prepared in a way which would facilitate such strategic decision making – e.g. by presenting options or alternatives.

The evidence provided for the findings on this question is fairly strong when it comes to clarity and reporting on KPIs as it relies on information in the work programmes and annual reports. The judgement on their appropriateness relies on an expert assessment and thus has a risk of bias as there is no established standard for e.g. number of KPIs. The evidence on strategic prioritisation processes in the Management Board relies on minutes of meetings as well as interviews with Management Board members. These are in principle strong sources of data providing a solid foundation for the findings, however, minutes of Management Board meetings may not give the full extent of the discussions that actually took place.

EQ6: Are the objectives set out in the mandate of the EEA/Eionet Founding Regulation, including its priority areas in Article 3, still relevant and fit-for-purpose?
This question looked into the relevance of the objective and priority areas of work of the EEA as reflected in Articles 1 and 3 of the Founding Regulation. The main approach to the assessment was comparative considering the

wording of the articles against the policy framework and main activities of the agency during the evaluation pe-
riod. In addition, stakeholders' views were also considered.

On this basis, the current mandate and overall objective of the EEA as stated in Article 1 are assessed as still valid
and fit for purpose. It provides a broad mandate and a frame within which activities and outputs can be planned
taking into account the changing policy framework and needs as expressed in the environmental action pro-
grammes to which the objective refers. It is noted that the objective is based on somewhat outdated language not
reflecting how environmental issues are now analysed in a more integrated way and taking into account the main-
streaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas.

The broadness and flexibility in the Regulation makes it very important that the MAWP/AWPs reflects well the key
policies of the given period, and that a clear strategic direction are made by the Commission and the Management
Board and that clear agreements between involved collaboration partners are concluded and revisited as needed
to continuously focus on the right objectives.

As to the principal areas of activity of the EEA (Article 3 (1)), key analytical conceptual frameworks used by the
EEA and representing the core functions of the EEA and Eionet, such as the MDIAK and DPSIR approaches, are not
explicitly reflected in the Regulation.

In terms of the relevance of Article 3 (2) on the areas of work of the EEA, the areas of work included in the Regu-
lation reflect areas where the EEA has been active during the evaluation period, but they do not encompass all rel-
evant areas, with climate being the most obvious example. The topical focus reflected in the areas of work is not
completely in line with the evolving policy landscape during the evaluation period, which was characterised by the
launch of several key pieces of integrated policy approaches in the EU and globally, and by internal EU legislative
developments and does not cater for the increasing need for focus on sector interlinkages and integrated and sys-
temic assessments, e.g. acknowledging interlinkages between key policies.

Overall, the evidence for the relevance of the Regulation's objective and principal areas of activity is considered to
be solid as it is mainly based on desk review of confirmed sources and also verified by stakeholders.

Secondly, the question addressed the extent to which the Regulation reflects in an appropriate way, the extent to
which the Agency does 'regulatory work', where this was defined as work in support of implementation of the envi-
ronment and climate acquis. It was found that regulatory work, in particular that related to reporting on the imple-
mentation of environment and climate legislation, has less emphasis in the Founding Regulation compared to the
actual share of EEA activities during the evaluation period (it was difficult to provide an exact estimate as EEA's
activity based accounting data does not distinguish between regulatory and non-regulatory work). Recent EU
agendas introduced during the evaluation period, e.g. the increased focus on governance aspects and compliance
issues, better regulation and transparency as reinforced by the Juncker priorities to reach tangible results on the
ground, have added to the environmental policy agenda and imposed increased need for evidence-based policy
making. Thus, the policy framework during the evaluation period provided a strong basis for emphasis on regula-
tory work.

As a third element, the assessment looked into the relevance of non-core activities to the EEA objectives with a
focus on the Copernicus activities. Here, the review considered the EEA's own use of the data produced by the Co-
pernicus Land Monitoring Service managed by the EEA under a Delegation Agreement as well as the importance of
these activities relative to EEA's core activities. Here, Copernicus as a major non-core activity was found to be of
such major relevance to the tasks and work of the EEA that it may be almost misleading not to have this included
among the Agency's core tasks.

As the last element, the question addressed the extent to which the Regulation provides an appropriate framework
for tasks and activities considering the development and use of new technologies during the evaluation period. The
lack of reference to the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) and related tasks linked to INSPIRE (In-
frastructure for Spatial Information in Europe), Copernicus services and GEOSS (Global Earth Observation System

of Systems) despite these tasks being an integral part of the EEA's tasks does not enhance the transparency and understanding of the EEA's work and efforts to expand data use. During the evaluation period, data sources in the form of transboundary earth/satellite based observation were becoming increasingly relevant, in addition to and as supplement to in situ data and statistical data. Such tasks related to the need for complementary data is currently not reflected in the wording of the tasks of the Regulation.

EQ7: How far are the Agency's tasks and resources aligned with key EU policies?

In assessing this question, the support study focused on judgement criteria on the extent to which the tasks and their weighting as expressed in the Founding Regulation correspond to the weighting of actual activities performed by the EEA and Eionet during the evaluation period, the extent to which the tasks in the Founding Regulation match the policy framework for environment and climate policy during the period, the consistency and clarity of the task in the context of the objectives of the EEA, together with stakeholders' views on relevance of the tasks.

The overall conclusion is that while the tasks still provided a reasonable framework within which the activities and outputs of the EEA and Eionet could be framed, they were somewhat outdated and did not represent the balance of activities of the Agency during the evaluation period and did not fully mirror the MDIAK framework, which was a key conceptual framework forming the basis for the Agency's activities as well as activities undertaken by ETCs, NFPs and NRCs. Data from consultation with stakeholders shows that different stakeholders have different views about the relevance of various tasks. Most notably, the member countries generally emphasised the importance of the task on forecasting, whereas representatives of the Commission were more sceptical. The support study categorised the tasks in three main categories:

- Tasks which are highly relevant and where no or limited need for adaptation was identified: (a) on coordination of Eionet, (g) on promoting incorporation of European information international monitoring programmes, (h) on the State of the Environment Report, (m) on dissemination

- Tasks where the relevance is medium and some adaptation would be needed to make them fit-for-purpose: (c) on reporting, e) on recording, collating and assessing data and providing a reference centre, (i) on forecasting, (l) on cooperation with JRC, Eurostat, RTD and others, task (o) on diffusion of results of environmental research

- Tasks where the relevance is low and where substantial revision or even complete abolishment of the task could be considered: (b) on provision of information, (d) on advise to Member States on monitoring systems, (f) on ensuring comparability and harmonisation of methods, (j) on assessing cost of damage, (k) on best available technologies, (n) on environmental assessment methodologies.

Additional summary information on the tasks with medium and low relevance is provided in the table at the end of this executive summary. It should be noted that several of the tasks that have been assessed as having low or medium relevance have been categorised as such because they do not represent concrete operational tasks, but rather objectives. As such, their relevance to the work of the EEA may still be high.

The evidence for the findings is based on review of the Founding Regulation, work programmes, annual reports and key policy documents complemented with results of the consultation activities. As such there was a clear basis. However, the assessment was complicated by the fact the activities undertaken are described according a different logic than the tasks (the strategic areas of the multiannual programme 2014-2018) and thus it was not possible to precisely establish the weight given to each task. In itself, the fact that the work programmes are set up with a structure that uses a structure so different from the tasks, is an indicator that the tasks are not fully fit-for-purpose.

EQ8: How relevant is the EEA to EU citizens?

To address this question, the support study considered relevance of EEA environmental information to EU citizens.

Data from Eurobarometer surveys show that environmental protection and climate issues were important to EU citizens during the evaluation period and this also provides evidence that the citizens have a need for information

on these issues. Thus, overall, it is found that the EEA was relevant to citizens as it played an important role in providing reliable and objective information on the state of environment.

Ideally, the relevance of the EEA should be confirmed by individual citizens themselves as part of their participation in the open public consultation conducted for the evaluation. However, the number of respondents was low and respondents cannot be seen to represent EU citizens or citizens of EEA member countries. However, the evidence for these findings is considered solid and relies to a large extent on the documentation of the dissemination efforts done by the Agency as well as data on uptake of EEA information for which a considerable amount of data exists and is presented in the study under effectiveness documenting the high level of effectiveness in performing the task on ensuring a broad dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information (Task m in the Founding Regulation).

EQ9: To what extent is EEA acting in cooperation with the European Commission services, the member countries and other agencies that deal with comparable issues (e.g. the European Chemicals Agency, the European Maritime Safety Agency, the European Food Safety Authority) and bodies to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts?

This evaluation question assesses the cooperation mechanisms established between the EEA, the European Commission services leading on environment and climate policies and knowledge[4], European Commission's working groups, other EU Agencies and national bodies.

Good cooperation and synergies between the European Commission and the EEA were established in several policy areas, e.g. on the Nature Directives, waste statistics, climate legislation such as F-gases, EU ETS and monitoring of CO_2 from cars/vans. However, there were also a few duplications of work or missed synergies (e.g. in the field of freshwater and land use) and other issues that point to the need for increased coordination on some tasks (e.g. the lack of a complete and coordinated inventory of indicators in the field of agri-environmental-climate issues; weak coordination with DG ENV on review of draft EEA reports; limited exploitation of the results of environment and climate research, addressed in 2014 with the creation of the Environmental Knowledge Community).

Cooperation mechanisms varied across EEA's tasks and themes, and worked well especially when a clear division of roles and strong mechanisms for ongoing coordination were in place. The founding regulation, the consultation on the multi-annual and annual work programmes and the representation of the Commission in the EEA Management Board provide an overall framework for cooperation between the European Commission and the EEA. However, it was found that, beyond these high-level mechanisms, a more systematic strategic cooperation framework could have been helpful to avoid diverging approaches across tasks and policy areas. Moreover, the findings indicate a potential for increased coordination at horizontal level, i.e. between Commission services, within DG ENV and within the EEA.

Eionet NRCs and some of the working groups coordinated by the Commission (DG ENV and DG CLIMA) covered different aspects of environmental data; in some cases the scope of work of the two groups is interlinked and, thus, there is a need for cooperation. In the evaluation period, there were positive examples of cooperation established between the two groups, while coordination in areas such as freshwater improved but room for further coordination remained.

At national level, through Eionet, the institutional set up of the EEA ensures coordination between the Agency and a large number of national bodies and helps promote synergies avoid overlaps. However, there has been an increasing need for cooperation with national bodies beyond Eionet, as it has been already the case in some areas (e.g. Nature, Copernicus).

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[4] DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG RTD, JRC and Eurostat.

Finally, the EEA established cooperation with other EU Agencies in several fields (e.g. food safety, chemicals, infectious diseases, earth observation technology). No overlaps were identified (also because of the different remits of each Agency).

EEA's work has a broad scope and the Agency interacts with a number of EU and national institutions. Given this broad scope, the eight case studies provided one of the main sources of information for this evaluation question.

EQ10: To what extent are the procedures and mechanisms put in place effective to ensure that EEA cooperation activities are coherent with the policies and activities of its stakeholders? Are EEA contributions contributing to the mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas?

This question assesses the mechanisms set up to ensure coordination between the EEA and institutions acting in policy areas interlinked with environment and climate topics, focusing especially on cooperation between the EEA and sectorial policy DGs selected on the basis of relevant policy areas and interlinkages with the EEA's activities.

As concluded above under EQ2, there was limited use of EEA information and outputs among the sector policy DGs and the support study finds that this was linked to limited concrete cooperation with some relevant policy DGs.

The coordination mechanisms put in place varied across policy areas. At a horizontal level, overall mechanisms for systematic coordination were limited. The formal consultation on EEA's programming documents, involving sectorial policy DGs, contributes to some alignment between EEA's activities and priorities pursued in other policy areas. Nevertheless, it represented only a high-level mechanism of coordination with 'key partners', which in some cases did not materialise in actual cooperation.

EQ11: What has been the EU added value of the EEA? What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?

EU added value (EAV) may be the result of different factors including coordination gains, legal certainty, greater effectiveness or efficiency, complementarities that could not have been achieved by Member States acting alone. These can be considered to be key benefits. In order to appraise EAV, we've sought to appraise where the EEA and Eionet's contribution is considered crucial. Whilst this approach may overlook some of the more moderate contributions from the EEA and Eionet, it seeks to identify clear evidence of EU added value.

Overall the EEA has been found to contribute to the delivery of EAV. There is good evidence to suggest that additional effectiveness, efficiencies and synergies are associated with the delivery of many of its tasks; especially where data collection has taken place. The contribution of EAV is significant and crucial in several of the areas studied as case studies, notably climate and nature, but data also points to a very significant role for air quality.

Perhaps most important is the EEA and Eionet's role in the collection of high quality data and information on environmental issues. This task/benefit is not exclusive to the EEA and Eionet, and can be undertaken by Member States acting alone. However, by undertaking this task at an EU level, there are opportunities to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and synergies associated with data collection. For example, the gathering of high quality data can directly and indirectly influence the achievement of a number of other benefits that deliver EU added value. These include the ability to benchmark the performance of countries against each other. This was considered a crucial benefit in a number of case studies (including Copernicus, ETS, Nature, SOER, Trends and Projections and Freshwater).

Whilst there is an overall conclusion of the EEA and EIONET is contributing to the delivery of EAV, it should be noted that this has not been universal across all of the benefits and some differences have been found in achievement between thematic areas and specific products. Based on the assessment of the case studies, there was some evidence to suggest that the involvement of the EEA was not crucial for a number of areas. This includes the exchange of knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries (only identified as crucial in the Nature case study) and coordination of activities between Member States and preparation for the future (again, only identified as crucial in the Nature case study). These reflect the impression that whilst beneficial, the

EEA's involvement is not always crucial and some activities can be completed by Member States in the absence of the EEA.

With regard to the engaging with members beyond EU Member States, there is evidence to suggest that a wide range of benefits have been derived that support the achievement of the subsidiarity principle. These have included the ability to pool resources and provide cost effective data gathering schemes (an example of improved efficiency). The benefits are considered by many participants to have flowed in both directions; towards the EU28 and other member and participant countries and demonstrate significant added value.

EQ12: What would be the most likely consequences at the EU level of stopping the EEA and Eionet?

For the purposes of this assessment (and in alignment with the research question) we have sought to appraise the added value associated with stopping the EEA and Eionet and instead the functions being completed by national environmental agencies and the European Commission acting alone. A key inherent difficultly in this assessment is that the EEA and Eionet are longstanding, with no formal assessment made of alternatives by either Member States or the Commission during the evaluation period. When considering a potential value for money assessment it is not possible to undertake a quantitative assessment of the costs and benefits due to the lack of a quantifiable counterfactual (of by national environmental agencies and the European Commission acting alone), therefore this is not included in this assessment.

Throughout the evaluation period the EEA and Eionet have provided a diverse range of activities and have interacted with a large number of institutions and organisations. The predominant view from these institutions and organisations was that the EEA and Eionet are trusted and well respected. They are seen by many as impartial and experts in their field. Given also that they have held this position for such a long period of time, for many tasks they are seen as extremely difficult to replace.

There was strong evidence gathered within the case studies on a number of negative impacts being identified as being likely if the EEA and Eionet were stopped. These included poorer data quality and a likely divergence of standards and lack of comparability of data. These negative impacts are closely aligned to the provision of high quality data and information. Perhaps the strongest evidence of the impacts of stopping the EEA and Eionet was derived from participants in the Stakeholder Workshop. Many were unable to envisage a scenario whereby the EEA and Eionet could be stopped.

Overview of key conclusions per task

The tasks of the EEA were key elements in the analysis across the criteria of effectiveness, relevance and coherence. To sum up the main conclusions of the study in a different fashion, the table below provide an overview as per the tasks.

The tasks include the fifteen tasks mentioned in the EEA Founding Regulation (Article 2). For a further elaboration of the tasks and the basis for the assessment, please refer to section 3.3 on analytical dimensions.

In relation to relevance, two conclusion columns are provided. The first conclusion column assesses the relevance of the content and intent of the task (regardless of whether the task is suitable as a task or worded in a way that lends itself well to implementation in the policy context). The second column assesses the relevance of task from the perspective of external and internal logic and coherence and meaningful wording.

Task	Effectiveness	Coherence	Relevance – content / intent	Relevance – logic and wording
a)	Medium-high: Meetings held and well-attended. Considered useful by involved parties. Scope for improvement in planning of national activities (Eionet planner not used). Risk: Structure prone to 'silo-organisation'.	Medium: There are positive examples of cooperation between NRCs and EC WGs (e.g. Nature Directive), although it does not seem to be systematic and confusion of roles has been pointed out (e.g. freshwater Directives).	High. Eionet is key in delivering the benefits of the EEA and Eionet.	High. With some room for clarification in relation to roles on reporting.
b)	Not assessed as this was considered part of the objective of the EEA and Eionet	Not assessed as this was considered part of the objective of the EEA and Eionet	High: Similar to objective.	Medium-low: Not a task, but an objective
c)	High: EEA is more effective than other entities when they are fully in charge of the reporting. Scope for improvement in relation to Reportnet.	High: No overlaps between the work of the EEA and that of the Commission services were found, while synergies have been established in several areas (e.g. Nature, Waste, F-gases).	High: The EEA effectively and efficiently supports reporting. Reporting processes and data and information on SOE were increasingly integrated.	Medium: Unclear role in relation to coordination of reporting and unclear how decisions regarding new reporting requirements are made*
d)	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Low: Not in line with current working of the Agency and member countries. Role of the EEA in capacity building not sufficiently clear/acknowledged.	
e)	Medium-High with improvement during the evaluation period. Effective management of IT tools, however, with scope for improvement in relation to Reportnet (outdated IT infrastructure and lack of maintenance). Not all indicators planned were implemented and indicators not sufficient to fully measure progress against 7th EAP priority objectives.	Medium: Positive cooperation was established, although there were few cases of overlaps or missed synergies (e.g. in agri-environmental indicators issues, freshwater, urban issues).	High: The EEA as key institution in relation to data management and environmental assessment.	Medium: Overlap with task c. Spanning too many sub-tasks across the MDIAK. Does not reflect SEIS or IT elements of data management.
f)	Assessed as part of task c) and e)	Assessed as part of task c) and e)	High: Strong link to objective of the EEA.	Not a task, but an objective
g)	Assessed as part of task c)	Assessed as part of task c)	High. Important part of EEA work. In line with 7th EAP PO9.	High.
h)	High. SOER2015 published and acknowledged by stakeholders as a high quality and useful product.	High: Good coordination between the EEA and the EC and with national bodies involved in the drafting of similar assessments	High: Important part of EEA work. In line with 7th EAP and international obligations.	High but frequency could be considered in light of requirements in other legislation.

Task	Effectiveness	Coherence	Relevance – content / intent	Relevance – logic and wording
		(e.g. environmental assessments required by the Aarhus Convention).		
i)	Medium: A number of activities have been undertaken as evidenced above, these seem to be somewhat more explorative and not based on a systematic approach to the research field in the area.	Medium: No specific overlaps found, but other actors with stronger capacity carry out similar work.	Medium: Risks of overlaps with other actors.	Medium: Vaguely worded
j)	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Low: Out of tune with policy framework and environmental economics standards.	
k)	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Low: Handled by IPPC Bureau under JRC.	High: Clear enough.
l)	Not assessed as a separate task, but assessed across other tasks and policy areas	Not assessed as a separate task, but assessed across other tasks and policy areas	High: Important to ensure coordination.	Low: Not a task in the pure meaning of the concept.
m)	High: Task is well addressed at strategic and operational levels. Coherent and relevant Communication Framework, a mix of activities to reach out to various stakeholders as well as activities undertaken to monitor the degree of outreach.	High: Complementary role of EEA and DG ENV.	High: In line with requirements on public access to information.	High: Could consider clarifying role in respect to direct communication to citizens vs communication to 'intermediary' organisations: NGOs, national authorities, etc.
n)	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Limited activity undertaken and thus not further assessed	Low: Unclear what the task is and no clear link to policy framework.	
o)	Medium: Limited but increasing activity during the evaluation period.	Medium: Limited exploitation of the results of environment and climate research.	Medium: Need for clarifying EEA role in science-policy interface	Medium: Vague wording, limited links to policy framework and EEA WPs.

RÉSUMÉ (FR)

En 2016, la Commission européenne a entamé une évaluation de l'Agence européenne pour l'environnement (AEE) et du Réseau européen d'information et d'observation pour l'environnement (EIONET) via la publication d'une feuille de route[5]. Cette évaluation a été menée selon les lignes directrices pour une meilleure réglementation et comprend ainsi l'analyse de cinq thèmes principaux : efficacité, efficience, pertinence, cohérence et valeur ajoutée européenne. L'évaluation couvre l'ensemble des travaux de l'AEE et d'EIONET sur la période de mi-2012 à fin 2016. La Commission européenne a octroyé un contrat à un consortium dirigé par COWI, afin de mener une étude appuyant l'évaluation.

Méthodologie

Au total, 12 questions d'évaluation (QE) ont été traitées par l'étude de soutien dans le cadre des cinq thématiques mentionnées ci-dessus. Le schéma présenté sur la page suivante illustre la logique d'intervention utilisée dans l'étude de soutien, ainsi que les liens avec les critères d'évaluation. L'encadré jaune indique l'« intervention », c.-à-d. les éléments qui sont sous le contrôle des personnes impliquées dans la mise en œuvre au sein de l'AEE et d'EIONET. Il montre deux « couches » principales reflétant la nature dynamique de l'AEE et d'EIONET. Au niveau réglementaire, les objectifs et missions définis par les articles 1 et 2 du règlement fondateur prévoient un mandat plutôt large, tandis qu'au niveau opérationnel, les programmes de travail pluriannuels et annuels (adoptés par le conseil d'administration de l'AEE) précisent les priorités spécifiques et les activités à déployer.

L'étude de soutien définit les critères de jugement et les indicateurs qui guident l'évaluation et la collecte des données pour chacune des questions d'évaluation. En outre, une stratégie de consultation a été établie pour diriger la sélection des parties prenantes et des méthodes de concertation. L'étude de soutien a employé les méthodes suivantes pour la collecte des données et la consultation avec les parties prenantes :

- L'examen de documents clés sur les performances et les travaux de l'Agence, notamment les programmes de travail annuels, les rapports annuels d'activités, les comptes rendus des réunions du conseil d'administration (CA) et les documents présentés au conseil, les résultats produits par l'AEE et EIONET (y compris le site Internet de l'AEE), ainsi que les documents politiques pertinents de l'Union européenne.
- Une consultation publique ouverte (CPO), qui n'a obtenu que 51 réponses, ne présentant donc qu'une valeur limitée pour les questions d'évaluation.
- Trois études ciblées menées entre novembre et décembre 2017 visant : 1) les membres du CA, 2) les services de la Commission et 3) les points focaux nationaux (PFN), ainsi que les centres de référence nationaux (CRN).
- Des ateliers et des réunions : un atelier avec les PFN tenu conjointement avec une réunion des PFN en juin 2017. Un atelier avec EIONET du Royaume-Uni réalisé en juillet 2017. Des réunions avec le bureau et le comité scientifique de l'AEE tenues au cours du mois de mai.
- 83 entretiens avec les parties prenantes, dont la plupart ont eu lieu en 2017, et quelques-uns en 2018.
- Huit études de cas ont été utilisées pour apporter une analyse approfondie de l'AEE et l'EIONET dans les domaines suivants : directives relatives aux eaux douces, directives sur la nature, déchets, rapport sur les tendances et projections, système d'échange de quotas d'émission de l'UE, gaz fluorés, rapport sur l'état de l'environnement (SOER) 2015 et Copernicus.

Un atelier avec les parties prenantes tenu le 5 décembre 2017. Ce dernier a présenté les résultats intermédiaires fondés sur les données recueillies et les consultations réalisées. Les parties prenantes comprenaient des membres du CA, des PFN, des services de la Commission, une organisation d'intérêt et l'AEE.

Organisation d'EIONET au cours de la période d'évaluation

EIONET est un réseau de partenariat entre l'AEE et ses pays membres et coopérants (33 pays membres et 6 pays coopérants) établi par le règlement fondateur de l'AEE. L'AEE se charge du développement du réseau et de la coordination de ses activités. Le réseau se compose de l'AEE, de six centres thématiques européens (CTE) et d'un réseau rassemblant environ un millier de

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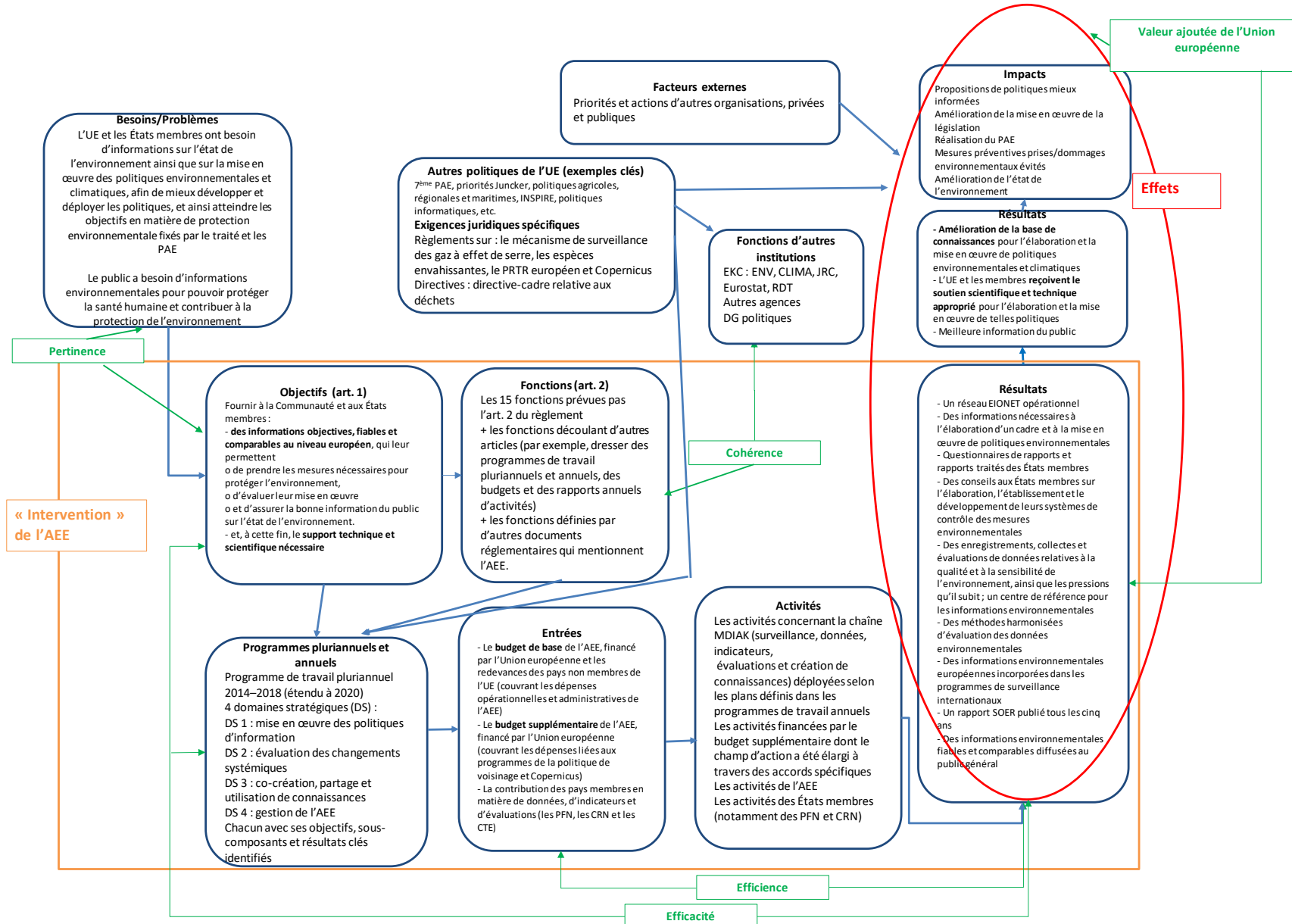[5][106] http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2018_env_002_eea_evaluation_en.pdf

spécialistes au sein de 400 institutions nationales et d'autres organismes traitant des informations en matière d'environnement.[6]. Ces spécialistes et institutions agissent en tant que points focaux nationaux (PFN) et centres de référence nationaux (CRN).

Les **centres thématiques sur l'environnement (CTE)** sont des centres dotés d'une expertise spécifique chargés par l'AEE de mener certaines missions particulières. Les CTE, œuvrant de concert avec les pays EIONET, facilitent la fourniture de données et d'informations issues des pays, tout en remettant également des rapports et apportent d'autres services à l'AEE et EIONET. Au cours de la période d'évaluation, six CTE étaient en place, chargés des thèmes suivants : 1) pollution atmosphérique et atténuation du changement climatique ; 2) impacts, vulnérabilité et adaptation au changement climatique ; 3) eaux intérieures, côtières et marines ; 4) diversité biologique ; 5) systèmes urbains, utilisation des terres et des sols, et 6) déchets et ressources matérielles dans une économie verte.

Les points focaux nationaux (PFN) sont constitués d'un expert ou d'un groupe d'experts nommé(s) et financé(s) par un membre de l'AEE, ou par un pays coopérant, pour agir en tant que point de liaison et de contact privilégié entre le pays visé et l'AEE, les autres pays membres d'EIONET et les autres acteurs concernés. Les PFN coordonnent la contribution nationale à la mise en œuvre de la stratégie de l'AEE et de son programme de travail, tout en appuyant également les activités pertinentes au sein des pays. Leur organisation et leurs méthodes de travail varient d'un pays à l'autre. Ce phénomène reflète la nature diversifiée des structures nationales d'administration environnementale, ainsi que des systèmes et réseaux d'information nationaux y afférents. Les PFN sont situés au sein des ministères, des agences et d'autres institutions semblables traitant de l'environnement.

Les centres de référence nationaux (CRN) sont les principaux organismes destinés à agir avec l'AEE et les CTE pertinents dans des domaines environnementaux spécifiques liés au programme de travail de l'AEE. Ces institutions sont nommées par les pays membres ou coopérants pour leurs compétences spécifiques dans certains domaines particuliers, afin qu'elles apportent une coordination et un soutien techniques à l'Agence en matière de données et d'expertise. Elles travaillent avec les CTE soit directement soit à travers les PFN.

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[6] [447] https://www.eionet.europa.eu/about

Valeur ajoutée de l'Union européenne

Facteurs externes
Priorités et actions d'autres organisations, privées et publiques

Impacts
Propositions de politiques mieux informées
Amélioration de la mise en œuvre de la législation
Réalisation du PAE
Mesures préventives prises/dommages environnementaux évités
Amélioration de l'état de l'environnement

Effets

Besoins/Problèmes
L'UE et les États membres ont besoin d'informations sur l'état de l'environnement ainsi que sur la mise en œuvre des politiques environnementales et climatiques, afin de mieux développer et déployer les politiques, et ainsi atteindre les objectifs en matière de protection environnementale fixés par le traité et les PAE

Le public a besoin d'informations environnementales pour pouvoir protéger la santé humaine et contribuer à la protection de l'environnement

Autres politiques de l'UE (exemples clés)
7ème PAE, priorités Juncker, politiques agricoles, régionales et maritimes, INSPIRE, politiques informatiques, etc.
Exigences juridiques spécifiques
Règlements sur : le mécanisme de surveillance des gaz à effet de serre, les espèces envahissantes, le PRTR européen et Copernicus
Directives : directive-cadre relative aux déchets

Fonctions d'autres institutions
EKC : ENV, CLIMA, JRC, Eurostat, RDT
Autres agences
DG politiques

Résultats
- **Amélioration de la base de connaissances** pour l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre de politiques environnementales et climatiques
- L'UE et les membres **reçoivent le soutien scientifique et technique approprié** pour l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre de telles politiques
- Meilleure information du public

Pertinence

Objectifs (art. 1)
Fournir à la Communauté et aux États membres :
- **des informations objectives, fiables et comparables au niveau européen**, qui leur permettent
o de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour protéger l'environnement,
o d'évaluer leur mise en œuvre
o et d'assurer la bonne information du public sur l'état de l'environnement.
- et, à cette fin, le **support technique et scientifique nécessaire**

Fonctions (art. 2)
Les 15 fonctions prévues pas l'art. 2 du règlement
+ les fonctions découlant d'autres articles (par exemple, dresser des programmes de travail pluriannuels et annuels, des budgets et des rapports annuels d'activités)
+ les fonctions définies par d'autres documents réglementaires qui mentionnent l'AEE.

Cohérence

« Intervention » de l'AEE

Résultats
- Un réseau EIONET opérationnel
- Des informations nécessaires à l'élaboration d'un cadre et à la mise en œuvre de politiques environnementales
- Questionnaires de rapports et rapports traités des États membres
- Des conseils aux États membres sur l'élaboration, l'établissement et le développement de leurs systèmes de contrôle des mesures environnementales
- Des enregistrements, collectes et évaluations de données relatives à la qualité et à la sensibilité de l'environnement, ainsi que les pressions qu'il subit ; un centre de référence pour les informations environnementales
- Des méthodes harmonisées d'évaluation des données environnementales
- Des informations environnementales européennes incorporées dans les programmes de surveillance internationaux
- Un rapport SOER publié tous les cinq ans
- Des informations environnementales fiables et comparables diffusées au public général

Programmes pluriannuels et annuels
Programme de travail pluriannuel 2014–2018 (étendu à 2020)
4 domaines stratégiques (DS) :
DS 1 : mise en œuvre des politiques d'information
DS 2 : évaluation des changements systémiques
DS 3 : co-création, partage et utilisation de connaissances
DS 4 : gestion de l'AEE
Chacun avec ses objectifs, sous-composants et résultats clés identifiés

Entrées
- Le **budget de base** de l'AEE, financé par l'Union européenne et les redevances des pays non membres de l'UE (couvrant les dépenses opérationnelles et administratives de l'AEE)
- Le **budget supplémentaire** de l'AEE, financé par l'Union européenne (couvrant les dépenses liées aux programmes de la politique de voisinage et Copernicus)
- La contribution des pays membres en matière de données, d'indicateurs et d'évaluations (les PFN, les CRN et les CTE)

Activités
Les activités concernant la chaîne MDIAK (surveillance, données, indicateurs, évaluations et création de connaissances) déployées selon les plans définis dans les programmes de travail annuels
Les activités financées par le budget supplémentaire dont le champ d'action a été élargi à travers des accords spécifiques
Les activités de l'AEE
Les activités des États membres (notamment des PFN et CRN)

Efficience

Efficacité

Principaux résultats et conclusions concernant les questions d'évaluation (QE)

QE 1 : Dans quelle mesure l'Agence et le réseau EIONET ont-ils atteint leurs objectifs et mis en œuvre les fonctions définies dans leur mandat et leur programme pluriannuel ? Quels sont les facteurs clés influençant/restreignant les progrès, et comment ces facteurs sont-ils liés à l'Agence (le cas échéant) ? L'AEE et EIONET s'acquittent-ils systématiquement de leurs fonctions avec le même niveau de qualité ?

Afin de répondre à cette question, l'étude de soutien s'est concentrée sur deux critères de jugement clés : la mise en œuvre des activités et l'accomplissement des objectifs définis dans les programmes de travail pluriannuels et annuels, ainsi que dans les 15 fonctions prévues dans le règlement fondateur.

La principale conclusion est que l'Agence et EIONET se sont montrés efficaces sur les deux aspects au cours de la période d'évaluation.

En ce qui concerne la mise en œuvre des programmes de travail pluriannuels et annuels, la documentation montre que les activités et les résultats prévus ont été largement exécutés. Le domaine stratégique du développement urbain ainsi que celui de l'utilisation des terres et des sols a rencontré des difficultés en raison de pénuries de personnel et de manque de données disponibles. Les documents utilisés pour apprécier cet aspect ont été constitués par les rapports annuels d'activités de l'Agence et par les registres des plans de publication pour chaque année fournis par l'Agence. Ces documents sont fiables, car aussi bien ces rapports que ces registres sont examinés et adoptés par le conseil d'administration de l'Agence.

En ce qui concerne l'exécution des fonctions, les documents montrent que lorsque les programmes de travail déployés pendant la période d'évaluation définissaient un niveau d'activité substantiel, les fonctions avaient été assurées correctement. Les activités planifiées ont été, de manière générale, mises en œuvre (comme le prouvent les rapports annuels et les autres documents produits par l'Agence et EIONET), et les parties prenantes étaient satisfaites du niveau de performance. Les fonctions ayant rencontré des difficultés en matière de mise en œuvre au cours de la période d'évaluation ont été les suivantes : la « *coordination d'EIONET* », les rôles des PFN et des CRN n'étant pas clairement définis ; la structure des 24 CRN, qui posait difficulté en raison de l'« organisation cloisonnée » ; ainsi que la planification annuelle des activités à l'échelle nationale, qui n'était pas suffisamment ponctuelle et transparente ; les *systèmes de données et d'informations* concernant la communication des informations, Reportnet n'ayant pas été capable de traiter de grandes quantités de données, tel qu'exigé pour pouvoir satisfaire certaines obligations de communication des informations, et ayant affiché, en outre, des faiblesses associées à une infrastructure des technologies de l'information (TI) obsolète et vieillissante ; et la « diffusion d'informations sur les résultats des recherches », où l'on a constaté une activité limitée malgré les intentions du programme de travail pluriannuel. En ce qui concerne les deux derniers points, la situation s'est améliorée au cours de la période d'évaluation, et le manque de performance n'était pas exclusivement lié à l'Agence, mais aussi à certains facteurs externes (notamment la complexité croissante des exigences en matière de communication des informations et l'engagement de la Commission à s'acquitter de la fonction).

L'étude a montré que quatre fonctions étaient associées à une activité limitée pendant la période d'évaluation ([d] conseiller les États membres à titre individuel sur le développement, la création et l'extension de leurs systèmes de surveillance des mesures environnementales ; [j] les méthodes d'évaluation du coût des dommages ; [k] l'échange d'informations sur les meilleures technologies disponibles ; et [n] l'assistance à la Commission dans le processus d'échange d'informations sur le développement de méthodes d'évaluation environnementale[7]). Ces activités limitées montrent les priorités établies, c.-à-d. que peu d'activités prévues dans les programmes de travail pouvaient se référer à ces fonctions. Selon la logique du règlement fondateur, les fonctions sont définies de manière libre, conférant ainsi un mandat relativement large à l'Agence (qui établit ses priorités, avec son conseil d'administration, conformément aux besoins dominants). Par conséquent, une faible activité au sein de certaines fonctions n'entraîne pas automatiquement la constatation d'un niveau de performance bas ; cela peut également refléter une situation avec des besoins plus limités dans un domaine particulier. Il y a lieu de se référer, à ce propos, à la QE 3, qui analyse

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[7] Les lettres se rapportent à celles utilisées dans l'article 2 du règlement fondateur [105], qui définit les quinze fonctions.

l'efficacité de l'Agence dans le traitement de politiques en évolution et dans la réponse aux besoins des parties prenantes.

L'évaluation de la mise en œuvre des fonctions a reposé sur les rapports annuels d'activité, complétés par des données additionnelles issues d'autres sources, notamment des rapports et études supplémentaires produits par l'Agence, EIONET ou la Commission, ainsi que des données indiquant le niveau de satisfaction à travers des enquêtes et entretiens réalisés dans le cadre de l'étude de soutien. De manière générale, les éléments factuels se sont avérés solides. Néanmoins, il a été difficile de mesurer les performances dans l'exécution des fonctions, qui (comme mentionné ci-dessus) sont définies d'une manière créant un mandat large et global. Ainsi, le règlement lui-même ne fournit pas de repères clairs pour une exécution adéquate des fonctions (les QE 6 et 7 traitent de la pertinence des objectifs et fonctions).

QE 2 : Quel est le degré d'efficacité des travaux de l'AEE par rapport à ses objectifs principaux à travers toutes les thématiques environnementales et toutes les activités ?

Pour répondre à cette question, l'étude de soutien s'est concentrée sur l'accomplissement des objectifs fixés dans l'article 1er du règlement fondateur. Ainsi, les critères de jugement ont concerné les performances de l'AEE et d'EIONET dans la diffusion et la mise à disposition d'informations objectives, fiables et comparables servant à l'élaboration de politiques aux échelles européenne et nationale, ainsi qu'à l'information du public sur l'état de l'environnement.

La conclusion générale est que l'Agence et EIONET ont fourni des informations objectives, fiables et comparables, lesquelles ont été largement utilisées dans les politiques environnementales et climatiques européennes et nationales.

Il apparaît que le niveau d'information et de sensibilisation du public à l'AEE et ses produits varie selon le produit. Par exemple, les produits relatifs au débat sociétal général présentent une plus grande portée. De manière générale, l'AEE a fait participer un vaste éventail de parties prenantes, tel que le montre l'analyse des abonnés à la liste de diffusion de l'AEE et des répondants aux enquêtes visant un plus large public. Cependant, l'avis des parties prenantes à propos de la sensibilisation d'audience plus larges indique des activités positives et des améliorations, mais aussi certaines limites. Notamment, aussi bien les acteurs de l'industrie que les ONG ont manifesté leur intérêt pour une coopération plus étroite avec l'AEE.

Dans la plupart des domaines, les travaux de l'Agence se sont avérés cruciaux ou ont revêtu une importance considérable pour les politiques européennes (cela comprend, en particulier, les activités et résultats liés aux rapports sur la législation de l'UE). Par exemple, les travaux réalisés pour répertorier les émissions de gaz à effet de serre (GES) et appuyer la mise en œuvre du mécanisme de surveillance du climat sont apparus très bénéfiques aux yeux de la DG CLIMA, et les activités liées aux directives sur la nature et à la législation en matière de qualité de l'air ont, quant à elles, joué un rôle de premier plan dans le soutien de la DG Environnement. Les éléments factuels sont notamment issus d'études de cas, qui fournissent un aperçu probant et détaillé sur les domaines d'action sélectionnés. Ils montrent également que le secteur des eaux douces s'est révélé moins efficace que les autres pour différentes raisons, notamment des changements de personnel au sein de l'AEE et de la Commission, des complexités dans la communication des informations et des difficultés liées à Reportnet, qui ont particulièrement affecté la divulgation d'informations concernant la directive-cadre sur l'eau. Toutefois, la participation de l'AEE à la mise en œuvre de la directive-cadre sur l'eau a été jugée comme essentielle, tandis que la directive sur l'eau potable et la directive sur les eaux urbaines résiduaires ont rencontré quelques difficultés. Cette situation est corroborée par les données issues d'une enquête et d'entretiens avec des fonctionnaires de la Commission, qui sont venues étayer la conclusion selon laquelle l'AEE et EIONET ont apporté, de manière générale, un soutien efficace à l'élaboration de politiques, bien que de légères lacunes aient été constatées dans le domaine de l'environnement urbain (conformément au constat tiré de la QE 1).

Les décideurs politiques nationaux présentaient des besoins plus diversifiés reflétant les différences entre les pays membres de l'AEE. Néanmoins, les éléments factuels tirés des études de cas fournissent de bons exemples de la façon dont les informations de l'AEE ont été utilisées à l'échelle nationale. Ce constat est également corroboré par

des enquêtes et entretiens avec les membres nationaux du conseil d'administration de l'AEE, ainsi que par un atelier avec les parties prenantes, qui soutiennent la conclusion générale selon laquelle les informations et travaux de l'AEE et d'EIONET ont significativement contribué à l'élaboration de politiques nationales dans les secteurs de l'environnement et du climat.

En ce qui concerne les politiques sectorielles (transports, énergie, agriculture et maritime), les éléments factuels montrent que l'AEE a soutenu des initiatives concrètes en faveur de la production d'indicateurs et de rapports sur l'intégration des préoccupations environnementales (indicateurs sur le transport et l'environnement, et indicateurs agroenvironnementaux). Bien que l'AEE ait joué un rôle crucial pour garantir la mise à disposition d'informations pertinentes et cohérentes dans les domaines associés (par exemple, le climat, la qualité de l'air et les émissions industrielles), l'utilisation des informations et des productions de l'AEE dans les domaines de politique sectorielle s'est avérée plutôt limitée, ainsi que, par voie de conséquence, la coopération avec les DG pertinentes. Toutefois, certaines améliorations ont été constatées vers la fin de la période d'évaluation. Le phénomène apparaît de manière évidente dans les rapports annuels d'activités, ainsi que dans les entretiens avec les DG des secteurs concernés.

Certaines données (issues d'entretiens avec des représentants du comité scientifique de l'AEE, des ONG et des organisations internationales) montrent que les informations et contributions de l'AEE ont eu un impact sur la science, les groupes de réflexion et la société civile, mais également des effets indirects sur l'élaboration de politiques à travers cet impact. Cependant, ces données sont tirées d'entretiens et sont particulièrement révélatrices, et il existe moins de preuves tangibles dans ce domaine.

En ce qui concerne l'impact plus large de la contribution de l'AEE à l'amélioration de la protection de l'environnement et du développement durable en Europe, il ne s'est pas avéré possible de présenter des « preuves tangibles » décrivant la contribution de l'AEE au renforcement de la protection de l'environnement en Europe et, *in fine*, au progrès sur la voie du développement durable, qui représentent les objectifs ultimes de l'Agence. Toutefois, les conclusions présentées ci-dessus indiquent qu'à travers les contributions à l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre de politiques, ainsi qu'à la sensibilisation du public, l'AEE était en passe de contribuer à la satisfaction de ces objectifs.

QE 3 : Dans quelle mesure l'équilibre entre les activités associées aux différentes thématiques environnementales est approprié au regard de l'évolution du paysage des politiques environnementales et climatiques ainsi que des besoins des principales parties prenantes ? (À quel point l'AEE s'est montrée efficace dans l'anticipation et le traitement des politiques en évolution ?)

Afin de répondre à cette question, l'étude de soutien s'est concentrée sur des critères de jugement concernant la mesure dans laquelle les programmes de travail annuels et pluriannuels de l'AEE correspondaient (et en tenaient compte) aux évolutions des politiques survenues pendant la période d'évaluation, ainsi que sur la capacité de l'AEE à répondre aux besoins des parties prenantes.

En ce qui concerne le premier point, l'étude a examiné la manière dans laquelle les différentes politiques ayant émergé au cours de la période d'évaluation étaient reflétées dans les programmes de travail, notamment les politiques stratégiques (le 7ème Programme d'action pour l'environnement [7ème PAE], les Objectifs de développement durable, l'Union de l'énergie et le Paquet sur l'économie circulaire), ainsi que deux mesures législatives concrètes (le règlement relatif à un mécanisme pour la surveillance des émissions de gaz à effet de serre et le règlement relatif aux espèces exotiques envahissantes). La principale conclusion tirée de l'analyse des programmes de travail de l'AEE est que les politiques stratégiques clés lancées pendant la période d'évaluation étaient bien reflétées dans ces programmes, notamment le 7ème PAE, l'Union de l'énergie et le Paquet sur l'économie circulaire. Le règlement relatif à un mécanisme pour la surveillance des émissions de gaz à effet de serre (adopté en 2013) prévoyait des fonctions spécifiques pour l'AEE el il apparait des éléments factuels que des postes supplémentaires à de tels effets ont été créés au sein de l'Agence. En ce qui concerne le règlement relatif aux espèces exotiques envahissantes (entré en vigueur le 1er janvier 2015), l'AEE avait émis une demande afin d'obtenir des ressources supplémentaires pour appuyer le règlement, mais la demande avait été rejetée par les autorités budgétaires dans le cadre du processus budgétaire de 2015. Aucune

décision pour revoir la priorité d'autres fonctions n'ayant été prise, l'Agence n'a pas œuvré dans ce domaine au cours de la période d'évaluation. Si le règlement relatif aux espèces exotiques envahissantes avait attribué une fonction spécifique à l'AEE (comme c'est le cas avec d'autres législations, telles que le règlement relatif à un mécanisme pour la surveillance des émissions de gaz à effet de serre), le problème serait apparu de manière plus évidente et le besoin de ressources supplémentaires pour assumer la fonction aurait probablement été évalué lors de la préparation du règlement.

L'analyse de la réponse aux besoins des parties prenantes a permis de tirer la conclusion principale que ces besoins n'étaient pas uniformes et que l'Agence (ainsi que son conseil d'administration) tentait de trouver un équilibre pour répondre au mieux à tous les besoins. Cette difficulté s'est vue accentuée par une réduction des ressources survenue pendant la période d'évaluation. Il n'est donc pas possible de déterminer clairement si l'AEE a répondu aux besoins des parties prenantes ou non. De manière générale, le fait que les programmes de travail annuels et pluriannuels (exprimant les plans et les priorités) aient été adoptés par le conseil d'administration après consultation avec ses membres (représentant la Commission, les États membres et le Parlement) constitue en soi un indicateur fiable que l'AEE a répondu aux besoins des principales parties prenantes. En outre, les résultats des enquêtes et entretiens montrent que l'Agence est parvenue à atteindre un équilibre acceptable. Toutefois, sur certains sujets spécifiques, la réactivité de l'Agence a été mise en doute. Ces sujets comprennent notamment les préoccupations de la Commission quant à la décision de l'Agence de mettre un terme à son soutien en faveur de la directive sur l'eau potable au cours de la période d'évaluation.

Le règlement fondateur a été élaboré de manière à ce que les objectifs, fonctions et principaux domaines d'activité prévus entraînent un mandat assez large, tandis que la planification des activités et contributions spécifiques est laissée à la discrétion de l'Agence et de son conseil d'administration. Ainsi, il assure à l'Agence une certaine souplesse et lui permet de concilier les évolutions politiques et les besoins. En parallèle, certaines mesures législatives environnementales et climatiques spécifiques définissent un rôle pour l'AEE. Ce rôle est défini systématiquement dans le cas des législations climatiques, mais pas dans celles relatives à l'environnement, où seulement 8 sur les 58 mesures législatives analysées dans le bilan de qualité de la communication d'informations mentionnent le rôle de l'AEE. Ces mesures ont apporté un certain niveau de clarté dans ces domaines, mais ont limité également la marge de manœuvre globale de l'Agence. Les éléments factuels ne montrent pas de logique claire expliquant la raison pour laquelle le rôle de l'AEE est mieux défini dans certains domaines que d'autres, donnant ainsi une image différenciée des cas où l'établissement des priorités est laissé à la discrétion de l'Agence et de son conseil d'administration et des cas où il n'en est pas ainsi.

Les preuves utilisées pour déterminer si les nouvelles politiques étaient retranscrites dans les programmes de travail sont solides, car elles reposent sur un examen de documents et une évaluation concrète de la mesure dans laquelle les éléments de politiques sont reflétés dans les programmes. L'analyse de la réponse aux besoins des parties prenantes (permettant de savoir si l'Agence établissait des priorités et « faisait ce qu'il fallait ») s'est avérée plus compliquée. Il en a été ainsi, premièrement, car les besoins des parties prenantes se sont révélés être plutôt divers, et il a été donc impossible d'identifier objectivement la « ce qu'il fallait faire » ainsi que l'équilibre idéal pour la répartition des ressources entre les différentes fonctions. En second lieu, parce que les informations relatives à la distribution des ressources de l'AEE étaient uniquement disponibles au sein du cadre structurel des domaines stratégiques du programme de travail pluriannuel de 2014–2018. Il n'était donc pas possible de réaliser une évaluation détaillée permettant de savoir si le niveau de ressources (donc la priorité) accordé à certaines fonctions ou contributions était en phase avec l'importance dévolue à cette fonction ou contribution par les parties prenantes. Par conséquent, les preuves sont majoritairement fondées sur les perceptions subjectives des parties prenantes quant au fait de savoir si leurs besoins ont été comblés.

QE 4 : Dans quelle mesure l'AEE et EIONET se sont-ils montrés efficaces dans l'exécution des fonctions évolutives définies dans leur mandat et dans leurs documents de programmation ?
Afin de répondre à cette question, l'étude de soutien a tenu compte des coûts et bénéfices de l'AEE et de EIONET, ainsi que de la mesure dans laquelle les perspectives d'amélioration de l'efficacité ont été exploitées au cours de la période considérée.

La conclusion générale est que les bénéfices ont dépassé très probablement les coûts. Toutefois il n'est pas possible de quantifier les bénéfices de l'AEE et d'EIONET, de sorte que cette conclusion repose sur une évaluation qualitative. Les coûts de l'AEE et d'EIONET sont estimés à environ 66 millions d'euros par an (les coûts des États membres contribuant avec des experts nationaux détachés ainsi que le temps passé par les membres du CA, les PFN et CRN sont difficiles à évaluer avec certitude, car les données ne sont pas facilement disponibles). Les preuves issues d'autres sources (y compris les études, enquêtes et entretiens réalisés, ainsi que les études de cas) démontrent clairement que les travaux de l'AEE et d'EIONET ont engendré un certain nombre de bénéfices, notamment associés à l'accomplissement de leurs objectifs (tel qu'établi dans la QE 2), c.-à-d., apporter une contribution au développement et à la mise en œuvre de législations climatiques et environnementales. Bien que quelques études aient quantifié les bénéfices liés à la mise en œuvre de législations dans certains domaines, il n'est pas possible de déterminer quelle part de ces bénéfices revient à l'AEE et EIONET.

En matière d'efficacité administrative, les activités Copernicus, menées dans le cadre d'une convention de délégation, ont entraîné une duplication du travail, puisque l'AEE devait se charger de la gestion comptable et financière du budget principal et de celle de la convention. Les activités Copernicus étaient, à certains égards, relativement intégrées au sein d'autres activités de l'Agence, rendant cette organisation inutilement complexe et exigeante en ressources.

Pour certaines fonctions, il s'est avéré possible de réaliser une évaluation préliminaire de la rentabilité fondée sur les données disponibles. Cependant, cette tentative a été compliquée en raison de l'imprécision des données relatives aux ressources attribuées à ces fonctions, ainsi qu'à cause du manque de repères pour apprécier l'efficacité de la gestion des fonctions.

En ce qui concerne la fonction a) relative à la coordination d'EIONET, les ressources affectées sont apparues plutôt stables au cours de la période d'évaluation, à l'instar du niveau d'activité (nombre de réunions). Par conséquent, les éléments factuels suggèrent des performances uniformes, avec une certaine marge d'amélioration de l'efficacité. La fiabilité de ces éléments est estimée comme étant faible-moyenne, car les données concernant l'attribution des ressources pour cette fonction sont incertaines. En outre, EIONET constitue une constellation unique, qui n'existe nulle part ailleurs. Il est ainsi impossible de déterminer si le rapport coûts-activités (par exemple, le nombre de réunions et les coûts liés à ces réunions) est relativement élevé ou faible. Par conséquent, le jugement repose principalement sur des évaluations qualitatives réalisées par les parties prenantes impliquées pour savoir si la fonction est exécutée efficacement.

Pour la fonction c) concernant les obligations de déclaration, les données issues du bilan de qualité de la communication des informations environnementales montrent que l'AEE est plus efficace que les autres acteurs (la Commission) dans le traitement des obligations de déclaration en tant que principal prestataire de services. La comparaison du nombre de communications de données avec les coûts informatiques montre également un gain d'efficacité dans ce domaine durant la période d'évaluation, indiquant que l'AEE a géré un volume croissant de données tout en maintenant des coûts informatiques stables. En outre, les centres thématiques environnementaux (CTE) ont probablement contribué au gain d'efficience. Cependant, cette hypothèse repose sur une évaluation qualitative.

Pour la fonction h) relative au rapport sur l'état de l'environnement (SOER), il est apparu que les ressources utilisées ont dépassé le montant prévu, indiquant un faible niveau d'efficacité. En ce qui concerne le SOER, il pourrait exister certaines perspectives de simplification pour réduire les ambitions du rapport, mais cela pourrait compromettre les attentes des parties prenantes quant au contenu. Il est à noter que le contenu du SOER 2015 a fait l'objet de consultations approfondies au sein du CA et du Comité scientifique (CS).

Pour la fonction m) concernant la diffusion des informations, les données comparant l'utilisation des ressources avec le niveau d'activité et de contribution indiquent qu'au cours de la période d'évaluation, plus de travail a été accompli avec un budget stable, suggérant ainsi des gains d'efficacité. Quelques autres perspectives de gains supplémentaires d'efficacité ont été identifiées dans le cadre d'entretiens.

QE 5 : Dans quelle mesure les mécanismes internes de programmation, surveillance, déclaration et évaluation de l'AEE sont-ils adéquats pour garantir la reddition de comptes et l'évaluation appropriée des performances globales de l'Agence, tout en minimisant la charge administrative pesant sur cette dernière et les parties prenantes ? Les recommandations formulées dans le cadre de la précédente évaluation ont-elles été suivies ? Quels enseignement ont été tirés depuis ?

Afin de répondre à cette question, l'étude de soutien s'est concentrée sur des critères de jugement évaluant la mesure dans laquelle l'AEE a suivi les recommandations issues de la précédente évaluation concernant la clarté des objectifs, les contributions et indicateurs clés de performance (ICP), la clarté des priorités en matière d'attribution du budget et des ressources, et l'établissement des priorités au regard de la diminution des ressources.

La principale conclusion est que l'Agence a suivi ces recommandations, mais pas dans une mesure ayant permis de réaliser une évaluation améliorée des performances et des priorités de l'Agence. Un système d'ICP a été introduit avec le nouveau programme de travail pluriannuel de 2014–2018. Cependant la surveillance pratique de ces ICP n'ayant pas été dûment prise en compte, aucune donnée n'est disponible concernant les performances d'un certain nombre de ces indicateurs, et les rapports annuels ne les mentionnent pas de manière cohérente. Un système budgétaire et comptable fondé sur les activités a également été mis en place et a amélioré significativement la vue d'ensemble des priorités. Cependant, ce système fournit des informations à un niveau toujours relativement agrégé et n'apporte pas de renseignements sur les ressources affectées à la production de résultats ou fonctions clés, puisqu'il est basé sur les domaines stratégiques principaux du programme pluriannuel de 2014–2018.

Alors que la précédente évaluation attirait l'attention sur le besoin de définir les priorités entre les différents fonctions et/ou domaines d'activité au vu des mesures d'austérité budgétaire attendues, l'examen des rapports d'activité et des procès-verbaux des réunions du conseil d'administration a montré que bien que les réductions budgétaires et les contraintes rencontrées aient été mentionnées, les comptes rendus des réunions indiquent que cela n'avait pas donné lieu à d'importants débats sur une planification stratégique des priorités au sein du conseil d'administration avant une certaine réunion tenue vers la fin de la période concernée. Les quelques décisions stratégiques visant l'arrêt de certaines activités ne semblent pas avoir été débattues au sein du conseil d'administration (par exemple, la décision de mettre un terme au soutien à la directive sur l'eau potable). Les données issues des entretiens avec les membres du conseil d'administration et de l'atelier avec les parties prenantes indiquent que l'établissement de priorités négatives est jugé comme une difficulté pour le CA, étant donné sa taille et la diversité des intérêts qui y sont représentés. Toutefois, l'examen des ordres du jour et des documents de référence des réunions du conseil d'administration, ainsi que des entretiens indique également que les réunions n'ont pas été préparées de sorte à faciliter la prise de telles décisions stratégiques (par exemple, en présentant des possibilités et des alternatives).

Les éléments fournis pour répondre à cette question sont relativement solides en ce qui concerne la clarté et les renseignements sur les ICP, car ils reposent sur des informations issues de programmes de travail et de rapports annuels. Le jugement quant à leur pertinence s'appuie sur une évaluation par des experts et présente donc un risque de partialité, puisqu'il n'existe aucune norme établie (par exemple, le nombre d'ICP). Les éléments traitant des processus de définition des priorités stratégiques au sein du conseil d'administration reposent sur des comptes rendus de réunions, ainsi que sur des entretiens avec les membres du conseil. Il s'agit, en principe, de sources de données fiables, fournissant de solides fondations pour les résultats. Cependant, les comptes rendus des réunions du conseil d'administration pourraient ne pas retranscrire l'étendue complète des débats effectivement tenus.

QE 6 : Les objectifs du mandat de l'AEE/EIONET énoncés par le règlement fondateur, y compris les domaines prioritaires définis à l'article 3, sont-ils toujours pertinents et adaptés à leur finalité ?

Cette question s'attarde sur la pertinence des objectifs et domaines d'action prioritaires de l'AEE reflétés dans les articles 1 et 3 du règlement fondateur. L'approche principale de l'évaluation a été constituée par une appréciation comparative entre le contenu des articles et le cadre politique, ainsi que les activités clés de l'Agence au cours de la période concernée. En outre, elle a également tenu compte de l'avis des parties prenantes.

Dans ce contexte, le mandat actuel et l'objectif global de l'AEE, tel que défini à l'article 1, sont jugés comme toujours valides et appropriés par rapport à leur finalité. Ce mandant confère à l'Agence une large compétence et un

cadre au sein duquel elle peut planifier ses activités et contributions, en tenant compte de l'évolution du cadre politique et des besoins exprimés dans les programmes d'action environnementaux auxquels les objectifs se réfèrent. Il convient de noter que les objectifs se fondent sur un langage quelque peu dépassé qui ne reflète pas le fait que les sujets environnementaux sont désormais analysés de manière plus intégrée et prennent en considération les questions environnementales dans d'autres secteurs politiques.

En raison de l'étendue de la compétence et de la souplesse conférée par le règlement fondateur, il est essentiel que les programmes de travail pluriannuels/annuels reflètent les politiques clés de la période donnée, que la Commission et le conseil d'administration prennent une direction stratégique claire, que les partenaires impliqués concluent des accords bien définis et que ces accords soient revus au besoin pour maintenir la concentration sur les objectifs appropriés.

En ce qui concerne les principaux domaines d'activité de l'AEE (article 3 [1]), les cadres conceptuels et analytiques clés utilisés par l'AEE (qui représentent les fonctions principales de l'Agence et d'EIONET), tels que les approches MDIAK et DPSIR, ne sont pas explicitement reflétés dans le règlement fondateur.

Quant à la pertinence du paragraphe 2 de l'article 3, relatif aux domaines d'action de l'AEE, les domaines inclus dans le règlement fondateur reflètent ceux où l'AEE s'est montrée active durant la période d'évaluation, mais ils n'englobent pas tous les secteurs pertinents, celui du climat étant l'exemple le plus frappant. Les thématiques reflétées dans les domaines d'action ne sont pas complètement en phase avec l'évolution du paysage politique au cours de la période d'évaluation, qui s'est caractérisée par le lancement de plusieurs initiatives clés de politiques intégrées au sein de l'UE et dans le monde, mais aussi par des changements législatifs internes à l'UE. Ces thématiques ne répondent pas davantage au besoin croissant d'accorder de l'attention aux interconnexions entre les secteurs et aux évaluations intégrées et systémiques (par exemple, la reconnaissance des liens entre les principales politiques).

De manière générale, les éléments soutenant la pertinence des objectifs et principaux domaines d'activité définis dans le règlement fondateur sont jugées fiables, car ils sont majoritairement fondes sur un examen documentaire de sources vérifiées et confirmées par les parties prenantes.

En outre, la question s'intéresse à la mesure dans laquelle le règlement fondateur reflète de manière appropriée l'étendue des « travaux de réglementation » de l'Agence, ces travaux étant définis comme une fonction de soutien à la mise en œuvre de l'acquis relatif au climat et à l'environnement. Il est apparu que les travaux de réglementation (notamment ceux liés à la communication d'informations sur la mise en œuvre de la législation sur l'environnement et le climat) revêtent peu d'importance dans le règlement fondateur par rapport à la part effective qu'ils ont représenté dans les activités déployées par l'AEE au cours de la période d'évaluation (il s'est avéré difficile de fournir une estimation exacte, puisque les données comptables fondées sur les activités de l'Agence ne font pas de distinction entre les travaux de réglementation et les autres). Les récents programmes européens introduits au cours de la période d'évaluation (par exemple, l'attention accrue accordée aux aspects de bonne gouvernance et de conformité, ainsi que l'amélioration des réglementations et de la transparence, telles que renforcée par les priorités Juncker pour obtenir des résultats tangibles sur le terrain) sont venus s'ajouter à l'agenda politique environnemental et ont engendré un besoin croissant pour l'établissement de politiques fondées sur des éléments factuels. Ainsi, durant la période d'évaluation, le cadre politique a fourni un socle solide pour mettre l'accent sur les travaux de réglementation.

De plus, l'évaluation s'est penchée sur la pertinence des activités périphériques aux objectifs de l'AEE, accordant une attention particulière aux activités Copernicus. Dans ce cas, l'évaluation a examiné l'utilisation que l'AEE faisait des données produites par le service de surveillance des terres Copernicus, géré par l'Agence dans le cadre d'une convention de délégation. L'évaluation s'est aussi intéressée à l'importance de ces activités au regard des fonctions principales de l'AEE. Copernicus, en tant qu'activité périphérique majeure, a revêtu une telle importance pour les fonctions et travaux de l'AEE qu'il pourrait s'avérer trompeur de ne pas l'inclure dans les activités principales de l'Agence.

Enfin, la question s'est intéressée à la mesure dans laquelle le règlement fondateur fournit un cadre approprié pour les fonctions et activités de l'Agence au regard du développement et de l'utilisation de nouvelles technologies au cours de la période d'évaluation. L'omission d'une référence au Système de partage d'informations sur l'environnement (SEIS), aux activités liées à la directive INSPIRE (Infrastructure d'information géographique dans la Communauté européenne), aux services Copernicus et à GEOSS (Réseau mondial des systèmes d'observation de la Terre) (bien que ces tâches fassent partie intégrante des activités de l'AEE) n'améliore pas la transparence et la compréhension des travaux et des efforts déployés par l'Agence pour élargir l'utilisation des données. Au cours de la période d'évaluation, les sources de données prenant la forme d'observations fondées sur des constatations transfrontalières/satellitaires ont gagné en pertinence, en supplément des données *in situ* et statistiques. De telles tâches liées au besoin de données complémentaires ne sont actuellement pas reflétées dans le texte du règlement fondateur.

QE 7 : Dans quelle mesure les fonctions et les ressources de l'Agence sont-elles en phase avec les politiques européennes clés ?

Afin de répondre à cette question, l'étude de soutien s'est concentrée sur le critère de jugement relatif à la mesure dans laquelle les fonctions et leur importance, telles qu'exprimées dans le règlement fondateur, correspondent à l'importance des activités effectivement déployées par l'AEE et EIONET au cours de la période d'évaluation ; la mesure dans laquelle les fonctions prévues par le règlement fondateur concordent avec le cadre politique pour l'environnement et le climat de la période concernée ; ainsi que la pertinence et la clarté des fonctions dans le contexte des objectifs de l'AEE, en prenant en compte l'avis des parties prenantes sur la pertinence des fonctions.

La conclusion générale est que, bien que les fonctions fournissaient toujours un cadre raisonnable au sein duquel les activités et contributions de l'AEE ainsi que d'EIONET pouvaient être encadrées, elles étaient quelque peu dépassées, ne représentaient pas l'équilibre des activités de l'Agence au cours de la période d'évaluation et ne reflétaient pas entièrement le cadre MDIAK, un cadre conceptuel clé formant la base des activités de l'Agence ainsi que des tâches menées par les CTE, les PFN et les CRN. Les données obtenues à partir des consultations avec les parties prenantes montrent que leur avis sur la pertinence des différentes tâches n'est pas uniforme. En particulier, les pays membres ont généralement insisté sur l'importance des tâches de prévision, tandis que les représentants de la Commission se sont montrés plus sceptiques quant à la priorité de cette fonction. L'étude de soutien a classé les fonctions en trois catégories principales :

- Des tâches hautement pertinentes ne nécessitant pas ou que peu d'adaptation ont été identifiées concernant : (a) la coordination d'EIONET, (g) la promotion de l'intégration des informations environnementales européennes dans des programmes internationaux de surveillance, (h) un rapport sur l'état de l'environnement et (m) la diffusion d'informations.

- Des tâches moyennement pertinentes et exigeant une certaine adaptation pour qu'elles restent adaptées à leur finalité concernant : (c) les obligations en matière d'informations, (e) enregistrer, collationner et évaluer les données, ainsi que fournir un centre de référence, (i) la prévision, (l) la coopération avec le JRC, Eurostat, la recherche et le développement (DG RDT) et avec d'autres organismes, et (o) la diffusion d'informations sur les résultats de la recherche environnementale.

- Des tâches dont la pertinence est faible et nécessitant une révision considérable, voire un arrêt total des activités concernant : (b) la mise à disposition d'informations, (d) la fourniture de conseil aux États membres sur leurs systèmes de surveillance, (f) la garantie de la comparabilité et l'harmonisation des méthodes, (j) l'évaluation du coût des dommages, (k) les meilleures technologies disponibles et (n) les méthodes d'évaluation des incidences sur l'environnement.

Des informations complémentaires sur les tâches revêtant une pertinence moyenne et faible sont disponibles dans le tableau présenté à la fin du présent résumé. Il convient de noter que plusieurs des tâches dont la pertinence a été jugée faible ou moyenne ont été classées en tant que telles parce qu'elles ne représentaient pas des tâches opérationnelles concrètes, mais plutôt des objectifs. Ainsi, leur pertinence en relation avec les travaux de l'AEE pourrait s'avérer importante.

Les éléments étayant les résultats se fondent sur un examen du règlement fondateur, des programmes de travail, des rapports annuels et des documents politiques clés, complété par les résultats des activités de consultation. Ceci a permis d'obtenir une base claire. Cependant, l'évaluation s'est avérée compliquée en raison du fait que les activités menées sont décrites selon une logique différente de celle des fonctions (les domaines stratégiques du programme pluriannuel de 2014–2018), de sorte qu'il n'a pas été possible d'établir avec précision l'importance accordée à chaque tâche. Le fait même que les programmes de travail soient conçus avec une structure si différente des fonctions indique que ces dernières ne sont pas entièrement adaptées à leur finalité.

QE 8 : Dans quelle mesure l'AEE est pertinente pour les citoyens de l'UE ?

Afin de répondre à cette question, l'étude de soutien a examiné la pertinence des informations environnementales de l'AEE pour les citoyens de l'Union.

Les données issues des enquêtes de l'Eurobaromètre montrent que les citoyens de l'UE considéraient importants les sujets de protection de l'environnement et du climat lors de la période d'évaluation, ce qui prouve que les citoyens de l'Union ont besoin d'informations sur ces questions. De manière générale, il ressort ainsi que l'AEE était pertinente par les citoyens, car elle a joué un rôle important dans la mise à disposition d'informations fiables et objectives sur l'état de l'environnement.

Dans l'idéal, la pertinence de l'AEE devrait être confirmée par les citoyens eux-mêmes dans le cadre de leur participation à la consultation publique ouverte tenue pour l'évaluation. Cependant, le nombre de répondants a été peu élevé, et ces derniers ne peuvent pas être considérés comme représentatifs des citoyens de l'UE ou des pays membres de l'AEE. Toutefois, les éléments soutenant ces résultats sont jugées solides et reposent, dans une large mesure, sur la documentation des efforts de diffusion déployés par l'Agence, ainsi que sur les données relatives à l'utilisation des informations de l'AEE pour lesquelles une quantité considérable de données existe et est présentée dans l'étude, dans la documentation du haut niveau d'efficacité de l'Agence dans l'exécution de la fonction concernant la garantie d'une large diffusion d'informations environnementales fiables et comparables (fonction m dans le règlement fondateur).

QE 9 : Dans quelle mesure l'AEE agit-elle en coopération avec les services de la Commission européenne, les pays membres, les agences qui traitent des sujets comparables (par exemple, l'Agence européenne des produits chimiques, l'Agence européenne pour la sécurité maritime et l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments) et d'autres organismes afin de garantir une action complémentaire et éviter la duplication des efforts ?

Cette question d'évaluation examine les mécanismes de coopération établis entre l'AEE, les services de la Commission européenne dirigeant les politiques et les connaissances en matière d'environnement et de climat[8], les groupes de travail de la Commission, les autres agences européennes et les organismes nationaux.

Une bonne coopération et des synergies entre la Commission européenne et l'AEE ont été mises en place dans différents domaines politiques (par exemple, les directives sur la nature, les statistiques sur les déchets, les législations climatiques concernant notamment les gaz fluorés, SEQE-UE et la surveillance des émissions de CO_2 des voitures/camionnettes). Cependant, quelques duplications d'efforts et des lacunes en matière de synergie (notamment dans le domaine des eaux douces et de l'utilisation des terres) ont été constatées, ainsi que d'autres difficultés indiquant le besoin d'une coordination accrue dans certaines fonctions (par exemple, l'absence d'inventaire complet et coordonné des indicateurs agroenvironnementaux/climatiques ; le manque de coordination avec la DG ENV sur l'examen des projets de rapports de l'AEE ; et l'utilisation limitée des résultats de la recherche environnementale et climatique, traitée en 2014 avec la création de la Communauté pour la connaissance environnementale).

Les mécanismes de coopération variaient entre les fonctions et thématiques traitées par l'AEE et se sont montrés efficaces, particulièrement lorsqu'une répartition claire des rôles et de solides mécanismes gérant la coopération en cours étaient en place. Le règlement fondateur, la consultation des programmes de travail annuels et pluriannuels

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[8] DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG RDT, JRC et Eurostat.

ainsi que la représentation de la Commission européenne au sein du conseil d'administration de l'AEE fournissent un cadre général pour la coopération entre la Commission et l'AEE. Toutefois, il est apparu qu'au-delà de ces mécanismes de haut niveau, un cadre plus systématique de coopération stratégique aurait pu s'avérer bénéfique pour éviter des approches divergentes à travers les fonctions et domaines politiques. En outre, les résultats indiquent une marge de progression de la coordination au niveau horizontal, c.-à-d., entre les services de la Commission, au sein de la DG ENV et au niveau de l'AEE.

Les CRN d'EIONET et certains groupes de travail coordonnés par la Commission (DG ENV et DG CLIMA) ont couvert différents aspects de données environnementales ; et dans certains cas, le domaine de travail des deux groupes était interdépendant, montrant ainsi un besoin de coopération. Au cours de la période d'évaluation, on a pu constater l'existence d'exemples positifs de coopération entre les deux groupes, la coordination dans des domaines tels que les eaux douces s'étant améliorée, mais une marge de progression demeure en matière de coordination.

À l'échelle nationale, la structure institutionnelle de l'AEE garantit, à travers d'EIONET, une coordination entre l'Agence et un grand nombre d'organismes nationaux, contribuant à promouvoir les synergies et à éviter les chevauchements. Cependant, on a pu constater un besoin croissant de coopération avec les organismes nationaux au-delà d'EIONET, comme c'était déjà le cas dans certains domaines (par exemple, Nature et Copernicus).

Enfin, l'AEE a mis en place une coopération avec d'autres agences européennes dans plusieurs secteurs tels que la sécurité alimentaire, les produits chimiques, les maladies infectieuses et les technologies d'observation de la terre. Aucun chevauchement n'a été identifié, en partie en raison des différents mandats de chaque agence.

Les travaux de l'AEE ont une grande portée, et l'Agence interagit avec un certain nombre d'institutions de l'UE et nationales. Au vu de cette grande portée, les huit études de cas ont fourni l'une des principales sources d'informations pour cette question d'évaluation.

QE 10 : Dans quelle mesure les procédures et mécanismes établis se montrent-ils efficaces pour garantir que les activités de coopération de l'AEE sont cohérentes avec les politiques et activités de ses parties prenantes ? Les contributions de l'AEE facilitent-elles l'intégration des questions environnementales dans les autres domaines politiques ?

Cette question examine les mécanismes mis en place pour garantir la coordination entre l'AEE et les institutions actives dans les domaines politiques liés aux thématiques environnementales et climatiques, se concentrant particulièrement sur la coopération entre l'Agence et certaines DG sectorielles, sélectionnées pour la pertinence de leur domaine politique et leurs interconnexions avec les activités de l'AEE.

Comme il a été conclu dans le cadre de la QE 2 ci-dessus, l'utilisation des informations et contributions de l'AEE s'est avérée limitée au sein des DG sectorielles, et l'étude de soutien a montré que cette sous-utilisation était liée au manque de coopération concrète avec certaines DG pertinentes.

Les mécanismes de coordination établis variaient selon les domaines politiques. Au niveau horizontal, il existait peu de mécanismes généraux pour la coordination systématique. La consultation formelle des documents de programmation de l'AEE, impliquant plusieurs DG sectorielles, contribue à un certain alignement des activités de l'Agence sur les priorités fixées dans d'autres domaines politiques. Néanmoins, elle représentait uniquement un mécanisme de coordination de haut niveau impliquant des « partenaires clés » qui, dans certains cas, ne s'est pas traduit par une coopération effective.

QE 11 : Quelle valeur ajoutée européenne a créée l'AEE ? Quelle valeur ajoutée a créée l'implication d'acteurs autres que des États membres de l'UE ?

La valeur ajoutée européenne (VAE) peut être le résultat de différents facteurs tels que l'amélioration de la coordination, la sécurité juridique, une efficacité ou efficience accrue et des complémentarités qui ne pourraient être obtenues en impliquant uniquement des États membres. Ces facteurs peuvent être considérés comme des bénéfices

clés. Afin d'évaluer la VAE, nous avons tenté de définir les secteurs où la contribution de l'AEE et de l'EIONET est jugée comme essentielle. Bien que cette approche puisse omettre certaines contributions plus modestes de l'AEE et de l'EIONET, elle est destinée à identifier des preuves manifestes de VAE.

De manière générale, l'AEE s'est révélée capable de contribuer à la création de VAE. Il existe des éléments prouvant qu'une augmentation de l'efficacité, de l'efficience et des synergies est associée à l'exécution de nombre de ses fonctions, notamment lorsque des données ont été recueillies. La contribution à la VAE se montre significative et cruciale dans plusieurs des domaines examinés dans les études de cas, notamment le climat et la nature, mais les données suggèrent un rôle particulièrement déterminant pour ce qui est de la qualité de l'air.

Le rôle probablement le plus important de l'AEE et d'EIONET concerne la collecte de données et d'informations de haute qualité sur les sujets environnementaux. Cette fonction/bénéfice, n'est pas exclusive/exclusif à l'AEE et EIONET, et peut être assuré par les États membres agissant seuls. Toutefois, exécuter cette tâche à l'échelle européenne offre l'occasion d'améliorer l'efficacité, l'efficience et les synergies liées à la collecte de données. Par exemple, la collecte de données de haute qualité peut influencer directement et indirectement l'obtention d'un certain nombre d'autres bénéfices créant de la valeur ajoutée européenne. Ceci comprend la capacité d'étalonner la performance des pays entre eux. Cet étalonnage a été jugé comme un avantage essentiel dans nombre des études de cas (concernant notamment Copernicus, SEQE, Nature, SOER, les tendances et projections, ainsi que les eaux douces).

Bien que la conclusion générale soit que l'AEE et EIONET contribuent à la création de VAE, il convient de noter que le phénomène n'est pas universel parmi tous les bénéfices et que quelques différences de résultats ont été identifiées entre les domaines thématiques et les produits spécifiques. L'examen des études de cas a dégagé certains éléments suggérant que l'implication de l'AEE ne s'est pas avérée essentielle dans un certain nombre de domaines. Ces domaines comprennent notamment l'échange de connaissances et de meilleures pratiques entre les experts nationaux des pays membres (identifié comme crucial uniquement dans l'étude de cas Nature), ainsi que la coordination des activités entre les États membres et la préparation à l'avenir (encore une fois considérées comme essentielles uniquement dans l'étude de cas Nature). Ceci reflète l'impression que, bien qu'elle soit bénéfique, l'implication de l'AEE n'est pas toujours essentielle, et certaines activités pourraient être assurées par les États membres, sans l'aide de l'Agence.

En ce qui concerne la coopération au-delà des États membres de l'UE, certains éléments de preuve suggèrent qu'un vaste éventail de bénéfices dégagés pourraient soutenir l'accomplissement du principe de subsidiarité. Ces bénéfices comprenaient la capacité à regrouper les ressources et fournir des mécanismes de collecte de données rentables (un exemple d'efficience accrue). Nombre des participants jugent que les bénéfices ont eu un effet bidirectionnel, vers l'Europe des 28 ainsi que des autres pays membres et participants, démontrant ainsi une valeur ajoutée significative.

QE 12 : Quelles seraient les conséquences les plus plausibles de l'arrêt de l'AEE et d'EIONET à l'échelle de l'UE ?

Pour les besoins de cette évaluation (et en phase avec la question de la recherche), nous avons cherché à apprécier la valeur ajoutée liée à l'arrêt de l'AEE et d'EIONET, et à la place, l'exécution des fonctions par les agences environnementales nationales et la Commission européenne agissant seules. L'une des principales difficultés inhérentes à cette évaluation repose sur le fait que l'AEE et EIONET existent depuis longtemps et n'ont jamais été soumises à un examen officiel des alternatives par les États membres ou la Commission au cours de la période d'évaluation. Lors de l'examen d'une potentielle évaluation qualité-prix, il n'est pas apparu possible de réaliser une évaluation quantitative des coûts et bénéfices, en raison du manque d'éléments contrefactuels quantifiables (issus des agences environnementales nationales et de la Commission européenne agissant seules). Aussi, cet élément n'est pas inclus dans la présente évaluation.

Tout au long de la période d'évaluation, l'AEE et EIONET ont fourni un large éventail d'activités et ont interagi avec un grand nombre d'institutions et d'organisations. En grande majorité, ces institutions et organisations respectent

l'AEE et EIONET et leur font confiance. Nombre d'entre elles considèrent les deux agences comme impartiales et des experts dans leur domaine. En outre, étant donné que l'AEE et EIONET assurent cette fonction depuis très longtemps, beaucoup jugent que les deux agences seraient extrêmement difficiles à remplacer.

Les études de cas ont permis de rassembler des preuves solides indiquant qu'un certain nombre d'effets négatifs surviendrait dans l'éventualité de l'arrêt de l'AEE et d'EIONET. Ces effets comprenaient une baisse de la qualité des données, une probable divergence des normes et des lacunes en matière de comparabilité des données. Ces effets négatifs sont étroitement liés à la fourniture de données et d'informations de haute qualité. La preuve probablement la plus frappante des effets de l'arrêt de l'AEE et d'EIONET a été donnée par les participants à l'atelier des parties prenantes. Nombre d'entre eux ne pouvaient concevoir un scénario où l'AEE et EIONET pourraient être arrêtés.

Récapitulatif des conclusions principales pour chaque fonction

Les fonctions de l'AEE ont représenté des éléments clés dans l'analyse des critères d'efficacité, de pertinence et de cohérence. Afin de résumer les principales conclusions de l'étude de manière différente, le tableau ci-dessous présente un récapitulatif des conclusions pour chaque fonction.

Ces fonctions comprennent les quinze tâches énoncées à l'article 2 du règlement fondateur de l'AEE. Pour une élaboration affinée des fonctions et des bases d'évaluation, veuillez consulter le point 3.3, relatif aux dimensions analytiques.

Deux colonnes sont utilisées pour présenter les conclusions concernant la pertinence. La première colonne évalue la pertinence du contenu et de l'intention de la fonction (indépendamment du fait de savoir si la fonction est adaptée en tant que telle ou libellée de manière à permettre une mise en œuvre pratique dans le contexte politique). La seconde colonne examine la pertinence de la fonction depuis la perspective d'une logique/cohérence externe et interne et d'un libellé pertinent.

Fonction	Efficacité	Cohérence	Pertinence – Contenu/Intention	Pertinence – Logique et définition
a)	Moyenne-élevée : Réunions tenues et largement suivies. Jugée comme utile par les parties impliquées. Marge de progression dans la planification des activités nationales (planificateur EIONET non utilisé). Risques : Structure encline à une « organisation cloisonnée »	Moyen : il existe des exemples positifs de coopération entre les CRN et les groupes de travail (notamment dans le cadre de la directive sur la nature), bien qu'elle ne soit pas systématique et que des confusions de rôle aient été signalées (notamment dans les directives sur les eaux douces).	Élevée : EIONET est essentiel pour la fourniture des bénéfices de l'AEE et d'EIONET.	Élevée : Avec une marge de progression pour la clarification de ces rôles.
b)	Non évaluée, car cette fonction est considérée comme faisant partie de l'objectif de l'AEE et d'EIONET.	Non évaluée, car cette fonction est considérée comme faisant partie de l'objectif de l'AEE et d'EIONET.	Élevée : Semblable à l'objectif.	Moyenne-basse : Il ne s'agit pas d'une fonction, mais d'un objectif.
c)	Élevée : L'AEE est plus efficace que les autres organismes lorsque ces derniers sont seuls responsables des productions de	Élevée : Aucun chevauchement entre les travaux de l'AEE et des services de la Commission n'a été constaté, et des synergies	Élevée : L'AEE appuie effectivement et efficacement les productions de rapports. Les activités de production de rapports	Moyen : Rôle mal défini concernant la coordination des activités de production de rapports et processus de prise de décision peu

Fonction	Efficacité	Cohérence	Pertinence – Contenu/Intention	Pertinence – Logique et définition
	rapports. Marge de progression en rapport avec Reportnet.	ont été établies dans plusieurs domaines (tels que la nature, les déchets et les gaz fluorés).	ainsi que de données et informations sur l'état de l'environnement étaient de plus en plus intégrées.	clair pour les nouvelles obligations de déclaration*.
d)	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Faible : Non conforme aux travaux actuels de l'Agence et des pays membres. Rôle de l'AEE en matière de renforcement des capacités pas suffisamment clair/reconnu.	
e)	Moyenne-haute : avec des améliorations au cours de la période d'évaluation. Gestion efficace des outils informatiques, avec toutefois une marge de progression en rapport avec Reportnet (infrastructure informatique dépassée et manque de maintenance). Tous les indicateurs prévus n'ont pas été mis en œuvre, et certains indicateurs n'étaient pas suffisants pour mesurer complètement les progrès accomplis au regard des objectifs prioritaires du 7ème PAE.	Moyen : une coopération positive a été mise en place, en dépit de certains chevauchements et opportunités de synergies manquées (concernant notamment les indicateurs agroenvironnementaux, des eaux douces et de l'urbanité).	Élevée : L'AEE est jugée comme une institution clé dans la gestion des données et l'évaluation environnementale.	Moyen : Chevauchement avec la fonction c). Couvre trop de sous-fonctions à travers le cadre MDIAK. Ne reflète pas le SEIS ou les éléments informatiques de la gestion de données.
f)	Évaluée comme une partie des fonctions c) et e).	Évaluée comme une partie des fonctions c) et e).	Élevée : Lien étroit avec l'objectif de l'AEE.	Il ne s'agit pas d'une fonction, mais d'un objectif.
g)	Évaluée comme une partie de la fonction c).	Évaluée comme une partie de la fonction c).	Élevée : Partie importante des travaux de l'AEE. En phase avec l'objectif prioritaire 9 du 7ème PAE.	Élevée :
h)	Élevée : SOER 2015 publié et reconnu par les parties prenantes comme un produit de qualité et utile.	Élevée : Bonne coordination entre l'AEE et la Commission européenne, ainsi qu'avec les organismes nationaux impliqués dans l'élaboration d'évaluations semblables (par exemple, les évaluations environnementales exigées par la Convention d'Aarhus).	Élevée : Partie importante des travaux de l'AEE. En phase avec le 7ème PAE et les obligations internationales.	Élevée, mais la fréquence pourrait être évaluée à la lumière des exigences prévues par d'autres législations.
i)	Moyen : Un certain nombre d'activités ont été menées, comme montré ci-dessus, mais elles semblent quelque peu exploratoires et ne sont pas fondées sur une approche	Moyen : Aucun chevauchement spécifique n'a été constaté, mais d'autres acteurs avec une meilleure capacité mènent des travaux semblables.	Moyen : Risque de chevauchement avec d'autres acteurs.	Moyen : Définition vague.

Fonction	Efficacité	Cohérence	Pertinence – Contenu/Intention	Pertinence – Logique et définition
	systématique de la recherche dans le domaine.			
j)	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Faible : Pas en phase avec le cadre de politique et les normes environnementales et économiques.	
k)	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Faible : Gérée par le bureau de la PRIP sous l'égide du JRC.	Élevée : Suffisamment claire.
l)	Non évaluée comme une fonction distincte, mais parmi d'autres tâches et domaines politiques.	Non évaluée comme une fonction distincte, mais parmi d'autres tâches et domaines politiques.	Élevée : Importante pour garantir la coordination.	Faible : Non considérée comme une fonction au sens propre du concept.
m)	Élevée : La fonction est bien traitée aux niveaux stratégique et opérationnel. Cadre de communication cohérent et pertinent, assorti d'activités de sensibilisation de diverses parties prenantes et activités menées pour surveiller le degré de sensibilisation.	Élevée : Rôle complémentaire de l'AEE et de la DG ENV.	Élevée : En phase avec les exigences en matière d'accès du public aux informations.	Élevée : Pourrait envisager de clarifier les rôles en matière de communication directe aux citoyens par rapport à la communication « intermédiaire » aux organisations (ONG, autorités nationales, etc.).
n)	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Peu d'activités déployées, donc non évaluées de manière plus approfondie.	Faible : Définition de la fonction floue et aucun lien clair avec le cadre politique.	
o)	Moyen : Activité limitée mais en augmentation au cours de la période d'évaluation.	Moyen : Utilisation limitée des résultats de la recherche sur l'environnement et le climat.	Moyen : Nécessité de clarification du rôle de l'AEE dans l'interface science-politique.	Moyen : Définition vague, liens limités avec le cadre politique et les programmes de travail de l'AEE.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report is the final report of the study to support the evaluation of the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet).

1.1 Purpose and scope of the study

The study was initiated in December 2016 with the purpose of supporting the Commission's evaluation, which is guided by the Evaluation Roadmap[9]. The study will be used by the Commission in writing the final evaluation.

Following the terms of reference as well as agreement with the Commission, the study is closely aligned with the evaluation and should provide answers to the same evaluation questions as those given in the Evaluation Roadmap and observe the objectives of the evaluation (see Text Box 1-1 below). It also works within the same scope as the evaluation, which covers the full range of EEA/Eionet operations and processes during the period summer-2012 until 2016.

Text Box 1-1   Evaluation objective

Referring to the Evaluation Roadmap, the objective of the evaluation is to assess how well the agency is performing and in particular, to assess how far the core missions of the EEA and EIONET match current policy demands and to provide the necessary evidence that will serve as an input to future considerations, including if necessary, a possible revision of the EEA's mandate.

Previous evaluations of the EEA have been initiated by the EEA itself and focused on assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery and impact of the EEAs work programmes and outputs. The intentions with these evaluations were to enable the Agency to prepare for its future strategy and the related work programmes and management plans.

The present evaluation is initiated by the Commission and follows the Better Regulation Guidelines. In that sense, it has a broader focus including not only effectiveness and efficiency, but also a distinct emphasis on relevance, coherence, and EU added value. It thus goes beyond the scope of the previous evaluations and assesses the Founding Regulation as well as the performance of the Agency.

1.2 Structure of this report

The report is structured according to the five evaluation criteria addressed by the study: Effectiveness (chapter 4), efficiency (chapter 5), coherence (chapter 6), relevance (chapter 7) and EU value added (Chapter 8). Each evaluation question is addressed in a separate section under each chapter. The questions are numbered (EQ1, EQ2, etc.) and reference is made to these question numbers throughout the text. Following the terms of reference and the agreement with the interservice steering committee (ISSG), the support study addressed the questions individually and the support study was not required to produce cross-cutting conclusions and was to refrain from making concrete recommendations. These elements are to be addressed in the Commission's official evaluation report (staff working paper).

The method used in the support study is explained in chapter 2 while chapter 3 provides an overview of the intervention logic of the EEA and Eionet as applied by the support study – and in accordance with the Better Regulation Guidelines.

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[9] [106] http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2018_env_002_eea_evaluation_en.pdf

Aside from the evaluation criteria in the Better Regulation Guidelines, the terms of reference also required that the support study assess the extent to which the EEA was acting in accordance with the Common Approach to decentralised agencies as set out in the Joint Statement of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission on Decentralised Agencies[10]. This assessment is summarised in chapter 9.

An important note to the reader is that a document repository has been set up by the support study (see Appendix F). All documents reviewed have a unique number and references in the report refer this number in square brackets, e.g. [12]. Further, it should be noted that EEA member countries comprise the 28 EU Member States as well as 5 non-EU countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. The report refers to either EU Member States or member countries as relevant.

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[10] [117]

2   METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology applied in the support study. There are four sub-sections:

- Section 2.1 describes the approach to answer the evaluation questions by setting out the judgement criteria, indicators and data sources applied for each question.
- Section 2.2 describes the document review undertaken for the study.
- Section 2.3 provides an overview of consultation tools and activities applied.
- Section 2.4 describes the methodology applied for the eight case studies undertaken.
- Section 2.5 describes key methodological challenges and limitations

2.1   *Evaluation questions, judgement criteria and indicators*

The study is framed by a set of evaluation questions outlined in the evaluation roadmap. The evaluation questions address the five evaluation themes of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU value added and are listed in the box below. It should noted that the list below reflects some amendments to the questions in the Roadmap to enable a structured analysis. Hence, some sub-questions were moved between questions and one question was dealt with within the scope of others. Therefore, the list below is not 100% identical to the Roadmap.

Text Box 2-1   Evaluation questions as listed in the Evaluation Roadmap

Effectiveness

EQ1: To what extent has the Agency and the EIONET network achieved its objectives and implemented the tasks set out in its mandate and in its multi-annual work programme? What are the key factors influencing/restricting progress and how do they link to the agency (if at all)? Does it consistently perform the same tasks with the same quality level?

EQ2: How effective is the EEA's work against its core objectives, across all environmental topics and across all activities (management of reporting flows, policy assessment, prospective analyses)? Are EEA contributions contributing to the mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas?

EQ3: How appropriate is the balance of activities in relation to different environmental topics considering the evolving environment and climate policy landscape and the needs of the main stakeholders? How effective has the EEA been in anticipating and dealing with evolving policies?

Efficiency

EQ4: To what extent have the EEA and EIONET been efficient in implementing the evolving tasks set out in their mandate and programming documents? To assess this question, elements relating to governance and structure, operation, programming of activities and resources, accountability and controls, etc. must be analysed.

EQ5: To what extent are the internal mechanisms for programming, monitoring, reporting and evaluating the EEA adequate for ensuring accountability and appropriate assessment of the overall performance of the Agency while minimising the administrative burden of the Agency and its stakeholders (established procedures, layers of hierarchy, division of work between teams or units, IT systems, initiative for streamlining and simplification, etc.)? Have the recommendations from the previous evaluation been followed-up and what lessons have been learned since then?

Relevance

EQ6: Are the objectives set out in the mandate of the EEA/EIONET founding regulation, including its article 3, still fit-for-purpose given current needs? In particular:

- Is the balance of EEA work sufficiently geared towards EU regulatory work?
- Have some of the initially non-core activities of the Agency become part of its core-business? What was the rationale in such cases?
- How well adapted are the EEA and EIONET to technological and scientific advances in the fields of e-government, earth observation and big data?

EQ7: How far are the Agency's tasks and resources aligned with key EU policies?

- Which Agency tasks are absolutely essential to deliver on these priorities?
- Which Agency tasks are necessary to continue implementing existing and evolving obligations under the Treaties and EU legislative framework?

- Which Agency tasks have become redundant / negative priorities?

How relevant is the EEA to EU citizens?

Coherence

EQ9: To what extent is EEA acting in cooperation with the European Commission services, the member countries and other agencies that deal with comparable issues (e.g. the European Chemicals Agency, the European Maritime Safety Agency, the European Food Safety Authority and bodies to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts?

EQ10: To what extent are the procedures and mechanisms put in place effective to ensure that EEA cooperation activities are coherent with the policies and activities of its stakeholders?

EU added value

EQ11: What has been the EU added value of the EEA? What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?

EQ12: What would be the most likely consequences at the EU level of stopping the EEA and EIONET?

For each of these questions, the study elaborated a framework of judgement criteria and indicators to form the basis against which the question would be assessed. A first version of this framework was elaborated in the inception phase. It was subsequently modified during the course of the study based on lessons learnt and data availability[11]. The final version of this evaluation matrix can be found in Appendix A.

The evaluation matrix reflects that the evaluation follows the Better Regulation Guidelines and thus the understanding and application of the five evaluation criteria as described in these Guidelines. At the same time, the Guidelines are intended for evaluation of policies and regulatory instruments and not targeted at the evaluation of Agencies. This means that some further delineation and understanding of the questions and how they fit with the guidelines was undertaken by the study team in dialogue with the Commission – and this is reflected in the matrix in Appendix A. Most notably:

- Although not mentioned in the evaluation questions on efficiency, the judgement criteria and indicators set out for these questions reflect the need to analyse costs and benefits as this follows the Guidelines. This is reflected through introducing judgement criteria reflecting the analysis of costs and benefits under efficiency.

- The need to look into issues of governance which affect both effectiveness and efficiency is reflected in the evaluation questions, however, this element is not covered by the Guidelines. In order to have a structure which is as streamlined as possible, governance issues are primarily dealt with under effectiveness (third question) and efficiency (second question). The third efficiency question is answered as part of answering these two questions (and thus not addressed independently).

- An element of the evaluation linked with the governance issues is the requirement to address whether the principles set out in the Common Approach to Decentralised Agencies[12] are implemented in the case of the EEA. Reference to relevant principles are reflected in the indicators in the evaluation matrix in Appendix A under relevant evaluation questions (in particular under efficiency, second question). In addition, the assessment against the common approach principles is summarised in Appendix E.

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[11] It also takes into account that the Commission decided that the study report should be structured according to the evaluation questions in the Roadmap and not the questions listed in the terms of reference.

[12] [117] Reference is made to the Joint Statement of European Parliament, The Council of the EU and the European Commission on decentralised agencies, July 2012, which sets out 66 principles for decentralised agencies.

- The relevance questions are delimited to an assessment of the relevance of the Founding Regulation in the light of the evolving policy landscape and technological developments (whereas questions related to effectiveness/efficiency in delivering work programmes that align with this context are handled under effectiveness (third question) and efficiency (second question)).

- The analysis of coherence according to the Better Regulation Guidelines would normally focus on coherence between policies (i.e. the coherence between the policy/legislation being evaluated and other policies within the same or related policy field) and assess how well the policies work together. In the case of this evaluation, the focus is somewhat different – the analysis of coherence focuses on tasks and activities rather than policies and assesses the extent to which there are overlaps/duplications or synergy effects.

Chapter 3 on intervention logic provides some further illustration of how the analysis of the evaluation criteria relates with the various elements in the intervention logic. The individual chapters on the analysis of evaluation criteria and questions (chapters 4-8) provide more detailed explanation of the understanding of the questions and how they link to the intervention logic.

2.2 Document review

A large number of documents have been reviewed by the study team as part of the work involved in answering the evaluation questions. These include documents available from web-sites (in particular the EEA web-site) as well as a range of documents supplied by the EEA and some supplied by the Commission. The documents have all been categorised and listed in a document repository which is available on CircABC. Appendix F provides an overview of the folder structure and the documents available in the repository. An important note is that the documents provided included confidential documents and these are listed in Appendix F, but not included in the document repository. All documents have a unique identifier number and this number is used in the report to make reference to sources in desk review.

The review of documents followed the logic of the evaluation matrix and sought to shed light on the indicators identified for each judgement criterion. Thus, the way of analysing the documents depended on the indicators and judgement criteria applied. Where possible, the study sought to apply quantitative approaches and indicators. Key results of desk reviews, which involved EEA data were sent to the EEA for factual check in advance of the submission of this draft final report, notably Appendices B, N and O, as well as some of the tables and data provided in response evaluation question 1.

2.3 Consultation strategy, tools and activities

This section briefly outlines the consultation tools applied and the main activities. Reference is made to Appendix B for further details. Further, other appendices provide detailed results of individual consultation activities. Reference to those are indicated below.

The consultation strategy was developed by the study team in the inception phase and some modification took place during the course of the study in the dialogue with the Commission. Overall, the stakeholders to be addressed and the tools to be applied were implemented as foreseen with some slight adjustments. Appendix B provides the synopsis of the consultation work as required by the terms of reference and the Better Regulation Guidelines.

Overall, the consultation activities stretched over more than a year.

During the first phase of the study (December 2016-April 2017), the inception report and consultation strategy were elaborated and some initial consultation activities took place, which included exploratory interviews in DG Environment, DG Clima and the EEA as well as a meeting with the members of the EEA Bureau.

The formal consultation activities according to the consultation strategy were initiated in May 2017 and included the tools and activities outlined below. The stakeholder workshop held in December 2017 marked the end of the main consultation period, however, a few follow-up interviews were held during the period January-February 2018 to close various information gaps.

2.3.1 Open public consultation

The open public consultation was initially planned to take place early in the study period. However, a number of iterations were needed in order to finalise the questionnaires. The ISSG required that the questionnaire be divided in two: One aimed at 'general' stakeholders and another aimed at stakeholders with a technical insight in the activities and outputs of the EEA and Eionet. Table 2-1 provides an overview of the main iterations.

Table 2-1   Open public consultation questionnaire, main steps

Version	Submit	Description	Comments (ISSG/DG ENV)
1	31 Jan	Submitted in excel-table format	Received at ISSG meeting 16 March 2017
2	24 Mar	Resubmit of version 1 in word format + some changes	Received by mail 4 April
3	10 Apr	Reworked. Most comments accommodated. Scales. Positive / negative statements.	Received by mail. Discussed at meeting 25 April
4	11 May	Restructured and general part reduced.	Received by mail 17 May and discussed at meeting 24 May. Agreed feed-back needed from ENV – this feed-back received on 7 June.
5	9 June	Revised version	Final comments received 15 June. Iterative process of agreeing response 15-16 June.
6	16 June	Final version with tracked changes	Approved by mail 16 June
7	19 June	Final version in clean version sent	Approved and programming authorised

Both questionnaires were finalised and made available in English, German and French and uploaded to the EU Survey tool. The survey was launched on 18 July 2017 and closed on 6 November 2017 (a total of 17 weeks). The public consultation generated a total of 51 responses; 21 for the general questionnaire and 30 for the stakeholder questionnaire. The responses are described and analysed in Appendix I.

2.3.2 Targeted surveys

The consultation included three targeted surveys addressing key stakeholders of the EEA and Eionet. For all three surveys, the questionnaires were developed in dialogue with the Commission and launched using the EU Survey tool. All surveys were available in English only. Table 2-2 provides an overview of the surveys. Survey results are available in Appendix J.

Table 2-2   Overview of targeted surveys

Survey	Period (launch date – closure date)	Main topics covered	Response rate
EEA Management Board members	October -November 2017	Governance and MB functions Coordination of the EEA and Eionet Objectives and tasks of the EEA and Eionet Benefits of the EEA and Eionet	29% (20/70)

| Commission Heads of Unit | October -November 2017 | Use of EEA products in policy development and implementation
Benefits of the EEA and Eionet | 18% (22 / 116)[13] |
| NFPs and NRCs | October -November 2017 | Governance and coordination of the Eionet
Capacity of Eionet to respond to change
Benefits of the EEA and Eionet | 10% (200 / 1915) |

2.3.3   Interviews

In total, 83 interviews have been carried out. The interviews cover different types of stakeholders as indicated in the table below. Some interviews addressed general topics related to the five evaluation criteria and the performance of the EEA and Eionet, whereas others focused more specifically on a topic covered by a case study. Some interviews covered both elements. A list of interviewees can be found in Appendix G.

Table 2-3   Overview of interviews per stakeholder type

Stakeholder	Number of interviews
Member country, NFP/MB members	10
Member country, NRC	1
Member country, other	1
Commission, DG ENV	18
Commission, DG CLIMA	4 (including 1 group interview)
Commission, JRC	3
Commission, Eurostat	2
Commission, DG RTD	2
Commission, other policy DG	5
NGOs (environment and/or climate)	3 (including one focus group with 3 NGOs)
Business organisation	2
International organisation	2
Scientific community/ Scientific committee	3
EEA	19
ETC	4
Other EU Agencies	3
MEP	1

2.3.4   Workshops

The consultation activities undertaken in the framework of the study included the conduct of three workshops (listed in chronological order):

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[13] Please note that 32 responses were received in total, although 6 units provided more than 1 respondent

- Workshop for NFPs held in conjunction with the EEA NFP meeting 31 May – 1 June 2017. This workshop focused on soliciting views and inputs from the NFPs on the performance of the EEA in coordinating the Eionet and on costs and benefits of the EEA and Eionet. The output document from the workshop is found in Appendix M.

- Workshop for the United Kingdom Eionet network. This workshop was held on 17 July 2017 in connection with a meeting of the United Kingdom Eionet network. It focused on costs and resource use of Eionet participants, impact and benefit of EEA and Eionet, coordination of Eionet, data management and IT. The output document from the workshop is found in Appendix L

- Stakeholder workshop. This workshop was held in Copenhagen on 5 December 2018. In this workshop, the study team presented interim findings to a selection of invited stakeholders, representing the member countries (Management Board members, NFPs and ETCs), the Commission (DG Environment, DG Clima, JRC, DG RTD, Eurostat, the Secretary General, DG SANTE, the EEA Scientific Committee), an interest organisation (Copa-Cogeca) and the EEA. The workshop discussed and further elaborated on these findings. The output document from the workshop is found in Appendix K.

2.4 Case studies

A case study approach was selected to provide in-depth insights into the performance of the Agency in selected areas as a detailed analysis of all areas of activity would not be feasible within the limits of the study. Six sector-based case studies were selected, as well as two horizontal case studies. All case studies were conducted by applying a consistent set of questions and a standard template allowing for case study findings to feed into overall assessment of the evaluation questions. At the same time, each case study was unique and provided different insights to specific questions. The case studies were thus used to complement data collected at the general level to support (or not) and exemplify findings. The case studies applied both document review and targeted interviews as data collection methods. Each case study is documented in a case study report, which can be found in Appendices D1 to D8

The following case studies were conducted:

1 **EU Emission Trading System (ETS).** The aim of this case study is to assess whether and to what extent the EEA supported the Commission in the context of the Art. 21 reporting; whether EU ETS data reported by EEA member countries and/or economic operators has been collected, processes quality assured and disseminated by the EEA in an appropriate and timely manner, supporting the Commission (DG CLIMA) in its activities, and whether issues of non-harmonisation and resulting risks have been identified. This case study is linked to the Strategic Area (SA) 1.3 on climate change mitigation and energy, which contains activities relevant for EU ETS.

2 **Trends and Projections.** This case study aims to analyse the performance of the EEA in the coordination and preparation of the Trends and Projections reports. The EEA's T&P reports[14] are annual reports that present an updated assessment of the progress of European countries and the EU as a whole towards their climate mitigation and energy targets. The data flows handled by the EEA under this activity are substantial, and constitute one of the largest outputs from the EEA in reporting on the EU's progress towards the energy and climate change targets, making this particularly interesting for an in-depth analysis. This output is described under SA1.3 of the MAWP.

3 **F-gas reporting.** The Commission started the cooperation with EEA in the area of F-gas in 2012 (2011 was the last year for which the Commission worked on F-gases with an external consultant). In this respect, the

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[14] [446] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/trends-and-projections-in-europe

timing of EEA involvement in F-gas reporting work fits well with the period of this evaluation. This case study covers the EEA involvement from its very beginning until end 2016, covering the evolution in reporting needs and corresponding EEA activities emanating from the repeal of the old F-gas Regulation by the new F-gas Regulation adopted in 2014. This case study allows to assess the ability of the EEA to respond to evolving needs and policy frameworks. F-gases is also one of the three areas where the EEA handles data reported by companies in relation to their commercial activities and for which special confidentiality arrangements are put in place.

4   **Freshwater.** This case study focuses on the activities of the European Environment Agency (EEA) to support EU water legislation. The EU has an articulated set of legislation to protect Europe's common water resources and ecosystems. Thus the case study analyses the work of the EEA framed by the water sector policies, in particular the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Bathing Water Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, the Floods Directive, the Nitrates Directive and the Drinking Water Directive. The freshwater case study is related to EEA's Strategic Area (SA) 1.5 of its Multi-Annual Work Programme 2014-2018 (MAWP) which covers Water management, resources and ecosystems.

5   **Nature Protection.** This case study links to EEA's Strategic Area (SA) 1.7 of the MAWP which covers biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests. As such this case study focuses on EEA's work to support the Birds and Habitats Directives (Nature Directives). It reviews the role of EEA and highlights the successful coordination mechanisms in place between the European Commission and EEA.

6   **Waste.** The EEA's work on waste falls under two Strategic Areas of the MAWP: SA1.9, which focuses on informing policy implementation related to waste and material resources, and SA2.1, which focuses on assessing systemic challenges in relation to a resource-efficient economy and environment. The case study seeks to assess the performance of EEA in terms of providing waste-related indicators and other information needed to support the Circular Economy package.

7   **Copernicus Land Monitoring Service.** Copernicus is the EU's Earth Observation programme previously known as Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES). The management of the different Copernicus services is shared between Commission services (DGs), European agencies and industry[15]. EEA is responsible for the management of the Pan-European and local components of the Land Monitoring Service, as well as for the cross-cutting in-situ component of all six Copernicus services. The EEA's specific Copernicus tasks for the period 2014-2020 are defined in a Delegation Agreement between the EU and the EEA[16]. This case study focuses on EEA's work under this Agreement.

8   **SOER 2015.** A State of Environment Report (SOER) is prepared by EEA every five years. The mandate to do so comes from the EEA Founding Regulation (Article 2 (h)). The activities related to preparation of the State of Environment Reports are included in the EEA MAWP under Strategic Area 2.4. This case study focuses on the 2015 report, which falls within the period of the evaluation. This is a cross-cutting case study, as SOER covers a number of topics and areas.

The results for each case study are provided in the case study reports (Appendices D1 to D8). In addition, observations and assessments from the case studies are integrated into the answering of the evaluation questions in chapters 4-8.

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[15] Copernicus website: http://www.copernicus.eu/

[16] [16] Agreement Between the European Union, Represented by the European Commission, and the European Environment Agency on the Implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component, Ref. Ares(2014)4012930 - 01/12/2014

2.5   Challenges and limitations

The study encountered numerous methodological challenges and limitations. This section mentions the key over-arching issues, while specific data limitations to address the evaluation questions are explained in the specific sections on each question. Notably, each section on the evaluation questions end with a section on key findings and conclusions and here, the report reflects on the strength of data and evidence to form the findings and conclusions for the specific question.

A key challenge with the research was the issue of recall bias. The evaluation period took place some years before the support study was commissioned. Often in qualitative research the study found that stakeholders placed greater focus and weight on recent events (including those outside of the evaluation period). This led to difficulties of examining the evaluation question in the earlier parts of the evaluation period and required additional probing from interviewers. In some cases, those individuals who had worked in the particular area during the evaluation period were no longer in the position and actual interview persons were only able to give partial answers in relation to the evaluation period.

The activities of the EEA and Eionet are (and have been) wide ranging and thus cover a number of different environment and climate issues. One particular challenge was therefore to engage with as wide as range of stakeholders as possible. One key method was to utilise the OPC; utilising two separate questionnaires; one for stakeholders with a more general interest and one those with expert knowledge. The response to this consultation was particularly low (only 51 responses). This was despite our efforts to promote the survey to a wide audience, ensure it was short, and delay the closure of the survey. Accordingly, additional research (in the form of interviews) was required to ensure that as wide a range of stakeholders engaged in the study. This could rectify the situation to some extent, but it was not possible to cover a wide range of institutions through interviews, especially, when at the same time, there was a requirement to collect data in deep detail on the elements of cooperation between the Commission and the EEA, which required numerous interviews with Commission and EEA staff. This was further challenged by the fact that few organisations outside this sphere – and also few organisations outside the Eionet and the Commission were able to join the stakeholder workshop. Consequently, the representation of stakeholders outside the environmental and climate sphere was limited (see also appendix B on the synopsis of the consultation work).

The study focused on case studies (eight case studies in total) giving a more detailed insight into some topics than others. This was deemed necessary as it was not possible within the scope to cover all topics and sectors with equally detailed data collection. This means that the study was not able to generate a full overview of effectiveness, efficiency and coherence for all the different topic areas in which the EEA and Eionet were engaged. Rather, overall assessments could be made drawing on specific and detailed data collection from the case studies.

The evaluation period (summer 2012 – 2016) is not consistent with the EEA planning cycle and thus cuts across two cycles of EEA multi-annual planning (2009-2013 with 2014-2018). The EEA changed the planning framework from the one cycle to the other, meaning that it was difficult to compare across the two. The support study analysed data based on the entire evaluation period, however, the most detailed assessment and focus was on the period starting from the latest multi-annual work programme (2014-2016) as it was spanning the majority of the evaluation period, the data availability was better, and also, it was the main reference frame for the stakeholders during interviews and workshops (difficult to get stakeholders to relate to a multi-annual work programme dating back 4 years and more).

The scoping of the evaluation questions under Coherence is focused on cooperation between institutions as opposed to the traditional scoping under this evaluation criterion, which according to the Better Regulation Guidelines refers to internal coherence with the policy instrument being evaluated (i.e. focus on the intervention logic and links between objectives at different levels, etc.) as well as external coherence, which looks at how well a policy/instrument works together with other interventions/policies. However, given the wording of the questions, the support study looked at inter-institutional coherence and cooperation rather than inter-policy. This meant that there were a lot of reference between the analysis of effectiveness and coherence and it was sometimes difficult to

draw the line between the questions. Cross-referencing has been used extensively in the report in seeking to address this.

3 THE INTERVENTION LOGIC OF THE EEA AND EIONET

This chapter describes the intervention logic used as a basis for the analysis of the evaluation questions. It provides an overview description of the intervention logic and how the EEA and Eionet are intended to work following the Founding Regulation. This is combined with some key facts reflecting the *de facto* functioning of the Agency and Eionet during the evaluation period (mid-2012 to 2016). In chapters 5 to 10 on the analysis of the evaluation criteria, the relevant elements in the intervention logic and how it is used in the analysis are explained in greater detail.

The EEA was established in 1990, in accordance with Regulation (EEC) 1210/90 (founding regulation)[17]. The regulation came into force in late 1993 after the decision was made to locate the EEA in Copenhagen and the Agency became operational in 1994. The founding regulation establishes the EEA as an independent agency with legal personality and also provided for the establishment of the European environment information and observation network (Eionet).

The visualisation in Figure 3-1 follows the example of the Better Regulation Guidelines and illustrates how the elements of the intervention logic are analysed under each of the five evaluation criteria addressed by the evaluation support study.

The yellow box indicates the 'intervention', i.e. the elements which are within the control of those involved in implementation in the EEA and Eionet. It shows two main 'layers' reflecting the built-in dynamic nature of the agency and Eionet. The top regulatory level giving a fairly broad mandate by the objectives and tasks set out in Articles 1 and 2 of the Founding Regulation; and the operational level (below), where multi-annual and annual work programmes set specific priorities and define the activities to be undertaken.

The red circle shows the intended effects from establishing the EEA and Eionet. Whereas the outputs are within the control of those involved in implementation, the achievement of results and wider impacts are influenced by other societal and political factors, which are beyond the control of those involved in EEA and Eionet activities.

The evaluation criteria and the main relations between elements of the intervention logic that are analysed are shown in green boxes and arrows.

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[17] [105] The regulation has been amended several times and the effective regulation in force during the evaluation period (and today) is the codified version (Regulation EC 401/2009).

Figure 3-1   Intervention logic
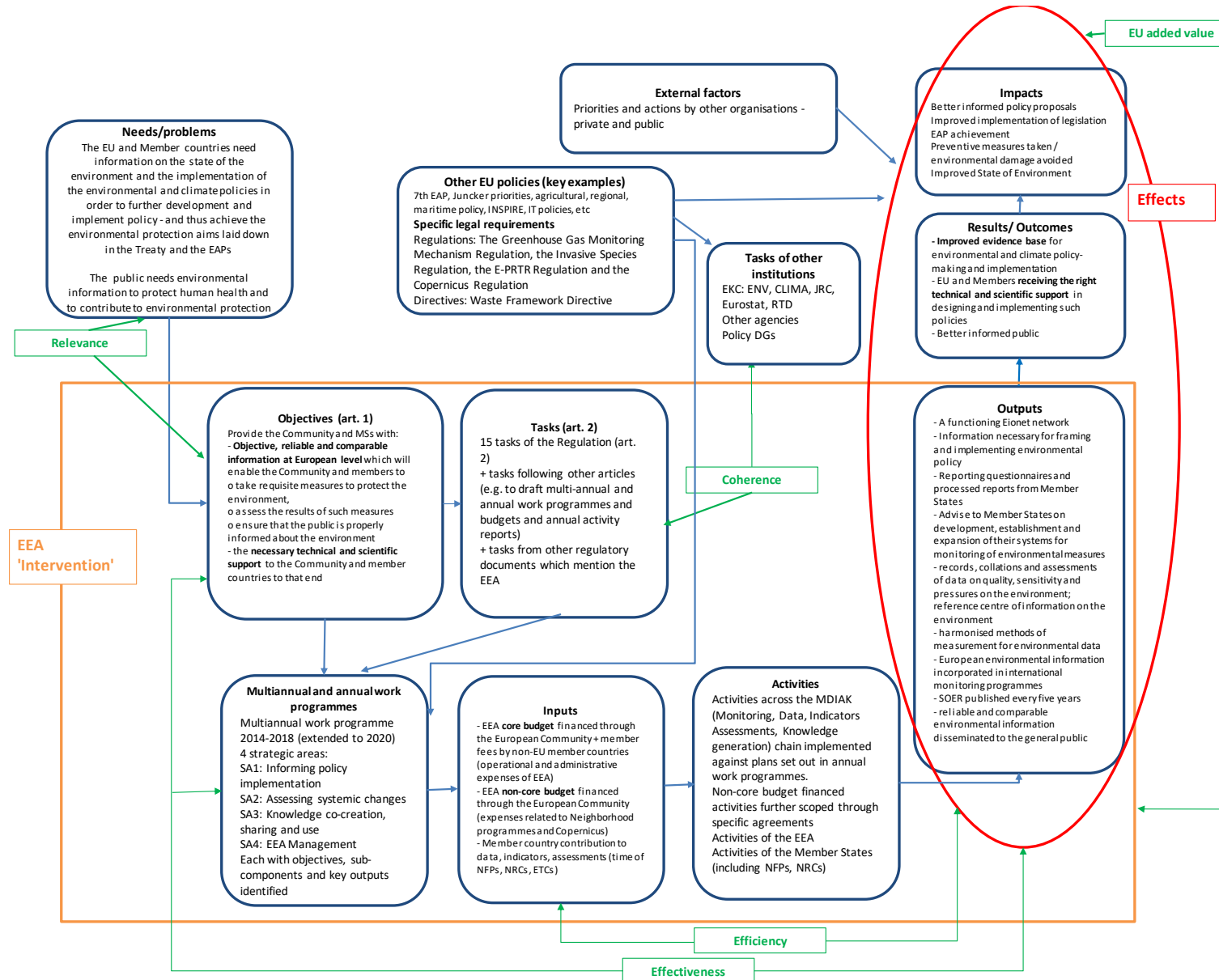
3.1 The EEA intervention

3.1.1 Objective

The objective of the EEA, as set out in the Founding Regulation (article 1), is to provide the Community and the Member States with objective, reliable and comparable information at European level enabling them to take the requisite measures to protect the environment, to assess the results of such measures and to ensure that the public is properly informed about the state of the environment, and to that end the necessary technical and scientific support.

3.1.2 Tasks

The founding regulation specifies 15 tasks for the EEA.

Text Box 3-1   EEA tasks according to founding regulation[18]

- (a) To establish, in cooperation with the Member States, and coordinate the Network (Eionet);
- (b) To provide the Community and the Member States with the objective information necessary for framing and implementing sound and effective environmental policies;
- (c) To assist the monitoring of environmental measures through the appropriate support for reporting requirements, in accordance with the aim of the coordinating reporting;
- (d) To advise individual Member States on the development, establishment and expansion of their systems for the monitoring of environmental measures;
- (e) To record, collate and assess data on the state of the environment;
- (f) To help ensure that environmental data at European level are comparable;
- (g) To promote the incorporation of European environmental information into international environment monitoring programmes;
- (h) To publish a report on the state of, trends in and prospects for the environment every five years, supplemented by indicator reports focusing upon specific issues;
- (i) To stimulate the development and application of environmental forecasting techniques so that adequate preventive measures can be taken in good time;
- (j) To stimulate the development of methods of assessing the cost of damage to the environment and the costs of environmental preventive, protection and restoration policies;
- (k) To stimulate the exchange of information on the technologies available for preventing or reducing damage to the environment;
- (l) To cooperate with Community bodies and programmes and other bodies;
- (m) To ensure the broad dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information to the general public and, to this end, to promote the use of new telematics technology for this purpose;
- (n) To support the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies and best practice;
- (o) To assist the Commission in the diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research and in a form which can best assist policy development

In addition, as illustrated in the box on other policies above, other pieces of legislation determine some tasks and activities for the EEA (in fact this affects the multiannual and annual work programmes of the EEA more directly than illustrated in the figure as it is an element the EEA has to include in the programming).

3.1.3 Programming and governance of activities, inputs and outputs

The specific activities, inputs and outputs of the Agency and Eionet are not specified in the Founding Regulation apart from what is set out in the 15 tasks. They are defined through multiannual and annual work programmes following the procedures laid out in Article 8 in the Founding Regulation as well as annual budgets following the procedures in Article 11 of the Founding Regulation.

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[18] The tasks are described briefly in this list. The full wording can be found in the Regulation [105] EC 401/2009, art. 2.

This programming and budgeting is managed through a governance system set out in the Founding Regulation (articles 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13).

The Management Board (MB) is the governing body of the Agency and is composed of one representative of each Member State[19], two representatives of the Commission and two representatives designated by the European Parliament (Article 8). The Management Board adopts the multi-annual programme, the annual work programme and annual reports of the Agency's activities. The Bureau of the MB is composed of the Chairperson, up to five vice-chairpersons, one Commission representative and a member designated by the European Parliament. The Management Board can delegate executive decisions to the Bureau.

The Executive Director is the legal representative of the Agency, and is responsible to the Management Board for the proper implementation of the work programmes and for the day-to-day administration of the Agency (Article 9).

The Scientific Committee (SC) consists of members specifically qualified in the field of the environment (Article 10). The task of the Committee is to assist the Management Board and the Executive Director by giving its opinion on the multi-annual and annual work programmes, and on the recruitment of the Agency's scientific staff, as well as advising on any scientific matter concerning the Agency's activities.

The governance system put in place by the FR thus allows for flexibility and ability of the agency to accommodate the activities to current needs, and the key stakeholders (Member States, the European Commission and the European Parliament) has an influence on the planning of the activities of the Agency through their function as Management Board members. Notably, the EU Framework Financial Regulation (EU FFR)[20] also defines the mandate of the MB.

Following the Regulation, the EEA shall:

- Draft multi-annual work programmes and annual work programmes and submit them to the Management Board for approval after consulting with the Scientific Committee and the Commission
- Draft annual reports and submit them to the Management Board for approval
- Draft the budget (including establishment plan) of the agency for each financial year and submit it to the Management Board
- Prepare accounts and send to Commission

The Management Board of the EEA has the following responsibilities in respect to governance and priority setting[21]:

- Approving multi-annual and annual work programmes as well as annual reports
- Designating the topic centres in the Member States
- Taking decisions regarding the component elements of the Eionet
- Adopting the financial rules applicable to the agency
- Forwarding the draft budget and establishment plan to the Commission
- Adopting the budget
- Delivering opinion on the agency's final accounts

The Commission has the following role:

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[19] In practise, each member country is represented, i.e. 33 EEA member countries

[20] [218] 1271/2013/EU

[21] In addition, the MB should also adopt rules of procedure for the governance bodies, appoint the Executive Director, designate members of the Scientific Committee, approve Eurostat work programme in the field of the environment, adopt implementing rules to Staff Regulations and CEOS. The [218] EU FFR includes additional tasks such as appoint accounting officer and internal audit capacity and specific tasks in relation to the budget and accounts

- Using the information provided by the EEA in ensuring implementation of Community legislation (ref. Article 2(e))
- Coordinating with the EEA (JRC and E-STAT in particular, ref. art. 15)
- Designating two members for the Management Board
- Consulting with the EEA on the multi-annual and annual work programmes
- Consulting with the agency on the financial rules
- Forwarding the draft budget of the agency to European Parliament and the Council together with the draft budget of the Commission
- Consolidating the accounts and sending to Court of Auditors

The role of the Member States involves:

- Cooperating with the agency and contribute to the work of the Eionet in accordance with the work programmes by collecting, collating and analysing data nationwide
- Designating a member of the Management Board
- Keeping the agency informed about the component elements of the Eionet in their countries
- Designating a national focal point (NFP)
- Identifying institutions that can act as topic centres

The current MAWP of the agency is presented in the box below.

Text Box 3-2   Current MAWP

The present multiannual work programme (MAWP) is the fifth of its kind and covers the period 2014-2020. It was originally adopted in 2013 for the period 2014-2018. The period of validity was extended to 2019 during the 74th MB meeting in November 2015, and again to 2020 during the 77th MB meeting in December 2016. The first extension was explained as being due to the fact that it was not foreseen at the time of adopting the original MAWP, how closely it would link to the 7th Environmental Action Programme (EAP) and other major policy frameworks that have a horizon of 2020[22]. In the case of extension to 2020, the issue was raised of the timing of preparation of the new MAWP. Extending the validity to 2020 would allow the new work programme to be developed at the time of higher clarity on political priorities and directions in terms of environmental policy. Specifically, the preparation of the new MAWP would occur after the 2019 European Parliament elections and possible revision of the EEA/Eionet regulation, and after the establishment of the successor to the 7th EAP[23].

The Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2020 is built on 4 key strategic areas:

- Informing policy implementation (SA1)

- Assessing systemic challenges (SA2)

- Knowledge co-creation, sharing and use (SA3)

- EEA management (SA4)

While the first three areas support different phases of the policy cycle, the fourth seeks to ensure that the work is conducted in an efficient and effective manner, while adhering to the relevant legal framework. Together SA1 to SA3 support all the priority objectives in the 7th EAP.

3.1.4   The Eionet

The Founding Regulation establishes the Eionet (Article 4) as outlined above by obliging the Member States to nominate NFPs and cooperate with the Agency by keeping the Agency informed about the main component elements of their national environment information networks and by collecting, collating and analysing data nationwide. The Member States may also identify institutions or organisations that can act as topic centres, with which the Agency can conclude agreements.

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[22] [174] 74th MB Meeting minutes Doc. EEA/MB/75/02-final
[23] [184] Minutes of the 70th Bureau Meeting (4th October 2016)

In practise, the Eionet has evolved over the years to consist of the NFPs, the National Reference Centres (NRCs) and the topic centres (ETCs). The EEA contracts out a significant part of its work to ETCs. The Eionet and its structure during the evaluation period is described in the box below.

Text Box 3-3   Eionet set-up during the evaluation period

Eionet is a partnership network between the EEA member countries and cooperating countries (33 member countries and 6 cooperating countries), established by the EEA founding regulation. The EEA is responsible for developing the network and coordinating its activities. The network consists of the EEA, six European Topic Centres (ETCs) and a network of around 1000 experts in up to 400 national institutions and other bodies dealing with environmental information[24]. These experts and institutions act as National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Reference Centres (NRCs).

European topic centres (ETCs) are centres of thematic expertise contracted by the EEA to carry out specific tasks. The ETCs, working together with Eionet countries, facilitate the provision of data and information from the countries and deliver reports and other services to the EEA and Eionet. During the evaluation period, there were six ETCs: 1) Air pollution and climate change mitigation; 2) Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation; 3) Inland, coastal and marine waters; 4) Biological diversity; 5) Urban, land and soil systems; and 6) Waste and material in green economy.

The National Focal Point (NFP) is an expert or group of experts nominated and funded by an EEA Member or cooperating country to be the primary link and contact between the country and EEA, other Eionet members, and other relevant actors. The NFPs coordinate the national contribution to the implementation of the EEA Strategy and its Work Program and support relevant activities in the country. Their organisation and working methods differ from country to country. This partly reflects the diverse nature of the national structures established for the environmental administration and the related national information systems and networks. The NFPs are based in environment Ministries, Agencies or other similar institutions.

National Reference Centres (NFPs) are the main entities to work with the EEA and relevant ETCs in specific environmental areas related to the EEA work programme. These institutions are nominated by the member or cooperating countries for their expertise within the specific areas for the purpose of technical coordination and support to the Agency in terms of data and expertise. They work with the ETCs either directly or through the NFPs.

3.1.5   Input and budgets

Following from the above, the inputs provided for the working of the EEA and Eionet includes the budget of Agency as well as the inputs provided by the member countries in the form of work done by NFPs, NRCs and co-financing of ETCs.

The EEA's budget in the period is shown in the table below, and may be divided in two parts:

1. A core budget financed from EU subventions, EFTA subsidy and new EEA Member Countries contributions, which is used to execute the strategy and work programme, and
2. A budget for specific projects, where revenue is channelled specifically for the implementation of these projects.

Table 3-1   EEA Budget (EUR).

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Revenue				
Core budget	41.740.722	41.770.897	41.718.306	41.687.497
Other	7.530.000	10.802.174	7.438.168	8.800.000
Total	49.270.722	52.573.071	49.156.474	50.487.497
Expenditure				
Staff	24.273.596	24.319.644	25.214.792	24.245.474
Administrative	4.212.000	4.372.400	4.385.412	4.158.411

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[24] [447] https://www.eionet.europa.eu/about

| Operating | 20.785.126 | 23.881.027 | 19.556.270 | 22.083.612 |
| Total | 49.270.722 | 52.573.071 | 49.156.474 | 50.487.497 |

Sources: Budget information on EEA website (https://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/documents/eea-budgets/)

Table 3-2 shows the development in number of posts according to the Agency's establishment plan and the actual number of staff in period 2011-2016. Early years included to enable comparison. The bottom rows indicate the percentage of posts filled and illustrate that a high level was maintained during the evaluation period.

Table 3-2   Posts established and filled

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Posts established						
Permanent	4	4	4	4	4	4
Temporary	130	132	134	131	129	126
Contract staff	63	71	69	69	69	70
Seconded national experts	24	27	25	20	20	20
Total	221	234	232	224	222	220
Posts filled						
Permanent and temporary	132	132	131	130	128	129
Contract staff	58	68	60	59	61	67
Seconded national experts	24	24	18	15	18	12
Total	214	224	209	204	207	208
% posts filled (perm+temp)	99%	97%	95%	96%	96%	99%
% posts filled (contract)	92%	96%	87%	86%	88%	96%

Source: Table prepared by the EEA for the support study (2013-2016). Data for 2011 and 2012 from the previous evaluation.

In respect to the inputs provided by the member countries in the form of support through seconded national experts, work done by NFPs, NRCs and co-financing of ETCs, there are no established data records on these. For NFPs and NRCs, there are no records keeping track of how much time is devoted by the relevant officials to fulfil these functions. The support study has collected data, which provides some basis for estimating this. On this basis, the study estimates that the total costs associated with running the EEA and Eionet were around EUR 66 million per year (this is elaborated in the section on efficiency Q4, see section 5.2.1.1). In respect to the national support for ETCs, the data shows that ETC grants have been awarded by the EEA on a condition that the awarded consortium provided a 10% co-financing. Hence, either private or public sources of funding have born 10% of the ETC costs.

3.2   Effects and impacts (red circle)

The part of the intervention logic that focuses on **effects and impacts (red circle)** implies some <u>assumptions</u> about what the different stakeholders are supposed to do with the outputs of the EEA. Notably, it is assumed that the Commission and the Member States will use the information and assessments of the EEA in their policy work. This is further elaborated under effectiveness (see chapter 4.1) and efficiency (see chapter 5.1).

3.3 Analytical dimensions – relation between intervention logic and evaluation criteria (green boxes and arrows)

As mentioned above, the green boxes and arrows in the figure above indicate how the analysis of the evaluation criteria relate to the different elements in the intervention logic:

- **Effectiveness** explores the extent to which the tasks of the agency, as defined in the Founding Regulation, or in complementary legislation, have been implemented in the work programme and are leading to the intended impacts – and thus focuses on the chain from objectives to intended impacts.

- **Efficiency** explores the relationship between inputs (costs) and achieved effects (benefits) and seeks to establish whether the benefits exceed the costs (as would be the intended situation). It also analyses the relationship between inputs and outputs and seeks to establish whether the outputs could be achieved at reduced cost – identifying e.g. unnecessary burdens and options for streamlining.

- As mentioned above in chapter 2.1, **Coherence** focuses on tasks and activities and assesses whether there are overlaps/duplications or synergy effects. It explores two main dimensions: Firstly, the relationship between EEA/Eionet activities and the activities of other bodies and the extent to which these are coordinated to avoid duplication and exploit synergies. This is relevant as other EU institutions are involved in the same field of environmental knowledge creation (in particular DG ENV, DG CLIMA, the JRC, DG RTD – who together with the EEA form the partners in the 'Environmental Knowledge Community' – EKC). Another important dimension for analysis is the tasks and activities carried out by national institutions in their capacities as members of the Eionet versus tasks and activities carried out by national institutions stemming from other legal requirements and arrangements. This also means that there are very strong relations between the analysis of coherence and the analysis of effectiveness.

- **Relevance** looks at the extent to which the EEA / Eionet is relevant considering the needs and challenges prevailing. The external factors are important here along with an assessment of changes in these factors since the Founding Regulation was enacted – and their significance in relation to relevance of the objectives and tasks specified in the Founding Regulation.

- **EU added value** looks at the impacts and benefits generated and asks whether these could have been produced and in a similar or better way meeting the needs through other (potentially existing) interventions or mechanisms at the Member State and/or international level. It draws to a large extent on the analysis done under the other evaluation criteria.

3.3.1 Tasks, activities and the MDIAK framework

A key element in relation to analysis of the performance of the EEA and Eionet is the analysis of tasks and activities. While the Founding Regulation includes 15 tasks as referred above, the EEA and Eionet in their daily operations refer substantially to the MDIAK framework, which provides a conceptual frame for understanding the key activities and how they are connected.

K What do we need to **K**now?
A What **A**ssessments are needed?
I What **I**ndicators are needed?
D What **D**ata is needed at European level?
M What **M**onitoring is needed to deliver the required data?

The MDIAK framework conceptualises the flow from monitoring and collection of data on the environment (state, pressures and measures, etc.), transforming this to information and understanding and knowledge, which can inform policy and action. It is an illustration of the core function of the EEA and Eionet. In addition to the key functions represented by the MDIAK, the EEA and Eionet involves some cross-cutting 'support functions', which enable

the MDIAK to be carried out, notably the coordination of the Eionet, coordination with other actors in the field, as well as the operation of a set of IT systems to handle the data flows and assessment processes. This is illustrated together in the figure below.

Figure 3-2   MDIAK and support functions of the EEA and Eionet

Monitoring → Data → Information → Assessment → Knowledge

--------------------------Eionet coordination------------------------------------
--------------------Coordination with other actors-----------------------------
------------------------IT systems support------------------------------------
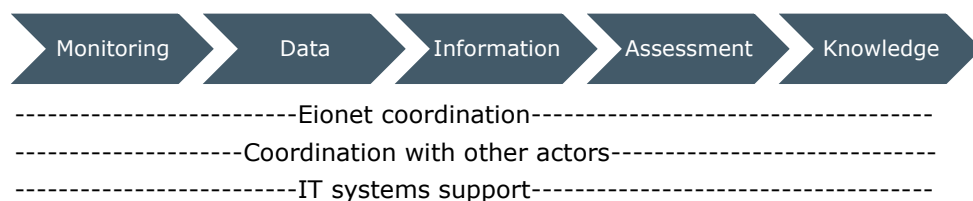
Source: Support study

The 15 tasks in the Founding Regulation can be seen within the framework expressed in the figure above although it is clear that the tasks were not originally conceptualised exactly in that way.

Table 3-3   MDIAK and support functions and tasks in the Founding Regulation

MDIAK and support functions	Tasks in Founding Regulation (letter in article 2) (see Text Box 3-1)
Monitoring	d), e), f)
Data	c), e), f)
Information	c), e), g), h), k)
Assessment	e), h), i), j), k), n)
Knowledge	b), h), i), j), m), n), o)
Eionet coordination	a)
Coordination with other actors	g), l)
IT systems support	e)

Source: Support study

When turning the attention to the activity planning of the EEA during the evaluation period, it is apparent that the MAWP 2014-2018 uses a different organising principle than the tasks as given in the Founding Regulation. The main principle of the MAWP is organisation according to environmental and climate topics rather than tasks, although parts of SA2 and SA3 are more task oriented.

A mapping of planned activities against the tasks showed that there are tasks of the Regulation where very little or no activity is planned according to the MAWP and AWPs or taking place according to annual reports. These include: (d) on advise to individual Member States on the development, establishment and expansion of their systems for the monitoring of environmental measures; (j) on methods for assessing cost of damage; (k) on exchange of information on best available technologies; (n) to support the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies. For this reason, it was decided not to focus on assessment of the implementation of these tasks in connection with analysis of effectiveness and coherence questions. This is reflected in the evaluation matrix in Appendix A where detailed judgement criteria have not been developed for these specific tasks.

Further, it was found that two tasks – although listed among the 15 tasks in the Founding Regulation have a character of objectives or measures to ensure the effective performance rather than operational tasks. These tasks are therefore not analysed under effectiveness and coherence.

- Task b) (on providing the Commission and Member States with objective information…) is very similar to the objective of the EEA and Eionet as expressed in the objective statement (Founding Regulation Article 1, see section 3.1.1). The effectiveness of this task is therefore assessed as part of the assessment of objective achievement rather than as a task in itself.

- Task l) on cooperation with other bodies. Coordination with other entities is an activity which is required to ensure that other tasks are performed, but it is not a task in itself. It is therefore not meaningful to analyse as a stand-alone task. Coordination is the key subject of analysis in the assessment of Coherence and as such the topic is addressed in the support study.

The table below indicates the main tasks we have applied for analysis of effectiveness and coherence with reference to the Founding Regulation (FR), the MDIAK framework above and the multiannual programme (MAWP). With this approach, the intention was to remain 'loyal' to the Founding Regulation while at the same time taking into account key elements in the MDIAK framework.

Table 3-4   Tasks used for analysis of effectiveness and coherence

Tasks	Reference FR	MDIAK	Reference MAWP
Management of Eionet	Article 2(a)	Support	SA3.1
Support to reporting requirements	Article 2(c) (f) (g)	MDI	Some share of: SA1 + SA2.1 + SA3.3
Collect, record, and manage dataflows for SOER data	Article 2(e) (f)	MDI	Some share of: SA1 + SA3.3
Manage data and information systems	Article 2(e)	Support	SA3.2
SOER	Article 2(h)	AK	Some share of: SA2.4
Assessments other than SOER	Article 2(e)	AK	Some share of: SA2.2 + SA2.4
Dissemination of environmental information	Article 2(m)	IAK	SA 3.4
Forecasting	Article 2(i)	AK	SA2.3
Diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research	Article 2(o)	AK	Mission/goals + SA1 objective

4   ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS

This chapter presents the findings with respect to the evaluation criterion on effectiveness. Three main questions from the Evaluation Roadmap have guided the evaluation and the chapter is structured according to these questions.[25]

Effectiveness question 1 (Q1): To what extent has the Agency and the EIONET network achieved its objectives and implemented the tasks set out in its mandate and in its multi-annual work programme? What are the key factors influencing/restricting progress and how do they link to the agency (if at all)?

Effectiveness question 2 (Q2): How effective is the EEA's work against its core objectives, across all environmental topics and across all activities (management of reporting flows, policy assessment, prospective analyses), i.e. does it consistently perform the same tasks with the same quality level? How effective has the EEA been in anticipating and dealing with evolving policies?

Effectiveness question 3 (Q3): How appropriate is the balance of activities in relation to different environmental topics considering the evolving environment and climate policy landscape and the needs of the main stakeholders?

4.1   *Intervention logic and approach to effectiveness analysis*

Referring to the intervention logic presented in Chapter 4, the analysis of effectiveness involves an assessment of the relation between the planned objectives of the agency and actual achievements in terms of outputs, results and impacts. Referring to the Better Regulation Guidelines, the analysis of effectiveness needs to look at progress towards objectives – at the operational, specific and general level.

Referring to the intervention logic, the general and specific objectives may be seen as those stated in Article 1 of the Founding Regulation. The tasks stated in the Regulation (Article 2) and the activities of the MAWP and AWPs may be seen as operational objectives.

Table 4-1   Objective hierarchy and effects

Objectives		Effects
General objectives Founding Regulation Article 1	Improved state of the environment Improved environmental protection Better policy making and implementation at EU and MS level	Impacts
Specific objectives Founding Regulation Article 1	Provide the Community and Member States with: Objective, reliable and comparable information at European level to enable them to take requisite measures to protect the environment, to assess the results of such measures and to ensure that the public is properly informed about the environment The necessary technical and scientific support	Results
Operational objectives Founding Regulation article 2	Fifteen tasks – see Box 3-1 in chapter 3 The activities and specific outputs as planned in the multi-annual and annual work programmes of the agency. See chapter 3 for a summary.	Actual activities and outputs as reported in annual reports

[25] Note that we have changed the sequence of the questions compared to the Roadmap, so that the third question in the Roadmap now appears as the second question and vice versa.

Our approach to analysing effectiveness is based on a bottom-up method, where we analyse the three levels in the objective hierarchy illustrated in Table 4-1 above starting from the bottom level of activities and outputs. This also means that our operationalisation of Q1 and Q2 makes distinct the part of the intervention logic that is being investigated and which level in the objective hierarchy is subject to analysis in each question.

- Under Q1, we first explore the extent to which planned activities and outputs in the multi-annual and annual work programmes have been achieved. We then use the results of this analysis complemented with additional data to analyse the extent of achievement of the tasks set out in the Regulation. This hence addresses the operational objectives (the bottom and third level in the objective hierarchy).

- Under Q2, we focus on achievement of the specific and general objectives (results and impacts) and thus the two upper levels in the objective hierarchy.

- Q3 is a different type of question as it concerns the effectiveness of the EEA in addressing new policy developments. Our analysis of this question therefore goes beyond the analysis of the achievement of the objectives in the above hierarchy. We explore how the EEA and Eionet have responded to key policy developments that happened during the evaluation period and also analyse data on general responsiveness of the EEA and Eionet.

Q2 refers to the achievement of objectives across topics and across activities. With the above definitions and scoping in relation to the intervention logic and objectives hierarchy, the achievement of activities is in fact assessed under Q1, whereas the achievement of objectives across topics is relevant to assess in Q1 as well as in Q2. Our definitions of these terms, for the purposes of this evaluation, are as follows:

- **Topics:** The different environmental sectors or themes (water, air, waste, etc.). These can be organised in many different ways. In order to do a meaningful analysis, we find that topics should be understood in the meaning of the strategic areas and sub-areas of the EEA multi-annual work programme (ref. chapter 3). This implies that we focus on the nine strategic sub-areas within SA1.

- **Tasks:** The tasks as set out in the Regulation. As further explained in the section on Q1 below (section 4.2.2), we base the analysis of effectiveness of task implementation on a revised list of tasks compared to the full list of 15 tasks in the Founding Regulation.

- **Activities:** The specific planned activities at the operational level and as expressed in MAWP and AWPs.

- **Outputs:** The immediate products of activities (most often tangible in the form of e.g. reports, workshops, etc.).

In answering Q1 and Q2, it is relevant to seek to understand through the evidence gathered whether and how achievement of objectives differ across the topics (i.e. are activities/tasks more effectively implemented under some topics than others, are specific objectives reached to a higher degree for some topics than for others). Therefore, in this chapter we present the detailed data per topic where such data is available.

4.2 Q1: Progress in task and activity implementation

Q1: To what extent has the Agency and the EIONET network achieved its objectives and implemented the tasks set out in its mandate and in its multi-annual work programme? What are the key factors influencing/restricting progress and how do they link to the agency (if at all)? Does the Agency consistently perform the same tasks with the same quality level?

In answering this question, we focus on the achievement of activities and tasks as set out in the Regulation and in the MAWP. The question is thus answered in two main sections:

Section 4.2.1 on achievement of planned activities as set out in work programmes

Section 4.2.2 on achievement of tasks as per the Founding Regulation.

In addition, section 4.2.3 provides the key findings that emerge from the evidence and analysis presented in the two preceding sections.

This refers to different 'layers' in the intervention logic as explained in section 4.1 above. We look at the extent to which planned activities have been implemented, assess progress made and consider which key factors have contributed to or inhibited progress. Reference is made to the judgement criteria and indicators, which have guided the assessment of Q1 as per the evaluation matrix in Appendix A. These are reiterated in each section below.

4.2.1   Achievement of activities and outputs as set out in work programmes

In this section, we present a review of the level of achievement of outputs and activities set-out in the multiannual work programme 2014-2018 (MAWP)[26].

Table 4-2   Judgement criteria and indicators, Q1

Judgement criteria	Indicators
EEA planned activities and outputs achieved	Annual reports and publication plans document that planned activities and outputs as set out in MAWP and AWP are achieved on time

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

This section provides an overview of progress in implementation for each strategic area with the exception of SA4, which is purely administrative (this is covered under efficiency in Chapter 5). This section is used to explain how effectively the EEA has carried out the planned activities under each SA, using document review. EEA work plans and annual reports were reviewed, supplemented by publication plans. This review did not assess whether the outputs are achieved to quality standards, or the satisfaction of stakeholders (quality and satisfaction is addressed in section 4.2.2 which looks at implementation of tasks).

The MAWP consists of four key strategic areas (SAs) and each of these is divided into sub-areas (e.g. SA1.1, SA1.2) as seen in the table below.

Table 4-3   Strategic areas and sub-areas in the MAWP

Strategic area (SA)	Sub-areas (level 2)
SA1 Informing policy implementation	SA1.1 Air pollution, transport and noise SA1.2 Industrial pollution SA1.3 Climate change mitigation and energy SA1.4 Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation SA1.5 Water management, resources and ecosystems SA1.6 Marine and coastal environment and maritime activities SA1.7 Biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests SA1.8 Urban, land use and soil SA1.9 Waste and material resources

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[26] The MAWP covers the period 2014-2018 and thus not the entire evaluation period. However, for assessment of effectiveness in implementing planned activities and outputs, it was considered reasonable to look at the implementation of the latest MAWP and the associated annual work programmes. The added value in assessing the effectiveness in the second half of 2012 and 2013 would be very limited compared to the amount of work required in scrutinizing the documents, which are incompatible with the current MAWP and AWPs as the structure of the work programme was changes in connection with the elaboration of the MAWP 2014-2018.

SA2 Assessing systemic challenges	SA2.1 Resource-efficient economy and the environment SA2.2 Environment, human health and well-being SA2.3 Megatrends and transitions SA2.4 Sustainability assessments and state of the environment reporting
SA3 Knowledge co-crea-tion, sharing and use	SA3.1 Networking and partnerships SA3.2 Technical systems development SA3.3 Monitoring, data and information management SA3.4 Communication, outreach and user analysis SA3.5 Quality management and operational services SA3.6 Copernicus operational services SA3.7 Capacity building in West Balkan and European Neighbourhood countries

Source: MAWP 2014-2018 [90]

4.2.1.1 Review of publication plans

Each year in December, the EEA has prepared a status on the publication plan for that year noting whether the publication has been published as planned, postponed or cancelled. Table 4-3 provides a summary based on these status documents for the years 21013, 2014, 2015, 2016. However, the columns showing number postponed or cancelled only counts the more 'serious' postponements (postponements within a year or of less than six months crossing years have not been counted). Appendix C shows additional detail.

Table 4-4   Number of publications planned and postponed 2013-2016

Strategic Area	Number Planned				Number Postponed or cancelled			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
SA1.1	13	11	7	13	0	0	0	0
SA1.2	6	2	3	4	0	0	0	0
SA1.3	10	6	10	10	2	0	2	2
SA1.4	1	2	2	4	0	0	0	0
SA1.5	2	4	4	6	0	0	2	1
SA1.6	1	3	3	3	1	1	0	2
SA1.7	12	6	6	2	5	2	2	0
SA1.8	3	4	12	12	0	2	7	8
SA1.9	2	2	2	4	0	0	1	1
SA2.1	5	1	1	4	3	0	1	2
SA2.2	2	-	-[27]	-	1	-	-	-
SA2.3	1	1	2	4	0	0	1	3
SA2.4	-	2	6	2	-	0	1	0
SA3.1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
SA3.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA3.3	1	2	1	-	0	0	0	-
SA3.4	-	3	4	3	1	0	1	0
SA3.5	1	-	-	-	0	-	-	-
SA3.6	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1[28]
SA3.7	-	2	1	-	-	0	0	-

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[27] Summary report of the late lessons work deleted from the publication plan and thus not counted here although mentioned in publication plan

[28] Methodological report on the validation approach for Copernicus land monitoring – cancelled according to publication plan status

Strategic Area	Number Planned				Number Postponed or cancelled			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	60	51	65	72	13	5	19	20
% cancelled or postponed					22%	10%	29%	28%

Source: COWI review based on [299-302]. Note: there is not a one-to-one match between 2013 thematic areas, and Strategic Areas in the 2014-18 MAWP. Hence, numbers were assigned where there is a thematic overlap.

The table above combined with data from interviews with EEA staff indicates that in the years analysed there was a certain 'optimism bias' in the EEA with regard to what could be managed in terms of report production. It should be noted that reports related to legal requirements were very rarely among the ones postponed. The EEA in its CAARs has also reported on the ratio of planned versus finalised publications and here, the picture is similar to the one presented above[29]. Since the details given in the AWPs and CAARs do not include the publications listed in the publication plan, it has not been possible on the basis of the available information in these documents to establish causes of delays or cancellations.

4.2.1.2   Review of MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

The current MAWP (meant to cover the period 2014-2018 and since extended to 2020) was prepared in 2013, and therefore the Annual Work Programmes (AWP) for 2014-16 are based on this MAWP and the priorities established in it. The MAWP and AWPs include a list of expected outputs. Each year, a report on activities is prepared by the EEA, entitled Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR)[30]. During the review and the dialogue with the EEA it became apparent that not all outputs and activities mentioned in the MAWP were reflected in the AWPs and CAARs – even if work had been planned/carried out in the relevant areas. The practise was to focus more on new elements rather than giving a full account of recurrent activities in the AWPs and CAARs[31]. To take this into account, the review of these programming documents involved the following steps:

- compare the planned outputs and activities in the MAWP with planned outputs and activities in the Annual Work Plans to assess alignment

- review and assess what was reported in the CAARs and the extent to which MAWP and AWP outputs are reported as complete

The full analysis per strategic area in the MAWP is documented in Appendix C. Table 4-5 provides a summary of the analysis performed in Appendix C. The table indicates, for each SA, the degree of alignment between the MAWP and the AWPs, and the extent to which outputs were completed, according to the CAARs. In addition, the far-right column provides a performance assessment based on the data on publication plans presented in Table 4-4 above. The cells in the table are coloured according to a grading system:

- Green indicates: Full alignment / completion: 90-100% achievement.
- Yellow indicates: Partial alignment / completion: 60-89% achievement
- Red indicates Limited alignment / completion: Less than 60% achievement

Table 4-5   Summary output alignment and completion based on EEA planning documents (MAWP, AWPs and CAARs 2014-2016)

Strategic Area	Number of outputs in MAWP	Alignment: Number of these reflected in AWPs	Number of MAWP outputs reported in CAARs as complete	Proportion of AWP outputs reported in CAARs as complete	Proportion of publications completed (2014-2016)
SA1.1	15	12 (80%)	12 (80%)	43/50 (86%)	31/31 (100%)
SA1.2	8	8 (100%)	8 (100%)	33/34 (97%)	9/9 (100%)

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[29] CAAR 2016 presents a graph covering 2011-2015, p. 102 [186]

[30] MAWP: [90]; Annual plans (work programmes/management plans): [95]; [89]; [88]; [86]; Annual reports: [187]; [40]; [7]; [186]; Publication plans: [299-302]

[31] Information from the EEA

Strategic Area	Number of outputs in MAWP	Alignment: Number of these reflected in AWPs	Number of MAWP outputs reported in CAARs as complete	Proportion of AWP outputs reported in CAARs as complete	Proportion of publications completed (2014-2016)
SA1.3	16	13 (81%)	10 (63%)	28/34 (82%)	22/26 (87%)
SA1.4	10	10 (100%)	9 (90%)	21/22 (95%)	8/8 (100%)
SA1.5	7	7 (100%)	6 (86%)	25/29 (86%)	14/14 (100%)
SA1.6	9	7 (78%)	5 (56%)	19/23 (83%)	6/9 (67%)
SA1.7	11	11 (100%)	11 (100%)	25/32 (78%)	10/14 (71%)
SA1.8	8	8 (100%)	5 (63%)	11/23 (48%)	17/28 (61%)
SA1.9	6	5 (83%)	4 (67%)	16/19 (84%)	7/8 (88%)
SA2.1	7	5 (71%)	3 (42%)	18/20 (90%)	6/6 (100%)
SA2.2	6	6 (100%)	4 (67%)	12/14 (86%)	/
SA2.3	4	4 (100%)	4 (100%)	16/17 (94%)	5/7 (71%)
SA2.4	4	4 (100%)	4 (100%)	5/5 (100%)	10/10 (100%)
SA3.1	6	6 (100%)	5 (83%)	19/24 (79%)	1/1 (100%)
SA3.2	8	6 (75%)	5 (63%)	18/23 (78%)	/
SA3.3	5	4 (80%)	4 (80%)	13/16 (81%)	3/3 (100%)
SA3.4	8	6 (75%)	6 (75%)	32/35 (91%)	9/10 (90%)
SA3.5	5	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	15/19 (79%)	/
SA3.6	4	4 (100%)	2 (50%)	11/13 (85%)	0/1 (0%)
SA3.7	3	2 (60%)	2 (60%)	10/10 (100%)	3/3 (100%)

Source: COWI review based on [90]; [95]; [89]; [88]; [86]; [187]; [40]; [7]; [186]

Overall, the following findings emerge from the table:

- The majority of the strategic areas perform well in terms of achieving planned outputs.

- Most Strategic Areas report a high proportion of completed AWP outputs, with the exception of SA1.8 (Urban, land use and soil), where the CAARs cite various performance challenges. Staff reductions, and limited data availability, were identified as the causes of a high number of postponed publications in 2015, and 2016 (See Appendix C).

- As the MAWP covers the period until 2018 (and now 2020), it would be expected that not all outputs have been covered by AWPs during the evaluation period. Overall, the completion rates are above 50% with the exception of two areas (SA2.1 and SA3.5) and this should be seen as satisfactory considering the duration of the MAWP (2014-2020) against the part of the evaluation period that is covered by the MAWP (2014-2016).

The review documented further in Appendix C further led to the following findings related to planning and reporting practises.

The reporting evolved over the years of the evaluation period, and the 2015 and 2016 CAARs provide a more straightforward link with the corresponding AWPs, compared to previous annual reports. However, a number of activities or outputs that are reported in all annual reports (including the more structured 2015 and 2016 reports), do not have a clear counterpart in the AWP. This makes it challenging to infer the extent to which the activities planned were implemented, and how the specific outputs support the objectives outlined in the programming documents.

The self-evaluation provided in the CAARs does not provide detail on the success or timeliness of each output. The outputs are mostly reported as "done" or "postponed" (with explanation, if postponed). Some outputs are broadly defined; for these the completion statement is even less informative. For example, "*Provision of policy support*" for SA 1.1 or 1.2 includes policy support in a number of areas and in relation to a number of Directives and Regulations. When this is reported simply as "Done", it does not allow assessing the level of support provided for more specific topics.

The MAWP does not provide a full and comprehensive overview of all the recurrent tasks the EEA and Eionet were undertaking and neither do the AWPs. Some details are included in the MAWP and others in the AWPs and again

others in the CAARs and, while there is a level of correspondence, as illustrated in the table above, it is not complete. This makes it difficult to establish with certainty the degree of achievement although the main features and strategic areas provide an overall structure, which is logical and useful for that purpose.

4.2.2   Achievement of tasks set out in the Regulation

This section outlines the extent to which the EEA/Eionet is delivering against its planned activities and outputs seen in the perspective of the tasks specified in the Founding Regulation.

For the purpose of assessing the achievement with respect to the tasks in the Founding Regulation, we have mapped the tasks against the activities as set out in the MAWP as explained in chapter 3.3. As presented in chapter 3.3, there are some tasks of the Founding Regulation where the level of activity was quite limited during the evaluation period and these tasks are therefore not analysed further in respect to their degree of implementation. These tasks include:

- d) on advise to individual Member States on the development and expansion of their systems for monitoring of environmental measures
- j) on methods for assessing cost of environmental damage
- k) on exchange of information on best available technologies[32]
- n) on support to the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies

It is noted that this should not be taken as an indicator of lack of performance of the EEA and Eionet. Rather, the scope of the mandate of the EEA allows for these tasks to be performed, however, they have not been prioritised as part of the planning of the activities of the agency. Further, the wording of the tasks in the Founding Regulation is to some extent open for interpretation and some activities undertaken by the Agency could be seen to refer to the tasks in the list above. Reference is made to chapter 6 on relevance, which discusses all tasks and their relevance.

The analysis of activities as presented in the MAWPs and AWPs seen against the tasks in the Founding Regulation further led to the observation that in order to provide an assessment of effectiveness in implementation of the tasks, it was reasonable to divide task (e) into several discrete elements reflecting the large weight on this task in the work of the Agency. On this basis, the tasks analysed further in this section are:

- Coordination of the Eionet (task a)
- Support to reporting requirements (task c)
- Collect, record and manage dataflows for SOE data (tasks e and f)
- Manage data and information systems (task e)
- State of the environment report (task h)
- Assessments other than state of the environment report (task e)
- Forecasting (task i)
- Dissemination (task m)
- Diffusion of the results of relevant environmental research (task o)

The sections below presents the findings task-by-task according to the list above. The assessment follows the judgement criteria and indicators in the evaluation matrix – see Appendix A. These are reiterated in tables presented for each task. The final section (4.2.3) provides a summary of key findings. An overall note on the assessment and the judgement criteria is that the Founding Regulation in itself does not provide for performance criteria for the tasks, which generally provide a mandate within which the activities and outputs of the Agency can be

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[32] As noted under relevance and coherence, work on best available technologies was undertaken by the European IPPC Bureau under the JRC, which may explain why limited activity was undertaken by the EEA during the evaluation period. However, no reference to this has been found in MAWPs, AWPs or CAARs.

planned and delivered. Consequently, the support study sought to set up objective indicators for effective performance drawing on the objectives, outputs and KPIs set out in MAWPs and AWPs combined with a focus on stakeholders' satisfaction with the performance of the EEA and Eionet in implementing the tasks.

4.2.2.1   Management and coordination of Eionet (task a)

Referring to the evaluation matrix in Appendix A, this section focuses on the judgement criterion "EEA and Eionet established and coordinated in an effective way". To assess whether this task has been implemented effectively during the evaluation period, indicators were setup guided by the Founding Regulation and the MAWP and the presentation of evidence below is structured accordingly:

Table 4-6   Judgement criterion and indicators, task a

Judgement criterion	Indicators
EEA and Eionet established and coordinated in an effective way (Task (a))	No. of Eionet meetings held, and number held as planned vs. postponed or cancelled. No. of NFPs / NRCs per country and topic. 'Vacant' vs 'filled' NFP/NRC positions per country. Ref Common Approach, point 22. Clarity of roles of Eionet structure and roles of NFPs and NRCs ETCs/NFPs/NRCs consider that Eionet is coordinated effectively: Meetings considered useful. Work programming procedures considered suitable and effective. Well-functioning planning and reporting systems for Eionet entities (ETCs, NFPs, NRCs)

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

Number of Eionet meetings

The desk review showed that there are no data directly (publically) available on NFP and NRC meetings held and the levels of participation in these meetings. The CAARs do not provide a systematic overview. However, the EEA informed that the Eionet Forum contains this data but has restricted access. All NFP meeting details are logged here on the NFP Eionet Group meeting site. From here you can also access actions, meeting presentations etc. Similar systems are available for NRC meetings. The EEA also keep a register for attendance at NFP and NRC meetings. However there is no comprehensive overview of Eionet activities.

The EEA provided data on request of the study team and this data shows that the EEA is organising regular meetings three times per year with the NFPs, and levels of participation in these meetings are high, as shown in Table 4-7. Topical meetings for various NRC groups are also organised regularly. The NRC meetings are more frequent in some groups than in others, as shown in Table 4-8, which includes both physical meetings and webinars.

Table 4-7: NFP meetings 2012-16

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of Regular meetings	3	3	3	3	3
Number of webinars	/	/	3	4	1
No of participants in Regular meetings	48, 38, 49	48, 48, 40	58, 45, 50	54, 54, 48	45, 41, 45
No of participants in webinars			6, 28, 33	28, 22, 23, 20	20

Sources: [287]; [268-272]; [273-275]

Table 4-8: Number of NRC meetings 2012-16, including workshops, meetings and webinars

NRC title	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Agriculture and Forests (until 2014)	1	2	-	-	-
Air Quality	1	1	1	1	1
Climate Change Adaptation	1	6	3	6 + 2 webi-nars	2
Freshwater[33]	1	1	1	2	2
Environmental Information Systems	1	2	-	1	1
Forward-Looking Information and Services	6	12	4 + 1 webi-nar	5 + 3 webi-nars	2
Industrial pollution[34]	-	-	-	1	1
Marine, coastal and maritime	1	2	1	1	2
Mitigation of Air Pollution and Climate Change	1	1	1	1	3
Nature and Biodiversity (until 2014) (joint with Biodiversity Data & Information)	1	2	1	-	-
Biodiversity and ecosystems indicators and as-sessments	-	-	-	1	1
State of Environment	1	1	1	- (1 webi-nar)	- (1 webi-nar)
Communication	1	1	2	1	1
Energy	-	-	-	1	1
Environment and Health	1	1	1	-	1
Environment and Transport	1	1	1	1	1
Land Cover	1	1	1	1	2
Land Use and Spatial Planning	1	1	1	1	1
Noise	1	1	1	1	1
Soil	-	-	1	3	2
Waste				1*	
Sustainable Consumption and Production (until 2014)		1*			
Resource-efficient economy and the environment					1*
Environment and Agriculture	No information				

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[33] In 2014-18 three related NRCs are defined: Water emissions, Water quality and water quantity.
[34] NRC established in 2014-2015 and consequently no meetings until 2015.

Source: [281]; and EEA update via email March 2018 and May 2018. For Waste, SCP and Resource-efficient economy, the information obtained is that in specific years meetings were held (no information on other years, or if there were multiple meetings). The lists of meetings provided by the EEA may not be fully comprehensive (information provided through EEA update).

There is no data on whether planned meetings were postponed or cancelled during the evaluation period. Interviews with EEA staff and NFPs show that the schedule of three NFP meetings per year has been as planned during the evaluation period. When it comes to NRC meetings, interviews with EEA staff indicate that meetings are held as planned. However, the schedules are not as stable and predictable as for the NFP meetings, because the level of activity varies from year to year. As can be seen in the table above, some NRC groups do not have an annual meeting.

No. of NFPs / NRCs per country and topic

According to the Common Approach, item 22, it is advisable that Member States review adequacy of resources assigned to the agency, ensure information flows and appoint contact points.[35] The Founding Regulation of the EEA provides for the latter in setting up the Eionet, including NFPs and NRCs (Art. 4 of the Founding Regulation).

Following the requirement of the Founding Regulation, all Member States have appointed an NFP and there is one NFP per country, i.e. one organisation assigned to the role. During the evaluation period, in July 2013, Croatia joined the EU, and at the same time became a full member of the EEA, having previously been a cooperating country. Croatia had been a member of the EIONET since 2003, taking part in the EEA/West Balkans programme, and providing data and information to the EEA (as a cooperating country)[36]. Thus the NFP/NRC structure was already well-established in the country prior to joining as a Member State.

In practise, the data from the NFP workshop and interviews shows that one or several people per country can fulfil the NFP duties. An NFP survey conducted in 2013 by the EEA showed that in the majority of countries, one or two people were involved in the NFP work (28 out of 34 responses)[37]. The time spent by these designated contact points is analysed under Efficiency in Chapter 5.

In contrast, the number of NRCs varies widely between countries. Overall, 24 types of NRCs were defined for the period 2014-2018[38], corresponding to the MAWP 2014-2018, as listed in Table 4-8. A snapshot of the Eionet contact points was taken in autumn 2017. Over 2,500 contact points from over 400 organisations and institutions were assigned to NRC roles across 39 countries (Member and partner countries). The figure below shows the number assigned in each country.

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[35] [117]

[36] [448] https://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/biodiversity-rich-croatia-becomes-33rd

[37] [292]

[38] [279]

Figure 4-1   Number of NRCs (across all topics) in each country, 2017
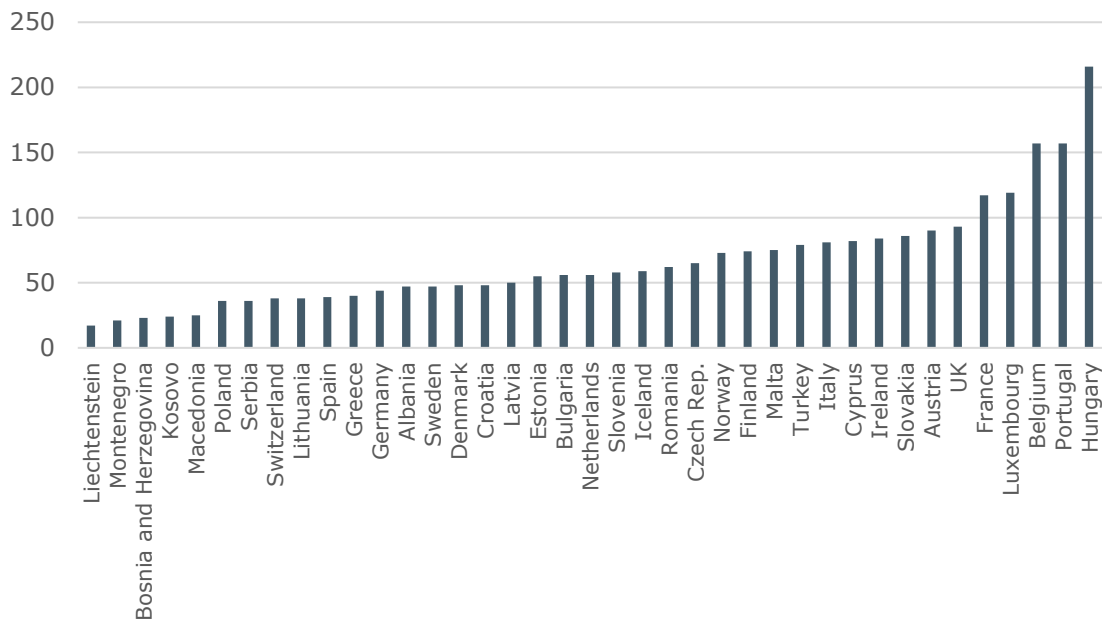
Source: [298]. Note: This includes all designations, so experts assigned to several NRCs will be reported several times (i.e. not unique experts).

The majority of countries have below 100 contact points assigned to the NRCs across the areas. Only France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Portugal and Hungary have more than that. Hungary in particular, stands out with 216. It has, for example, 24 different persons from 17 organisations assigned to Climate Change Adaptation, and more than ten persons assigned to many other NRCs.

In the 2013 NFP survey[39], conducted by the EEA, the NFPs indicated much lower numbers than those reported above. A questionnaire filled by NFPs in 2016[40] did not consistently report on this, but for those countries that did state the number of experts designated as NRC contact points, these were close to the values in the Figure above. However, some NFPs only report "active" designated NRCs, or number of "unique" experts, i.e. if one expert is assigned to several roles, they will be reported once, while the Figure above includes all designations.

Figure 4-2 below shows that the number of NRC contact points assigned per topic varies between 74 for Communication NRC to 177 for NRC for Mitigation of air pollution and climate change. Climate change impacts, water topics, air and industrial pollution are also among the best-represented NRCs.

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[39] [292]
[40] [291]

Figure 4-2   Number of NRC contacts per topic
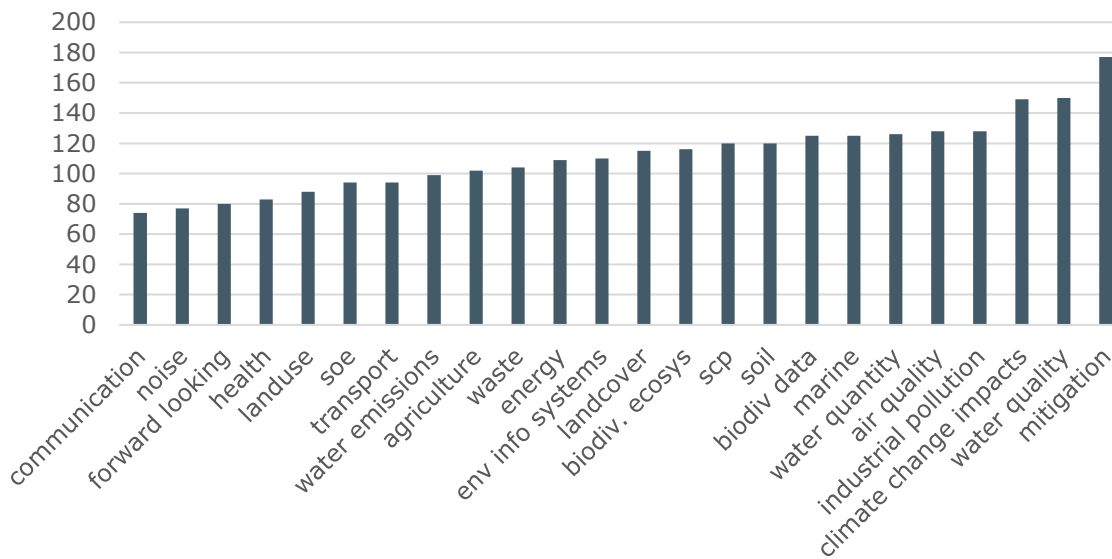
Source: [298]. Note: scp – Sustainable consumption and production

Clarity of Eionet structure and roles of NFPs and NRCs

The desk review shows that the Eionet structure into a set of NRC groups was revised in 2014. The result was the set of groups illustrated in the tables and figures in the sections above. The structure was approved by the EEA MB on the meeting held 26 March 2014. Subsequently, the NFPs developed a document containing profiles of the NRCs and this was approved at the NFP Plenary on 3 June 2014[41]. The document talks about different NRC types and underlines that the NRCs have different roles, but also that there are some common tasks applicable to all NRCs.

Box 4-1   Extracts from the document on profiles of the NRCs

NRC typology

There is no one size fits all description for what constitutes the role of an NRC. There are a number of ways to classify NRCs, three of which are highlighted in Appendix 3. Perhaps the most attractive method is one based on products, where NRCs can be considered as data oriented (where their role is to support technical discussions underpinning EEA Priority Data Flows and / or other legally binding EU legislation or international conventions) whilst other NRCs focus on the development and produc-tion of regular reports. These two groups are then supported by cross-cutting NRCs. Whilst there are a number of newer NRCs that are not yet fully developed for which capacity building and knowledge exchange are the key products / goals. Whatever the method chosen it is clear breadth of NRC contributions to the EEA and the diversity of NRC work within the Eio-net community make it clear that Eionet is more than just a 'data-delivery network'.

General NRC responsibilities

NRCs have a responsibility to contribute to EEA-Eionet working as facilitators between the European and national scale ensur-ing the two-way sharing of knowledge and Information at workshops and via day-to-day interaction with the EEA. This docu-ment therefore is still very much oriented towards what the NRC is supposed to do for the EEA.

The NRC is an official representative to the EEA of a country or institution. NRCs are asked to report (especially following NRC Eionet workshops) to the NFP and other members of their network in a manner consistent with national rules.   There are a number of generic tasks that are valid for most NRCs; these are not necessarily repeated in the individual profiles:

☐ Contributing to and reviewing the content of EEA draft reports (including technical reports);

☐ Contribute knowledge and information to enhance the value of SOER report suite and SOE online;

☐ Updates of EEA indicator fact sheets, Priority Data Flows, and support to INSPIRE processes;

☐ Actively participation in NRC Eionet workshops, webinars and where appropriate expert meetings;

☐ Contribute views to help shape upcoming EEA Annual Work Programmes (2015 to 2019) alongside the next EEA Multi-An-nual Work Programme.

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[41] [279]

Source: [279]

The document is quite comprehensive and includes a one-page standard description of each NRC group detailing, among other things, the policy processes to be supported and the expected inputs during the MAWP period.

Based on a review of this document as well as input from the NFP workshop and interviews with NFPs, one of the elements, which made the structure complicated and thus could give rise to uncertainties was the high number of NRC groups and their different types. There were groups, with a topical focus (sometimes several groups covering the same topic but from different angles – e.g. different steps in the MDIAK chain) and groups with a more task-based, horizontal focus (e.g. assessments or communication). This reflected the structure of the MAWP 2014-2018.

The figure below shows the NFP and NRC answers to the two questions on roles in the Eionet. The responses indicate that the majority of survey respondents consider their own role clear and well-defined, but are less clear over the other roles in the Network. 5% are not clear over their own role, while 7% do not consider the roles of the rest of the Network clear.

Figure 4-3   Clarity of own roles and roles of the rest of the Network
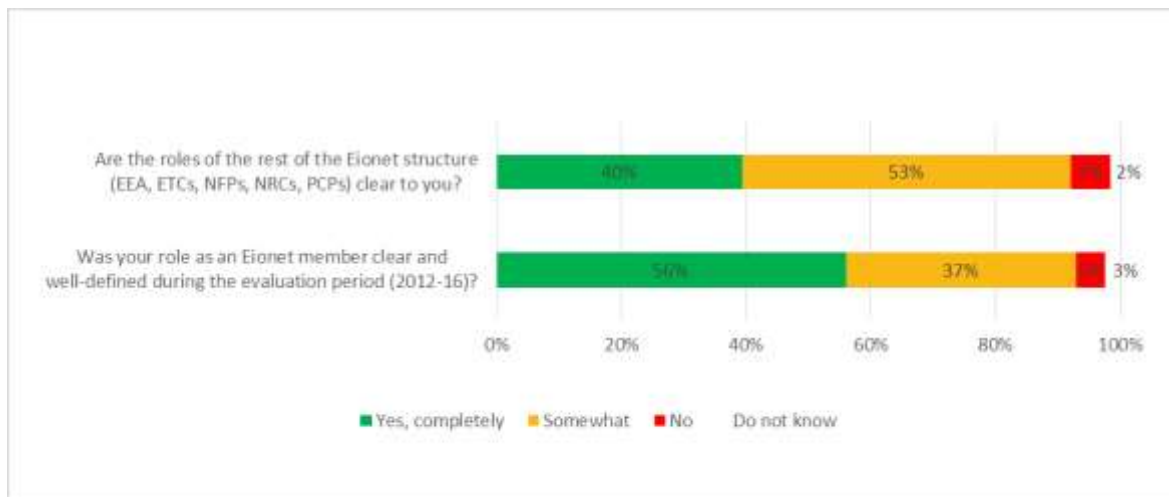
Source: NFP/NRC Survey; Questions: Was your role as an EIONET member clear and well-defined during the evaluation period (2012-16)? And Are the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure (EEA, ETCs, NFPs, NRCs, PCPs) clear to you? Valid Responses: 200

Breaking down the answers to NFPs and NRCs, as shown in Table 4-9, the results show that the NFPs have a greater understanding than NRCs of their own role and more NFPs have complete clarity over the roles of rest of the Network. However more NFPs answered "no" or "do not know" regarding the roles of the rest of the Network.

Table 4-9   Clarity of roles by type of respondent

Is role clear to respondent	Own role		Roles of the rest of the Network	
	NFP	**NRC**	**NFP**	**NRC**
Yes, completely	60%	55%	52%	36%
Somewhat	33%	38%	36%	57%
No	0%	6%	7%	6%
Don't know	7%	1%	5%	1%

Source: NFP/NRC Survey; Questions: Was your role as an EIONET member clear and well-defined during the evaluation period (2012-16)? And Are the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure (EEA, ETCs, NFPs, NRCs, PCPs) clear to you? Valid Responses: 42 NFPs and 158 NRCs

Overall, it is striking that about one third of NFPs and NRCs are only "somewhat" clear about their own role. Some respondents provided a free text comment, that the tasks of Eionet members could be made clearer, e.g. NRC versus EC working groups. This is also an issue that has been identified in case studies and interviews with Commission staff and NRCs. The issue of concern is that a parallel structure of Eionet NRC groups (related to reporting on SOE data, assessments in the topic area, etc. as described above) and Commission working groups (related to reporting on Directives in the topic area) existed during the evaluation period. Interviewees on both sides have expressed concerns that there have been examples of overlaps in topics discussed at meetings in these groups and uncertainties about the respective roles. Please refer to Coherence Chapter, Section 7.2.5 for further analysis of this issue.

The 2016 MB seminar discussed among other topics the structure and functioning of the Eionet. From the report of the seminar, it emerges that it was found that the Eionet structure was found not to sufficiently allow or facilitate interactions between specialised NRCs to address more integrated, systemic framing of issues[42]. The NFP workshop held in the context of the support study also pointed to the risks associated with 'silo-thinking' inherent in the NRC structure.

Thus, while quite considerable effort went into describing the roles of the NRCs, the structure was complex and given the many entities involved, it is perhaps not surprising that each individual did not always have a clear view of what other entities in the system were doing. Neither is it necessarily important that each individual holds an exact view of roles of all other entities. However, the data does point to some weaknesses in the system related primarily to the topical organisation and the ability of the network to handle integrated issues across the different topics.

Stakeholder perception of Eionet coordination

To complement the above data, the perceptions of stakeholders within the Eionet have been assessed. This includes assessing whether ETCs/NFPs/NRCs consider that Eionet is coordinated effectively, are the meetings considered useful, and work programming procedures suitable and effective. The EEA has sought inputs from the NFPs (and ETCs) on some of these issues, including quality of meetings on a number of occasions. The study team has had access to meeting feedback surveys: at the end of 2015 and after March, June, October meetings in 2016. Data from meeting feedback surveys is summarised in Table 4-10 below.

Table 4-10   NFP responses to EEA meeting feedback questionnaire, question on usefulness of NFP/Eionet meetings

% rate usefulness of meetings as	2015	2016 March	2016 June	2016 October
Excellent	9 (28%)	1 (6%)	9 (43%)	2 (18%)
Good	20 (63%)	14 (88%)	11 (52%)	8 (73%)
Satisfactory	3 (9%)	1 (6%)	1 (5%)	1 (9%)
Poor	-	-	-	-
Number of respondents	*32 (of these 1 ETC)*	*16*	*20 (of these 1 ETC)*	*11*

Sources: [307-310]. Note: the 2015 question refers to "Eionet meetings overall": "How do you rate NFP/Eionet meetings overall in terms of usefulness?", while 2016 questions ask feedback on the specific meetings at which the feedback was sought: "How do you rate this NFP/Eionet meeting in terms of usefulness?"

The data displayed in Table 4-10 shows that the majority of the NFPs consistently rate the usefulness of the NFP meeting as 'good'. None of the NFPs consider the meetings to have a 'poor' usefulness. Overall, the results indicate a solid performance where there is still room to raise the standard even further.

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[42] [163], p. 11

The NFP/NRC survey conducted by the study team complements this information by asking the NFPs and NRCs a number of questions related to the coordination of Eionet. To this end, they were asked:

- how useful have the meetings organised by the EEA been for their work as EIONET members (see Table 4-11),
- how satisfied the NRCs are with the coordination provided by the NFPs (Table 4-12).

Table 4-11 shows a picture similar to the one obtained from the EEA's questionnaires on the NFP meetings. The data illustrates that the NRCs rate the usefulness of the NRC meetings very similarly to the rates provided by the NFPs on the NFP meetings. This confirms the picture of a solid performance with room for raising the standard even higher.

Table 4-11   Usefulness of meetings to NFPs and NRCs

How useful have the meetings organised by the EEA been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member?	Respondents	
	NFP	**NRC**
Extremely useful	26%	21%
Very useful	48%	45%
Moderately useful	12%	19%
Slightly useful	5%	1%
Not at all useful	2%	1%
Do not know	7%	13%
Number of Valid Responses	*42*	*158*

Source: NFP/NRC Survey. Question: How useful have the meetings organised by the EEA been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member? Valid Responses: 200

The NRCs were in addition asked how satisfied they are with the coordination at a national level, provided by the National Focal Point. Table 4-12 shows that the majority of respondents are very satisfied with the coordination by the NFP, and overall 82% feel positive, 11% neutral about the coordination.

Table 4-12   Satisfaction with the coordination from the NFP

How satisfied are you with the coordination provided by your NFP?	Total (#)	%
Very satisfied	92	58%
Slightly satisfied	38	24%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17	11%
Slightly dissatisfied	5	3%
Very dissatisfied	1	1%
Do not know	5	3%

Source: NFP/NRC Survey. Question: How satisfied are you with the coordination provided by your NFP? Valid Responses: 158 (NRC only)

During the evaluation period, according to a survey conducted by the EEA in 2016, the cooperation between the EEA and Eionet members has been considered an important activity that enabled systematic consultations across countries in the context of EEA's activities and the sharing of information outside the formal reporting obligations and/or compliance context, the uptake of national data in European assessment and *vice versa* (i.e. use of European data in national assessments)[43].

These findings are confirmed by the results of the Survey with the MB, NFPs and NRCs carried out during the present study and showing a generally positive opinion on the capacity of the EEA to develop synergies with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in the Member States, and to coordinate effectively with them in its work on assessments and knowledge creation. Most NFPs and NRCs agree to a large or very large extent that the EEA has sought to develop synergy (53%) and has coordinated effectively (52%) with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States. This perception is higher among NFPs (67%), compared to NRCs (49%)[44]. Among members of the MB having replied to the survey, 76% (or 13 responses) found that the EEA, in its work on assessments and knowledge generation, coordinates effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States[45].

Well-functioning planning and reporting systems for ETCs, NFPs, NRCs

Based on the NFP workshop as well as interviews with NFPs, NRCs, ETC managers and EEA staff, the study team understood that planning of the activities of the Eionet entities took place as follows during the evaluation period:

- For NFPs and NRCs, the AWP of the EEA for the year in question was translated into operational plans for activities at the country level, which were presented at the first NFP meeting, which typically took place in the beginning of March of the year in question (i.e. two months into the year). The EEA operated during some of the period a system called the Eionet Planner, which provided an overview of the work programme and activities for NFPs and NRCs.

- For the ETCs, a cascading system was operated whereby annual plans and budgets for the ETCs were devised on the basis of the draft final version of the EEA AWP and budget during the autumn of the year before. The ETC managers had an active role in setting up the annual plans together with programme managers at the EEA and in some ETCs, staff of DG ENV were also involved in the planning.

Concerning NFPs and NRCs: The NFP/NRC survey asked respondents to evaluate the usefulness of tools and systems, including the Eionet Planner. The Eionet Planner was originally implemented in the mid-2000s, as a tool to help Eionet members keep track of EEA activities and services requiring their input. As such, it aimed to bridge between the EEA internal Management Plan System (MPS) and the Eionet portal. The inputs to the Planner came from the MPS. Hence in order for the Planner to be up-to-date, consistent inputs to the MPS were required. The MPS has grown in complexity over the years, and it became more difficult to ensure consistent inputs. Subsequently, this challenged the information consistency in the Eionet Planner. Therefore in 2014/15, it was decided to put the planner on hold. Since then, the required information has been compiled and distributed manually.

Table 4-13 shows the responses from NFPs and NRCs regarding usefulness of the Eionet Planner.

Table 4-13   Usefulness of the Eionet planner to Eionet members

How useful has Eionet planner been for facilitating your work as an Eionet member	NFP	NRC	Overall
Extremely useful	10%	3%	5%
Very useful	21%	20%	20%

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[43] [29] EEA, 'EEA and Eionet, Shaping out future together (background paper)', 2016.
[44] [307] NFP/NRC survey. Data based on 200 respondents.
[45] MB survey.

Moderately useful	19%	17%	18%
Slightly useful	14%	10%	11%
Not at all useful	17%	8%	10%
Do not know	19%	42%	38%
No of respondents	42	158	200

Source: NFP/NRC Survey. Question: How useful have the following tools and systems been for facilitating your work as an Eionet member: Eionet planner?. Valid responses: 200

About a quarter of survey respondents indicated that the Eionet Planner has been a valued tool (extremely or very useful), while nearly 40% did not know. The free text responses to a follow up question in the NFP/NRC survey and discussions at the NFP workshop[46] provide some insight into these answers. Since the Eionet planner has been phased out, the newer members of Eionet do not know it. Some of the NFP/NRCs who have used it would like it to be reinstated. When asked "What could the EEA have done to further facilitate your work as an EIONET member?", several planning-related comments and suggestions have been made by NFPs and NRCs in 7 member countries, e.g.

- The phasing-out of the Eionet planner has been the main problem I have encountered with the EEA over the period.
- Planning more in advance would help participants to consult better with colleagues, and to therefore bring appropriate information to the meetings.
- Circulated papers we in advance of meeting to allow internal MS discussions.
- Long term planning of NRC meetings
- Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
- Documents for the meetings and early enough before the meeting
  Have a working Eionet planner/calendar with all Eionet events and consultations in one single document/tool.
- It would be more useful to be informed about activities of EIONET in advance
- provide on a regular basis an overview of upcoming EIONET consultations and meetings

In 2015-16, the EEA has undertaken a product type review in order to streamline and align with the Programming documents (see Section 4.2.2.8). According to the EEA, the Management Plan System with the new product types potentially allows to reinstate the Planner.

The topic of planning of activities of the NFPs and NRCs was discussed at the NFP workshop. Many NFP representatives remarked that planning of Eionet activities based on the AWP could be improved (although the strategic planning of the EEA was generally regarded as excellent). Some offered the opinion that an "operational add-on" that makes it possible to better understand the practical implications of the AWP is needed early in the year in order to enable the NFPs to plan activities at the national level (whereas now such an overview is only made available in connection with the NFP meeting in March).

All in all, the inputs received from NFPs and NRCs strongly indicate a scope for improvement in planning of activities of NFPs and NRCs. This includes planning sufficiently in advance as well as providing easily accessible information on planned activities in a systematic way through Eionet Planner or similar tools.

The study team notes that the responsibility of planning and coordination of Eionet rested with the Partnerships and Networks (PAN) programme of the EEA, a horizontal programme (one out of the seven programmes in the EEA organisation). At the same time, most NRC groups were coordinated through other topical programmes in the EEA reflecting the theme relevant for that group. The data presented above indicates a scope for improvement in the coordination between these programmes.

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[46] NFP/Eionet Workshop in connection with the NFP/Eionet meeting on 31 May-1 June 2017; 10.20

In terms of reporting systems, less data is available on the functioning of the procedures[47]. In general, there are no procedures agreed on the level of the entire Eionet. According to the survey conducted among the NFPs in 2013[48], about half the countries have agreed some predefined reporting from NRCs to the NFP (Table 4-14).

Table 4-14   Procedures of NRC reporting to NFP – predefined reporting

How many NRCs has predefined reporting been agreed with	Number of countries with this arrangement
None of the NRCs	16
Minority of the NRCs	3
Majority of the NRCs	9
All NRCs	6
Total	34

Source: [292]. With how many of the NRCs it has been agreed on a predefined reporting to the NFP? Respondents: 34.

In the countries where some predefined reporting has been agreed with at least some of the NRCs (18 countries), the level of structuring this procedure is highly varied. In one country, neither timing nor contents are predefined, while in six both timing and contents are predefined. In addition, there is quite a lot of ad hoc reporting, both on request of the NFPs, and NRCs' own initiative. In most countries, irrespective of the agreements of predefined reporting, some sort of ad hoc reporting has taken place. In 3 of 34 countries there was no ad hoc nor predefined reporting, as shown in Table 4-15.

Table 4-15   Procedures of NRC reporting to NFP – ad hoc reporting

Level of predefined reporting	Ad hoc reporting (for each category of predefined agreement and overall			
	Requested by NFP (but no NRC initiative)	On NRCs' own initiative (but not on NFP request)	Both	Neither or no response
None of the NRCs	2	4	7	3
Minority of the NRCs	-	-	3	-
Majority of the NRCs	6	1	1	1
All NRCs	-	-	6	-
Total ad hoc reporting	8	5	16	4

Source: [292]. Note: For ad hoc reporting the answer categories in the survey were further split into "some NRCs", and "All NRCs". Here, both are shown together, if at least "some NRCs" have been requested to report, or initiated reporting themselves.

Concerning planning of the work of the ETCs, a review of the EEA AWP and annual plans of the ETCs in 2016 shows that there is a high level of consistency between these planning documents. The focus group with the ETC managers provided some inputs on the effectiveness of this system.

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[47] Here, reporting refers to information exchange in terms of Eionet activities, rather than reporting under the Reporting obligations.
[48] [292]

- The system of "cascading down" has improved over the years. However, it is challenging to connect the over-all EEA AWP with the ETC action plan and some ETC leaders remarked that sometimes discussions on new tasks happen too late on the side of EEA (in September, for the following year). Last minute changes to budget hamper planning and management of tasks; in particular, with regard to staff/human resources management.

- It is to be kept in mind that the ETCs are different, not only with regard to topics but also with regard to interactions with the EEA and the Commission. Hence, there was a mixed picture with regard to the satisfaction levels of the planning process. ETCs agreed that it largely depends on the management style – at the EEA, the EC and also the ETC.

- The use of a rolling plan as done in the ETC-BD can be seen as a good practise. However, it is not considered equally applicable in all ETCs by the ETC managers. Other ETCs have less stability and predictability in their work, which makes a rolling plan less useful in the eyes of the ETC managers.

The case studies conducted have not indicated any major issues in respect to planning of the work of the ETCs. The Nature case study done under this support study confirm that the rolling plan has been a good instrument for the planning and coordination of activities of the ETC (Box 4-2 below provides a description of the rolling plans in the ETC/BD). The key value added is that it served as an instrument to ensure coordination, not only between the ETC and the EEA, but also the Commission. In this way, expectations as to what could be achieved were aligned in the planning process covering more than one year. The other case studies show varying degrees of involvement of the Commission in the planning processes. The coordination and coherence with the work of the Commission in respect to ETCs is further addressed under Coherence, see section 7.2.5.

Box 4-2   Rolling plans in the ETC/BD

An informal rolling plan process coordinating the work of the EEA, the ETC/BD and DG ENV was introduced in 2008. Rolling plans are used to detail the actions foreseen in the EEA annual work programme and find consensus on the use of available resources.

The rolling plans are drafted by DG Environment, based on its upcoming needs, and then discussed with the EEA. The rolling plans list actions for the coming year and beyond and identify the bodies to carry out each action. The rolling plans focus on work to be carried out by DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC, but relevant actions by JRC and other bodies are also identified. One rolling plan is prepared each year for each of the two relevant units within DG ENV: Unit D2 (Biodiversity) and Unit D3 (Nature Protection). The rolling plan for Unit D3 is most relevant to the EEA's work on the Nature Directives.

After the finalisation of the plans, their resources implications for the EEA (including the ETC-BD or any other relevant ETCs) are fine-tuned and incorporated into the EEA's Annual Work Programme for the coming year. Based on these discussions, the EEA reviews the plans and resource implications with the ETC, for the preparation of ETC Activity Plan. The resource allocation discussion related to the activities in the rolling plan allows resource limitations to be identified and the clarification of priority settings.

The interviews at both the EEA and DG Environment indicated that the rolling plans have been effective in aligning resources and have helped schedule outputs (e.g. in terms of linking outputs to activities under an upcoming Presidency). According to the interviews, the rolling plans have avoided overlaps between DG Environment, the EEA and the ETC/BD and ensured a clarity of roles. It was noted that the rolling plans developed by Unit D3 and the EEA tend to be more detailed than those with other units (such as Unit D2 working on the EU Biodiversity Strategy), whose work is less technical and more policy-oriented.

Source: Nature case study, appendix D

4.2.2.2   Support to reporting requirements (task c, g)

Task c requires the EEA to assist in the monitoring of environmental measures through appropriate support for reporting requirements in accordance with its MAWP and with the aim of coordinating reporting. Further, task g are related to the reporting task as well as it relates to international reporting requirements (which are often reflected in requirements from EU legislation). Table 4-16 provides the judgement criterion and indicators applied in the assessment.

Table 4-16   Judgement criterion and indicators, task c and g

Judgement criterion	Indicators
The EEA/Eionet is providing effective support for reporting requirements (Task (c))	Requirements of the Mechanism for Monitoring Regulation and the 5 other pieces of legislation which provide specific tasks to the Agency are met
	Requirements of reporting in other areas where a role for the EEA is legally required or otherwise agreed are met. Identification of areas where reporting requirements are considered not met.
	The support provided enables the European Union and the member countries to meet their international reporting obligations
	Effectiveness of Reportnet and other information tools used for reporting: Continued development to include agreed reporting requirements, up-time during the evaluation period, ease of use for member countries, EEA and Commission.

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

Below, the first three indicators are assessed under the heading 'meeting reporting requirements' and the fourth indicator is assessed further below under the heading 'Reportnet'.

Meeting reporting requirements

The EEA has provided a list of reporting obligations supported during the evaluation period indicating the role performed by the EEA. This list includes 100 reporting requirements (see 10.22). In some cases, the role is mandated in a Regulation or Directive specifically requiring the EEA to perform certain tasks in relation to reporting, in other cases, the mandate is more vague – and in some cases, the activities undertaken by the EEA are defined by the MAWP/AWP or by general agreement – but not in a specific legal requirement in sector legislation. Some of the activities of the EEA in relation to reporting requirements were clearly identified in the (M)AWPs whereas others were not (e.g. as seen from the case study on freshwater, EEA's activities in relation to the Bathing Water Directive were not mentioned in the MAWP – ref case study report). In most cases where the EEA had a significant role (e.g. in providing summary reports of the data), these are listed in the MAWP and/or the AWPs among the outputs under each level 2-SA.

The desk review of the MAWP, AWPs, CAARs and publication plans described in 4.2.1 shows that the reports that were postponed (or cancelled) were reports which do not relate directly to reporting obligations. Further, the CAARs do not report on any implementation issues in relation to delivering on outputs related to reporting requirements, except in one case: The 2016 CAAR reports about problems encountered in Reportnet related to water and air. Due to volume and complexity, data could not be handled within the normal time frame.

The EEA maintains a performance indicator 'scoreboard' on the performance in relation to delivering on core data flows. Performance is reported annually and has been since 2005. During 2015, the system underwent a review and some adjustments were made. The number of data flows regarded as 'core' as thus monitored in the scoreboard increased from 14 to 18. Also, the scoreboard was amended to show the median rather than the average of all countries' performance as the main aggregate indicator. The scoring reflects timeliness as well as quality of data provided by member countries with a score of 100% reflecting full achievement on both. The EEA set up a target of an average of 90% in the MAWP. Table 4-17 below shows the performance as reported by the EEA in the 2016 report on Eionet core data flows.

Table 4-17   History of data reporting performance

Countries	2012	2013	2014	2016
Median EU-28	92%	90%	89%	85%
Median EEA-33	90%	90%	89%	85%
Median EEA-39	89%	88%	88%	81%

Source: Eionet core data flows 2016 [386], Table 1. Note that the score for 2016 is based on 10 out of the 18 core data flows for which data was available.

The data presented in Table 4-17 above indicates that performance on data delivery deteriorated slightly during the evaluation period. However, the level is still high although not quite reaching the performance target stated in the MAWP (90%) except in the beginning of the period, where this target was reached for EU-28 countries and EEA-33 countries. The EEA publication on the 2016 core data flows also mention that reaching this target continues to be an ambitious challenge. Data and feed-back from interviews shows that there was an increasing integration between SOE data and reporting data during the evaluation period. Of the 18 EEA priority data flows as defined in 2015, 14 were related to reporting obligations and four were pure 'SOE-flows'[49]. The results shown in the table above can thus be regarded as representative of effectiveness in relation to reporting obligations.

An internal DG ENV study of 30 environmental reporting obligations (ROs) conducted in 2014[50] showed that DG ENV officials found that quality of Member State reporting was a problem for their Unit for nine out of the 30 ROs. The EEA was involved in both ROs where quality issues were identified and in ROs where they were not. There were no significant differences in the status with regard to quality problems between the ROs with and without EEA involvement[51]. The data from the study is thus not conclusive with regard to a possible influence of the EEA on quality of reporting.

The recently completed support study for the Fitness Check of Environmental Monitoring and Reporting analysed 181 ROs and found that they could be divided in three main categories: Those where the Commission (DG ENV) manages the reporting process, those where the EEA is fully or partially conducting the process on behalf of the Commission and those where other Commission services (in particular Eurostat) manage the reporting process. The study found that the EEA was involved to some extent in 49 ROs of which the EEA was determined as 'reporting partner' for 28 and for 21 EEA provided some support but some of the tasks were outsourced and not dealt with by the EEA. [52]

The Staff Working Document reporting the results of the Fitness Check identified 78 ROs where the Commission (or the EEA) produces a report on the basis of information reported to them (i.e. these are the reporting obligations that require more substantial resources) and found that:

"In more than half, DG Environment handles these processes (receiving the information and then reporting onwards). Except for six cases under the waste legislation where Eurostat handles the reporting, the other main environmental reporting processes rely on the support from the EEA to a larger or lesser extent. In 19 cases, the EEA manages the process from the beginning to the end publishing a technical report as well as other reporting products such as map viewers (e.g. on the Habitats and Birds Directives, the Bathing Water Directive or the National Emissions Ceiling Directive). In 11 cases (e.g. on the Urban Wastewater or the Nitrates Directive), the EEA makes the Reportnet infrastructure available and Member States can submit their files to the "Common Data Repository" (CDR). Thereafter, however, the quality assurance, analysis and evaluation of the data are then handled under the responsibility of DG Environment often through outsourcing (i.e. with the help of an external consultant)."[53]

Overall, the Fitness Check indicated that the EEA is effectively and efficiently managing the reporting tasks in the cases where it is involved. In general in relation to reporting it was found that there is room for simplification and harmonisation, including the better use of technology, the elimination of overlaps across the environmental acquis

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[49] [318] Annex 1

[50] [427] Moore Stephens (2014). *Analysis of reporting requirements and complaint procedures. Draft final report.* European Commission. 07.0211.00.04/2014/ENV.SRD.1/S12.675250.

[51] [427] Moore Stephens (2014). *Analysis of reporting requirements and complaint procedures. Draft final report.* European Commission. 07.0211.00.04/2014/ENV.SRD.1/S12.675250 (support study analysis of raw data).

[52] SWD [112], p. 23

[53] [112] SWD, p. 24

(i.e. data being reported on multiple occasions for different uses, using different definitions and specifications) and the greater involvement of the EEA. Building on these results, the Commission adopted a report in June 2017 including a range of actions aiming at modernising and streamlining environmental reporting[54], also with the support of the EEA[55]. In particular, the EEA is expected to lead on the implementation of Reportnet 2.0, an action specifically aimed at improving the current reporting infrastructure, centralising and streamlining environmental reporting (see further on Reportnet below).

During 2014-2016 several studies were undertaken relating to fitness check and evaluation of the reporting obligations in the Climate and Energy Acquis and impact assessment relating to the Governance of the Energy Union. None of these studies analysed the effectiveness of the EEA in contributing to implementing the reporting requirements. Nevertheless, the process led *inter alia* to a decision from the Commission to involve the EEA more in reporting in the future, which is an indicator of good performance.

The Open Public Consultation asked respondents about the performance of the EEA in managing various functions. One of these functions was 'managing environmental monitoring and reporting data'. 23 out of 30 respondents (77%) found that the EEA was competently managing this function to a large or very large extent (see further details, Appendix I, question 3.1).

The case studies conducted in the areas where the EEA is supporting reporting requirements (freshwater, nature, T&P, ETS, F-gas, see case studies in Appendix D) generally show that the EEA is effective in supporting the reporting requirements. In general, both DG CLIMA and DG ENV are satisfied with the support provided by the EEA in this respect for the various Directives. The degree of satisfaction is very high for all three case studies involving DG CLIMA. For DG ENV, the level of satisfaction is a bit more mixed – high in the Nature area and medium in the freshwater area. In the freshwater area, there were challenges in 2016 with the reporting related to the Water Framework Directive. The main factors involved were late preparation and revisions in the reporting schema as well as capacity problems in Reportnet (see also below). The good coordination and principle of rolling plans in the Nature area was key factors contributing to a high level of satisfaction. When comparing the two areas it is also evident that reporting formats and principles were very stable in the Nature area with the two Directives (Birds and Habitats Directives) having been in place for many years with an established routine, whereas, for the freshwater area and the WFD in particular, the Directive was more recent and also involved a new regulatory regime with River Basin Management Plans requiring a more advanced reporting framework (which changed considerably from the first reporting cycle to the next).

The case studies also show that where international reporting requirements are involved, the assistance of the EEA helps to ensure that they are obliged with.

Interviews with officials in DG ENV covering areas outside the case studies point to a high effectiveness of the EEA in supporting reporting requirements.

The main issues that have come up under case studies and interviews relate to priorities and resources. Especially in the freshwater area, there was controversy during the evaluation period in connection with the decision of the EEA in 2015 to not support the reporting for the Drinking Water Directive (while having agreed to take this on in connection with the MAWP). Reference is made to Q3 which addresses responsiveness – see section 4.4, and Q5 which addresses the mechanisms for priority setting – see section 5.3.

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[54] [449] Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Actions to Streamline Environmental Reporting, COM(2017) 312 final.
[55] According to the report, the Commission will increase the budget dedicated to the EEA and enable it to lead on the implementation of Reportnet 2.0 (Action 3) – as described in the following text - and help deliver on several other actions (Actions 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10).

Roles of EEA, ETCs and NRCs: The data from the fitness check as well as the case studies conducted illustrate that the roles and activities performed by the EEA, the ETCs and the NRCs differed depending on the reporting obligation. In some cases, the EEA merely made the database (Central Data Repository - CDR) and Reportnet infrastructure available to the Member States and the Commission to support the reporting process. In other cases, the EEA and/or the ETCs supported the process by quality assurance and checking of the data provided by countries. There were also cases, where the EEA and/or the ETCs supported the preparation of a report based on the data reported. This is further elaborated under Coherence section 7.2.3.1, which discusses roles and coordination in relation to the reporting task and provides detailed data on roles performed in the areas covered by the case studies. The fitness check found that when the EEA was dealing with reporting obligations, public access to the information was usually ensured and subject to high demand (e.g. in relation to the bathing water report), whereas for the reporting obligations not dealt with by the EEA, the picture was more mixed as to whether the public was informed[56].

Reportnet

Reportnet was the EEA's main IT tool for facilitating reporting data flows during the evaluation period. Reportnet was designed in 1999, when the number of records in a data delivery was in the order of a few thousands. The Fitness Check on Environmental Monitoring and Reporting shows that Reportnet was a driver in a process where systems for reporting have evolved from paper-based systems to electronic reporting along with sectorial initiatives (here WISE and E-PRTR are mentioned)[57]. As such, in the broader perspective and also looking at the period before the evaluation period, the EEA has played an important role in this process.

However, in 2014 the reporting data flows started to increase substantially as the air quality data increased in magnitude and complexity. This situation was worsened in 2015 when data relating to the Water Framework Directive started to flow in. The records from water bodies and stations could be counted in the millions and this, together with increased demands on automated checks, caused an overload to Reportnet's capacity (see further on key issues in the box below)[58]. The EEA's own assessment documented in the 2016 draft plan for Reportnet 2.0, is that maintenance of the Reportnet infrastructure was limited since 2008 and therefore, there was a need for development of Reportnet 2.0. This is consistent with remarks by the NFPs and several interviewees that the IT technology applied had become outdated.

Box 4-3   Key issues in relation to Reportnet, extracts from Reportnet 2.0 draft plan

Issue	Details
Increased amount and complexities of data	The central data repository for the deliveries, called CDR was designed in 2002 for a much smaller number of deliveries per year. Since it keeps all historical data, the technology that it was constructed with is straining under the amount of data. Reportnet is now receiving 100 GB of data yearly. Even if the amount is constant over time, in 10 years the system will store an additional terabyte compared to today.

The QA system is also being stretched beyond its proper limit. There are deliveries that depend on whether the delivery to another dataflow has been made, and there are deliveries that must be blocked if certain QA rules didn't run for some reason or certain files were not included in the delivery. In addition, even after a delivery has gone through all QA it might still not be possible to import the data into a database. Hence, it should be part of the QA to test the database import.

There is one old problem that hasn't been solved yet in a systematic way. Some dataflows require that the reporter's delivery is compared with the last valid delivery to check for outliers etc. When such a requirement has been solved, it has been done so ad hoc as there is no subsystem in Reportnet that provides this functionality. The problem is especially momentous in the AQ e-Reporting dataflow, where deliveries made on zones minutes before are used to validate the delivery on stations. |

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[56] [112], p. 37-38

[57] [112], p. 68

[58] Plan for Reportnet 2.0 and interviews with EEA staff

Security	When Reportnet was originally developed, it wasn't feasible to encrypt all communication. The computers were simply not powerful enough. Reportnet was also designed with the base premise that the data would be publicly available. We are now going to implement SSL encryption everywhere.
Maintainability	A lot of the Reportnet source code is now more than 15 years old. There have been many changes over the years where old source code has been left in place because it was used in a transition phase. Furthermore, technologies become superseded by newer more modern technologies. For instance, many security holes have been found in Java and it is strongly recommended to upgrade to Java version 8. Reportnet was developed when Java 5 was the newest version and probably cannot be compiled with Java 8.
Operational management	A major contributing factor to Reportnet's current troubles has been that there is no one who is managing Reportnet. It is a complex system that has to be looked after. For instance, the maintenance of code lists, obligations, specifications, coordinating functionality requirements, supervising etc. has not been systematically done for years. The developers are not being informed about future user needs until it is too late to plan and there is no one to discuss concerns with the NFPs.

Source: [523]

These issues are reflected at an overall level in the CAAR for 2016 and the AWP for 2016 also emphasizes the initiative to build 'Reportnet 2.0'. However, risks were identified already in the audit of EEA data management carried out in 2014 and finished in 2015[59]. On this basis, the study team finds that the EEA could have been more pro-active in foreseeing the need for updating Reportnet and to a larger extent foreseen the problems encountered and discussed options for addressing it with the Management Board in the context of developing AWPs. A review of MB minutes shows that Reportnet and issues in this regard was not a subject on the agenda during the period. The understanding from interviews with EEA staff is that Reportnet was initially developed as a tool for organising the data flows from the NRCs to the EEA (via the ETCs). However, gradually it was increasingly used for reporting on implementation of Directives and various components were added over the years by the EEA and by different contractors (initiated by the Commission) and use of the system changed while the architecture lying behind remained the same and gradually became technically outdated.

As mentioned above, the follow-up to the Fitness Check involves the role of the EEA to develop 'Reportnet 2.0' and this process started in 2016 as reflected in the EEA work programme and the EEA draft plan for Reportnet 2.0.

4.2.2.3 Collect, record, and manage dataflows for SOE data (tasks e and f)

The table below provides the judgement criteria and indicators applied in the assessment of the performance in implementing this task (as noted above, this is an element of task (e) in particular – whereas other elements of task (e) are covered under separate headings).

Table 4-18   Judgement criterion (task e and f)

Judgment criterion	Indicators
The EEA / Eionet is providing an effective system for monitoring, informing, assessing and generating knowledge on the state of the environment in Europe (Task (e))	Data collected, processed, QA'ed and disseminated by EIONET according to agreed deadlines in a timely and reliable manner Datasets and indicators updated regularly (and accordance with stakeholders' needs) EIONET data are used for assessments of SOE

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

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[59] [388]

Data collected, processed, QA'ed and disseminated by EIONET according to agreed deadlines in a timely and reliable manner

Reference is made to the presentation in section 4.2.2.2 above on EEA core data flows, ref. Table 4-17 on the history of data reporting performance for the core data flows. The core data flows included data flows pertaining to specific legal reporting requirements (14 of the 18 core data flows monitored) as well as data flows which represented additional data required for SOE assessments and thus the reporting requirement originated from the EEA Founding Regulation (four of the 18 core data flows).

As shown above in section 4.2.2.2, the performance with regard to reporting in this area has been high although not reaching completely the ambitious 90% target set by the EEA.

In relation to the other key performance indicator of the EEA in this area (ref. MAWP: annually updated European datasets online within three months of deadline for national deliveries), there is no information in the CAARs on this indicator specifically. The EEA has informed the study team that no systematic data is available for the evaluation period covering the performance in respect to this key performance indicator of the MAWP.

Datasets and indicators updated regularly (and accordance with stakeholders' needs)

This support study indicator relates to the updating of the type of data collected and displayed in connection with indicators (e.g. deciding new data flows or indicators that are needed for better understanding of SOE / policy requirements or deciding to stop the collection of certain data if it is found that it does not provide value added).

The review of documents and the web-site shows that the EEA revised the data flows and indicators during the evaluation period. A major revision took place in 2013-2014, and resulted in the EEA publishing a key report on their indicator sets and work with indicators[60][61]. According to an information paper provided to the Management Board on connection with the 68th MB meeting in November 2013[62], the review was prompted by shortcomings in the quality and management of the Agency's indicators that became apparent through their use in SOER2010. This was complemented by demands from several stakeholders at the Management Board seminar in November 2010 to see a clean-up of the overall indicators picture in Europe. The review included four activities, which according to the information paper were all implemented and embedded in on-going activity of the Agency by end-2013:

- Cleaning of the EEA indicators to remove redundancies and duplications and ensure improved access to them on the website

- Mapping the EEA indicators and their status related to their technical, conceptual and political context

- Continuance of indicator-based state of the environment reporting in member countries

- Reviving the annual publication of an indicator-based cross-cutting assessment

In the report on Digest of Indicators[63], it appears that the EEA defined 137 indicators out of which 42 were the Core Set of Indicators (CSI). The CSI was established in 2004 and the revision in 2014 involved 26 new indicators (these indicators were new as CSI but some were already among indicators produced by the EEA) as well as removal of seven indicators that originally belonged to the CSI. Out of the original CSI, 16 indicators were retained (most of them unchanged, some were revised).

The review of the web-site as per end-2017 showed 121 indicators out of which 41 were CSI. There was no information available on the website to explain the difference between the number of indicators (total and CSI) in the

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[60] [398] EEA: Digest of EEA indicators, Technical report No 8/2014

[61] Here, the EEA also worked together with Eurostat in relation to streamlining of indicators (see Coherence section 0)

[62] [319]

[63] [398]

2014 publication and the display on the website. The EEA has provided a note on the state of implementation of the CSI dated 12 Oct 2017. From this note it appears that 13 of the CSIs decided in 2014 were not yet implemented by the time of the note[64]. The 13 indicators that had not yet been implemented as per EEA note on state of implementation of the core indicators of October 2017[65]:

- Passenger and freight transport demand[66]
- Pollutant releases to air, water and waste from industrial facilities[67]
- Cryosphere trends for European glaciers and sea ice[68]
- Freshwater: Trends in ecological status
- Climate change impacts on water[69]
- Pressures on water
- Species and habitats of European interest
- Fragmentation of habitats and ecosystems
- Agricultural areas under Natura 2000
- Forest growing stock, increment and fellings and deadwood
- Diversion of waste from landfill
- Decoupling of resource use from environmental pressures
- Decoupling of resource use from environmental impacts

A test on the EEA web-site conducted by the study team at the end of 2017 showed that 43 out of 121 indicators displayed dated 2015 or before, while the majority (78) had been updated in 2016 or 2017. The study team did not investigate the situation for all indicators in the group of the 43 with the 'oldest' data. Note was taken for the indicator for bathing water the latest data shown on the indicator page was from 2012, whereas the 'data and maps' page showed data until 2017 and 'topic' page referred the 2016 report on bathing water quality. Furthermore, it was noted that among the indicators featured on the web-site as CSI were indicators which belonged to the previous set (e.g. urban wastewater treatment). Interviews with EEA staff have confirmed that not all indicators have been implemented. The interviews indicate that while the indicators were decided based on what was assessed as needed for policy purposes, it proved more difficult to establish these indicators due to limits in data availability. Consequently, for some indicators, the intentions to revise them to be more sophisticated and policy relevant were not fulfilled during the evaluation period and therefore, the 'old' versions of these indicators are still displayed on the web-site (explaining why urban wastewater treatment was displayed as new indicators pressures on water were not yet implemented).

In 2015, the EEA performed a mapping exercise of the monitoring needs of the 7th EAP to available EEA indicators on the basis that the 7th EAP in its article 4 stipulates a support role for the EEA as the EEA's indicators on the state of the environment are to inform the monitoring of the 7th EAP. The result was a working paper (June 2015)[70] with a comprehensive overview of the monitoring needs of the 7th EAP taking into account the priority objectives 1-9 and their sub-components. This was mapped against existing EEA indicators and assessment was made as to whether the EEA indicators corresponded to the 7th EAP monitoring need.

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[64] [316]

[65] [316]

[66] However, these are published as two separate CSI and have been during the evaluation period (information from EEA and visible on EEA website)

[67] The EEA has informed the study team that three indicators under the umbrella of this theme have been published in 2017-2018.

[68] The EEA has informed the study team that they decided to update two separate indicators on Arctic and Baltic sea ice and on glaciers by end of 2016.

[69] The EEA has informed the study team that they decided to instead update (latest by early 2018) the indicator 'Economic losses from climate-related extremes'.

[70] [405]

In 2015 and 2016, the EEA published an annual indicator report (in line with the outcome of the indicator review described above, where the fourth action was to revive the annual publication of indicator-based assessment[71]). This indicator report was framed within the monitoring needs of the 7th EAP, but responding only to the first three priority objectives and drawing on existing EEA indicators. This corresponds to the mapping of 7th EAP monitoring needs to available EEA indicators[72] where the first three priority objectives are best covered by EEA indicators. From interviews with representatives of DG ENV, the support study learned that there was some extent of disappointment that the EEA was not able to support the monitoring of all nine priority objectives, however, also a recognition that the EEA had consulted with DG ENV on the approach, however, the consultation was considered to be insufficient. This is judged by the support study (on the basis of interview information) to be caused as much by internal coordination issues within DG ENV and with the external coordination between the EEA and DG ENV.

In relation to working with indicators on the sustainable development goals, an interview with representatives of DG ENV express a positive impression of working with EEA (which is characterised as constructive and responsive) and the EEA support to input on technical level on development of SDG indicators (Eurostat lead) and also how and what to monitor at EU level. It was emphasised that EEA provided support despite that no formal role was envisaged as (compared to 7th EAP which specifically mentions data from the EEA in article 4).

The open public consultation asked respondents about how well the EEA performs key functions including the function of 'Setting up criteria and indicators for measuring the state of the environment in different sectors and themes across Europe'. 19 out of 30 respondents (63%) indicated that the EEA performs this function competently to a large or very large extent (10.16, Table 3-5).

The open publication also asked respondents about the extent to which the information provided by the EEA meets their needs and here there were specific questions on indicators and maps, graphs and data sets. As shown in Table 4-19, the majority of the respondents found that the information meets their needs. However, this is more evident for maps, graphs and datasets than for indicators.

Table 4-19   Open public consultation: Responses to the question on the extent to which the respondent agrees that information provided meets the needs (n=30 for indicators, 29 for maps, graphs and datasets)

Topic	N	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
Maps, graphs and datasets	30	27%	43%	17%	7%	0%	7%
Indicators	29	14%	48%	32%	3%	0%	3%

Source: Open public consultation, ref Appendix I, Q 2.5

Two main comments were provided by respondents in the open public consultation on the subject. One respondent considered that the EEA is lagging behind in relation to indicators on 'new subjects' such as sustainable mobility, energy transition, sustainable food supply and green growth. Another comment concerned a perceived lack of transparency in the methodologies followed for gathering and processing the data contained in the GHG data viewer (see official comment in Appendix I)[73].

In interviews, many representatives from the country level have emphasised on the importance of the EEA in setting standards for indicators and data systems that have benefitted countries in building their own systems for

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[71] [316]

[72] [405]

[73] It should be noted that the GHG data viewer is accompanied by a detailed manual as well as a link to the underpinning data set, http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/data-viewers/greenhouse-gases-viewer

monitoring and reporting on SOE (evidenced by NFP workshop and interviews with MB members and NFPs). How-ever, this was a development which mainly took place before the evaluation period.

One international interviewee considered that it could be useful if the EEA included additional indicators and data flows. However, at the same time there was recognition that this requires the acceptance and implementation in all cooperating countries and thus it is necessary to be selective in the choice of indicators.

EIONET data are used for assessments of SOE

A desk review of the data and indicators used in the SOER2015 performed by the support study team shows that the data from priority data flows as well as the CSI were used in the synthesis report as well as in the 'European briefings', which are the thematic chapters of the SOER (the review was a spot-check based on a selection of the CSI listed as 'current CSI' in the information note to the Management Board from November 2013[74]). In addition, as emphasised above, the annual indicator report also uses and describes the annual trends in key indicators cor-responding to the first three priority objectives of the 7th EAP.

4.2.2.4   Manage data and information systems (task e)

The table below shows the judgement criterion and indicators applied to assess effectiveness in implementing this task. The section is structured in accordance with the indicators.

Table 4-20   Judgement criterion and indicators, task (e) (data and information systems management)

Judgment criterion	Indicators
The EEA is effectively managing data and infor-mation systems	Effective IT management Effective systems for storing and sharing of data among the EEA, ETCs, NFPs and NRCs enabling joint work on analysis and assessment Effective management of thematic web-sites (focusing in particular on WISE, BISE and Climate-ADAPT) expressed in high user satisfaction as well as well-functioning cooperation between the EEA and the Commission. Progress towards Inspire-compliance of spatial data infrastructure in 2018

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

Effective IT management

During the evaluation period, the EEA was managing a range of IT systems – more than 100 in total according to a list provided to the support study. The applications managed include those co-owned by the EEA and the Com-mission – and thus also co-financed by the Commission[75] (type 1) and those owned entirely by the EEA (type 2) – both listed in the table below, as well as a range of Eionet applications and internal applications.

Table 4-21   Applications managed by the EEA

Application (type 1 and 2)	Main function
BISE: Biodiversity Informati-ons System for Europe (1)	Contributing to the improvement of the knowledge and evidence base for the European Un-ion's environmental policy. Owned by DG-ENV. Contact at Commission: Anne Teller.
Climate-ADAPT (1)	CLIMATE-ADAPT aims to support Europe in adapting to climate change by providing infor-mation on climate change impacts and vulnerability and on adaptation actions.
Copernicus In Situ (1)	Portal for the Copernicus In Situ Component

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[74] [319]

[75] I.e. financing which could be seen as coming on top of EEA's core financing, but the systems are also co-owned by the Commission.

Application (type 1 and 2)	Main function
Copernicus Land Monitoring Services (GioLand) (1)	The Copernicus land monitoring service provides geographical information on land cover/land use and on variables related to vegetation state and the water cycle.
Corda (Copernicus Reference Data Access) (1)	Hosting of the main CORDA application as a single entry point node to the relevant national and regional geospatial reference data.
E-PRTR (1)	Provides key environmental data from industrial facilities
Natura 2000 GIS Intranet web-application (1)	The Natura 2000 GIS Intranet web-application was developed to make Natura2000 data accessible to a large(r) amount of people within the European Commission through an easy-to-use intuitive interface.
Natura2000 Network Viewer (1)	The European database on Natura 2000 sites consists of data submitted by Member States to the European Commission.
WISE: Water Information System for Europe (1)	Gateway to information on European water issues
Biodiversity clearing houses (2)	The CHM portal hosts about 11 national clearing houses for biodiversity.
Discomap (2)	Provide spatial data services to the other IT applications and environmental specialists.
EEA Emission Review Tool (EMRT) (2)	The Emission review tool supports the annual review of EU countries' GHG emission inventories. The annual review is conducted by a Technical Expert Review Team under contract with the Commission, supported by EEA as Review Secretariat.
EEA Enquiries Forum (2)	To facilitate dialogue with the Internet users.
EEA Glossary (2)	All terms with definitions used by EEA in a single place.
EEA web mapping platform (2)	The EEA platform for hosting web mapping services (Including INSPIRE services), web geo-processing services, web map printing services
EEA Website systems (2)	Dissemination of products and information from EEA. It serves as the master catalog of metadata for all EEA products when they are released to the public.
EUNIS Application (2)	Information of species, habitat types and protected sites
NOISE: Noise Observation and Information Service for Europe (2)	Presentation of data related to strategic noise maps delivered in accordance with European Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise.
ODP CKAN - Open Data Portal CKAN client (2)	This client is used to automatically update/create datasets catalog entries on "EC Open Data Portal":https://open-data.europa.eu via the usage of "ODP CKAN API":https://open-data.europa.eu/en/developerscorner.

Source: Information provided by the EEA

The data shows that EEA activities increased in this area during the evaluation period. One indicator illustrating this is the number of data deliveries in Reportnet as shown in the table below.

Table 4-22   Number of Reportnet deliveries

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of Reportnet deliveries	2,143	2,780	2,667	3,507

Source: Information provided by the EEA

In 2015, an internal audit on the EEA's data and information management was finalised. It pointed to a number of critical risks in the management structures employed by the agency and gave a series of recommendations. This shows that the performance of the agency in this area during the evaluation period was lacking in a number of respects. The EEA annual report from 2015 states that the EEA devised an action plan (which was agreed by the audit service) and completed all the documents covered by the action plan, including an IT strategy, IT security policy, data management framework, data quality framework and mapping of data flows. Interviews show that the EEA is recognised by stakeholders as being capable IT managers, while at the same time there are concerns over what is seen as a lack of consistency and streamlining of tools across the different programmes and units. These are elements that were also addressed in the 2015 audit. Document review as well as interviews with EEA staff shows that the EEA set up an ICT Steering Committee (as a result of the audit), which served as advisory body and provided recommendations to the management of the Agency on the purchase of software. In this way, a centralised structure was established which according to interviews has helped to streamline across the organisation.

Effective systems for storing and sharing of data

During the evaluation period (starting April 2015), the EEA introduced a common workspace which is an IT infrastructure for the creation of European datasets after data delivery from member countries. Interviews and data provided by the EEA shows that this created both effectiveness and efficiency gains in the management of data. On the effectiveness side, interview data and written responses from EEA staff shows the following advantages of the common workspace:

- One central place where all entities can collaborate. EEA, ETCs and contractors no longer need to export/send/receive/import datasets towards each other. This reduced human mistakes and lots of human to human actions one had to wait for. The ETCs no longer produced ad-hoc datasets inside their own infrastructure. Before the implementation at EEA these products where generated by the ETC and results were exported and send around to the different stakeholders for review multiple times until they were correct and accepted. It took about two years before all products where delivered. In 2017, the EEA published the data within 6 months (From receiving data of the countries towards publishing all final products). For some products within two hours.

- One common way of automation of the data flow and its end products. EEA gained better control and easier transfer of the tasks between all stakeholders. EEA has now also a team to overlooks the manual work performed by ETC and consultants and can propose better ways that allow improvements of the process in automation and quality. There is a benefit on data quality and completeness, because EEA can provide countries in a very short time all errors including the final products for review.

- The ability to produce overviews and dashboards above the entire data flow process was one more additional gain that allowed not only technicians but as well other stakeholders such as thematic experts to play a role in the process.

Examples provided by the EEA to understand the advantages and effectiveness gains include:

Air quality: The entire team (ETC staff, EEA staff, DG Environment and Consultants) work all together into one single place inside the common workspace on a daily basis. EEA Common workspace infrastructure has numerous of databases and products that are constantly updated with newly received data.

Water Framework Directive: The WFD2010 data was produced in the old way while the WFD2016 has been produced using the Common Workspace. In 2010 it took about 5 years to receive all data and compile the final products. The process was not automated and data was sent as exports between the different organisations. In 2016 EEA received the final products in 5 months and could re-produce all products in less than one month.

Looking at the wider institutional picture of how environment data is stored (reflecting the task description that the EEA should 'develop further and maintain a reference centre of information on the environment'), the picture

during the evaluation period was more complex than that as JRC and ESTAT were also involved in hosting of envi-ronmental data centres (EDCs) (this is further described under Coherence). However, the EEA was hosting the majority of the data centres (air pollution, biodiversity, climate change, land use and water), whereas JRC hosted the EDCs on soil (ESDAC) and forestry (EFDAC) as well as other thematic data, e.g. for chemistry data (IPCHEM)[76] and a JRC data catalogue[77] which for many cases allows the identification and download of datasets in an easier way than through the EDC web pages. **Eurostat** hosted the EDCs on waste and natural resources. The EEA in a reflection paper from 2017 found that, data provided by each Environmental Data Centre[78] are described and pro-vided using different approaches which do not easily enable comparability and common access[79]. This is further analysed under Coherence (section 7.2.3.2).

Effective management of thematic web-sites

During the evaluation period, the EEA operated a number of thematic web-sites and applications. Some of these (nine in total) were co-owned by the Commission. Here, the Commission was often complementing the invest-ments done by the EEA with additional funding. BISE, WISE, Climate-ADAPT are typical examples. A few of the thematic information systems were entirely owned by the EEA, the European Nature Information System EUNIS and the biodiversity clearing houses are typical examples.

Data from the EEA user survey conducted in 2017 shows that BISE, WISE and Climate-ADAPT are regarded as useful by those of the respondents who use them.

Table 4-23   EEA user survey, results on usefulness BISE, WISE and Climate-ADAPT

Platform	Share of users who rate usefulness as high or very high
WISE	87%
BISE	80%
Climate-ADAPT	95%

Source: EEA user survey [330], Q19. n=736

Interviews with Commission staff indicates a high degree of satisfaction with the cooperation with the EEA on BISE and Climate-ADAPT whereas the feed-back concerning WISE is more mixed. Interviews with staff at the EEA indi-cates that the management of the thematic platforms was professionalised during the evaluation period and at the end of the evaluation period was more systematic with clear identification of product owner and with steering com-mittees and common implementation plans established to ensure joint management with the Commission. The exception is to some extent the WISE platform, where a steering committee and implementation plan was estab-lished during the evaluation period, but discontinued in 2015 and uncertainty remained over the entity to be the product owner. Interviews with Commission staff shows that despite the implementation plans and steering com-mittee, there was a lack of common agreement about what WISE should contain, whereas information and inter-views with EEA staff indicate that adoption of a revised implementation plan and clarity in relation to product own-ership was hindering progress. The case study on freshwater shows that there were delivery problems in relation to WISE during the evaluation period (related to the above challenges as well as staff shortages at EEA), however, progress was also made in relation to map viewer functions despite the cooperation challenges encountered (see Appendix D for details).

Although the levels of satisfaction in relation to work on BISE and Climate-ADAPT are higher, the input received from the Commission also indicate some cooperation issues in relation to these two thematic sites although of a lesser degree than experienced for WISE. In general, the data from interviews with both EEA and Commission

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[76] https://ipchem.jrc.ec.europa.eu/RDSIdiscovery/ipchem/index.html

[77] http://data.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

[78] For an overview please see https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/european-data-centres/european-data-centres

[79] [312]

staff point to the challenges and requirements for coordination when sites and tools are co-managed and co-financed by the two sides.

Progress towards Inspire-compliance of spatial data infrastructure

Document review of the EEA's annual reports shows that the EEA undertook several key activities during the evaluation period to work towards the MAWP objective of being Inspire compliant in 2018. In 2015, the agency participated in the working group set up for the fitness check of the Inspire Directive and in 2016 supported the Inspire maintenance and implementation work programme and prepared a concept note with DG ENV on e-reporting and link to Inspire. In addition, an NFP Eionet working group was established for discussion of priorities on Inspire/reporting.

In 2016, a meeting between the Directors of DG ENV and EEA discussed INSPIRE implementation and agreed to develop jointly a strategic direction in relation to reporting under environmental policies. It was agreed to develop a strategic concept document on 'the future of eReporting and the link to INSPIRE'. A concept note was developed jointly by DG ENV and the EEA and sent for consultation with the Member State experts working with DG ENV and with the EEA. The concept note was also intended as a reference point in discussing work programmes and concrete activities[80].

The concept paper outlined the main challenges of implementing INSPIRE and eReporting building on existing studies as well as the experience of DG ENV and the EEA. It found that the use of INSPIRE services at the EEA is still limited although some progress has been made. It also found that implementation at Member State level is "patchy" and without Member States having transformed their datasets it is difficult to establish EU applications in the line with the INSPIRE Directive. The concept note set out long-term objectives, realising that INSPIRE implementation and fully functional e-reporting will be challenging to achieve. It concluded that:

"In conclusion, the further development of eReporting using the INSPIRE approach should lead to a significant efficiency and effectiveness gain over the coming years with the perspective to further develop and transform the current reporting business process over the coming 10 years or so. This will require investments at national and EU level but should not only result in efficiency gains which would outweigh the investments but also improve the possibilities of using the environmental data for more integrated assessments or forecasting models. This long-term objective should be pursued in such a way that everybody is a "winner" (or can harvest benefits) at the end."
[116, p. 8].

In the survey addressed to NFPs and NRCs, there were a set of questions related to INSPIRE:

- Has the EEA provided adequate support to assist NFPs and NRCs in working with harmonised spatial data?
- Did you have human and technical resources to work with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive's requirements?
- Do you believe that the EIONET network, including NFPs and NRCs, is prepared to work more frequently in coming years with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive's requirements?

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[80] Note on future of e-reporting [116].

Figure 4-4   Questions on the INSPIRE Directive (200 responses)
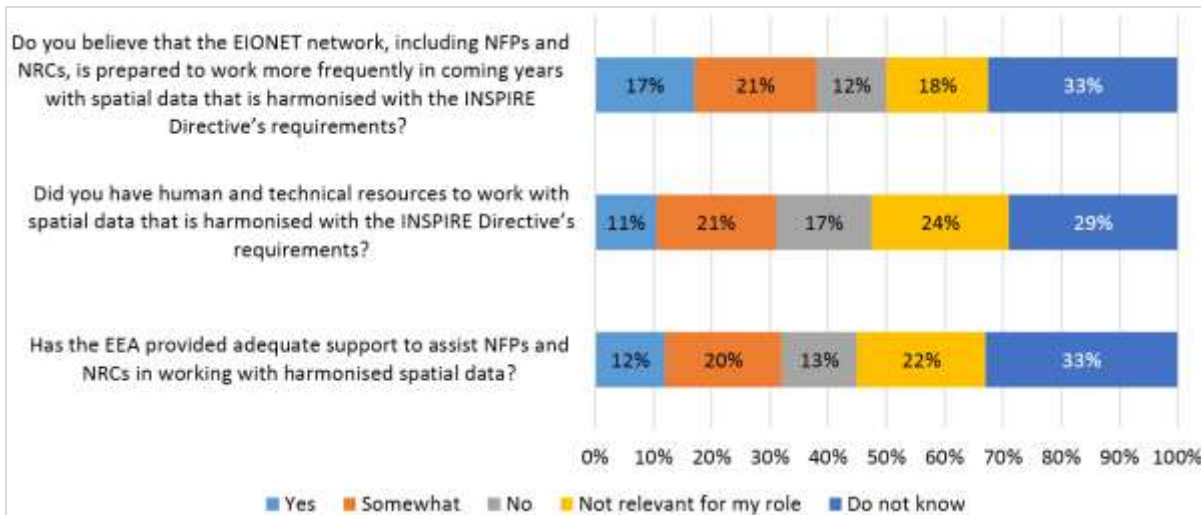
Source: Question: Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016. Valid Responses: 200

A large portion of the responses (around half) across all three questions are either 'do not know' (29-33%) or 'not relevant' (18-24%). Even though this may to some extent be explained by some NRCs working in areas where spatial data is less important (e.g. NRC Communication which had nine respondents), it is nevertheless striking that so many respondents have provided these answers, considering that spatial data in principle is relevant across the majority of environmental topics.

Although 20% of respondents think the EEA has provided some support to those working with harmonised spatial data, 12% think the support is adequate but 13% of respondents do not agree the support is sufficient. There is a similar split in responses regarding human and technical resources, with 21% claiming to have some resources, 11% saying they did have the resources they required but 17% responding 'no'.

Moving forward, 17% (34 responses) agree that the EIONET network is prepared for more frequent work with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive requirements. 21% somewhat believe that to be true, but 12% of respondents do not believe the EIONET network is prepared.

The survey among Commission officials asked whether the EEA was found to provide adequate support to NFPs and NRCs in working with harmonised spatial data. Respondents were asked whether during the evaluation period the EEA provided adequate support to assist National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Reference Centres (NRCs) in working with harmonised spatial data. Out of 32 respondents, 25% felt that level of support was either totally (9%, 3 responses) or somewhat (16%, 5 responses) adequate; only 3% (1 response) felt that it was not. The majority of respondents said either that they did not know (34%, 11 responses), or that it was not relevant for their role (38%, 12 respondents).

The data above illustrates that INSPIRE compliance is a major challenge and one that the EEA and Eionet cannot achieve alone. Progress was made during the evaluation period and the EEA actively participated in a dialogue with DG ENV on setting out a pathway towards implementation.

4.2.2.5   SOER (task h)

The table below shows the judgement criterion and indicators applied to assess effectiveness in implementing this task. The section is structured in accordance with the indicators.

Table 4-24   Judgement criterion and indicators, task (h)

Judgment criterion	Indicators

The EEA / Eionet is effectively is-suing a SOER every five years as well as indicator reports at suitable intervals (Task (h))	SOER published and providing an overview of state of, trends and prospects for the envi-ronment in Europe Indicator reports published (number/types) Stakeholders satisfied with the SOER and indicator reports

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

SOER 2015

In the evaluation period, one State of the Environment Report (SOER) was planned. It was published in March 2015. Given that the prior edition of the SOER was released in December 2010, it can be concluded that the re-lease of SOER 2015 in March 2015 met the requirement to release a report every five years.

The SOER 2015 was comprised of a number of products:

- SOER 2015 Synthesis Report;
- Assessment of Global Megatrends Report;
- Global Megatrends Briefings (11 in total);
- European Thematic Briefings (25 in total);
- Cross-country Comparison on Environmental Indicators Briefings (9 in total); and
- Countries and Regions Briefings (39 in total)

These products cover all elements required in the definition of Task (h)[81], namely: state of the environment (Syn-thesis report Part 1), trends (Synthesis report Part 2, Global Megatrends Briefings), and prospects for the environ-ment (Synthesis Report Part 3).

A case study on the State of the Environment Report (SOER) 2015 was conducted to support the evaluation, since it is a flagship project of the EEA, and due to its nature provides a horizontal perspective across thematic areas, bringing together all types of activities conducted by the EEA/Eionet. The case study report can be found in 10.4.

While there is no doubt that the report was delivered and covered the aspects listed in the Founding Regulation, another perspective to consider is whether it covered the elements relevant to policy work. Here, the above men-tioned working paper on coverage of EEA indicators seen against monitoring needs of the 7th EAP (section 4.2.2.3) and the fact that the EEA indicators were deemed relevant only to cover the first three out of nine priority objectives of the 7th EAP, provides an indication that the data basis for elaborating the SOER could not extent to the full range of the 7th EAP priority objectives.

This leads to an additional discussion on what constitutes the 'right' elements of a SOER and when a SOER is com-plete and serves its purpose. It is evident from the documents reviewed and interviews held (see case study for details) that the plan and contents of the SOER2015 were widely consulted upon in the Eionet as well as with the MB during the evaluation period. An analysis of MB meeting minutes indicates that the SOER was included as a recurring agenda item. The MB made a number of recommendations on the different parts of the SOER 2015 re-port and its communication strategy. No concerns were captured in the meeting minutes of any recommendations that had not been taken on board. As such, the support study finds that the EEA took the appropriate steps to en-sure the relevance of the SOER2015 in view of policy requirements. However, as can be seen from the section fur-ther below, there are varying opinions about the SOER and what it should contain.

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[81] *to publish a report on the state of, trends in and prospects for the environment every five years, supplemented by indicator reports focusing upon specific issues." (ref Founding Regulation, article 2, h))*

Indicator reports

Environmental indicator reports support the preparation of the SOERs, and are explicitly included in the MAWP. The associated performance indicator is as follows: "timely annual publications of indicator reports relevant to the transition to a green economy/society in Europe".

Table 4-25 lists these annual reports published between 2012 and 2016. There was no indicator report published in 2015, since that is the year of the SOER. On the indicator reports responding to the 7th EAP, reference is made to section 4.2.2.3 above.

Table 4-25   Indicator reports published during the evaluation period

Title	Year	Theme
Environmental indicator report 2012	2012	Ecosystem resilience and resource efficiency in a green economy in Europe
Environmental indicator report 2013	2013	Natural resources and human well-being in a green economy
Environmental indicator report 2014	2014	Environmental impacts of production-consumption systems in Europe
Environmental indicator report 2016 In support to the monitoring of the 7th Environment Action Programme	2016	7th EAP thematic priority objectives

Source: EEA website

Stakeholder perceptions

The indicator seeks to assess the extent to which stakeholders are satisfied with the SOER and indicator reports.

Within the OPC a range of questions were asked associated with the SOER 2015. Over 75% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the SOER 2015 was impartial, provided comparable information, accurate and easy to access (valid responses: 30). This is supported by evidence provided by user feedback collected by the EEA. In 2016 web survey on SOER 2015, over 85% of respondents found that the SOER 2015 was rated as being of high or very high quality.[82] The most recent EEA user survey also asked respondents to rate information quality in the SOER, where 95% rated it highly or very highly[83]. It should be noted that many of the respondents to the surveys have a working relationship with the EEA (35% in the EEA user survey[84]). In addition, the EEA User survey used a 4-point Likert scale (i.e. no neutral option was provided), while the others used a 5-point scale.

Interviews with representatives of the Commission and an MEP emphasise the value of the SOER, although some Commission representatives have expressed some concerns over the more forward-looking approach focusing on transitions rather than a more routine aggregation process across the MDIAK chain. There were some views from Commission staff that such an approach may overlap with other organisations work (e.g. DG RTD, JRC and EPSC (the European Political Strategy Centre) and may not be considered a primary function of the EEA.

Member country interviewees noted that SOER is a valuable source of knowledge that supports action (examples provided include country comparison, benchmark for measuring progress, and as inspiration in terms of communication and presentation approach). NGOs mentioned that the SOER is used and found useful, but no specific examples have been obtained.

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[82] [203]. The SOER 2015 online survey (2016) *Question 4: How would you rate the overall quality of SOER 2015?* Valid responses: 268
[83] [330]. Number of valid responses: 351
[84] [330]

The SOER case study shows that key positive factors contributing to the success of the publication where related to highly qualified staff at the EEA, inputs and involvement of Eionet bodies, and good consultation and working procedures with the Scientific Committee and with other contributors (e.g. the Joint Research Centre). The main challenges encountered in the production of the SOER2015 related to the horizontal approach and work processes required for the SOER seen against the vertical/topical organisation of the EEA programmes. The support study considers that in a matrix organisation, the trade-off between the topical (and often recurrent) tasks and the horizontal production of the SOER every five years is bound to create some tensions. Overall, the impression from interviews is that the EEA managed this process well, however, further centralisation to ensure production resources at the right time could potentially have benefited the process.

4.2.2.6   Assessments other than SOER (task e)

This task focuses on the work of the EEA and the Eionet in undertaking thematic assessments other than the SOER and the indicator reports, which are mentioned in task h (see above), i.e. the part of task (e) which is to *'draw up reports on the quality, sensitivity and pressures on the environment within the territory of the Community'[85]*. The assessment therefore considers whether the EEA has published such reports and done so in line with the areas of work listed in the Founding Regulation (article 3, 2), the plans set out in annual work programmes and stakeholders' needs.

Table 4-26   Judgement criterion and indicators, task (e) (assessments other than SOER)

Judgment criterion	Indicators
The EEA / Eionet is effectively producing assessments other than SOER (Task e)	Assessments are produced according to plans and cover the various topics (art. 3 of Founding Regulation)

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

As presented in section 4.2.1 above, the EEA operates with annual publication plans, which set out the planned publications for the year. These include primarily publications which can be regarded as 'assessments' but also other types of publications, notably those termed 'briefings' in the publications plans. The data presented in 4.2.1 shows that the majority of planned publications were implemented during the evaluation period, however, there were also delays (including some significant ones with publications being several years delayed) and cancellations. The 2016 publication plan distinguishes between publications categorised as 'assessments', 'briefings', Eionet report (ETC)', 'joint reports' and 'corporate products'. In previous years, a different categorisation was used.

Table 4-27   Number of assessments planned, published, postponed and cancelled according to the 2016 publication plan, status end-2016

No planned	No. published	No. published that were carried over from 2015	No published that were carried over from 2014	No postponed to 2017	No cancelled
56	45	11	1	9	2

Source: EEA document on status of 2016 publication plan [302]

Looking across the publication plans for the years 2014-2016, it is evident that publications have been published by the EEA covering the areas of work listed in the Founding Regulation Article 3 with the exception of 'chemical substances which are hazardous to the environment'. It can be observed that assessments published covered several additional topics in line with the MAWP, notably climate and energy, industrial pollution, transport and environment, and resource efficiency. In addition to the formal publications, the EEA also published a range of country fact sheets in various areas (e.g. noise, waste, air pollution), which were used in the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR).

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[85] [105] Founding Regulation, Article 2(e)

The EEA user survey (conducted in 2017 by the EEA) found that the most commonly used product type is the EEA reports and assessments (87% of respondents have used these). The product type was found to be highly used by all groups, particularly by national policymakers (205/252) and scientists (183/195). In terms of percentage also environmental NGOs (95%) and EU policymakers were found to be important users (92%). The survey asked respondents to rate the quality of four selected reports. 94% of respondents expressed a positive evaluation (assessed quality to be high or very high)[86].

The Open Public Consultation asked to which extent the EEA is performing various functions in a competent manner. One of the functions was 'undertaking thematic assessments of the state of the environment in selected sectors and themes'. Out of 30 respondents, 23 (77%) considered that the EEA performed this function in a competent manner (see Question 3.1, section 3.3., 10.16).

The Open Public Consultation also asked about the extent to which various EEA products met the needs of the respondents. The category of 'assessment' was not used, but a number of product types, which could contain assessment or elements of it, including signals, country fact sheets, technical reports and EEA reports (other than SOER). The results are shown in the figure below.

Figure 4-5   *OPC, Responses to the question on extent to which respondents agree that information provided meets their needs, Q2.5*
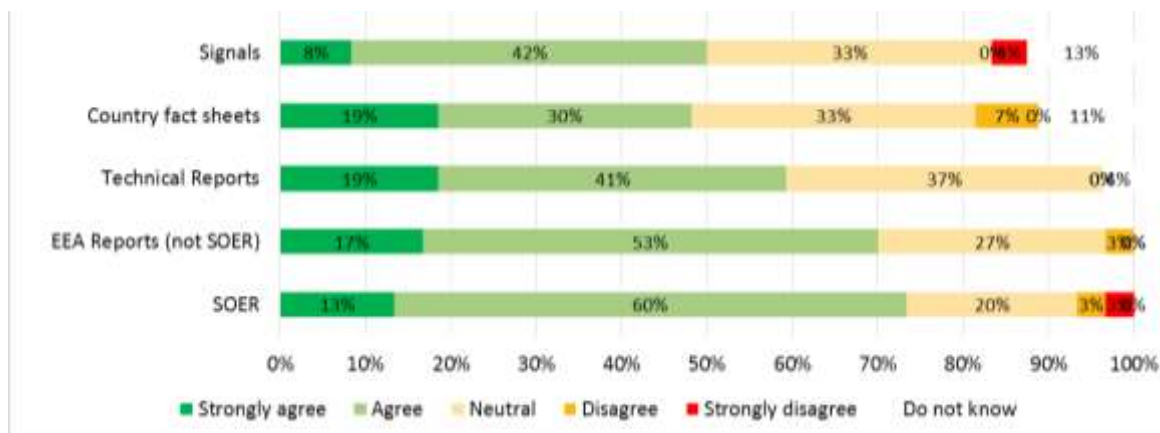
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The Information provided meets my needs. (See 10.16)
Valid Responses: EEA reports (other than SOER), 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals.

The Open Public Consultation also provided respondents with the opportunity to comment on the usefulness of the information provided by the EEA. A few comments provided concerned EEA reports:

- There are a lot of reports that are produced which is great but there is less information about how they join up and are interrelated.

- Some reports can be too long too detailed and difficult to read. The change to briefings is a step in the right direction. Signals is much more readable than other reports.

Data from interviews with environmental and climate NGOs as well as organisations representing business interests complement the data collected through the Open Public Consultation. All the organisations consulted through interviews found that the EEA reports were relevant and useful. Some interviewees found that more attention to explaining the sources of information and data and assumptions behind the assessments would be useful, however, there was not a consistency in examples provided to support this point. One interview called for better information on the policy context of the various reports – e.g. the relevant Directives that the content refers to. One interviewee suggested to include more information on main authors and who to contact for additional information.

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[86] [330]

Feed-back from Commission stakeholders on EEA's reports and assessments is presented under Q2, which addresses the contribution to environment and climate policy development and implementation as well as mainstreaming into other policy areas (see section 4.3).

4.2.2.7   Forecasting (task i)

The table below shows the judgement criterion and indicators applied to assess effectiveness in implementing this task. The section is structured in accordance with the indicators. While this task as presented in the Founding Regulation does not mention 'megatrends', the MAWP and AWPs/CAARs as well as interviews and reviews of other documents show that the EEA and Eionet have done work in this area, this is reflected in the indicators. As also commented under relevance (Q7), the wording of the task in the Founding Regulation is somewhat vague and it is therefore not simple to determine what the success criteria for the implementation of this task would be. It relates also to the notion of the EEA as an institution in the science-policy interface translating results of research into policy relevant information. However, if read literally, the task does not fully comprise this function. Nevertheless, an interesting element to explore in relation to the effectiveness of this task would be whether the EEA had taken on board relevant research results in its work on foresight and megatrends. This would require a comprehensive mapping of the large field of scientific research in this area during the evaluation period and assessment of its relevance to the EEA and then consideration whether it was reflected in specific activities and outputs produced. This would require a scientific approach and was considered beyond the scope of the support study. The indicators therefore reflect delivery of planned activities and outputs as seen in the table below.

Table 4-28   Judgement criterion and indicators, task (i)

Judgment criterion	Indicators
The EEA / Eionet is effectively stimulating the development of environmental forecasting techniques (Task (i))	Timely delivery of activities and outputs in relation to long-term economic, social and environmental megatrends Stimulation of foresight oriented discussions about transitions to a more sustainable society

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

Delivery of relevant outputs

This indicator is largely assessed through desk review, namely identification of relevant activities and their outputs through review of annual reports and work programmes. As noted above, Strategic Action 2.3 is closely related to this Task (i). According to the assessment of this Strategic Area, it has good alignment between MAWP and AWPs (see section 4.2.1), and according to reporting in CAARs, the outputs have been completed, including:

- SOER contributions on megatrends and transitions,
- FLIServices - Forward looking information Platform - Eionet shared information platform on the web,
- Web tools for content sharing (related to FLIS platform): Horizon scanning; Methods and Methodologies
- Eionet workshops on forward looking information tools, content and services.

Particular highlights include the Eionet Report *Sustainability transitions: Now for the long term*, published in 2016, which explains concepts under system transitions thinking and presents case studies to exemplify such transitions.

The publication plans[87], indicate some delays in planned outputs, notably:

- *Environment and security in the OSCE region*, a joint report (with OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), was added to the publication plan in 2015, carried over to 2016 and then to 2017.

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[87] [299-302]

- The publishing of *Impacts of Global Megatrends at national and European level*, an Eionet report, was postponed from 2016 to 2017.

There is an NRC dedicated to the topic, NRC FLIS. It has met regularly over the evaluation period, including physical meetings and webinars, although fewer meetings were held in 2016[88] in comparison with other years. Compared to most other NRCs, it has fewer EIONET members assigned as members of the NRC, some member countries noting that it is difficult to find suitable individuals to take on the task, given its cross-cutting (horizontal) nature. [89]

Open Public consultation also asked how well the EEA and Eionet are performing key functions, specifically "Providing analyses of long-term economic, social and environmental megatrends". 67% percent of respondents (20 out of 30) have selected "to a very large extent" or "to a large extent".

According to information from the EEA, following the SOER 2015, the EEA has sought to engage with the diverse research communities in the area, to develop knowledge and collaboration partner network in the field.[90] To this end, the EEA has presented and engaged at conferences of (e.g. the Sustainability Transitions Research Network, Future Earth), and hosted workshops with relevant FP7 projects.

In May 2016, the EEA hosted a seminar with the Scientific Committee which aimed to engage participants in a discussion to explore the needs for knowledge on transitions, EEA's role in creating and communicating such knowledge, etc.[91]

Stimulation of relevant discussions

To assess the extent to which relevant discussions have been stimulated in the evaluation period, interviews with the Commission and member countries, as well as NFP/NRC survey have been used.

NFP/NRC survey asked respondents how often they have participated in foresight oriented discussions facilitated by the EEA or EIONET about transitions to a more sustainable society during the evaluation period. This question was asked to all NRCs and NFPs, and responses indicate the level to which the topic is present outside of the FLIS NRC, stimulating discussions across topics and themes. Out of the 158 NRC member responses concerning foresight oriented discussions outlined in Table 4-29, 53% (83 responses) report having never participated in one of these discussions in any form throughout the 2012-16 evaluation period. 39% of NRC members (61 responses) have participated on a few occasions, and only 9% (14 responses) have often taken part in the discussions.

Out of the NFP members, 50% (21 responses) have taken part in discussions on a few occasions, while almost a quarter each have taken part often (24%, 10 responses) or never (26%, 11 responses). All the NRC FLIS members have answered either "Often" or "on a few occasions" (5 and 4 respondents respectively).

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[88] [281]

[89] [298], [291]

[90] [364]

[91] [410]

Table 4-29: Frequency of Participation in Foresight Oriented Discussions (200 responses)

Frequency of participation in foresight oriented discussions	NRC		NFP	
	Total	**%**	**Total**	**%**
Often	14	9%	10	24%
On a few occasions	61	39%	21	50%
Never	83	53%	11	26%
Number of respondents	158		42	

Source: NFP/NRC survey question: How often have you participated in foresight oriented discussions facilitated by the EEA or EIONET about transitions to a more sustainable society during the evaluation period (2012-16)? Valid Responses: 200

The NFP survey conducted by the EEA in connection with the Management Board seminar in 2016[92] provides considerations on each NRC, including FLIS. According to this survey, the following observations were made on this NRC:

1) The NRC is noted as active

2) The tools and products derived from this group are seen as beneficial (e.g. the development of a method of assessing the impacts of megatrends at the national level found of great added value)

3) Discussion on the topic is seen as useful for policy making (e.g. "exchange about trends/megatrends or emerging issues will enable better policy making to address future challenges", "Having European partners to give credit or to refer to increases the possible impact of policy recommendations", "acquired knowledge is used during the development of new environmental strategies", "better understanding about how environmental foresight is incorporated into the political agenda of different participating States")

4) Cooperation and learning seen as another item of added value (examples given: prospective analysis techniques, fostering collaboration with researchers, sharing problems, solutions and success cases).

In addition, some areas for improvement were noted:

1) The profile is not clear and seen by some as a closed circle

2) It is difficult to find suitable representatives for this NRC due to cross-cutting nature of the work

3) Mainstreaming efforts, such as more active presence of the European institutions in the FLIS meetings which would ensure that they are aware of the work and foresight approaches used

During interviews and interactions with the ISSG, the Commission has expressed concerns over whether the EEA is the best placed actor to perform this task, the argument being that many other actors are also engaged in the field of modelling and forecasting scenarios. This point is further reflected under relevance (Q7) and coherence (Q9). Further, concerns were also expressed as to whether the EEA was taking on board the relevant scientific research in the area. As noted above in the introduction to this section, the support study has not assessed this as it would require a scientific study, however, it is noted that the EEA in 2011 (i.e. before the evaluation period) in connection with the start-up of FLIS prepared a catalogue of scenario studies. No evidence has been found that the EEA has comprehensively followed up on such systematic mapping of relevant research to reflect into its work during the evaluation period. The FLIS platform launched in 2015[93] contains a structure that would enable various actors to contribute, but the actual content available on the platform seems limited and not updated. So, while a

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[92] [291]
[93] http://pfli.eionet.europa.eu/

number of activities have been undertaken as evidenced above, these seem to be somewhat more explorative and not based on a systematic approach to the research field in the area.

4.2.2.8 Dissemination (task m)

The table below shows the judgement criterion and indicators applied to assess effectiveness in implementing this task. The section is structured in accordance with the indicators.

Table 4-30   Judgement criterion and indicators, task (m)

Judgment criterion	Indicators
The EEA is effectively ensuring the broad dissemination of environ-mental information (Task (m))	Communication strategy is coherent, relevant and coordinated with the Commission (Common Approach point 26) The EEA effectively engages in a wide range of dissemination activities, using targeted channels The EEA actively monitors stakeholder engagement

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

Note that this criterion under evaluation question 1 assesses the activities undertaken by the EEA, including their use of various forms of media. The awareness and uptake of the various products is discussed under Q2, in Section 4.3.1, and items related to the general public are also assessed under Relevance, in Section 6.4.1.

Communication strategy

The strategic document outlining the EEA communication strategy relevant for the evaluation period is the Communication Framework 2014-2018.[94] This document outlines that the aims of the Framework are to contribute to positioning the EEA as:

- "the prime source of knowledge at European level informing the implementation of European and national environment and climate policies;

- a leading knowledge centre supporting long-term transition challenges and objectives;

- the lead organisation at European level facilitating knowledge-sharing and capacity building in the field of environment and climate change."[95]

The Communication Framework supplements the MAWP, including objectives, priorities and a section performance measuring referring to the performance indicators of the MAWP and stating that these will be reviewed before 2018.

The Common Approach item 26 recommends the engagement in coherent, relevant communication activities coordinated with the strategies of the Commission and other institutions. However, such activities should not put a burden on the agencies core tasks[96]. Since dissemination is one of the EEA tasks, defined in the Founding Regulation, communication activities are a core task, as long as it enhances and complements the rest of its activities. The Communication Framework is a concise document that outlines broad high-level strategy. It includes the following elements:

- Objectives
- Main narratives that are expected to be communicated
- Description of main audiences and stakeholders

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[94] [141]

[95] [141], Introduction

[96] [117]

- Priority work areas

The latter element addresses the second part of the Task as defined in the Founding Regulation, namely "to this end, to promote the use of new telematics technology for this purpose". These areas are:

- Prioritising digital products and going mobile,
- Using modern communication channels[97]

The Management Board survey asked the respondents to what extent they agree that the EEA Communication Framework is relevant and coherent. 80% of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is, as shown in the figure below. These include all three respondents who indicated that they represent EU institutions on the Management Board.

Figure 4-6   Relevance and coherence of the EEA Communication Framework
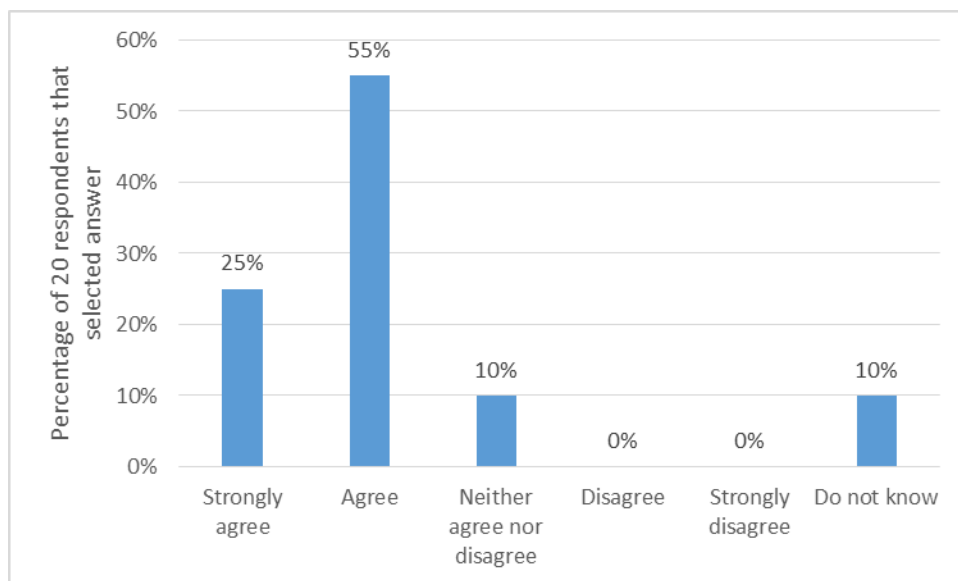
Source: MB Survey, question 7a) Do you agree that the EEA Communication Framework is relevant and coherent? Valid Responses: 20

Some national stakeholders mentioned the communication strategy in interviews, noting that they consider that the EEA has a very good communication strategy that engages the public, being based on political, technical, and communication considerations. Note, that this is mentioned sporadically and is not a topic that was consistently discussed in the interviews.

At the EEA, the Communications programme is responsible for leading the activities under MAWP SA3.4. In addition, Eionet has a specific NRC for Communication, which is tasked with supporting communication of environmental information, in particular:

- Providing inputs from the national perspective into the Eionet,
- Supporting national policy processes,
- Raising awareness
- Supporting the development of EEA strategies, and communication on pan-European information products in terms of national events, feedback on reception, providing a national perspective to products, etc.
- Identifying challenges in communicating environmental issues.

The EEA Communications programme is an integral team member in the process of production, launch and dissemination of EEA products, in particular reports and other publications. To achieve its goals, it works together

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[97] [141], pg. 5

with the IT department, Administration, and thematic programmes. It supports the organisation in terms of deciding and managing the EEA product portfolio. A major initiative in the evaluation period was undertaken over 2015-16, where product type review was undertaken in order to streamline, modernise it and align with the programming documents.[98]

Effective dissemination activities

As described, the activities undertaken under the umbrella of the EEA communications Strategic Area include: dissemination of EEA products, such as reports and assessments, managing web content, media and social media relations, producing specific targeted communication products, and engaging the general public. The section focuses on EEA activities in the evaluation period, with the focus on the extent to which the various channels are covered effectively. This includes: Media and social media outreach, website, dissemination of EEA products and other items that do not fit in the categories above.

The stakeholder questionnaire[99] in the Open Public Consultation asked whether the EEA has performed its key functions in a competent manner, including dissemination of environmental information to the general public. A slight majority (53%) of the respondents in the OPC thought it had to a large of a very large extent, and a further 33% thought it was to a moderate extent. The responses are presented in the table below.

Table 4-31   OPC results on the extent to which the EEA has performed dissemination related functions in a competent manner

Function: *Ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public*	**Number**	**%**
To a very large extent	10	33%
To a large extent	6	20%
To a moderate extent	10	33%
To a limited extent	3	10%
To no extent	1	3%
Do not know	0	0%

Source: Open Public Consultation, Q 3.1 Has The EEA/Eionet performed its various functions in a competent manner? Ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public. See 10.16, number of responses: 30

Media outreach

In terms of media engagement, the main tasks include preparing press communications on specific reports or topics, as well as responding to media inquiries, including from national media outlets. The number of these activities throughout the evaluation period has increased, with a much higher number press communications produced in 2016 than in 2013. The number of responses to media inquiries peaked in 2015 (possibly in relation to SOER), and was lower in 2016, as shown in Table 4-32.

Table 4-32   Number of media-related activities in the evaluation period

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of press communications	13	7	30	43

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[98] [193], [7]

[99] i.e. the part of the questionnaire aimed at individuals who had specific knowledge and interest about EEA and EIONET activities and products

Responses to media inquiries	-	500	550	278

Source: Annual Reports: [187], [40], [7], [186].

In addition, interviews have been conducted with radio, TV, or other media, on an ad hoc basis, related to specific high-interest topics, such as air quality.[100]

Social media
According to information from the EEA staff, the Agency started to engage via social media in 2011. The approach has aimed to attract a genuinely interested audience rather than quickly build up a high number of followers. Hence the EEA does not conduct social media marketing campaigns or purchase clicks. The number of posts and tweets for years 2013-16 is shown in the table below. The Facebook posts and tweets in 2015 include a large number associated with the launch of the SOER.

Table 4-33   Number of social-media related activities in the evaluation period

	2013	2014	2015	2016
EEA Facebook posts	283	300	350	*
EEA Tweets	1000	740	1100	442

Source: Annual Reports: [187], [40], [7], [186]. *-not reported in the Annual Report

Overall, social media is recognized by the EEA as an important tool of communication, and is actively used, in line with the aim to maintain a modern approach to the task.

Website
A website improvement project was initiated in 2016, including a thematic restructuring of the EEA homepage, work on design, tagging, and content update. The website in particular has received some critique, in terms of user friendliness, accessibility, and appearance. Therefore the case studies aimed to assess these aspects for the particular parts of the website. Table 4-34 shows a summary of the assessment, showing that overall there is room for improvement in terms of these characteristics.

Table 4-34   Case study authors' assessment of selected parts of the EEA website

Case study	Accessibility	User friendliness	Visual appearance
Copernicus	Moderate	High	High
Nature	Low-Moderate	Moderate-high	Moderate-high
SOER	Moderate	High	Moderate
Waste	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Freshwater	Moderate	Low	Moderate

Source: case studies, 10.4

The F-gas case study noted that on terms of the usability, there is room for making the BDR reporting system more user friendly from an IT perspective, according to an interview with a Member State and there is ongoing work on such improvements. The room for improvement is somewhat limited though by the technical nature of f-gases as a topic.

See 6.4.1 for further examples related to the general public, and 10.4 for details in the case studies.

Dissemination of EEA products

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[100] [186]

All of the activities mentioned above are used in the dissemination of EEA products, such as reports and assessments. An example of this is the major outreach campaign that was associated with the launch of the SOER. According to the 2015 Annual Report[101], this included 78 events, which together reached more than 3,000 participants. In terms of media, both regular media and social media was targeted. In addition, the EEA ran Google AdWords campaign during the launch month. The report was distributed both electronically and in print. The electronic notification was sent to over 80 thousand contacts from media, national institutions and NGOs. Nearly 39 thousand hard copies were disseminated.

The SOER synthesis report was translated into 31 languages, and included substantial efforts to reach national stakeholders. Among the outreach events, 44 were Eionet country events in 30 countries. This effort has been noted and appreciated by national stakeholders, as indicated, for example, by the participants in the NFP workshop[102], as well as the Stakeholder workshop[103]. The NFP workshop participants found that the SOER "communication package", including short briefings in national languages, available for countries was excellent. This kind of communication would be appreciated for other key reports as well. It is important that the methodological background of certain reports as well as an executive summary are translated into national languages in easily accessible language for journalists.

According to interviews, this type of recommendation has been noted by the EEA, in terms of the value added of country-specific activities.

Others
In addition, the EEA engages the public through events, exhibitions, answering public enquiries and so on. Table 4-35 shows the number of such activities as reported in the annual reports. It can be seen to have remained relatively stable through the evaluation period.

Table 4-35   Number of other communication activities in the evaluation period

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Exhibitions	8	7	8	7
Public enquiries	881	670	876	812
Visiting groups	33	34	32	40
Newsletters	2*	4	4	4

Source: Annual Reports: [187], [40], [7], [186]. *Note: The EEA newsletter was proposed and launched in 2013 and hence there were only two issues that year.

Another targeted product that aims to communicate to the wider audience is the annual *Signals* reports. These are relatively short publications "providing a snapshot of issues of interest to the environmental debate and the wider public"[104].

In general, orientation towards citizens is a challenge, according to both the EEA and other stakeholders. According to the EEA, efforts in this direction have been reduced due to resource constraints, and that is a concern in the context of EU discussion on citizen relations. A view from the stakeholder side is illustrated in Text Box 4-1, which contains an extract from the T&E response to the OPC, which states that overall reach to EU citizens could be improved.

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[101] [7]
[102] 10.20
[103] 10.18
[104] [411]

Text Box 4-1   Extract on EEA communications from "Response by Transport & Environment (T&E)"

> The EEA is the most authoritative source of environmental data in Europe. In the past few years, the EEA has strengthened its communications outreach consider ably but more impact and reach to EU citizens is desirable. A glance to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) websites and social media channels show that the EEA communications platforms lag behind in terms of reach and impact. We understand that devoting more resources to communicate better the environmental problems and improvements achieved by EU policies will show EU citizens the value of the Union and therefore strengthen the European project.

Source: OPC, qualitative response attached by T&E. 10.16

Stakeholder monitoring

The indicator on stakeholder monitoring is used to assess the extent to which EEA tracks the users, to allow informed decisions in terms of the communication strategy. This section presents the main stakeholder monitoring activities conducted by the EEA in the evaluation period, and in some cases this is hard to separate from the main findings of these activities; in such cases these are also included.

The stakeholder engagement is monitored actively by the EEA. This includes: tracking specific communication activities, web statistics, surveys, subscription tracking, outreach review, and mention of the EEA in policy documents. Many of these tracking activities have been introduced during the evaluation period, and some results are available in public documents, such as annual reports. Note, some of these activities aim to assess the number, while others the satisfaction of users.

Tracking and reporting on communication activities
The EEA Annual Reports have improved in consistency of reporting on the specific communication activities since 2013, in particular adding numbers of social media users to their reporting in 2013. Since then, the Reports have also improved the presentation and visibility of these activities and audiences reached, including showing, for example, developments over time since tracking first started. As can be seen in Table 4-36, the Annual Reports present the numbers of media articles that mention the EEA, Facebook views, Twitter followers, and subscribers consistently[105]. Other related information is presented in a less consistent format.

Table 4-36   Stakeholder engagement monitoring

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of articles in the press mentioning the EEA	8,300	7,400	8,000	9,937
Facebook content views	3 million	3 million	2.2 million	1 million
Twitter followers	18,000	28,000	40,000	46,000
Subscribers	>1,000	>3,000	>5,000	>6,000
Annual number of map views*	35 million		58 million	

Source: Annual Reports: [187], [40], [7], [186] and *presentation [30]. Note: some values inferred from charts

Outreach reviews and user statistics
In 2015 and 2016, the EEA assessed the external performance (reach) of EEA publications, in order to draw out key messages, identify success factors, and lessons learned[106]. This outreach review combines several outreach indicators by specific publication: web downloads, tweet views, media citations and users that opened the email notification. It is noted that this assessment is done in full awareness that some reports and assessments have

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[105] Note this is in addition to reporting on the activities undertaken in the area, which were presented in the previous section.
[106] [205], [206]

narrower audience than others, and that external factors beyond the EEA control affect their "popularity". As such, it is not intended to provide any value judgement on the products.

The EEA CRM system can also be used to extract information on outreach for each product. Such an extract was systematically done in 2015 and accompanied the 2015 Outreach review[107]. This includes tracking information of what the users receiving the notification on the report did: opened report, clicked linked, did nothing, shared on social media. Some key information from these reviews and statistics is presented in Section 4.3.1.1.

Mentions in policy documents
A new focused measurement started in 2016, collecting data on mentions of EEA in policy documents. This analysis is about measuring the impact of the EEA's work, in terms of factual information regarding the uptake of EEA outputs[108]. This tracking is undertaken through a contract with an external contractor, and checks for: references to particular reports or data services, reference to EEA's role as host of data services/compilation of data, and reference to EEA's role in terms of monitoring policy implementation. Outputs from this exercise are presented under Evaluation Question 2.

Others
In addition to the above, the EEA undertakes web-surveys for specific publications. These surveys aim to assess not the number of users reached, but their satisfaction with the products. Such surveys are not done systematically for all products. Examples provided to the team included web surveys for Signals in 2014-15 and SOER[109]. It is noted by the EEA that more surveys would not necessarily add value, since users may become overwhelmed with questionnaires. Some national efforts to monitor communication outreach have been identified: The UK has done a review in 2016, comparing users on the European level to those in the UK.[110]

4.2.2.9 Diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research

The table below shows the judgement criterion and indicators applied to assess effectiveness in implementing this task. The section is structured in accordance with the indicators.

Table 4-37 Judgement criterion and indicators, task (o)

Judgment criterion	Indicators
The EEA is effectively assisting the Commission in the diffusion of the results of environmental research (task o)	The EEA has cooperated with DG RTD with the aim to exploit the insights that result from Horizon2020

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

Under this task, the EEA would be expected to reflect on results of research projects financed under EU research programmes, notably Horizon2020 and translate and disseminate the results in a way, which is relevant to environmental policy making. This task features clearly in the MAWP. The MAWP section on role, mission and goals emphasizes that *"the EEA will work closely with DG Research, the Joint Research Centre, and others in seeking to influence activities under the EU Framework Research Programmes (Horizon 2020 and earlier). The Agency also aims to exploit the insights that result from these programmes."* (p. 11). One of the four objectives of SA1 is: *"mainstream new data and information needs through incorporating the outcomes of EU-FP7 and Horizon 2020 research projects, as well as of similar ventures at national and international level;"* (p. 19). However, the AWPs 2014, 2015, 2016 do not contain specifics on planned activities or outputs in this regard. Desk research shows

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[107] [199]
[108] [412]
[109] [197], [198], [203]
[110] [164]

that one activity that can fall under this task is the provision of links to relevant Research projects by Horizon 2020 through EEA's thematic portals such as WISE, Climate-Adapt or BISE.

In the Open Public Consultation there was a question on the degree to which the EEA was seen as performing various functions in a competent manner. One of these functions was 'Supporting European-level knowledge creation and exchange among institutions and organisations dealing with environmental information and knowledge'. Out of 30 respondents, 18 (60%) considered that the EEA performed competently to a large or very large extent (ref. Open Public Consultation in 10.16, section 3.3., question 3.1).

Interviews with DG RTD as well as EEA staff show that there has been limited, although increasing, activity in this area during the evaluation period. Notably the increased cooperation through the Environment Knowledge Community (EKC, a cooperation mechanism between DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG RTD, the JRC, and the EEA, see further description of this mechanism under Coherence, 7.2.2) is highlighted by RTD as a factor positively influencing activities in this area through creating closer contact between the institutions and a basis for better communication, even beyond the EKC activities. Positive developments highlighted by the RTD interview include:

- The activities in the project on Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services Accounting.

- The ESMERALDA project financed by RTD responds to the requests of the MAES (Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services, which involved ENV, EEA, JRC and Member States).

- Cooperation on GEO/GEOSS[111] and citizen science

Based on the interview with DG RTD, the support study has identified the following factors explain the limited activity in this area:

- Not all projects financed by DG RTD have a policy orientation and have thus been relevant for the purpose of the task. However, there have been cases where DG ENV or DG CLIMA have asked RTD to finance projects on specific domains, to respond to knowledge gaps.

- The research projects financed by RTD follow longer cycles than projects responding to immediate knowledge needs for policy making. Results do not appear until 3-4 years after a relevant topic for research has been identified.

- There were no formal channels to transmit knowledge from RTD to the EEA and transmission of results from RTD to the EEA were weak during the evaluation period. RTD was invited but did not participate in meetings of the EEA Scientific Committee.

The first two points are confirmed by the interim evaluation of the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Programme, Societal Action number 5, Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials. The report indicates that results of R&I projects in the field of environment are 'not always directly exploited in policy'. Reasons behind that include the different timing between research projects and policy needs, but also the lack of solid FP7/Horizon 2020 monitoring system[112]. Consequently, lack of dissemination of research results has been a gap that goes beyond the EEA. Interviews and interactions with the ISSG point to improvements during the evaluation period building on areas of existing collaboration between DG RTD and the EEA, such as GEO/GEOSS and Citizen Science as well as mutual recognition of the need to reinforce this.

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[111] Group on Earth Observation and Global Earth Observation System of Systems

[112] [400], p. 10

4.2.3   Key findings and conclusions on Q1

Under this question, two key judgement criteria were assessed relating to 1) achievement of activities and outputs as planned in work programmes, and 2) implementation of the 15 tasks of the Founding Regulation. The key find-ing presented in this section are organised according to the judgement criteria and for each criterion presents the main findings and the key supporting evidence and strength of this evidence.

4.2.3.1   EEA planned activities and outputs achieved

This judgement criterion related to the achievement of outputs and activities as set out in multiannual and annual work programmes (MAWP and AWPs).

The main finding is that the EEA and Eionet were effective in implementing the planned activities and outputs dur-ing the evaluation period.

The evidence is review of annual activity reports (CAARs), which document that the planned activities in the AWPs were generally implemented during the period. Furthermore, publication plans and end-of-year status reports on these plans also show that planned outputs were to a large extent produced according to plan although there were cases of some delay or cancellations. The review showed that the strategic area of 'urban, land use and soil' expe-rienced challenges due to staff shortages and lack of available data.

The document review showed that the AWPs were set out in the framework of the MAWP and the fact that AWPs were implemented is a strong indicator that there was a good path towards implementation of the MAWP during the evaluation period. Overall, the review of CAARs illustrate that in most of the strategic areas (SAs) of the MAWP, the rate of implementation of the mentioned outputs was above 50% during the evaluation period, which is considered satisfactory considering that the MAWP covers the period 2014-2020.

The evidence is considered strong as it is based on official documents consulted and approved by the EEA Manage-ment Board ((M)AWPs and CAARs).

However, the review shows that there was not a full alignment between the MAWP and AWPs – not all outputs of the MAWP are addressed in the AWPs (and vice versa) and not all recurrent activities/outputs that the Agency and Eionet were engaged in were included in the MAWP and AWPs. This complicated the review and pointed to room for improvement in respect to the set-up of (M)AWPs and CAARs. Data from interviews and feed-back from the EEA emphasised that AWPs focused mostly on new topics and developments rather than the routine activities, which are repeated every year. For this reason, not all MAWP outputs have been consistently mentioned in the AWPs (and hence CAARs). However, this does not mean that they were not implemented. Hence, the support study considers that the documents are still very valid to use as indicator of level of performance and the evidence on degree of implementation of activities and outputs is considered to be robust.

4.2.3.2   Tasks of the Founding Regulation implemented in an effective way

The support study did a mapping of the activities, outputs and objectives as set out in the MAWP and AWPs against the 15 tasks as set out in the Founding Regulation[113]. This led to a finding that some tasks were associ-ated with limited activity during the evaluation period. These tasks include:

- d) on advise to individual Member States on the development and expansion of their systems for monitoring of environmental measures
- j) on methods for assessing cost of environmental damage
- k) on exchange of information on best available technologies

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[113] As explained in chapter 3.3, this led to the conclusion that two tasks were in fact not actual tasks and therefore should not be analysed as such: Task (b) which is a reflection of the objective of the Agency (ref Article 1 of the Founding Regulation) and Task (l) which requires the Agency to cooperate with other bodies (which is not a task in itself, but a means to achieving other tasks).

- n) on support to the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies

This reflected priorities made, i.e. not many activities were planned in the work programmes that could be referred to these tasks. Following the logic of the Founding Regulation, the tasks are set out in an open way forming a relatively broad mandate for the Agency (enabling prioritisation by the Agency and its Management Board according to prevailing needs). So a low level of activity in some tasks would not automatically lead to a finding of low performance, it can also reflect a situation of more limited needs in that particular area. Reference is made to EQ3, which analyses the effectiveness of the Agency in dealing with evolving policies and meeting the needs of the stakeholders.

The analysis of activities as presented in the MAWPs and AWPs seen against the tasks in the Founding Regulation further led to the observation that in order to provide an assessment of effectiveness in implementation of the tasks, it was reasonable to divide task (e) into several discrete elements reflecting the large weight on this task in the work of the Agency. On this basis, the tasks analysed further under this question were:

- Coordination of the Eionet (task a)
- Support to reporting requirements (task c)
- Collect, record and manage dataflows for SOE data (tasks e and f)
- Manage data and information systems (task e)
- State of the environment report (task h)
- Assessments other than state of the environment report (task e)
- Forecasting (task i)
- Dissemination (task m)
- Diffusion of the results of relevant environmental research (task o)

For each of these tasks, the support study established indicators to assess whether the task had been implemented in an effective way. This was a challenge considering that the Founding Regulation is not very specific with regard to the level of performance expected, but is rather a broad mandate through which the activities and outputs can be programmed by the Agency and its Management Board. The indicators thus drew on the objectives and key performance indicators set out in the programming documents as well as focused on level of satisfaction of key stakeholders.

In regard to the task of **management and coordination of the Eionet (task a)**, the indicators addressed related to existence of main network actors (NFPs and NRCs), meetings held and attendance as well as network entities' assessments of usefulness of meetings and programming of activities. The overall finding is that the network is well-established, but there is scope for improvement in the planning of activities to take place and thus increasing further the national engagement in the activities of the Eionet and the EEA.

The evidence is records of network entities (NFPs and NRCs) and meetings provided by the EEA, which shows that regular meetings were held with high levels of attendance. Although the data on meetings is not completely accurate (which points to scope for improvement in keeping records at EEA) it is still considered robust. Data from surveys of NFPs and NRCs showed that meetings were also considered useful by participants. However, scope for improvement in the coordination of Eionet was also identified. Firstly, the evidence pointed to uncertainties about the roles of the NFPs and NRCs, despite the fact that quite detailed role descriptions were elaborated. This may be seen in conjunction with the complexity of the network, with 24 NRC groups following the revised structure adopted during the evaluation period. Data from the document review, NFP workshop and interviews indicated challenges in relation to 'silo-organisation' within the groups and handling cross-cutting issues. Another issue identified related to the planning and programming of activities to be undertaken at the national level. Here, it was found that the lack of use of the Eionet planner had reduced the transparency and effectiveness of the planning and further, the planning of activities at the national level (based on the EEA AWP) happened too late in the year and thus did not facilitate an effective implementation. The survey data is thus backed up by data from the NFP workshop and interviews with NFPs and is therefore considered to be a robust finding.

Data from interviews with ETC managers, Commission representatives and EEA staff as well as evidence from the case studies showed that the work of the ETCs was well-coordinated with a scope for further improvement drawing on the experience from the ETC-BD in setting up rolling plans. Given the different data sources, which all support this finding, it is regarded as solid. Further elaboration on the coordination with ETCs and the use of rolling plans by the ETC-BD is given under Coherence (section 7.2).

In regard to the task of **support to reporting requirements (task c)**, the indicators addressed related to the fulfilment of reporting requirements in those cases, where a role for the EEA is set out (in legislation or otherwise) as well as the effectiveness of tools managed by the EEA to support the reporting process (notably Reportnet). The overall finding is that the EEA effectively assisted in implementing reporting obligations.

The evidence from the comprehensive fitness check of environmental monitoring and reporting supports clearly that the EEA effectively assisted in implementing the reporting obligations where they were fully involved (which was not the case for all environment and climate reporting obligations, although this could fall under the scope of the Regulation). This can also be established from the EEA annual activity reports and publication plans, which show delivery on time. Data from the EEA's own monitoring of core reporting flows (the majority which relate to reporting obligations) supported this and showed a high level of performance although not reaching the very ambitious targets with regard to timeliness and quality set by the EEA itself during the entire evaluation period and noting a slight deterioration during the evaluation period. The case studies also support a high level of performance in this area, in particular they serve to illustrate that the EEA plays an important role in meeting reporting obligations in the climate area (which is not covered by the fitness check exercise mentioned above). The fitness check of climate and energy related reporting obligations did not analyse the role of the EEA, but nevertheless led to a decision from the Commission to involve the EEA more in reporting in the future, which is an indicator of good performance. All in all, a number of different data sources together provide solid evidence that the EEA is delivering on this task.

Data from the fitness check as well as the case study on freshwater under the support study shows that some challenges were experienced in the freshwater area, in particular due to Reportnet not being able to handle large amounts of data required in 2016 as well as complexities and uncertainties around reporting schemas and formats. The latter is assessed to be beyond the full control of the EEA. The EEA could have been more proactive in foreseeing and addressing the challenges related to Reportnet (see task on information systems below).

In regard to the task of **management of SOE data and indicators (task e),** the indicators applied by the support study to assess effectiveness related to the timeliness of data provision on indicators as well as the ability to set out relevant and useful indicators. The main finding is that the EEA was effective in managing this task, however, there is scope for further improvement of performance.

In relation to timeliness of data provision, the data mentioned above on high effectiveness in relation to core data flows is also relevant here. Further, the support study undertook a review of the web-site and the display of indicators and this illustrated that most of the indicators were available and recently updated. However, from the new set of indicators adopted by the EEA during the evaluation period (in 2015), not all the new indicators were available. The explanation, according to interviews, is that new indicators were decided based on the perceived policy needs, but not easy to implement in practise as data is not readily available, so it is likely to take time to ensure their practical implementation through the Eionet system or otherwise.

In respect to setting relevant and useful indicators, the EEA conducted a comprehensive process for the revision of the core set of indicators to better reflect policy requirements during the evaluation period with the involvement of the Management Board. This was based on feed-back from stakeholders during the MB seminar in 2010 as well as lessons from the process of producing SOER2010. In this connection, the annual indicator report was also revived in accordance with the wishes of the Management Board and a process of establishing a methodology for linking this with monitoring and reporting on the 7th EAP took place and was coordinated at operational level between the EEA and DG ENV. This resulted in a methodology whereby the EEA indicator report reflects the first three of the

nine priority objectives of the 7th EAP. Interviews show that this is not entirely to the satisfaction of DG ENV and consequently, it is assessed that coordination on this area could have been improved.

The data to support the findings on the management of this task rests mostly on review of documents from Management Board meetings and official reports and web-site display from the EEA. As such it is solid in respect to documenting the main actions taken. It was more difficult to determine whether these actions were sufficient and useful in the light of the policy needs. First of all, as the new set of indicators was approved by the Management Board, this is a strong indicator. Further, survey and interview data on the satisfaction level with the indicators and the annual indicator reports provide some additional insights, but it is a complex topic difficult to cover through such means. The topic of indicators and their appropriateness could be subject to an individual study on its own.

It should be noted that the EEA also did work on agri-environmental indicators and indicators on transport and environment and this is further described under Q2 in connection with the issue of contribution to mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas.

In respect to the task (e) **on management of data and information systems,** the indicators investigated by the support study to assess effectiveness were related to effectiveness of IT management, management of thematic web-sites and progress towards Inspire compliance. Overall, the finding is that the EEA improved its performance in this area considerably during the evaluation period and the management of the task was effective when considering the situation at the end of the period.

The data used as evidence include an audit of IT management concluded during the period as well as documents and interviews showing how the EEA reacted to a number of critical risks identified by this audit by developing the necessary policies and procedures. As such the data is solid and clearly illustrates the improvements achieved, which include better data management and streamlining and using tools which enable cooperation across programmes and units in the EEA as well as Eionet entities. One specific area, where the EEA was less effective relates to Reportnet (the tool used for reporting of data – in respect to reporting obligations as well as other dataflows). Here, the data from annual reports, the Fitness Check on Environmental Monitoring and Reporting as well as feed-back from stakeholders (notably the Commission and NFPs) clearly indicate that the system was not performing and could not handle the large amounts of data required for some reporting obligations and showed weaknesses related to an outdated, aging IT infrastructure, which had not been maintained. In 2016, work was initiated to upgrade Reportnet, however, since this risk was already identified in conjunction with the audit, the support study finds that the EEA could have been more proactive in handling the issues.

In respect to management of thematic web-site, there was a focus on assessing WISE, BISE and Climate-ADAPT. Here, data from the EEA user survey shows that the stakeholders consider these web-sites useful and this is supported by evidence from interviews with the Commission, who also consider cooperation to have been well-functioning. However, some cooperation issues were identified in the case of WISE relating to staff shortages at EEA and steering of the process. With the respect to the latter, interview data indicates that this was an interinstitutional issue and thus not only a situation of lack of performance on the side of the EEA.

In respect to progress towards INSPIRE compliance, the data illustrates that was a major challenge and one that the EEA and Eionet cannot achieve alone. Progress was made during the evaluation period and the EEA actively participated in a dialogue with DG ENV on setting out a pathway towards implementation. This is in particular evidenced by a concept paper drafted by the EEA and DG ENV together and the evidence is thus strong.

Concerning task (h) of **delivering the SOER and indicator reports as well as other assessments** (task e)**,** the indicators applied related to the evidence of publishing of these reports and their evaluation by stakeholders. The evidence shows that the EEA has delivered the SOER in 2015, and annual indicator reports throughout the evaluation period. The SOER 2015 has been positively evaluated by stakeholders evidenced by EEA user survey as well as consultation inputs from interviews (see SOER case study). In respect to assessments other than the SOER, the evidence shows that the EEA has published a series of other assessments during the evaluation period

covering the areas of the Founding Regulation with the exception of chemicals. Stakeholders generally acknowledge the reports as being of good quality.

Concerning task (i) on **forecasting**, the indicators applied related to delivery of outputs and activities supporting analysis of megatrends as well as stimulation of foresight discussions. Based on review of annual reports, it can be established that the task has been implemented effectively, in particular taking a prominent place in the 2015 SOER. Actions have been taken to improve knowledge and collaboration with a variety of stakeholders. There is a specific NRC dedicated to the area, and is active in its tasks. A part of the wider Eionet reports having engaged in foresight-oriented discussions, indicating some mainstreaming of the activities. Further action in terms of main-streaming is considered needed by some Eionet stakeholders as shown by responses to the NFP/NRC survey. Further, the evidence on the implementation of the task suggests that it has followed an explorative rather than a systematic approach to research in the area and the FLIS platform launched in 2015 does not appear to have been used extensively. Concerns have been raised by the Commission whether the EEA is the best placed institution to perform this task as many other actors are also involved in the area (this is addressed under relevance Q7 and coherence Q9).

In relation to task (m) on **dissemination**, the indicators used related to the communication strategy and its co-herence and relevance, the range of dissemination activities and monitoring of stakeholder engagement. Overall, it is found that the task was well-addressed on a strategic level. EEA has a Communication Framework, defined for years 2014-18, which is seen as coherent and relevant by its Management Board. The Framework is aligned with task (m) as defined in the Founding Regulation, providing broad strategic elements. The task on dissemination is reflected in the MAWP as well, under Strategic Area 3.4, and Eionet structure includes a dedicated NRC for Com-munication.

On an operational level, the EEA has undertaken a number of activities over the evaluation period, in order to maintain and improve the dissemination and outreach of the EEA products. Notably, the outreach associated with SOER had a country focused approach, aiming to increase the relevance and uptake in member countries. Accord-ing to its strategy and requirement in the Task (m), the EEA has engaged in outreach activities online, including web-based content and social media. In addition, the EEA actively monitors its users, having added a number of monitoring activities during the evaluation period. Notably, it started monitoring mentions of EEA in EU policy doc-uments, aiming to get an understanding of the impact of its work. This solidly documented in annual reports as well as specific reports provided to the Senior Management Team of the Agency and shared with the support study (e.g. on mentions in EU policy documents).

In relation to task (o) on **diffusion of information on the results of research**, review of annual reports as well as interview data shows that there has been limited, but increasing, activity in this area during the evaluation pe-riod. This was largely due to institutional factors (lack of a monitoring system that could help to identify the re-search results from which relevant information could be diffused and limited engagement on the side of the Com-mission) rather than lack of initiative on the side of the EEA. However, evidence does not indicate that the EEA took a very proactive approach in this area either.

4.3   Q2: Effectiveness of the EEA's work against its objectives, across all environmental topics and across all activities

Q2: How effective is the EEA's work against its core objectives, across all environmental topics and across all activities (management of reporting flows, policy assessment, prospective analyses)? Are EEA contributions contributing to the mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas?

Compared to Q1, Q2 takes a step up in the objective hierarchy and focuses on the achievement of specific and general objectives and thus looks at results and impacts achieved rather than at progress in implementing activi-ties and tasks and looks at the judgement criteria and indicators presented in the table below.

Table 4-38   Judgement criteria and indicators, Q2

Judgement criteria	Indicators
Information provided by the EEA/Eionet is objective, reliable, comparable and accessible across the countries concerned	Citing and use of EEA information shows that it is regarded as authoritative source Key stakeholders find that the information is objective, reliable, comparable and accessible Factors identified for ensuring the above
The information and knowledge created by the EEA/EIONET is widely disseminated	Level of awareness and use of EEA and its products Visibility of EEA among a variety of stakeholders (NGOs, research institutions, industry, stakeholders outside environment/climate area)
The information and knowledge provided by the EEA/Eionet is useful for and applied in policy development and policy implementation for the Union and its members	Uptake of EEA findings in policy documents (key general policy documents in environment and climate policy as well as specific ones in case studies) Stakeholders (member countries, Commission and European Parliament) find that information is useful for policy-making and policy implementation and can provide specific examples (also of situations and outputs that are considered not useful) Timeliness, responsiveness and quality of input for selected policy processes (case studies). Results of analysis under relevance question 1
EEA information and products were being used by 'other DGs' (policy DGs in other areas – notably energy, transport, agriculture)?	DGs (other than ENV and CLIMA) consider EEA information and products useful and can give concrete examples of their use Key policy documents from other DGs make reference to and actively use data and information from the EEA EEA (M)AWPs refer to other sector policies
Through better policy making and awareness creation, the EEA/Eionet is contributing to enhanced environmental protection in Europe as well as to sustainable development	Results from the other judgement criteria summarising: case study findings and stakeholder responses

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

The sections below follow the structure of the judgement criteria and are thus presented as follows:

- The extent to which the products provided by the EEA are known and used by stakeholders and the public (section 4.3.1)
- The extent to which products provided by the EEA provide objective, reliable and comparable information at European level (section 4.3.2)
- The extent to which EEA products are used by the Commission and Member States in their policy work, including their relevance and utility for this purpose (section 4.3.3 – EU level and section 4.3.4 Member State level)
- The extent to which EEA products contribute to enhanced environmental protection in Europe (section 4.3.5)
- Key findings and conclusions are summarised in section 4.3.6

The evidence for this section is organised according to the judgement criteria defined in the evaluation matrix (Appendix A).

4.3.1   Awareness and uptake of EEA products

This criterion is closely related to the effectiveness in performing Tasks (h) and (m) in the Founding regulation. As such, the specific indicators here build on the results of Evaluation Question 1, specifically on the assessment of Tasks (h), (m). In terms of assessing the effectiveness in performing Task (m), this criterion complements the assessment done under Q1. The analysis in Q1 focused on activities performed by the EEA/Eionet in order to ensure effective dissemination. This question takes the next step and assessed the extent of uptake of the various products and activities, building on the findings of Question 1. This focuses on use and awareness of products generally, rather than their use in policy development and implementation (which is addressed in the next sections under separate criteria).

4.3.1.1   Awareness and uptake of EEA products

Desk study

As described in section 4.2.2.8, the EEA has a number of approaches to track the use and users of its information. The documentation provides information of uptake in the form of user downloads, specific product surveys and other assessments.

In particular, outreach performance analysis[114] for 2015 and 2016 outputs has assessed the number of downloads from the website (2015)/visits to the report website (2016), number of tweet views, media mentions and views of the email notification. These were combined into a single rank, showing which publications have a highest "reach".

The results indicated that the publications that consistently reach the most users across Europe were:

- Annual *Air Quality in Europe* reports (SA1.1): over 9,000 downloads in 2015; 135,000 tweet views in 2016

- Annual Trends and Projections reports (SA1.3): over 3,000 downloads in 2015; 57,000 tweet views in 2016

In addition, SOER 2015 was a highlight in 2015: more than 2.5 million tweet views, 2,000 media mentions, 14 thousand email notification views, and more than 10 thousand web downloads of the various SOER products (see Section 4.2.2.5 for a list of main products and more details on the SOER 2015).

In general, it can be seen from the Outreach reviews that the audience of the different reports varies highly. While the top-ranking publication websites were viewed over 20 thousand times in 2016, webpages of some more "niche" reports were only viewed several hundred times.

As also noted in the section above, "popularity" as defined by a number of downloads, media mentions, etc., only provides a part of the picture, and does not grasp their value, only the breadth of their reach. Despite that, some messages and factors of success have been noted (by the authors of the Outreach analysis), e.g. the importance of societal debates to the uptake, popularity on social media is high for products targeted at a non-expert audience.

As also noted in the stakeholder workshop in December, various stakeholders have had different needs and not all reports were useful to all, but they stressed it would not be appropriate to single out certain reports as "not useful".

Stakeholder awareness

In the general part of the OPC[115] respondents were asked regarding their awareness of particular products of the EEA/Eionet. As can be seen in the figure below, the awareness of different products and services provided by the EEA differs significantly (8% to 76%). Most of the respondents (76%) had heard of the SOER, the EEA reports and

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[114] Documents [205], [206]
[115] i.e. respondents with only general knowledge and interest in the EEA

maps, graphs and datasets the EEA provides. In contrast, other products or services (8%), exhibitions (19%), corporate reports (24%) and BISE (29%) show lower awareness among the general public respondents.

Figure 4-7   Awareness of products and services provided by the EEA
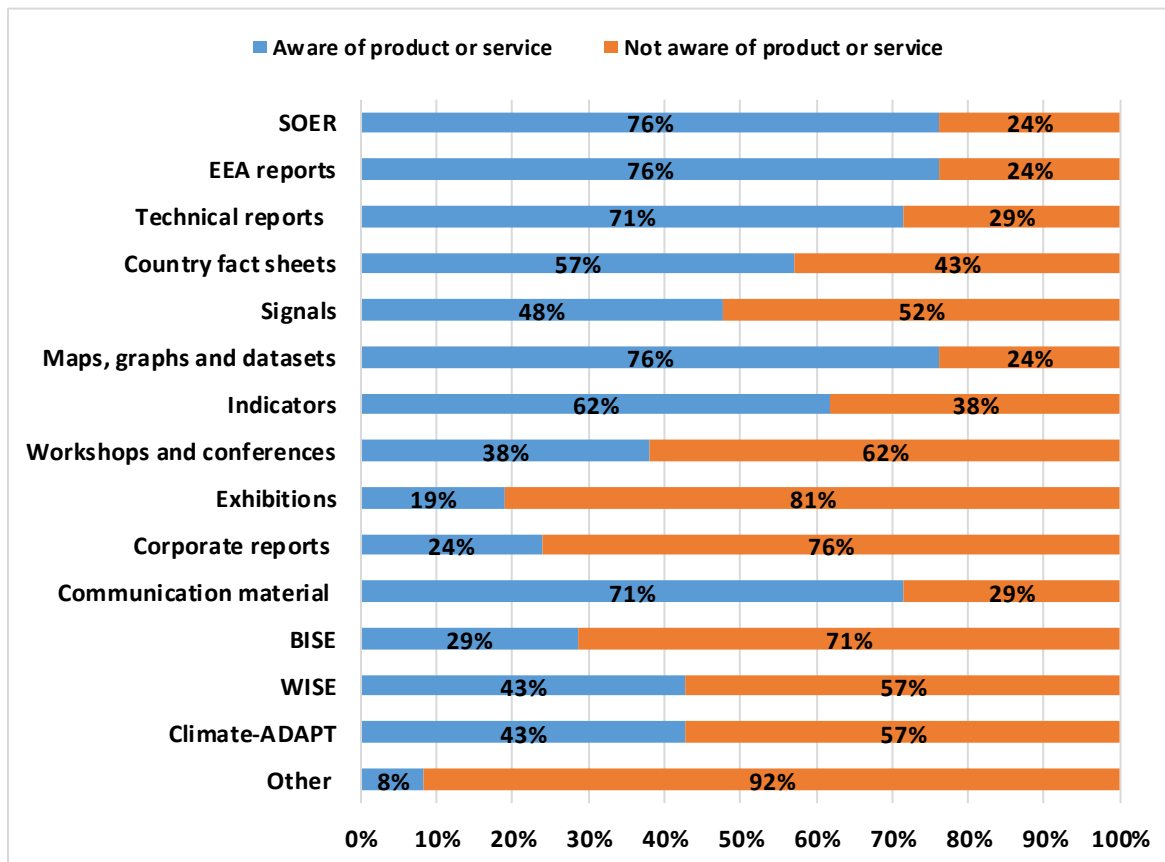
Source: General Survey. Q2.1, See 10.16; number of valid responses: 21. Note that 17 out of the 21 respondents were aware of the EEA before the OPC (ref. question 1.11 in the OPC)

Together these two sets of responses show that there was significant variation in the awareness and attention to various EEA products, which is not surprising as some are more targeted to a broader audience than others. Also, it must be noted that the OPC had very few respondents and thus limited value in assessing the level of awareness of the broader public.

4.3.1.2   Reaching a broad spectrum of stakeholders

An item that has been raised in several interviews relates to the visibility of the EEA among stakeholders outside environment and climate policy circles, including industry stakeholders and the research community. This section explores the extent to which the EEA information reaches the community outside of policy-making/implementation community. Use of EEA information in policy other than environment and climate is addressed as a separate item in Section 4.3.3.4.

The figure below shows the composition of the EEA subscriber list (across all countries). The mailing list is notably very varied, and includes private sector, NGO, and media representatives. Contacts representing scientific/research institutions are largest group, followed by national institutions and individuals. Contacts related to policy appear to be the most represented overall (National plus European institutions).

Figure 4-8   Subscribers to the EEA mailing list (all countries), 2015
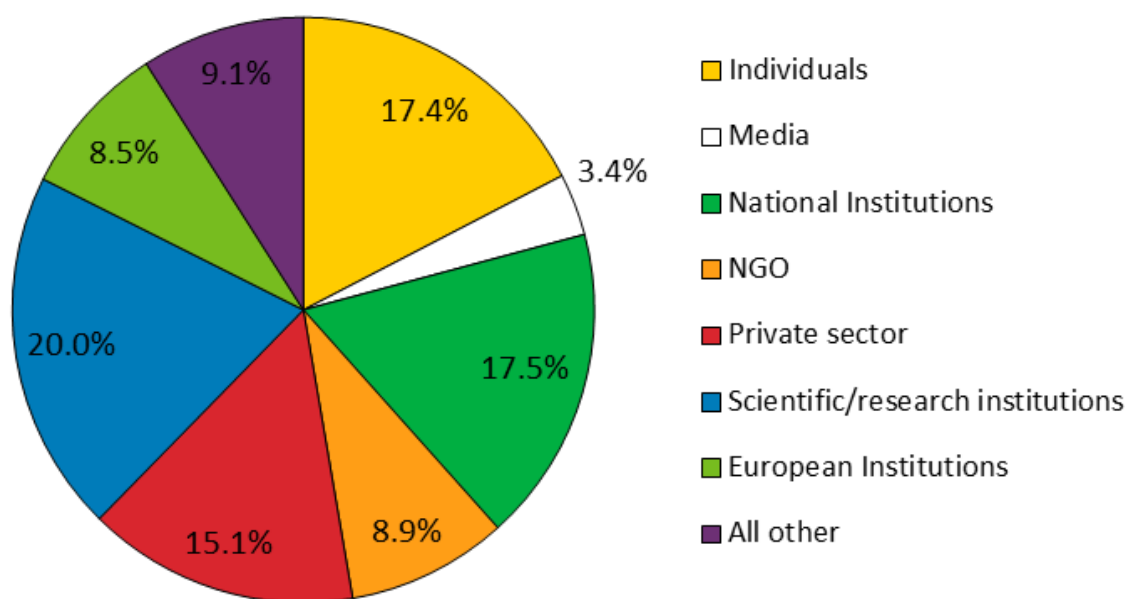
Source: [192]. Note, according to the EEA Annual Reports, there were over 5,000 subscribers in 2015, as shown in Section 4.2.2.8.

In 2017, the EEA conducted a user survey, which was sent out to its subscribers, members of Eionet, Management Board and the Scientific Committee. Overall, 10,000 invitations were sent out and 736 responses obtained[116]. Among these, around one third are Eionet, MB or SC respondents. In terms of occupation, the respondent sample here is dominated by national level policy makers, followed by people working in science/research, as shown in Table 4-39.

Table 4-39   Occupation of respondents to the EEA user survey 2017

Occupation	%
Policy maker/civil servant at national level	34%
Scientist (University/research institute)	26%
Industry/private sector	13%
Environmental NGO	8%
Other civil society organisation	5%
Policy maker/civil servant at EU/international level	4%
Student	1%
Others	9%

Source: [330]. Note: The survey report [332] explains that "others" are considered the general public, but no detail is available to the study team.

Signals reports, as noted in section 4.2.2.8, are reports targeted at a wider audience. User surveys were publi-cised in 2014 and 2015 to gather information on their reach. These include general questions on the respondents'

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[116] [332]

background, showing that the main categories answering the surveys are scientists/researchers, government officials, but also business and NGO representatives as well as teachers, as shown in the table below.

Table 4-40   Occupation of respondents to Signals online surveys (EEA)

	2014	2015
Scientist/researcher	23%	31%
Government official/public servant at national level	21%	22%
Businesses	17%	14%
NGO	9%	8%
Teacher	8%	11%
Government official/public servant at EU/international level	4%	3%
Student	1%	2%
Others (consultant, journalist, unemployed)	17%	9%

Source: [197], [198]. Survey question *Q11: Which of the following best describes your profession?* Number of respondents: 121 (2014), 64 (2015). Note: "others" included a free-text field; the table provides most common examples given.

These numbers represent only the people that have chosen to respond to the online survey, not all those that have downloaded or used the reports. However, they still provide an indication of the general audience, which is relatively well-aligned with the types of subscribers in the mailing list. The responses to the EEA user survey were more heavily dominated by the national level policy makers, while the rest of the groups were similarly distributed.

The support study explored the question of reaching a broad spectrum of stakeholders further in the MB survey. The Management Board members were asked to what extent the EEA/Eionet ensure that environmental information and EEA products reach stakeholders in their country (if they were national representatives) or in the EU (if they were EU institution representatives in the Management Board). The results for the member country respondents can be seen in the figure below. 13 respondents (76%) consider that environmental authorities are reached to a large or a very large extent, while only 24% think the same regarding the general public, no respondent selecting "to a very large extent" on this item. "Other NGOs" (i.e. those working in areas other than climate and environment) were considered to have been reached to an even lower extent. A higher number of respondents was not able to provide an estimate for this category.

Figure 4-9   MB survey responses: The extent to which EEA/Eionet ensure that the stakeholders are reached
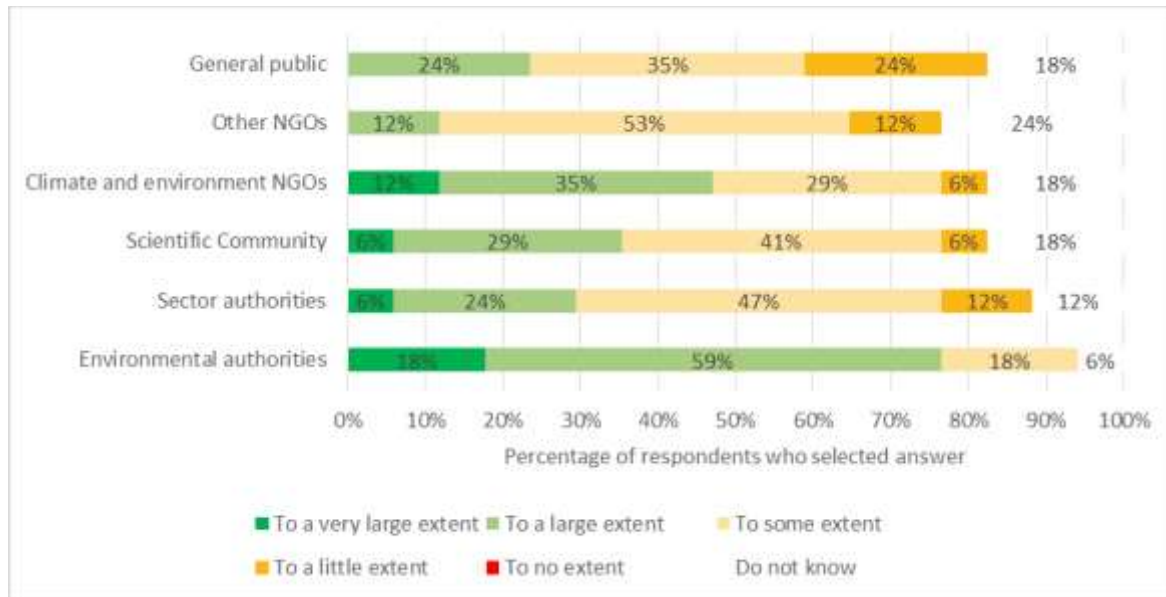
Source: MB survey, Question 7b): To what extent does EEA/Eionet ensure that environmental information and EEA products reach stakeholders in your country? Number of valid responses: 17

The issue of reach to various stakeholders was also discussed at the NFP workshop, where some participants considered that EEA information needs to find a better way into mainstream media, and that current social media strategy could be strengthened. One NFP remarked that EEA communication needs to be stronger linked with local stories in order to make sure information provided resonates with people. These items relate to suggestions that may lead to improved reach to general public.

Specifically in terms of engagement of research community, members of the EEA Scientific Committee highlighted both positive and negative aspects. On the plus side, the Agency has in the recent years linked better with FP7 and H2020 projects, improving links with the research community. In particular, active cooperation is noted in the area of systemic change. On the other hand, there are still a lot of researchers and students are not aware of the EEA, what it can deliver. This aspect in the communication strategy could be strengthened, positioning EEA more clearly as the key information source.

NGO and interest group interviews confirm the finding – the reach to the general public is low, and some respondents note that the EEA could be more visible, at all levels (nationally, EU, internationally). However, it is also noted that reaching the general should be a national responsibility (rather than pan-European). Environmental NGOs noted that they themselves also have a role to play. However, in this respect it was noted that they would benefit from being better informed, e.g. receive information on the planned publications in advance, so they could prepare better for their launch and wider distribution in their networks.

Specifically on the industry association side, BusinessEurope noted that there has been some communication with the EEA, e.g. invitations to activities, or participation in common panels. However, this is not a consistent engagement. BusinessEurope considers that a closer liaison between the Agency and business associations would improve outreach and would itself be interested in a closer dialogue. Moreover, the interviewees suggested that a way to broaden the outreach would be to include NGO and business representatives as observers in the Management Board, such as is the case in ECHA[117].

On a final note, it appears from interviews that very few stakeholders are aware of the fact that the EEA has an office in Brussels and this could be a missed opportunity for closer collaboration.

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[117] The ECHA MB includes six representatives of the Commission, including 3 members without voting rights appointed (by the Commission) to represent interested parties

4.3.2   Objective, reliable, comparable information

To assess this judgement criterion, public and targeted surveys were used in order to gauge stakeholder views. This was complemented by reviewing citations and other evidence of use of EEA information, as well as information from the case studies.

The data does not reveal anything about citing of EEA information in policy documents at country level. Such data is not collected by the EEA.

Member country participants at the Stakeholder workshop cautioned however, that if a product is not cited, it does not mean it is not used. In general, the position of the stakeholders at the workshop was that all EEA reports are useful and used, even if it is not possible to identify specific evidence that they are cited.

4.3.2.1   Stakeholder perceptions

Data from open public consultation

The open public consultation asked respondents to what extent they view the products they use as i) impartial, ii) allowing comparison across countries and iii) containing accurate information.

Over 70% of participants either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the SOER, EEA Reports (not SOER) and Maps, graphs and datasets provided impartial information. Less than or equal to 50% of respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that this was the case for Exhibitions, WISE and BISE. The details are shown in the figure below.

Figure 4-10   OPC responses regarding impartiality of information
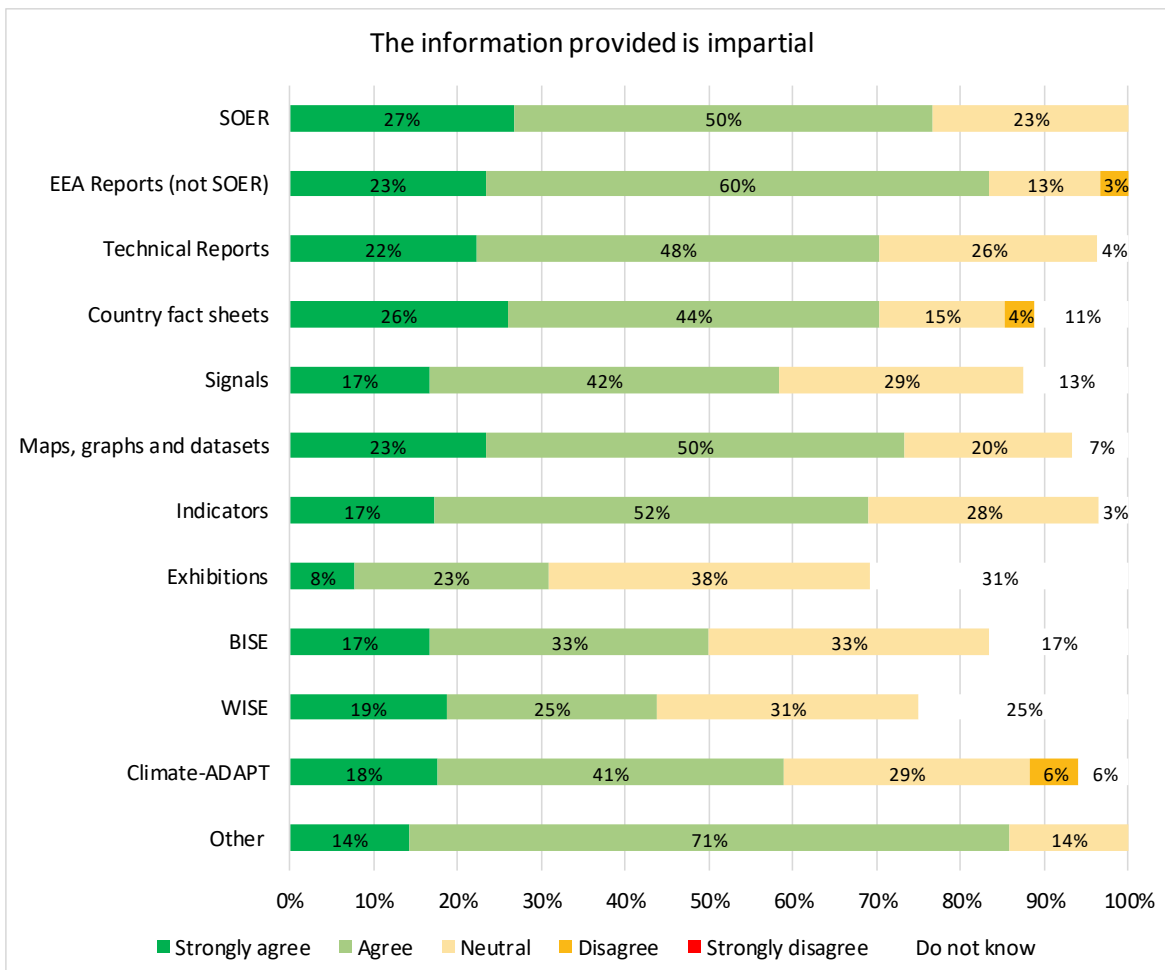
Source: Open Public Consultation Survey. Q2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is impartial. Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

As shown in the figure below, 90% of respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the information provided in the SOER was comparable across different countries. Only 50% either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that this was the case for WISE and only 31% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' for Exhibitions.

Figure 4-11   OPC responses regarding comparability across countries
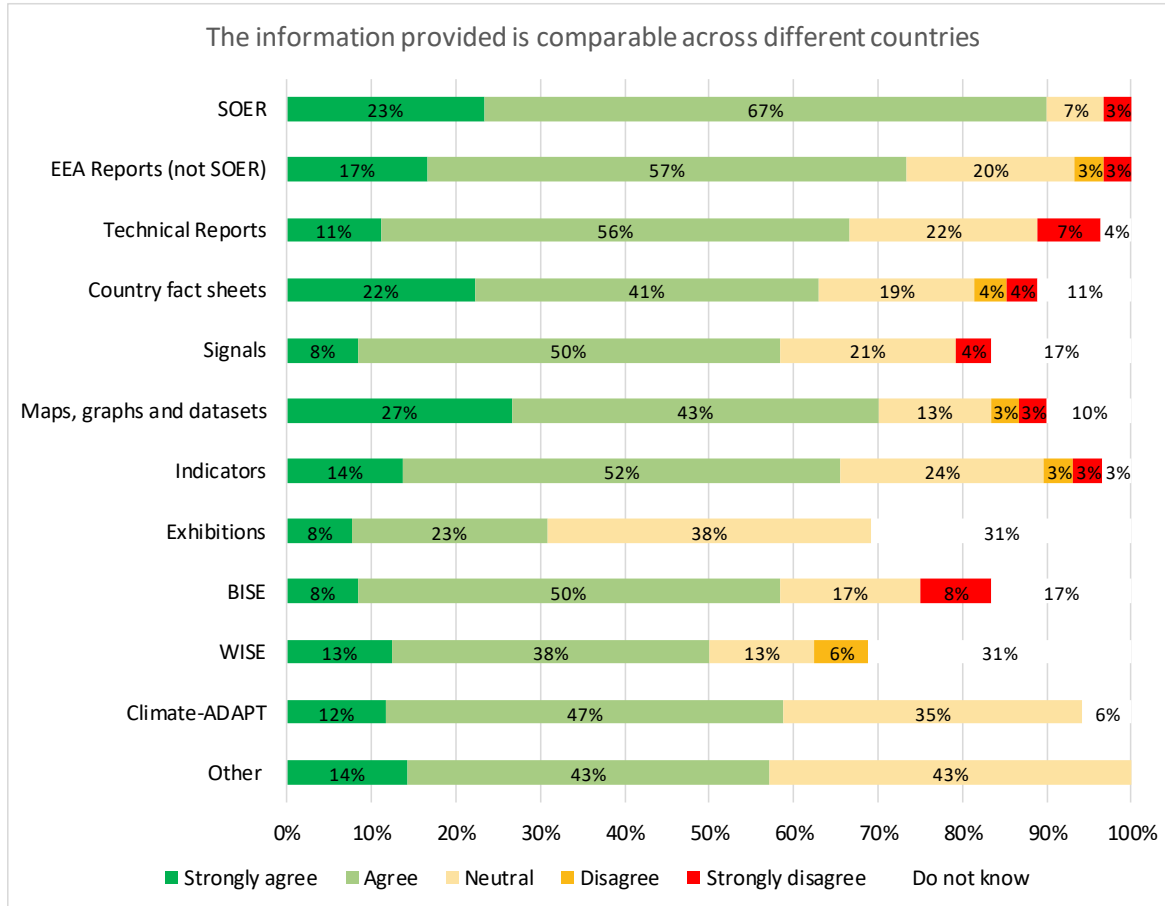
Source: Open Public Consultation Survey. Q2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is comparable across different countries.
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

Over three quarters of respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that SOER and Maps, graphs and datasets provided accurate information. Only 31% of respondents thought the same for WISE and Exhibitions. The Figure below shows the full results for all products.

Figure 4-12   OPC responses regarding accuracy of information
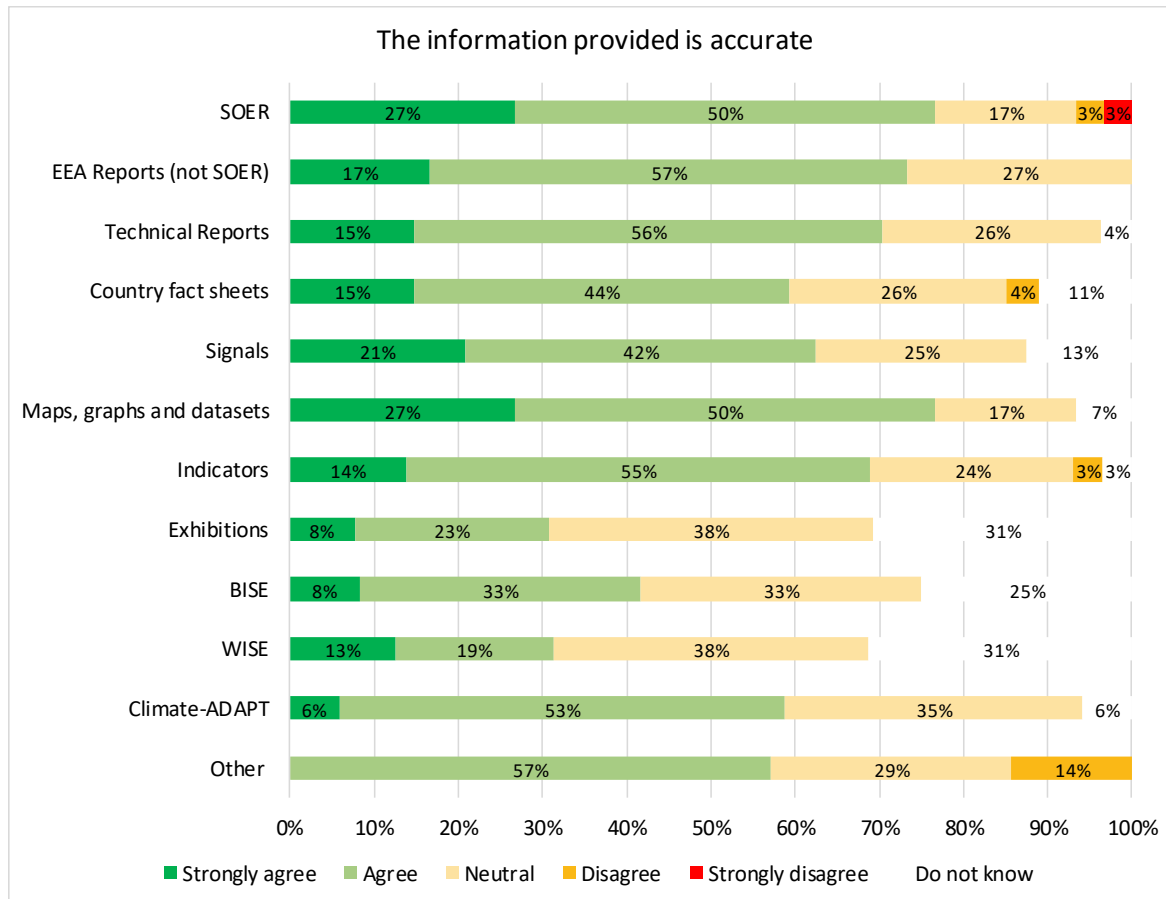
Source: Open Public Consultation Survey. *Q2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is accurate*. Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

Data from targeted surveys

The targeted survey with the Commission asked respondents to assess the products they use in policy development and implementation in terms of robustness and impartiality.

45-76% of respondents found the information produced by the EEA "completely" impartial depending on specific product and application (policy development or implementation). Datasets and maps used in policy implementation score highest (76%), while meetings/workshops in relation to policy implementation were found to be completely objective by 45% of respondents. The rest considered these products to be "somewhat" objective, or do not know (in most cases 1 respondent). No respondent selected "not at all" for any of the products. Table 4-41 shows the proportion of respondents who selected "completely" (i.e. product completely meets the robustness or impartiality criteria).

Table 4-41   COM survey responses on robustness and impartiality
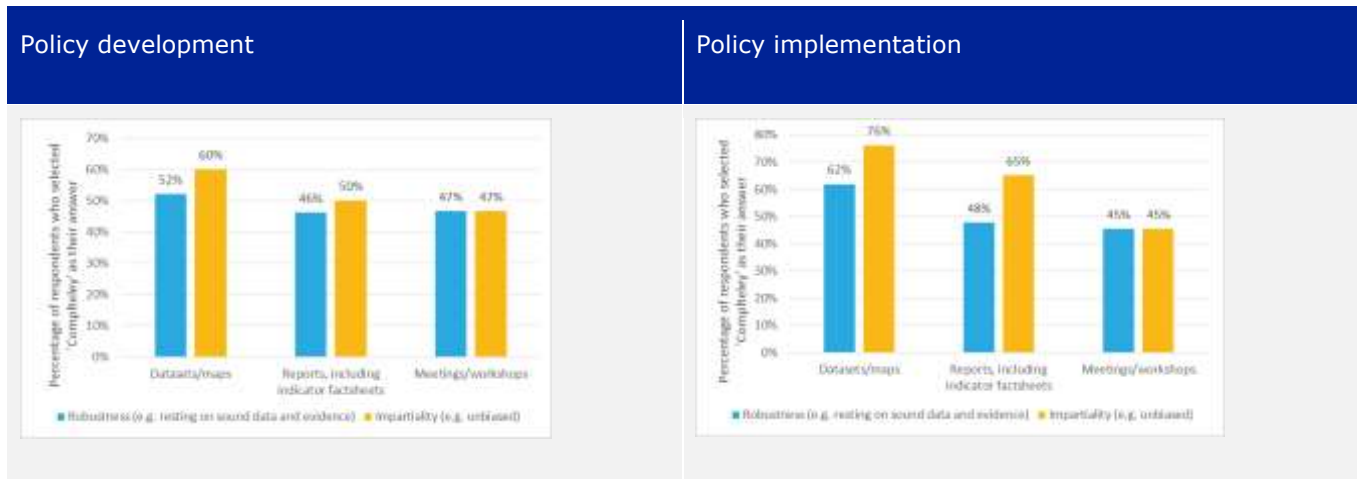
Source: COM survey, **Q5a:** To what extent did the products [used in policy development] meet the following criteria: Robustness and Impartiality. Valid Responses: Datasets/Maps: 25, Reports, including indicator factsheets: 26 and Meetings/workshops: 15 and **Q5b:** To what extent did the products [used in policy implementation] meet the following criteria: Robustness and Impartiality. Valid Responses: Datasets/Maps: 21, Reports, including indicator factsheets: 23 and Meetings/workshops: 11

Case study evidence

The case studies provide further support to these findings[118]. The EEA has fulfilled the role of an impartial, trusted advisor in this respect, seen from both the Commission and Member State perspectives. In particular, EEA's role in ensuring comparability of data is highlighted in all of the case studies, except waste.

The ETS case study indicates that the work of the EEA work in terms of summarising and analysing across countries has been important in ensuring comparability across the Member States and participating countries. As such, the EEA has provided a unique product based on the compilation of the national Article 21 reports, not delivered by other institutions.

Trends and Projections reports were noted by the Commission to have provided very good and consistent data and information across the EU-28, allowing for solid analyses and inputs to further work by the Commission on defining policies and measures. The case study did identify divergent views on the quality of the input data and the use of alternative sources (CLIMA and ENER), however, this improved as cooperation increased towards the end of the period. The EEAs work on the Effort Sharing Decision (ESD) is reported by the Commission to be excellent, including in terms of comparability across countries.

In the F-gas case study data quality is paramount and QA/QC checks by the EEA is also a means to flagging possible non-compliance for further scrutiny. Data quality is of satisfaction to the Commission and Member States and of increasing quality with time. One area where there could be some scope for improvement is to keep fully (100%) aligned the data in the EEA BDR database (reporting), with information in the Commissions' HFC Registry (compliance) where DG CLIMA store data on company compliance with their quotas.

The case study on the EU Nature Directives found that the EEA and collaborating ETC on Biodiversity data have been highly effective in ensuring the comparability and reliability of information generated through reporting under the Nature Directives. Datasets prepared in support of the Nature Directives provide data from all Member States compiled at the European-level in a comparable format. As part of the 2015 reporting for the 2007-2012 period under the Nature Directives, the ETC/BD carried out a number of activities to support consistent reporting: harmonise reporting approaches, reconcile different interpretations of reporting requirements, and address difficulties in reporting. Interviews with DG ENV suggest that information is considered to be reliable and objective in this area.

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[118] See 10.4

The indicators assessed under the <u>Freshwater case study</u> were found to be transparent in terms of their sources and assumptions. It was found that the EEA has provided standardised tools and methods for the collection of comparable SoE data and has contributed to tools and methods for some EU freshwater Directives, notably the Water Framework Directive.

<u>Waste case study</u> found that in this area the EEA outputs are considered to be impartial: taking into account that the information comes directly from the Member States there is a limit to the possible impartiality, but the EEA does what it can to test data consistency against other sources such as data collected by Eurostat and, relative to all the data available in general. In terms of data comparability, in this area the responsibility for standardisation lies with Eurostat.

<u>Copernicus:</u> The CLMS products under the responsibility of the EEA provide data comparable at the EU level. While some Member States have their own satellite monitoring and more detailed data at the national or local level (as well as local aerial monitoring), their programmes use different approaches and methodologies which impedes the comparison and integration of datasets. Therefore, CLMS products allow for comparisons at the European level and for calibration of the different national products[119]. Even though Copernicus data is produced by service providers, products and deliverables are quality checked and verified by the ETC/ULS or the NRCs.

The EEA has employed the necessary technology and IT capacity to manage and deliver the Copernicus services under its responsibility. The production of datasets is similar to their work on CLC pre-dating Copernicus and uses some of the same software tools and content management systems. Since the launch of the Copernicus programme, the following processing techniques (e.g. visual interpretation, automated variable calculations, geo-statistical supervised classifications and time series analyses) have been used. The EEA had to meet the security requirements set by the Copernicus Security Board and started using cloud services to process the greatly increased volume of data. According to EEA staff working on Copernicus, this experience provided an opportunity to use cloud computing also for the EEA's other data work[120].

<u>SOER case study</u> highlighted that SOER 2015 is a particularly good example of provision of objective, comparable and reliable information. Data sources were clear and trackable and there was a clear process of consultation, including a scientific review.

Evidence from interviews with Commission staff confirm the findings also in areas not covered by the case studies. Interviews have highlighted in particular the value of the EEA providing continuity in methods applied and staff involved over the years and thus providing the background for comparable information and consistent reporting from year to year and country to country. One example relates to the MMR, where Article 14 requires projections every two years. The Member States provide the information to EEA, which then compiles it for all 28 Member States. The EEA conducts quality checks, engages with MSs, and ensures a consistent dataset that CLIMA can use for their yearly *climate action progress reports*.

4.3.2.2   Factors supporting delivery of objective, reliable, comparable information

The work of the EEA in connection with core indicators and associated assessments as well as reporting processes in connection with specific Directives is in general regarded as very solid. The EEA performs many QA/QC in relation to the data submitted by the MS, which is noted as a factor in ensuring that the data is reliable and comparable.

Case studies exemplify factors that contribute to the provision of consistent, impartial and good quality data.

In the <u>T&P case</u> the factors mentioned are good and frequent working liaisons built over the years between the EEA and the Commission and also good liaisons to the Member States on the QA/QC processes.

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[119] Interview with the ETC/ULS.

[120] Interviews with the EEA.

The F-gas case study found that comparability and reliability is ensured through a comprehensive data QA/QC approach which encompasses both automatic checks, manual checks, as well as close interaction with reporting entities. In addition, it is helpful that relevant guidance documents are available in different languages. It was noted that the common reporting platform used by companies based in different Member States, the built-in automated and manual QA/QC checks, a number of manuals and guidance documents to support reporters, as well as the availability of a common helpdesk ensures comparability of data.

Also in the Nature case, quality assurance noted as a factor in reliability and impartiality. In this sense, efforts of the EEA and the ETC to ensure quality, and address gaps in data were important. In terms of comparability, targeted efforts were also important. Specifically, the ETC/BD held ad hoc working groups and prepared guidelines, in order to address harmonisation issues.

This was confirmed and complemented by the participants at the Stakeholder workshop[121]. Participants considered that the strongest factor underlying the ability of the EEA and Eionet to provide objective, reliable and comparable data was the mandate of the Agency and the fact that it was a separate institution, which supported the work of other institutions, while not being too aligned with any one of them.

Participants confirmed the above finding that QA/QC processes within the Eionet were essential and reflected that these could be divided in two main types: QA/QC of data, QA/QC of knowledge creation. QA/QC of data involved the process whereby data to support indicators and/or reporting requirements coming from NRCs would be checked and controlled thus ensuring their reliability. QA/QC of knowledge creation involved the process whereby outputs and reports produced by the EEA or the ETCs would be consulted with the relevant experts in the Eionet for commenting and quality check and also new workflows were implemented during the evaluation period, which involved guidance, sign-offs and intensive QA/QC aspects across text, visuals, data and copyright/plagiarism checks in place[122]. This consultation and involvement of the Eionet also meant that the relevant experts felt ownership towards the process and the results – both in terms of data and knowledge products, which was regarded by participants as an important underlying factor. In this regard, participants also mentioned that these processes also led to building of capacity among the experts, which again was seen as an important underlying factor.

4.3.3   Use of EEA products for policy development and implementation at EU level

For the purpose of the analysis of EEA products and the extent to which – and how – they are used in policy making at EU level, the support study distinguishes as far as possible between use for **policy development** and **policy implementation**.

- Policy development: The design of new policy or revision of existing policy and the related impact assessment activities and other analyses in the law-making process by the institutions including the Commission and the European Parliament.

- Policy implementation: The actions of the Commission related to implementation of existing policies and legislation through e.g. monitoring, follow-up, compliance promotion, etc.

4.3.3.1   Citing of EEA information

Since 2016, the EEA has been collecting data on the mention of EEA in documents of the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council through a contract with an external contractor. The overview of the results of this data collection covering the year 2016 was presented in a note to the Senior Management Team at the EEA in June 2017, which the EEA has made available to the support study team. It shows that the EEA was mentioned 69 times in documents of the European Parliament, 53 times in documents of the Commission and 7 times in Council documents. The overview also showed that EEA was mentioned 8 times in documents by other EU agencies and 19 times in documents by interest groups[123]. The way in which the EEA is mentioned differs and only some of the

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[121] 10.18

[122] Information provided by the EEA through fact-checking exercise

[123] [412]

mentions refer to actual use of EEA data or reports. Other mentions refer to the mandate of the EEA or role in e.g. data compilation. The detailed data on mentions in Parliament documents shows that the mentions which are related to specific data or reports by the EEA are very varied over different types of documents ranging from studies done by the Parliament Research Service, briefings in relation to policy proposals (e.g. the Circular economy package, four legislative proposals on waste as well as legislation on mercury) and written questions by individual MEPs.

The EEA's own analysis of the data, as presented in the note to the senior management team, shows that 35% of the 2016 EEA publications (15 of 43) and 29% of the 2015 EEA publications (13 of 45) were mentioned[124]. The SOER2015 is the most frequently mentioned product.

4.3.3.2 Development of environment and climate policy

There are various data sources, which shed light on the extent to which EEA information and products are used in policy development.

- At the overall level, we have analysed the 7th EAP and the related impact assessment to see to which extent and how EEA information was used. It should be noted, however, that the most of the development of the 7th EAP took place before the evaluation period and therefore this only provides a limited indication of use of EEA products during the evaluation period.

- Data from the targeted survey among Commission officials, which contained questions on the EEA contribution to policy development

- At the more specific level, we have analysed in each case study the extent to which and how EEA information has been used in policy development activities.

- This will also be complemented with data from interviews with selected MEPs and Commission officials

Analysis of use of EEA data and reports in the development of the 7th EAP

The Commission's website on the 7th EAP states that the Commission used the SOER2010 and the evaluation of the 6th EAP as the two main sources to inform the development of the 7th EAP, which is a very clear indication of the importance and use of the SOER2010 report[125]. This is also shown in the preamble of the decision (1386/2013/2013) of the European Parliament and the Council adopting the 7th EAP, which refers to the SOER2010 and the need to address a number of major environmental challenges.

The impact assessment for the 7th EAP was comprehensive and included a number of background analyses where EEA information and products were substantially referred. The reference list (Annex 8) includes the SOER as well as the T&P report and the SOER is also mentioned as a key source in Chapter 1 on the consultation activities undertaken. Other EEA reports are also referred in the IA. The EEA publication 'Towards a Green Economy in the EU, Gaps and macroprocesses' from April 2012', which included 'gap to target' assessments for four sectors, is referred in the main report and in Annex 3. The options analysis of the IA also refers to some EEA reports as does Annex 6, which provided the underlying analyses for the priority objectives.

Annex 6 includes a description of the situation, future outlook, key challenges and justification of the priority objective. In the context of the description of the situation, EEA data or reports was referenced directly in 11 of the 17 dimensions analysed under priority objectives 1-3 as seen in Table 4-42 below. In addition, there are numerous indirect references to EEA information (i.e. referencing of other policy documents where EEA information has been used).

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[124] The totals count only reports, technical reports, briefings and joint reports, excluding for instance country fact sheets, Eionet reports, the EEA general brochures and other products.
[125] [450] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/action-programme/process.htm (checked 23 September 2017)

It is however noteworthy, that the sections on future outlook generally do not refer to EEA data or reports. These sections refer to specific models or tools on the topics (priority objectives) that can help to predict future development and effects of policies. The EEA's forward-looking analysis encompassed in the SOER 2010 is not mentioned. This can be seen in conjunction with the observation that SOER is not referenced either in Annex 4 of IA, which provides a more general outlook to 2020 and 2050. Here the main reference is the OECD environmental outlook.

Table 4-42   Mention of EEA information in Annex 6 of the impact assessment for the 7th EAP

Priority objective	Dimensions analysed in impact assessment Annex 6	Mention of EEA information
1) Protecting, conserving and enhancing the EU's natural capital	Biodiversity	2010 Biodiversity baseline used for description of current situation
	Fresh, transitional and coastal waters	Publication on natural hazards and technological accidents cited
	Marine waters	SOER 2010 referred on IUU
	Air	No direct reference
	Land and soil	SOER referred on factors contributing to soil degradation 2006 estimate of contaminated sites referred 2010 biodiversity baseline referred as data source on soil degradation
	Forests	No direct reference
	Nutrient cycles	SOER referred on eutrophication of coastal waters EEA report no. 4/2009 referred on excess nitrogen deposition
2) Turning the EU into a resource efficient, greener and more competitive low-carbon economy	Low-carbon economy (climate change mitigation)	EEA's Trends and Projections report (2011)
	Industrial emissions	(Referring to the application of SEIS principles will make sure that national data on implementation of the IED is widely available)
	Sustainable production and consumption	EEA State of Environment Report (2010)- includes EU outlooks and scenarios for future developments in three key sectors – food, housing and mobility

EEA info on air pollutants emissions and exceedances of emissions ceilings European Union emission inventory report 1990 — 2009 under the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), EEA technical report No 9/2011 |
	Waste	Reference made to the COM and EEA modelling tool aiming to establish projection of waste generation and management and for anticipation of future potential implementation problems, taking into account exiting waste management plans and strategies of the Member States
	Water stress	Reference made to EU-level water accounts made by the EEA and COMM
3) Safeguarding EU citizens from environment-related pressures and	Air quality	EEA cited on exposure to particulate matters
	Noise	No direct reference
	Drinking and bathing waters	No direct reference

Priority ob-jective	Dimensions analysed in impact assessment Annex 6	Mention of EEA information
risks to health and wellbeing	Chemicals	SOER2010 referred on combined effects of chemicals
	Climate change adaptation	No direct reference

Survey results

The survey among the Commission officials examined whether the respondents use EEA products, and if they find them useful for policy development. The table below shows the proportion of respondents who have used the listed types of products in policy development and the perception of their usefulness among those who use them.

Table 4-43   Survey among Commission officials: Use and usefulness of EEA products for policy development (32 respondents)

Product type	Proportion using the product types	Proportion finding product types useful or very useful
Datasets/maps	78%	80%
Reports, including indicator fact-sheets	81%	73%
Meetings/workshops	47%	67%

Case study evidence on use of EEA outputs in policy development

In the case studies, we sought to establish an assessment of the extent of the contribution made by the EEA to policy development processes in DG CLIMA and DG ENV categorised according to the following scale: Crucial contribution, some contribution, insignificant or no contribution, negative contribution. The table below provides an overview of the assessment based on data collection and analysis conducted through the case studies with examples from the case studies given below the table (further reference is made to the case study reports in 10.4).

Table 4-44   Assessment of EEA contribution to policy development in case studies

Case study	Assessment
Nature	Crucial contribution
Waste	Some contribution
Freshwater	Some contribution
T&P	Some contribution
ETS	Some contribution
F-gases	Some contribution (to date, in particular at international level); Important contribution (in the future at EU level)
Copernicus	No contribution
SOER	Some contribution

The Nature case study shows that the EEA's datasets developed in support of the Nature Directives has made cru-cial contributions to policy development in this area, in particular for the evaluation how the Directives met their objectives under the Fitness Check of the Directives. The work of the ETC/BD in compiling and analysing reported data supported the Fitness Check as well, and informed policy development a under the CAP, as seen in the use of EEA indicators on nature protection in the Agri-Environmental Indicators.

The waste case study shows that the work of the EEA has been in supporting the Commission in the area of policy development. Overall it is judged that some contribution has been made by the EEA to the development of waste and resource policy. The continued development and refinement of the Reference Model for Waste has provided an early warning mechanism for DG Environment and enabled them to understand what future policy interventions might be necessary in the future[126]. Furthermore, the provision of waste and resource indicators, help to further understand the underlying trend of performance across Europe.

The T&P reports and associated data work has been important as input to the Commission's further development of the energy and climate change policy for 2030 and 2050, e.g. in showing and confirming trends across the EU as a whole, whether the EU is on track on each of the three mitigation targets and how the situation may differ at individual country level, and also providing information on in which sectors progress is insufficient.[127] The Commis-sion is mainly using the data behind the T&P reports, rather than the report itself.

The EEA has provided important information to the Commission in terms of supporting the evaluation of the imple-mentation of the EU ETS, with focus on the monitoring and implementation role of the member countries. The EEA's analysis of the national Article 21 responses has also provided some contribution to the Commission's fur-ther policy development of the EU ETS.EEA's data quality assurance, identification of implementation challenges and assessment of the member countries performance have thus provided an important indirect contribution to the rules to be designed and applied in Phase 4 (2021-2030).[128].

In the case of F-gases, the case study indicates that in the EU setting, the F-gas reporting has been used in rela-tion to policy implementation rather than for policy development so far (as a new regulation had just been adopted in 2014). There has been some contribution in relation to policy development in the international setting, where EEA F-gas annual reports have been significant in providing a benchmark for the international negotiations leading to the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol. The EU was the first major player to take strong action on HFCs, and through these annual EEA F-gas reports it could credibly illustrate its domestic action. The work has contributed to encouraging other countries to follow suite e.g. Japan, US etc., and it continues to do so, as the EU continues to show how EU policy develops. Domestically, as the quota system is starting to affect the market, the data collected by the EEA is becoming more and more important in preparing the ground for upcoming policy de-velopment. For example, the Commission will have to make a comprehensive review of the Regulation in ca. 2020, which will also be supported inter alia by the extensive data collected by the EEA.

For the case on freshwater, it is assessed that the EEA provided some contribution to policy development. For both processes considered – the *Blueprint* and water reuse policy – EEA provided inputs. In neither case, however, were these inputs reported to be crucial, and other data and information sources were used alongside those from the EEA.

Overall the importance of SOER 2015 to policy development can be measured of having some contribution. The products associated with the SOER are clearly valued by the Commission and MEPs alike. It is a unique product

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[126] The model was originally developed by external contractors under a contract held by DG ENV and handed over to the EEA in 2015

[127] As example, 17 countries are reported to be on track with their 2020 targets in all three areas in 2016, which is a slight improvement from the year before, where only 13 countries were on track.

[128] [451] COM (2015) 80 final

that provides a holistic assessment. However, factors which reduce its contribution include its timing (provided every five years as opposed to EAPs that have a seven-year cycle) and the issue that other (targeted) reports are provided on a regular basis by the EEA.

Evidence from interviews and workshop

Interviews with stakeholders involved in EU policy have generally confirmed the data from the survey that EEA information is used and useful for policy development. This includes also parliamentary debates which according to both MEP interview and interviews with NGOs often involve citing and referencing to EEA information. The MEP interview emphasised that some EEA data is absolutely essential to some debates, air quality, air pollution and biodiversity was mentioned as key areas. The data is seen as valuable and with high authority and with better coverage of Europe than other data in these areas in particular.

Interviews have also indicated some examples of EEA reports that are not used and not considered useful by specific policy units in DG ENV – in particular in the freshwater area (see case study in Appendix D). At the stakeholder workshop, the issue of use and uptake in policy processes of EEA documents was discussed. Participants emphasised very strongly that the EEA is seen as producing very valuable inputs to policy development (and policy implementation). While not all reports are useful to a particular unit, the assessment was that overall and seen in the perspective of the wider range of stakeholders, the reports are all to be regarded as useful.

Participants at the stakeholder workshop also emphasised the strength of the EEA and Eionet in combining EEA/Eionet data with other data sources and analysing and consolidating other data (one participant emphasised the carbon lock-in report as a good example: It was based on an excellent database which comes from outside, i.e. external data, which the EEA used to analyse the situation. Using the best available data on the market and extracting important information on pressure areas. Similarly, the Electric Vehicles report was emphasised by the participant as a good example of the effectiveness of the EEA and Eionet in gathering available information and condensing it to a report.)

In addition, workshop participants found that the strength of the EEA should not only be considered in connection with development of specific environmental policies and pieces of legislation, but also in the forward-looking work supporting the strategic policy thinking about how to cope with the environmental and societal challenges seen in the long term. E.g. how to reach overall targets for decarbonisation and decisions on which measures are needed. Here, participants considered that the SOER provided useful perspectives on the strategic level for policy development and implementation (see workshop output document in 10.18). Somewhat contrary to this, interviews with representatives of the Commission have called into question the usefulness of the work of the EEA in this area highlighting that they rely primarily on other actors perform modelling and outlook work and this is very resource-demanding and thus not possible for the EEA to manage while also addressing what the Commission representatives consider more important: The focus on the state of the environment and the effectiveness of the measures and policies to address environmental and climate challenges.

4.3.3.3   Implementation of environment and climate policy

For the analysis of EEA contribution to policy implementation, various sources of data are used:

- At the overall level, the support study conducted a desk review of the Environmental Implementation Review to assess to what extent and how EEA information was used

- Data from the targeted survey among Commission officials, which contained questions on the EEA contribution to policy implementation.

- At the more specific level, the support study analysed in each case study the extent to which and how EEA information has been used in policy implementation activities.

- Data from interviews and the stakeholder workshop

EIR and use of EEA data and outputs

Data is also to a large extent used for the Environmental Implementation Review process. The deliverables from the EIR process are heavily based on information and data collected by the Commission, the European Environment Agency, Eurostat, the Joint Research Centre, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and official national sources. The EIR Communication[129] uses the 2015 SOER as a key reference stating that "The foundation for short- and long-term improvements in Europe's environment, people's health and economic prosperity rests on full implementation of policies, and better integration of the environment into the sectoral policies that contribute most to environmental pressures and impacts, but also other EEA reports such as the 'Late lessons from early warnings: science, precaution, innovation', inter alia illustrating how damaging and costly the misuse or neglect of the precautionary principle can be (EEA report No 1/2013). The Commission draw for the individual country reports on the EU-28 also on EEA data and reports to a large extent, e.g. in the area of resource consumption, soil protection, marine protection, air quality, water quality and management and urban environment.

Targeted survey results

The survey of Commission officials examined whether the respondents use EEA products, and if they find them useful for policy implementation. Table 4-45 shows the proportion of respondents who have used the listed types of products in policy implementation and the perception of their usefulness among those who use them.

Table 4-45   Survey among Commission officials: Use and usefulness of EEA products for policy implementation (32 respondents)

Product type	Proportion using the product types	Proportion of those using the products finding product types useful or very useful
Datasets/maps	66%	81%
Reports, including indicator fact-sheets	72%	78%
Meetings/workshops	34%	64%

Source: See 10.16, Question 5a

Data from the case studies on use of EEA outputs for policy implementation

In the case studies, the support study assessed the extent of the contribution made by the EEA to policy implementation processes in DG CLIMA and DG ENV categorised according to the following scale: Critical contribution, some contribution, insignificant or no contribution, negative contribution. The table below provides an overview of the assessment with supporting evidence from the case studies given below the table.

Table 4-46   Assessment of EEA contribution to policy implementation in case studies

Case study	Assessment
Nature	Crucial contribution
Waste	Some contribution
Freshwater	Crucial for some directives (e.g. BWD), some contribution for others
T&P	Crucial contribution as regards data
ETS	Crucial contribution (with respect to Member State implementation)

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[129] Delivering the benefits of EU environmental policies through a regular review, [445] COM (2016) 316.

F-gases	Crucial contribution
Copernicus	Some contribution but use of earth observation data is in preliminary stages: scope for further use
SOER	Not assessed as not purpose of SOER

Nature: The work of the EEA has been effective in supporting the European Commission in implementing the Nature Directives. In particular, the EEA and ETC/BD played a strong role in Member State reporting under the Directives and assessment of the data reported by Member States: this role included maintaining the reporting platform for Member States; support to Member States throughout the reporting period; assuring the quality of data reported; analysis of data reported; preparation of key reports, including the State of Nature in the European Union Technical Report. DG Environment and EEA coordinate via yearly rolling plans and also in frequent, ongoing communication at working level to ensure that EEA outputs support work for the directives.

Waste: The overall impression by DG Environment staff of the provision of support from the EEA is broadly satisfactory and that some contribution has been made to the implementation of policy; though noting that less overall activity has taken place. DG Environment staff were reported to be generally pleased with the quality of the information provided by the EEA.

Regarding the T&P case it is found that the EEA has been very effective in providing the Commission with relevant data and information on whether countries are on track on their climate and energy targets. The Commission used the data behind the T&P reports for going into dialogue with Member States on their performance on their individual national targets. The Commission appreciates the EEA for its close contacts with Member States on data compilation and data quality assurance, enabling high quality data. Also, the data from the Member States are seen to have considerably improved thanks to the EEA and not least since their quality procedure has also included considerable elements of capacity building to the Member States in improving their data.

ETS: The EEA's role and importance in the analysis of the national Article 21 responses and elaboration of the Article 21 reports as input to the reporting on the *policy implementation and implementation of the existing rules* in the carbon market during the evaluation period was substantial. The analysis of the national Article 21 responses was a key output from the EEA in terms of its focus on monitoring and implementation, including whether the administrative arrangements in the Member States were considered effective or needed further improvements. As the EU ETS Article 21 report received considerable attention from the broader carbon market, the data and analysis needed to be of highest quality and the data from document review and interviews show that the EEA made a significant contribution to ensuring this.

F-gases: In addition to enabling the measurement of policy impact, the EEA work supports the year-to-year implementation of the F-Gas Regulation, as well as follow up compliance actions. The HFC phase down in particular is implemented through a quota system - with gradually decreasing quota allocations - and the BDR reported data form the basis for a) assessing whether companies comply with quotas; b) tracking the progress with the HFC phase-down[130]; and also c) informing the allocation of future quotas (every three years the Commission recalculates/determines by means of implementing acts the quota reference values for the companies on the basis of reported quantities) including through the assessment of the quota allocation method itself[131]. In sum, the collected data serves a dual purpose of compliance and implementation.

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[130] [452] DG CLIMA, October 2016, Progress of the HFC Phase Down: https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/f-gas/docs/phase-down_progress_en.pdf
[131] E.g. [453] A 2016 briefing paper with a preliminary assessment of the quota allocation method draws on F-gas BDR data, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/20161201_briefing_paper_en.pdf ; [454] A 2017 Report from the Commission assessing the quota allocation method, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/f-gas/legislation/docs/com_2017_377_en.pdf

Freshwater: Overall, EEA has provided between *some* contribution to policy implementation. Its role has varied across EU Directives. For the WFD, EEA's role has been crucial in supporting reporting and data handling as well as in the preparation of an overview report on the state of Europe's waters. Similarly, for the Bathing Water Directive, carries out all tasks leading to the preparation of the annual report on the EU's bathing water quality. For the Floods Directive, Nitrates Directive and UWWT Directive, EEA in particular supports reporting and prepares data and map viewers for the FD and UWWTD (for UWWTD, a separate map viewer was also developed by DG ENV indicating scope for improving coordination in this area). For the DWD, EEA ended its role and thus did not make the contribution expected by DG ENV. EEA has provided some contribution to the EIR process and has worked with Commission services in the development and preparation of the agri-environmental indicators, some of which are used as CAP context indicators.

Data from interviews and workshop

At the stakeholder workshop, participants expressed that for the implementation of EU legislation, the EEA and Eionet were indispensable in the areas where they assisted in data and reporting on implementation. Through the EEA and Eionet, all the data was double and triple checked and this meant that there was no doubt about the datasets. No Member State stood up and said: wrong data. The Eionet as the biggest scientific network of its kind ensured that the quality assurance was the best possible.

4.3.3.4   Use of EEA information in other policy areas (mainstreaming)

Among the nine priority objectives of the 7th EAP, priority objective 7 deals with improving environmental integration and policy coherence. This part of the 7th EAP does not mention a role for the EEA. Nevertheless, the MAWP 2014-2018 included several activities which support this objective (as explained in section 4.4.2.1). Most notably, the MAWP refers to EEA work in relation to transport and environment indicators (TERM report) and the agri-environmental indicators (AEI) as well as to relevant indicators on climate change and energy.

Table 4-47 lists the sectorial policy DGs where there was a cooperation with the EEA during the evaluation period.

Table 4-47   Outline of the role of relevant EC DGs and areas of cooperation[132]

DG	Mandate	Areas of cooperation
DG AGRI	DG AGRI is responsible for EU policy on agriculture and rural development and deals with all aspects of the common agricultural policy (CAP)[133]. Environmental concerns are integrated in the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). Three priority areas for action are identified: biodiversity and the preservation and development of 'natural' farming and forestry systems, and traditional agricultural landscapes; water management and use; dealing with climate change[134].	The cooperation was related to the Agri-environmental indicators.
DG REGIO	DG REGIO is responsible for delivering Regional Policy, supporting job creation, business competitiveness, economic growth, sustainable development, and citizens' quality of life in the EU[135].	DG REGIO and the EEA cooperated on data products and maps, such as the Urban Atlas, European Climate Change Adaptation Platform (Climate-ADAPT), Base-maps and tools for the monitoring of the EU-wide Green Infrastructure strategy implementation.
DG MARE	DG MARE manages two policy areas: Integrated maritime policy (IMP), promoting Blue Growth, i.e. 'a long term strategy to support sustainable growth in	DG MARE and the EEA cooperated on the Atlas of the Seas, WISE-MARINE and key legislation such as the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSP).

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[132] Areas of cooperation are identified on the basis of the EEA's MAWP and AWPs.

[133] Webpage of DG AGRI: https://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/agriculture-and-rural-development_en.

[134] Webpage of the CAP: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/envir_en.

[135] Webpage of DG REGIO: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/what/investment-policy/.

DG	Mandate	Areas of cooperation
	the marine and maritime sectors as a whole'[136]; Common fisheries policy (CFP), setting the rules for managing European fishing fleets and for conserving fish stocks[137].	
DG MOVE	DG MOVE 'promotes a mobility that is efficient, safe, secure and environmentally friendly and to create the conditions for a competitive industry generating growth and jobs'[138].	DG MOVE and the EEA cooperation was limited to the TERM report (Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism).
DG ENER	DG ENER is responsible for 'developing and implementing the EU's energy policy, including the promotion of sustainable energy production, transport and consumption in line with the EU 2020 targets'[139].	DG ENR is indicated as 'key partner' in several EEA's reports and assessments related to GHG emissions, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.
DG GROW	DG GROW is responsible (among others) for: 'helping turn the EU into a smart, sustainable, and inclusive economy'; 'delivering the EU's space policy via the two large-scale programmes Copernicus (European Earth observation satellite system) and Galileo (European global navigation satellite system), as well research actions to spur technological innovation and economic growth'[140].	DG GROW and the EEA cooperated on Copernicus and issues related to circular economy.
DG ECHO	DG ECHO 'ensures rapid and effective delivery of EU relief assistance, in response to natural disasters and man-made crises'[141].	DG ECHO was involved in issues related to climate change and adaptation (e.g. Climate-ADAPT information system).
DG NEAR[142]	DG NEAR deals with EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies, and coordination of the relations with EEA-EFTA countries[143].	DG NEAR and the EEA were involved in cooperation activities with countries of the European Neighbourhood for the strengthening of national capacities in the field of environment. Eastern Partnership countries (ENI SEIS II East) and the ENP South Region (ENI SEIS II South)

Source: See footnotes

The desk review of AWPs and CAARs found that other DGs are mentioned in several places as 'key partners' or in connection with certain activities but there is limited reference to the policy processes in the policy areas of these DGs that EEA work would be expected to contribute to. Further, interviews in some of the sector DGs show that these references have not been translated into actual cooperation and interactions have been quite limited (DG AGRI, DG MARE, and DG ENER). The designation of 'key partners' or general mentioning of DGs does not seem to have implied practical cooperation between the EEA and other entities, and this element indicates a discrepancy between the programming documents and the practical implementation of cooperation activities.

The cooperation with DG NEAR was of a more operational character focused on the assistance to the Neighbourhood countries in capacity building for environmental information systems and Eionet set-up. EEA work in this area

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[136] Webpage of DG MARE – Maritime Affairs: https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue_growth_en.

[137] Webpage of DG MARE – Fisheries: https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp_en.

[138] Webpage of DG MOVE: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/about-us_en.

[139] Webpage of DG ENER: https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/about-us.

[140] Webpage of DG GROW: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/about-us.

[141] Webpage of DG ECHO: https://ec.europa.eu/echo/who/about-echo_en.

[142] EEA programming documents refer to DG Enlargement and DG DEVCO. These two DGs were merged and DG NEAR was formed.

[143] Webpage of DG NEAR: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/about/directorate-general_en.

was funded through non-core funds which were granted through DG NEAR managed grant mechanisms. Consequently, it is not in the same way as for the sector DGs (ENER, AGRI, and MARE) relevant to consider mainstreaming of EEA work. An interview with a representative of DG NEAR indicates that the EEA is performing well in this area, however, with some scope for improvement in relation to project management.

The monitoring of mentioning of EEA outputs 2016 referred above shows that out of the 20 Commission documents that referred EEA data, four related to DGs other than ENV/CLIMA (see table below for specific details).

Table 4-48   Commission documents mentioning EEA data in 2016 (not ENV and CLIMA)

Commission document	Theme	EEA output mentioned
Fifth report on monitoring developments of the rail market.	Transport; Noise	Reference to data on noise from rail transport.
Strategy for Agricultural Statistics 2020 and beyond and subsequent potential legislative scenarios.	Agriculture	SOER 2015
On the position to be adopted on behalf of the European Union concerning the designation and taking effect of the Baltic Sea and North Sea as Nitrogen Oxyde Emissions Control Area.	Marine issues	1) The impact of international shipping on European air quality and climate forcing (published 14 March 2013). 2) Air quality in Europe – 2015 report (published 30 November 2015).
Proposal for a Directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources.	Energy	1) Renewable Energy in Europe 2016 – Recent growth and knock-on effects. 2) Energy support measures and their impact on innovation in the renewable energy sector in Europe.

Source: EEA monitoring [414], analysed by support study

Further desk research by the support study showed that EEA information has been referred in key policy processes in several policy areas.

For environment, DG AGRI uses some of the indicators produced by the EEA for the agri-environmental indicators in its CAP Context Indicators[144].

For transport (DG MOVE), the Staff Working Document on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport referred to EEA data on GHG emissions[145].

In the energy area (DG ENER), the EEA report on renewable energy in Europe (2017) and report on Air quality in Europe (2017) were cited in 3rd State of the Energy Union report (2017). The T&P report is referred several times in the Assessment of the progress made by Member States towards the national energy efficiency targets for 2020[146].

The survey of Commission officials only yielded one response from a sector-policy DG: AGRI. EEA information used was assessed as 'very useful' or 'useful' for policy implementation.

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[144] [456] https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-indicators/context_en
[145] [478] The implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system" five years after its publication: achievements and challenges, p. 18, (SWD(2016) 226 Final)
[146] [479] COM(2015) 574 final

Data from interviews with representatives of DG AGRI, DG MARE and DG ENER provided additional detail and understanding of the use of EEA outputs in these DGs. While there is recognition of the work done by the EEA, the interviews also expressed some concerns related to the understanding of the economic sector and the interplay between the environmental issues and sector issues. Further, there were concerns related to level of precision in the data provided in relation to e.g. reporting on the Habitat Directive and Water Framework Directive. On the other hand, there is also a concern that EEA in some cases mainly drew data from other sources, which were already available to these policy DGs and thus did not always add value to the knowledge base (seen in the eyes of the sector DGs). However, it is important to note that there are differences between the DGs, the intensity of the cooperation between the EEA and the DGs and the mechanisms ensuring this cooperation (as further detailed under Coherence, section 7.3.1 dealing with cooperation mechanisms). Overall, the data from interviews indicates that cooperation in the beginning of the period was limited and there was a lack of trust, however, positive developments happened towards the end of the evaluation period with actions to improve relations. However, it should also be considered that the Founding Regulation is relatively weak in this area. The priority areas of concern listed in Article 3 of the Regulation are focused on the traditional environmental sectors – and are supplemented with a relatively diffuse sentence stating that 'The socio-economic dimension shall also be taken into account' (Article 3, 2, see also analysis of relevance of the priority areas in section 6.2.2).

4.3.4   Use of EEA products for environment and climate policy in Member States

With regard to contribution to national policy development and implementation, country representatives in the EEA Management Board were asked to what extent they consider that the EEA, through its activities and outputs, has contributed to the development and implementation of environment and climate policy in their country. As shown in the figure below, more respondents considered that the activities and outputs of EEA contributed to policy development than implementation, and the vast majority judged that it contributed to both at least to some extent.

Figure 4-13   Results of the MB survey: Contribution of EEA to national policy development and implementation (based on 17 responses)
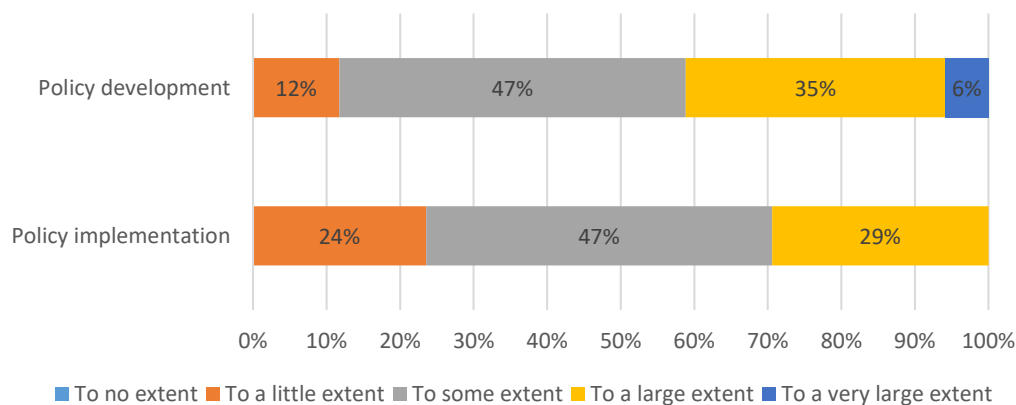
The interviews with Management Board members and the workshop with the NFPs indicate that EEA products play an important role in policy making at the national level, however, often together with national information and sometimes in a more indirect way through setting an agenda. The stakeholder workshop found that:

-   EEA products were useful for national policy work and used by national authorities as background documents and allowed to see the situation in the country in the light of the European situation and the reports also brought new knowledge that the countries themselves could not produce (or would be more costly and duplicate work between the countries to produce).

-   The EEA reports were used for policy development at the national level. If some internal analysis was needed to support some policy development, and resources were limited, having "precooked" data from EEA was important. However, this would not necessarily appear in any public document, hence the impact would not have been widely publicised. The fact that the source was the EEA would have been promoted, but mainly internally.

- Ex post analysis of policies. Countries took different approaches, which can provide learning. The Eionet had an important role in facilitating exchange of practices. E.g. this sharing of good practices was very important in climate adaptation, a new policy area.

- The EEA reports were circulated and consulted upon in the Eionet as part of their preparation and NRCs took active part in the process through contributing to the reports. This increased the visibility and knowledge of the reports at the national level and thereby also the uptake of the reports in national policy work[147].

Further, the point was made by workshop participants that it is important also to recognise that the data, processes, services and tools embedded in the work of the EEA and Eionet in themselves also have provided support for policy work both at the EU and national level. I.e. the work of the EEA and Eionet has improved the availability of information at the national level, because better systems for monitoring and reporting on the environment have been in place than would be the case without the EEA. This point was also made in interviews with MB members and NFPs.

4.3.5 Contribution to enhanced environmental protection in Europe and sustainable development

This judgement criterion relates to the general objective of the EEA, which is to contribute to enhanced environmental protection in Europe and sustainable development. The achievement of this objective depends not only on the actions of the EEA/Eionet, but also on other stakeholders and general societal context. As such, hard evidence is very difficult in this area, and relies primarily on the assessments made under the rest of the judgement criteria. The discussion here is based on the evidence and findings presented in previous sections, such as illustrations from case studies, and stakeholder responses on the subject.

The way that the EEA/Eionet contributes to this general objective is through its contributions to policy development and implementation. As shown in Sections 4.3.3, 4.3.4, and 4.3.3.4, EEA contribution to policy development and implementation (in the area of environment and climate) is found to be high, both on the EU and on a national level. Most case studies have shown some or crucial contribution, in particular for policy implementation.

While stakeholders were not systematically asked to assess the level to which the EEA contributes to environmental protection and sustainable development, some examples were provided by NGOs and national stakeholders. According to these examples, the contribution to the objectives is achieved via: instigating and contributing to relevant debates, policy contributions, bringing attention to the topic of environmental protection (e.g. by raising the prestige of environmental initiatives).

The topic is further explored in the context of the benefits assessment in Section 5.2.1.2, which explores the benefits of the EEA which relate to achieving the general objectives of the Agency.

Overall, while it is not possible to directly assess the contribution, the analysis in the previous sections, as well as the benefits assessment under the efficiency criterion, indicate positive contribution of the EEA to environmental protection and sustainable development.

4.3.6 Key findings and conclusions on Q2

In answering this question, the support study focused on four judgement criteria reflecting steps in the levels of effects in the intervention logic and taking into account the objectives of the EEA as stated in the Founding Regulation. The first of these focused on dissemination of EEA information, and here it was found that the awareness and reach of the EEA and its products varies depending on the product. For example, the products related to general societal debates have a wider reach. However, it is noted that this does not provide a value judgement on the more "niche" reports, which have their own, albeit narrower, audience. Overall, the EEA engages a broad range of stakeholders, as seen by the analysis of the subscribers to the EEA mailing list, and respondents to surveys aimed at a broader public. However, stakeholder impressions of the reach to the wider audiences indicate both positive

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[147] See workshop output document in 10.18

activities and improvements and some limitations. Notably, both industry and NGO stakeholders indicated interest in closer collaboration with the EEA.

The second judgement criterion concerned the supply of objective, reliable, comparable and accessible information by the EEA. The information generated by the EEA is found to be reliable, objective and comparable, although some differences between areas and specific products have been found. The comprehensive quality assurance pro-cesses are noted as one of the main factors in ensuring reliability and comparability of data. This is based on per-ceptions from users rather than actual 'expert' check of specific reports and other types of outputs provided by the EEA. This includes both general feed-back from the open public consultation, survey of Commission officials as well as interviews. Notably, interviews conducted in relation to the case studies provided more specific inputs and un-derstanding, and thus also verification, that the EEA is delivering on its objective in this regard. At an overall level, Copernicus activities contributed to providing objective, reliable and comparable information as by nature these data rely on earth observation and employ the same method regardless of the country or individuals involved. However, the actual use of the data was fairly limited during the evaluation period with all stakeholders having high expectations for increased use in the future.

The third judgement criterion was related to the application of EEA information and knowledge in policy develop-ment and policy implementation. Here, the main conclusion is that the EEA contributes to policy development and implementation of environment and climate policy at EU and national levels. This is based on analysis of use of EEA data and reports in key horizontal EU policy processes (elaboration of the 7th EAP as well as the Environmen-tal Implementation Review) as well as specific processes in areas covered by the case studies. In relation to the case studies it was found that the contribution was significant and crucial in several of the areas studied as case studies, notably climate and nature, but data also points to a very significant role when it comes to air quality. In all cases (including the horizontal processes), the EEA was found to make a contribution. However, the case stud-ies show that the area of freshwater has been less effective than other areas – for several reasons including staff changes in both the EEA and the Commission, complexities in reporting processes and the difficulties related to Reportnet, which affected in particular reporting on the Water Framework Directive. Nevertheless, the EEA's input to implementation of the Water Framework Directive is still considered crucial, whereas some difficulties were en-countered in relation to the Drinking Water Directive and the Urban Wastewater Directive.

The evidence from the analysis of use of EEA reports and the case studies is further supported with data from the survey and interviews with Commission officials, which support a finding that EEA and Eionet overall provides ef-fective support for policy work, although the area of urban environment is identified as an area with shortcomings (in line with the finding in EQ1 above). However, in relation to 'urban', inputs from the Commission also empha-sise that this was a policy area under development during the evaluation period and some shortcomings are there-fore not unexpected. At the overall level, case studies together with data from surveys, interviews and the work-shop, all consistently pointed at a positive evaluation of the EEA's contribution to policy work at the EU level. The finding is thus regarded as solid.

Document reviews and interviews with other policy DGs (REGIO, MARE, ENER, AGRI) show that there is more lim-ited use of EEA products in these DGs. However, there are good examples of how EEA data and reports have been used. In relation to agriculture and transport, the EEA's work has been focused on indicators and reporting on in-tegration of environmental concerns in these policy areas, which is the obvious starting point. Despite other DGs being mentioned as 'key partners' in the AWPs, the interviews indicate that there has been limited cooperation. This is further explored under coherence, section 7.3.1.

When it comes to support to policy work at national level, the data shows that national policy makers had more diverse needs reflecting differences between the EEA member countries, nevertheless the evidence from the case studies provides good examples of how EEA information has been used nationally. This is further supported by evi-dence from surveys and interviews of national members of the EEA's Management Board as well as observations from the stakeholder workshop, which supports the overall finding that EEA and Eionet information and outputs have contributed significantly to national policy work in the environment and climate areas. The study did not in-

clude comprehensive interviews with national policy makers from each Member State although a number of Management Board members were interviewed and MB members also had the possibility to contribute via the survey. National stakeholders provided input also through the NFP workshop and the general stakeholder workshop. However, it is assessed that further interviews (covering a wider range of national policy stakeholders, e.g. also going beyond the environment and climate spheres) as well as analysis of national policy processes and how the EEA contributed could have served to further solidify the findings and gaining better insight into how the Agency support national policy work.

There is some data from interviews with representatives of the EEA Scientific Committee, NGOs and international organisations which illustrate that information and outputs from the EEA had impacts on science, think tanks and civil society and through these also indirect effects on policy making at EU and national levels. However, the data is based on interviews and is more indicative and there is thus less solid evidence in this area.

The fourth judgement criterion related to the wider impacts of the EEA's contribution to enhanced environmental protection and sustainable development in Europe. Here, it was not possible to present 'hard evidence' on the contribution the EEA is making towards enhancing environmental protection in Europe and, ultimately, to progressing on a path towards sustainable development, which are the ultimate aims of the agency. However, the findings presented above indicate that through contributions to policy development and implementation, as well as raising awareness, the EEA is contributing to this goal.

4.4 Q3: Effectiveness of EEA in responding to stakeholder needs and dealing with new policy developments

Q3: How appropriate is the balance of activities in relation to different environmental topics considering the evolving environment and climate policy landscape and the needs of the main stakeholders? How effective has the EEA been in anticipating and dealing with evolving policies?

This question is approached by looking at two key issues: Effectiveness in responding to stakeholder needs and effectiveness in responding to new EU policy developments in environment and climate during the evaluation period. The two are interrelated as new EU policy developments represent key stakeholder needs across European and national policy institutions, which are the key stakeholders of the EEA. The chapter is organised accordingly with section 4.4.1 presenting evidence on responsiveness to stakeholder needs and section 4.4.2 presenting evidence on responsiveness to new policy developments. The judgement criteria and indicators guiding this question are presented in Table 4-49 along with the data sources identified.

Table 4-49   Q3: Judgement criteria and indicators

Judgement criteria	Indicators
The EEA has been responsive to stakeholders' needs in relation to existing policies and priorities The EEA has responded to needs of its main stakeholders in relation to new policy making - 7th EAP - Juncker agenda - IAS - Energy union - SDGs - Circular economy package	Mirroring of new policies in work programmes (EEA and ETC) Changes in EEA staff compared to policy development Changes in EEA expenses compared to policy development Changes in NFP/NRC/ETC set-up mirroring policy developments Perceived responsiveness of EEA by stakeholders Responsiveness to results of evaluations

4.4.1   Responsiveness to stakeholder needs

As explained in chapter 3, the governance structure of the Agency is such that the MAWP and the AWPs shall determine the precise activities of the Agency within its mandate. As the MAWP and AWPs are consulted with the members of the MB and ultimately approved by the MB, this provides the stakeholders of the MB with the opportunity to influence the activities of the Agency and to ensure that they are coherent with their needs. An efficient system for consultation and dialogue with the MB on the elaboration of the MAWP and AWPs is therefore a precondition for being effective in the response to stakeholders' needs. This element is addressed in Q5 below (section 5.3), which examines the efficiency of the decision making system and governance structure. In the present section, the focus is on evidence regarding responsiveness to needs expressed by key stakeholders as well as stakeholder perceptions of responsiveness.

4.4.1.1   Responsiveness and balance of activities according to the MDIAK chain

Table 4-50 below presents data on staff time and expenses allocated strategic areas in the period 2013-2016. This is based on cost and staff data supplied by the EEA based on the activity based accounting system, which is based on three levels, where the two top-levels correspond to SA1, SA2, SA3 and SA4 in the MAWP. The second level refers to level 2 in the MAWP (e.g. SA1.1). The third level is a 'project code' – each level two (e.g. SA1.1.) is typically divided into 3-5 project codes. It should be noted that data for the year 2013 is based on an exercise by the EEA to transfer data from the previous activity based accounting system (which was not organised according to the new MAWP) to the new one started in 2014. For further details, see Appendix N. It must be underlined that this information should be treated with caution as the system has been under implementation during the period 2014-2016 and data is not to be regarded as completely accurate, but it does give an overall picture of how resources have been used in the key areas of the MAWP.

Table 4-50   Expenses and time booked for the broad strategic areas, 2013-2016

	Expenses, Thousand Euros						Time booked, full time equivalents (FTEs)					
	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2013-14	% Change 2014-16	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2013-14	%Change 2014-16
SA1. Informing policy implementation	6,971	7,846	8,333	8,286	13%	6%	51	55	63	62	7%	13%
SA2. Assessing systemic challenges	1,052	1,033	1,239	1,130	-2%	9%	13	20	16	14	53%	-30%
SA3. Knowledge co-creation, sharing and use	4,676	4,641	4,464	4,384	-1%	-6%	90	72	67	67	-21%	-7%
SA4. EEA management	1,799	1,456	1,373	1,430	-19%	-2%	67	65	62	65	-3%	0%
Total	14,498	14,975	15,410	15,230	3%	2%	222	211	208	207	-5%	-2%

Source: Based on information received from the EEA[148].

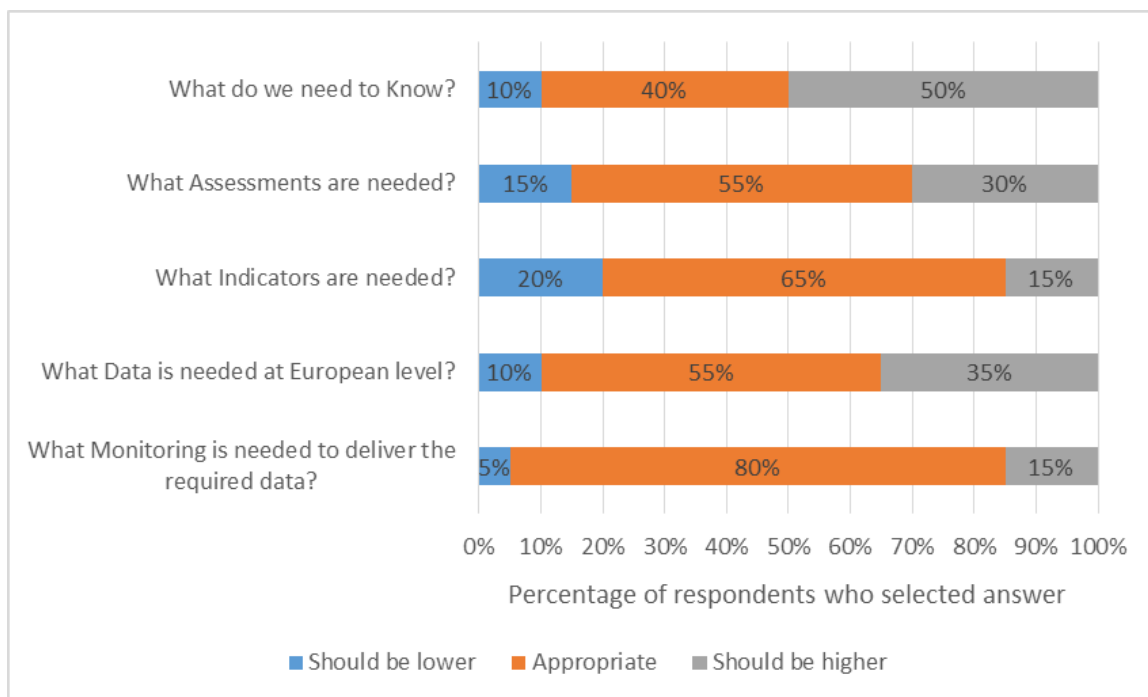[148] <u>Note:</u> To show the trend over the period, the 2013 strategic actions and projects were restated to align with the structure of the 2014-2016 MAWP. This means that the 2013 values were calculated by matching relevant areas of work between 2013 and

The table above shows that the strategic area focusing on policy implementation in topical areas (SA1) is the one with the highest expenses, while the majority of staff time has been booked to Knowledge co-creation strategic area (SA3). However, since the expenses above only show core budget, SA3 does not include expenses from, for example, Copernicus funds.

While the distribution on SAs is not directly comparable to the steps in the MDIAK chain, a rough estimate is that SA1 and the majority of SA3 corresponds with MDI, whereas SA2 and a smaller part of SA3 corresponds with AK. It thus emerges that the balance of activity of the Agency during the evaluation period was weighted towards MDI with less resources devoted to AK.

The question is then whether this balance was in line with stakeholder needs. The data from consultation with the stakeholders shows a mixed reply and illustrates that the needs of the stakeholders are not uniform. The survey of MB members asked whether the prioritisation between the different elements in the MDIAK chain has been appropriate. Figure 4-14 provides an overview of the answers.

Figure 4-14   MB survey responses on prioritisation between the five elements of the MDIAK chain

Source: Question 3b): Do you consider that the prioritisation of the EEA between the five elements (M, D, I, A, K) has been appropriate? Valid Responses: 20

The majority (80%, 16 responses) of respondents felt that the level of prioritisation given to Monitoring is appropriate. 55% (11 responses) felt that the level of prioritisation given to Data is appropriate, but 35% (7 responses) felt that it should be higher. 65% (13 responses) felt that the level of prioritisation to Indicators is appropriate. 55% (11 responses) felt that the appropriate level of priority was given to Assessments. However only 40% (8 responses) of respondents felt that Knowledge had an appropriate level of prioritisation, and 50% (10 responses) felt it should be given higher priority.

MAWP, from original project codes used in 2013. The project codes in 2014-16 are consistent, and based on the MAWP 2014-16. The expenses are reported according to the budgetary accounts (EEA financial regulation).

The allocation of expenses to years is based on the activity year in the posting criteria (activity years were corrected for some transactions based on fund source C1/C8 and financial year).

The actual FTEs include staff funded by non-core projects and are based on time registrations and 200 productive days per year (the drop in FTEs from 2013 to 2014 is influenced by the change from a 37 to 40 hour working week).

During the interviews, some of the stakeholders from the Commission expressed concern that the EEA focused too much on outlook and forecasting (AK of MDIAK) and not enough on MDI. During the workshop, stakeholders from the Member States emphasised on the importance of the AK steps. This was also emphasised during the Seminar of the Management Board in 2016.

The data from consultation with stakeholders thus illustrate that there is not a uniform agreement on how EEA's resources should be prioritised across the MDIAK chain. Also, no matter which step one focuses on, there are always stakeholders who find that resources devoted have not been sufficient or should have been less. In a situation where the budget was fixed (and in fact even being constrained by budget cuts), this constitutes a challenge and highlights the need for efficient governance mechanisms allowing the Management Board to steer the direction of the Agency in the most appropriate way leveraging the priorities of the different stakeholders. The efficiency of the governance system is assessed under Q5.

4.4.1.2   Responsiveness to results of evaluations

One element in assessing what has changed in the major direction of the agency during the evaluation period is to compare the previous planning documents (MAWP 2009-2013 and annual plans) with the current MAWP and to consider how the recommendations from the previous evaluation were reflected in the current MAWP. The previous evaluation highlighted some areas of activity that were regarded by most stakeholders as being less relevant and deserving less priority. These included Eye on earth as well as international activities at the global level such as participation and showcasing of the EEA in international meetings and conferences.

From a review of the MAWP and AWPs in the 2009-2012 period, it can be seen that Eye on earth was quite prominent in the AWPs although not mentioned very specifically in the MAWP. The programmes do not contain any information on budget/staff allocations. The same is true to some extent for international activities. The current MAWP represents a decisive shift in relation to Eye on earth, which was entirely removed from the activities to be undertaken. In relation to international activities, it is not as simple to discern from the programming documents the extent which these have been downscaled. However, staff at the EEA have explained that this has been the case and it can also be seen in the budget figures that travel activities have gone down in the period 2013 – 2015 (mission expenses, budget line 1300).

4.4.1.3   Responsiveness in relation to existing tasks and on-going work

During the survey, the respondents from the Commission were asked to assess whether: 1) the EEA has provided sufficient resources for their unit's work, 2) the EEA has been adaptive to the needs of the unit and 3) the EEA has adapted its activities and outputs to the changing policy environment during the period of 2012 to 2016. In total, 32 responses were received. The figure below presents the findings from the survey.

Figure 4-15   Commission survey responses on ability to adapt to change
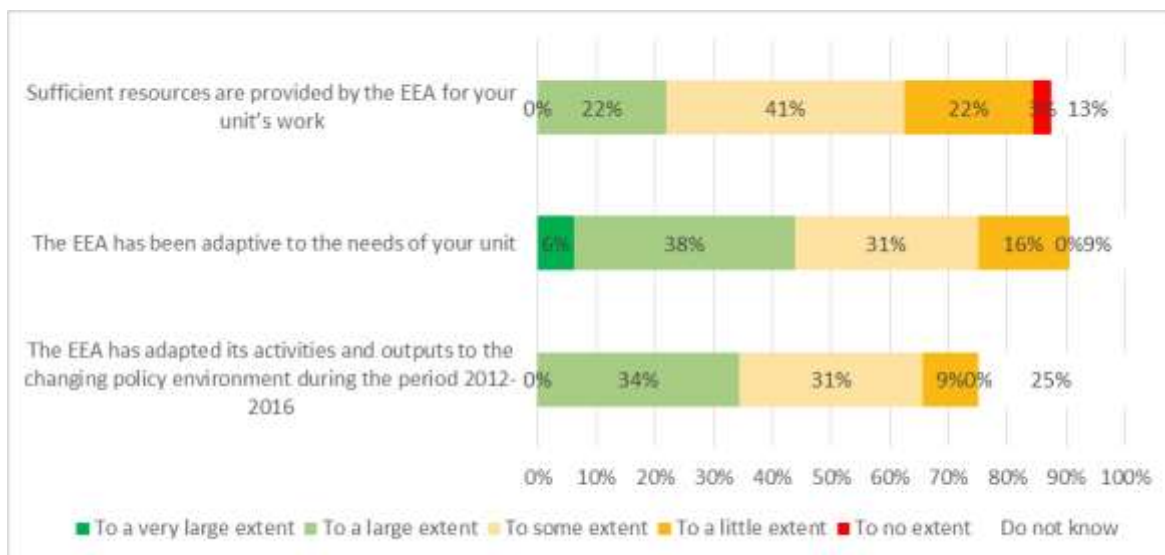
Source: Q12) To what extent do you agree with the following statements: a) the EEA has adapted its activities and outputs to the changing policy environment during the period 2012-2016, b) the EEA has been adaptive to the needs of your unit, c) sufficient resources are provided by the EEA for your unit's work? Valid Responses: 32.

63% of respondents felt that the EEA provided sufficient resources for their unit's work to some extent (41%) or to a large extent (22%), and 75% of respondents felt that the EEA has been adaptive to the needs of their unit to a very large extent (6%), large extent (38%) or some extent (31%) None of the respondents thought that the EEA had not adapted at all.

The interviewees from DG ENV overall found that the EEA has been responsive to their needs and has been flexible in adapting to the requests in terms of timing and framing of reports. This is also supported by the interviewees from DG CLIMA. They state that the EEA has been very responsive in respect to adjusting to policy frameworks and targets (e.g. in Trends and Projections publication, adjusting to the Kyoto targets, 2020 & 2030 Climate and Energy Framework(s), additional reporting requirements introduced stepwise by the new F-gas Regulation, etc.) and adding additional frameworks to the data reporting systems. In regard to the Nature Directives, adjustments to the work of the EEA were observed in response to policy developments, indicating that the EEA is able to adapt to remain relevant to policy needs and developments. However, in some cases interviewees from DG ENV considered that the EEA was considered less responsive to the needs of the Commission. One key case is the case of data handling for reporting under the Drinking Water Directive (DWD). The EEA had included this task under the MAWP, however, in 2015, the EEA informed DG ENV that it would end data handling for the DWD. DG ENV asked the EEA to reverse this change, but in 2016 the EEA confirmed that it would end the reporting work on the DWD. According to interviews with EEA staff, resource constraints was one reason for this decision, together with an assessment by the EEA that drinking water did not fully enter EEA's mandate related to the state of the environment. Another area, where respondents at DG ENV considered the EEA to be less responsive is 'urban'. Here, the interviewees found that despite this area being mentioned in the MAWP, the EEA did not show willingness to provide inputs when requested to do so. In this regard, it is relevant to investigate how DWD support and 'urban' and the changes or requests for work were reflected in the dialogue and consultation around the AWPs. In this regard, the observation is that neither of these two subjects seem to have been reflected in the AWPs and comments on AWPs provided by the Commission (see further elaboration under Q5).

4.4.2   Responsiveness to new policy developments

A key element in assessing the responsiveness of the EEA to the needs of the stakeholders is to examine how the Agency has responded to policy development during the evaluation period, i.e. whether the EEA has been effective in programming and prioritising their activities in a way that takes into account the changing policy landscape. During the evaluation period a number of policy developments occurred. The study has focused on the following key policies that were considered to be the most relevant to EEA's work:

- 7th EAP
- Juncker Commission Agenda
- Energy Union
- SDGs
- Circular Economy Package
- Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR)
- Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Regulation

The timeline of these policy developments (i.e. when the new policies entered into force or have been adopted) is presented in the figure below. The figure also presents the timeline of the MAWP (guiding the work of the EEA) and this evaluation period. As it can be seen from the figure, the new policies came into force in parallel to (7th EAP) or after the MAWP was adapted in 2014, thus they have different levels of maturity.

Figure 4-16   Timeline with some policy development during the EEA's MAWP
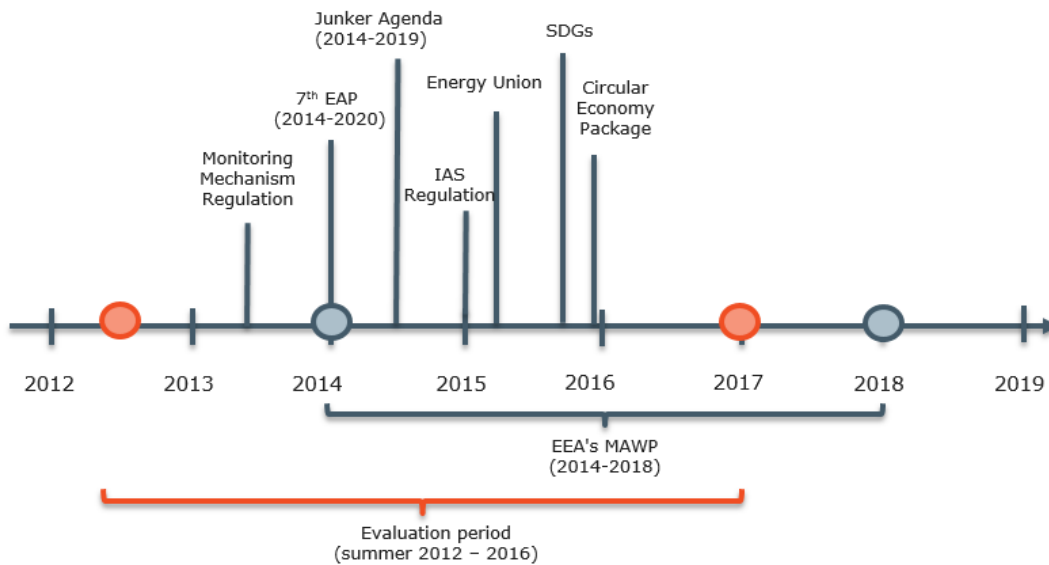
Source: Support study team

These policy developments are different in their nature. Some of the policy developments have a horizontal and strategic focus, like the 7th EAP, Juncker Agenda and SDGs, covering several environmental areas and setting general objectives. Others are more operational and involve specific legal instruments like the IAS Regulation or MMR. In between, there are horizontal instruments which still have a more limited focus and which foresee specific actions and legal instruments, such as the Energy Union and Circular Economy Package. The sections below present the evidence found on the extent to which the EEA has been responsive to these different categories of policies. The distinction is important because the type of response that can be expected is different. For strategic policies, one can expect that the EEA reflects on these in their MAWP and overall priorities and direction of work. For the policies involving specific legal instruments, these can encompass potential concrete tasks for the EEA and the question is then whether this is the case and these tasks have been incorporated in the EEA work programmes and staff and resources assigned to the performance of these tasks.

4.4.2.1   Strategic policies

7th EAP

The 7th Environmental Action Programme (EAP) titled 'Living well, within the limits of the planet' is a key strategy document guiding the EU actions in the environmental and climate policy until 2020.[149] It was approved in November 2013 and entered into force on January 2014.

The 7th EAP is guided by a long-term vision for 2050 on becoming a low-carbon, resource efficient green economy. The programme sets three key objectives: 1) protect, conserve and enhance the natural capital, 2) turn the EU into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy, and 3) safeguard the citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing. Within those objectives, a specific focus is given to natural capital (i.e. soil, water, air and biodiversity), resource efficiency, climate change and pollution (i.e. water, air, noise, toxic chemicals). To achieve these objectives, the EU will focus on the following enablers: better implementation of legislation (objective 4), increasing knowledge about the environment and widen the evidence base for policy (objective 5), more and wiser investments for environmental and climate purposes (objective 6) as well as full integration of environmental considerations into other policies (objective 7). The programme also sets two horizontal objectives to promote more sustainable cities (objective 8) and to address international environmental and climate change more effectively (objective 9).

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[149] [457] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013D1386

The 7th EAP explicitly recognises the EEA's ability to achieve one of the objectives set in the programme, namely, increase knowledge about the environment and widen the evidence base for policy (objective 5). Thus, the programme entrusts a monitoring and evaluation role to the EEA, particularly in assessing the implementation of environmental policy and progress towards 2020 and 2030 targets. This is also reflected in the MAWP for the EEA.

The objectives of the EAP are integrated into the MAWP and its four strategic areas. In line with the priority objective 5, the MAWP is structured around 4 strategic areas, SA1: informing policy implementation, SA2: assessing systematic challenges, SA3: knowledge co-creation, sharing and use, and SA4: EEA management. Particularly, the SA3 is strongly linked to the priority objective 5 of the EAP. The strategic areas 1-3 support several different priority objectives of the 7th EAP, and together they cover all 9 priority objectives. The MAWP clearly reflects which objectives from the EAP are covered by which SA. For SA1 and SA2, the MAWP includes diagrammes illustrating how the priority objectives of the 7th EAP are reflected in the MAWP (p. 18 for SA1 and p. 39 for SA2). Based on the review of the MAWP, it is very clear that the EEA considered carefully the 7th EAP. The consultation among the MB members of the MAWP also shows that several members appraised this in particular. A deeper look at the contents of the MAWP (going beyond the cross-check shown in the tables of the MAWP) shows that some of the 7th EAP priorities are better reflected than others (see Table 4-51).

Table 4-51   Integration of priorities of the 7th EAP in the MAWP

7th EAP priority objective	EEA reference SA tables in MAWP	Reflection in the MAWP text
PO1 – to protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital	All SA1-areas except SA1.3, SA1.4 and SA1.9 SA2.4	This includes an ecosystems service perspective and focus on the economic valuation of natural capital, which is not strongly featured in the MAWP, however, the protection of natural capital is referred to in SA1.5 - water management, SA1.6 – marine environment, SA1.7 biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forest, SA1.8 land use and soil, natural capital. Not very prominent in SA2.4, which focuses primarily on SOER and indicator reports.
PO2 – to turn the EU into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy	SA1.3, SA1.5 and SA1.9 SA2.1, SA2.3, SA2.4	Featured in all selected SA1 with SA1.3 focusing on resource efficiency and low carbon economy, SA1.5 - on water resources and SA1.9 – on waste and material resources. PO is explicitly referred to in SA2.1, but it is not very prominent in SA2.3 (megatrends) and SA2.4 (focuses primarily on SOER and indicator reports).
PO3 – to safeguard the citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing	SA1.1, SA1.2, SA1.4 and SA1.5 SA2.2 and SA2.4	SA1.1 reflects the targets set in 7th EAP on air quality and noise pollution. SA1.2 reflects the PO3 by delivering targeted indicators identifying the environmental, health, and economic impacts of pollutant releases from industrial facilities to air, water, soil, and in waste. SA1.4 reflects safeguarding citizens through climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation. SA1.5 does not explicitly feature safeguarding citizens, but it is implied through tracking the objectives of achieving good ecological status in EU water bodies. PO3 fully featured in SA2.2, which is dedicated to environment, human health and well-being, and in SA2.4. As this is one of the three key cross-cutting priorities of the 7th EAP, the MAWP is more focus in the MAWP could have been expected.

7th EAP priority objective	EEA reference SA tables in MAWP	Reflection in the MAWP text
PO4 - to maximise the benefits of EU environment legislation	All SA1-areas SA2.2 and SA2.4	PO4 is reflected in all SA1 and SA2.2 and 2.4 through supporting and informing policy developments – evidence based. PO3 fully featured in SA2.2, which is dedicated to environment, human health and well-being, and is implicitly reflected in SA2.4.
PO5 - to improve the knowledge and evidence base for environment policy	All SA1-areas All SA2-areas	Improving knowledge and evidence base for environmental policy is reflected in all SA1 and SA2.
PO6 - to secure investment for environment and climate policy and get the prices right	None SA1 areas SA2.1 and SA2.4	None of the SA1 contribute to PO6. SA2.1 explicitly refers to PO6 on getting the price right. Overall, this objective seems to be less relevant to work EEA does.
PO7 - To improve environmental integration and policy coherence	SA1.1, SA1.3 and SA1.7 SA2.4	All selected SA1 areas feature interlinkages between different policies and policy coherence, e.g. SA1.3 addresses interlinkages between air pollution and climate change; climate change, energy and transport. SA2.4 implicitly reflects PO7.
PO8 - To enhance the sustainability of EU cities	Only SA1.8 SA2.4	SA1.8 makes a direct link to PO8 by referring to a clear demand for urban, land use and soil information analysis in the spatial context in view of the sustainable cities. There is an indirect link as Climate-ADAPT, which is mentioned, includes an urban element. Not very prominent in SA2.4, which focuses primarily on SOER and indicator reports. Overall focus on PO8 is limited to only SA1.8.
PO9 - To increase the EU's effectiveness in addressing regional and global environmental and climate challenges	All SA1-areas except SA1.4 and SA1.8 SA2.1 and SA2.4	All selected SA1 areas deal with issues covering regional and global environment, such as air pollution, climate change, biodiversity, etc. Both SA2.1 and SA2.4 reflect the support for addressing regional and global environmental challenges.

Source: Developed by the study team.

During interviews with the representatives from the Commission and MB, none of the interviewees mentioned that the 7th EAP was not sufficiently reflected in the MAWP.

Looking at AWPs 2014-2016, the 7th EAP is used as a justification/reference for many different expected outputs under various SA in the AWPs, e.g. to justify various expected outputs under SA1.4 Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation. However, compared to the MAWP not all SAs mention 7th EAP as a justification/reference. The MAWP states that SA1.2 Industrial pollution contributes to the priority objective 1: protect, conserve and enhance the natural capital, but the AWP 2016 does not refer to the 7th EAP directly. It may be implicitly understood that the expected results support the objectives of the 7th EAP, however, in some case, no reference to the 7th EAP is made. The references to the 7th EAP made in the AWP do not seem to be systematic. One of the suggestions brought up during the consultation forum was to give a default justification of 7th EAP (brought by Germany during the Consultation of AMP 2014).

In 2014, a restructuring of the Eionet was undertaken in order to link the structure better to the priorities defined in the MAWP (see Table 4-52). This restructuring primarily focused on a revision of NRC structure and NRC profile descriptions. One of the changes introduced was that the NRCs for 'Chemicals', 'Environment and Economy' and

'Policy instruments and evaluation' were discontinued. Furthermore, the NRC "Sustainable Consumption and Pro-duction" was renamed to NRC "Resource-efficient Economy and the Environment" as well as adjusting the tasks under this NRC, which is in line with the new policy developments on resource efficiency. Another change introduced was new NRCs for 'Industrial Pollution'. In addition, the NRCs on Biodiversity were reduced to two: "Biodiversity data and information", focusing on Monitoring, Data and Information (MDI) and 'Biodiversity and ecosystems indicators and assessment' with a focus on Information, Assessments and Knowledge (IAK). The NRC 'Agriculture and Forest' was changed to 'Environment and Agriculture' to ensure that it reflects the systemic nature of interdepend-ences between agriculture sectorial activities and the environment. Finally, the two NRCs 'Marine and Coastal' and 'Maritime' were merged into a NRC for 'Marine, Coastal and Maritime'.

The new structure of NRCs was linked with the SAs defined the MAWP and as such it is broadly in line with the 7th EAP as was the case for the MAWP. However, the NRC structure also inherited the same weaknesses in reflecting certain elements of the 7th EAP as portrayed in Table 4-51 above.

Table 4-52   Overview of linking the NRCs to the SA under the MAWP

Area	Name of NRC after 2014 with key changes highlighted
SA 1.1	Air quality
SA 1.1	Environment and transport
SA 1.1	Noise
SA 1.2	Industrial pollution
SA 1.3/ 1.1	Mitigation of air pollution and climate change
SA 1.3	Environment and energy
SA 1.4	Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation
SA 1.5	Water quantity
SA 1.5	Water quality and ecological status
SA 1.5	Water emission
SA 1.6	Marine, coastal and maritime
SA 1.7	Biodiversity data and information
SA 1.7	Biodiversity and ecosystems indicators and assessment
SA 1.7	Environment and agriculture
SA 1.8	Soil
SA 1.8	Land cover
SA 1.8	Land use and spatial planning
SA 1.9	Waste
SA 2.1	Resource-efficient economy and the environment
SA 2.2	Environment and Health
SA 2.3	Forward looking information and scenario's (FLIS)
SA 2.4	State of Environment
SA 3.2 /3.3	Environmental Information Systems
SA 3.4	Communication

Source: [162] Doc. EEA/MB/69/19, MB meeting, March 2014.

Juncker Commission Agenda

The Juncker Commission Agenda is a set of strategic guidelines for the EU established by the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker (2014-2019).[150] It was presented by the European Council on 27 June 2014.

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[150] [458] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/juncker-political-guidelines-speech_en.pdf

The Juncker Agenda focuses on different aspects of the EU's economy and society, e.g. boost of jobs, growth and investment or connected digital market. When it comes to the environmental policy, the agenda stresses the importance of developing a resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy. As elaborated in the previous section, the Energy Union will ensure that Europe has secure, affordable and climate-friendly energy. This strategy is reflected in the climate and energy legislation adopted by the EU (e.g. Climate and Energy 2030 Framework, Energy Efficiency Directive, Renewable Energy, etc.).

The Juncker Agenda is not mentioned in the AWP (2016, 2015) or consultations with the Member States. This can be explained by the fact that the Juncker Agenda sets strategic guidelines and concrete strategic actions are developed by separate legislation packages. For example, there is a strong focus in the AWP 2016 on the Energy Union and Climate and Energy Framework 2030, which reflects one of the priority areas of the Juncker Agenda. A study was conducted to assess how EU agencies contribute to the Juncker Commission Agenda.[151] The study found that the EEA directly supports three Juncker Commission's priorities: 1) Jobs, Growth and Investment; 2) Union of Democratic Change and, naturally, 3) Energy Union and Climate Change.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also known as '*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*' set 17 different goals[152] to stimulate action in the areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet.[153] The SDGs were adopted on 25th September 2015 by the United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1. The EU has committed to implement the SDGs in its policies.

The MAWP states that the work on environmental risks to human health and well-being will contribute to global processes such as the WHO Environment & Health process and the SDGs. Themes of relevance to these processes include 'health and population', 'chemicals and waste', 'food security, nutrition, sustainable agriculture', and 'water and sanitation'.

Even though the SDGs were adopted in 2015, AWP 2014 includes an objective under SA3.1 to "*provide advisory and technical support to the Commission and EU Member States on the Rio+20 implementation, with a particular focus on the development of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and associated indicators*". Furthermore, the AWP 2016 mentions that the measurable uptake of EEA concepts and analyses for environmental risks to human health and well-being into other policy processes, including the SDGs.

Before the adoption of the SDGs in the end of 2015, the EEA established a small reference group to coordinate the different thematic areas, including indicator experts and staff with UN liaison experience in order to support development of the EU common approach to SDGs.[154] In addition, the Executive Director of the EEA attended the 16th UNEP IRP meeting in May 2015 in Hanoi. The Programming Document for 2017-2019 states that additional resources may be needed for the EEA for monitoring SDGs' implementation in EU.

Furthermore, the NRCs established in 2014 - 'Environment and Health' and 'FLIS' - mention in their description that they will support the SDGs. However, they do not elaborate in detail on how the SDGs will be supported. 'Biodiversity data and information systems' NRC is focusing on EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, mentioning among others the target on tighter controls on IAS.

Looking at EEA's responsiveness to strategic policies together, overall the evidence shows that the EEA was very responsive and to a large extent reflected these policies in its MAWP and AWPs although some elements of the 7th

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[151] [290] How do EU agencies and other bodies contribute to the Europe 2020 Strategy and to the Juncker Commission Agenda? Deloitte, November 2016.
[152] [459] The information on 17 SDGs can be found here: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs
[153] [460] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld
[154] [7] Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) for 2015, EEA, June 2016.

EAP could have been better reflected, notably PO1 and PO8. This was also confirmed in interviews and the stake-holder workshop, where the participants acknowledged that the strategic priorities set in the MAWP – and the AWPs as well as the update of the MAWP[155] have broadly addressed the evolution of the EU's policy agenda.[156]

4.4.2.2   Strategic policy initiatives covering several legislative initiatives

Energy Union

The Energy Union Strategy was launched in February 2015, and it focuses on making energy more secure, affordable and sustainable. Since the launch of the strategy, several packages of measures have been published to promote the Energy Union. The strategy builds on the 2030 Climate and Energy framework[157] and the European Energy Security Strategy.[158]

The Energy Union Strategy encompasses 5 closely related dimensions:

1. security, solidarity and trust

2. a fully integrated internal energy market

3. energy efficiency

4. decarbonising the economy

5. research, innovation and competitiveness

As the Energy Union strategy was adopted only in February 2015, the strategy is not mentioned in the MAWP and only mentioned in the AWP 2016. However, the MAWP refers to the previous frameworks on which the strategy was built on. This includes the Climate and Energy Package for 2020, which sets targets (20-20-20) for GHG emissions, renewable energy and energy efficiency. The EU Climate and Energy package covers a wide range of inter-linked legislation to help to achieve those targets (e.g. MMR, EU ETS Directive, Effort Sharing Decision, Renewable Energy Directive, etc.). Furthermore, the MAWP dedicates SA1.3 to Climate Change Mitigation and Energy.

In the AWP 2016, SA1.3 Climate Change Mitigation and Energy will support the further development of the European Energy Union, its governance and reporting requirements. Furthermore, the EEA will support 2030 policy framework discussions and follow-up activities. One of the outputs expected under the SA1.3 is a support to the European Energy Union Report.

When examining the changes in employees working within the operation programme on Air and Climate Change (ACC), more specifically Climate Change mitigation and energy (ACC3), it is possible to observe the reflection of this policy. It can be observed that the number of employees increased from 6 temporary agents and 2 contract agents in 2014 to 7 temporary agents and 4 contract agents in 2016.[159] In regard to the expenses booked under SA1.3 (for detailed figures see 10.3), an increase of 5% can be observed in the period 2014-2016. The increase in both staff

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[155] [85] EEA Programming Document for 2017-2019, Adopted by the EEA Management Board on 7 December 2016, which is not within the timeframe of this evaluation.

[156] Output of the stakeholder workshop on 5 December 2017 on Study to support the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet.

157 http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-169-2014-INIT/en/pdf

[158] [461] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0015

[159] *Contract agents* are employed on short-term basis in order to reinforce capacities to work in areas where a long term requirement has not yet been defined, whereas *temporary agents* are often employed on potentially long-term employment in order to lead, manage and deliver core activities and to safeguard continuous expertise in the specific area/group.

number (particularly temporary agents) and expenses booked shows that the EEA was responsive to this new policy initiative.

In addition, the new NRC structure, establishing the NRC for 'Environment and Energy', supports the 2030 Climate and Energy Package, including the Energy Union. This is achieved by supporting the EEA's assessment and indicator work and helping the EEA to identify country-specific challenges in support of achieving medium and long-term energy goals. Thus, the Energy Union is fully reflected in the work of this NRC.

Circular Economy package

The communication on '*Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe*' was adopted in 2014 and set the focus on circular economy for sustainable growth.[160] A year later, the Circular Economy Action Plan was adopted (December 2015) with the actions proposed intending to contribute to the EU's transition to a circular economy, helping both consumers and producers to use resources in a more sustainable way.[161]

The Circular Economy Action Plan consists of a set of general and material-specific measures. The general measures focus on product design (e.g. Ecodesign Directive, Extended Producer Responsibility, Energy Labelling), production process (e.g. BREFs), consumption (e.g. sharing economy), moving from waste to resources (e.g. secondary materials), and innovation and investments. Thus, the nature of the Circular Economy Package is cross-institutional covering many sectors and products.

Different sectors and materials face specific challenges, thus the Circular Economy package also proposes some material-specific measures. Those measures include actions on plastics, food value chain, critical raw materials, construction and demolition, biomass and bio-based products and review of legislation on fertilisers.

As stated in the MAWP, the role of the EEA is to monitor progress and identify opportunities to improve the environment in line with a circular economy perspective. More specifically, the objectives stated in the MAWP include carrying out assessments of production systems, consumption and lifestyle patterns, and new business models, as well as, developing and implementing indicators.

In line with the 7th EAP, the MAWP is supporting the 2050 vision for a resource-efficient Europe. The focus on the circular economy is particularly visible in SA1.9 Waste and material resources and SA2.1 Resource-efficient economy and the environment. There, the expected outputs include the briefing on progress towards achieving circular economy in Europe as well as participatory processes with different stakeholders to promote uptake of sustainable business models enabling a circular economy. Even though the Circular Economy Package was adopted after the MAWP, the focus on circular economy was established earlier with 7th EAP and is reflected in the MAWP.

The expected outputs supported in the AWP 2016 and 2015 reflect a focus on the circular economy as well. Those outputs include a report on progress towards a circular economy and reach out activities (AWP 2016, 2015). The AWP 2015 refers to the EC's Communication '*Towards a circular economy: a zero-waste programme for Europe*' for justifying the focus on the circular economy. However, the AWP 2014 does not refer to circular economy but addresses resource-efficient economy. This can be explained by the fact that the communication on circular economy was published only in 2014, thus 'resource-efficient economy' was the term used then.

During the consultation forum, many Member States (i.e. Poland, Austria, Hungary, Sweden, etc.) expressed their support to the EEA working on the circular economy. Particularly, they appreciated the fact that AWP (2016) included a strong focus on the circular economy.

The new developments within the circular economy could potentially be reflected in the employees working within the operation programme on Integrated Environmental Assessment, specifically within the Green Economy, IEA1.

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[160] [462] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52014DC0398
[161] [463] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52015DC0614

The EEA uses a concept of 'green economy'[162], which encompasses the circular economy perspective. In 2014, 5 temporary agents and 5 contract agents were working within green economy, while 4 temporary agents and 3 contract agents were working within this field in 2016. This constitutes a decrease in the number of the employees, particularly contract agents. The reasons for this are unclear. However, it should be noted that the Circular Economy Package was adopted only in December 2015. Thus, the focus on the circular economy may still not be fully reflected in the organisational charts, as it takes time to employ new staff. On the other hand, when it comes to expenses booked under SA2.1 on Resource-efficient economy for 2014-2016 (for detailed figures see 10.3), an increase of 39% can be observed. This is also in line with the EEA performing more tasks to support circular economy. The Programming Document for 2017-2019 confirms that the legislative provisions in the circular economy package include new or extended work for the EEA (e.g. annual report on waste prevention and circular economy, 'Early warning reports' under the Waste Framework), which will require more resources.

Some changes introduced to the NRC structure also support the argument that the EEA is responsive to new policy developments. For instance, circular economy is reflected implicitly in two NRCs, namely 'Waste and material resources' and 'Resource-efficient economy and the environment'. The first NRC focuses on waste in the context of moving towards a circular economy, including a strong focus on the EU waste legislation. The second NRC focuses primarily on sustainable production and consumption, linking it to green economy, circular economy and resource efficiency.

4.4.2.3   Sector-specific policies and new legislation

Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR)

As part of reporting obligations under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, the MMR was adopted in 2013 amending the preceding Decision No 280/2004/EC. The Regulation established a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions of the EU and Member States. Under the Regulation, the EEA is given a task to assist the Commission in its work to monitor and report greenhouse gas emissions, which is further elaborated in Article 24 of the MMR. According to the MMR, the EEA should support the Commission in compiling the greenhouse gas emissions inventory and preparing inventory reports, performing quality assurance and quality control procedures, preparing estimates for not reported data, conducting reviews, compiling the inventory, disseminating information among other tasks.

The EEA's report on Budgetary and Financial Management in 2013 states that:

"To ensure that the new tasks defined in the legislation can be fully carried out, the EEA has in the course of 2012-2013 requested four new posts to support climate change mitigation reporting and review, and reporting of air quality. In 2012, two additional posts were added to the establishment table and approved by the budgetary authority to reinforce the Effort Sharing Decision. Likewise, a further two new posts were added in 2013 to cover new tasks, in the area of air quality and climate change (mitigation, review, reporting and verification in the context of the Effort Sharing Decision and the newly proposed Monitoring Mechanism Regulation). The EEA was only classified as a new task agency in 2012 and not in 2013 despite the fact that it is the very same legislative act that the new posts were based upon in both years."[163]

The EEA has been fully responsive to the new tasks established under the MMR, which is reflected in the programming documents as well as in the organisational developments (i.e. staffing allocated for the purpose). The AWPs for 2014, 2015 and 2016 all foresee the assistance to the European Commission in relation to Articles 6-9, 12-19, 21, 22 and 24 of the MMR. The assistance is foreseen in a form of publications, reports, assessments, data, maps and information systems. Furthermore, the Regulation is used as justification in many expected outputs. As presented under the Energy Union section, an increase of 5% in staffing can be observed in the period 2014-2016.

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[162] Green economy concept goes beyond circular economy, focusing on resource efficiency with ecosystem resilience and human health and well-being.
[163] [234], p. 3

Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy (in line with the Convention of Biological Diversity) sets targets for protecting and improving the state of biodiversity in the EU. One of the targets (target 5) focuses on combating Invasive Alien Species (IAS). [164] As a part of this strategy, EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species (hereafter IAS Regulation) was developed and entered into force on 1 January 2015. IAS Regulation sets measures to prevent and manage introduction of IAS and their spread in the EU.[165] These measures focus on prevention (restrictions on keeping, importing, selling, breeding and growing), early detection and rapid eradication, and management of the species that are already spread in the territory. IAS Regulation also developed a list (also called Union list) of Invasive Alien Species of Union concern, which is continuously updated with new species. The first Union list entered into force on 3 August 2017.[166]

The Programming Document for 2017-2019 states that the EEA request for an additional post for supporting the reporting on the IAS Regulation was not taken into account in the 2015 budget process[167]. Data from interviews indicate that both sides (the Commission and EEA) tried to ensure that IAS could be handled by EEA, but did not succeed in getting the extra post.

This is thus a case, where the EEA was not responsive to a specific policy development. Ultimately, an alternative solution to make room for the task of reporting under the IAS could have been to deprioritise something else from the existing work programme, however, this was not done. Notably, there is no record of the subject being discussed in Management Board meetings. The subject is not mentioned in annual work programmes for 2015 or 2016 or in the consultation procedures for these AWPs. Hence, the discussions on possible extra post seem to have been conducted outside the formal setting of the Management Board and annual planning procedures.

While this is case of 'unresponsiveness' of the EEA, it must also be mentioned that the lawmakers did not specify a role for the EEA when drawing up the IAS Regulation. As stated in the Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting, a reason why the EEA is not undertaking reporting tasks for more Directives is that it was not foreseen in the relevant legal acts[168].

4.4.3   Factors influencing responsiveness

The effectiveness of EEA in dealing with new policy developments should be examined through the lenses of the way the EEA operates and the mandate it has. The Founding Regulation sets out 15 tasks that form a rather broad mandate. This allows for flexibility in defining and prioritising the specific activities to be undertaken through MAWPs and AWPs – and thus gives an important role for the Management Board in undertaking this prioritisation. However, the Founding Regulation does not prescribe a process for how to handle the situation where other legislation directly or indirectly specifies a role for the EEA. An amendment was made in 2009 and this (among other things) introduced task c) on reporting, but it did not go further to specify the role of the EEA in this regard, thus leaving the mandate broad and up to the Management Board to prioritise the activities in this area. However, as analysed in the Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting, a role for the EEA is set out in some pieces of legislation covering some reporting obligation (eight of the 57 pieces of legislation analysed as part of the Fitness Check, Appendix O identifies the legislation where a role for the EEA is set out), thus de facto reducing the room for manoeuvre of the EEA in those specific areas. The specification of the role of the EEA, on the other hand, provides a clearer mandate for the EEA to take action in these specific areas.

While many of the activities undertaken by the Agency are thus in principle flexible from year to year, the review of the MAWP as well as interviews with EEA staff show that, in practical terms, this is not case. A large share of the

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[164] [464] EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0244

[165] [465] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014R1143

[166] [466] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/list/index_en.htm

[167] [36]

[168] [112], p. 48

activities undertaken are recurrent. This can also be seen in the MAWP and AWPs where many of these annual processes are described. In addition, it can be seen from the overview of reporting flows managed by the EEA (see Appendix O as well as section 4.2.2.2) – a total of 100 reporting flows of which 45 are annual, 14 occur every three years and the rest are recurrent at intervals in between. Furthermore, a range of other activities are also recurrent, e.g. organisation of the Eionet network with regular annual meetings as well as a range of internal activities related to the management of the agency (e.g. MB meetings). EEA staff assess that at least 80% of activities are recurrent[169]. This means that the remaining budget, which has more flexibility, is relatively limited and there is thus limited ability to respond to requests. It also means that adding new recurrent activities would take place at the expense of the already limited 'open room' or at the expense of other already planned recurrent activities.

In addition, the EEA has followed the austerity measures in line with the overall principles laid down for EU institutions (5% reduction in staff in the period 2013-2018).[170] This, of course, had a limiting factor on the EEA's ability to employ new staff members in the evaluation period. The hiring/ firing procedure is also a time consuming process, due to the requirements the EEA has to follow. This, together with the fact that the staff of the Agency are typically quite specialised experts and thus not 'interchangeable' between the different units and projects, in particular limits the EEA's flexibility to be responsive. However, experience from the evaluation period according to interviews with the EEA and ETC managers shows that this lack of flexibility can to a certain extent be overcome through ETCs, as they are more flexible in terms of identifying/employing relevant experts to work on specific topics. Further, as identified under Q1 and coherence, there are positive experiences from the Nature area, where the coordination between the EEA, the ETC and the Commission is organised through annual rolling plans, where priorities are agreed by all three parties. This illustrates that the ability of the EEA to accommodate the needs of the 'clients', notably the Commission, also relies on the coordination between the clients and the EEA (as further analysed under Coherence).

The above marks key challenges for the Management Board in exercising its role as governing body for the Agency – and these are further analysed in connection with Q5, which deals with efficiency of the governance of the Agency (see section 5.3).

4.4.4 Key findings and conclusions for Q3

This question was addressed by focusing on judgement criteria on the extent to which EEA's work programmes aligned with and took on board policy developments that happened during the evaluation period as well as the extent to which stakeholders' needs were addressed by the EEA.

In respect to the first criterion, the review and comparison of EEA work programmes with key policy documents shows that the key EU environmental and climate policy developments during the evaluation period were well reflected in the EEA's programming documents. The evidence shows that the EEA was very responsive and to a large extent reflected new policy developments in environment and climate in its MAWP and AWPs although some elements of the 7th EAP could have been better reflected, notably PO1 and PO8. The Energy Union (including the MMR) and the Circular Economy Package are reflected in the AWPs. The increased number of staff dedicated towards working within climate change mitigation and energy during the evaluation period indicates that there are increasing efforts to support the Energy Union. The evidence to show that policy developments have been reflected in programming documents is very clear and solid and relies on a review of the relevant documents. It was more complicated to assess whether the priorities and intentions as expressed in the work programmes were associated with de facto increased activities in certain areas compared to others as the information available on how resources were distributed follows the logic of the strategic areas in the MAWP and thus are not directly inferable to the different policy priorities and concrete tasks undertaken.

In respect to Invasive Alien Species Regulation (which entered into force on 1 January 2015), the EEA did not make available resources to assist the Commission in reporting and data management for this Regulation and the request

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[169] Interviews at EEA. It is not possible through the current activity-based budget and accounting system to identify these activities and determine their budget and to see how much of the budget is then left for 'non-recurrent' activities. It is thus not possible to validate the assessment of 80% recurrent activities through the actual data.
[170] [40] EEA Consolidated Annual Activity Report, 2014.

for additional resources in order to do so was rejected by the budgetary authorities in connection with the 2015 budget process. A role for the EEA was not specified in the Regulation. Contrary to this, the MMR, adopted in 2013, did set out a role for the EEA and here, the EEA addressed the need for support in a very comprehensive way and new posts were approved by the budgetary authorities to address the tasks.

In respect to the analysis of meeting stakeholders' needs, the evidence shows that the stakeholders' needs were not uniform in respect to how resources should be prioritised across the MDIAK chain. Stakeholders from the Commission tend to focus on the MDI-part, whereas stakeholders from the member countries tend to also emphasise the AK-part. Review of (M)AWPs shows that stakeholders' views on areas to deprioritise as transmitted in the previous evaluation of the EEA were taken into account in subsequent planning of work (notably to reduce the engagement in Eye-on-Earth and international activities).

Overall, the evidence from surveys and interviews shows that both the Commission and the member countries find that their needs have been met. However, in a few individual areas the responsiveness of the Agency was criticised by Commission representatives. These include, most prominently, the decision of the Agency to discontinue its support to the Drinking Water Directive and, less prominently, the inability to support the Invasive Alien Species Regulation and the lack of responsiveness to provide general support to the Commission on urban environment.

Thus, stakeholders' needs were not uniform and the Agency (and its Management Board) was in a balancing act to seek to meet all needs as far as possible. This challenge was accentuated by resources being cut as happened during the evaluation period. It is therefore not possible to make a simple assessment of whether needs have been met or not. Overall, the evidence from surveys and interviews indicate that the Agency has managed to strike an acceptable balance.

The Founding Regulation is set up in a way where the objectives, tasks and principle areas of activity set out a fairly broad mandate whereas planning of specific activities and outputs is left for the Agency and its Management Board. This enabled flexibility and allowed the Agency to accommodate to policy developments and needs. At the same time, some specific pieces of environment and climate legislation set out a role for the EEA (eight out of 57 pieces of environment legislation analysed in the Fitness Check of environmental reporting, whereas in the climate legislation a role for the EEA is more systematically set out, see Appendix O). This brought some degree of clarity in these areas but it also limited the room for manoeuvre. Evidence shows no clear logic why the role of the EEA is better specified in some areas than in others thus leaving a differentiated picture of where the decisions on priorities are left for the Agency and its Management Board and where they are not.

The planning and prioritisation of resources was challenged by the budget austerity measures coupled with the situation where the majority of the activities of the EEA are recurrent – and thus, making room for new activities requires de-prioritisation of existing activities or achievement of efficiency gains in the implementation of existing recurrent activities. This is further explored under efficiency Q4 and Q5, which look into efficiency gains as well as planning and prioritisation mechanisms.

5 ASSESSMENT OF EFFICIENCY

This chapter presents the findings with respect to the evaluation criterion on efficiency. Two main questions from the Evaluation Roadmap have guided the evaluation and the chapter is structured according to these questions.

Efficiency question 1 (Q4): To what extent have the EEA and the Eionet been efficient in implementing the tasks set out in their mandate and programming documents?

Efficiency question 2 (Q5): To what extent are the internal mechanisms for programming, monitoring, reporting and evaluating the EEA adequate for ensuring accountability and appropriate assessment of the overall performance of the Agency while minimising the administrative burden of the Agency and its stakeholders (established procedures, layers of hierarchy, division of work between teams or units, IT systems, initiative for streamlining and simplification, etc.)? Have the recommendations from the previous evaluation been followed-up and what lessons have been learned since then?

5.1 Intervention logic

Referring to the intervention logic as presented in chapter 4, the analysis of efficiency looks at the relationship between the inputs (costs) of the EEA and the outputs produced and effects (benefits) achieved.

The first efficiency question (Q4) is thus the central question and addresses both the issue of costs versus benefits and cost-efficiency, i.e. whether outputs could be produced at lower costs. The Cost Benefit Analysis compares all the costs incurred by the EEA and Eionet during the evaluation period, with the benefits that result from having the Agency and the Network. In terms of cost efficiency, Q4 looks at areas where potentials exist to improve efficiency in implementing tasks, and assesses the extent to which such potentials have been explored.

The second efficiency question (Q5) relates to the internal mechanisms for programming, monitoring and evaluation of the agency and whether they are adequate for ensuring accountability and assessment of the agency's performance, i.e. it concerns 'organisational efficiency'. Seen against the intervention logic, it explores the decision-making structures around the work programming and budgeting processes and is thus related to the activity and input elements and how the objectives and tasks defined in the Founding Regulation are translated into plans and budgets for the work of the Agency.

5.2 Q4: Efficiency in implementing tasks

> Q4: To what extent have the EEA and EIONET been efficient in implementing the evolving tasks set out in their mandate and programming documents?

This question covers the essential aspects of efficiency as set out in the Better Regulation Guidelines, namely: costs, benefits, corresponding cost-benefit ratio and the extent to which the potential for efficiency gains have been exploited during the evaluation period.

While the question refers to the 'evolving tasks', this could be understood to mean only 'new tasks' that have been taken up by the Agency during the evaluation period. However, the understanding of the question employed in the support study is that the question should address all tasks and activities undertaken by the Agency during the evaluation period and perform an overall assessment of the costs and benefits associated with these. This is in line with comments provided by the ISSG at the kick-off meeting of the study as well as the requirements of the Better Regulation Guidelines. Thus, the support study has addressed this question in two main strands: 1) Costs and benefits of the EEA and Eionet overall, and 2) Cost-efficiency in implementation of the tasks of the Agency. The judgement criteria and indicators reflect this and are listed in the table below.

Table 5-1   Judgement criteria and indicators, Q4

Judgement criteria	Indicators
Positive cost-benefit ratio related to EEA / Eionet activities	Costs compared to benefits
Tasks implemented in a cost-efficient way Extent to which efficiency gain potentials have been exploited by the EEA / Eionet during the evaluation period, including potentials for efficiency gains in relation to ICT management	Existence of an efficiency gain strategy in the EEA Examples of efficiency gains achieved or not exploited identified through interviews and case studies Cost of IT tools related to number of reporting and data flows supported by IT over time during the evaluation period Identification of possibilities for reducing costs from interviews and case studies, e.g. through exploiting options for synergy between systems or tools, investments in tools to reduce operational costs.

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

This section is organised according to the judgement criteria presented above. Assessment of the costs and benefits of the EEA and Eionet is presented in section 5.2.1. Section 5.2.2 presents findings regarding efficiency gains. Finally, section 5.2.3 sums up the key findings and conclusions for question 4.

5.2.1   Costs and benefits of the EEA and Eionet

According to the Better Regulation Guidelines, evaluations should look at costs and benefits experienced by different stakeholders. Following this framework, the study aimed to identify the full costs associated with the EEA and Eionet. Further, it aimed to identify the benefits delivered by the Agency and Network. While it has not been possible to explicitly monetise specific benefits, a minimum proxy was identified in order to inform the cost-benefit ratio. This section describes data on costs and benefits. First, an overview of costs is provided (section 5.2.1.1), followed by description and analysis of benefits (section 5.2.1.2). Finally, the comparison of costs and benefits is presented in section 5.2.1.3.

5.2.1.1   Costs

The costs of the EEA and Eionet consist of: the costs associated with the running of the Agency and its tasks and the costs borne by the member countries and cooperating countries (associated with the Eionet and seconded national experts). The following sections provide an assessment of each. While costs associated with the Agency are readily available, costs borne by member countries in relation to Eionet and seconded national experts had to be estimated. Three sections are presented below: a) The EEA budget, b) Member and cooperating country contribution, c) summary of overall costs of EEA and Eionet.

a) The EEA Budget

Referring to section 3.1.5, the annual budget of the EEA was around EUR 50 million per year during the evaluation period. The costs associated with the Agency consist of core budget provided and grants for funding non-core tasks that the Agency has become responsible for. During the evaluation period, the core budget has been stable at EUR 41.7 million per year (with small deviations around this figure in each year), whereas the operational budget for non-core tasks has varied between EUR 7 and 11 million (see Table 3-1 in section 3.1.5).

b) Costs for member countries and cooperating countries

The EEA member countries include EU Member States as well as non-EU members. The non EU-members pay a membership fee for their membership. This payment becomes part of the EEA's core budget and is thus included in the figures presented in Table 3-1 in section 3.1.5. The core budget subvention from the EU budget covers the 'membership fee' of all EU Member States.

All member countries have additional costs related to the work done by MB members, NFPs and NRCs as part of their contributions to the Eionet. In addition, the member countries provide co-financing of the ETCs. Based on

consultation (interviews, NFP workshop), it was found that countries in general do not keep track of the time and resources that they invest in Eionet and EEA activities. Thus, there was no evidence readily available. Costs to member and cooperating countries were therefore estimated using the following sources and procedure, the results of which are presented below:

- An NFP survey conducted by the EEA in 2013[171]: the survey focused on national network setup, and included a question on the amount of time spent by all staff with NFP duties (in full-time equivalents)
- The NFP/NRC survey and MB survey conducted as part of the support study gathered data on time spent by NRCs, NFPs and MBs on their Eionet/Management Board duties
- The time was monetised using Eurostat labour cost information (by country and EU average)[172].

Costs were calculated on a "per year" basis, since the available information did not distinguish between individual years in the evaluation period. Hence there is no differentiation between the years.

Time spent by the Management Board members

In the MB survey conducted in autumn 2017, the respondents were asked how much time they spend per year on your duties as Management Board member. Overall, 20 responses were obtained, of which 17 were from member country MB members (the other 3 being from EU institutions). The majority of the respondents estimated using 11-20 working days per year on their EEA Management Board duties, as shown in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2   Time spent on MB duties

	All respondents	Member country
31 working days per year or more	1	1
21-30 working days per year	6	5
11-20 working days per year	10	9
10 working days per year or less	3	2
Number of respondents	20	17

Source: MB survey, Question: How much time do you spend per year on your duties as Management Board member? If duties are shared with the alternate, please assess the total number of working days spent for both persons (preparation for MB meetings, participation in MB meetings, coordination with Eionet at country level)

Countries of the respondents are unknown, hence the monetised cost was calculated using EU average labour cost, which is likely to be an overestimate. Lower and higher estimates were calculated based on the ranges of working days provided. The results are shown in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3   Costs of MB time, based on low and high time estimate

	Member country MB	
	Lower estimate	**Higher estimate**
Days/year for those who answered (17 respondents)	237	390
Average per MB member	14	23

Time spent, days/year, for all member country MB members (33)	460	757
FTE equivalents (based on 200 days/FTE)	2	4
Labour cost, EUR/year	134,747	221,735

Source: COWI calculations based on MB survey and Eurostat data.

Time spent by the NFPs

In terms of NFP time, two sources were available:

- The 2013 survey conducted by the EEA, which asked respondents to estimate the number of person-years used for the NFP work. This means that this would take into account all persons who share NFP duties in the country. 34 member and cooperating countries have answered this survey (5 not responding being Croatia, Cyprus, Iceland, Italy and Liechtenstein).

- The NFP/NRC survey conducted by the study team, which asked the respondents to estimate time they spent on Eionet duties in the evaluation period. 37 respondents from 24 member or cooperating countries provided time estimates, as shown in Table 5-4. These were converted to high and low estimates of Full-time equivalents (FTEs) the same way as shown above for MB members.

Table 5-4: Time Spent performing Duties as NFP (42 responses)

Time/year spent performing duties as NFP, during the 2012-2016	NFP	
	Total	**%**
61 or more working days per year	16	38%
41-60 days per year	2	5%
21-40 working days per year	7	17%
1-20 working days per year	12	29%
Do not know	5	12%

Source: Question: How much time did you spend performing your duties as NRC/NFP, during the 2012-2016 period on a yearly basis? Valid Responses: 42 (NFPs only)

Country of respondents is known for both of these surveys, hence it is possible to establish the cost estimates for different countries. Table 5-5 shows time and corresponding labour cost estimates, per country. Low and high estimates correspond to the lowest and highest amount of time given across the two surveys. Iceland, Italy and Liechtenstein did not respond to either of the surveys, hence time spent by the NFPs in these countries is unknown.

Table 5-5   Estimated costs of NFP work, on an annual basis

Country	Estimated FTEs/year		Cost per FTE, EUR	Cost of NFP work, thousand EUR	
	2013 survey	NFP/NRC survey		Low estimate	High estimate
Albania	1.4	no response	5,811	8.1	8.1
Austria	0.1	no response	66,518	6.7	6.7

Country	Estimated FTEs/year		Cost per FTE, EUR	Cost of NFP work, thousand EUR	
	2013 survey	NFP/NRC survey		Low estimate	High esti-mate
Belgium	2	0.305 - 1	84,077	25.6	168.2
Bosnia and Herze-govina	1.1	no response	10,791	11.9	11.9
Bulgaria	0.33	0.11 - 0.3	9,487	1.0	3.1
Croatia	no response	0.41 - 1.2	31,083	12.7	37.3
Cyprus	no response	0.005 - 0.1	34,549	0.2	3.5
Czech Republic	0.3	0.31 - 1.1	25,689	7.7	28.3
Denmark	0.2	no response	76,761	15.4	15.4
Estonia	0.2	0.205 - 0.3	22,033	4.4	6.6
Finland	0.8	0.31 - 1.1	62,328	19.3	68.6
Republic of Mace-donia	2	0.305 - 1	10,290	3.1	20.6
France	0.8	0.61 - 2	72,291	44.1	144.6
Germany	1.5	no response	63,829	95.7	95.7
Greece	1	no response	28,094	28.1	28.1
Hungary	0.25	0.105 - 0.2	20,973	2.2	5.2
Iceland	no response	no response	:	-	-
Ireland	1	0.205 - 0.3	59,228	12.1	59.2
Italy	no response	no response	57,288	-	-
Kosovo*	2	no response	5,811	11.6	11.6
Latvia	0.33	0.105 - 0.2	16,578	1.7	5.5
Liechtenstein	no response	no response	-	-	-
Lithuania	0.15	0.105 - 0.2	14,943	1.6	3.0
Luxembourg	0.1	no response	79,178	7.9	7.9
Malta	0.15	0.105 - 0.2	25,571	2.7	5.1
Montenegro	0.1	0.305 - 1	11,089	1.1	11.1
Netherlands	0.5	no response	74,177	37.1	37.1
Norway	1	no response	109,227	109.2	109.2
Poland	1	0.305 - 1	18,339	5.6	18.3
Portugal	0.7	0.305 - 1	31,241	9.5	31.2
Romania	1	no response	12,047	12.0	12.0

Country	Estimated FTEs/year		Cost per FTE, EUR	Cost of NFP work, thousand EUR	
	2013 survey	NFP/NRC survey		Low estimate	High estimate
Serbia	0.1	0.005 - 0.1	12,916	0.1	1.3
Slovakia	1.4	0.305 - 1	21,043	6.4	29.5
Slovenia	0.5	no response	33,343	16.7	16.7
Spain	3.5	0.31 - 1.1	41,767	12.9	146.2
Sweden	1	0.31 - 1.1	83,764	26.0	92.1
Switzerland	0.7	0.31 - 1.1	113,635	35.2	125.0
Turkey	2	0.425 - 1.5	23,115	9.8	46.2
United Kingdom	1.5	0.31 - 1.1	62,204	19.3	93.3
Total				625	1,513
Total adjusted to include the 3 countries with no data (based on average cost)				677	1,639

Sources: 2013 survey: [292], NFP/NRC survey, Eurostat, COWI calculations. Notes: *Kosovo – Eurostat has no estimate for labour costs, here assumed same as Albania. FTE = 200 working days.

Based on the results presented in the table above, the overall costs of NFP work are estimated to have been in the range of EUR 625,000-1,513,000 for the countries that responded to at least one of the surveys used. Making no prejudice on time spent in the 3 remaining countries, extrapolating these costs to all 39 member + cooperating countries leads to an estimated range between EUR 677,000 and EUR 1,639,000 for all countries.

Time spent by the NRCs

A similar approach to that described above was followed to estimate the costs of NRC time. The NFP/NRC survey conducted by the study team, which asked the respondents to estimate time they spent on Eionet duties in the evaluation period, obtained 147 responses with estimates from the NRC members in 18 countries.

Table 5-6: Time Spent performing Duties as NRC (158 responses)

Time/year spent performing duties as NRC, during the 2012-2016 period	NRC	
	Total	%
61 or more working days per year	7	4%
41-60 days per year	13	8%
21-40 working days per year	40	25%
1-20 working days per year	87	55%
Do not know	11	7%

Source: Question: How much time did you spend performing your duties as NRC/NFP, during the 2012-2016 period on a yearly basis? Valid Responses: 158

Individual NRC members may be members of multiple NRCs, and such responses are recorded as individual responses. This means that the answers are not about the time an individual person spends on their NRC work in general, but about the time required to fulfil the duties of each of their NRC assignments.

Table 5-7   Estimated costs of NRC work, on an annual basis

Country	Estimated FTEs			Cost per FTE, EUR	Cost of NRC work, thousand EUR	
	per respondent	Number of NRC members	For all members		Low estimate	High estimate
Spain	0.21 - 0.60	39	8.0 - 23.4	41,767	334	977
Albania	0.19 - 0.46	47	9.0 - 21.5	5,811	52	125
Slovakia	0.11 - 0.28	86	9.0 - 23.7	21,043	190	498
Turkey	0.10 - 0.26	79	7.9 - 20.6	23,115	182	477
Bulgaria	0.09 - 0.18	56	4.9 - 10.3	9,487	47	97
Croatia	0.07 - 0.17	48	3.4 - 8.0	31,083	107	249
Czech Republic	0.07 - 0.22	65	4.2 - 14.3	25,689	109	367
Estonia	0.08 - 0.17	55	4.2 - 9.4	22,033	93	208
Germany	0.06 - 0.15	44	2.4 - 6.6	63,829	154	421
Montenegro	0.14 - 0.23	21	2.9 - 4.9	11,089	32	54
Finland	0.03 - 0.12	74	1.9 - 8.9	62,328	115	553
France	0.01 - 0.10	117	0.6 - 11.7	72,291	42	846
Ireland	0.01 - 0.10	84	0.4 - 8.4	59,228	25	498
Netherlands	0.04 - 0.13	56	2.1 - 7.5	74,177	159	554
Poland	0.03 - 0.13	36	1.2 - 4.6	18,339	22	85
Sweden	0.01 - 0.10	47	0.2 - 4.7	83,764	20	394
Switzerland	0.02 - 0.12	38	0.9 - 4.5	113,635	103	513
United Kingdom	0.03 - 0.13	93	3.0 - 11.8	62,204	187	736
Total		**1,085**			**1,972**	**7,652**
Total extrapolated to all NRCs in all countries		**2,615**			**4,753**	**18,442**

Sources: NFP/NRC survey, Eurostat, COWI calculations. Notes: FTE = 200 working days.

ETC co-financing

As explained in chapter 3, the ETCs are contracted by the EEA. This is done through grant agreements. Following the terms in these agreements, the ETCs are required to provide co-financing amounting to 10% of the total con-

tract value. In practical terms, this is organised in connection with the payments of the ETCs, where 10% is deducted from the amount calculated based on the work done by the ETCs[173]. Table 5-8 below shows the amounts paid to the ETCs during 2013 to 2016, which constitute the 90% actually paid by the EEA. The corresponding 100% and 10% share are calculated in the two bottom rows. The table shows that the annual average 10% co-financing was EUR 849 thousand in the period 2013-2016.

Table 5-8   Co-financing of ETCs, EUR

ETC	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL	Average annual value
ETC ACM - Air and Climate Change Mitigation	2.070	2.289	2.370	2.315	9.044	2.261
ETC ICM - Inland, Coastal and Marine Waters	1.548	1.496	1.549	1.514	6.108	1.527
ETC BD - Biological Diversity	1.038	1.455	1.481	1.438	5.412	1.353
ETC ULS - Urban, Land, Soil Systems	1.160	789	762	926	3.637	909
ETC WMGE - Waste and Materials in a Green Economy	950	889	949	1.055	3.843	961
ETC CCA - Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation	603	641	640	620	2.504	626
TOTAL (90%)	7.369	7.560	7.752	7.868	30.549	7.637
100% total	8.188	8.400	8.613	8.742	33.943	8.486
10% co-financing	819	840	861	874	3.394	849

Source: Figures on payment provided by the EEA. Calculation of 100% and 10% co-financing as well as annual average done by support study. Notes from the EEA on payment figures: The expenditure reported are the actual costs (payments) made against C1 in the relevant year of activity and C8 in the following year. These costs differ from the costs reported in the annual accounts, which reflect the commitments against C1 for the current year of activity, less the difference between C8 commitments and actual payments made in the current year for the prior year's activity.

Seconded national experts (SNEs) assist the EEA in carrying out the work programme, as well as help develop a relationship between national institutions and the EU. The European Commission rules on secondment of national experts apply. SNEs remain employed by the institutions in the EEA member countries, and as such, their salaries continue to be paid by their employer, and not the EEA. The EEA holds the information on the number of experts and the time they spend at the Agency, as shown in the table below, but not their salary details. Hence, the cost to MS of seconded national experts have been calculated using labour cost estimates from Eurostat.

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[173] Practical arrangements explained during interviews with EEA staff, who also explained that comprehensive checks and auditing is carried out on ETCs requests for payment on the grant agreements.

Table 5-9   Contribution of seconded national experts per country per year

Country	Number of SNEs and person-months			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Austria	none	none	1 person - 11.5 months	2 people - 10.5 months
Belgium	1 person - 12 months	1 person - 12 months	2 people - 23 months	2 people - 13 months
Czech	1 person - 4 months	1 person - 12 months	1 person - 8 months	1 1 person - 12 months
Den-mark	1 person - 12 months	none	none	none
France	3 people - 25 months	2 people - 24 months	2 people - 24 months	2 people - 22 months
Ger-many	2 people - 15.5 months	3 people - 33.5 months	3 people - 36 months	3 people - 22.5 months
Greece	none	none	none	1 person - 4 months
Hungary	1 person - 12 months	1 person - 12 months	1 people - 10 months	none
Italy	4 people - 29.5 months	1 person - 12 months	2 people - 21 months	3 people - 27.5 months
Poland	none	none	1 person - 10 months	1 person - 2 months
Romania	1 person- 12 months	1 person - 8.5 months	2 people - 7.5 months	3 people - 22 months
Slovakia	2 people - 12 months	1 person - 12 months	1 people - 8 months	none
Slovenia	1 person - 7 months	1 person - 12 months	1 person - 5 months	none
Spain	4 people - 39.5 months	4 people - 35.5 months	2 people - 15 months	1 person - 5 months
Sweden	none	1 person - 11 months	1 person - 12 months	1 person - 12 months
Turkey	2 people - 22.5 months	1 person - 12 months	1 people - 12 months	2 people - 14.5 months
UK	3 people - 19 months	1 person - 1 month	none	none

Source: EEA, email communication July 16, 2018

Based on the above person-months, and Eurostat labour cost data, it has been estimated, that overall salary costs for the seconded national experts in the period 2013-16 have been around EUR 3.3 Million, as shown in the table below. This corresponds to EUR 832 thousand per year, on average.

Table 5-10   Estimated SNE labour costs, thousand EUR

Country	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Austria	0	0	64	58	122
Belgium	84	84	161	91	420
Czech Republic	9	26	17	26	77
Denmark	77	0	0	0	77
France	151	145	145	133	572
Germany	82	178	191	120	572
Greece	0	0	0	9	9
Hungary	21	21	17	0	59
Italy	141	57	100	131	430
Poland	0	0	15	3	18
Romania	12	9	8	22	50
Slovakia	21	21	14	0	56
Slovenia	19	33	14	0	67
Spain	137	124	52	17	331
Sweden	0	77	84	84	244
Turkey	43	23	23	28	118
United Kingdom	98	5	0	0	104
Total	**896**	**802**	**906**	**722**	**3,326**

Sources: EEA, Eurostat, COWI calculations. Note: FTE = 12 months.

Overall costs for member and cooperating countries

Table 5-11 summarises the above evidence in terms of costs for member and cooperating countries.

Table 5-11   Costs of time for member and cooperating countries, per year

Type of entity	Costs in EUR thousands		
	Lower estimate	Higher estimate	Mid-point
MB	135	222	178
NFP	677	1,639	1,158
NRC	4,753	18,442	11,597
ETC co-financing	849	849	849
Seconded national experts	832	832	832
Total	**7,245**	**21,983**	**14,614**

Sources: Sections above, support study calculations

Note: Higher and lower estimates correspond to high and low values in the ranges of time spent, as provided by survey respondents. ETC co-financing does not have a lower/higher estimate, since these are budget values. Yearly average is used in all three columns.

c) Overall costs of EEA and Eionet

As described above, overall costs of EEA and Eionet consist of the budget of the Agency and costs to the countries associated with Eionet and ETCs. Since the evolution of costs for the Eionet is not known, the totals have been calculated as a yearly value averaged over the evaluation period. The overall costs of the EEA and Eionet are presented in the table below. The high/low estimates are based on the highest/lowest time-spent values in the intervals selected by the Member States. The mid-point represents the average, while likely estimate is based on a calibration with known expenditure.

Table 5-12   Overall costs of EEA and Eionet, per year EUR Million

Cost	Low	Mid-point	High
EEA Budget	49	51	53
Costs for member and cooperating countries	7	15	22
Total cost of EEA and Eionet	**56**	**66**	**75**

Source: Previous sections, COWI calculations

Overall costs of the EEA and Eionet are thus estimated to be between EUR 56-75 Million per year. The mid-point would be EUR 66 million.

5.2.1.2   Benefits

The benefits of the EEA and Eionet have been analysed along two main categories: direct benefits and wider benefits. The first type of benefits are those related to the specific objectives (and outputs) of the EEA/Eionet, while the wider objectives would incorporate those that relate to broader, general aims of the EEA and Eionet (and effects achieved by the outputs).

As such, the direct benefits are those that directly relate to activities and outputs of the EEA, and are largely a direct result of those activities. Meanwhile while EEA/Eionet contribute to the wider benefits, it is not a sole actor influencing whether they materialise or not. For example, they depend on the stakeholders using the information provided by the EEA in policy development and implementation. In other words, the wider benefits of the EEA/Eionet are defined as those benefits that would be gained if the general aims were achieved.

The Better Regulation Guidelines recommend that evaluations aim to quantify the benefits identified, while noting that obtaining robust data on this can be challenging. Thus the study aimed to provide: identification and description of benefits, quantification of their importance, based on case studies and stakeholder assessment. However, the assessment is qualitative as it is not possible monetise the value of the benefits created. This is presented in the following sections.

Direct Benefits of the EEA/Eionet

Initial consultations with stakeholders were used to identify a list of direct benefits of the EEA and Eionet. See Text Box 5-1 for a summary of benefits identified at the NFP workshop in May-June 2017.

Text Box 5-1   Benefits identified at the NFP workshop

> • Providing data and information for policy formulation. EEA plays a major role in the implementation and monitoring of key EU Directives. There is a major added value when systems for assessing the state of the environment are based on the same methodologies. Eionet plays an important role in making sure that both the same methodologies are applied and similar levels of monitoring and data collection are achieved in member countries.
> • With Eionet there is much more comparability between countries. This helps all countries get an assessment of the state of the environment in Europe and to compare their own situation with that in other countries. This is perceived as one of the biggest added values beyond the actual data collection efforts. EEA standards are used by the member countries hence the EEA has a very strong effect on the internal environmental data management processes of the member countries.
> • Eionet is seen as instrumental in communicating data and information and knowledge to policymakers and other actors such as the public or civil society. In this context, several participants remarked that information and messages coming from the EEA are viewed as credible and thus having an impact on policy formulation (The EEA solutions can be transferred into the national level).
> • The role of EIONET in building the community between the countries and between the countries and the EU Agency as well as between different institutions at the country level, sharing experiences, learning from each other

Source: NFP workshop summary note, 10.20

The direct benefits defined based on the initial consultations were as follows:

- It is easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other
- High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers
- Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making
- It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data
- It allows to exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries
- It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting (national stakeholders only)
- It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation
- It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation
- It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies

In order to verify and assess the level to which these direct benefits were in fact created by the activities of the EEA and Eionet during the evaluation period, a number of stakeholders were asked to assess the extent to which they consider those benefits to have resulted from the EEA/Eionet activities. The benefits listed above were assessed in the targeted surveys (COM survey, MB survey, NFP/NRC survey).

The Commission respondents and member country respondents were asked the question in slightly different ways. For the COM survey it was asked " In your area, to what extent do you agree with the following benefits from EEA and EIONET activity over the period 2012-2016? " with answer options from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" (+Do not know). The member country respondents were asked to consider the extent to which they find that the membership of the EEA and Eionet contributes to the realisation of each of the benefits – with response categories from "to a very large extent" to " to no extent" for MBs and from "to a very large extent" to "to a very small extent" for NFP/NRC respondents (+Do not know).

Based on the responses obtained in the surveys, the table below shows the average score for each of the benefits. The score is calculated as follows:

- Answer categories are converted to numerical Likert scale (where 1 is the lowest answer category, and 5 is the highest/most positive)
- "Do not know" responses are excluded
- Average score is calculated for the remaining responses, using 1-5 scores

As such, the higher values indicate where more respondents selected more positive responses.

Table 5-13   Averaged values for each of the benefits

Benefit	Average (5-highest, 1-lowest score)		
	COM survey	MB survey	NFP /NRC survey
It is easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other/ It is easier to benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries	4.04	4.47	3.70
High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers	4.03	4.29	3.72
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making/Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments	4.14	4.06	3.65
It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	3.94	4.12	3.65
It allows to exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	4.04	4.18	3.95
It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting	-	4.24	3.87
It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation	4.24	4.33	3.63
It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation	3.71	3.71	3.04
It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies	3.61	3.81	3.07

Source: COWI calculations based on COM survey, MB survey, NFP/NRC survey.

The low scores for the benefits related to EU reporting are largely due to coordinated responses, which explained the low scores given, by noting that the countries deliver the data as required by the EU obligations and this would have to be done regardless of their membership in the Eionet[174].

Additional benefits were identified in consultation, including during the Stakeholder workshop. During the Stakeholder workshop, the benefits listed above were presented to the participants, who were then invited to identify other benefits. The following additional benefits were identified[175]:

- Coordination of activities between member states and preparation for the future;

- Increase in the volume of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken and provide an efficient uptake of them; and

- Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments.

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[174] This type of response may be due to the question formulation

[175] 10.18

These benefits were tested in the revised versions of the case studies (presented in Section **Error! Reference source not found.**). Selected interviews and case studies have provided additional insights into the perceived benefits of the EEA, describing the way these benefits manifest in member countries. In addition, another benefit has been identified in the interview responses: EEA has contributed to improved cooperation and coordination on a national level. Examples provided by the interviewees:

- Participation in the EEA has helped Switzerland improve its own internal communication across agencies, which is a challenge in a decentralised system. The requirement to report to the EEA provides a focal point for collaboration and creates connections within the different levels of government in Switzerland.

- In France, the Ministry is the NFP rather than an agency. Therefore, the EEA plays a special role there, because it helps to manage some of the complexity of inter-agency communication. As such, the EEA and the Eionet help organize internally.

- Perhaps the biggest impact [of the EEA/Eionet] has been on the internal organization of the Spanish system. The Eionet system has helped shape the internal communication and collaboration tools of the Spanish system. Because Spain is a federal state, collaboration and coordination can be difficult. The Eionet helps to develop connections and it helps the central agencies obtain information in a coordinated way.

Overall, it is found that the EEA/Eionet is seen as delivering a number of benefits that lead to streamlined reporting, and availability of good quality comparable data to policy makers.

Wider Benefits of the EEA/Eionet

Referring to the intervention logic, the wider benefits which can be expected from the work of the EEA/Eionet can be seen as step-wise effects. The EEA work and outputs are expected to contribute to better legislation and more informed public, leading to improved protection of the environment, in turn leading to overall better state of the environment in Europe. As such, these are not separate benefits, but a sequence benefits that lead to delivering of other, gradually wider, benefits. This section discusses the extent to which the EEA/Eionet have provided these benefits, drawing upon the assessment in effectiveness and the discussion on direct benefits above.

Public is informed about the environment

A general objective as set out in the Founding Regulation is keeping the public informed about the state of the environment. This is also a specific aim of Task (m) in the Regulation. As such, it has been assessed under Questions 1 and 2 of the evaluation (Sections 4.2.2.8 and 4.3.1). It was found that this task is well-addressed on a strategic level. On an operational level, the EEA has undertaken a number of activities over the evaluation period, in order to maintain and improve the dissemination and outreach of the EEA products. The awareness and reach of the EEA and its products varies depending on the product. For example, the products related to general societal debates have a wider reach. Overall, the EEA engages a broad range of stakeholders, but there are some limitations. Notably, NGO and interest organisation stakeholders indicated interest in closer collaboration with the EEA in this area. Hence, in general the EEA has played a role in informing citizens about the environment. Section 6.4 further explores the issue of the EEA's relevance to the European citizens.

Improved legislation leading to improved environmental protection and state of the environment

Referring to the Founding Regulation, article 1, the operational objectives of the EEA concern the provision of information and support to the EU institutions and the Member States to enable them to take measures to protect the environment and to assess the results of these measures.

In other words, an intended benefit for the EEA and Eionet is to contribute to the <u>policy development</u> actions (taking of measures) by the Commission and European Parliament as well as the Commission's monitoring, reporting and follow-up on the <u>implementation of policy</u>. Likewise, at the Member State level. A number of direct benefits described in the previous section, lead to policy development and implementation contribution.

Under Q2 (Section 4.3.3) the effectiveness of the EEA and Eionet in contributing to policy development and to policy implementation has been assessed. From this analysis, it is clear that the EEA is delivering benefits through although the effectiveness in this regard differs across environmental topics. It is found that the EEA is contributing to both development and implementation of environment and climate policy.

The Fitness Check of Environmental Monitoring and Reporting analysed benefits associated with reporting and provision of environmental information and found that most reporting obligations provide clear benefits and emphasised that there is clear evidence that such obligations are an important part of policy compliance and make an important contribution to the achievement of the environmental policy objectives[176]. Obviously, these benefits cannot be attributed to the EEA alone but are associated with the implementation of the reporting requirement as a whole. However, given the important role of the EEA in relation to managing reporting processes (see section 4.2.2.2), the findings do provide a strong case that the EEA has contributed to these benefits.

Text Box 5-2   Benefits highlighted by the Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting

- Checking and verifying compliance with legislation and making sure that the agreed objectives are being met;

- Supporting implementation at the national and EU level;

- Informing citizens and stakeholders of the state of the environment and the implementation of environmental legislation;

- Enabling compilation of environmental information at EU level, thereby providing information about the state of Europe's environment, trends, pressures and responses;

- Providing up to date information about arrangements for implementation, including responsible authorities, methods of implementation, enforcement arrangements and penalties for non-compliance;

- Aiding the identification and resolution of problems in implementing EU legislation as well as triggering improvements in the environmental performance of economic sectors boosting innovation that can increase the competitiveness of the sectors; and

- Informing the regulatory monitoring and evaluation of EU environmental legislation (as set out in the Better Regulation Guidelines).

Source: [112], p. 28

As described in the Monitoring and Reporting Fitness Check support study[177], the benefits from this type of support are difficult to quantify because the benefits are delivered indirectly by enhancing policy development and implementation over time and because this is difficult to express in monetary terms. As also noted by the Fitness Check study monetary assessments have been made of the overall benefits of various EU legislation. Examples of estimates from existing literature are provided in Text Box 5-3.

Text Box 5-3   Estimates of implementation of environmental legislation - examples

For the Nature Directives, the support study for the recently completed Fitness Check of these Directives refers to an estimate that the implementation of these two Directives generate ecosystem service benefits amounting to EUR 200-300 billion per year and that there are also other benefits (which are not monetized).[178]

For water legislation, a study undertaken by the European Parliamentary Research Service[179] estimates that if existing EU water legislation were to be fully implemented and all water bodies achieve a 'good' status ranking (in the meaning of the WFD), the combined annual benefits would be in the range of EUR 2.8 billion annually.

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[176] [112], p. 28

[177] [210] Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation, March 2017, p. 102-103

[178] [416] The study referenced is IEEP: Estimating the Overall Economic Value of the Benefits provided by the Natura 2000 Network, 2011

[179] [278] Water Legislation, Cost of non-Europe report, European Parliamentary Research Service, May 2015.

In terms of air quality, a number of estimates exists on costs of air pollution. For example, the CBA[180] done for the EU Clean Air Policy package found that the Commission proposal would result in health benefits of EUR 138.7 Billion/year in 2030 (compared to the "current legislation" baseline). The EEA study on industrial air pollution found that in 2012, European industrial facilities caused air pollution damages to health and environment on the level of EUR 59 Billion.[181] These estimates do not in the same way reflect the concrete policies that the EEA is working with, but provide an indication of the level of benefits that may be achieved with the EU legislation.

Source: See footnotes

The table below shows the monetised values of benefits that would be gained from full implementation of EU environmental legislation, identified in literature, along with a brief description of the EEA's role in each of the areas.

Table 5-14   Monetised values of benefits of environmental legislation

Policy area	Indicative level of benefit/year	Support assessment of EEA's role
Freshwater	EUR 2.8 billion	Some contribution to policy development and implementation as found in the case study
Ecosystem services – Nature Directives	EUR 200-300 billion	Crucial contribution to policy development and strong role in implementation as found in the case study
Air quality	EUR 59-139 billion	Area cited as very important and effectively managed in interviews (not covered by a case study)
Overall range (in these policy areas)	**223-442 billion/year**	

Sources: [278], [416], [417], [418]

Overall, as described above, the contribution of EEA and Eionet to EU policy development and implementation is assessed as positive. There is thus a good case that the EEA and Eionet activities play a certain role in generating the benefits associated with the development and implementation of environmental legislation in the nature, water and air quality areas. As such, some share of the monetised values described above can be attributed to the EEA and Eionet. However, it is not possible to translate this into monetary figures expressing the value of the benefits created by the EEA and Eionet.

5.2.1.3   Costs compared to benefits

As described in the section on costs, overall costs of EEA and Eionet are estimated to be between EUR 56 and 75 million per year. We cannot monetise the benefits due to methodological difficulties.

5.2.2   Cost-efficiency

In the cost-efficiency perspective, the focus is on analysing whether the same benefits could be delivered at lower cost (regardless of the cost-benefit ratio). As the focus of the analysis is backward looking, the study looked at the extent to which there have been efficiency gains during the evaluation period and whether the agency has exploited the potential for harvesting on the possibilities for efficiency gains.

5.2.2.1   EEA efficiency gain strategy

Document review and interviews show that the EEA does not have a formal efficiency gain strategy in the sense that there is no strategic document with that title. However, the need to prioritise and optimise has clearly been on the agenda during the evaluation period. This is evidenced in many documents, including the MAWP 2014-2018 (foreword by the Chairman of the Management Board and by the Executive Director), minutes of Management

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[180] [417], pg. 22
[181] [418]

Board meetings as well as by consultation with MB members and EEA management staff. However, as further discussed under Q5 (section 5.3.4.2), there have been challenges during the evaluation period in relation to prioritisation. However, the perspective discussed in this section relates to cost-efficiency, i.e. not prioritisation of certain tasks or activities over others, but whether the tasks and activities actually implemented were executed in a cost-efficient manner. As seen below, there have been concrete actions in the EEA to this effect during the evaluation period, but they have not been guided by a formal efficiency gain strategy.

The following sections provide specific evidence for changes in cost-efficiency from the perspective of administrative efficiency (section 5.2.2.2), and efficiency in task implementation (section 5.2.2.3).

5.2.2.2   Administrative efficiency

The Agency has carried out a screening exercise in accordance with the guidelines prepared by the Working Group of the EU Agencies that focuses on a joint Agencies' approach. This exercise includes tracking the operational/overhead ratio. The proportions have remained relatively steady over the evaluation period, although the proportion of operational staff decreased slightly (change corresponds to about 3 staff). No official comparison has been made between the Agencies, hence this should be seen as a way to see the extent of intra-Agency fluctuations.

The table below shows the proportion of staff at EEA that is dedicated to administrative tasks, neutral tasks (such as finance), and operational tasks.

Table 5-15   Proportion of staff in different categories (%)

Job category	2013	2014	2015	2016
Administrative support and coordination	NA	14.6	13.93	14.69
Operational	NA	79.2	78.33	77.37
Neutral (finance/control)	NA	6.2	7.74	7.94

Sources: [40], [7], [186] (CAARs). Note, 2014 was the first year this exercise was conducted. The distinction between administrative, operational and neutral is determined by the guidelines.

Through interviews with the EEA a number of actions have been identified that have aimed at reducing overhead. This includes: consolidating programmes in the organisation, and as such reducing the number of top/line management and programme secretaries, removing the position of the Deputy Director, introducing new tasks, e.g. in the Communications programme.

In terms of staff costs, these have increased somewhat (from EUR 22.7 in 2013 to 23.6 million in 2016, as staff increased in seniority (as can be seen, for instance, from establishment plans, in the EEA Annual Reports[182]). The Agency has limited direct influence on the salaries, since the annual indexation is set at the EC level (the Agency can influence the salary levels only through the promotion strategy).

The EEA is in several cases obliged to use the standard Commission systems for administrative services and pay the Commission a service charge in this respect. The table below provides an overview. During interviews, concerns have been raised by EEA staff that while the rationale for use of centralised systems ought to be optimisation and service provision at lower cost than if the Agency was using local systems, the situation is in several cases seen to be the opposite. For example, it was mentioned in interviews that the previous ABAC system devised by the Decentralised Agencies together ran at an annual cost of approximately 2,000 EUR to the Agency. Also, the payroll expense is considered excessive by EEA staff compared to the cost of running various standard

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[182] [40], [186] – Annex IV

systems that can be procured from the market. As such, this indicates an efficiency loss – and also points to that use of standard Commission systems does not necessarily lead to efficiency gains at the Agency level.

Table 5-16   Overview of charge-back for Commission systems, 2012-2016 (EUR)

System	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
ABAC finance system	70,542	85,000	49,000	49,000	49,000
Commission access cards	480	520	380	281	440
Payroll services	109,667	112,522	109,095	101,604	104,306
Procurement services					15,000
TOTAL (EUR)	**180,689**	**198,042**	**158,475**	**150,885**	**168,746**

Source: Data supplied by the EEA

In addition, the fact that the work done by the EEA for the Copernicus Programme, was organised under a Delegation Agreement (and thus separate from the core budget administration) implied additional administrative costs during the evaluation period in the form of duplications in the administrative parts of the work (ranging from planning and accounting to reporting).

The case study of Copernicus in Appendix D shows that until 2015, staff costs and any overheads resulting from the implementation of the Delegation Agreement were covered by the Copernicus remuneration budget. However, due to the increase in Copernicus activities, starting in 2016, a contribution from the core budget was effectively provided. In 2016, this contribution amounted to EUR 320,000 according to the EEA.

The case study also illustrates that in practical terms it was difficult for the EEA to separate Copernicus activities from core activities due to their interdependencies and therefore, reporting separate time for staff providing IT services for Copernicus from those for the core EEA activities was difficult. Consequently, while the implementation of the Copernicus activities supports the core activities of the EEA and provides new data for its outputs, the Delegation Agreement creates additional administrative costs for the EEA.

5.2.2.3   Cost-efficiency in task implementation

This section looks at the cost-efficiency of implementation of the tasks that are also analysed in terms of their effectiveness under Q1. Due to the interrelated nature between some of the tasks, a broader perspective is taken and some tasks are grouped together and only tasks, where the evidence provided for a meaningful assessment of cost-efficiency are presented. The section thus consists of the following sections: Task a) on Eionet coordination, task c) and e) on reporting and SOE dataflows and data management, Task h) on SOER and task m) on dissemination.

a) Task a) on Eionet coordination

Activities related to Eionet coordination are mentioned in the MAWP 2014-2018 primarily under SA3.1. Based on the data from the EEA's activity-based budgeting system, expenses booked on SA3.1 have ranged from EUR 191,000 to 251,000 per year (2014-2016) and FTE's allocated were 10 in 2014 and 2015 and rose to 11 in 2016 (see Appendix N). The resource allocation has thus been quite stable during the evaluation period, which also reflects a stable set of activities in each year in term of number of NFP and NRC meetings conducted (see Q1, section 4.2.2.1). As such, from the overall figures, the evidence points to an even performance.

However, as can be seen in e.g. the MAWP and annual WPs (and confirmed in interviews), the management of the Eionet activities was intertwined with the management of the topical programmes in the EEA and also other programmes (e.g. there was an NRC group on communication in which the Communications programme took part) as such a share of the resources and budget coming under the areas mentioned in SA1 as well as other SAs was devoted to Eionet coordination, in particular the NRC meetings as well as the management ETCs and their annual

programmes and deliveries. However, the information on allocation of resources and budget does not allow to determine how much of the budget for these different SAs was devoted to Eionet coordination issues. This means that there is uncertainty about the actual resource use on this task.

The MB seminar in 2016 discussed the functioning of the Eionet and found that an increased use of webinars would be helpful. This also came out in interviews conducted by the support study, which suggested that this could help to optimise and increase efficiency in this area (reduce travel costs and time). Further, as mentioned under Q1, a scope for improvement in planning of annual activities and more use of the Eionet Planner was identified – which also indicates a potential for efficiency gains.

All in all, the evidence points to an even performance with some scope for efficiency gains. The strength of the evidence is considered to be low-medium as the data on resource allocation for this task is uncertain. Furthermore, the Eionet is a unique constellation not replicated anywhere else. It is thus not possible to determine whether the ratio of costs to activities (e.g. number of meetings and costs associated with these meetings) is comparatively high or low. The judgement therefore rests mostly on qualitative assessments by the involved stakeholders on whether the task is efficiently implemented.

b) Tasks c) on reporting, and e) on data flows and data management and assessments

Regarding task c) on reporting, the Fitness Check on Environmental Monitoring and Reporting analysed the efficiency in relation to reporting processes and found that the EEA has standardised and optimised procedures and systems for reporting flows that they are handling and thus doing this more efficiently than other service providers – the evidence is in particular quicker data processing of the data flows that the EEA is handling[183]. The fitness check estimated the annual costs for the European Environment Agency at around EUR 4.5 million (corresponding to approximately 11% of the EEA core budget). This was based on a detailed review and cost assessment for each of the environmental reporting obligations. The cost estimate included costs related to maintaining the IT infrastructure supporting the data flows for the reporting obligations as well as staff costs and costs of the ETCs involved. As discussed under Q1, the total list of reporting obligations handled by the EEA includes also reporting obligations related to climate legislation as well as reporting obligations related to international conventions for which the costs would have to be added in order to obtain a full picture of the total cost involved in performing this task. For the purpose of the support study, the EEA provided some indicative estimates of the level of resources going into supporting these additional reporting requirements. These indicate that the annual costs are in the range of EUR 0.9 million and 2.6 million. If the assumption is made that the correct estimate is mid-point between the two, this what bring the costs to approx. EUR 1.8 million – and adding these to the 4.5 million, the total costs would be in the range of EUR 6.3 million, including all reporting obligations. This needs to be seen in the context that some of the climate related reporting obligations are assessed by the EEA to involve very high costs. However, the estimate is tentative and overall, it can be established with relative certainty that the costs range between EUR 5.3 million and 7.1 million (i.e. 13-17% of the EEA core budget).

The cost estimates for the execution of the task of supporting reporting include costs related to IT as a major element in this support is to provide the IT infrastructure that can support the data flows related to reporting. The EEA's main tool for doing this was Reportnet as described already under Q1 (see section 4.2.2.2). Reportnet handled not only the data related to reporting requirements, but also other data related to Eionet indicators. Further, other data management tools supported the process – and likewise, these tools supported data flows whether or not they are related to reporting requirements. Therefore, when considering cost-efficiency, it is difficult to separate tasks c), e) and g) in particular because the systems and tools backing these tasks were shared.

The support study has considered the ratio of data flows/deliveries against the IT costs over time as one way of establishing whether efficiency gains were achieved during the evaluation period. The hypothesis would be that increased data deliveries at stable costs (reflecting stable overall budget of the EEA) would indicate that efficiency gains were achieved. The table below shows expenses booked to project codes under IT budget lines in the years

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[183] [112], p. 47

2013-2016. The data management budget line is the one linked directly to IT infrastructure to support data flows. The data in the table indicates that IT costs have been fairly stable in 2014-2016, with some increase in 2015.

Table 5-17   Expenses booked to project codes under IT budget lines 2013-16

Budget Line	2013	2014	2015	2016
B03321 – IT infrastructure/quality assurance	993,914	1,306,421	1,651,903	1,411,123
B03322 – Technological development	371,650	1,081,535	1,020,828	1,090,455
B03325 – Data Management	799,684	1,096,308	1,119,169	1,097,530
B03540 – Shared Environmental Information System	988,563	-	-	-
Grand Total (EUR)	3,153,811	3,484,264	3,791,901	3,599,109

Source: [157]. Note the values include costs incurred and carried over (C1 and C8 budget lines). The IT infrastructure budget line relates to help-desk, servers, etc., and as such it is not related to a specific project or projects. The budget line on technological development relates to information platform, website, WISE, BISE, etc., as well as software tool development and maintenance. As such, this relates to IT systems. The Data Management budget line is the one related to data flows.

The number of data flows required for the reporting obligations under EEA/Eionet responsibility has increased between 2013 and 2016. Some data flows have several datasets/envelopes required, and the complexity of data/size of files may also be different[184]. The number of deliveries also increases in case of re-deliveries, corrections, etc. Table 5-18 shows the number of Reportnet deliveries, that is:

number of data flows × number of countries delivering the data flow × number of datasets/ envelopes required per reporting obligation.

Table 5-18   Number of Reportnet deliveries vs costs of data management

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Cost (data management budget line)	799,684	1,096,308	1,119,169	1,097,530
Number of Reportnet deliveries	2,143	2,780	2,667	3,507
Expenses per delivery (EUR)	373	394	420	313

Source: [424]; [157]; COWI calculations. Note: Budget lines changed between 2013 and 2014

The trend in these four years is a continuation of a longer-term trend of increased deliveries. The ways the increase in deliveries is managed within the relatively steady budget have included increase automation and centralisation of processes, which in 2015-16 culminated in the creation of a Common Workspace[185] (CWS). CWS is IT infrastructure allowing data managers and operations to work together on a single platform, which is important in the setup where many technical partners are located in different locations. Overall, these improvements have allowed a more streamlined process, leading to shorter times between data delivery and publishing (as well as use of this data in reports and assessments).

Other elements that helped to create efficiency gains in relation to IT systems more broadly but also positively affecting data management included the setting up of an ICT strategy and an ICT steering group, increasing use of

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[184] According to interviews with the EEA

[185] Interview with the EEA; CWS Project Plan [425]

cloud services, where the EEA has also cooperated with the Food Safety Agency. In addition, the EEA has made use of contracts through DG Digit, which has also helped to keep down ICT costs.

Another IT-heavy area, which supports task e) primarily but also task m) on dissemination are the thematic information systems, including BISE, WISE and Climate-ADAPT, some of which were co-owned with the Commission and some owned entirely by the EEA. During the evaluation period, the EEA managed 9 sites co-owned (and thus also co-financed) with the Commission. EEA staff have pointed to some examples of additional transaction costs due to contracts being held by the Commission and work of contractors being managed by the EEA, e.g. when the terms of the contracts with the relevant service providers are not known to the EEA.

Information on number/type of systems and their specific costs in different years has not been available to the study team, hence no direct conclusions can be drawn in terms of efficiency change. It is to be noted, that it would be challenging to objectively quantify any efficiency gains (or lack thereof) considering the number and complexity of systems. Also, due to the co-management arrangements, it would be challenging to isolate efficiency gains to the EEA.

As the ETCs perform a considerable amount of the work associated with reporting, data management and assessments (evidenced by case studies, see especially nature and freshwater case studies), especially in the policy areas under DG ENV, the working procedures and business model applied naturally also impacts on efficiency of performing these tasks. Applying a similar logic as above, a comparison of the development in data deliveries and costs of ETCs gives an impression of whether efficiency gains were achieved during the period. Table 5-8 displayed figures on ETC expenditure and showed that it increased slightly during the evaluation from EUR 8.2 million in 2013 to EUR 8.7 in 2016 (including the 10% co-financing provided by the ETCs themselves). Comparing this to the data deliveries in the same way as in Table 5-18 above gives the result displayed in the table below. The table illustrates that ETC expenses per data delivery have decreased over the period, which indicates that ETCs have become more efficient during the period. This is a crude assessment as ETCs were performing a range of different tasks.

Table 5-19   ETC expenditure seen against data deliveries, 2013-2016 (EUR, thousand)

	2013	2014	2015	2016
ETC Expenditure (including 10% co-financing)	8,188	8,400	8,613	8,742
Number of Reportnet deliveries	2,143	2,780	2,667	3,507
ETC Expenses per delivery (EUR)	3.82	3.02	3.23	2.49

Sources: See Table 5-8 and Table 5-18

On the issue of efficiency of the ETCs and whether they represent an efficient business model, the support study has gathered several observations.

- The ETCs are selected via competitive public tender procedures. During consultation, some interviewees have raised concerns over the limited competition during the tender procedures and it is also mentioned that several of the ETCs have had the same (or nearly the same) consortium in place for many years. This lack of competition could lead to a concern that efficiency would be compromised. On the other hand, case studies and interviews also show how the long-term involvement of ETCs and stability of the set-ups have supported implementation. Also, stakeholders across the Commission, the EEA and ETCs themselves have offered the judgement that the ETC rates were less expensive than e.g. consultants would be if individual services (such

as data management and reporting for a particular directive) were contracted out. The support study has not had access to information that allows for a concrete assessment in this regard (as this type of information is confidential business information).

- If the ETC scenario is compared to a scenario whereby the tasks undertaken by the ETC were instead in-sourced to the Agency, this would imply a substantial increase in staffing, without the flexibility allowed when contracting with a consortium of institutions which can draw on relevant resources and expertise in relation to the task in question. A qualitative assessment based on this scenario is therefore that the ETCs represent a comparatively efficient business model.

- While the ETCs are contractors to the EEA and selected on the basis of tender processes, they are also part-ners in the Eionet and form part of the research capacity of the Eionet. Interviews conducted indicate that their rationale for participation relies just as much on the knowledge exchange possibilities as on the financial income from the contracts as such. At the same time, a concern has been expressed by ETC and EEA staff, that the relatively low costs of the ETCs provide an incentive to transfer more tasks to the ETCs and not all of these tasks are knowledge-based. Also, the ETCs have expressed concerns that their role in Eionet in turning to be more of a service provider rather than a knowledge centre and the discouraging aspects of this develop-ment.

In preparation of the 2016 MB seminar, an ETC note was prepared by the EEA and ETCs, which included the 10 points listed in the box below and which further underpins the observations made above.

Box 5-1   Key points about ETCs made by the EEA and ETCs in connection with 2016 MB seminar

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1. **ETCs were set up** following the EEA member countries wish (still largely shared) to collaborate with the EEA on thematic areas in a proactive way.

2. The **financial support by ministries** to the ETC was based on the intention to provide services to the countries (e.g. the original intention of the French Ministry of Environment, when committing to provide financial support to the ETC/BD, was to strengthen the support to a kind of European public service. The ministry saw a need to establish a forum to connect policy with country-based work in the implementa-tion of nature policies. The initial incentives in the UK on the other hand were product focus and bringing in private companies.) This needs discussion at the EEA Management Board Seminar also because the institutional setting has changed over time. Focus in the early years of EIONET was to set up systems, collaboration etc. where countries could learn from one another and create a level playing field by focus-sing on the quality of systems, quality and completeness of data and reporting, and so on. Now we have achieved a situation where the infrastructural arrangements and information sharing is at a more satisfy-ing level, it makes sense to discuss next steps. That may entail, for instance, harmonisation of monitor-ing and reporting requirements; develop and apply smart tools for automating parts of the work & QA/QC

3. ETC consortia currently work under a multi-annual **Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs)** (currently 5 years), signed between the leading organisation, on behalf of the consortium, and the EEA. The FPAs are implemented through specific agreements, funded from the annual EEA budget with a 10% contribution from the consortium.

4. ETCs provide a **unique pool of expertise**, providing expertise on the full range of topics and over a large geographical coverage of Europe as well as contacts through own existing networks across EEA member countries.

5. ETCs consist of a combination of **various institutional experiences** from partner organisations: the country perspectives (governmental organizations, link to the Directives implementation at the national level), researchers (innovative and conceptual approaches), and private companies used to work as con-sultants (flexibility in terms of timing and content);

6. ETCs have in their partner institutions a **huge amount of expert capacity** (in terms of expertise, and connections and networking with countries) covering the full MDIAK cycle in support to policy develop-ment and implementation.

7. The **continuity in middle and long-term** perspective of work is ensured by the ETCs, in contrast to the consultancy work, through roadmaps and rolling work plan between ETCs, EEA and the EC.

8. Regardless of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) or the Framework Contracts (FC), ETCs staff is relatively **cheap** compared to consultants' staff thus allowing for much more staff days to perform the work.

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9. ETCs proved to be **flexible** in terms of activities, resources and consortium composition during the yearly Action Plans implementation and within a multi-annual perspective;

10. ETCs allow for **additional flexibility** due to Art. 5 of the EEA Regulation (contracting Eionet experts).

Source: [24]

c) Task h) on SOER

SOER activities relate primarily to strategic area SA2.4 in the 2014-2018 MAWP. Referring to Appendix N, this involved 9 and 11 FTEs in 2013 and 2014, respectively, whereas expenses were in the range of EUR 300 to 500 thousand in those years. Thus, especially in terms of FTEs during the two years, the use of resources was quite substantive at approx. 5% of total. However, it should be taken into account that time booked to this SA has probably also included other items than SOER work.

Referring to the case study in Appendix D, the evidence shows that the total resource requirements in producing the SOER2015 were some 28% larger than budgeted/forecast for. This impacted negatively on the EEA as resources were taken from other vital tasks. The adoption of the SOE-online aimed to provide a common platform for data collection. However, it appears that the greatest amount of time was associated with the interpretation, synthesis and quality assurance of the data – rather than its collection.

As noted IAS Audit on the 2015 SOER preparation process in EEA, there is no written report analysing the significant differences between the total resource estimates, and those which were used. As there is little information on the breakdown of these tasks, it is not clear whether the development of the SOER could have been more efficient. During consultation, especially Commission representatives have offered the view that the SOER could be streamlined through implementing a more routine aggregation/integration process across the MDIAK chain focusing on the specific data and indicators rather than putting resources into forecasting and systemic analysis. However, other stakeholders have emphasised the value of the approach taken for SOER2015. As evidenced in the case study, the contents of the SOER2015 were thoroughly consulted upon in the MB and SC.

d) Task m) on dissemination

Dissemination would fall under the SA3.4 on communication, outreach and user analysis. As such, data on resource allocation is available from the EEA's activity-based budgeting system, ref. Appendix N. This data shows that resources devoted have diminished over the evaluation period. The expenditure booked went from EUR 755 thousand in 2014[186] to EUR 452 thousand in 2016. The staff time booked went from 16 FTEs in 2014 to 15 in 2015. Comparing this to the number of reports published and other communication indicators, such as numbers of newsletters issued, postings in social media, etc. that have been presented already under effectiveness Q1 and Q2, it can be seen that while the service level (expressed in the effectiveness indicators) remained stable or improved during the evaluation period, the resources devoted decreased, which indicates that efficiency gains were achieved.

At the same time, document review and interviews have pointed to two areas with further potentials for efficiency gains:

- Translation: In line with the Common Approach, the EEA is committed to provide as much of its information as possible in all national languages. As such, the EEA translates selected reports and assessments in order to boost accessibility. The EEA is bound to use the translation service of the EU- the price is assessed by the EEA to be three times higher and service slower that what the EEA could get from tendering the translation assignments to private actors. In connection with the SOER 2015, the EEA did use external providers because the demand for translation was so large and timelines so short that EU translation service could not deliver[187]. Further use of external providers could reduce the budget for translation, however, the budget for translation

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[186] EUR 1194 thousand in 2013, however this figure is not reliable as the system was not in place for the SAs of the MAWP2014-2018.

[187] Interviews and documents [296], [297]

has been relatively limited during the evaluation period constituting less than 1% of the total budget, so in any case the potential efficiency gain is relatively small.

- Report production: It has been raised in interviews that there may be scope to simplify the process of report preparation: For example, since most people use websites, and access reports online, the information could be presented as websites, in an interactive way, rather than preparing a report. Effectiveness may also be affected by such a change, e.g. by easier access to data (not in reports, but directly), and more users reached.

5.2.3   Key findings and conclusions for Q4

Costs of the EEA have remained relatively constant over the evaluation period, at around EUR 50 million. The non-core (grant) part of the budget has increased. The assessment of costs to member countries indicates costs of around EUR 15 million per year. I.e. the total cost of EEA and Eionet is estimated at around EUR 66 million per year. This cost estimate is solid for the part that relates to the EEA budget as this is based on audited accounts. The assessment of costs to member countries is more uncertain and relies primarily on estimates derived through data on time consumption by MB members, NFPs and NRCs and not actual data (which is not available as member countries generally do not keep track of this).

Evidence from different sources, including existing studies, surveys and interviews conducted as well the case studies, clearly demonstrate that the work of the EEA and Eionet generated a number of benefits – most importantly the benefits associated with meeting the objectives as demonstrated above under EQ2, i.e. providing input to development and implementation of climate and environment legislation. While there are studies quantifying the substantial benefits associated with implementation of legislation in some areas, it is not possible to determine what share of these benefits would accrue to the EEA and Eionet. Therefore, the finding that the EEA creates considerable benefits related to implementation of environmental and climate legislation, however, it is not possible to quantify these benefits. Hence, there is good reason to assume that the benefits exceed the costs, but this rests on a qualitative assessment.

In relation to administrative efficiency, it was found that some of the central Commission systems used by the Agency most likely caused additional administrative costs compared to a situation where the Agency could procure such services locally. However, this is beyond the control of the Agency. The management of Copernicus through a separate Delegation Agreement increased administrative costs due to parallel budgeting and accounting procedures (core budget accounting as well as Delegation Agreement accounting).

For some tasks, it was possible to make a tentative assessment of cost efficiency based on data available. However, this was complicated by imprecise data on resources allocated to those tasks as well as lack of benchmarks against which efficiency in task management could be assessed.

For task a) on coordination of Eionet, it was found that resources allocated were quite stable during the period and so was the level of activity (number of meetings). Hence, the evidence points to an even performance with some scope for efficiency gains. The strength of the evidence is considered to be low-medium as the data on resource allocation for this task is uncertain. Furthermore, the Eionet is a unique constellation not replicated anywhere else. It is thus not possible to determine whether the ratio of costs to activities (e.g. number of meetings and costs associated with these meetings) is comparatively high or low. The judgement therefore rests mostly on qualitative assessments by the involved stakeholders on whether the task is efficiently implemented.

For task c) on reporting, the data from the fitness check of environmental reporting shows that the EEA is more efficient than other actors (the Commission) when handling the reporting obligations as the main service provider. Comparing number of data deliveries against IT costs also supports that efficiency gains were achieved during the evaluation period in this area with the EEA handling increasing amounts of data at stable IT costs. Further, it is likely that the ETCs have contributed to supporting efficiency in this area. However, this rests on a qualitative assessment.

For task h) on SOER, it was found that the resource use exceeded the planned amount, which indicates a low level of efficiency. In relation to the SOER, there could potentially be some options for streamlining in terms of reducing the ambition levels for the report, however, this could compromise stakeholders' expectations with regard to contents of the report. It is noted that the contents of the SOER2015 were thoroughly consulted upon in the MB and SC.

For task m) on dissemination, the data comparing resource use and level of activity and outputs indicate that over the period more was accomplished within a stable budget, thus indicating that efficiency gains were achieved. A few additional options for further efficiency gains were identified through interviews.

5.3   Q5: Efficiency of oversight mechanisms

> Q5: To what extent are the internal mechanisms for programming, monitoring, reporting and evaluating the EEA adequate for ensuring accountability and appropriate assessment of the overall performance of the Agency while minimising the administrative burden of the Agency and its stakeholders? Have the recommendations from the previous evaluation been followed-up and what lessons have been learned since then?

The table below presents the judgement criteria and indicators used in the assessment. The presentation of evidence below is organised according to the judgement criteria.

Table 5-20   Judgement criteria and indicators, Q5

Judgement criteria	Indicators
Transparent priorities and options expressed in draft (M)AWP enabling the MB to take part in strategic decision-making (ref. recommendation from the previous evaluation)	Clear communication on strategic choices and priorities (budget) to activities. Clarity of objectives and indicators (RACER). Adherence to guidelines and best practices on programming and budgeting Common Approach points 27-32.
Transparent consultation procedures on (M)AWPs	Clear documentation of comments received and how they have been handled and clear feed-back to those providing comments on how the comments have been handled with rationale to decisions provided.
There is an appropriate balance of interests in the MB considering policy areas handled by the EEA	Representation, voting rights and rules in the MB (as per Regulation and compared to Common Approach for Decentralised Agencies, point 10-20) Relevant stakeholders (member countries, Commission DGs, European Parliament) are sufficiently represented in MB / Bureau and their views thus heard and taken on board in a balanced way Views of stakeholders on whether there is an appropriate balance
Decision-making systems / governance structure enable effective and efficient decision-making	• Amount of time and personnel resources devoted to governance functions • Clear roles and distribution of tasks between the MB and the Bureau • Clarity in strategic choices and priorities and involvement of MB in prioritisation
Procedures and systems in the agency support efficient programming and reporting	• Initiatives to streamline and simplify the work programming, monitoring and reporting (in particular those stemming from previous evaluations) • Reporting on achievement of activities, outputs and KPIs enabling monitoring and oversight

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

5.3.1 Transparency of priorities and options expressed in work programmes

In this section, we present evidence collected in respect to clarity of objectives and indicators as well as clarity on strategic choices and priorities.

5.3.1.1 Clarity in objectives and indicators

The previous evaluation of the EEA recommended a clearer focus on performance indicators as well as a simplified structure with specified objectives and deliverables. This is in line with CADA points 27-32.

The desk review of the multi-annual and annual work programmes (MAWP and AWPs) of the EEA shows that they have in general been well-aligned with the Common Approach to Decentralised Agencies (CADA) points 27-32 (see reflection on each point in 10.12).

As already introduced under effectiveness Q1 (section 5.2), the EEA operated with a MAWP in the period 2014-2016, which thus covered the majority of the evaluation period. The structure in four strategic areas (SAs) and sub-areas under each SA was replicated in the AWPs and thus created consistency in the programming framework.

The MAWP provides for each SA, a goal, key objectives and performance indicators. For each sub-SA, an objective is provided, as well specific objectives, performance indicators and outputs. Table 5-21 counts the number of the various benchmarks established in the MAWP and illustrates that the MAWP includes an elaborated system of KPIs with a total of 108 KPIs, which in principle should be monitored and reported on. While this could be desirable in terms of a detailed insight into the operation of the agency, the support team finds that it is overly ambitious and there seems to have been a lack of consideration of the practical implications of having these KPIs. The MAWP does not consider how the KPIs should be monitored and whether it practically possible to do so.

Table 5-21   Overview of number of goals, objectives, performance indicators and outputs

Strategic Area (SA) in MAWP	Goals	Key ob-jectives	Objec-tives	Specific objectives	Key perfor-mance in-dicators	Out-puts
SA1	1	4			3	
Nine sub-Sas (SA1.1-SA1.9)			9	51	44	80
SA2	1	3			3	
Four sub-SAs (SA2.1-2.4)			4	15	11	21
SA3	1	3			3	
Seven sub-Sas (SA3.1-SA3.7)			7	39	34	39
SA4	1	1			2	
Two sub-SAs (SA4.1-SA4-2)			2	8	8	8
Total	**4**	**11**	**22**	**113**	**108**	**148**

Source: MAWP and AWPs

In addition to the number of objectives and KPIs, the support study has also looked in to the quality of these as well as the interlinkages.

A well-known framework for developing good quality KPIs is the RACER framework, ref Better Regulation Guide-lines Tool #44. RACER stands for relevant, accepted, credible, easy and robust:
Relevant – i.e. closely linked to the objectives to be reached
Accepted – e.g. by staff and stakeholders
Credible for non-experts, unambiguous and easy to interpret

Easy to monitor (e.g. data collection should be possible at low cost)
Robust – e.g. against manipulation

The study team has reviewed the KPIs and the key findings of this review are listed in Table 5-22 below.

Table 5-22   Review of KPIs against the RACER criteria

Criterion	Key findings	Examples from MAWP
Relevant	In general KPIs are related to the objective in the SA.	
Accepted	MAWP approved by MB and KPIs therefore regarded as accepted	
Credible	Not all KPIs are unambiguous and easy to interpret. Many KPIs are set up more like activities and/or objectives.	"sound, timely and policy relevant indicators and assessments' "EEA information systems developed according to the policy needs" "establish relevant partnerships with major operators in biodiversity monitoring, data gathering, and agriculture and forests ecosystems data and observation networks, in order to reinforce information provision as well as assessment capacities"
Easy	The number of KPIs included in itself calls into question the quality of the indicators in relation to this criterion. Many of the KPIs are not expressed in a way where it is clear how they will be measured and monitored.	
Robust	Issues in relation to credibility also impact on robustness. Some indicators are ambiguous and therefore also prone to manipulation.	

Source: Support study

When it comes to the interlinkages between the objectives, KPIs and outputs, the review of the MAWP (ref. section 4.2.1) indicates that the KPIs are most often relevant to the objective stated for the SA, however, the linkages across objectives, KPIs and outputs are, in some cases, obscure and KPIs and outputs often have a nature of objectives or activities rather than indicators/outputs. For example, for SA1.5, the specific objectives, performance indicators and outputs are not directly linked one to another.

The desk study also shows that the EEA, in line with CADA requirements, has developed other strategic documents which existed alongside the MAWP such as the Communication Framework and the Framework for International Engagement. There is a risk that such strategic documents add to the complexity of performance requirements by introducing additional objectives and KPIs. Considering the Communication Framework, the objectives and KPIs are consistent with the MAWP and there is a clear reference to a specific sub-strategic area (SA3.4) and thus this risk was avoided. The Framework for International Engagement finalised in 2016 referred to the MAWP and the international dimensions in the scope of work under various SAs (p. 2). It summarised these in three main lines of international engagement of the EEA (Box on p. 2) and then set out principles that help to prioritise the activities within these three areas (in section 3 on priorities, p. 3-4). As such the Framework for International Engagement provided a further operationalisation of the MAWP as a strategic instrument to set direction. However, the principles set out do have a character of objectives, which are additional to the objectives mentioned in the MAWP:

"Contributing directly to regular processes…, to ensure consistency and to improve overall mainstreaming and streamlining of work"

"Representing or acting as a bridge for Eionet partners to facilitate their contributions to regional and international processes…"

"Based on a regional approach to create synergies and maximise impacts"[188]

This does somewhat increase the complexity of the system of performance targets of the EEA.

The previous evaluation of the EEA recommended that the EEA should give more focus to identifying measurable objectives, tangible outputs and performance indicators. This recommendation has been followed to some extent as illustrated above: A number of KPIs are included in the MAWP. However, the support study finds that insufficient attention has been given to the practical aspects of how to monitor the achievement of the KPIs.

5.3.1.2   Clarity on strategic choices and priorities

The previous evaluation of the EEA found that the EEA needed to improve on the level of information on allocation budget and resources to various areas of activity in order to give the Management Board a better basis for making decisions on priorities. During the evaluation period, this became even more pertinent given the austerity measures put in place during the evaluation period with the objective of reducing staffing levels in agencies by 5% over 5 years as expressed in the Commission's Communication from 2013 on programming of human and financial resources for decentralised agencies 2014-2020[189].

As presented in 10.21, the EEA has since the previous evaluation, established an activity-based accounting system, which enables additional detail on budget and resources devoted to different activities (organised around the SAs of the MAWP). This system was used as basis for presenting a budget with allocations at SA-level 2 in AWPs 2014, 2015, 2016. It was also used as basis for creating data on actual expenditures allocated to the different SA-level 2 areas although this information was not included in the CAARs. The support study finds that this is a considerable improvement in the level of information on strategic priorities in the AWPs. However, the SA-level 2 priorities are still at a high level giving first and foremost an impression of distribution of resources across main topics. While the activity-based system has a third level (called 'project codes') these are not displayed in the AWPs or CAARs and they do not correspond to the outputs specified in the MAWP.

As explained in section 4.2.1 on the review of MAWP, AWPs and CAARs, the review found a lack of consistency and pointed to the following issues:

- The MAWP does not list all the major EEA activities. For example in the water sector: the annual Bathing Water Report is not mentioned.

- The activities set out in the AWPs do not always reference the outputs of the MAWP. The AWPs do not mention the annual products in a systematic way.

- For 2014, the tasks in the AWP and the results in the AAR do not fully correspond: the AAR does not provide information on all activities listed in the AWP (in contrast, activities in the AWPs and results in the CAARs for 2015 and 2016 do correspond)

The EEA has explained that the AWPs, particularly early in the period, were not designed to provide a clear summary of annual activities, not a detailed work programme describing each individual product planned during the year. A number of publications across all SA areas were included in the publication plan, approved by the Management board, and subsequently documented in the CAAR for respective years. It was not the guidance at the time that all products should be included in the AWPs[190].

Based on the desk review, the support study finds that the practise of not systematically referring the annual activities and products in the MAWP and AWPs made the priorities more obscure. Also, the lack of clear referencing

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[188][161], p. 4

[189] [47]

[190] Comment by EEA, 9 March 2018 in connection with factual check of MAWP, AWP and CAAR review

between AWPs and MAWP compromised the ability determine the degree to which the MAWP objectives and intentions were being fulfilled by the AWPs. Furthermore, the fact that the activity-based budgeting system does not allow a detailed understanding of how resources are linked to activities and products, means that it is difficult for a supervisory function – such as the Management Board - to understand the strategic resource implications of reducing priorities on some activities while increasing them on others.

The desk review of AWPs and CAARs during the period also shows that, for the most part, they were limited to a presentation of activities planned/implemented and not to a great extent accompanied by strategic considerations on prioritisation. The prioritisation was implicit from the list of activities to be implemented according to the AWP.

As mentioned under Q3, the case of the EEA in 2015 discontinuing their support to the Commission in connection with the reporting under the DWD Directive has been mentioned as a concern during interviews with Commission staff. It is an example of a negative priority that was made during the evaluation period – and the justification for the negative priority as expressed by EEA staff during interviews was the lack of resources coupled with the need to prioritise support for the WFD and an assessment that drinking water did not fully enter EEA's mandate related to the state of the environment. This decision is not clear from any of the programming documents reviewed, nor do minutes of MB meetings indicate that it was discussed.

The CAAR from 2016 is the first programming document from the period, which very explicitly addressed strategic prioritisation and resource constraints. It referred to the 2013 Commission Communication on 'Programming of human and financial resources for decentralised agencies 2014–2020', which sets the framework for overall planning of resources of agencies and concludes that 'the total number of posts decreases from 138 in 2013 to 124 in 2018' for the EEA. The CAAR states that: "For the EEA it is increasingly difficult to achieve its objectives set out in the MAWP 2014–2020 under the increased resource constraints. As a result, some expected outputs included in the AWP 2016 could not be delivered."(p. 87).

Data on the view of members of the Management Board on these issues show that there is a certain division. Interviews with Management Board members from the Commission, DG ENV in particular, show that there is a wish to see a greater level of granularity in the information provided in AWPs in particular as a basis for strategic decisions on allocation of resources and priorities. On the other hand, data from the survey of MB members and interviews with MB members from the country level, indicate that the majority of MB members are satisfied with the level of detail provided in the programming documents.

The survey of MB members asked whether they found that the content of draft AWPs was sufficient as basis for the MB members to assess and provide feed-back on the priorities of the EEA and allowed four categories of responses: Too superficial, too detailed, adequate, other. 15 of 20 respondents found that the content was 'adequate', 3 found that it was too detailed and 2 respondents marked 'other'[191]. Of the two respondents that marked 'other', one found that detail was lacking. Even so, survey results indicate that the majority of MB members consider the level of detail to be appropriate to give feed-back on priorities. The survey asked an identical question on the multi-annual work programmes and here 16 out of 20 found the content 'adequate', 3 'too detailed' and 1 marked 'other', i.e. the same picture as for AWPs.

The survey also asked MB members whether the priorities of the EEA with regard to the distribution of resources and budget between the five elements of the MDIAK chain were clear. Here, 60% of respondents thought that the priorities of the EEA with regard to the distribution of resources and budget between the five elements (M, D, I, A, K) were clear to them as an MB member to a large (55%, 11 responses) or very large (5%, 1 response) extent. Only one respondent (5%) felt it was not clear at all[192].

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[191] MB survey, Q2a (see 10.17)
[192] MB survey, Q3a, ref. 10.17

5.3.2   Transparency of consultation procedures on (M)AWPs

The IAS audit undertaken in 2012 found that: 'The stakeholders' consultation established to adopt the EEA Annual Management Plan is performed in a comprehensive, transparent and timely manner. The modern IT tools used which allow on-line posting of contributions by the stakeholders, increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the process and should be considered as a very good practice.'[193]

The review of documents relating to consultations undertaken during the evaluation period found that the EEA undertook comprehensive consultation of its annual work programmes allowing the stakeholders represented in the MB to provide comments. This was organised in a 'Forum consultation' where the draft AWP was made available and open for comments in a certain period of time. The comments were then logged along with notes on changes made to the AWP in response to the comments. The consultation is thoroughly documented in a 'log' including actions taken to take on board the comments received. In addition, both the Commission and the Scientific Committee have issued opinions on the draft work programme, which existed separate to the individual comments in the Forum consultation and the EEA have issued responses to these opinions.

Table 5-23 below provides an overview of number of comments received during the years. It should be noted that during the period, the Commission changed its practice for provision of comments in the forum consultation. Starting from 2015, DG ENV coordinated the comments from the other DGs represented in the MB and one set of Commission comments were provided in the forum consultation. In addition to this, the formal Commission opinion was coordinated by DG ENV through an Interservice Consultation (ISC). The participation of different DGs in the procedure over the years is shown in Table 5-24 below.

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[193] IAS Audit on Stakeholders Relations Management and External Communication in EEA, 2012, p. 5

Table 5-23   *Overview of levels of participation in the consultation process of Annual Work Programmes (AWP) and the Multi-annual Work Programme (MAWP)*

	2013 AWP	MAWP	2014 AWP	2015 AWP	2016 AWP
Countries providing comments(1)	13 (four of these provided more than 10 comments)	15 (six of these provided more than 10 comments)	11 (five of these provided more than 10 comments)	10 (three of these provided more than 10 comments)	12 (three of these provided more than 10 comments)
Commission	As form of opinion, 11 issues raised	Forum: DG ENV, DG CLIMA and Eurostat comments + opinion	Forum: DG ENV, DG CLIMA and Eurostat comments + opinion	29 comments in the Forum consultation from DG ENV on behalf of Commission + opinion	12 comments in the Forum consultation from DG ENV on behalf of Commission + opinion
Parliament	Joint comments paper, 8 specific suggestions	ENVI committee	ENVI committee	ENVI committee	ENVI committee
SC members providing comments	3 members took part in the Forum consultation plus SC opinion paper	9 members took part in the Forum consultation + Opinion paper	5 members took part in the Forum consultation + Opinion paper	1 member took part in the Forum consultation + Opinion paper	No members took part in the Forum consultation + Opinion paper

Sources: [238]-[262]

Notes: (1) 2013 AWP: most active countries were Poland, Switzerland, Sweden and France. 2014 AWP: most active countries were Sweden, Poland and Slovakia. 2015 AWP: most active countries were Poland, Sweden and Germany. 2016 AWP: most active countries were Poland, Sweden and the UK. MAWP: most active countries were Sweden, UK and Poland

Table 5-24   *DGs providing comments in the ISCs*

ISC	2013 AWP	MAWP	2014 AWP	2015 AWP	2016 AWP
DGs	BUDG CNETC EEAS ENER HR JRC MOVE R&I SANCO	AGRI BUDG CLIMA CNECT DEVCO EEAS ELARG ENER ENTR ESTAT HR JRC	ISC document not available to study team	AGRI BUDG CLIMA CNECT DEVCO EEAS ELARG ENER ENTR ESTAT HR JRC	DG BUDG DG HR DG MOVE SG DG CLIMA

		MARE		MARE	
		MOVE		MOVE	
		RTD		REGIO	
		SANCO		RTD	
		SG		SANCO	
		SJ		SG	
				SJ	

Source: [381], [382], [383], [384], [385]

The review of the logs with comments and responses from the EEA[194] shows that all comments have received a response from the EEA and responses also provided reasons for accepting or rejecting comments and details on how the work programme has been amended to address the comment.

In the survey to MB Members, the following two questions were asked:

- Question 2d) To which extent do you find that consultation procedures on Annual Work Programmes work effectively? 60% (12 of 20 responses) of respondents felt that, to a large extent, the consultation procedures on Annual Work Programmes work effectively.

- Question 2e) Do you consider that time and resources required for participating in the consultation procedures are proportionate to the value your participation provides? Half of respondents (10 responses) consider that, to a large extent, the time and resources required for participating in the consultation procedures are proportionate to the value that their participation provides. 40% (8 responses) consider that it is proportionate to some extent.[195]

Data from interviews with MB members indicate that the consultation procedures are regarded as transparent. Interviews with EEA staff indicate that the recording and documentation of comments and responses requires a lot of work. However, the interviews indicate that this is needed to maintain the high level of transparency and thus it is not considered that there is scope to reduce the associated administrative burden.

5.3.3   Balance of interests in the MB considering policy areas handled by the EEA

The MB is composed of the following members following the Founding Regulation art. 8 (each member may be represented by an alternate member):

- One representative of each Member State
- Two representative of the Commission
- Two scientific personalities designated by the European Parliament, chosen on the basis of the personal contribution they are likely to make to the Agency's work
- Each 'other' country (i.e. non-EU Member State) which participates in the Agency may have one representative in the MB

Following Article 8 of the Founding Regulation, each MB member has one vote and decisions of the MB require two-thirds majority to be adopted.

Comparing the Founding Regulation to the points in the Common Approach to decentralised Agencies (CADA) 10-13, the Founding Regulation conforms well to the CADA. The CADA mentions one member appointed by the Parliament whereas the EEA has two. Also, the Founding Regulation does not contain any provisions on the term of office of the MB members whereas CADA suggests a period of four years (renewable).

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[194] Comment logs provided by the EEA, referring AWPs 2013-2016
[195] See 10.17

The CADA mentions the possibility of including in the MB where appropriate a 'fairly limited number of stakeholders' representatives', which is understood by the study team to include representatives of non-governmental organisations, e.g. industry organisations, consumers organisations, interest organisations, etc. However, such organisations are not represented in the EEA MB despite the mandate of the EEA to disseminate environmental information to the general public (ref. Art. 2(m)) as well as the situation that environmental information and environmental issues are key concerns to many non-governmental stakeholders.

The Commission Decision of 2010 appointed MB members as follows:

"The representatives of the Commission to the Management Board of the European Environment Agency shall be the persons occupying the following positions and exercising the following functions:

(a) Director for Strategy, Directorate-General for Environment
(b) Director, Environment Directorate, Directorate-General for Research
The alternate representative(s) shall be the person(s) occupying the following positions and exercising the following functions:
(a) Director, Institute for Environment and Sustainability, Joint Research Centre
(b) Director, Sectoral and Regional Statistics, European Statistical Office"[196]

Further, DG CLIMA acts as observer in the MB as per a 'gentleman's agreement'. Based on the review of the MAWP, AWPs and other documents and data it is clear that the EEA handled activities in policy areas, which were relevant to all of the five DGs, which are in one way or the other represented at the MB meetings. The practical set-up is thus a way of ensuring that actions can be coordinated with all these DGs. The most prominent policy areas handled by the EEA are environmental policy and climate policy, and the current set-up is not completely coherent with this situation. However, survey results and interviews with MB members shows that in general MB members subscribe to the current set-up and find that it is appropriate to ensure a sufficient balance of interests.

In the survey of MB members, a question was asked: *Do you find that the balance of interests in the MB is adequate, considering the policy areas handled by EEA?* The majority (16 responses of 20) of respondents answered yes, two answered no and two answered 'do not know'.

Looking at the balance of interests overall, interviews with MB members shows that they acknowledge the value of having the interests of all member countries, the Commission and participants selected by the Parliament represented on the MB.

Interviews with MB members and inputs received during the Stakeholder workshop point to the size and diversity of the MB as a challenge in a situation where there is a need to make decisions on negative priorities as has been the case due to budget austerity measures implemented during the evaluation period. This is related to a tradition in the MB that decisions are generally made by consensus rather than by enforcing the two-third majority vote.

5.3.4   Decision-making systems / governance structure enable effective and efficient decision-making

5.3.4.1   Time and resources devoted

Table 5-25 shows the level of attendance at MB meetings based an overview created by DG ENV covering 11 meetings in 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016 for which attendance data was available to the support study. The overview illustrates that attendance levels of members or alternates differed considerably. However, overall for the member countries, 27 out of the 33 countries attended the meetings represented by the formal member or alternate to the Board in more than 70% of the 11 meetings counted, which is quite a high level of attendance.

Table 5-25   Level of attendance at MB meetings 2012, 2014-2016[197]

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[196] [286], p.2

[197] For 2012, only attendance from member countries was assessed as the team did not have data on Commission representatives.

Country	Member	Alternate	Other	Absent	Member or Alternate	% meetings attended by member/alternate
AUSTRIA	11	0	0	0	11	100%
BELGIUM	11	0	0	0	11	100%
BULGARIA	11	0	0	0	11	100%
CROATIA	7	2	0	2	9	82%
CYPRUS	2	1	4	4	3	27%
CZECH REPUBLIC	3	8	0	0	11	100%
DENMARK	6	2	3	0	8	73%
ESTONIA	7	3	1	0	10	91%
FINLAND	5	6	0	0	11	100%
FRANCE	11	0	0	0	11	100%
GERMANY	9	1	1	0	10	91%
GREECE	7	0	1	3	7	64%
HUNGARY	7	3	0	1	10	91%
ICELAND	10	0	0	1	10	91%
IRELAND	6	3	1	1	9	82%
ITALY	6	4	1	0	10	91%
LATVIA	9	0	1	1	9	82%
LIECHTENSTEIN	1	0	0	10	1	9%
LITHUANIA	8	2	0	1	10	91%
LUXEMBOURG	8	1	0	2	9	82%
MALTA	5	1	1	4	6	55%
NETHERLANDS	6	2	2	1	8	73%
NORWAY	10	1	0	0	11	100%
POLAND	4	5	1	1	9	82%
PORTUGAL	6	2	3	0	8	73%
ROMANIA	7	3	1	0	10	91%
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	7	4	0	0	11	100%
SLOVENIA	3	2	3	3	5	45%
SPAIN	1	10	0	0	11	100%
SWEDEN	5	6	0	0	11	100%
SWITZERLAND	2	7	2	0	9	82%
TURKEY	1	6	4	0	7	64%
UNITED KINGDOM	7	3	0	1	10	91%
DG ENV	9	0	0	0	9	100%
DG RTD	1	0	7	1	1	11%
DG JRC	0	2	7	0	2	22%
DG ESTAT	0	4	0	5	4	44%
DG CLIMA			7	2		

Source: DG ENV for meetings 2014-2016, MB minutes and information on MB members and alternates for individual countries in 2012. No data for Commission representatives for 2012 and thus only 9 meetings included.

The figure below shows the responses to a question on time spent on MB duties in the survey of MB members. Most of the respondents spend 11-20 working days per year (i.e. 2-5 days per MB meeting), 30% spend 21-30 working days per year (i.e. 4-7 days per MB meeting). This can reflect that some respondents were also Bureau members and have counted the time spent on Bureau duties as well.

Figure 5-1   Q4e – Time Spent on MB Duties
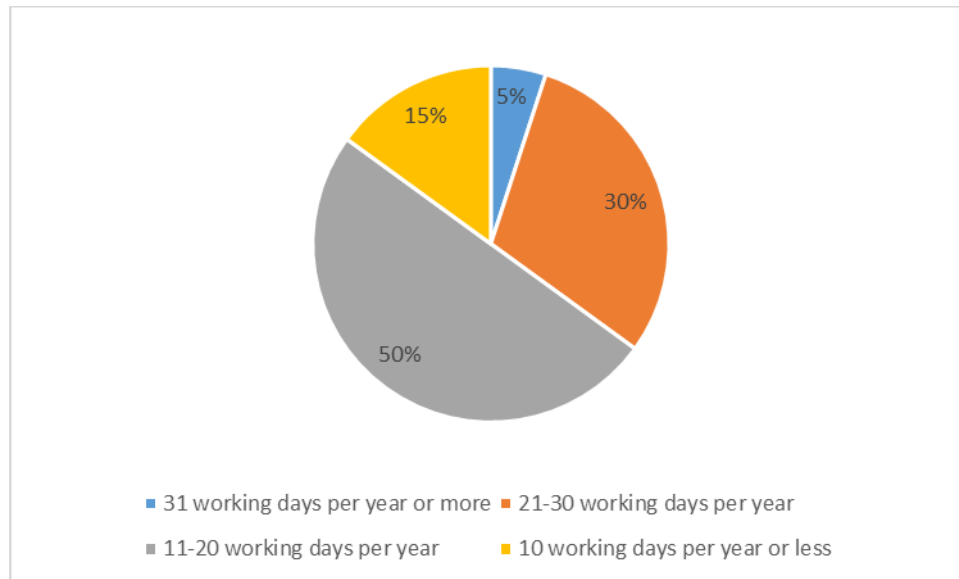
Source: Question 4e) How much time do you spend per year on your duties as Management Board member? Valid Responses: 20

Interviews with MB members have raised the following concerns in relation to devotion of time and resources for MB activities (the concerns listed have not been raised unanimously by all those interviewed, but by at least more than one):

- The majority of MB members were passive during the meetings and do not seek to exercise any influence or engage in discussion

- The majority of MB members accepted and 'congratulated' what was put forward by the EEA and did not engage in constructive criticism and/or suggestions

- The format and agenda of the MB meetings focused too much on information and procedural issues allowing too little time for strategic discussions

- The MB should to a larger extent discuss concrete options of how to address the situation of shrinking resources. The draft AWPs did not provide a basis for such discussion.

- Too often, MB members sent junior representatives who are not in a position to engage in a strategic discussion (as seen in the table above, most member countries were represented by their member or alternate at the meetings, whereas this was less so the case for the Commission representatives, so the comment made is not fully in line with actual data on attendance)

5.3.4.2   Exercising strategic oversight and prioritisation

While the austerity measures in relation to agencies were on the table starting from 2013 with the Commission's Communication as explained above (see section 5.3.1.2), desk studies of MB meeting minutes from the evaluation period show that it was not until 2016 that the requirement to address negative priorities was evident in the MB setting. Minutes from the years 2013-2014 reflect very little consideration or debate about strategic issues and prioritisation of resources in the MB, although there is mention of the consultation procedures around the MAWP and AWPs.

The first meeting during the period where the minutes reflect a more thorough debate on these issues is the meeting 22 June 2016 where a debate was tabled based on a paper submitted to MB members by the EEA Executive Director (Item 7 Resource outlook and implications for the EEA work programme). The minutes reflect that MB members acknowledged the need for making priorities (including negative ones) but at the same time also wanted

to send a message that more resources were needed. Some countries offered to provide support through seconded national experts. There were no concrete suggestions discussed or mentioned for areas that could be cut down or prioritised over others.

Looking at the comments provided by MB members in the consultation for AWPs during the evaluation period, the desk study shows that these generally did not relate to the overall prioritisation of resources. The far majority of the comments related to specific elements in specific SAs. A few comments by the Commission requested additional details on allocation of resources to various elements of the AWP. The opinion of the European Parliament's ENVI Committee on the 2015 AWP to some extent addressed more overall strategic issues and discussed some of the priorities and the extent to which they were clear of the EEA mission and goals.

The survey of MB members asked the MB members: *As an MB member, to which extent do you find that you have the opportunity to exercise real influence on the priorities of the EEA?* [198]

Only 25% (5 responses of 20) of respondents felt that as an MB member they had a large extent to exercise real influence on the priorities of the EEA; 50% (10 responses) felt they could exercise real influence to some extent.

Further, the survey asked whether MB members meet with the relevant authorities in your country that take part in EU level discussions on the budget of the EEA (through COREPER) to discuss EEA budget and country positions on this. As shown in the figure below, only a quarter do so on an annual basis or more often.

Figure 5-2   *Q4c – Frequency of Meetings with Relevant Authorities to Discuss EEA budget (Member Country Respondents)*

At least once per year ▪ Less than once per year ▪ Never ▪ Do not know
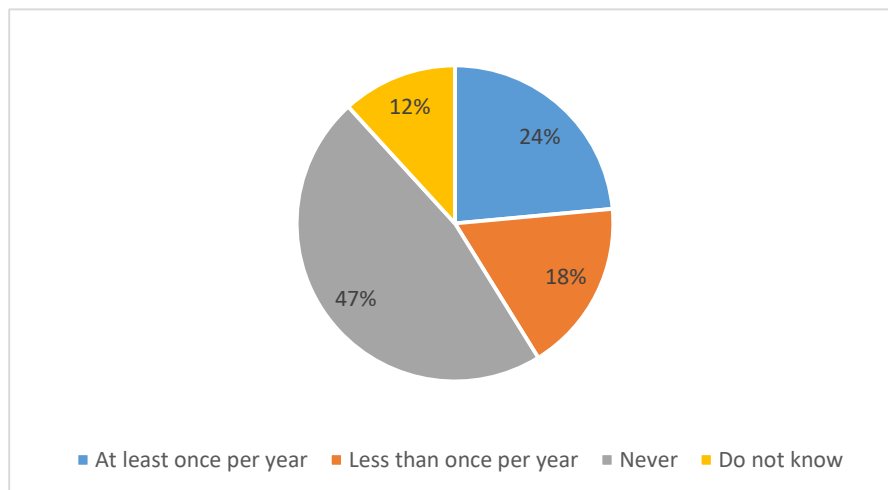
Source: Question 4c) Do you meet with the relevant authorities in your country that take part in EU level discussions on the budget of the EEA (through COREPER) to discuss EEA budget and country positions on this? Valid Responses: 17

Interviews with MB members as well as the session with the Bureau and interviews with EEA management have highlighted the importance of strategic prioritisation in the view of fiscal austerity measures being imposed. It appears from the interviews that while this is a topic that all acknowledge as important and in need of action, the MB or the Agency did not during the evaluation period find a model for how to address it in practical terms.

At the stakeholder workshop, participants emphasised that in the context of increasing demands and data combined with shrinking budgets, the ability of the management of the Agency to set negative priorities was essential. However, participants considered that the evaluation period had shown limited ability of the Management Board to set negative priorities. Rather, there had been a tendency that if anything was suggested to be taken off the table, someone would be dissatisfied and state that it was very important. However, at the same time, participants considered that the current MAWP had involved the setting of some negative priorities, i.e. certain areas of activity were removed compared to the previous MAWP (EEA strategy), for instance Eye-on-Earth. Participants reflected that it was not sufficient to have such considerations in connection with the strategic considerations for the MAWP,

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[198] MB survey, Q2e, see 10.17

and that annual processes were necessary – however, not effectively implemented during the evaluation period (see workshop output document in 10.18).

5.3.4.3   Clarity of roles and distribution of tasks between governance bodies

A review of agendas and minutes of the MB and Bureau shows a clear overlap in subjects covered during the evaluation period. This indicates that roles of the two bodies are not distinct. However, the survey with the Management Board members shows that the division of responsibilities between the two is clear to the majority of respondents (70% found the division clear to a large, or very large extent). Also, the vast majority (82%) considered that the division of responsibility between the Bureau and the MB contribute to a large or very large extent to the effectiveness of the governance of the EEA. During interviews, MB members from the Commission have raised a concern that the two bodies have overlapping roles. Interviews with some MB members have also raised suggestions that the MB should focus more on strategic issues with the Bureau having a more operational role. Looking at the Rules of Procedure for the two Bodies, there are provisions about when the Bureau is empowered to act on behalf of the MB and when such empowerment can only happen with explicit delegation from the MB. These provide a framework and also it is clear that the areas where the Bureau is empowered to act on behalf of the MB have a more operational character. As such, it can be understood why MB members consider that the roles are clear. However, against this is the fact that minutes of meetings illustrate that there is some level of duplication in the topics treated in the two bodies, which indicates that the roles were not fully exercised according to a strategic / operational split.

5.3.5   *Procedures and systems in the agency support efficient programming and reporting*

5.3.5.1   Initiatives to streamline programming and reporting

During the evaluation period, the two annual reports (Annual Report and Annual Activity Report) were merged into one (Consolidated Annual Activity Report) and this can be considered an important streamlining both for the efficiency of agency resources as well as for the recipients of the reports.

The MAWP 2014-2018 provided a consistent a systematic framework (of strategic areas and sub-areas) which has been consistently applied by the EEA in programming and reporting in the subsequent years. This has provided a stable and recognisable framework and the comments provided by the MB on the subsequent AWPs also show a great deal of appreciation in this regard. Some comments have indicated less need for repeating MAWP objectives and KPIs and instead focusing more on giving additional detail in the AWPs.

5.3.5.2   Reporting on achievement of objectives, KPIs, outputs and activities

Based on the desk review, it is found that the annual reports have to a large extent been constricted to reporting on the activities that were planned for the year in question, whereas there has been limited reporting on the achievement in respect to objectives, outputs and key performance indicators set out for each of the strategic areas identified in the MAWP.

5.3.6   *Key findings and conclusions for Q5*

This question was addressed through five judgement criteria. The first one dealt with transparency of priorities and options expressed in draft work programmes. This related to a recommendations from the previous evaluation of the EEA, which recommended that the EEA should give more focus to identifying measurable objectives, tangible outputs and performance indicators. The data from review of work programmes show that this recommendation has been followed to some extent: The MAWP presents a logical framework of objectives, outputs and KPIs. However, the support study finds that insufficient attention has been given to the practical aspects of how to monitor the achievement of the KPIs (the number of KPIs is too large and definitions of - and linkages between - objectives, outputs and KPIs are not sufficiently clear). This is based on an expert assessment based on review of the documents and as such there is an element of subjectivity involved seen as there is no set benchmark for e.g. number of KPIs that would be appropriate.

The second judgement criterion related to transparency of consultation procedures. Here, the support study reviewed comment logs in connection with work programme elaboration and the consultation of these with the Management Board members, the Parliament ENVI Committee as well as the Scientific Committee. In addition, an audit of these processes was available along with stakeholders' assessments given in surveys and interviews. All sources point towards a conclusion that the procedures are transparent and comprehensive. The data forming the basis for this finding is therefore very solid.

The third judgement criterion related to the appropriateness of the balance of interests in the MB. The study found that the interests represented (one representative per Member State, two from the Commission, two scientific personalities appointed by the Parliament as well as one representative of participating non-EU Member States) conforms well with the Common Approach to Decentralised Agencies (CADA). The CADA mentions the possibility of including stakeholders' representatives (interest organisations) and it is noted by the support study that such organisations are not members of the EEA MB despite the mandate to disseminate environmental information to the general public.

The fourth and fifth judgement criteria related to decision-making systems and in particular clarity on choices and priorities and reporting on KPIs. The previous evaluation of the EEA found that the EEA needed to improve on the level of information on allocation budget and resources to various areas of activity in order to give the Management Board a better basis for making decisions on priorities. The support study found that during the evaluation period, this became even more pertinent given the austerity measures put in place during the evaluation period with the objective of reducing staffing levels in agencies by 5% over 5 years. Data from document reviews and interviews with EEA staff shows that the EEA has responded to this by elaborating an activity based budgeting system and this marks a considerable improvement. However, the system provides overview of priorities only at the MAWP SA-2 level, which is still a high level giving an impression of distribution of resources across main topics and not on specific tasks and activities. The AWPs did not systematically refer the MAWP outputs and the recurrent activities (e.g. reports provided on an annual basis) and it is unclear exactly what the budgetary situation was for these recurrent activities (see also EQ3) and this practise contributed to making the priorities more obscure.

Of the AWPs from the period, only the 2016 AWP addressed specifically the need for making strategic priorities in the light of a shrinking budget. In general, changes in prioritisation in the context of AWPs was implicit from the list of activities presented. No specific options for strategic choices or similar were presented for the Management Board to address. During the period, a strategic decision to discontinue the support under the DWD was taken, however, this is not evident from the AWP process and there is no evidence that the MB was involved in this decision. Evidence of content of MB meetings suggest that strategic prioritisation of resources was only discussed to a limited extent and the MB showed limited ability to set negative priorities. The support study finds the following contributing factors:

- Preparation of material for the MB (especially AWPs) not putting forward options and scenarios to facilitate decision-making and not sufficiently clear on budgetary implications of various recurrent activities and the consequent 'room for manoeuvre' in terms of responding to other demands.

- Size and diversity of interests in the MB

- Decision-making power / level of seniority of the representatives attending MB meetings

Overall, the situation at the end of the evaluation period was that the agency and its Management Board had a serious challenge in how to set priorities in the view of shrinking resources. While significant improvements were made to the planning and reporting systems during the period, they were still not sufficiently suited to provide a basis for a dialogue and a real involvement of the Management Board in setting priorities.

6   ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANCE

This chapter presents the findings with respect to the evaluation criterion on relevance. Three main questions from the Evaluation Roadmap guide the evaluation and the chapter is structured according to these questions.

Q6: Are the objectives set out in the EEA/Eionet Regulation, including its Article 3, still fit-for-purpose given current needs?

Q7: How far are the EEA's tasks and resources aligned with key EU policies?

Q8: How relevant is the EEA to EU citizens?

6.1   Intervention logic

Referring to the intervention logic as presented in chapter 4, the analysis of relevance looks at the relationship between needs vis-a-vis objectives and tasks.

Needs are thus the EU and Member States need of information on the state of the environment and implementation of the environmental and climate change policies in order to further implement existing policy and legislation, and - more forward looking - to develop better policy and legislation. Specific to the evaluation period, the needs and the existing policy framework is framed within the 7th EAP and the prevailing environment and climate acquis. Needs are also the public's need for environmental information to protect human health and to contribute to environmental protection.

Objectives are those laid down in the EEA regulation Art. 1 to provide the Community and Member States with objective, reliable and comparable information at European level enabling the Community and the members to take requisite measures to better implement the EU environmental [and climate] acquis communautaire.

Tasks is in this context first and foremost interpreted as the 15 tasks in Article 2 of the Regulation, the tasks related to the elaboration of the MAWP[199] based on the priority areas, and related annual work programmes[200], but also other pieces of legislation mentioning additional roles and tasks of the EEA.

In the following, the order of questions from the Roadmap has been swopped, so that Q7 starts by addressing the objectives, followed by Q8 addressing the tasks of the EEA (and not vice-versa).

• The first question (Q6) relates to the appropriateness of the objectives of the EEA as set out in the Founding Regulation Article 1 and whether these are still fit for purpose given current policy framework and needs. The question also address the priority areas of work in Article 3 and whether these are still fit-for-purpose in the context. The question then addresses whether the balance of the EEA work is sufficiently geared towards EU regulatory work. It also looks at whether some of the initially non-core activities of the Agency has become part of the core business, and what has been the rationale in such cases. Finally, the question looks into how well the EEA and Eionet are adapted to technological and scientific advances in the fields of e-government, earth observation and big data.

• The second question (Q7) addresses whether the tasks are fit for purpose and thus broadens the focus of Q6 to look not only at objectives and priority areas of work, but also at the tasks of the EEA and Eionet as set out in the Founding Regulation and whether these are appropriate considering the current policy framework and needs. The question also seek to address which tasks are essential to deliver on current and evolving EU priorities, and whether any tasks have become redundant.

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[199] Article 8(4)
[200] Article 8(5)

- The third question (Q8) addresses relevance seen from the perspective of EU citizens. This relates to needs for citizens to be informed about the environment and the task assigned to the EEA of disseminating environmental information. Here, there is a strong link to effectiveness in implementing this task (ref. Q1).

6.2   Q6: Suitability/relevance of the objectives set out in the EEA/Eionet Regulation

Q6: Are the objectives set out in the mandate of the EEA/EIONET founding regulation, including its priority areas in article 3, still fit-for-purpose given current needs? In particular:

- Is the balance of the EEA work sufficiently geared towards EU regulatory work?

- Have some of the initially non-core activities of the Agency become part of its core-business? What was the rationale in such cases?

- How well adapted are the EEA and EIONET to technological and scientific advances in the fields of e-government, earth observation and big data?

The table below shows the details on judgement criteria and indicators used to answer this evaluation question, along with the data sources identified.

Table 6-1   Judgement criteria, indicators and data sources for evaluation question 7

Judgement criteria	Indicators
EEA's *objectives* as specified in Founding Regulation appropriate for the EU's environment and climate legislation and policy	Objectives compared to existing policy framework
EEA's *priority areas of work* as specified in Founding Regulation appropriate for the EU's environment and climate legislation and policy	Comparison of areas listed in Article 3 with actual policy framework requirements and evolving practises of the EEA and Eionet
The Founding Regulation has an appropriate emphasis on regulatory work considering current policy framework and demands from stakeholders	Degree of focus on regulatory work in article 1, 2 and 3 of the Founding Regulation Founding Regulation's focus on regulatory work versus expectations of stakeholders and actual balance of tasks towards regulatory work (regulatory work defined as work in support of implementation of legislation or development of new legislation)
Agreement between EEA and European Commission on priorities among EEA core and non-core activities Activities not financed from core budget and their importance and history in the organisation / 'organisational fit' and relation with objectives of the EEA / Eionet	Existence of agreement(s) on EEA non-core activities Integration of non-core activities in core business (Copernicus as detailed example)
Extent to which the EEA has used new technologies, including Earth observation, to improve the quality of information and of its outputs Appropriateness of Founding Regulation in providing a sufficient framework for such tasks and activities	Use of Earth observation data in EEA outputs Eionet organisation as set up by Founding Regulation and its appropriateness for facilitating use of Earth observation data Continued relevance of data and information from Eionet considering extent to which Earth observation data is used

The sub-sections below refer to the judgement criteria listed in the table above.

6.2.1   Relevance of objectives

To achieve the aims of environmental protection and improvements as laid down in the Treaty and by successive Community action programmes on the environment as well as of sustainable development, the objective of the EEA and of EIONET is to provide the Union, the Member States with a) objective, reliable and comparable information at European level enabling them to take the necessary measures to protect the environment, to assess the results of such measures and to ensure that the public is properly informed about the state of the environment, and to that end: b) the necessary technical and scientific support.[201]

Based on the desk review of the Regulation and key EU policies, the mandate and objective is found still to be overall relevant and sufficiently fit for purpose in the sense that it is able to encompass existing as well as evolving EU environmental EU policies and legislation. The Regulation's broad reference to successive Community action programmes on the environment and sustainable development implies that within the evaluation period, the objective of the EEA as laid down by in Article 1(2) of the Founding Regulation should be interpreted in the context provided by the 7th EAP. Consequently, all elements of the 7th EAP as well as former EAPs are implicitly covered.

Interviews and the stakeholder workshop have confirmed the overall relevance of the objectives of the EEA and Eionet. Respondents express appreciation of the broadness and flexibility of the objective in the Regulation which has enabled the adaptation to new policy developments. Correspondingly, interviews with the EEA and the Commission have emphasised the importance of effective programming to ensure that the MAWP is working well and reflects well the key policies of the given period. Interviews have also emphasised that this requires a clear strategic direction by the Commission and clear agreements between involved collaboration partners, in order to continuously focus on the right activities within the limited resources.[202] Where participants at the stakeholder workshop found that the involved institutions have succeeded in this in the evaluation period, participants also pointed to a potential future challenge in maintaining the current broad objectives, as the demand for coverage of items going beyond the traditional environmental protection sphere increases while resources become increasingly constrained.

Two concerns have been raised during consultations with stakeholders. The first concern relates to the fact that the objective refers to 'environmental protection and improvement' and does not explicitly mention climate change policy area. However, participants at the workshop representing the climate area did not view this as an issue of great concern as the EEA's roles and tasks are already explicitly laid down in the Monitoring Mechanisms Regulation and will be reinforced with the adoption of the Energy Union Governance Regulation.

The second issue relates to the wording of the objective and the reference to 'environmental protection and improvement' and the taking of 'measures to protect the environment'. Participants at the stakeholder workshop argued that this wording over time has become somewhat outdated and in particular lacks sufficient focus on systemic issues, interlinkages and cross-cutting issues where integration of data is highly needed. This, as well as a growing dynamic policy development, has created an increasing need for institutions setting priorities together and for promoting coordination between the Commission, the EEA, other agencies and institutions to ensure a high level of co-production and mainstreaming of environmental concerns into other policies. As the 7th EAP contains a priority objective on mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policies (PO7), this subject area is indirectly also covered, however, the objective with the focus on 'environmental protection' and 'measures to protect the environment' does not fully reflect the integration of environmental issues into other policies, such as the CAP and transport and energy policy.

Another message from the stakeholder workshop was that even though the objective of the Founding Regulation allows for policy evaluation ("to assess the results of such measures", cf. Article 1 (2) a)), the mandate is not very clear in this regard.

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[201] Article 1(2) a and b

[202] EEA interviews; DG ENV interviews

6.2.2   Relevance of priority areas of work (a)-(h)

The following question relates to two aspects:

The relevance of the EEA's principal areas of activity in order to appropriately include the elements enabling it to gather the information necessary to describe the present and foreseeable state of the environment from the *point of view* of

- (a) the quality of the environment;
- (b) the pressures on the environment;
- (c) the sensitivity of the environment

Including placing these in the context of sustainable development,

and whether the EEA's *priority areas of work* as specified in Article 3 (2) of the Founding Regulation is appropriate for the EU's environment and climate legislation and policy.

- (a) air quality and atmospheric emissions
- (b) water quality, pollutants and water resources
- (c) the state of soil, the fauna and flora, and of biotopes
- (d) land use and natural resources
- (e) waste management
- (f) noise emissions
- (g) chemical substances which are hazardous for the environment
- (h) coastal and marine protection

As stated in Article 3(2), the Agency shall furnish information which can be directly used in the implementation of Community environmental policy. A desk review was conducted and its findings was discussed and validated at the stakeholder workshop.

The desk review of the Article 3(1) of the Regulation specifying the EEA's principal areas of activity found this to be a robust framework provision able to cover all core EEA activities. However, the wording of the principal areas of activity does primarily anticipate trends on the state of the environment. Key analytical conceptual frameworks used in the daily work of the EEA and representing the core functions of the EEA and Eionet, such as the MDIAK[203] and DPSIR[204] approaches are however not reflected in the current provisions.

The desk study found that the priority work areas as defined in Article 3 (2), litra (a)-(h) of the Regulation are strongly focused on sector work by their mere wording. The areas of work have somewhat been passed by the policy development in the EU and globally, and by internal EU legislative developments. E.g. work areas in relation to other EU policy areas strongly related to the environment such as transport, agriculture, industry and fisheries are missing. EU's sustainable energy and climate change obligations are obviously missing. The original sector focus also does not cater for the increasing need for focus on sector interlinkages and integrated and systemic assessments, e.g. acknowledging interlinkages between key policies such as climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, or the use of biofuels impacting on energy, transport and agriculture, or the linkages between ambient air quality and climate change.

The 6th EAP ended in July 2012 amongst other with a conclusion that unsustainable trends persisted in climate change, nature and biodiversity, environment and health, and natural resources and waste. The 7th EAP requires continued focus on these issues including on global systemic trends and challenges, accelerating technological changes and long term sustainable development. The 7th EAP emphasizes that the integrated and coherent development of environment and climate policy can help to ensure that the Union's economy and society are well-prepared to face the abovementioned challenges. Action under the 7th EAP requires focus on three overall thematic

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[203] The MDIAK framework is described in detail in Chapter 3.3.1

[204] Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Responses (DPSIR)

objectives which are inter-related and should be pursued in parallel, as action taken under one thematic objective will often help to contribute to the achievements of the other objectives:

(a) protecting, conserving and enhancing the Union's natural capital;

(b) turning the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy;

(c) safeguarding the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being.

The Regulation is mainly focusing on point (a) and (c) whereas the Regulation lacks proper reflection of the need for (b) turning the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive carbon economy, though this can be said to be indirectly covered by the reference to placing the activities in the context of sustainable development.

As to the relevance of the areas of work, the desk review assessed whether the areas of work have been encompassed by the priority objectives of the later 7th EAP. The desk review found, as shown in the table below, that all areas of work in Article 3(2) a-h of the Founding Regulation are reflected in one or more priority objectives of the 7th EAP. This is also the case for the cross-cutting areas of work on transfrontier, plurinational and global phenomena and the socioeconomic dimension.

Table 6-2   Areas of work and their relevance in light of 7th EAP priority objectives

Areas of work cf. Article 3(2) of Regulation 401/2009/EC	Areas of work reflected in the priority objectives 1-9 of the 7th EAP
Air quality and atmospheric emissions	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 4: To maximise the benefit of Union environment legislation by improving legislation 8: To enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities
Water quality, pollutants and water resources	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 2: To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 4: To maximise the benefit of Union environment legislation by improving legislation 5: To improve the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy 7: To improve environmental integration and policy coherence 8: To enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities
The state of the soil, flora and fauna, and of biotopes	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 5: To improve the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy 6: To secure investment for environment and climate policy and address environmental externalities
Land use and natural resources	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 2: To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 6: To secure investment for environment and climate policy and address environmental externalities 8: To enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities 9: To increase the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate-related challenges
Waste management	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 2: To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy

Areas of work cf. Article 3(2) of Regulation 401/2009/EC	Areas of work reflected in the priority objectives 1-9 of the 7th EAP
	3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 4: To maximise the benefit of Union environment legislation by improving legislation 5: To improve the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy 8: To enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities 9: To increase the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate-related challenges
Noise emissions	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 4: To maximise the benefit of Union environment legislation by improving legislation 8: To enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities
Chemical substances hazardous for the environment	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 2: To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 4: To maximise the benefit of Union environment legislation by improving legislation 5: To improve the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy 9: To increase the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate-related challenges
Coastal and marine protection	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 4: To maximise the benefit of Union environment legislation by improving legislation 7: To improve environmental integration and policy coherence 9: To increase the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate-related challenges
Transfrontier, plurinational and global phenomena	1: To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital 2: To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 5: To improve the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy 9: To increase the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate-related challenges
Socioeconomic dimension	2: To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy 3: To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being 5: To improve the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy

The desk study also found that besides the EU sector environmental legislation as the original principal activity areas of the EEA, the EU's overall policy development has meanwhile required much more emphasis on data re-

lated to cross-cutting areas and tasks, *such as* resource efficiency, circular economy, natural capital, mainstreaming of environment and climate change into other EU policies and overall EU budgets, to name but a few.[205] These issues are also closely related to the Commission's work on evaluating the implementation of existing environmental policies and legislation[206] and in preparing for new policy developments. However, the EEA Regulation itself does not provide much enabling framework or guidance on work delineation between the EEA and the Commission on data for such cross cutting topics as the priority areas in the Regulation merely focuses on a traditional sector approach.

At the stakeholder workshop, the key message from the discussion of priority areas of work was that whereas the priority areas of work had been relevant within the evaluation period, an increasing need was seen for further emphasis on sector linkages, integrated approaches and systemic issues. Some participants found that the priority areas of work could be more geared towards impact and effectiveness of EU environmental measures, whereas others found that it was already within the mandate of the EEA to address socioeconomic aspects. Also, some participants were of the view that the chemicals area should broader reflect health aspects, and not only the environment. Finally, sustainable water management, ecosystems and biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, plastics and other cross-border challenges such as trade in chemicals and forestry products were found not to be sufficiently reflected in the priority areas of work.

6.2.2.1   Relevance of focus on transfrontier, pluri-national and global phenomena

The focus in Article 3(2) that areas of work should cover in particular transfrontier, pluri-national and global phenomena (in the understanding: within the Member States and member countries) is still relevant. This is in line with the 7th EAP priority objective 9, which focuses on increasing the effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate related challenges. As also evident from this priority objective, many of the environmental and climate issues have a global or at least cross-border significance and require international action in order to address them. It is therefore considered appropriate that this is emphasised in the Founding Regulation. Further to this, the EEA is an EU institution and, following the subsidiarity principle, it seems appropriate that the activities have a special focus on international issues rather than issues, which can be handled by Member States or at lower levels of administration. That being said, it must also be recognised that there are phenomena which may have a global relevance but at the same time require local action, such as e.g. the sustainable cities dimension, or the climate change adaptation agenda requiring a strong focus at the local level – areas that also requires integrated approaches and coordination across many actors to provide long term sustainable solutions. The Founding Regulation does not qualify further what is to be understood by the terms applied and they may thus be translated to include such issues as well (in particular seen in the light of the reference to the environmental action programmes, where the 7th EAP PO 8 refers to local and urban areas).

6.2.2.2   Relevance of socioeconomic dimension

The desk study also found that the requirement in the Founding Regulation that the socioeconomic dimension should be taken into account in the prioritised work areas seems somewhat understated, given the meanwhile development in the EU of the Better Regulation Agenda and the Commission's objectives of creating legislation 'fit for purpose'. In light of this policy agenda, it can be questioned whether the Founding Regulation has sufficiently focus on data related to uptake of measures, best practices and what measures achieves the best results against the environmental and climate change objectives. Interview with the Commission and the messages from the stakeholder workshop have confirmed that the importance of such data has increased in the evaluation period and stakeholders along expect that the need for this will increase also in the future.

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[205] E.g. in the form of later launched Union policies as follow up in particular to the 7th EAP's PO 1 (protecting natural capital), PO 2 (resource-efficient, green and competetive low-carbon economy), PO 5 (knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy) and PO 6 (securing investments for environment and climate policy).

[206] In particular PO 4 (maximising the benefits of Union environmental legislation by improving implementation).

6.2.2.3 Relevance of cooperation in exchange of information with other bodies, including at international level and in non-member countries

Article 3 (3) allows for cooperation and exchange of information with other bodies, such as IMPEL. This relates also closely to the tasks of the EEA, on promoting the incorporation of European environmental information into international environmental monitoring programmes (Art. 2g) and cooperating with regional/international bodies and programmes such as OECD and UNEP (Art 15.2) and cooperating with institutions in non-EU member countries (Art 15.3). Article 15, para. 2 stresses that the Agency shall cooperate widely with other bodies, such as OECD, the Council of Europe, the International Energy Agency and the UN.

The tasks and work areas include a sizeable share of the EEA's work and relates inter alia to the European contributions to global work, such as reporting on the SDGs, and on sharing EIONET and SEIS approaches with other regions and organisations to strengthen the knowledge-policy interface.

Case studies and interviews have confirmed the existing and continued role of the EEA as an important producer of data, facilitator and influencer in international engagements (e.g. the climate case study on F-gases, on trends and projections, on EU ETS, respectively). The current text of the Regulation does obviously not reflect later prioritizations, neither does it explicit give principles to help prioritization of the orientation of EEA's regional and multilateral activities. Also, the Annex I in the Regulation lists only few (core) of other community bodies for cooperation and is thus quiet on other cooperation bodies at international level (regional and global UN bodies), thus also not providing a full picture of the cooperating institutions. The indirect coverage through the 7th EAP, and especially priority objective 9 on increasing the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate-related challenges, thus sets the framework for the EEA's role at international level.

6.2.3 Degree of focus on regulatory work in article 1, 2 and 3

The desk review looked at the three first articles of the Founding Regulation to see how 'regulatory work' is reflected in these articles and whether this mirrors:

- the actual activities undertaken by the Agency during the evaluation period

- the expectations of the stakeholders

The analysis should be seen in the context of priority objective 4 of the 7th EAP, which focuses on implementation of environmental legislation. For the purpose of the analysis 'regulatory work' was defined as work in support of implementation of climate and environment legislation in the respective 'acquis's. It should be noted that in principle the EEA Founding Regulation is also included in the environment acquis and seen in that perspective, all work of the EEA is regulatory work. Here, the focus in the analysis is on implementing pieces of legislation under the acquis. Table 6-3 provides an overview of degree to which 'regulatory work' is reflected in articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Founding Regulation.

Table 6-3   Degree of focus on 'regulatory work' in articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Founding Regulation

Article in FR	Degree of focus on 'regulatory work'
1	The article refers to achievement of the aims of the Treaty and successive EAPs as an overall objective. By this, it can also be inferred that reference is made to environmental and climate legislation underpinning the overall Treaty objectives of environmental improvement and protection. However, there is no direct reference to the aims of achieving objectives of the environment and climate acquis. Likewise, litra (a) refers to 'measures' to be taken by the Community and Member States, but does not refer directly to the acquis.
2	This article covers the fifteen tasks (see chapter 4, Text Box 3-1 for an overview). Out of these, three tasks have a character that can be interpreted to be related to 'regulatory work': task b, task c and task e.

Article in FR	Degree of focus on 'regulatory work'
	Task b works as a further elaboration of the objective in article 1 and specifies that the task of the Agency is to provide 'objective information necessary for framing and implementing sound and effective environmental policies'…'to provide the Commission with the information it needs to be able to carry out successfully its tasks of identifying, preparing and evaluating measures and legislation in the field of the environment'. This is the only direct mentioning of environmental legislation in the FR. Task c refers to support for reporting requirements. It may be implicitly understood that the reporting requirements arise from legislation, but it is not stated directly. Task e includes an obligation for the Commission to use the information provided by the Agency in 'its tasks of ensuring the implementation of Community legislation on the environment'. It may be inferred that the information supplied by the EEA should be designed for this purpose, but it is not stated directly.
3	Article 3(2) states that the Agency shall 'furnish information which can be directly used in the implementation of Community environmental policy'.

Source: Founding Regulation and support study team analysis

The table above shows that there are references to 'regulatory work' in the Founding Regulation, however, in terms of objectives (article 1) these references are primarily indirect, and in terms of tasks (article 2), only three tasks out of fifteen reflect 'regulatory work and one of these refers to a task of the Commission rather than directly stating a 'regulatory task' for the EEA. The 'principal areas of activity' (article 3) contain a relatively direct reference to 'regulatory' work.

Looking at the MAWP and the AWPs from the evaluation period, it is clear that activities related to 'regulatory work' took up quite a large share of the Agency's activities. A rough estimate can be based on the four overall strategic areas of the MAWP with SA1 (informing policy implementation) clearly representing a large share of 'regulatory work', while also some elements of SA2 and SA3 are focused on 'regulatory work'. Referring to EQ3 and the overview of how resources are distributed across the SAs (ref Table 4-50), it is evident that a good share of resources of the EEA are in fact related to 'regulatory work'. Table 6-4 provides some estimates in this regard based on the figures from the EEA activity based accounting system (see Appendix N for details). The point of departure is the figures for 2016 as these are the most precise and a rough estimate done by the support study of the share of regulatory work being either 0%, 25%, 50% or 75%. On this basis, the share of expenses going to regulatory work is estimated to be around 40%, whereas the share of FTEs going to regulatory work is around 20% (almost 30% if only looking at SAs1-3).

Table 6-4   Estimates on share of regulatory work

Strategic Area	Share reg. work	2016 exp	2016 FTEs	Exp on Reg work	FTEs on Reg work
SA1.1	75%	1.297	11	973	8
SA1.2	75%	357	4	268	3
SA1.3	75%	799	9	599	7
SA1.4	50%	867	7	434	4
SA1.5	75%	877	6	658	5
SA1.6	25%	802	5	201	1
SA1.7	75%	1.634	6	1226	5
SA1.8	-	1.140	10		
SA1.9	50%	512	2	256	1
SA2.1	-	611	4		
SA2.2	-	104	2		
SA2.3	-	248	3		
SA2.4	50%	167	5	84	3
SA3.1	25%	251	11	63	3
SA3.2	50%	1.872	6	936	3
SA3.3	-	511	9		
SA3.4	-	462	15		
SA3.5	-	1.286	14		
SA3.6	-	0	5		
SA3.7	-	2	6		
SA4.1		961	38		
SA4.2		469	26		
Total		15.229	204	5.695	41
Total SA1-3		13.799	140	5.695	41
Reg work, % of total				**37%**	**20%**
Reg work, % of total SA1-3				**41%**	**29%**

Sources: Data from EEA's activity based accounting system and estimates by support study

As established under Q3, the MAWP and the AWPs from the evaluation period reflected the evolving policy land-scape and thus also took into account the prevailing needs in terms of responding to the various legislative re-quirements. In this regard, there is also a consideration of legislative requirements evolving in the period before the evaluation period, which are also reflected in the MAWP and AWPs. The support study has not comprised an analysis of these and thus cannot judge on the extent to which these are fully reflected, however it is clear from the MAWP and AWPs that they respond to a large share of the elements in the environment and climate acquis and as can be derived from the section on effectiveness in implementation of task c (reporting requirements, see section 4.2.2.2), the EEA had an important role in relation to a large share of the 'heavy' reporting requirements relating to environment and climate legislation, which has been implemented in the period since the establishment of the Founding Regulation.

The dynamic evolvement of the EU environmental acquis since the adoption of the Founding Regulation has im-plied that the EEA's activities to an increasing extent have become based on the reporting obligations for Member States required by specific pieces of the EU environmental or climate acquis. This was due to additional pieces of legislation with various reporting obligations being implemented over the years and thus an increasing number of dataflows. In a few cases did these reporting obligations replace data flows that were previously organised on the basis of the EEA Founding Regulation, and designed to fulfil the information needs related to monitoring of data on the state of environment and pressures on the environment (in some instances referred to as 'voluntary' data flows although this is incorrect as these data flows are also obligations following from the EEA Regulation). The EEA during the 2016 MB seminar and in interviews for the support study made the observation that whereas 'pre-viously' the share of the 'voluntary' data flows managed by the EEA would be 80% and the 'legal' dataflows would constitute 20%, the situation as per 2016 was the opposite. The EEA could not provide an assessment of the situ-ation/shares as per 2012, but confirmed that the shift was already well underway at that time. The MB seminar paper from 2016 states that the first nine Eionet priority data flows were agreed in 2000, whereas presently more than 70 environmental data flows are reported through Eionet Reportnet, around 80% of which are as a result of EU legal requirements.

Seen in this context the support study finds that the weight given to 'regulatory work' in the Founding Regulation is too light and not appropriately reflecting the real importance of the EEA's work on this matter during the evaluation period.

Further, other EU agendas introduced during the evaluation period, e.g. the increased focus on governance aspects and compliance issues, better regulation and transparency as reinforced by the Juncker priorities to reach tangible results on the ground, have also added to the environmental policy agenda and imposed increased need for evidence-based policy making. The emphasis of the Juncker priorities to deliver a streamlined and efficient body of EU legislation and do better law making increases the need of the Commission for having data and information also on the impact and effectiveness of policies and measures. Environmental and climate change legislative instruments will continue to be subject to EU regulatory fitness checks and subsequent revisions. This puts a question mark as to whether the current EEA tasks are sufficiently geared towards EU regulatory work and fit for purpose to provide also such type of assistance and technical support to the Commission, and whether policies and measures that deliver results on the ground are sufficiently in focus, assuming that the EEA as the principal data provider to the Commission in general will have to adapt to the overall Commission agenda.

However, it is important to emphasise that consultations with stakeholders also revealed different opinions on the ideal weight given to regulatory versus non-regulatory work. Commission stakeholders tend to be in favour of focusing on regulatory work whereas Member States, NGOs and research actors emphasise more on the importance of non-regulatory work. This is related to the prioritisation of the steps in the MDIAK chain, where the regulatory work is particularly related to the MDI steps and the non-regulatory more related to the AK steps. This is also discussed under EQ3 (see section 4.4.1.1).

Another important note is that despite the fact that a growing number of reporting obligations have been laid down in EU legislation and is a key task of the EEA, the relevant directives or regulations do not always spell out clearly the EEA's role and tasks on these, leaving a certain room for interpretation and negotiations of the more specific EEA tasks in the MAWP/AWP or general agreement (see also analysis of coherence in respect to task c on reporting (section 7.2.3.1). The 2017 Fitness Check on reporting and monitoring of EU environmental policy[207] confirmed this ambiguity, stating that whereas most reporting obligations are found relevant, there is room for improvement, and the roles of the Commission and the European agencies on reporting and monitoring are not always clear and explicit. Recommended actions following the fitness check thus include the streamlining of reporting obligations focusing more on information that is strategic, quantitative and better-regulation driven.

6.2.4   Non-core activities and their relevance to the EEA objectives

An additional sub-question relates to non-core activities and their relevance to the EEA objectives. By non-core activities, reference is made to activities undertaken by the EEA financed outside the core budget. During the evaluation period, there were two such major non-core activities: Copernicus and the capacity building assistance provided to the West Balkans and European Neighbourhood. The first was financed through a Delegation Agreement (DA) with DG GROW, the latter was financed through Grant Agreements with DG NEAR. The support study has focused in particular on Copernicus and a case study was conducted to understand the relevance of Copernicus in relation to the Founding Regulation among other aspects (see Appendix D for the full case study report).

The case study shows that within the evaluation period, EEA's Copernicus budget was a fairly small share of its overall work. However, in 2016, Copernicus funding rose to EUR 16 million (i.e. corresponding to approx. one third of the core budget) and was to grow higher in 2017 and 2018. Copernicus is thus a major activity, even when compared to the overall EEA budget. It has been managed under Delegated Agreement as it was originally assessed by the Commission that it could not work under the existing mandate, since the management of Copernicus tasks would be outside the EEA's core activities as such a role would be in the scope of an executive agency

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[207] [210] Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation, March 2017

whereas the EEA is a regulatory agency.[208] However, in the Commission's programming of human and financial resources for decentralised agencies 2014-2020, a modification of the legal basis of the Agency was actually foreseen in order to include Copernicus as a new task. As emphasised in the Copernicus case study, the relevance of Copernicus activities are closely inter-connected to or reliant on the Agency's core tasks and its influence is expected to grow considerably in the coming years, however the Regulation does not explicitly mention this task or work area thus not appropriately reflecting substantial share of EEA activities in this field.

In interviews, both EEA and Commission staff have underlined that earth observation data from Copernicus is expected to play a growing role in supporting EU policy: the Action Plan[209] following the recently completed Fitness Check on Reporting and Monitoring of EU environmental legislation sets as one of its ten actions making better use of the data produced by Copernicus. In this light, EEA's work on the local and pan-European components of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service fit into its overall mandate to provide "objective, reliable and comparable information at European level" on the environment (Art. 1(2)(a) of Regulation 401/2009). Already in the evaluation period, two of the most popular Copernicus Land Monitoring products are Corine Land Cover and the Urban Atlas, both of which are used in EEA and Commission reports, making them an important part of the EEA's Copernicus tasks. EEA's work on the in-situ component also supports environmental and climate data: here the in-situ component supports all six services, including the land service.

In light of this, it can thus be questioned whether it is appropriate to have the EEA's Copernicus work as a big non-core budget. While EEA has all along used and processed earth observation data (e.g. in the Corine Land Cover work), this has now become a much larger area of work. Interviews with the EEA and with Commission services thus also called for an amendment to the Regulation to allow the EEA include Copernicus in its core programme. As found under efficiency Q4, the management of the Delegation Agreement was also causing additional administrative costs due to double accounting and administration in parallel to the core budget administration, which is another argument for include the Copernicus activities as a core task.

6.2.5   Relevance of Founding Regulation in the light of new technologies, including Earth observation

This section looks into the relevance of the Founding Regulation considering the development in new technologies that has taken place during the evaluation period. In this context, the support study has considered the extent to which the EEA has used new technologies, including Earth observation, to improve the quality of information and of its outputs, i.e. including Copernicus data from the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service as well as from other services not managed by the EEA.

As shown also in the Copernicus case study, the EEA uses Copernicus data for EEA data and information products in several areas, including air quality (SA1.1), climate impacts (SA1.4), marine environment (SA1.6), bio-physical mapping and assessments of ecosystems and their services (SA1.7), and land use (SA1.8) and for several indicators and reports in the evaluation period.[210]

The EEA and the Commission considers the Earth observation data very relevant but obviously it needs to be supported by other existing and new approaches for data collection at both national and transboundary level. The uptake of Copernicus services has been slower than expected, but is considered to have a great potential and is expected to increase[211], also following the emphasis made on this in Action Plan following the Fitness check on Reporting and Monitoring of EU environmental legislation.

As shown in the sections on the effectiveness of the EEA in management of data and information systems (section 4.2.2.4), the Agency is managing a large number of different systems, including e.g. BISE, WISE and Climate-

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[208] For details see Copernicus case study Ch. 4.1. on relevance for EU policy, referring to the minutes from the EEA Management Board on this issue.

[209] [467] European Commission, 2017, DG ENV, Streamlining environmental reporting – action plan, at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/reporting/fc_actions_en.htm

[210] See further details in the Copernicus case study on incorporating Copernicus data in EEA indicators and outputs (Ch. 2.1)

[211] DG ENV interview; EEA interview.

ADAPT. Also, the management of data from reporting through Reportnet is a key task in itself for the Agency. The volume and complexity of data is increasing amongst others due to an increasing amount of reporting requirements in legislation. Hence, the Agency has developed the competency to handle data using new technologies and this has been necessitated in order to fulfil the objectives of the Founding Regulation and the expectations of the stakeholders as reflected in work programmes.

The Shared Environmental Information Systems (SEIS) as the Commission's and the EEA's overall collaborative response to the environmental information challenge and its key principles for promoting access to environmental information and maximising and expanding its use are an important and integral part of the MAWP 2014-2018 and the Agency's daily tasks. Other SEIS related initiatives and tasks such as INSPIRE, Copernicus monitoring services and tasks related to the Global Earth Observation system of systems (GEOSS) also form part of the Agency's activities in the area.

Considering the increasing use of earth-observation data as well as new technologies in data management, it is relevant to consider the appropriateness of the Founding Regulation in providing a sufficient framework for such tasks and activities. Besides the overall flexibility of the Regulation not hindering the use of new technologies as such, it is however also clear that the wording does not give incentives or further enables a larger uptake of new technologies. The text of the Founding Regulation does not provide any specific guidance on this. The current formulation 'to promote the use of new telematics technology for the purpose of ensuring the broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public' (Article 2, para. 1, litra m) does not steer a technology push as such and also limits the reference to use of new technology to use in connection with dissemination. Task e states that the EEA shall 'develop further and maintain a reference centre of information on the environment', however, this does not either provide a strong impetus and background for the Agency's actual activities in relation to data management and the use of new technology in this regard.

It is noteworthy that the SEIS principles and the role of the EEA in relation to implementing and upholding these are not mentioned in the Regulation. Other EU policies, e.g. INSPIRE, open data policies and e-government improving general and cheaper access to environmental data are also not reflected.

Further, as shown in the section above on relevance of Copernicus, it was found by the Commission that Copernicus activities could not be undertaken by the EEA under the mandate given by the Founding Regulation. This is also a strong indication that the Regulation does not provide a sufficient framework for use of new technologies.

6.2.6 *Key findings and conclusions for Q6*

As a first element, this question looked into the relevance of the objective and priority areas of work of the EEA as reflected in Articles 1 and 3 of the Founding Regulation. The main approach to the assessment was comparative considering the wording of the articles against the policy framework and main activities of the agency during the evaluation period. In addition, stakeholders' views were also considered.

On this basis, the current mandate and overall objective of the EEA as stated in Article 1 are still valid and fit for purpose. It provides a broad mandate and a frame within which activities and outputs can be planned taking into account the changing policy framework and needs as expressed in the environmental action programmes to which the objective refers. It is noted that the objective is based on somewhat outdated language not reflecting how environmental issues are now analysed in a more integrated way and taking into account the mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas.

The broadness and flexibility in the Regulation makes it very important that the MAWP/AWPs reflects well the key policies of the given period, and that a clear strategic direction are made by the Commission and clear agreements between involved collaboration partners are concluded and revisited as needed to continuously focus on the right objectives.

As to the principal areas of activity of the EEA (Article 3 (1)), key analytical conceptual frameworks used by the EEA and representing the core functions of the EEA and Eionet, such as the MDIAK and DPSIR approaches, are not explicitly reflected in the Regulation.

In terms of the relevance of Article 3 (2) on the areas of work of the EEA, the areas of work included in the Regulation reflect areas where the EEA has been active during the evaluation period, but they do not encompass all relevant areas, with climate being the most obvious example. The topical focus reflected in the areas of work is not completely in line with the evolving policy landscape during the evaluation period, which was characterised the launch of several key pieces of integrated policy approaches in the EU and globally, and by internal EU legislative developments and does not cater for the increasing need for focus on sector interlinkages and integrated and systemic assessments, e.g. acknowledging interlinkages between key policies.

Overall, the evidence for the relevance of the Regulation's objective and principal areas of activity is considered to be solid as it is mainly based on desk review of confirmed sources and also verified by stakeholders.

Secondly, the question addressed the extent to which the Regulation reflects in an appropriate way, the extent to which the Agency does 'regulatory work', where this was defined as work in support of implementation of the environment and climate acquis. It was found that regulatory work, in particular that related to reporting on the implementation of environment and climate legislation, has less emphasis in the Founding Regulation compared to the actual share of EEA activities during the evaluation period (it was difficult to provide an exact estimate as EEA's activity based accounting data does not distinguish between regulatory and non-regulatory work). Recent EU agendas introduced during the evaluation period, e.g. the increased focus on governance aspects and compliance issues, better regulation and transparency as reinforced by the Juncker priorities to reach tangible results on the ground, have added to the environmental policy agenda and imposed increased need for evidence-based policy making. Thus, the policy framework during the evaluation period provided a strong basis for emphasis on regulatory work.

As a third element, the assessment looked into the relevance of non-core activities to the EEA objectives with a focus on the Copernicus activities. Here, the review considered the EEA's own use of the data produced by the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service managed by the EEA under a Delegation Agreement as well as the importance of these activities relative to EEA's core activities. Here, Copernicus as a major non-core activity was found to be of such major relevance to the tasks and work of the EEA that it may be almost misleading not to have this included among the Agency's core tasks.

As the last element, the question addressed the extent to which the Regulation provides an appropriate framework for tasks and activities considering the development and use of new technologies during the evaluation period. The lack of reference to the SEIS and related tasks linked to INSPIRE, Copernicus services and GEOSS despite these tasks being an integral part of the EEA's tasks does not enhance the transparency and understanding of the EEA's work and efforts to expand data use. During the evaluation period, data sources in the form of transboundary earth/satellite based observation were becoming increasingly relevant, in addition to and as supplement to in situ data and statistical data. Such tasks related to the need for complementary data is currently not reflected in the wording of the tasks of the Regulation.

6.3   Q7: Alignment of EEA's tasks and resources with key EU policies

Q7: How far are the Agency's tasks and resources aligned with key EU policies?

- Which Agency tasks are absolutely essential to deliver on these priorities?

- Which Agency tasks are necessary to continue implementing existing and evolving obligations under the Treaties and EU legislative framework?

- Which Agency tasks have become redundant / negative priorities?

Article 2 of the Founding Regulation sets out fifteen tasks, see Chapter 3 (Text box 3-1). This question addresses the relevance of these fifteen tasks seen in the light of the policy landscape during the evaluation period. The table below shows the details on judgement criteria and indicators used to answer this evaluation question. The structure used to provide the findings does not strictly follow the indicators. Rather, it follows the tasks, so below the findings pertaining to each task are described. However, a section discussing the mapping of tasks against the MDIAK chain is introduced to start with along with overall survey results pertaining to the relevance of the tasks.

Table 6-5   Judgement criteria, indicators and data sources for evaluation question 8

Judgement criteria	Indicators
EEA's tasks as specified in Founding Regulation appropriate for the EU's environment and climate legislation and policy	Match / degree of consistency between tasks and activities/outputs/objectives in MAWP and AWPs
	Match / degree of consistency between tasks and key policy documents and ensuing requirements
	Degree of internal coherence between tasks seen in the context of the MDIAK chain
	Relevance of tasks in light of findings under relevance (other questions), effectiveness and coherence
	Stakeholders' perception of relevance of tasks seen in the light of prevailing policy landscape and their needs

6.3.1   Tasks seen in the context of the MDIAK chain and the MAWP 2014-2018

Section 3.3.1 includes a mapping of tasks and activity areas of the MAWP 2014-2018 seen in the context of the MDIAK chain. It shows that the tasks, while not inconsistent with the MDIAK, are not structured in a way, which directly follows the MDIAK either. The table below builds on the table introduced in section 3.3.1 and further details it to reflect each task and the connection to the MDIAK steps (middle column) as well as how this task is reflected in the MAWP 2014-2018 (right column). Overall, the table illustrates the point made above. Further, it shows that the logic of the MAWP 2014-2018 does not follow the logic of the tasks in the Founding Regulation (as already found in Q1, which assesses the effectiveness of implementation of key tasks). This is also means that it is very difficult to assess the 'weight' given to each task as information on EEA's resource distribution is organised according to the strategic areas in the MAWP. Overall, the fact that the work programme is set up with a structure that is so different from the structure of the tasks in the Founding Regulation is in itself an indicator that the tasks are not fully fit-for-purpose. More detailed findings are provided per task in the sections below.

Table 6-6   Tasks mapped against the MDIAK chain and the strategic areas in MAWP 2014-2018

Task	MDIAK	Reference MAWP 2014-2018
(a)	(Support)	SA3.1
(b)	IAK	SA1 and SA2 (SA3)
(c)	MDI	Some share of: SA1 + SA2.1 + SA3.3
(d)	M	Not very clear (related to SA3.1)
(e)	MDIAK (+support)	Some share of: SA1, SA3.3, SA2.2, SA2.4
(f)	M	Not very clear (related to SA3.1)
(g)	MDI	Some share of:SA1 + SA2.1 + SA3.3
(h)	AK	Some share of: SA2.4
(i)	AK	SA2.3
(j)	AK	Not very clear (related to SA2.2)
(k)	?	Not clear
(i)	(Support)	Not clear (and would not make sense as coordination is not a task in itself)
(m)	IAK	SA 3.4
(n)	AK	Not very clear (related to SA2.4)
(o)	AK	Mission/goals + SA1 objective

Source: EEA Founding Regulation, MAWP 2014-2018 and expert judgement of the support team

6.3.2   Survey results

Below, reference is made to the results of the survey of MB members, which included a question on the importance of the fifteen tasks. The figures below provide an overview of responses by member country respondents and Commission respondents. The results indicate that all the tasks are considered to have some importance to all respondents. The tasks that scored the highest in terms of respondents indicating the task as 'very important' across the two groups were tasks e, f and m. The member country respondents generally scored the tasks higher than the Commission respondents. The two groups both gave relatively lower scores to task o.

Figure 6-1   *Responses to the MB survey question: How important is it for development and implementation of policy in your country that EEA performs the following tasks (as per Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation)*
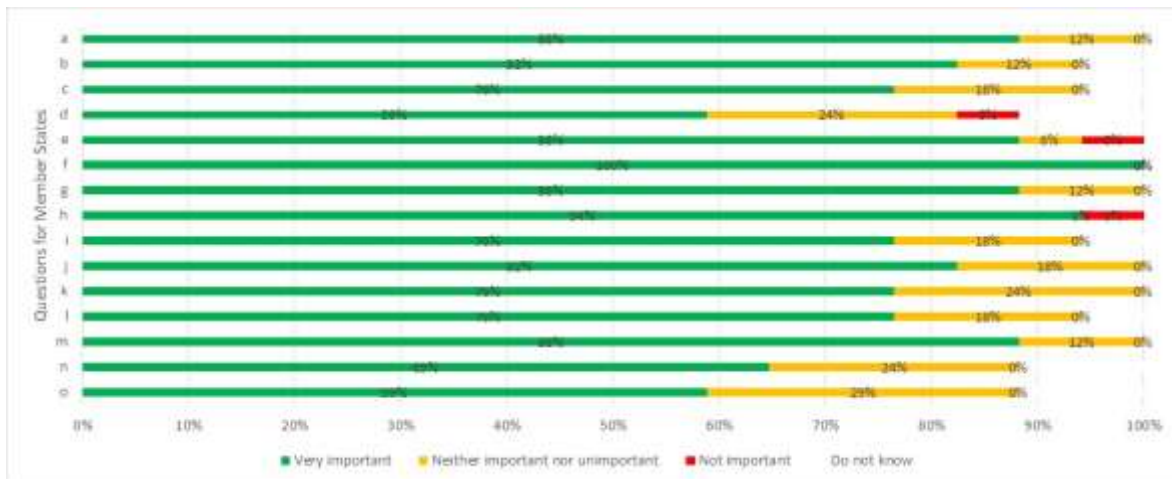
Source: MB survey, see Appendix J, n=17

Figure 6-2   *Responses to the MB survey question: How important is it for development and implementation of policy in the EU that EEA performs the following tasks (as per Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation).*
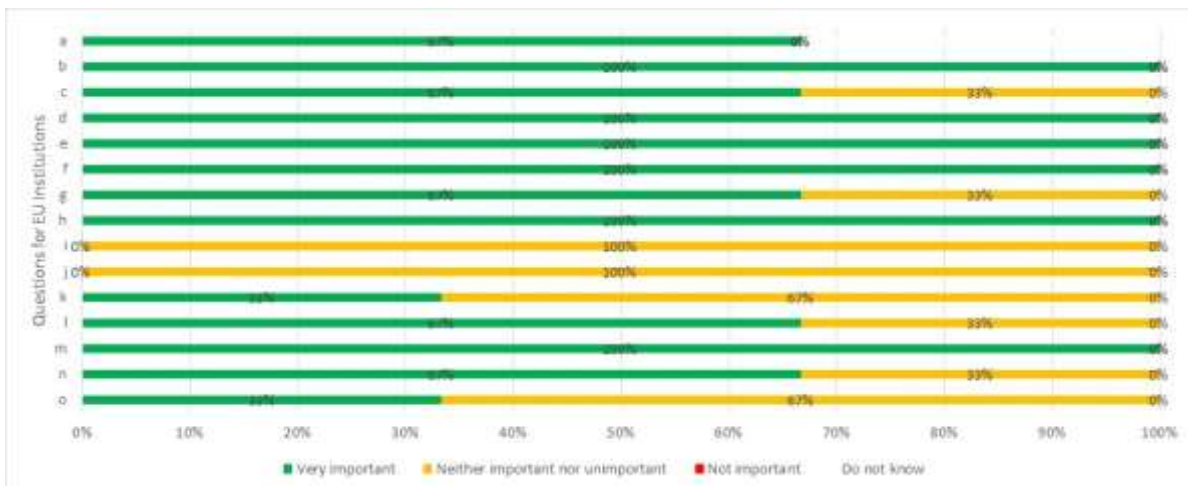
Source: MB survey, see Appendix J, n=3

6.3.3   Task (a) on managing and coordinating the Eionet

This task is only relevant in so far as the Eionet (established following Article 4 in the Founding Regulation) is relevant, which is a broader question than the one asked in this context. The Eionet is only relevant to the extent that the tasks performed by the Member States and their national Eionet 'components' continue to be relevant. Following Article 4(2), the Member States '*shall, as appropriate, cooperate with the Agency and contribute to the work of the European Environment Information and Observation Network in accordance with the work programme of the Agency by collecting, collating and analysing data nationwide*'. Thus, in the perspective of this question, as long as national data, information and assessments are needed (and in a format brought together through the work of the Eionet and EEA) to inform EU policies, the task would be considered relevant. The data from the analysis of the effectiveness question 2 in particular shows that data, information and assessments produced by the EEA and Eionet are used extensively by EU policy institutions (and by the Member States themselves) and thus it can be concluded that, overall, the task is still relevant.

However, there were several developments during the evaluation period and factors identified from the analysis under other evaluation criteria, which had implications for the relevance of the Eionet. These include:

- Eionet structure: The Eionet has been through a long period of institutionalisation starting long before the evaluation period. This is clear from desk review of the previous MAWP, previous evaluations as well as inter-

views with Eionet representatives. The roles and functions are described in much more detail in various documents (for example, the Brochure on Eionet 'Eionet connects' is from 2012) and the NRC structure (the different groups of NRCs organised into themes) has been changed over time, with one revision taking place after the adoption of the MAWP 2014-2018 (see Q3 for details). The relatively clear definition of NRCs (national reference centres) that has developed over time and is reflected in various programming documents, etc. is not equally clear in the Founding Regulation. Furthermore, the results of the survey of NFPs and NRCs pointed to uncertainties in relation to the roles of the NFPs in particular, which indicates room for improvement in respect to the role description in the Founding Regulation. However, it should also be noted that the Founding Regulation provided a high-level description of the components of the network (in Article 4), thus leaving it to the Management Board of the EEA to set out the more precise content. This provided for flexibility and accommodation of e.g. NRC groups over time.

- <u>Relevance of Eionet in the context of policy development:</u> Looking at the 7th EAP, the relevance of the Eionet is confirmed in the sense that the network is mentioned in connection with steps to be taken under priority objective 5 on improving the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy, where in point 67, the 7th EAP states that better use should be made of bodies specialising in adapting scientific knowledge for public policy (the Eionet being one of the bodies targeted in this respect). Further, although Eionet is not specifically mentioned, it is also relevant in relation to several of the other points with actions and investments to be made under this priority objective (e.g. point 69 on ensuring credible, comparable and quality assured data and indicators, environmental information systems, data exchange, and point 70 on SEIS). The relevance of the Eionet in the context of policy development was discussed at the EEA MB seminar in 2016. The final report of the seminar reflected this issue in the following way:

  "The evolving EU policy framework towards a more integrated systemic framing of issues gives guidance about how to develop and adapt EEA and Eionet, for example: the 'Energy Union' and the circular economy package; the 7EAP priority objectives; the Monitoring and Reporting Refit (MRR); the 'Paris Climate change Agreement'; and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Work to support these initiatives needs involvement of, and cooperation by, different ministries in countries, including on energy, economic affairs and finance, which may need new or enhanced ways of collaboration at national level to link with Eionet. In practical terms, it was mentioned that the current Eionet structure does not sufficiently allow or facilitate interactions between specialised NRCs needed to address these new framings of issues. In this context, it was suggested that it would be useful to have a forum of some kind to enable the exchange of views among NRCs. There could also be a review of the NRCs to see which could perhaps be combined, or where new ones may needed. Also, some tasks that have a specific outcome or a limited time-frame could be covered by working groups rather the NRCs."[212]

  As emphasised above, the Founding Regulation provides a high-level framework for the components of the network, and this would allow for taking into account the need for greater integration and cooperation with other authorities than the environmental ministries and agencies. However, on the other hand, the Founding Regulation does not encourage such integration either.

- <u>Coherence between Eionet work and work on reporting:</u> The analysis under coherence illustrates that Eionet NRC groups existed in parallel to Commission working groups related to reporting on various directives. The two groups deal with different dataflows (Eionet NRCs with SOE dataflows and Commission working groups with reporting requirements stemming from EU legislation) and the situation varies depending on the policy area and country. In some countries, there is an overlap between persons in the groups and there is a more coordinated approach whereas in others, it is more separate[213]. The support study has been presented with

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[212] [163], p. 11

[213] This is reflected in data from the EEA, which shows that in the period mid-2017 to mid-2018, 2728 deliveries have been made to CDR, by 598 different users. 266 out of these 598 users had a Eionet NFP, NRC or Eionet reporter role. Based on this, one could say that around 40% of recent reporters are formal Eionet members (seen against the 20% of the data flows that are non-legislative).

examples of confusion about the roles of the two groups. This is also connected to the fact that, increasingly, data from reporting on Directives was also used in the context of assessing the state of the environment – and thus distinguishing between data for reporting (traditionally coordinated through Commission working groups) and data for SOE (traditionally coordinated through Eionet, NRC groups) became less meaningful during the evaluation period. This indicates a need for reconfiguring the groups to ensure that overlaps and inefficiencies are avoided, which could also impact on the Founding Regulation. See also Section under 7.2.5, 'Coherence'.

- <u>New technologies and their implications for the relevance of Eionet:</u> New technologies provide new data sources which complement data from Eionet sources and from reporting on Directives: Aside from the data obtained through reporting mechanisms (whether based on legal reporting requirements or not), new technologies involving earth/satellite-based observation was increasingly used during the evaluation period along with other information sources taking into account that, generally, information became more accessible through Internet-based tools and platforms. The EEA has confirmed during the interviews that other sources than data originating from the data flows managed by the EEA was increasingly used, but was not able to assess the magnitude. Given that the relative importance of the Eionet-related data flows decreased, this could lead to a finding that the relevance of the Eionet was declining. However, first of all, the Eionet-related data flows have not decreased in relevance. Secondly, the Eionet actors perform a role, which is much broader than just supplying data. In a situation where the amount of data is increasing, the competence to understand it and translate it into information and assessments can be even more important (the IAK part of the MDIAK chain). Thus, this points to continued relevance of the Eionet and hence the task of coordinating and managing it.

This overall relevance of the Eionet is confirmed by stakeholder perceptions expressed through the survey of the Management Board members (where 88% of member country respondents and 67% of Commission respondents considered this task very important) as well as views expressed during interviews and the 2016 Management Board seminar and the stakeholder workshop held in connection with this support study.

6.3.4 Task (b) on providing the Commission and Member States with the information necessary for framing and implementing sound and effective environmental policies

As already mentioned under Q1 as well as in connection with the intervention logic, this task is largely a repetition of the objective as expressed in Article 1. As such, it adds limited value to defining the scope of the mandate. In terms of its relevance, it would be considered relevant in so far as the objective is considered relevant (reference is made to Q6 above for assessment of the relevance of the objective). The support study notes that the task focuses on information necessary for sound and effective <u>environmental</u> policies. As such, the task description does not take into account the need for mainstreaming of environment into other policy areas, such as agriculture, transport and energy. While the EEA and Eionet have worked in these areas (as seen in the analysis of Q2), the support study also found in the analysis of this question, that there was scope for improvement in this area. A clearer mandate and task designation in this area could support this.

6.3.5 Task (c) on providing support for reporting requirements

As shown under the analysis of Q1, the EEA was conducting a considerable amount of work in this area during the evaluation period and data also points to the effectiveness and efficiency of the EEA in performing this task, notably the Fitness Check on Environmental Monitoring and Reporting[214]. Data from the Fitness Check shows that the estimated resource use of the EEA to perform its role in relation to the environmental reporting obligation amount to approximately EUR 4.5 million (conservative estimate)[215] equalling roughly 10% of EEA's budget. However, this does not count the support to the reporting obligations in the climate area, so the actual share is considerably larger. It is an important area of work in relation to most of the strategic areas under SA1 in the MAWP. Further, it is clear from the answer to Q4 that there are a number of benefits associated with the performance of this task, which relate in particular to the ability to support policy implementation. As such, there is no doubt that this is a

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[214] [112]

[215] [112], p. 25

highly relevant task. This is also reflected in inputs received during the consultation process, where in particular Commission respondents emphasised the importance of EEA work in this area and recognise the EEA for being very effective and efficient in handling this. There are several concerns of different nature, which have emerged as a result of the analysis of other evaluation questions as well as inputs provided by stakeholders during consultation.

- **Scope of the task:** This task was added in connection with the amendment of the Founding Regulation in 2009, however, as with other tasks, the task provides a broad mandate for the EEA to support reporting requirements, but does not 'fix' the scope to include certain reporting requirements or provide a procedure for how to handle the situation when new requirements arise. I.e. when new legislation is passed (such as the IAS Regulation analysed under Q3), there is no procedure or standard for assessing whether the EEA should support the reporting requirement. In some cases, sector legislation provides for a role for the EEA in supporting reporting[216], which determines the scope in regard to the specific reporting requirements, however, there seems to be no apparent logic for when this is the case and when it is not (see Appendix O for an overview of reporting obligations and which ones have a defined mandate for the EEA in the relevant sector legislation). So, the scoping of the mandate is only in some cases further defined by other pieces of legislation. This means that, in principle, the role of the EEA in relation to the other reporting obligations is defined in connection with the multi-annual and annual work planning. This allows for flexibility, but also implies uncertainty (however, it must be noted that the EEA's support to reporting requirements was stable during the evaluation period with the exception of the support to the DWD as discussed under effectiveness Q3). In a situation with a diminishing budget, it is difficult for the Agency to accommodate new reporting requirements without having a budget assigned (as seen in the case of the IAS Regulation, ref. Q3).

- **Relevance of data from reporting requirements to other EEA/Eionet tasks:** The analysis of Q1 (and referencing the findings of the fitness check of monitoring and reporting obligations) shows that data from reporting requirements are widely used by the EEA and Eionet in analyses of state of the environment. This points to a high level of relevance of this task. Nevertheless, there is a question on whether the EEA should support reporting requirements that do not yield data relevant for making environmental assessments. The case of the DWD, where the EEA discontinued the support to a reporting requirement during the evaluation period (see Q3) illustrates this as, according to interview data, part of the rationale from the EEA (apart from shortage of budget) was that reporting under this Directive did not fully enter the mandate of the EEA. While it may be discussed whether this rationale holds true, it still illustrates that the could be examples of reporting requirements where there is limited benefit seen in the perspective of providing information relevant to environmental assessment – and here, the question is then whether the EEA should assume responsibility.

- <u>Mandate in relation to coordination of reporting:</u> The task as it is described in the Founding Regulation includes the following wording at the end of the sentence describing the task: "…and with the aim of coordinating reporting."[217] From the description, it is unclear whether this should imply that the EEA should take a coordinating role in relation to reporting requirements or whether the support provided by the EEA as an effect of the task is intended to improve the coordination of reporting. In both cases, however, it is not very clear what is expected of the EEA in relation to coordination of reporting. As mentioned under several other questions and also in connection with assessment of relevance of task a) above, there was coordination on reporting requirements between NRCs and Commission working groups as well as coordination at the operational level between the EEA and DG ENV and DG CLIMA in relation to reporting requirements (see Section under 7.2.5).

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[216] As stated in the Monitoring and Reporting Fitness Check: Only in eight out of the 57 pieces of legislation analysed is the EEA mentioned, and then mostly in assisting or cooperating with the Commission in the reporting process.

[217] Founding Regulation, Article 2, c)

6.3.6   Task (d) on advise to Member States on development, establishment and expansion of systems for monitoring of environmental measures

As shown in the analysis under Q1, this is a task where there was limited activity during the evaluation period. Also, it is among the tasks which were considered least important when considering the data from the survey of the Management Board members. The MAWP 2014-2018 does not focus specifically on advice to Member States (or member countries) in relation to systems for monitoring of environmental measures. It does have for each of the areas under SA1, a performance indicator focusing on capacity building support in relation to reporting. Apart from that, the ethos of the MAWP is more oriented towards the Eionet as a network for sharing of experience and best practises and common development of methodologies and tools rather than the EEA providing advice to Member States. So, this indicates a process whereby capacity building takes place in a participatory, common process in the network, rather than a one-way process from the EEA to the Member States. This perspective is also supported by items identified as benefiting member countries in the synthesis of the discussions at the 2016 EEA MB seminar, which are highlighted in the box below. Further, the continued need for cooperation and capacity building was confirmed at the seminar[218].

Box 6-1   EEA MB seminar synthesis on items benefiting member countries

- Having access to information, methodologies and knowledge that countries would not have the resources or expertise to develop on their own;
- Peer/expert interaction, knowledge sharing, information exchange, capacity-building, ability to follow EU policy priorities, learning about processes, experiences and priorities in other countries, exploring diverse approaches to issues, and anticipating challenges and opportunities that may be arising;
- Data harmonisation, common methodologies, and quality assurance, especially in areas where there is no other framework in place, e.g. land use and soil;
- Uptake of national data in European assessments and use of European data in national assessments; and,
- Building community and strengthening cooperation both at international and national levels.

Source: [163], p. 9

Seen in this context, the current wording of task d) is assessed as not reflecting the way capacity building and mutual learning was facilitated through the EEA and Eionet during the evaluation period. However, on the other hand, it is clear that the benefits accruing from the network are very much related to these processes (this is also clear from the analysis of benefits in the support study, see Q4). It is noted that these processes are not reflected in the description of task a) in the Founding Regulation, which focuses more strictly on the activities related to data collection, processing and analysis.

6.3.7   Task (e) on recording, collating and assessing data on the state of the environment and to draw up expert reports and maintain a reference centre

This task is very comprehensive and in fact involves several tasks and spans the MDIAK chain almost entirely (with the exception of the M). As shown in the analysis for Q1, it takes a considerable share of the work undertaken by the EEA and Eionet. As such, there is no doubt on its overall relevance. Further, seen in the context of the 7th EAP, priority objective 5 on improving the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy, the relevance of this task is further underlined. Point 69 of this priority objective talks about the investment needed to ensure credible, comparable and quality assured data and indicators and design of environmental information systems. Point 70 talks about implementation of Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles, INSPIRE and Copernicus as well as environmental information systems (BISE and WISE – both managed by the EEA – mentioned specifically)[219]. Thus, overall the task is highly relevant. However, the wording used seems somewhat outdated and some elements would deserve stronger attention given their importance during the evaluation period. The points below elaborate on this:

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[218] [163], p. 16
[219] Annex, Priority Objective 5

- Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS): The focus of the task is on recording, collating and assessing data and thus strongly related to the SEIS. The 2008 Communication on SEIS also emphasised the role of the EEA and Eionet in implementing SEIS. However, this is not reflected in the task description[220].

- Technology and information systems: The mentioning of the requirement to 'maintain a reference centre' can be seen to give a mandate for activities related to information systems and IT, however, it does not fully cater for the development in new technology and the very substantial amount of activities undertaken by the EEA during the evaluation period in this area (which are also directly reflected in the mentioning of some of the systems and tools managed by the EEA in the 7th EAP (see above).

- Type of data: The analysis of task c and this task under Q1 showed that during the evaluation period (and before) there was increasingly an overlap between data managed for SOE (covered under task e) and data managed for reporting obligations (covered under task c). As such, the rationale for having separate tasks (tasks c and e) seems less pertinent.

- Mainstreaming of environment in other policy areas: In addition, the focus on the 'state of the environment' in this task disregards EU policy requirements launched during the evaluation period e.g. on mainstreaming of environment and climate change into other EU policies (e.g. CAP) and for making integrated assessments in relation to a large number of longer-term integrated policy agendas (circular economy, low carbon economy).

6.3.8   *Task (f) on ensuring comparability and harmonisation of methods of measurement*

Comparability in data and information is a fundamental element to provision of information at EU level and also already part of the objective in Article 1. The importance of comparable data and information is also emphasised in the 7th EAP, priority objective 5, point 69. The data from the Management Board survey confirms the continued importance of this as all the respondents have rated this task as very important. In the 2016 EEA MB seminar, data harmonisation and common methodologies were also highlighted as items benefiting countries (see Box 6-1 above). These different observations all point to a high relevance of this task.

One point of attention is related to the internal coherence and relation with the objective and other tasks: Task f) is worded more as an objective than as a task and is thus very open with regard to what kind of activities should be undertaken in order to achieve comparability and harmonisation. This can be an advantage as the Agency and its Management Board will then have flexibility to design activities that are deemed appropriate in the multiannual and annual work programmes. On the other hand, one could question whether there is a need to have a task, which sets this out – or whether the objective coupled with more specific tasks would be more appropriate. The means (or types of activities) needed to ensure comparability would be associated with establishment of common systems (including IT systems), standards, capacity building, cooperation – and these are elements which are (at least to some extent) included in other tasks already.

6.3.9   *Task (g) on promoting the incorporation of European environmental information into international monitoring programmes*

This task is closely associated with task c as some reporting requirements arising from the EU legislation relate also to international requirements. The advantages of coordinating this are not captured by having the two tasks described as separate. Other than that, the relevance of the task is evidenced by the work of the EEA in the area (e.g. UNFCCC, LRTAP, IPBES, and the UN SDGs). International reporting obligations supported by the EEA are listed in Appendix O. Further, the 7th EAP has a priority objective (9) on increasing effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate related challenges. Although international monitoring programmes are not directly mentioned under this priority objective, they form part of multilateral agreements that are mentioned and where the membership and active engagement of the Union is called for under several points. This indicates that task g) is relevant. In addition, relevance of the task is confirmed by MB members through the survey.

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[220] [525], p. 8

6.3.10   Task (h) on the publishing of the SOER every five years

The relevance of this task is clearly established by its value and use as evidenced by the case study (see appendix D) as well as examined in the context of the analysis of Q2 in this report. Seen in the context of the policy cycle of the EU following a 7-year cycle[221], the five-year cycle of the task is less appropriate. This implies a mismatch between the cycles of the EAPs and the SOER meaning that full benefit of the SOER is not achieved in respect to informing the development of the EAPs. Further, there is divergence between the obligations in the Aarhus Convention and the Aarhus Regulation, which provide for the EU to publish a SOER every four years whereas the EEA Regulation requires an SOER produced by the EEA every five years. As mentioned in the case study on the SOER, the value of the product decreases over time and is highest in the two first years. This could also argue for a shorter cycle.

6.3.11   Task (i) on stimulation of the development and application of forecasting techniques

The relevance of Task i) could be seen as confirmed in the sense that the 7th EAP under the priority objective 5, point 71 talks about gaps in knowledge and advanced research required to fill such gaps – e.g. research into planetary boundaries and systemic risks. However, the 7th EAP mentions Horizon 2020 as the opportunity to focus research efforts in this area and does not refer to the EEA. From the wording of Task i), it is not clear whether it is actually this type of research that is being referred to, however, the task can be understood in that meaning. The EEA MAWP 2014-2018 refers to work in this area under SA2 (SA2.3 on megatrends and transitions in particular), so this has been part of the work programme during the evaluation period, which points to the relevance of this task (if understood in the meaning indicated above).

However, the consideration on relevance of this task is more controversial as the data from consultation shows quite varied opinions in this respect. This is seen in the results from MB survey (ref above) as well as data from interviews and the workshop. Generally, the member country stakeholders emphasised the importance of this task, whereas the Commission representatives were more sceptical. Member countries and NGOs in particular, consider that the importance of this task to have increased considerably reflecting evolving policy needs related to more cross-cutting and systemic issues and work under the 7th EAP on megatrends, sustainability transition and assessing systemic challenges (e.g. in relation to Forward Looking Information Systems – FLIS) and not least due to the EU's long-term energy and climate change policy. Member countries, FLIS network and NGOs stressed a need for the EEA to do this type of work for better policy making including elaborating tools applicable at national level in the lack of national resources for this, whereas with Commission representatives held a more traditional view that the EEA should focus on monitoring and reporting on environmental information and assessments and not engage into foresights as other actors were active there.

The analysis of coherence (Q9) does show that other actors have been active in this area during the evaluation period. Comprehensive and expensive modelling exercises in various fields were implemented and also a variety of research institutions were involved. The support study has not developed a comprehensive overview of these activities, but examples illustrate the magnitudes involved. The question then is how the EEA is best placed in this institutional landscape. The task as it is worded in the Founding Regulation does not help to answer this question.

Overall, and in line with remarks made by several interviewees, the support study finds that this task is rather vaguely worded and does not consider what the role of the EEA should be more specifically considering that 'forecasting' is a very broad concept and could potentially be understood in many different ways. This increases the risk of overlap with other actors and inefficient use of the resources of the EEA. That being said, the EEA as a key knowledge institution on the state of Europe's environment cannot ignore the forward-looking elements and longer-term considerations if it is to live up to its objectives of providing information that enables policy-makers to decide on the measures to be taken to achieve the broader goals of sustainable development.

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[221] Note that Article 312 of the TFUE establishes that the multiannual financial framework shall be established for a period of at least five years. However, the recent policy cycles during the evaluation period have been 7 years (2007-2013, 2014-2020).

6.3.12   Task (j) on assessing the cost of damage

The 7th EAP in priority objective 6, point 76 talks about addressing environmental externalities and deployment of market-based instruments. Elements of priority objective 1 related to economic value of ecosystem services (e.g. point 27) are also related to this task. However, the wording of the task seems outdated compared to the 7th EAP and general development in the area of environmental economics. Also, as reflected in the 7th EAP priority objective 2 as well as e.g. in the 2011 Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe and later in the circular economy package, the policy framework and way of thinking about how environmental and economic issues are tied in together have gone much beyond the focus in the task on 'cost of damage'. SA2.1 in the MAWP 2014-2018 includes some elements that can be seen as related to this task if it is understood in a broad sense and in the framework of the policy developments described above. Overall, this indicates clearly that the task description is out of tune with policy developments in the evaluation period.

6.3.13   Task (k) on stimulating the exchange of information on best available technologies

This is a task with limited activity identified. This task was also being pursued by other actors, such as the European Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Bureau under the JRC. As such its relevance appears to be low although MB members have still assigned a relatively high importance to this task in the MB survey (see figures above). Despite this inconsistency, the support study finds that the fact that information on best available technologies was handled by the JRC is a strong indicator of low relevance of the EEA having a specific task of doing the same.

6.3.14   Task (l) on cooperation with JRC, Eurostat, DG RTD and others

While the support study clearly shows that cooperation with JRC, Eurostat and DG RTD is relevant and has been on-going during the evaluation period (see analysis of Coherence, Q9 and Q10 below), it also shows that the specification of tasks in this regard in Annex 1 of the Founding Regulation appears out of tune with how cooperation has been coordinated during the evaluation period and provides a far too generic framework which does not add any value. In addition, in line with observations under Q1, cooperation while necessary and important is not a task in itself – it is rather a measure needed to achieve certain tasks and as such does not appear relevant to feature among the tasks.

6.3.15   Task (m) on ensuring broad dissemination

This is an important task and comprises a significant share of the work of the agency as evidenced by the analysis under Q1 and also Q2 and Q8. Dissemination of information to the public along with public access to information (in line with the Aarhus Convention and Aarhus Regulation) are also highlighted in the 7th EAP (priority objective 4, point 59 and 65), which underlines the relevance of this task.

During consultations, several stakeholders questioned whether the EEA needs to communicate directly to citizens. The stakeholders consider the citizens not to be the main target group for the EEA's products. Some stakeholders highlighted that dissemination of the EEA's work to citizens may create unnecessary administrative burden (e.g. require adapting the language and translating it into all the national languages). However, the outreach to the wider public has increased through social media during the evaluation period and these have also provided a new avenue for more direct communication to individual citizens. Further, improvements in infographics and the technical opportunities in this regard further provided new opportunities for direct communication. This is also in line with the visibility principle set up in the Common Approach to Decentralised Agencies[222], welcoming to expand visibility of the agencies through tools like social networks, in order to ensure that the European citizens are well informed in a transparent manner about the agencies' work.

During the workshop, the participants discussed how much should be expected from the EEA and Eionet to communicate with individual citizens. The participants found that the EEA was already providing a lot of communication relevant for the European citizens. In addition, social media has supported this communication in a much further outreach than e.g. traditional reports from the EEA. It was confirmed that the EEA's core function was seen by participants to be on ensuring a better channel of information to the Member States and member countries in the

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[222] [468] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015BP0930(52)&from=EN

form of better data that is put in the right policy context. It was also mentioned that the NGOs can act as a channel to the general public.

The current wording of the task does not take into account the roles of other actors or provide any specification of how the EEA should operate in that regard.

6.3.16 Task (n) on support to the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies

This task saw limited activity during the evaluation period, although some of the activities undertaken e.g. in the context of the monitoring of the SDGs could be seen as coming under this task. The task is not very clearly worded and it is not evident what the EEA would be required to do. It is unclear whether the methodologies re-ferred to are environmental assessment in general or specific types of environmental assessment (e.g. strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment or the overall state of the environment assess-ment). The 7th EAP contains references to the implementation of the strategic environmental assessment and en-vironmental impact assessment Directives, however, this has no direct relation to this task as it is worded.

6.3.17 Task (o) on assisting the Commission in the diffusion of information on environmental research

This task is analysed under Q1 and the analysis shows that there was limited – although increasing - activity in the area during the evaluation period. However, the involved stakeholders (DG RTD in particular) maintain the im-portance of the task whereas the result of the MB survey indicates that this task is considered least important by MB members. Together with the task on forecasting (task i), this task relates to the function of the Agency in the science-policy interface – as an actor helping to translate results of research into applicable indicators and knowledge that can be used for policy-making. From the desk study of the MAWP 2014-2018 as well as interviews and the 2016 MB seminar, it emerges that the EEA is seen as an important institution in this regard. However, there is no wording in the Founding Regulation which directly states this. Task o is the closest, however, it focuses on assisting the Commission in the diffusion of information on environmental research, which does not have the focus on application of such results for policy-making. Under priority objective 5 in the 7th EAP, the role of the EEA in relation to improving the science-policy interface is specifically mentioned (point 67).

6.3.18 Key findings and conclusions on Q7

In assessing this question, the support study focused on judgement criteria on the extent to which the tasks and their weighting as expressed in the Founding Regulation correspond to the weighting of actual activities performed by the EEA and Eionet during the evaluation period and the extent to which the tasks in the Founding Regulation match the policy framework for environment and climate policy during the period. Further, stakeholder perceptions on the relevance of the tasks were considered as well as consistency between tasks and between objectives and tasks.

The overall conclusion is that while the tasks still provided a reasonable framework within which the activities and outputs of the EEA and Eionet could be framed, they were somewhat outdated and did not represent the balance of activities of the Agency during the evaluation period. Evidence from review of work programmes show that un-der some tasks, there was hardly any activity whereas under others, the level of activity was very high and the task did not fully reflect the nature or complexity of the activities undertaken. The relevance of some tasks was strongly established by their importance in the context of the policy framework, whereas this was less the case for others. The table below provides an overview of the assessment of the tasks along the key criteria considered. The table distinguishes between three 'scores': High (green), medium (orange), low (red), which are based on the findings elaborated above. The two far-right columns provide a conclusion based on the collective view across the scores. In some cases, certain criteria have not been addressed as these were considered redundant in the view of low relevance concluded from another criterion (in these cases, the cells are coloured grey).

The first conclusion column assesses the relevance of the <u>content</u> and <u>intent</u> of the task (regardless of whether the task is suitable as a task or worded in a way that lends itself well to implementation in the policy context). The second column assesses the relevance of task from the perspective of external and internal logic and coherence

and meaningful wording. The colour indication in both cells provides a indicative framework where the green colour indicates strong relevance of the task with no or limited need for adaptation, the yellow colour indicates medium relevance with a need for some rethinking of the task to ensure its continued relevance, and the red colour indicates low level of relevance with a need to substantially modify or altogether abolish the task.

Table 6-7   Overall assessment of relevance per task

Task	EEA WPs	Policy framework	Internal consistency and clarity	Stakeholders	Conclusion – content/intent	Conclusion – logic and wording
a)						
b)						Not a task, but an objective
c)						Unclear role in relation to coordination of reporting and unclear how decisions regarding new reporting requirements are made*
d)					Not in line with current working of the Agency and member countries. Role of the EEA in relation to capacity building.	
e)						Overlap with task c. Spanning too many sub-tasks across the MDIAK. Does not reflect SEIS or IT-elements in data management.
f)						Not a task, but an objective
g)						
h)						
i)					Risk of overlaps with other actors	Vaguely worded
j)					Out of tune with policy framework and environmental economics concepts	
k)					Handled by IPPC Bureau under JRC	
l)						Not a task in the pure meaning of the concept.
m)					EEA communicating directly to citizens versus to intermediaries (national public authorities, NGOs, etc.)	
n)					Unclear what the task is and no clear link to policy framework	
o)					EEA role in science-policy interface	Vague wording, limited links to policy framework and EEA WPs,

Source: Support study assessment

6.4   Q8: Relevance of the EEA to EU citizens

How relevant is the EEA to EU citizens?

This question examines the relevance of the EEA's work from the perspective of citizens' needs during the evaluation period. The Founding Regulation recital 5 and Art 1(2) *litra a* acknowledge that collection, processing and analysis of environmental data at European level are necessary to ensure that the public is properly informed about the state of the environment. More specifically, Art 1(2) *litra a* states that 'to achieve the aims of environmental protection and improvement laid down by the Treaty […] shall be to provide the Community and the Member States with: a) objective, reliable and comparable information at European level enabling them to take the requisite measures to protect the environment, to assess the results of such measures and to ensure that the *public* is properly informed about the state of the environment'.[223] In addition to that, Art 2 *litra m* mentions that to achieve the objectives set up in Art 1, the EEA' tasks shall be 'to ensure the broad dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information, in particular on the state of the environment, to the *general public* and, to this end, to promote the use of new telematics technology for this purpose'. Recital 8 of the Founding Regulation provides the right of access to documents and openness to the citizens enabling them to participate in the decision making procedures. Further, an element which is not in the same way reflected in the Founding Regulation, but did receive attention at policy level and to some extent also by the EEA during the evaluation period, relates to citizen science, i.e. environmental information from citizens feeding into environmental information systems and thus complementing public data.

The table below presents the details on judgement criteria and indicators used to answer this evaluation question.

Table 6-8   Judgement criteria and indicators, Q8

Judgement criteria	Indicators
Level of interest in environmental information and awareness among the general public of the EEA and its flagship publications (e.g. SOER) is high and positive.	Importance of environmental protection and information seen from the citizen perspective (Eurobarometer) Levels of awareness and use of EEA products by citizens or organisations representing citizens Use of social media and interest in postings/tweets etc. made by the EEA
EEA public web pages are user friendly, visually appealing and easy to use for EU citizens	Interest organisation and citizens' assessment of EEA web pages Assessment of navigability and presentation of information of specific themes by support study team
Non-technical publications and data are regularly downloaded by various non-governmental actors (NGOs, industry) and reported on in the press.	Number of downloads of specific reports Usage of EEA web pages and map services Number of articles in the press on EEA reports
EEA engaged in citizen science initiatives during the evaluation period	Citizen science activities reflected in (M)AWPs or CAARs

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

6.4.1   Level of interest and awareness of the general public

According the EU's Special Eurobarometer reports[224], a majority of EU respondents say that protecting the environment is important to them personally (94 % says that it is important to them to protect the environment, and more than half (56%) says it is very important to them). With respect to climate change, 74 % of EU citizens are perceiving climate change to be a very serious problem, and 92% see it as a serious problem. The most recent Eurobarometer reports refer to EEA reports e.g. on 'Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe 2016', however, the survey

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[223] [469] EEA Regulation 401/2009/EC Article 1.
[224] [470] Special Barometer Reports 459 (March 2017), [471] 435 (May 2015), [472] 409 (March 2014) on climate change; [473] Special Barometer Reports 468 (September 2017), [474] 436 (May 2015), [475] 416 (April 2014) on environment.

did not specifically ask for EU citizens' perception of EEA as an information provider. Nevertheless, the survey results clearly show that environmental protection is an important subject to European citizens and this also is an indicator that citizens need information on state of the environment and issues in relation to environmental protection.

The open public consultation conducted in the context of the evaluation received a limited number of replies and few of these came from individuals who could be considered 'ordinary citizens'. This could be seen as a sign of limited interest and awareness in the EEA and its information. However, on the other hand, it could also be taken as a sign that citizens are satisfied with the information available and therefore did not see a reason to respond. Further, it could simply be because the OPC did not attract the attention of ordinary citizens. The majority of respondents to the question in the OPC on whether the EEA is best placed to perform its various function of ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public have answered that the EEA is best placed to a very large extent (37%) or to a large extent (40%)[225].

Respondents to the OPC were mainly aware of the SOER (71 %) other reports than SOER (67 %) maps, graphs and data sets (67%) and communication materials (62%), whereas Signals, workshop and conferences and exhibitions are less known.

Figure 6-3   Awareness of EEA products and services, results of OPC
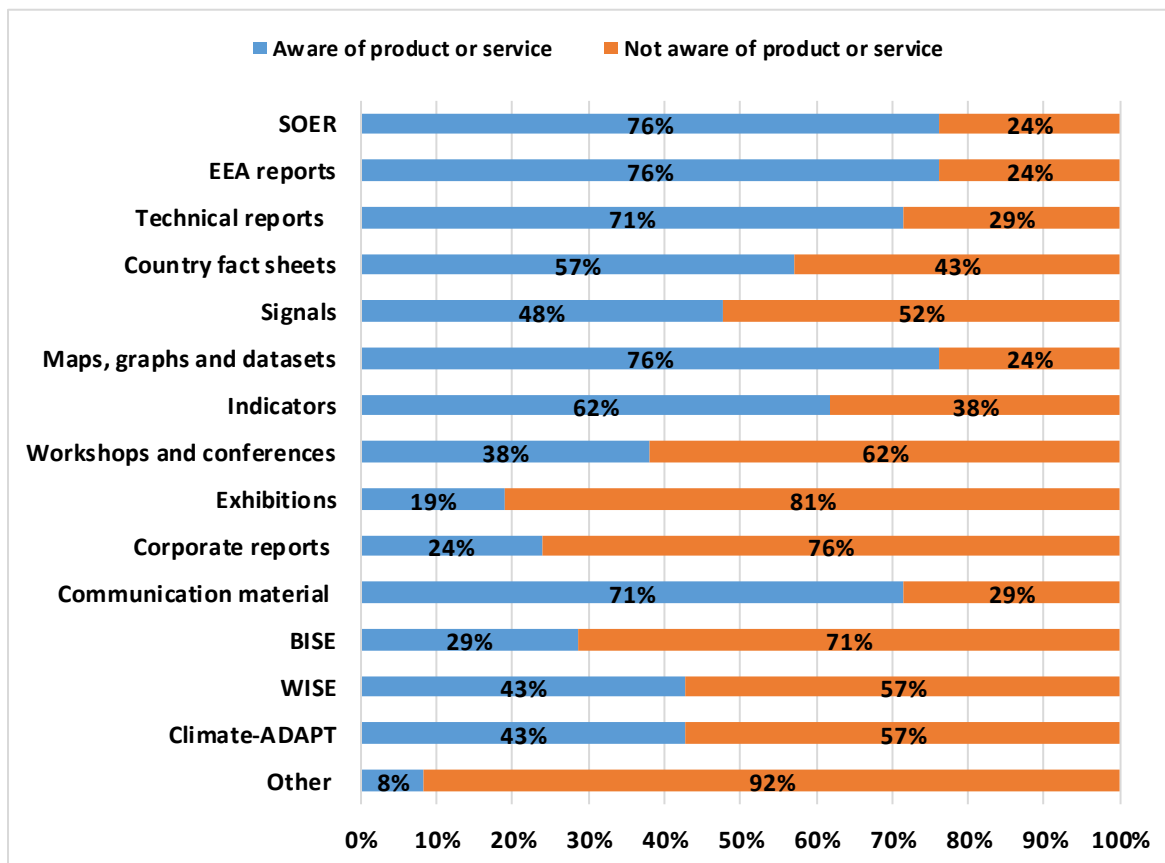
Source: Open Public Consultation, General Survey. Q2.1: The EEA produces a range of publically available products and services, as listed below. Please indicate which products and services you are aware of and how often you use them.? Valid Responses: 21

The EEA's user survey conducted in 2017 shows that the users of EEA products and services cover a wide selection of groups and civil society organisations (including environmental NGOs and other civil society and industrial organisations) as well as researchers and students use EEA's products and services. The respondents to the survey were invited through direct e-mails sent to EEA client relation management system (8,354 subscribers), the Management

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[225] OPC, question 3.2, n=30

Board (70), Scientific Committee (18), and Eionet (2,397)[226]. The response rate in the survey was deemed satisfactory (at 8%) and covering the four different groups above in a representative way. In total, 736 users completed the survey (34% of the respondents were policy makers (national), 27% - scientists, 13% - industry/private sector, 8% - others, 8% - NGOs, 5% - other civil society, 4% - policymaker (European level) and 1% students) [227]. This evidence thus points in the direction that the limited number of responses to the open public consultation cannot be taken as an indicator that the level of awareness of the EEA is low. This is also supported by the interviews conducted with environmental and climate NGOs, which confirm that the level of awareness of the EEA is high among the NGOs. However, as further discussed in section 6.4.3 below, the individual interested citizens may rely on the NGOs as their interest organisations to translate the information into meaningful messages in the specific context. Also, individual citizens may search for information through national public sources and, here, the EEA more indirectly played a role for reliable and objective information (as shown in the answer to Q2).

During the evaluation period, an increasing use of social media was observed. The EEA used different social media channels such as Facebook, Tweeter and Youtube Channel to communicate with the users and general public. Overall, social media was recognised by the EEA as an important tool of communication, and was actively used, in line with the aim to maintain a modern approach to the task (m) mandated by the Founding Regulation. In the social media, the most popular tweets were on SOER 2015 (2.6 millions), Signals 2015 (184,209) and State of Nature in the EU 2007-2012 (91,184) (more detailed analysis of use of social media is provided in section4.2.2.8, particularly Table 4-33 which presents an overview of the use of these channels and activity level of the EEA). During the interview with the focus group consisting of NGOs, the participants noted that the EEA was getting better at presenting information in a compelling, clear way to general public. They particularly noted that infographics can be easily used on social media.

In addition, the information from the EEA CAARs shows that the EEA implemented various activities, which were directly targeted at citizens, including photo competitions, responding to public enquiries, receiving visitor groups, etc.

Table 6-9   Information on activities recorded in CAARs directly targeted at citizens

CAAR 2014	CAAR 2015	CAAR 2016
Responded to 670 public enquiries, hosted 34 external visiting groups. Environment and me photo competition	Responded to 876 public enquiries, hosted 32 external visiting groups.	Responded to 812 public enquiries, hosted 40 external visiting groups. Photo competition: My city.

Source: [40], [7], [186]

6.4.2   EEA public web pages

When it comes to the EEA's website, 83% of respondents to EEA's user survey across all stakeholder groups replied that they use EEA's website. The website is also the most used channel (81% of all respondents) to find EEA's products. 92% of website users find the content relevant (28% - very relevant and 64% - relevant). 71% of the users find the website easy/very easy to use, while 26% find it difficult and 3% - very difficult. Comparing to other features of the website (i.e. content, graphics, web format), navigability had a higher share of negative values.

In the OPC, the respondents were asked whether it is easy to use EEA's website to access the information they need (see Figure below). The majority of the respondents agree that it is easy to use the website to find such products like SOER, EEA reports, Signals, Climate-Adapt, indicators, maps, graphs and databases. The more difficult to access are exhibitions, WISE and technical reports.

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[226] [331] EEA user survey, Annex 1
[227] [331] Survey of EEA's products, Overview and results, 2017.

Figure 6-4   Responses on whether it is easy to use the EEA's website to access the information that the user needs
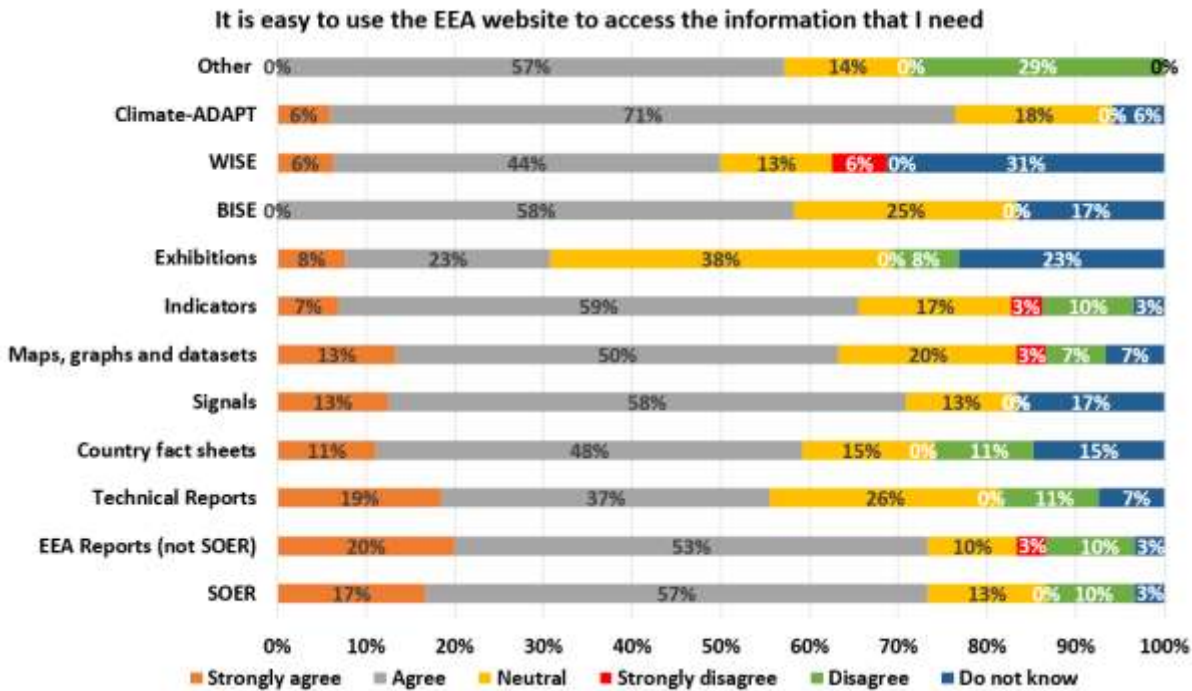
Source: Open Public consultation 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? It is easy to use the EEA website to access the information that I need
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other.

As part of conducting the case studies, the support study performed some spot checks on the user friendliness of the web-site in respect to specific content related to some of the cases. This is summarised in the table below. Further information can be found in the case study reports (see Appendix D).

Table 6-10   Case study findings on user friendliness of web-site

Service	Accessibility (easy to find)	User friendliness (easy to navigate)	Visual appearance (easy to understand)
EEA topic page on Biodiversity and Ecosystems[228] and the ETC/BD pages on the EIONET site[229]	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate-High
	Information on the Nature Directives is not centrally located on one site, and there is no clear link from the EEA site to the ETC/BD site.	The EEA site is relatively easy to navigate. The "Browse Catalogue" tabs make it easy to identify all products relevant to the topic. Similarly, the use of tabs in the ETC/BD site make navigation reasonably straightforward.	The EEA site is visually attractive and easy to understand. The ETC/BD site is perhaps slightly less easy to understand due to the visual appearance and strong reliance on text rather than visual communication. However, as this site is not intended for a general audience, this is unlikely to be a barrier to dissemination. In any case, the textual information provided is concisely presented.
SOER2015	Moderate	High	Moderate

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[228] [480] https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/biodiversity

[229] https://bd.eionet.europa.eu/

Service	Accessibility (easy to find)	User friendliness (easy to navigate)	Visual appearance (easy to understand)
	The SOER is not visible on the homepage of the EEA. The use of the term 'state of the environment' may not be apparent to all users and therefore there may be difficulty navigating to the SOER pages.	The website is easy to navigate with a clear menu system.	Some of the reports are presented in Pdf format, whilst others on webpages. It is not always clear that the relevant sections can be downloaded.
Waste (*https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste*)	Moderate	Moderate	Low
	Not easily identifiable from search engines, but navigable from the EEA's homepage.	A clear menu is provided on the right hand side of the relevant page	Maps and indicators are not particularly user friendly. For example it is not possible to change the period of assessment and the functionality of the webpages appear dated.
Information on freshwater[230]	Moderate	Low	Moderate
	Easy to find main water and marine page from EEA home page.	Navigation within the water pages – and in general, information on water available on the EEA web site – is not clear. Information can be found through targeted searches.	Text, figures and maps are for the most part easy to understand. The overall approach, however, is somewhat out of date and appears to be geared to a policy and technical audience rather than the broad public.
Copernicus land portal (www.land.copernicus.eu)	Moderate	High	High
	The portal is easy to via direct search or the Copernicus website but it is not directly referenced on the EEA website.	The portal has clearly defined menus and pages and finding raw data is straight-forward.	The portal uses different graphics and heading to distinguish the different components and menus of the CLMS.

Source: Assessment by support study team based on websites as they appeared in the beginning of 2018. Note: A scale was applied as follows: High-moderate-low-very low.

The assessments made reflect the web-site as it stood in the beginning of 2018 and thus not during the evaluation period (for technical reasons, it was not possible to make an assessment that reflected the evaluation period). Nevertheless, they do indicate that there are variations across themes in the user friendliness of the web-site and there is scope for improvement, which in some cases is considerable.

During the interviews, some NGOs mentioned that it can be difficult to find relevant information on EEA's website, especially if a user does not know the specific report or dataset he/she is looking for. For this reason, some NGOs state that website's interface is not very user-friendly. When it comes to general public, the NGOs overall agree that the EEA does not target general public, thus the users of the website are mainly NGOs, journalists, policy makers and not citizens. The NGOs also highlight that it is not seen as the EEA's purpose to disseminate information to the general public, this being rather the responsibility of Member States.

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[230] A review was carried out of EEA main pages on freshwater in early 2018, together with a review of one interactive map and one indicator.

6.4.3 Non-technical publications and databases

As it was assessed in Q2 (see 4.3), the awareness and reach of the EEA and its products varies depending on the product.

In the EEA user survey, the respondents were asked whether they use different EEA's products. 87% of respondents use EEA reports and assessments and it is highly used by all stakeholders. 72% of respondent use data maps, while 61% use indicators. The EEA reports and SOER are the most known reports. The vast majority (94%) of the respondents express a positive evaluation (high/very high) on EEA reports. EEA reports both information (96%) and presentation (94%) are rated high or very high. 91% of respondents that use data maps find them useful. 85% of respondents that use indicators highly appreciate the informative value of indicators.

All interviewed NGOs highlight that they use the EEA's products (e.g. reports, maps, graphs, datasets), especially the relevant products to their field of work. They also state that a number of their member organisations use EEA's products. At the same time, NGOs have pointed to that individual citizens may not have a lot of awareness of the EEA products. The NGOs do not necessarily consider it a problem as the main value of the EEA is seen to be its independent analyses and data, which are often presented through other institutions and intermediaries. Many of the NGOs highlighted that dissemination of the EEA's work to general public would require adapting the language and translating it into all the national languages, which would lead to unnecessary burden for the EEA. Thus, they consider the EEA outputs not designed or targeted the individual European citizen as such, however, the EEA's outputs have an important role amongst others in fulfilling EU and international requirements on reporting on the state of the environment (e.g. according to the Aarhus Convention).

During the interview with the EEA employee, it was mention that the efforts to address citizens have been reduced during the evaluation period due to resource constraints. Signals is the only publication directly targeted towards citizens (more information on Signals in section 4.2.2).

Among the most downloaded EEA reports in 2015 were Air quality report (9437 downloads), European bathing water quality in 2014 (5265 downloads), SOER 2015 (4652).[231] These three reports were also the most media quoted EEA reports. The email notification on SOER2 2015 was also the most viewed. In 2015 and 2016, the EEA gathered information on press coverage of the publications issued. The figure below illustrates the number of media quotations registered in 2015. In this connection, the EEA notes that there are also more than 800 media articles registered with no specific publication mentioned.

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[231] [205] Outreach 2015, Internal note, 9 September 2016.

Figure 6-5   EEA data on media quotations in 2015
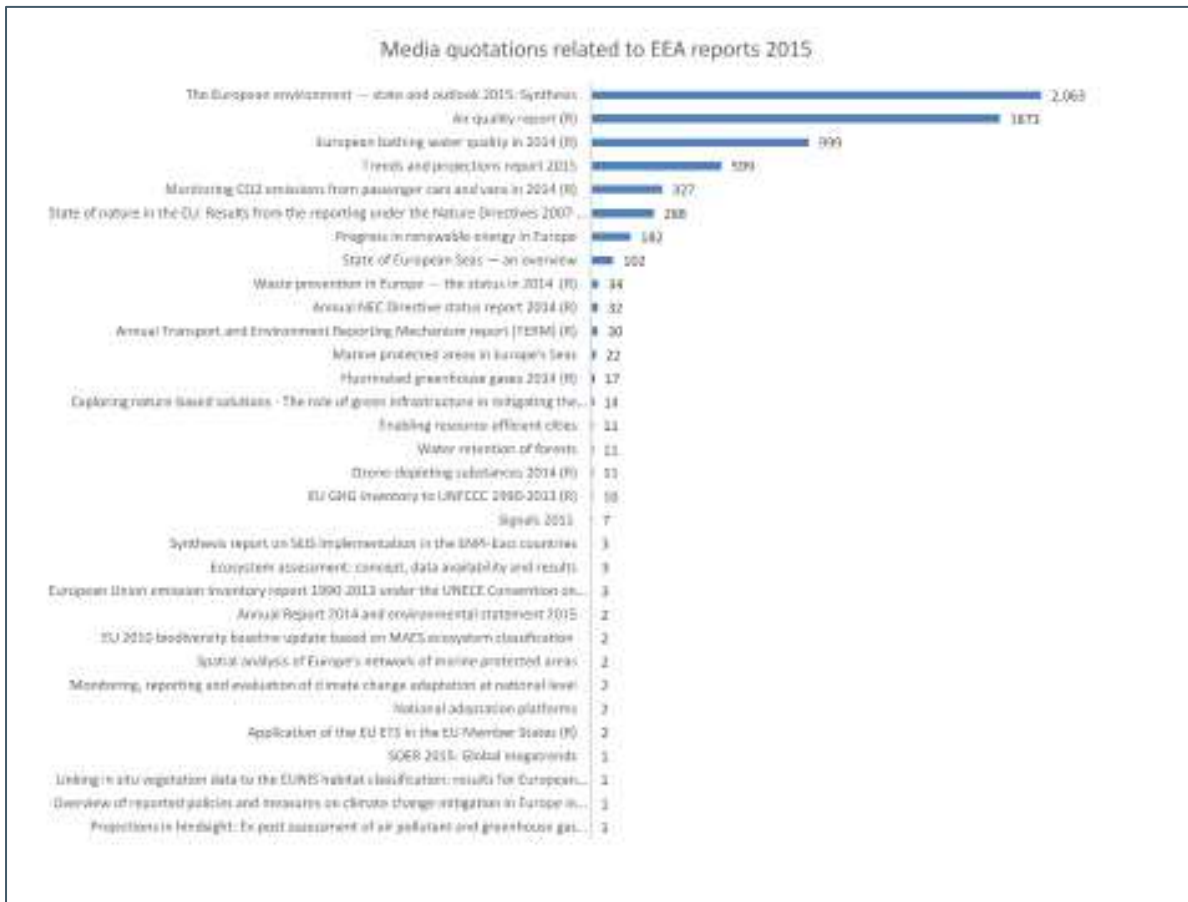
Source: EEA Outreach 2015 [205]. Note: For annual reports, references were counted independent of the year of publication the referred publication.

6.4.4   EEA and Eionet engagement in citizen science initiatives

The MAWP that was effective in the beginning of the evaluation period (covering the period 2009-2013 and thus the very first part of the evaluation period) had a considerable focus on EEA's role in the initiative 'Eye on Earth', which among other things focused on enabling access to information and citizen engagement in environmental information and decision making. As commented in chapter 4.4.1.2, the previous evaluation of the EEA identified this as one of the less relevant areas for the EEA to be involved in based on the feed-back from stakeholders (notably member countries and the Commission). As a consequence, the MAWP covering the next period (2014-2018 and thus 3 years of the evaluation period) did not focus on this initiative.

The MAWP 2014-2018 does in some respects recognise the role of citizens and information from citizens and civil society. For example in the figure illustrating core EEA/EIONET processes on p. 13. In SA1.6, there is a mention of an output on marine litter watch based on citizen science. Also, in SA3.1, there is an objective entitled: to widen and deepen the European knowledge base by developing communities of practice and engaging in partnerships with stakeholders beyond Eionet, such as business and research communities, civil society organisations (CSOs), and initiatives concerning lay, local and traditional knowledge and citizen science (MAWP, p. 50).

The EEA has provided information to the support study team on activities conducted in response to the objective stated in SA3.1 and quoted above. This includes three information notes and a presentation to the senior management team of the EEA as well as a cover e-mail summarising key information[232]. It appears from this information that the activities undertaken were focused taking the first steps towards engaging in partnerships with stakeholders beyond Eionet, i.e. stock-taking of existing cooperation and partnerships as well as initial considerations on how to organise this in the future. In addition, action was taken following the publication of SOER 2015, where the

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[232] Five references: [361] – [365]

EEA sought to develop its knowledge base on long-term transitions by engaging with the diverse research communities addressing systemic change. These interactions have included presenting the EEA's work and engaging actively at ten conferences and workshops with networks such as the Sustainability Transitions Research Network, Future Earth, the transformations community and the International Risk Governance Council. On this basis, in 2016 the EEA hosted two workshops with the FP7 project, PATHWAYS and its sister projects, ARTS and TESS. In addition, the EEA hosted a Scientific Committee seminar on 'knowledge for transitions' in May 2016.

While the above information shows that the EEA took steps to engage with the broader research community in relation to transitions and systemic change, it is also clear that the key focus was not on specific citizen science initiatives. From the annual activity report 2015, it can be seen that the EEA participated in innovation projects under the Environmental Knowledge Community, some of which focused on citizen science, but were not led by the EEA[233]. All in all, the support study finds that the engagement in citizen science initiatives was limited, especially after 2014, however, this was also in line with the feed-back received as part of the previous evaluation of the EEA.

6.4.5   Key findings and conclusions on Q8

Data from Eurobarometer surveys show that environmental protection and climate issues were important to EU citizens during the evaluation period and this also provides evidence that the citizens have a need for information on these issues. Thus, overall, the EEA was relevant to citizens as it played an important role in providing reliable and objective information on the state of environment.

Ideally, the relevance of the EEA should be confirmed by individual citizens themselves as part of their participation in the open public consultation conducted for the evaluation. However, the number of respondents was low and respondents cannot be seen to represent EU citizens or citizens of EEA member countries. However, other sources, notably, data on outreach, press coverage as well as EEA's own user survey provide quite solid evidence that the EEA website and non-technical publications and data are used by a range of stakeholders who in one way or the other represent individual citizens, including NGOs, business organisations, researchers and students. The webpages were widely used by these stakeholders for finding information, even though some stakeholders expressed their reservations towards the user-friendliness of the EEA's website and some room for improvement was also found in that regard in connection with the case studies undertaken by the support study. The data also documents that there was a considerable number of mentions of EEA products in the press, however, it is difficult to assess the extent to which these numbers can be seen as high as there is no benchmark to compare against.

On this basis, it is found that the EEA contributed to enabling other actors, whether those were Member States, NGOs or other civil society organisations, to ensure that the public was properly informed about the state of environment. In addition, the data on EEA outreach activities also shows that the EEA implemented different activities to reach out to individual citizens more directly, most prominently through use of the social media, but also through e.g. competitions, being open for visitor groups, etc. Based on the data available on number and type of activities, it is difficult to judge their effect in terms of reaching the 'ordinary citizen' in the EU. It must be expected that some share of those taking part are potentially part of one of stakeholder groups with more than an ordinary interest (e.g. environmental NGOs).

The data shows that the EEA was more engaged in citizen science related activities in the beginning of the evaluation period, due to the involvement in Eye-on-Earth, which was almost abandoned with the implementation of MAWP 2014-2018. Under the implementation of this MAWP, the focus shifted to engaging with stakeholders beyond Eionet more broadly – and, some specific activities were undertaken focusing on research communities related to transitions.

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[233] [7], (p. 41)

7 ASSESSMENT OF COHERENCE

This chapter presents the findings with respect to the evaluation criterion on coherence. Two main questions from the Evaluation Roadmap are addressed:

- Coherence question 1 (Q10): To what extent is EEA acting in cooperation with the European Commission services, the member countries and other agencies that deal with comparable issues (e.g. the European Chemicals Agency, the European Maritime Safety Agency, the European Food Safety Authority) and bodies to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts?

- Coherence question 2 (Q11): To what extent are the procedures and mechanisms put in place effective to ensure that EEA cooperation activities are coherent with the policies and activities of its stakeholders? Are EEA contributions contributing to the mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas?

7.1 Intervention logic

Referring to the intervention logic as presented in section 3, the analysis of coherence involves looking at the relationships between the "EEA Intervention" and the wider context and focuses on the tasks of the EEA in relation to the tasks of other bodies.

In order to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts, the EEA is expected to work in cooperation with other bodies that, both at the EU and national level, deal with on environment and climate issues, in order to avoid overlaps and exploit synergies (Question 9).

In parallel, the objectives, tasks and activities of the EEA are linked with sectoral policies (e.g. agricultural, regional, maritime policy) that increasingly integrate environmental considerations. In this view, the EEA is expected to coordinate with policy stakeholders (including sectoral policy DGs) acting in areas interlinked with environment and climate topics (Question 10).

7.2 Q9: Cooperation, duplication of efforts and complementarities

Q9: To what extent is EEA acting in cooperation with the European Commission services, the member countries and other agencies that deal with comparable issues (e.g. the European Chemicals Agency, the European Maritime Safety Agency, the European Food Safety Authority) and bodies to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts?

This evaluation question assesses the cooperation mechanisms established between the EEA and main stakeholders at EU and national level, and the effectiveness of these mechanisms in avoiding overlaps/duplications of effort.

The table below illustrates the judgement criteria and related indicators.

Table 7-1   Judgement criteria and indicators, Q9

Judgement criteria	Indicators
EEA has clear roles, vis-à-vis the European Commission, in the management and assessment of data and information reported by the Member States for EU environment and climate policy and in knowledge creation, and duplications of efforts are avoided	Role and tasks of EEA across environment and climate themes as set out in formal mandate/work programmes, compared to role/tasks of other EC DGs (in particular, DG ENV, DG CLIMA, JRC, Eurostat and DG RTD) Relevant agreements, mandates and cooperation mechanisms are in place to avoid overlaps and create synergies Duplication of efforts is avoided; actions taken are complementary; roles reflect each body's comparative strengths

Judgement criteria	Indicators
The EIONET network has a clear role vis-à-vis bodies involved in EU environment and climate reporting obligations	Synergies established and duplication avoided between EIONET bodies and representatives to committees and working groups coordinated by DG ENV and DG CLIMA
EEA has cooperated effectively with other EU agencies on common environment and climate issues	Agreements or other cooperation mechanisms between the EEA and EU agencies working on common issues exist Examples of cooperation; clear delineation of roles in these cases
EEA has cooperated effectively with bodies in member countries on common environment and climate issues as the Agency's work has evolved	Examples of cooperation

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

In line with the evaluation matrix and the judgement criteria, the assessment is structured along the following elements:

- Cooperation between the EEA and the European Commission services (Sections from 7.2.1 to 7.2.4): as the focus of this evaluation question is on overlaps or duplication of efforts and synergies, the analysis covers those DGs having a prominent role in the definition of environment and climate policy and legislation (DG ENV and DG CLIMA) and working on environment and climate data and knowledge (Eurostat, JRC, and DG Research)[234];

- Cooperation between Eionet bodies and European Commission Working Groups on environmental and climate legislation – Section 7.2.5;

- Cooperation between the EEA and other EU bodies, i.e. other decentralised EU Agencies – Section 7.2.6;

- Cooperation between the EEA and national bodies – Section 7.2.7.

For each of these interactions, the analysis discusses the scope of the cooperation, the mechanisms underlying it (e.g. formal agreements, EEA's role defined in legislative acts) and seek to identify positive examples of cooperation or possible duplications of effort. Given the nature of the evaluation question, the analysis is based on qualitative indicators and builds on the description of the main cooperation mechanisms identified and the issues raised by the stakeholders involved. The main indicator used to express an overall judgement on the adequacy of the current cooperation mechanisms is the extent to which duplications are avoided or synergies are created.

7.2.1   Cooperation between the EEA and the European Commission

Table 7-2 maps the tasks carried out by the EEA, in line with its mandate and across the MDIAK chain[235], against the Commission Services that have a leading role on environment and climate policy and legislation (DG ENV and DG CLIMA) and other DGs that (like the EEA) work on environment and climate data and knowledge (Eurostat, JRC, and DG Research). This mapping is based on the analysis of the EEA's Regulation, the EEA's MAWP and the

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[234] Other DGs, working in areas interlinked with environmental and climate topics (e.g. DG AGRI, REGIO, MARE, etc.), are covered under Evaluation Question 11. Evaluation Question 11 addresses broader coordination with policy stakeholders playing a role in the field of environmental and climate policies.
[235] See also Chapter 3.3.1, defining the main tasks used for the analysis throughout the study, on the basis of the Founding Regulation (FR), the MDIAK framework and the multiannual programme (MAWP).

mandates of the Commission Services. Interviews with the Commission have contributed to further define the areas of potential overlaps.

The respective roles of the EEA and the Commission vary depending on the policy areas and tasks, and these aspects are discussed in detail in the next sections. The purpose of Table 7-2 is to show that most of the EEA's tasks are not exclusively executed by the Agency but require work in collaboration with several Commission services. Coordination and operational cooperation are, therefore, needed to address potential overlaps and ensure synergies between the EEA and the relevant DGs across different tasks.

DG ENV plays a special role, being the 'parent DG' of the EEA. Cooperation with JRC and Eurostat is explicitly recognised in the EEA's Founding Regulation. Article 15 of the Founding Regulation specifies that the EEA has to 'actively seek the cooperation of other EC bodies and programmes, including JRC and Eurostat' to avoid any duplication of effort. Annex I of the Founding Regulation details the scope of the cooperation between the three bodies. According to the Annex, cooperation with JRC can include the harmonisation of and creation of new environmental measurement methods, intercalibration methods and standardisation of data formats[236]. Regarding cooperation with Eurostat, the Regulation establishes that the EEA should leverage relevant data collected by Eurostat as far as possible, and that the statistical programme in the field of environment should be agreed by the two bodies at Director level and approved by EEA's MB[237]. These are additional factors that require the establishment of cooperation between the EEA and the Commission Services.

Table 7-2   EEA's Tasks and key Commission services working in collaboration with the

EEA Tasks		Key Commission services working on environment and climate information				
		DG ENV	**DG CLIMA**	**DG Research & Innovation**	**Eurostat**	**JRC**
Coordination of the Eionet (task a)	MDIAK					
Support to reporting requirements (task c)	MD	✔	✔		✔	✔
Collect, record and manage data for SOE (task e and f)	MDI	✔	✔		✔	✔
Manage data and information systems (task e)	MDIAK	✔	✔		✔	✔
Publish State of the Environment Report (task h)*	AK					
Publish other assessments (task e)	AK	✔	✔			✔
Dissemination of environmental information to the general public (task m)	IAK	✔	✔		✔	✔

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[236] The Annex leaves room for further tasks, 'as agreed between the Executive Director of the Agency and the Director-General of the Joint Research Centre' (Annex I A of Regulation (EC) No 401/2009) [105].

[237] [105] Annex I B of Regulation (EC) No 401/2009.

EEA Tasks		Key Commission services working on environment and climate information				
		DG ENV	**DG CLIMA**	**DG Research & Innovation**	**Eurostat**	**JRC**
Forecasting and mega-trends (task i)	IAK		✔	✔		✔
Diffusion of the results of environmental research (task o)	IAK	✔		✔		✔

* EC services contribute to the SoE Report (e.g. JRC on soil issues) or are involved in consultations before it is published; how-ever, publishing the SoE Report is a responsibility of the EEA;
Source: author's elaboration

The next two sub-sections provide: (section 7.2.2) an overview of the general mechanisms that have been set up to ensure coordination between the EEA and the relevant Commission services at general level (i.e. regardless of the specific task); (section 7.2.3) an analysis of the cooperation established on each task, and the overlaps or syn-ergies found by the support study.

7.2.2   General coordination mechanisms

Several mechanisms support the general coordination between the EEA and the Commission services mentioned above, including:

- Involvement of the five DGs in the EEA Management Board (MB), although with different roles. Q5 (Chapter 5.3.3) discussed in detail the role of the MB and found limitations in terms of real involvement of the MB in setting priorities.

- Consultation on MAWPs and AWPs: these Commission services are also involved in the consultation process behind the approval of the EEA's MAWP and the AWPs, together with other stakeholders (European Parlia-ment, EEA member countries and Scientific Committee members). During the evaluation period, in addition to DG ENV and DG CLIMA, also DG RTD, JRC and Eurostat have taken part in the consultation on the current MAWP (2014-2019) and, to different extents, on the AWPs. Moreover, as established by the Founding Regula-tion (Annex I B), the EEA is consulted on Eurostat programming documents[238]. During the evaluation period, a positive evolution has been recorded in relation to the consultation on EEA's MAWP and AWPs: the European Commission has started to use this consultation as a strategic coordination tool (please see Evaluation Ques-tion 5, Section 5.3.2 for more details).

- Regular high-level meetings, at Director and Head of Unit/Head of Programme level. In this case, annual co-ordination meetings are held between the EEA and DG ENV. Moreover, coordination between the EEA and DG CLIMA has been traditionally strong (through meetings at Director and Head of Unit level), enabling alignment of the two institutions on strategic priorities. In the case of other DGs, meetings have not been regular; for instance, between the EEA and JRC, in the last four years, there has been only one meeting.

- The EEA Brussels Liaison Office (BLO) keeps regular contacts with DG ENV and the other DGs. While the BLO is not seen by the EEA as an instrument for strategic coordination, during the evaluation period, it had an im-portant role in following-up on the EU policy and legislative developments (e.g. strategic priorities, EC man-agement plans, roadmaps, etc.), reporting back to the EEA staff in Copenhagen, and contributing to identify needs and implications for the EEA. In addition, this office participates in the annual meetings between the Directors of the EEA and DG ENV[239] and in the meetings at Director level of the Environmental Knowledge

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[238] Interview with Eurostat.

[239] The EEA does not participate in the meetings between Directors of the EEA and DG CLIMA.

Community (further discussed below), facilitates the organisation of operational meetings between the staff of the EEA and the Commission services and other key activities (such as the launch of EEA's reports, dissemination of information on the EEA)[240]. The Box below provides a more detailed description of the BLO's tasks. Awareness of this office among the Commission services does not seem to be very high: according to the survey of Commission staff (from DG ENV, CLIMA, DG RTD, JRC and Eurostat), only 44% (or 15 out 32) of the respondents were aware that the EEA has an office in Brussels[241]. This might be due to the fact that the Commission services do not specifically recognize the activities of the BLO, as distinct from the activities of the EEA staff itself[242].

Box 7-1   Tasks of the Brussels Liason Office (the BLO)[243]

The BLO was established in 1996 and it is based in Brussels (DG ENV premises). During the evaluation period, the office had three staff members. Among others, during the evaluation period, the BLO contributed to the following areas of work[244]:

- Institutional and political intelligence: the BLO brought political intelligence to the EEA staff, by providing regular updates on relevant EU policy developments. The main instrument used to this purpose were the 'Brussels Weekly Briefing', reporting the main decisions/actions/communications by the EU institutions, EC releases, EEA staff mission in Brussels, and other issues to be followed (e.g. events, Council meetings).

- Communication: An EU calendar of events and meetings (organised by EU institutions, EEA and other organisations) were prepared and transmitted by the BLO to the EEA regularly. The BLO was actively involved in the organisation of events for the launch of EEA's publications (e.g. TERM Reports, SOER 2015, Annual Air Quality reports, Annual T&P). Finally, the Office distributed welcome packages to new comers at DG ENV and DG CLIMA.

The BLO was also actively involved in the budgetary procedures (budgetary hearings, discharge procedures).

Moreover, the cooperation between the EEA, DG ENV, Eurostat and JRC has been shaped by the technical agreement on **data centres for environmental topics**, signed in 2005 and still valid during the evaluation period. The Agreement led to the designation of nine Environmental Data Centres and established a clear division of responsibilities: EEA has been in charge of five data centres (air pollution, biodiversity, climate change, land use and water); Eurostat two (waste and nature resources); and JRC two (soil and forests). A core objective of the data centres was to fulfil DG ENV's information needs[245].

The technical agreement has provided the general framework for coordination and established mechanisms (i.e. regular meetings)[246]. In an informal 2014 document, the original four members also highlighted the increasing

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[240] Information provided by the EEA.

[241] COM survey.

[242] Information provided by the EEA.

[243] Information provided by the EEA.

[244] Other areas of work include: Networking and activities on Copernicus (during the evaluation period, one staff members of the BLO was placed in DG GROW).

[245] [476] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/environmental-data-centre-on-natural-resources/overview/policy-context.

[246] [396] Technical Arrangement between DG ENV, ESTAT, JRC and EEA on Environmental Data Centres, 14 November 2005.

need for reinforcing coordination and extending it to other bodies, such as DG CLIMA and DG Research and Innovation[247]. However, from interviews, it is understood that coordination under the agreement has been mainly linked with ad-hoc activities. An important step towards reinforced and extended cooperation was taken with the creation of the **Environmental Knowledge Community** (EKC) in 2015[248], an informal platform that brings together EEA and the five Commission Services discussed in this Section (DG ENV as lead partner, DG CLIMA, JRC, DG Research & Innovation and Eurostat). The EEA has also actively participated in the creation of the EKC and has contributed to the definition of the EKC's needs and its overall strategy[249].

The EKC represents an instrument for coordination, supporting co-planning of knowledge activities and the alignment of the work programmes of each partner accordingly. Meetings at Director level (held annually) have been considered 'very useful occasions to share views on policy priorities, to review and orient the EKC work in specific topics and to discuss forward-looking trends'[250]. The co-planning was supported by the development of a 'common knowledge planning table', including the knowledge generation activities planned by the EKC partners and the knowledge needs'[251].

The EKC, in addition, has created a platform for partners to work together on Knowledge and Innovation Projects (KIPs). Since May 2015, the EKC has started and developed three Knowledge and Innovation Projects (KIPs): Integrated natural capital and ecosystem services accounting, INCA (Eurostat leading); Knowledge base for "within the limits of our planet", WILOP (EEA leading); and Citizen Science for environmental policies (JRC leading)[252].

According to the preliminary results of a stock taking exercise[253] and input collected through interviews with DG ENV, JRC and Eurostat, the **EKC was working well** as an instrument to reinforce coordination among Commission services, share views on policy priorities and pool together expertise on environmental knowledge. However, during the evaluation period it was still a recent initiative and interviews indicate that it is expected to produce impacts only in the longer term.

In this context, **DG ENV**, as parent DG, played an **overall coordination role**, and Unit A3 (Environmental Knowledge, EcoInnovation & SMEs) worked as a horizontal unit responsible for liaising with the EEA. The role of Unit A3 was to ensure coordination: between the EEA and the European Commission; and within DG ENV, i.e. horizontal coordination between different Units of DG ENV and of the EEA.

Regarding the coordination between the EEA and other DGs, there were direct bilateral interactions between the EEA staff and different Commission services, in many cases based on well-established relationships that did not require the intermediation of DG ENV, or framed in the context of agreements. In particular, between the EEA and DG CLIMA, there has been a traditionally strong coordination at high level (e.g. regular meetings between Directors), which was reflected in a good cooperation achieved at the working level (see Section 7.2.3).

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[247] [397] Environmental Data Centres Review 2013-2014, Conclusions as agreed by DGs ENV, ESTAT, JRC and EEA and their meeting 14 March 2014.

[248] [284] "Environment Knowledge Community Roadmap" - endorsed at the EKC DG meeting 13 May 2015.

[249] Interview with DG ENV.

[250] [285] Environment Knowledge Community, Stocktaking document, updated 15 September 2017. Since the establishment of the EKC, partners held 5 meetings at the Director Generals/Executive Director level.

[251] [285] Further developed outside the evaluation period: in 2017, the JRC developed the Environment Knowledge Browser (EKB), which 'allows for an overview of all ongoing work by the EKC producers of knowledge (i.e. the activities agreed in the EEA, JRC, ESTAT work programmes and the environment and climate projects financed by H2020 and Life).

[252] [285] Moreover, the EEA is leading a Task Force on data centres (Information provided by an interview with DG ENV).

[253] [285] Environment Knowledge Community, Stocktaking document, updated 15 September 2017.

Regarding coordination within DG ENV, it should be noticed that both the EEA and DG ENV are organised in a 'matrix structure': the EEA is organised in three 'topical' programmes, while DG ENV (like all Commission DGs) is organised in several topical directorates and units. During the evaluation period, some examples have revealed **the lack of systematic coordination at horizontal level**, resulting in bilateral exchanges of information between topical programmes/units of the EEA and DG ENV, not coupled with a strong centralised mechanism for ensuring coordination within DG ENV (and within the EEA). Issues have been recorded especially in relation to coordination and communication between the EEA and DG ENV before the publication of EEA reports. Interviews have highlighted that EEA reports often reach DG ENV at a late stage, leaving little room for consultation, and issues occur when the person responsible for a specific report is not clearly identified in DG ENV. These problems can be traced back to individual cases of weak bilateral cooperation between the EEA and DG ENV, but also to the lack of a centralised organisation and coordination in DG ENV relation to the EEA's publication plans[254]. Problems related to horizontal coordination within the EEA have also been noticed. An example concerned the different messages conveyed about trends in bird populations, whose decline was attributed to different factors depending on the focus of the analysis (climate change and unsustainable management of farmland)[255].

As noted in interviews and in the case studies, cooperation between the EEA and DG ENV at working level (i.e. on specific tasks, as described in Section 7.2.3) sometimes depended on the working relationships established between the respective programmes units. This element implied risks in terms of inconsistent approach to cooperation across programmes/units and additional risks, i.e. coordination issues that could arise in the case of absence of staff or staff changes.

These overall mechanisms and considerations on the role of DG ENV represent the framework for cooperation at working level, i.e. on tasks and activities, discussed in the next section (Section 7.2.3).

7.2.3 Cooperation on tasks and activities

At working level, coordination on specific tasks and activities was managed by different, formal and informal, mechanisms.

According to the results of the survey with the Commission staff, there has been regular interaction between the staff of the EEA and that of the five Commission services discussed in this section, through meetings, conference calls and similar on technical issues (mainly on processes related to data collection, management and reporting; processes related to assessments and reports; processes related to use of EEA knowledge in policy making and implementation). Box 7-2 presents the detailed results.

Box 7-2   Coordination between the European Commission and the EEA: results of the Commission Staff survey

The tables and chart below present the answers provided by different units of: DG ENV (8 responses), DG CLIMA (14), JRC (1), Eurostat (5) and DG Research & Innovation (1).

Q10a) Do you know the relevant persons from the EEA who work within your areas of work? Valid Responses: 32

Response	No. of Responses	%
Yes	29	90%
No	3	10%

Source: COM survey

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[254] Interviews with DG ENV.

[255] Information provided by the European Commission services.

Q10b) How often has staff from the unit coordinated with their relevant counterparts in the EEA through meetings, conference calls and similar on technical issues? Valid Responses: 32

16%

0% (Never)

9%

25%

22%

- Greater than once per month
- A few times per year
- Never

- Once per month
- Less than once per year
  Do not know
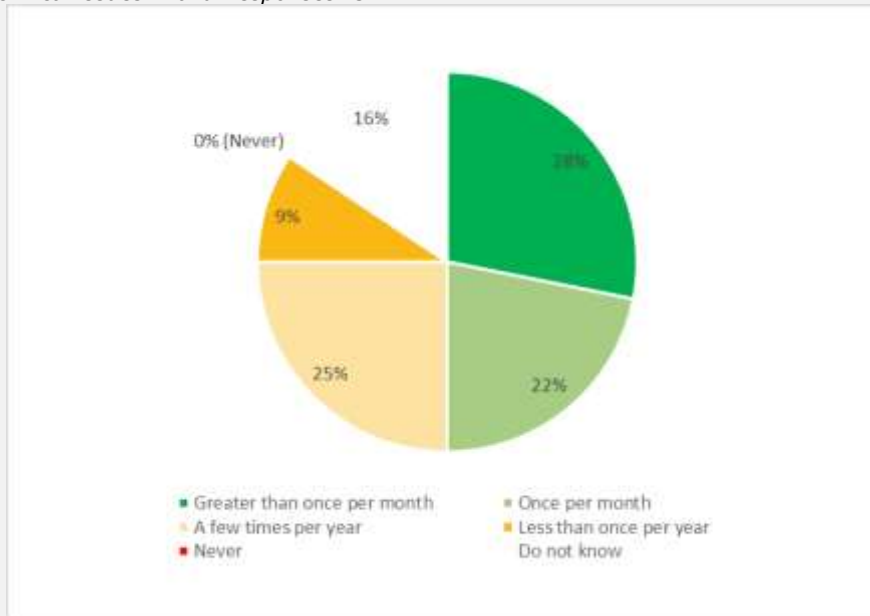
Source: COM survey

Q10b) Which types of technical issues have you coordinated with the EEA during the 2012-2016 period? Valid Responses: 32

Percentage of respondents who selected answer

Processes related to data collection, management and reporting	66%
Processes related to indicator building and data integration	50%
Processes related to assessments and reports	66%
Processes related to use of EEA knowledge in policy making and implementation	53%
Processes related to IT systems and tools	44%
Other...	3%
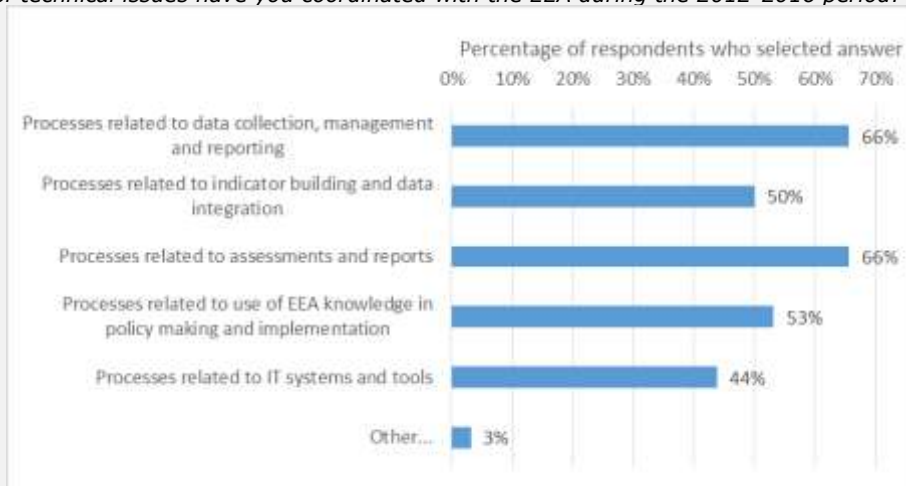
Source: COM survey

The next paragraphs focus on the cooperation at working or operation level, across the EEA's main tasks (as defined above and in Chapter 3.3.1)[256]. In several cases, the information presented draws on the findings of the case studies for detailed examples of good practices or issues encountered.

7.2.3.1   Support to reporting requirements (task c)

As mentioned in Sections 4.2.2.2 and 6.2.3, in line with Article 2.c of the Founding Regulation, the Agency played a key role in assisting the monitoring of environmental measures by **providing support to reporting requirements** (i.e. collecting, analysing and reporting information provided by Member States as part of reporting obligations established in EU environmental and climate legislation). A study to support the Fitness Check focused on

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[256] 'Coordination of Eionet (task a)' is not discussed in detail in the next paragraphs. The EEA has an "exclusive competence" in the coordination of Eionet, based on Article 2 (a) of the Founding Regulation [105]. As such, this task does not involve risk of overlaps between the EEA and other entities.

environmental monitoring and reporting obligations[257], and did not cover monitoring and reporting obligations under climate legislation. As a follow-up, further analysis of the role of the EEA in supporting environmental and climate change reporting obligations has been undertaken during the present study (see Section 4.2.2.2). The results of this exercise show that the EEA was involved in 100 reporting requirements, in relation to both environmental and climate legislation (see 10.22).

While Sections 4.2.2.2 and 6.2.3 focus on the results achieved by the EEA in relation to this task, the present section recaps the scope of the EEA's work in this area and looks at the cooperation established between the EEA and the Commission Services, and overlaps or synergies developed.

In relation to environmental legislation, the EEA acts as reporting partner, i.e. as an intermediary between the Member States and the European Commission, for 49 reporting obligations (i.e. 27% of the total 181 reporting obligations stemming from EU environmental legislation[258]). In relation to climate legislation, the EEA provides support for 17 reporting obligations, stemming from 8 pieces of climate legislation[259].

The **role of the EEA and Eionet varies**. The case studies provide a detailed overview of the different role played by the EEA and Eionet vis-à-vis the Commission Services. The EEA can fully or partially conduct the process on behalf of the Commission, by covering one or more of the typical three **steps of the reporting process**, as illustrated in the diagram below:

(i) Reporting Platform	(ii) Data handling	(iii) Regular reports
The EEA makes the reporting platform (i.e. Reportnet) available for Member States or other entities (e.g. companies), which can submit their data or reports	Handling data/reports provided by the Member States or other entities (including Quality Assurance and processing of data/reports)	Preparing reports directly related to legislative requirements (e.g. annual reports on implementation) addressed to EU Institutions or

In most of the case studies, the EEA manages all the process. However, this is not the rule; as highlighted in the Fitness Check, in relation to environmental legislation, the Commission (DG ENV) prepares the reports related to reporting obligations for the majority of obligations (while the EEA manages all the steps of the process in 19 cases out of 49)[260].

Other elements that vary across reporting requirements are:

- The **involvement and role of Eionet** (NRCs and NFPs) and relevant **ETCs**.

- The presence of a **legislative mandate** (i.e. the role of the EEA is identified in the legislation) or **written agreements** underpinning the EEA/Eionet tasks. The reference to the EEA depends in the legislation on the timing of its approval (obviously, legislative acts adopted before the EEA's Founding Regulation cannot include

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[257] [210] ICF Consulting and partners, Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation, 16 December 2016 – study commissioned by the EC; [112] Commission staff working document - Fitness Check of Monitoring and Reporting in EU Environment Policy, SWD (2017) 230, page 24.

[258] [210] The remaining reporting obligations are delivered via Eurostat and Joint Research Centre (JRC), and 'Other' reporting partners (including both out-sourcing or in-house work). Eurostat is a reporting partner for waste legislation (Directive 2008/98/EC on Waste Framework, Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste, Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment), Directive 2000/53/EC on end-of life vehicles and Council Regulation (EC) No 2173/2005 of 20 December 2005 on the establishment of a FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community. JRC is reporting partner in relation to Directive 2012/18/EU Seveso III.

[259] The other reporting requirements on which the EEA provides support are related to international conventions (see 10.22).

[260] [112] Commission staff working document - Fitness Check of Monitoring and Reporting in EU Environment Policy, SWD (2017) 230, page 24.

a reference to the EEA's role). However, the role of the EEA is rarely mentioned in environmental (only in eight out of the 57 pieces of environmental legislation[261]). In climate legislation, this is more systematic and detailed, especially for the MMR[262].

Accordingly, also the role of DG ENV and DG CLIMA (which are the main recipients and users of the output produced) varies; the Commission services can, for example, lead the work on the reporting questionnaire, co-ordinate Member State input through Committees and working groups established for the specific legislation (e.g. in the case of the Birds and Habitats Directives[263], via the Habitat Committee and its Expert Groups), carry out data handling (e.g. on part of the fresh water legislation[264]) or prepare the reports through external contractors, or only review the reports produced by the EEA. In some cases, data collection is performed by Eurostat (e.g. data on waste) and further elaborated by the EEA for reporting purposes.

The variations in EEA's roles for reporting requirements is illustrated in the case studies. Table 7-3 presents an overview of the work carried out by EEA, by the ETCs and by the NFPs and NRCs in relation to environmental and climate reporting for the case study themes.

Table 7-3   Role of the EEA, Eionet and ETCs in different environmental themes – findings of the case studies[265]

Environ-mental theme/ topic	Role/tasks performed by the EEA			EEA's role identified in legislation or written agreement	Role of Eionet (NRCs/NFPs)	Role of ETC(s)
	Report-ing plat-form	Han-dling data re-ported by MS or other entities	Regular reports directly related to legis-lative require-ments			
Nature Di-rectives (the Birds Directive[266] and the Habitats Di-rective[267])	√	√	√	No	NRCs: Review of State of Nature Technical Report.	ETC/BD involved across all the tasks (e.g. contributing to report-ing format, QA of data reported by MS, preparing national sum-maries, drafting of the EEA Tech-nical Report on State of Nature, drafting of technical and working papers)
Waste Di-rective			√	Article 30(2) of the Revised	NRCs: Provided evi-dence and quality assure reports.	ETC/WMGE supports the EEA in a wide range of activities including

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[261] [112] page 48.

[262] Specifically, [481] the GHG MMR Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions and for re-porting other information at national and Union level relevant to climate change and repealing Decision No 280/2004/EC).

[263] Respectively, [481] Directive 2009/147/EC and [482] Directive 92/43/EEC.

[264] [483] Floods Directive (FD), [484] Nitrates Directive (ND), [485] Water Framework Directive (WFD) and, from 2015, [486] Drinking Water Directive (DWD).

[265] Case studies on Copernicus and SOER 2015 are not presented in this table, as they are not related to legisla-tion and no reporting requirement is involved.

[266] Reporting obligations are defined in Article 12 of Directive [481] 2009/147/EC.

[267] Reporting obligations are defined in Article 17 of Directive [482] 92/43/EEC.

Environ-mental theme/ topic	Role/tasks performed by the EEA			EEA's role identified in legislation or written agreement	Role of Eionet (NRCs/NFPs)	Role of ETC(s)
	Report-ing plat-form	Han-dling data re-ported by MS or other entities	Regular reports directly related to legis-lative require-ments			
				Waste Frame-work Di-rective.		conducting waste prevention re-view in Europe.
Fresh Wa-ter Direc-tives[268]	√	√ (BWD, DWD[269], UWWTD)	√ (BWD)	Only for the WFD: Art. 18(2)(b) of the WFD.	None	ETC/ICM (for BWD, UWWTD) supports data handling for the BWD, UWWTD; drafts the annual BWD report and has supported the upcoming report on the State of Europe's waters.
ETS	√	√	√	No	None	ETC/ACM assists the EEA in pub-lishing data received, QA, up-dates of the online reporting tool for member countries reports, analysis for the application of the EU ETS report.
F-gas	√	√	√	No, but refer-ence in recit-als of Imple-menting act of the F-gas Reg-ulation[270].	None	ETC/ACM supports reporting companies through helpdesk, data management and QA, re-ports compliance issues to the Commission, provides, maintains and updates reporting platform, implementation of the reporting questionnaire, drafting annual re-ports
Trends and projections	√	√	√	Art. 24 of the MMR.	Review the final re-port	ETC/ACM assists the EEA in com-piling the GHG inventories from MS and in implementing a QA/QC procedure to ensure complete-ness, consistency, comparability of the reported inventories.

Source: Support study, on the basis of the case studies.

This information provides an overview of the complex framework that characterises the involvement of the EEA and the need for cooperation with the EC services involved (particularly, DG ENV, DG CLIMA, Eurostat). Overall,

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[268] Six Directives: [487] Bathing Water Directive (BWD), [486] Drinking Water Directive (DWD), [483] Floods Di-rective (FD), [484] Nitrates Directive (ND), [488] Urban Waste Water treatment Directive (UWWTD), [485] Water Framework Directive (WFD).

[269] To 2015. EEA decided in 2015 to end work on data analysis for the [486] DWD as well as the preparation of the annual report.

[270] Commission Implementing Act No 1191/2014 Commission Implementing Act No 2016/879.

despite the varying role of the EEA vis-á-vis reporting requirements, the case studies have not revealed **overlaps** between the work of the EEA and that of the Commission services. However, it is found that the degree of coordination varied across environmental themes and depending on the coordination mechanisms put in place.

The findings of the case studies show that cooperation between the EEA and Commission Services (DG CLIMA and DG ENV and, if relevant, Eurostat) involved works well especially where there were **clear divisions of roles and/or** where **strong informal coordination mechanisms were set up**.

For example, in the case of the **Waste Framework Directive**[271], there was a clear division of roles between Eurostat and the EEA, allowing the two institutions to work in a complementary way. Data on the implementation of the legislation was collected by Eurostat through the Environmental Data Centre on Waste[272], in line with the division of roles established in the technical agreement on data centres for environmental topics[273]; the EEA built on those statistics to compile its annual review of the progress towards the completion and implementation of waste prevention programmes (in line with Article 30 of the Directive)[274]. This division of roles was established under the technical agreement on data centres, not having a legal nature, and coordination between the two institutions mainly happened through mechanisms such as: annual meetings at Directors' level, meeting at project management level and regular work contacts, and consultation on programming documents[275]. Moreover, Eurostat participated in EIONET meetings on waste (although not regularly, but especially if data issues were on the agenda).

Another example of positive cooperation and clear division of roles is found in relation to the **Nature Directives** (the Birds Directive[276] and the Habitats Directive[277]). In this field, the EEA assisted DG ENV in managing the reporting on the nature directives via the ETC on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD)[278]. EEA's cooperation with DG ENV was primarily ensured by **strong informal coordination mechanisms** that, over the years, have effectively become institutionalised. They included regular meetings between officials, regular working relationships and the use of informal programming documents, i.e. **annual rolling plans** used to detail the actions foreseen in the EEA annual work programme and coordinate the work to be carried out by DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC/BD and other bodies (e.g. JRC). According to the interviews, the rolling plans have been a key instrument to avoid overlaps between DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC/BD and ensure clarity of roles[279]. Next to the rolling plans, there were stable and long-standing working relationship, with some cases of staff that moved between DG ENV, the EEA and ETC/BD.

While the role of the EEA in terms of reporting requirements is not often mentioned in environmental legislation, in the **climate area**, the role of the EEA has been established in the Climate Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR) (Article 24), concerning both mitigation and adaptation tasks; the EEA's role has been maintained in the integration of the MMR into the Proposal for the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union (Article 35)[280].

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[271] [489] Directive 2008/98/EC.

[272] The Data Centre represents the 'central entry point for reporting of data under European Union legislation on waste' (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/waste). Although not systematically, the EEA contributes to data validation, but does not carry out any data collection.

[273] [396] Technical Arrangement between DG ENV, ESTAT, JRC and EEA on Environmental Data Centres, 14 November 2005.

[274] Waste prevention in Europe – Annual Reviews (https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste/waste-prevention/reviews).

[275] Interview with Eurostat.

[276] [481] Directive 2009/147/EC. Reporting obligations are defined in Article 12.

[277] [482] Directive 92/43/EEC. Reporting obligations are defined in Article 17.

[278] The ETC/BD supports activities of the European Environment Agency in the areas of biodiversity and ecosystems (natural capital), including reporting under the Nature Directives and maintenance of Article 12 and Article 17 reference portals for reporting.

[279] See case study on Nature Directives.

[280] [148] Propsal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Governance of the Energy Union, COM(2016) 759 final/2.

In this context, extensive collaboration has been established between the EEA and DG CLIMA in relation to areas such as greenhouse gas emissions and F-gases. For example, regarding **F-gases** (and ODS), cooperation was formalised in an agreement between DG CLIMA and EEA at the end of 2011, while the implementing act of the new F-gas Regulation (adopted in 2014) mentions the EEA in its recitals[281]. In this case, the success factor behind the good cooperation is the **clear division of roles** between the EEA, which dealt with reporting issues, and DG CLIMA which dealt with compliance issues and the general understanding /interpretation of the F-gas Regulation. In cases where data quality checks and analysis performed by EEA indicated possible non-compliance, the EEA has pointed them out in the database and handed them over to the Commission, which then handled the further communication and action with reporting entities as necessary. Similarly, with a clear task allocation, the EEA's role has been established in the monitoring and reporting Regulations for CO2 from cars and vans and the use of its central data repository (CDR) for data submissions by Member States.

These examples suggest that clear roles between the EEA and the Commission services can be established by different means, i.e. not only through a legislative mandate, but also through written inter-institutional agreements (in the case of waste) or informal arrangements that become institutionalised over the long period (in the case of the Nature Directives, where cooperation is based on annual rolling plans and the engagement of the EEA, DG ENV and the ETC/BD in the joint planning of the activities).

For the agreements on the division of roles to work, **regular and strong coordination** between the EEA and the Commission services was crucial. In the case of Nature Directives, the alignment between the EEA, DG ENV and the ETC/BD was ensured by regular and well-functioning cooperation at working level, steered by the annual rolling plans.

Conversely, a **lack of sufficient coordination** has resulted in the **misalignment** between the EEA and the Commission services **about the respective roles and activities** in the case of freshwater. For freshwater, the role of the EEA, of the ETC on Inland, Coastal and Marine waters (ETC/ICM) and of the European Commission varied considerably across the six water directives considered[282]. Coordination mechanisms were mainly based on informal interpersonal connections between the EEA (and the ETC/IMC) and DG ENV and informal planning documents, i.e. the Freshwater Roadmap for 2015-18. DG ENV provided comments to the Freshwater Roadmap, outlining the DG's priorities in this period; however, the Roadmap was an internal working document for EEA and ETC/ICM, rather than a document jointly developed by the EEA (and the ETC/ICM) and the Commission (like in the case of the rolling plans for the Nature Directives). Moreover, other than the meetings of the WISE Steering Group (see 7.2.3.3 below), EEA and DG ENV did not hold regular coordination meetings for most of the evaluation periods; regular meetings, including also JRC and Eurostat, started in 2016[283]. Changes in personnel (in particular at DG ENV), the split in responsibility for EU water directives across different units of DG ENV, and a lack of clarity in the delineation of the roles of EEA and the Commission (including DG ENV) are all factors that interplayed and led to weak cooperation. Interviews pointed out to weak or unsatisfactory cooperation between the EEA and the Commission in this field, in particular related to EEA's 2015 decision not to continue its work on the Drinking Water Directive (see also Q5)[284]. Moreover, as described in the next paragraph, some overlaps on indicators and data products occurred.

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[281] Commission Implementing Regulation 1191/2014.

[282] [487] Bathing Water Directive (BWD), [486] Drinking Water Directive (DWD), [483] Floods Directive (FD), [484] Nitrates Directive (ND), [488] Urban Waste Water treatment Directive (UWWTD), [485] Water Framework Directive (WFD).

[283] See the case study on freshwater.

[284] EEA took over the reporting mechanism, data handling and QA – but in 2015, the Agency discontinued data handling and QA for this Directive. It should be noticed that EEA's Annual Work Programme for 2015 does not specify if EEA's work would include data handling and QA for the DWD. However, the EEA's decision to discontinue the this work was unexpected for DG ENV and perceived as an issue (see also the case study on freshwater).

Finally, INSPIRE-related services have not been extensively used for environmental reporting, although 80% of the environmental data and information used by the EEA have a spatial dimension[285]. Among the hindering factors, the evaluation of the INSPIRE highlighted the "inefficient EU-level coordination - between the European Commission and the EEA - in guiding Member States towards priorities in identifying the spatial datasets for environmental and related policies (e.g. for reporting)". This lack of coordination has hindered the identification of spatial datasets[286].

7.2.3.2   Collect, record and manage data for SoE (task e and f)

In addition to data related to reporting requirements, the EEA manages separate dataflows on the State of the Environment (SoE) that feed, together with other sources, into indicators across a range of environmental themes. These indicators are used in the EEA's flagship publication (the State of the Environment Report), produced every five years, and other assessments.

Dataflows are increasingly integrated (as data from reporting requirements are also used in the context of assessments of the state of the environment) and, thus, distinguishing between data for reporting requirements and data for SoE is difficult (see also Q1 and Q7). Keeping in mind this limitation, this section focuses on the work of the EEA on the production of environmental indicators, maps and other data products not necessarily related to its work on reporting requirements. The section presents, firstly, the findings from desk review, focusing on the general and overarching cooperation mechanisms on data and indicators (i.e. the technical agreement on data centres). Secondly, insights on cooperation mechanisms established in different policy areas are provided on the basis of the case studies.

In this field, cooperation between different actors is particularly important. The Agency is one of the main producers of environmental indicators at EU level, but a significant role is played also by other EU–level bodies such as DG ENV, JRC and Eurostat. International bodies (e.g. OECD, United Nations Statistical Division – UNSD, and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe - UNECE) also produce indicators that cover EU Member States.

As mentioned in the previous section, a technical agreement on **data centres for environmental topics** was signed in 2005 between DG ENV, EEA, JRC and Eurostat, and established a division of responsibilities between these bodies. In 2014, Eurostat led the project **'Streamlining of environmental indicators'** on behalf of the EEA, the JRC, DG Environment and Eurostat. The objective was to identify overlaps, merge/eliminate indicators, reduce double work and reporting[287]. The project resulted in the 'Environmental Indicator Catalogue', including mainly indicators produced by Eurostat and the EEA[288]. Although the streamlining exercise represented an important coordination initiative, **the scope of this streamlining exercise was limited,** as focused only on EEA and Eurostat indicators. As also the EEA pointed out in its Digest of EEA Indicators 2014, 'many indicators are also generated by research projects, but these are often not replicated or produced regularly, or disseminated in a

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[285] [210] ICF Consulting and partners, Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation, 16 December 2016 – study commissioned by the EC. Regarding the compliance with INSPIRE, see also section 4.2.2.

[286] [444] Commission Staff Working Document, Evaluation accompanying the report on the implementation of Directive 2007/2/EC (INSPIRE), COM (2016) 478 final/2 and SWD (2016) final/2.

[287] [398] The specific objectives of the project were: "to ensure that indicators based on the same data sets and/or with the same content have the same name, and that indicators based on different data sets and/or with different content have clearly different names, regardless of the indicator publisher; to publish online a list of available environmental indicators in thematic groups, as well as the respective metadata file for each indicator (indicator profiles); to define streamlining principles and apply these to the indicators; to set up a well-defined streamlining process and extend the results of the current exercise to other EU (and potentially international) sets of environment or sustainable development–related indicators" (Source: EEA, Digest of EEA indicators 2014, EEA Technical report No 8/2014).

[288] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/environment/environmental-indicator-catalogue

structured manner'[289]. More generally, an issue is represented by the **lack of a complete inventory of indicators in the field of agri-environmental-climate issues** produced by EU bodies. This element can increase the risk of overlaps and lead to inefficiencies (e.g. a proper inventory would reduce the need to commission, as part of external studies, the production of inventories of available data and information, including those produced by the EC and EU bodies[290]). This issue is not related to the lack of coordination between the EEA and the Commission services as such, but it relates to the multi-lateral coordination between the many actors involved in the production and use of environmental indicators (DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG RTD, Eurostat, JRC, the EEA and DG AGRI). It also covers the interlinkages between environment/climate and agricultural topics[291]. Nevertheless, it represents a significant example of the need for reinforced coordination. The approach taken at the EU level has promoted the division of tasks across different institutions to avoid overlaps (e.g. the Technical Agreement on EDC), but it appears that it has also led to a fragmented framework and the lack of a clear leadership in ensuring full coordination.

In other areas, where the EEA and Commission Services manage parallel data flows on the same topic, there are cases of **overlaps** or **missed synergies**. Examples from the case studies are discussed in the following paragraphs.

In the **field of freshwater**, an issue is also identified in the **EEA and Eurostat's separate work on the Water Exploitation Index** (WEI). Both Eurostat and EEA collect data on freshwater use (Eurostat via the OECD/Eurostat Questionnaire addressed to national statistical offices; EEA via the EIONET NRCs). The two datasets have some differences in the data collected and contain somewhat different parameters; moreover, the EEA index cites Eurostat data among its sources. Between 2010 and 2012, there was an effort to harmonise the two data-gathering initiatives that was, however, discontinued as from 2014 and resulted in the publication of separate Eurostat and EEA indicators[292]. DG ENV had led a working group to improve the index, and the work of the EEA has further developed into the definition of the EEA's WEI+. The issue recorded during the evaluation period was due to a slow transition from the WEI and to the WEI+ amidst an evolving policy framework.

On freshwater, overlaps have been also found between the EEA and DG ENV, which developed **separate map viewers** to disseminate information to the public on the implementation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD)[293]. Although there are some differences between the two map viewers, they are based on the

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[289] [398] EEA, Digest of EEA indicators 2014, EEA Technical report No 8/2014.

[290] [388] Draft Audit Report on the process for managing and sharing data on agri-environmental-climate issues in DG AGRI, DG CLIMA and DG ENV (Internal Audit Service, 2016).

The Audit reviewed a sample of sever contracts for procuring studies and noted that part of the work of the contractor was dedicated to the provision of an inventory of available data and information. According to the Audit, 'this could be avoided if a comprehensive inventory of available data at EU level was established'.

[291] The cooperation between DG AGRI and the EEA and the issues related to Agro-Environmental Indicators are addressed under Q11.

[292] [490] European Commission (Eurostat), Water: Water Exploitation Index, Water Productivity, web page consulted January 2018: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/environmental-data-centre-on-natural-resources/resource-efficiency-indicators/resource-efficiency-scoreboard/dashboard-indicators/water; [491] EEA, Use of freshwater resources, web page consulted January 2018: https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/use-of-freshwater-resources-2/assessment-2. Separately, JRC publishes model-based forecasts of the Water Exploitation Index, drawing in part of EEA data [492]: http://water.jrc.ec.europa.eu/waterportal.

See case study on freshwater.

[293] [493] EEA maps: http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/water-pollution/uwwtd/interactive-maps/urban-waste-water-treatment-maps-1; DG ENV maps [494] (developed through a contractor): http://uwwtd.oieau.fr/.

See the case study on Freshwater. A Member of the Management Board pointed out the risks that similar viewers could also be available at a country level, as a risk to be considered (however, no specific example was mentioend).

same data, reported by Member States under the Directive. It represents an example of weak coordination, although it refers to only one aspect of the extensive work done by the EEA on freshwater[294].

Another example of weak coordination has been found in the field of **urban issues**. JRC is another key actor in this field, having 'a long history of developing knowledge, processing data and creating models on regions and cities'[295]. In 2016, in collaboration with DG REGIO, JRC set up a pilot Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies (KCTP), representing a single point of access to data, policy analysis, interactive tools and methods across a range of sub-themes (social issues, environment and climate, energy and resource efficiency, etc.)[296]. Based on the information available, it appears that there is not a mechanism for coordinating the JRC initiative with the work performed by EEA on urban areas. One of the reasons might be the fact that the EEA's work related to the Urban Atlas[297] has a narrower scope, focused on land cover (in line with its SA1.8 Urban, land use and soil). However, it appears as an area of work where more exchange can be developed, in order to ensure synergies. Concerns have been raised regarding the fact that, on the Urban Atlas, the cooperation has mainly happened between the EEA and DG Regio, whereas DG ENV has not been sufficiently consulted[298].

Finally, as noted in the Fitness Check of environmental monitoring and reporting, a more general issue relates to the need for streamlining 'the reporting streams collected through EIONET and those resulting from environmental legislation (e.g. in the field of water policy or protected areas)'[299]. Although streamlining efforts have been already undertaken, according to the Fitness Check, there are still inconsistencies and duplications which could be addressed[300].

7.2.3.3 Manage data and information systems (task e)

EEA manages a broad range of data and information systems, subsequently used to build indicators and other data products (maps, data viewers, interactive maps) across environmental themes[301].

The EEA manages more than 100 information systems, including Reportnet and other thematic information systems, in the field of water, biodiversity and other strategic areas, such as: the Water Information System for Europe (WISE), the Biodiversity Information System for Europe (BISE), and Climate-ADAPT. These information systems were set up as partnerships between the EEA and Commission services (DG ENV, DG CLIMA, JRC, Eurostat): BISE is a partnership between the EEA and DG ENV, and it supports the EU's Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) in the context of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); CLIMAT-ADAPT is operated by the EEA, DG CLIMA, JRC (Institute for Environment and Sustainability) and the ETC on Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation (ETC/CCA); WISE is a partnership between the EEA, DG ENV, JRC and Eurostat.

Cooperation mechanisms have been developed for these systems. For example, in relation to WISE, mechanisms for collaboration include a Steering Group chaired by DG ENV, where tasks and roles are discussed; the group met about once a year in the period from 2012 to 2015, but did not meet in 2016, when, according to an interview at

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[294] As discussed in the freshwater case study and other sections of this report, during the evaluation period, EEA carried out a broad range of activities on six Directives.

[295] [421] JRC MAWP 2016-2017 (C(2016) 730 final), available at: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/mawp-2016-2017-key-orientations_en.pdf.

[296] [495] Website of the KCTP: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/territorial-policies.

[297] [496] The Urban Atlas is a joint initiative of DG Regio, DG GROW, ESA and EEA (https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/urban-atlas#tab-methodology).

[298] Information provided by the ISSG.

[299] Most of the data flows supported by Reportnet stems from reporting obligations.

[300] [112] Commission staff working document - Fitness Check of Monitoring and Reporting in EU Environment Policy, SWD (2017) 230.

[301] In the context of the present analysis, this activity is intended as limited to the management of the IT systems, whereas the EEA's work on indicators and data products has been discussed under the task 'Collect, record and manage data for SoE (task e and f)'.

DG ENV, key participants focused their attention instead on preparations for WFD reporting. Despite the existence of this group, cooperation did not yield an agreed set of improvements to WISE in the evaluation period.

In the field of freshwater, DG ENV has also supported IT work on reporting for the WFD and FD through consulting contracts that have been managed jointly with the EEA (though interviews indicate that the EEA has not always been able to provide sufficient human resources for joint management[302]).

There are risks of overlaps in terms of data and IT systems. For example, in the field of freshwater, an example of duplication has been provided in the previous section, in relation to the separate map viewers on the UWWTD developed by the EEA and DG ENV, despite the cooperation mechanisms established under WISE. In general terms, it has been noted that efficiency gain could be achieved through a streamlining of IT systems and reporting tools. The Fitness Check of environmental monitoring and reporting requirements noted that 'outside the EEA's Reportnet process, a large variety of processes and tools exist, and their harmonization could improve efficiency'[303].

7.2.3.4 Publish State of the Environment Report (task h)

The EEA role is quite clear when it comes to the publication of the SOER. However, other institutions contribute to this publication, at both EU and national level.

In relation to the SOER 2015, JRC co-authored the Soil Briefing as it is responsible for the European Soil Data Centre[304]. Together with JRC, also DG ENV, DG CLIMA and Eurostat were involved in discussions and provided feedback[305]. EEA shared early versions of SOER chapters with officials at DG ENV and DG CLIMA. The most important area of coordination with DG ENV and DG CLIMA was on means of disseminating the findings of SOER 2015. Coordination was ensured by the SOER 2015 Coordination Group (including staff from the EEA and NFP/NRCs). Overall, there was a clear division of roles between the Commission and the EEA and the coordination mechanisms used in the development of the SOER 2015 were considered robust[306].

As also highlighted in Q7 (6.3.10), an issue that has been noted regarding the **timeline for the publication of the SOER**, i.e. the inconsistency between the EEA's Founding Regulation and the Aarhus Regulation (entered into force in 2006)[307] and implementing the Aarhus Convention. Article 4(4) of the Aarhus Regulation requires the Commission to 'ensure that, at regular intervals *not exceeding four years*, a report on the state of the environment, including information on the quality of, and pressures on, the environment is published and disseminated'. While the publication of the SOER ensures the fulfilment of this requirement, in line with the EEA's Founding Regulation, the SOER is published *every five years*. In this view, there is a discrepancy between the two instruments.

7.2.3.5 Other assessments (task e)

The EEA, as well as DG ENV and DG CLIMA, publish reports on environment and climate legislation not strictly related to the work done in terms of support to reporting requirements.

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[302] Ibid.

[303] [112] Commission staff working document - Fitness Check of Monitoring and Reporting in EU Environment Policy, SWD (2017) 230.

[304] JRC was also part of an Advisory Group (including experts from IIASA -International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis; JRC; OECD; BEPA - Bureau for European Policy Advisors).

[305] [87]Also mentioned in the 'Acknowledgments' https://www.eea.europa.eu/soer-2015/synthesis/report/references.

[306] See the case study on SOER 2015.

[307] [497] Regulation (EC) N° 1367/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the application of the provisions of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters to Community institutions and bodies (OJ L 264, 25.9.2006, p.13) entered into force on 28 September 2006 and into application on 17 July 2007.

During the evaluation period, there have been issues in relation to the **consultation of DG ENV before the publication of EEA reports**. These issues are traced back to the lack of a strong mechanism for horizontal coordination, both with DG ENV and within the EEA (mentioned in chapter 7.2.2). Interviews have highlighted that there is a good dialogue bilaterally, between the persons working in relevant topical units in the Commission and in the EEA[308], and this has facilitated consultation on specific reports. However, there is no formal system in place for these consultation procedures and no evidence has been found that DG ENV has requested the EEA to formally and in a systematic way send their reports for consultation with a specific unit or level in the hierarchy. Likewise, we have found no evidence that the EEA has proactively sought to establish agreement on standard consultation procedures.

In this field, another issue is the relationship between the EEA's work on 'policy evaluation' and the European Commission's work under the Better Regulation (BR), approved in 2015 (i.e. following the approval of the EEA's MAWP)[309].

The EEA website provides a list of publications classified as 'policy evaluation', including a wide range of studies: scoping studies; overviews of the state of play or national policies in different environmental fields; the assessment of the implementation of EU policies and legislation[310]. In few cases, these studies have been elaborated with the collaboration of the ETCs or the Commission. These reports are generally intended as support to decision making, but do not strictly follow the BR Guidelines or fit into the type of studies covered by the BR[311]. In parallel, on the topic of environment and climate policy evaluation, as described in an EEA report from 2016[312], the EEA plans to cooperate more closely with its networks, including Eionet, the European Environmental Evaluators Network (EEEN), and other partners (including evaluation professionals and scientists). However, there has not been strategic coordination between the Commission and the EEA, i.e. the work of the EEA on policy evaluation does not seem to be linked and coordinated with the evaluations under the Better Regulation managed by the Commission.

In some cases, the EEA has provided support to DG ENV in the context of Better Regulation initiatives. For example, during the Fitness Check of the Nature Directives, the EEA has provided an important contribution in terms of data and information[313]. Nevertheless, this collaboration did not happen in the context of a structured or systematic cooperation that has been, as mentioned above, missing.

7.2.3.6   Dissemination of environmental information to the general public (task m)

The EEA prepares web pages, press releases, fact sheets and brochures on environmental and climate themes; other DGs (such as DG ENV and DG CLIMA) do so as well. According to interviews, there is intense collaboration between the EEA and, mainly, DG ENV. Priorities for communication activities are defined in regular meetings between the EEA and DG ENV. The priorities of EC (particularly of DG ENV) are the starting point to identify the focus topics. Overall, according to an interview, the **EEA and DG ENV have complemented each other**. With DG CLIMA there is also cooperation, but less structured.

7.2.3.7   Forecasting (task i)

The SA2.3 of the MAWP 2014-2018 and the subsequent AWPs outline the EEA's activities in the area of **megatrends and transitions**. EEA's work fed into the SOER 2015, and one of the report's main sections covers global

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[308] Interviews with DG ENV.

[309] [498] Commission Communication, Better regulation for better results - An EU agenda (COM(2015) 215 final). Revised [499] Better Regulation Guidelines have been issued in 2017 (SWD (2017) 350). and [500] Evaluation of progress under the EU National Emission Ceilings Directive (EEA Technical Report No. 14/2012).

[310] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications#c7=en&c11=5&c14=&c12=&b_start=0&c13=policy+evaluation. See Annex H.

[311] Do not represent fully-fledged evaluations or impact assessments.

[312] [399] EEA Report No 18/2016, Environment and climate policy evaluation.

[313] [409] EC (2016) Fitness check of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

megatrends[314]. EEA has developed a web-based platform for this area[315], and its work on SA2.3 is supported by an NRC for Forward Looking Information and Services (See also section 4.2.2.7 for information).

Other bodies at EU and international level are involved in similar activities. In particular, JRC has a long tradition of foresight activities[316]. So does DG Research & Innovation, which has funded foresight research projects as part of the framework programmes (FP7 and subsequently Horizon 2020) and organised an Expert Group on Strategic Foresight for Research and Innovation in 2015 to 2017[317]. The European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC), set up under the Juncker Presidency, also works on foresight issues[318] (building on work carried out by the former Bureau of Policy Advisors (BEPA) under President Barroso). Among international organisations, OECD has an International Futures Programme[319] and in 2012 published an Environmental Outlook to 2050[320]; UNEP also works on foresight[321] and publishes a Global Environment Outlook[322].

During the evaluation period, the EEA has engaged in **cooperation activities**, through meetings with the Commission Foresight Network established by JRC and BEPA (in 2014)[323], discussions and contacts with the staff of EU FP7 research projects in the area of forward-looking assessments[324], the establishment of contacts and cooperation with the Sustainability Transitions Research Network (STRN)[325] (in 2015)[326] and via the EKC. The **EKC** includes, as an objective of its Roadmap, developing a common foresight capacity. According to a document produced after the evaluation period, the EKC partners have developed a 'foresight system for the systematic identification of emerging environmental issues' (FORENV), building on horizon scanning activities, science alerts (currently in place in ENV, JRC, RTD and the EEA) and text mining tools developed by the JRC[327].

However, the role of the EEA in this field of action has been questioned in interviews with some Commission services (notably DG ENV and DG CLIMA).

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[314] [87] EEA, 2015, European environment — state and outlook 2015: Assessment of global megatrends (https://www.eea.europa.eu/soer#tab-global-megatrends). The first assessment of emerging global trends was produced by the EEA in 2010, as part of the SOER 2010.

[315] E.g. a new the web-based platform on 'Forward-Looking Information and Services (FLIS)' was launched in 2015 (http://pfli.eionet.europa.eu/).

[316] European Foresight web site: http://foresight.jrc.ec.europa.eu/; and JRC, https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/research/crosscutting-activities/foresight

[317] European Commission, Research and Innovation, About: What is foresight and why is it useful? Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/research/foresight/index.cfm?pg=about

[318] [501] The European Commission in-house think-thank, established in 2014 (Communication (C(2014) 9001 final) of 6 November 2014 from the President to the Commission on the European Political Strategy Centre: Mission, Tasks and Organisation Chart). The ESPC has published several strategic foresight studies, although most of them have been finalised and published in 2017 (see the website: http://ec.europa.eu/epsc/publication-types/other-publications_en and [503] http://ec.europa.eu/epsc/foresight-matters_en).

[319] See [504]: http://www.oecd.org/sti/futures/ifppublicationsandstudies.htm

[320] See [505]: http://www.oecd.org/env/indicators-modelling-outlooks/oecd-environmental-outlook-1999155x.htm

[321] [506] https://environmentlive.unep.org/foresight

[322] [507] http://web.unep.org/geo/

[323] [40] EEA's Annual Activity Report 2014.

[324] Examples of FP7 projects mentioned in EEA's Annual Activity Report 2015 [7] include: 'Pathways', a project completed in 2016 and aimed to explore the possibilities for transitions to a low-carbon, sustainable Europe (website: http://www.pathways-project.eu/); 'Impressions', focused on the implications of high-end climate change (involving temperature increases above 2°C) (website: http://www.impressions-project.eu/).

[325] STRN is an independent network of scholars and practitioners interested in sustainability transitions (website: https://transitionsnetwork.org/).

[326] [7] EEA's Annual Activity Report 2015.

[327] [285] Environment Knowledge Community, Stocktaking document, updated 15 September 2017.

On the one hand, concerns are related to **risks of overlaps**. Work on foresight and futures analysis can include the **development of projections and scenarios using quantitative modelling**. Projects and modelling can be an area of potential overlap between the EEA and Commission services. However, during the evaluation period, no examples of actual overlaps were detected. EEA has worked on trends and projections related to EU climate and energy targets (in addition, in the T&P reports, EEA compiles data, including projections, reported by Member States; no overlap was identified[328]). DG CLIMA has also invested in projections and modelling capacity in the recent years[329]. Although during the evaluation period EEA forecasting techniques had been essential in some areas (e.g. the projections on GHG targets mentioned before), more complex modelling techniques are increasingly needed, whereas the Commission and member countries also have to rely on actors other than the EEA[330]. This aspect shows the complexity and need for more data sources from several actors.

Another example of forward-looking work and modelling carried out by the EEA is in the area of waste. The EEA manages the Reference Model for Waste, originally developed by external consultants for DG ENV before being handed over to the EEA in 2015[331]. The model serves as an 'Early Warning System' for monitoring progress towards achieving waste targets and identify potential issues. In this case, the roles of the EEA and DG ENV are clear and no overlap has been identified.

Horizon scanning tools can represent another area of potential overlap. The EEA, with the support of EIONET, has worked on the development of a **horizon-scanning tool**[332], and JRC has also worked on horizon scanning[333]. This presents another area of potential overlaps. Again, no overlap was identified in the evaluation period. The work of the EKC on FORENV will be important to ensure coordination.

In addition, the European Commission has published reports on topics related to areas addressed by EEA in the megatrends section of SOER 2015: for example, DG RTD published, in 2016, a study on *The junction of health, environment and the bioeconomy[334]*; and EPSC published a Strategic Note on *Sustainability Now! A European Vision for Sustainability[335]*, also in 2016, covering planetary boundaries and new economic models. Both studies cite EEA's work on megatrends in SOER 2015. There seems to be no overlap between the work carried by the EEA and by the Commission services, in so far as EEA's outputs have been used for further work.

Moreover, there are **different opinions** about the **relevance** and **usefulness** of the EEA's activity in this field. On the one hand, in several interviews, Commission officials stated that EEA's products in this area were of limited relevance to their policy-making activities. Additionally, in a context of resource constraints, the EEA does not seem to be the best placed to work on forecasting, while other bodies have more capacity and expertise. On the other hand, member country participants in the stakeholder workshop underlined that, through its work on megatrends, EEA has provided added value in identifying emerging issues, including value to member countries that

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[328] See the case study on Trends and Projections.

[329] Interview with DG CLIMA.

[330] Stakeholder workshop held in the context of the support study for the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet on 05/12/2017.

[331] This model seeks to evaluate how Member States are performing, how they seem likely to perform in future and whether problems in the implementation of the revised Waste Framework Directive can emerge in the future. See case study on waste.

[332] https://github.com/eea/flis.horizon-scanning-tool

[333] [508] https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/research/crosscutting-activities/foresight

[334] [509] European Commission, The junction of health, environment and the bioeconomy: Foresight and implications for European research & innovation policies, 2016. Available at: https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/375971b3-ba8a-11e5-8d3c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

[335] [510] European Political Strategy Centre, Sustainability Now! A European Vision for Sustainability, EPSC Strategic Note 18, July 2016. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/epsc/sites/epsc/files/strategic_note_issue_18.pdf

have lacked resources to work in this area[336] (see also effectiveness Q2 and relevance Q7, respectively sections 4.3.3.2 and 6.3.8).

It appears that activities established in the context of the EKC, whose activities started in 2015 and continued after the evaluation period, have begun to enhance coordination among EEA and Commission services and better ensure that the respective strengths are leveraged.

7.2.3.8 Diffusion of the results of environmental research (task o)

Several sources point to the limited exploitation of the results of environment and climate research. An EEA publication from 2014 (Digest of Environmental indicators) highlights that 'many indicators are also generated by research projects, but these are often not replicated or produced regularly, or disseminated in a structured manner'[337]. More generally, results of research projects (e.g. FP7-Environment projects) have not been fully exploited in policy[338]. In parallel, as mentioned in Q1 (chapter 4.2.2.9), there has been limited activity by the EEA in this area, and it appears that EEA and DG Research & Innovation have had only limited coordination on the dissemination of environment and climate research[339].

An improvement in this direction has been introduced with the EKC, which is one of the main channels of cooperation between the EEA and DG research & Innovation and, according to the Mid-term Evaluation of the Horizon 2020 programme, represents an important instrument for a better connection between science and policy[340].

7.2.4 Overview across tasks and coordination mechanisms

At a working level, across the different EEA's tasks, the case studies have shown few duplications of work between the EEA and the European Commission, and other issues in terms of weak coordination and communication. On the basis of the case studies, the table below provides a summary of the overlaps or other issues identified, as well as a recap of the coordination mechanisms in place across environmental, climate and cross-cutting themes.

Table 7-4   Role of the EEA, coordination mechanisms, synergies, overlaps or other issues – findings of the case studies

Environmental or climate theme/topic	EEA Tasks performed	Main coordination mechanisms	Main synergies	Overlaps identified	Communication issues or missed synergies
Environment					
Nature Directives	Support to reporting requirements (task c). Manage data and information systems (task e).	EEA-DG ENV: Structured and regular informal mechanisms (annual rolling plans, meetings, direct contacts). EEA-Eurostat/DG ENV/DG AGRI: MoU on AEIs. Strong personal relations built over the time.	Roles are clearly understood and overlaps are avoided due to strong communication and the active involvement of each party in the preparation of annual 'rolling plans' to coordinate work.	-	-
Waste	Support to reporting requirements (task c).	EEA-DG ENV: Informal cooperation on an ad-hoc basis when needed.	Clear division of roles between Eurostat (data collection) and the EEA (use of data	-	-

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[336] Stakeholder workshop held in the context of the support study for the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet on 05/12/2017.

[337] [398].

[338] [400].

[339] Interview with DG Research and Innovation.

[340] [400].

Environmental or climate theme/topic	EEA Tasks performed	Main coordination mechanisms	Main synergies	Overlaps identified	Communication issues or missed synergies
	Manage data and information systems (task e). Publish other assessments (task h). Forecasting and megatrends (task i).	EEA-Eurostat: Technical Agreement on Environmental Data Centres.	to report on legislation).		
Freshwater Directives[341]	Support to reporting requirements (task c). Collect, record data for SOE (task e). Manage data and information systems (task e). Publish other assessments (task h). Dissemination of environmental information (task m). Forecasting and megatrends (task i). Diffusion of results of environmental research (task o).	EEA-DG ENV: Informal contacts. Cooperation on joint IT contracts. EEA-DG ENV-Eurostat-JRC-RTD: cooperation on WISE, including via WISE Steering Group EEA-Eurostat: Technical Agreement on Environmental Data Centres.	EEA data gathering and analysis supports the implementation of EU legislation. However, there has been general weak coordination.	Separate map viewers on UWWTD developed by EEA and DG Environment (task e). Separate work of the EEA and Eurostat on Water Exploitation Index (task e).	EEA's decision to end support for DWD reporting in 2015 (task c). EEA assessments (task h) – outside reports for Directives – have not been found valuable to DG ENV policy work.
Climate					
ETS	Support to reporting requirements (task c).	EEA-DG CLIMA: Agreement based on exchange of letters at the level of Director Generals and a well-functioning day-to-day cooperation.	Clear division of roles and synergies created: to produce its Carbon market reports, the EC builds on Article 21 data on the application of the EU ETS collected from Member States by the EEA to produce its reports.	-	Issues in coordination between the EEA and DG CLIMA for the launch of carbon market reports leading to unbalanced or 'less consolidated' messages (task c).
F-gas	Support to reporting requirements (task c).	EEA-DG CLIMA: Regular and well-functioning informal day-to-day	Clear division of roles between DG CLIMA (assess-		

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[341] Six Directives: [487] Bathing Water Directive, [486] Drinking Water Directive, [483] Floods Directive, [484] Nitrates Directive, [488] Urban Waste Water treatment Directive (UWWTD), [485] Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Environmental or climate theme/topic	EEA Tasks performed	Main coordination mechanisms	Main synergies	Overlaps identified	Communication issues or missed synergies
	Manage data and information systems (task e).	cooperation (meetings, direct contacts), based on exchange of letters at Director level.	ment of MS compliance) and the EEA (collecting data from reporting requirements).		
Trends and projections	Support to reporting requirements (task c)	EEA-DG CLIMA: Informal cooperation. (Developments occurred during the evaluation period: the 2016 COM proposal on the Energy Union Governance provide further clarification on how the EEA should assist the COM in its work on the dimensions of the Energy Union).	The Commission is using the data behind the T&P reports also for own purposes.	-	
Cross-cutting					
SOER 2015	Publish State of the Environment Report (task h)	The SOER 2015 Coordination Group?		-	
Copernicus	Collect, record data for SOE (task e). Manage data and information systems (task e).	EEA-EC (DG GROW, JRC, DG ENV, DG RTD): Written Agreement (Delegation Agreement between the EEA and the EU). EEA-DG ENV: informal coordination on Copernicus outputs	Coordination of EEA's work on the in-situ component with the entities in charge of different Copernicus services, including JRC's work on the Emergency Service		

Source: author's elaboration on the basis of the case studies

Overall, the different sources show that the **degree of cooperation at working level varies depending on the DG and the tasks concerned**. In parallel, the role of the EEA and the tasks it performed have varied largely across environmental and climate topics, as have the coordination mechanisms.
Coordination between EEA and Commission services has worked well when at least two factors have been in place.

The first is that EEA has a **clear role** within an agreed framework. EEA's roles can be set by legislation, as is the case for waste legislation, F-gases, Trends & Projections. Written, inter-institutional agreements could also provide the framework: the inter-institutional agreement on data centres has done so for waste, though in the water case study this agreement appears not to have been sufficient. Finally, EEA's role can become institutionalised over a long period: this is seen, for example, in the area of nature protection.

A second key factor is that there are **mechanisms for ongoing coordination**. Regular, high-level meetings can be a valuable mechanism to identify strategic directions. The management of DG CLIMA has engaged in the coordination with the EEA at a high level of the hierarchy in terms of strategic direction and decision-making regarding

the tracking of progress towards the achievement of short and long-term targets. In addition, the GHG reporting obligations have been clearly set in the MMR and thus not so fragmented or open for interpretation. Also, though primarily forward-looking, the 2016 Commission proposal on the Energy Union Governance clarifies in some details further the role of the EEA in assisting the Commission in its work with respect to renewables and energy efficiency. The combination of clear roles, often established in the legislation, and strong high-level coordination resulted in the good cooperation achieved at the working level. Well established working relationships were the rule in the case of F-gases, Trends & Projections and EU ETS.

Regular meetings at task level are also important, and in this context planning documents are valuable: the nature case study shows that regular meetings to prepare rolling plans have provided a successful approach for cooperation, avoiding overlaps and resolving issues. A final and necessary mechanism is regular, informal communication at working level.

The case studies suggest that these two factors are important for successful coordination on a bilateral basis, between EEA and DG ENV or DG CLIMA. They are also important for coordination where other actors, such as JRC and Eurostat are involved. In these cases, the role of the policy DG as overall coordinator has also been important, as seen in the Nature case study: here, the work of JRC and Eurostat has been included in the rolling plans.

In many areas of EEA's work, the ETC has a prominent role. The Topic Centres have mainly been involved in cooperation at working level: in the nature case study, the rolling plans specify work to be carried out by ETC/BD; the rolling plans and negotiated between DG ENV and EEA, which in turn communicates with the ETC. This appears to be appropriate given the role of the ETCs in supporting EEA.

As a final note, personal relations can of course be an important element in coordination. In the nature case study, it was mentioned that staff in DG ENV, EEA and ETC/BD have built up long-standing relationships, and indeed some staff have worked in more than one of these bodies, which has given greater insight to their respective working methods.

7.2.5   Role of Eionet vis-à-vis other bodies involved in EU environment and climate reporting obligations

In connection with environmental and reporting obligations, two parallel structures or groups exist at national level: EIONET bodies (particularly, NRCs) and Commission Expert Groups, Working Groups or Committees coordinated by DG ENV and CLIMA, involved in EU reporting obligations.

The groups coordinated by Commission services vary in terms of composition and functions. Comitology committees are made up of representatives from EU MS and give opinions on implementing acts proposed by the Commission; other Expert Groups bring together Member State authorities and other stakeholders (including experts, representatives of NGOs, etc.) and assist the Commission in the implementation of EU legislation, including EU reporting requirements. Eionet bodies (NFPs and NRCs) have similar functions and coordinate reporting activities, particularly with reference to SoE dataflows, but not related to EU reporting requirements. Therefore, the scope of the work and the nature of the data flows managed by the groups coordinated by the Commission and NFPs/NRCs are different. Nonetheless, SoE dataflows can also occur in similar areas as EU reporting requirements (such as freshwater) and, as mentioned several times, dataflows for the SoE and for EU reporting requirements have become increasingly integrated. Moreover, a number of ETCs support EEA's work on EU reporting requirements. In this view, avoiding overlaps is important.

A consolidated list of Commission Working Groups, Expert Groups and Committees in the environmental and climate field is not available, although efforts to achieve this are ongoing and information on each single group are publicly available (on the Europa website)[342]. Together with the large number of bodies concerned, this gap further limits the possibility to fully assess the interlinkages and overlaps between NRCs and all the Commission Working/Expert Groups and Committees.

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[342] Interview with DG ENV.

NFPs have expressed the opinion that there has not always been alignment between technical groups of NRCs and technical working groups coordinated by the Commission, and their respective roles (focused on data and indicators in the case of NRCs, and implementation of EU legislation in the case of Commission working groups) have not been fully respected. As a result, there has been some confusion, as well as increased need for coordination by the NFPs[343].

However, the situation **largely varies across policy areas**. There are **positive examples of cooperation** established between the two groups, in order to avoid overlaps and leverage on complementarities. For example, the DG Environment Habitats Committee[344] and the expert groups under the Committee (the Commission Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directives - 'NADEG', and the Reporting Expert Group) assist the Commission in the implementation of the **Nature Directives**, including technical and scientific aspects of reporting. The EEA and the ETC/BD attend the meetings of the Habitats Committee and its Expert Groups, and are members of the Reporting Expert Group. In this case, overlaps are avoided by the strict cooperation between the EEA and the relevant ETC, but also by the fact that NRCs are not involved in the collection of data for reporting requirements. The EC Committee and its Expert Groups are the main channel for cooperation between the EEA and the Member States.

In other cases, the **complexity of data flows and the high number of bodies** involved can create **confusion** about the roles of the two groups, although good coordination mechanisms are put in place. For instance, in the case of EU **freshwater** legislation, while NRCs are responsible for SoE dataflows, committees and working groups convened by DG Environment under EU water legislation discuss and oversee reporting issues for these directives (the Working Group on data information systems - WG DIS; and other Working Groups under the Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive– CIS). The EEA and DG Environment support coordination by attending meetings on both sides. Moreover, the work of the two sides has become more closely linked at national level, with NRCs increasingly cooperating with CIS working group members in Member States: both the EEA and DG ENV have encouraged this cooperation at MS level, according to interviews. Finally, EEA has asked NRCs to provide comments on drafts for reports such as the State of Europe's Waters and the State of Nature, while experts in groups organised by DG ENV were also asked to provide comments. This has strengthened coordination at national level and ensured broader participation; however, some NRC members have stated in interviews that it risks raising confusion about the roles of NRCs, which have traditionally focused on data gathering rather than assessments[345].

Finally, in some areas and especially in relation to climate legislation, Eionet bodies have only a limited role and, therefore, **there is no need for coordination** (e.g. in the case of Trends & Projections, F-Gases, EU ETS).

Table 7-5 recaps the information collected through the case studies on this point, providing an overall positive picture of the coordination between the Commission Working/Expert groups and Committees, and NRCs.

Table 7-5   Role of Eionet vis-à-vis other bodies involved in EU environment and climate reporting obligations[346]

Case study	EC WGs/EGs/Committees	EEA/ETCs participate in EC WGs/EGs/Committees	EC participates in NRCs meetings	Potential overlaps
Nature Directives	Habitats Committee and its Expert Groups	EEA and ETC BD/: Yes, regularly	-	-

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[344] [511] Comitology committee providing opinions on draft implementing acts, in line with the Comitology Regulation (Regulation 182/2011).

[345] See the case study on Freshwater.

[346] In the case of ETS, F-gases and Trends&Projects, Eionet is not involved.

Waste	WG on waste statistics	EEA, Yes	Yes, not regularly	No
Freshwater Directives[347]	WGs under the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for the WFD, including the WG on Data Information Systems (DIS).	EEA: Yes, regularly	DG ENV: Yes, regularly	

Source: author's elaboration on the basis of the case studies

The results of the surveys of the Commission staff (32 replies) and NFPs and NRCs (200 replies) provide further inputs.

The majority of the Commission staff (62% or 23) that replied to the survey stated that representatives of the EEA or EIONET are invited to take part in relevant committees or working groups established by the Commission, regularly or on an ad hoc basis (see Figure 7-1). Looking only at DG CLIMA and DG ENV, however, this share increases to 73% (16 out of 22). The better result can be traced back to the replies provided by DG ENV: DG ENV staff seem to regularly invite EEA representatives of the EEA or EIONET to take part in relevant committees or working groups (6 out of 8 respondents from DG ENV declared that have regularly invited the EEA and EIONET representatives, and 1 respondent has done so only ad hoc)[348].

Figure 7-1   Question 10e) Have you invited representatives of the EEA or EIONET to take part in relevant committees or working groups established by the Commission in your area of work? N=32
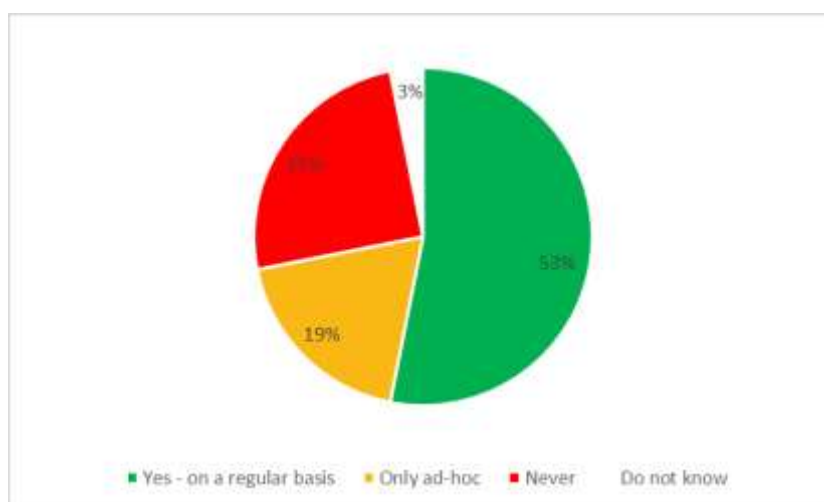
Source: COM survey

Conversely, only 44% (14) of the Commission staff have been invited by the EEA to take part in EIONET meetings (on a regular or ad-hoc basis)[349]. Most of those invited have actually participated in the meeting only sometimes (71%, i.e. 10 out of 14[350]). Also in this case, the share of those invited to take part in EIONET meetings, regularly

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[347] Six Directives: [487] Bathing Water Directive, [486] Drinking Water Directive, [483] Floods Directive, [484] Nitrates Directive, [488] Urban Waste Water treatment Directive (UWWTD), [485] Water Framework Directive (WFD).

[348] COM survey, Question 10 e).

[349] Question 10d) Have you been invited by the EEA to take part in any EIONET meetings?. Detailed breakdown is as follows: 44% never; 31% only ad-hoc; 13% on a regular basis; 13% do not know (source: COM survey; total responses: 32).

[350] Follow-up question on whether respondents participated in these meetings was asked to those that answered either Yes - on a regular basis or Only ad-hoc to Question 10d). Detailed breakdown is as follows: 2 Yes; 10 sometimes; 2 No; 18 Non-response/n.a. (source: COM survey; total responses: 32).

or ad hoc, is higher if only DG ENV is considered (6 respondents out of 8), but actual participation happens only sometimes[351].

Looking at the results of the survey addressed to NRCs and NFPs, less than half of respondents among both NRC members (46%) and NFP members (48%) know their country's representatives to committees and working groups organised by Commission services. This result is influenced by the share of NRCs and NFPs who indicated that the question was not relevant[352]. In some cases, NFPs/NRCs and country representatives to EC committees and working groups coincide. For those who are aware of their counterparts, the level of communication tends to be frequent. The majority of NRC (75% or 54) and NFP (70% or 14) responses indicate that they communicate with these representatives more than once a year, while 11% and 20% respectively say they communicate annually with their representatives[353].

Table 7-6   Do you know who your country's representatives are to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work? N=200

Replies	NRC		NFP	
	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	72	46%	20	48%
Yes, I am the representative in these groups	13	8%	2	5%
No	36	23%	9	21%
Not relevant: no committees or working groups are organised by the European Commission in my field	7	4%	3	7%
Not relevant: My country does not participate in such groups	3	2%	2	5%
Do not know	27	17%	6	14%

Source: NFP/NRC survey

These results have to be framed in the context described above: **only in some cases the scope of work of the two groups is interlinked and there is a need for cooperation**.

However, some open comments from NRCs/NFPs have pointed to the lack of easily accessible information on the working groups/committees coordinated by DG ENV and DG CLIMA[354]. On the other hand, feedback from DG ENV has pointed to the lack of comprehensive information on NRC meetings (e.g. a repository where meeting information can be found), which also makes it difficult to assess whether the EC is systematically involved or not[355]. In this view, there is room for improvement, to ensure that each group has a clear overview on the activities of the other.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the coordination between the relevant ETCs (part of Eionet) and the Commission services (including Working Groups). The case studies highlight that coordination between the two parties is usually channelled through the EEA (i.e. ETCs do not have a direct contact with the Commission). However, the work of the ETCs is based on multi-annual work-programmes, consistent with the annual work programmes of the EEA

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[351] COM survey, Question 10 d). The answers provided by DG CLIMA staff follows the general trend: 42% of DG CLIMA respondents (6 out of 14) have been invited by the EEA to take part in EIONET meetings (on a regular or ad-hoc basis). All of them, do not participate, only sometimes, or have not replied to the follow-up question.

[352] If the those having replied 'Yes, I am the representative in these groups', 'Not relevant: no committee….' And 'Not relevant: my country…' are excluded, NRCs and NFPs having responded 'Yes' are respectively 53% (72) and 57% (20) of the total.

[353] NFP/NRC survey, Question: How frequently have you communicated with your country's representatives to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work?.

[354] Two comments support this statement. NFP/NRC survey, Question: Are there any comments you would like to raise about EIONET and external coordination within your country?.

[355] Interview with DG ENV.

and, more generally, integrating the policy needs defined at the EU level. For example, in the field of Waste legislation, the work of the ETC/WMGE is guided by a multi-annual strategy, in turn based on the EEA programming documents and other EU policy documents, such as the Circular Economy Briefing, the 7th EAP and the EU 2020 Strategy. In the case of the Nature Directives, the annual rolling plans represent also instruments for the planning of the operation work and enable also a strong coordination between the ETC/BD and the Commission, ensuring that the policy needs are taken into account in the work of the ETC. In other cases, personal relationships or other fora reinforce the link between ETCs and relevant Commission services. In the case of F-gases, synergies are generated by the fact that one of the key organisations part of the ETC/ACM is also a consultant to DG CLIMA. Finally, in the field of urban monitoring, coordination and exchange between the ETC/ULS and Commission services is channelled through informal platforms such as IUME (including DG ENV, DG REGIO, Eurostat, JRC, etc.).

7.2.6 Cooperation with other EU Agencies or bodies

7.2.6.1 Overview of the interlinkages

There interlinkages between the areas of work of the EEA and those of other EU Agencies. Table 7-7 recaps the most relevant EU Agencies and their mandate, the areas of common interest and cooperation with the EEA.

Table 7-7   Relevant EU Agencies, areas of cooperation with the EEA and current mechanisms

Relevant EU Agencies	Mandate	Areas of common interest
European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)	EMSA's mission is to 'ensure a high, uniform and effective level of maritime safety, maritime security, prevention of, and response to, pollution caused by ships as well as response to marine pollution caused by oil and gas installations'[356].	EMSA deals with several environmental issues associated with maritime activities. It is responsible for providing technical, operational and scientific advice and assistance to the EC and the MS on environmental issues associated with maritime shipping activities (e.g. port waste reception facilities, ship recycling activities, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and the implementation of the new MRV regulation - Monitoring, Reporting and Verification).
European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)	ECHA is a regulatory authority implementing the EU's chemicals legislation. 'ECHA helps companies comply with the legislation, advances the safe use of chemicals, provides information on chemicals and addresses chemicals of concern'[357].	As part of its Risk assessment tasks, ECHA prepares opinions related to the risks of substances to human health and the environment.
European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)	EFSA was established as 'an independent source of scientific advice and to communicate on risks associated with the food chain'. It contributes to ensuring that consumers are protected and informed as regards risks in the food chain[358].	EFSA considers, through environmental risk assessments, the possible impact of the food chain on the biodiversity of plant and animal habitats.
EASA	According to its mission, EASA ensures safety protection for EU citizens and environmental protection; ensures a single regulatory and certification process among Member States; facilitates the internal aviation single market and works with other	Impact of aviation sector on environment and climate change.

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[356] EMSA's website: http://www.emsa.europa.eu/about/what-we-do-main/mission-statements.html. It was set up in 2002 with the [512] Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002.

[357] ECHA's website: https://echa.europa.eu/about-us/who-we-are/mission. It was set up in 2006 under the [513] REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006.

[358] EFSA's website: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/aboutefsa. It was set up in 2002 under the General Food Law [514] (Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, Chapter III)

Relevant EU Agencies	Mandate	Areas of common interest
	international aviation organisations and regulators[359]	
European Global Navigation Satellite Systems Agency (GSA)	The GSA's mission is to 'support European Union objectives and achieve the highest return on European Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) investment, in terms of benefits to users and economic growth and competitiveness[360].	Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) and Earth observation technology, such as Galileo, can be applied for a range of uses including climate change, ecosystem service monitoring, etc.
European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)	ECDC aims at strengthening Europe's defences against infectious diseases. ECDC carries out several activities, including surveillance, epidemic intelligence, response, scientific advice[361].	One of the areas of work is related to the effects of climate change on communicable diseases spread.

Source: See footnotes

7.2.6.2   Cooperation with other EU Agencies on specific topics

The EEA cooperates with other relevant EU Agencies listed in the table above on specific topics. Cooperation activities are not based on written agreements and are not regular or systematic.

One of the reasons lies in the fact that EEA and the other EU Agencies identified have different scope of work and competencies. EFSA provides scientific advice and scientific and technical support, while ECHA, GSA, EMSA and EASA have a direct role in the management and implementation of EU legislation or programmes, in some cases including inspection powers (EMSA and EASA).

However, in the areas of common interest, cooperation activities have been undertaken. These activities are not reflected in the EEA MAWP 2014 – 2018. As described below, they include high-level meetings between Directors, bilateral working relationships, joint publications, or participation in workshops and working groups.

Between **EASA** and the EEA, cooperation is mainly informal and has led to the **publication of a joint report** in 2016, i.e. the European Aviation Environmental Report, led by EASA with the contribution of the EEA and EUROCONTROL[362]. The report investigates the impacts of the aviation sector on climate change, noise and local air quality, building on several EEA's reports and datasets, for instance, on noise, air quality, ETS, and climate and energy targets. In addition, **coordination meetings** between EASA, DG ENV and the EEA are held, generally on an annual basis, with the objective of exchanging information on work activities and areas of possible joint cooperation.

Although **relatively limited and not regular**, cooperation at **operational level** has been established also with **ECHA** (specifically with the Directorate on Risk Management), towards the end of the evaluation period. There is exchange of information on monitoring data, i.e. information on the presence of chemicals in the environment and human beings[363], while ECHA uses data of the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) produced by the EEA. Another area of common interest is circular economy. Among the EEA's products used by ECHA there

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[359] EASA's website: https://www.easa.europa.eu/the-agency/the-agency. Set up in 2002 with [515] Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002.

[360] GSA's website: https://www.gsa.europa.eu/gsa/about-gsa. It was set up with [516] Regulation (EU) No. 912/2010, and subsequently amended by [517] Regulation (EU) No. 512/2014.

[361] ECDC's website: https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/about-us. It was established in 2005 following the [518] Regulation (EC) No 851/2004.

[362] [401] European Environmental Report 2016, available at: http://www.easa.europa.eu/eaer

[363] Cooperation between the EEA and ECHA in this area is also framed in the EU-funded project "European HumanInitiative" (HBM4EU), expected to provide better evidence of the actual exposure of citizens to chemicals and the possible health effects to support policy making. The project runs for five years, from 2017 to 2021.

is the Circular economy report[364]; moreover, in 2016, ECHA contributed to the organisation of a workshop on circular economy, in relation to chemicals-related aspects.

Regarding the collaboration with the **EFSA**, over the evaluation period, EEA **participated as observer in EFSA's Scientific Committees Working Groups** (WG), notably the WG on Endocrine Active Substances (in 2013) and the WG on overarching elements of environmental risk assessment (in 2016)[365]. According to an interview with EFSA, cooperation between the two Agencies has overall improved over the evaluation period[366].

According to the EEA Annual Activity Report 2016, cooperation with EFSA on risk assessment was intensified through **participation in a workshop** on future research priorities on bee health and pollution. At a more general level, there has been exchange between the two Agencies on methodologies for anticipating risks, horizon scanning and forecasting. There are also **meetings between Executive Directors**, which have been the means for dialogue between the two Agencies, although have not been regular[367].

EEA has also built interlinkages with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (**ECDC**) and the European Medicines Agency (**EMA**), through the European Parliament's Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI Committee)[368]. The EEA cooperates with these agencies on an ad-hoc basis, while opportunities for regular contacts are offered by the involvement in the work of the ENVI Committee. Regarding **ECDC**, an area of common interest relates to the impact of climate change on communicable on infectious diseases. The EEA draws on data and information produced by the ECDC for indicators published in connection with EEA's work on climate change and on environment and health (i.e. vector-borne diseases indicators – based on data own by ECDC).

Other cooperation activities between the EEA and other EU Agencies or international bodies are framed in the context of the Copernicus Programme (see Box below).

Box 7-3   Cooperation in the context of the Copernicus programme

In this field, the EEA has cooperated with **GSA** in cases where the combination of satellite remote sensing and geolocation services could provide added value. For example, there has been cooperation in the domain of precision farming (through the latest prize 'Farming by Satellite') and communication (for the promotion of the two European flagship programmes to a broader public). In that context, EEA has contributed with Urban Atlas based products to the European Space Expo managed by GSA and through presentations to each of the European Space Solutions conferences and the EGNOSS user conferences[369].

In addition, there are strong linkages between the EEA and the European Space Agency (**ESA**), an intergovernmental organisation with purpose of 'providing for, and promoting, for exclusively peaceful purposes, cooperation among European States in space research and technology and their space applications'[370]. ESA is one of the key organisations for the implementation of the Copernicus Programme, responsible for the management of the Copernicus satellites, including Sentinel 2A that provides data for the CLMS.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the EEA and **ESA** was signed in July 2011 and reviewed in 2015. The MoU sets out common objectives and areas of cooperation in the field of Earth observation and environment, by establishing a framework for cooperation in relation to: exchange of

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[364] [502] Circular economy in Europe — Developing the knowledge base, EEA Report No 2/2016, available at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/circular-economy-in-europe.

[365] For more information: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/cross-cutting-issues/working-groups

[366] Interview with EFSA.

[367] Interview with EFSA.

[368] The ENVI Committee is responsible for relations with the following four Agencies: EEA, ECHA, ECDC, EFSA and EMA.

[369] Interview with the EEA (written replies). See also the case study on Copernicus.

[370] EASA's website: https://www.easa.europa.eu/faq/19224. It was set up with [519] Regulation (EC) No 216/2008.

technical information; coordination and access to Earth observation and in situ data; evolution of obser-vation needs and capabilities; promotion and communication[371]. The MoU not only sets a generic frame-work, but also specifies the cooperation between the two agencies for the planning and procurement of satellite image data from Copernicus Contributing Missions (CCMs), mainly before the launch of Sentinel 2. This is important as in the past there were delays and issues with the image quality and accessibility of the data from the 2012 and 2015 reference years. Therefore, there was a need to ensure that ESA applies correctly the land monitoring user requirements in the calls for tender for the reference years[372].

Source: See footnotes

Finally, over the evaluation period, there has been **no direct cooperation activities between the EEA and EMSA** on environmental climate topics, despite work by both Agencies in relation to GHG emissions. The EEA assists the European Commission by collecting the official GHG inventories submitted by the EEA countries and the projected GHG emissions submitted by the Member States under the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (Regulation 525/2013, MMR). In the maritime sector, following the adoption of the Regulation on the monitoring, report-ing and verification of carbon dioxide emissions from maritime transport (Regulation 2015/757, MRV), EMSA pro-vides assistance to the Commission and Member States in relation to in relation to GHG emissions from ships. An initiative on data exchange to help support national air pollutant and GHG inventory reporting is planned in 2018 (although not yet confirmed).

7.2.6.3   Cooperation in the context of Inter-Agency Coordination activities

Other cooperation and coordination activities are framed within the mechanisms established at EU level for inter-Agency coordination. Several networks have been established and bring together all the EU decentralised Agen-cies: the inter-Agency Network, including sub-networks (e.g. on legal advice, communication) that meet regularly; the EU Agencies Network on Scientific Advice (EU-ANSA) that allows cooperation and exchange on scientific mat-ters; Heads of Administration meetings; the Performance Development Network (PDN).

These mechanisms ensure regular exchange and coordination between Agencies at a governance level, i.e. on is-sues related to resources, staff, procurement, etc. However, there is also coordination and exchange of infor-mation on scientific developments and science-related topics, in the context of the EU Agencies Network on Scien-tific Advice (EU-ANSA).

7.2.7   Cooperation with national bodies

This section investigates whether the EEA has cooperated effectively with bodies in member countries on common environment and climate issues (beyond Eionet bodies)[373].

Coordination between the EEA and member countries is embedded in the Eionet structure. Eionet bodies represent hundreds of organisations across member countries, including ministries, environmental agencies, and research institutes acting as NFPs, NRCs or ETCs. This institutional set up **ensures that the EEA cooperates with a large number of bodies at national level**.

The EEA is also part of the **European Network of the Heads of Environment Protection Agencies** (EPAs), an 'informal grouping' created in 2003 and bringing together the heads of environment protection agencies across 35 countries[374]. The EEA provides secretarial support. The mission of the Network is that of promoting the exchange of views and experiences among organisations involved in the implementation of environmental policy, assessing the state of the environment and communicating on environmental issues[375]. Within the Network, cooperation is

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[371] Spaceborne monitoring and Copernicus. Information provided by the EEA.

[372] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[373] The cooperation between the EEA and Eionet bodies is discussed in Q1 (chapter 4.2.2.1).

[374] EU 28 Member States plus Iceland, Norway, Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Switzerland (information based on the EPA's website: http://epanet.pbe.eea.europa.eu/european_epas, accessed in February 2018).

[375] [403] The EPA Network Brochure, 2013, available at: http://epanet.pbe.eea.europa.eu/fol249409/epa-bro-chure-final-web.pdf.

channelled through plenary meetings, thematic workshops, and sharing of relevant documents (e.g. studies, reports and other publications) produced at national level[376].

There are strong links between EEA, Eionet and the EPA Network. Around 60% of EPAs are part of the EEA MB and 85% of them are also NFPs. In other words, the EPA Network provides **an additional forum for cooperation and exchange of information among Eionet Members (NFPs) and between them and the EEA**. Moreover, EPAs are also part of several other networks acting in relevant fields, increasing the ability of Eionet to reach out to additional stakeholders at national level. Around half of the EPAs are part of IMPEL (a network of authorities for permitting, inspection and enforcement, includes ministries, EPAs and regional authorities) and around 20% are represented in ENCA (Nature Conservation Agencies and EPAs or ministries where no EPA exists).

However, in the frame of a changing context where production of knowledge is increasingly fragmented across many sources, the EEA stated, in an informal document produced at the end of the evaluation period, that there is an increasing need to **extend the scope of the cooperation at national level** by engaging with other networks and communities, non-state actors and businesses[377].

The **case studies** also show the importance of extending cooperation with a range of national bodies, outside the Eionet Network, in order to avoid overlaps between the EEA/Eionet and relevant work carried out at national level.

One example is related to the **SOER 2015**, which include Country Fiches for each member country. In parallel, Member States draft their own state of the environment assessments, required by Articles 4 and 10 of the Aarhus Convention[378]. These are prepared by national environmental ministries or departments. The country briefings that form part of the SOER 2015 are developed by NFPs and NRCs and seek to draw upon the indicators and data of national state of the environment assessments, in order to avoid duplication of work and use information already prepared at a national level. Moreover, in some cases, the national state of the environment assessments are prepared by the national Ministries with the support of national institutes, which might act also as NRCs and/or ETCs. For instance, the Italian environment assessment is drafted by the Ministry for the Environment Land and Sea and finalised by ISPRA, which is also an NRC and involved in two ETCs (ETC/BD and ETC/ICMW)[379].

Another point of attention is related to the relationship between the SOER Country Fiches and the Environmental Implementation Review (EIRs), which are drafted every two years and review the implementation of EU environmental policy and law, identify the main gaps and successful practices. The EIR was launched in 2016 and the first EIR package was approved in 2017[380]. The reports rely, among other sources, on the SOER 2015 and use, to a large extent, EEA reports and data[381]. Given the close nature of the two publications (EIRs and SOER Country Fiches), for the next cycles, it will be important to ensure that the two reports build on each other and synergies are developed.

In the context of **Copernicus**, some member countries have national or local services that provide data similar to that of CLMS that creates the risk of overlaps. To ensure such duplications of work are avoided, all products and services are discussed within the NRCs Land Cover meetings. In general terms, despite the cooperation mechanisms put in place, possible overlaps can occur due to the fact datasets that cover the same land cover theme apply very different technical specifications (e.g. nomenclature, resolutions, updates) which make them non-comparable with European-level data. Another possible reason can be differences in the license and use conditions, which

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[376] http://epanet.pbe.eea.europa.eu/european_epas, see section (News from the Members) – accessed in February 2018.

[377] [29] EEA, 'EEA and Eionet, Shaping out future together (background paper)', 2016.

[378] Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, 1998.

[379] http://www.minambiente.it/notizie/pubblicato-il-quarto-aggiornamento-sullattuazione-della-convenzione-di-aarhus-italia.

[380] European Commission website on EIR: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm.

[381] [445].

make the use or integration of national datasets in Copernicus impossible. An important development in the future will be the harmonisation of different national approaches and methodologies and making them comparable to those of Copernicus[382]. Moreover, as part of its work on in-situ data components, the EEA has established MoUs with key European data custodians (e.g. EuroGeographics, EuroGeoSurveys, EuMetNet) to improve and ease the access to in-situ data, produced by national. In particular, an important potential source of in-situ information for Copernicus is EuroGeographics – an association of European National Mapping, Cadastre and Land Registry Authorities in 46 countries. Starting with the predecessor of the Copernicus Programme, agreements between the EEA and Eurogeographics have aimed to enable access to national reference data[383]. The cooperation between the EEA and Eurogeographics has been challenging, however. The MoU does not outline specific outputs or deliverables but rather objectives, roles and responsibilities of the parties. Requirements and specifications for outputs were defined in the GISC project, led by EEA[384]. Despite specifications provided by the Commission, the EEA and under the INSPIRE implementation, the organisation has not delivered geospatial data products useful for the CLMS in the evaluation period[385].

Coordination has been extended beyond the Eionet network also in the field of the **Nature Directives**. In this case, the ETC/BD works with government bodies in Member States responsible for nature protection as well as stakeholders, such as NGOs and landowner organisations, through the bilateral seminars held in relation to the assessment of the sufficiency of site designations[386].

7.2.8   Key findings and conclusions for Q9

7.2.8.1   Cooperation between the EEA and the European Commission services leading on environment, climate change and knowledge creation

The first evaluation criterion aimed to assess whether the EEA has clear roles, vis-à-vis the European Commission, in the management and assessment of data and information reported by the Member States for EU environment and climate policy and in knowledge creation, and duplications of efforts are avoided. The analysis focuses on the numerous **interlinks between the work of the EEA and that of Commission Services** that have a leading role on environment and climate policy and legislation (DG ENV and DG CLIMA) and other DGs that work on environment and climate data and knowledge (Eurostat, JRC, and DG Research).

The findings show that, at a working level, across the different EEA's tasks, **good cooperation and synergies** were established in several policy areas. In the environmental area, this has been, for example, the case of the cooperation established in the field of the **Nature Directives** or **waste statistics**, where the EEA and the Commission services (respectively DG ENV and Eurostat) have used the respective strengths and avoided duplications. In the field of climate policies, the EEA and DG CLIMA have worked in a complementary way, for example in relation to **EU ETS and F-gases**. DG CLIMA has used the data gathered by the EEA to produce the MRV section of its Carbon market report (in the cases of EU ETS) and to assess Member States compliance with EU rules (in the cases of F-gases).

In parallel, only **few duplications of work** or cases of **weak cooperation** between the EEA and the European Commission were identified. In the field of **freshwater**, despite the extensive work carried out by the EEA, there were examples of weak cooperation between the EEA and DG ENV, leading to the development of separate map viewers on UWWTD by EEA and DG Environment, or the discontinuation of the EEA's work on the DWD in 2015.

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[382] Information provided by the EEA and ETC/ULS.

[383] [402] EEA, 2012, Agreement between European Environment Agency and Eurogeographics, presentation by E. Schuren, viewed 19 Dec 2017 at: http://www.eurogeographics.org/sites/default/files/01b%20EEA-EuroGeographics%20agreement%20in%20sup-port%20of%20GMES%20Emergency%20Management%20Service.pdf

[384] GMES in-situ coordination (GISC) is an FP7 project (2010-2013) that aimed to connect data providers or networks of providers and to develop a management system for in-situ data: http://gisc.pbe.eea.europa.eu/

[385] Information provided by the EEA.

[386] See the case study on Nature Directives.

Other issues were encountered in relation to specific tasks of the EEA (rather than specific policy areas): the lack of a **complete inventory of indicators** in the field of **agri-environmental-climate issues**, that has led to the risk of overlaps and inefficiencies (task e and f of the EEA); coordination problems between the EEA and DG ENV on the **review of draft EEA reports** (task e); concerns related to **risks of overlaps**, but also to the **relevance** and **usefulness** of the EEA's activity in the field of forecasting (task i); the limited **exploitation of results and data** from environment and climate research (task o), although the EKC is expected to address this gap.

Given the large number and diversified range of institutions involved across EEA's tasks and environmental, climate and cross-cutting themes, **the limited number of overlaps identified through the case studies represents a positive achievement**: bilateral cooperation between the EEA and the Commission services worked well and avoided major issues in terms of duplication of work. Cooperation worked well especially where there was a **clear definition of roles** of the EEA and the Commission services, and strong **mechanisms for ongoing coordination**, both at strategic and operational level. This is the case of the Nature Directives, where the cooperation between the EEA and DG ENV has been characterised by a clear division of roles and strong informal coordination mechanisms (the annual rolling plans); extensive collaboration has been established between the EEA and DG CLIMA (also framed in the context of the Climate Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR) (Article 24), which clearly identifies the role of the EEA).

At strategic level, several mechanisms support the general coordination between the EEA and the Commission services (such as the involvement in the EEA MB, consultation on MAWPs and AWPs, regular high-level meetings, the EKC, etc.). However, the analysis found some limitations in the functioning of these mechanisms (e.g. real involvement of the MB in setting priorities) and, more generally, that a more systematic framework for strategic cooperation could have avoided divergent approaches across tasks, climate/environmental themes and DGs. During the evaluation period, for each task and activity, the coordination between the EEA and the Commission services has been developed on an ad-hoc basis. Different coordination mechanisms have been applied across tasks and themes with different degrees of success; it seems that there was not an effort to capitalise on success factors, by identifying and applying good practices. This element indicates a **potential for increased coordination at horizontal level, i.e. between Commission services, within DG ENV and within the EEA**. The EKC, launched in 2015, has represented a step forward towards a more structured cooperation among the main Commission services, and between those and the EEA, on knowledge creation.

These findings are based on multiple sources, including a number of interviews with the Commission services in the scope of the analysis. The interviews, coupled with desk research, allowed us to provide a complete overview and solid assessment of the cooperation mechanisms established. However, given the broad range of tasks carried out by the EEA across many environmental themes, detailed examples of synergies and overlaps were mainly (although not exclusively) collected on the basis of the eight case studies.

7.2.8.2   Cooperation between Eionet members and EC working groups

The study assessed the role of EIONET network vis-à-vis other bodies involved in EU environment and climate reporting obligations, i.e. European Commission's Working Groups, Expert Groups and Committees in the environmental and climate field.

The results of the workshop with NFPs, and the survey with both Commission staff and NRCs/NFPs show that cooperation between the two levels has not been systematic. According to the survey, less than half of respondents among NRC members (46%) and NFP members (48%) declared to know their country's representatives to committees and working groups organised by Commission services. On the other hand, the survey of the Commission staff (although limited to 32 replies) suggests that the Commission services, other than DG ENV, were not always invited to Eionet meetings and, in turn, did not always invite Eionet representatives to relevant Committees/Working groups meetings. These results have to be framed in their context: **only in some cases** the scope of work of the two groups is interlinked and, thus, **there is a need for cooperation**. In this context, positive examples of cooperation exist. For instance, in relation to the Nature Directives and in the field of freshwater, cooperation was established between Eionet groups (NRCs and/or ETCs) and Commission Committees, in order to avoid overlaps and leverage on complementarities. However, there are also examples where the complexity of the dataflows has led to **confusion about the roles of the two groups** (e.g. in the case of freshwater).

Both the NRCs/NFPs and the European Commission (specifically DG ENV) have pointed to a **lack of complete and easily accessible information on the respective activities**. NRCs/NFPs find it difficult to retrieve information on the Commission Working Groups, whereas the Commission points to the lack of a comprehensive repository of NRCs meetings.

The large number of bodies concerned and gaps in information (specifically, the lack of a consolidated list of European Commission working groups dealing with environmental and climate legislation and of their role) made it difficult to fully assess the extent of coordination needed and the potential risks of overlaps. Information to address this judgement criterion has been collected through the case studies, and the survey with the Commission staff and with NFPs/NRCs, which received a satisfactory number of replies (respectively, 32 and 200 replies). The combination of these sources enabled a reliable assessment.

7.2.8.3 Cooperation between the EEA and other EU Agencies

The objective of this section was to investigate whether the EEA has cooperated effectively with other EU agencies on common environment and climate issues, in order to avoid overlaps and create synergies.

According to the information collected, the EEA has established cooperation activities with other EU Agencies in several fields, such as food safety (EFSA), environmental risks related to chemicals (ECHA), effects of climate change on infectious diseases (ECDC), aviation sector (EASA), and hearth observation technology (GSA), etc. Cooperation was not limited to environmental and climate topics, but it also relates to methodologies (e.g. forecasting methodologies), through exchange of information and joint activities/projects, and governance issues.

The desk and field research carried out has **not revealed overlaps** between the EEA and other EU Agencies. The EEA and the other EU Agencies in the scope of the analysis have different remits and mandates. While this element reduces the creation of overlaps, it also makes the need for formalised and structured cooperation less relevant. As a result, **cooperation activities have been ad hoc** and driven by the emergence of specific issues of common interest, rather than by the presence of a structured strategy.

Where cooperation existed, it worked satisfactorily, and the lack of formal agreements did not represent a barrier to cooperation or hindered its results.

The analysis covers a significant number of EU Agencies that have been identified as the most relevant. Desk research (EEA's programming documents, publications of the EEA and other Agencies) has been integrated with interviews with some of the EU Agencies and with input received from the EEA. The consistency of findings across sources points to an overall solidity and reliability of the assessment.

7.2.8.4 Cooperation between the EEA and National bodies

Finally, the study addressed the cooperation between the EEA and bodies in member countries on common environment and climate issues.

The cooperation between the EEA and Eionet members allows the EEA to reach out to a broad range of bodies across the member countries, including Environmental Agencies, national ministries, and research institutes. This institutional set up supports coordination between the EEA and national bodies, and helps leverage synergies and avoid overlaps. Moreover, the EEA provides the secretariat to the **European Network of the Heads of Environment Protection Agencies** (EPA Network), that represents an additional forum for the exchange of information between the EEA and national bodies. In many cases, members of this Network coincide with Eionet members.

The case studies do not point to any duplication of effort between the EEA/Eionet and other national bodies during the evaluation period. The information collected also shows that **cooperation with national bodies beyond Eionet** was ongoing in several fields (e.g. in the case of **Copernicus**, **Nature Directives**), and important to avoid overlaps (e.g. between **SOER 2015** country factsheets and national environmental assessments carried out under the Aarhus convention by MS). However, the EEA and Eionet members have recognised the increasing **need to extend the scope of the cooperation at national level beyond Eionet members**.

The assessment has drawn on EEA's sources and the case studies. The broad scope of action of the EEA and the number of national stakeholders that might carry out similar work are two significant challenges for the analysis.

7.3   Q10: Coherence with stakeholders in other policy areas

Q10: To what extent are the procedures and mechanisms put in place effective to ensure that EEA cooperation activities are coherent with the policies and activities of its stakeholders?

This section assesses the procedures and mechanisms that have been established to ensure coordination and effective cooperation between the EEA and other bodies, focusing on policy DGs in fields interrelated with environmental and climate themes, and the European Parliament.

The table below illustrates the judgement criteria and related indicators.

Table 7-8   Judgement criteria and indicators, Q10

Judgement criteria	Indicators
There are procedures and mechanisms supporting the cooperation and coordination between the EEA and policy stakeholders acting in other policy areas interlinked with environment and climate topics	Mechanisms and procedures for the coordination with other policy DGs (AGRI, ENER, REGIO, MARE)
	Mechanisms and procedures for the coordination with other EU institutions (European Parliament)

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

Accordingly, this question looks at the existence of procedures and mechanisms supporting the cooperation and coordination between the EEA and bodies acting in other policy areas interlinked with environment and climate topics. More in detail, it addresses the coordination and cooperation established between the EEA and:

- Sectorial policy DGs of the European Commission, beyond DG ENV, DG CLIMA and DG RTD (Section 7.3.1);

- The European Parliament (Section 7.3.2).

This section is interlinked with Evaluation Question 2 under effectiveness (i.e. Q2, Section 4.3.3.4), which assesses the extent to which EEA products contribute to the mainstreaming of environmental/climate concerns in other policies. The judgement criteria on mainstreaming, thus, is analysed under 'Effectiveness' and it is not addressed in this Section.

Part of the content of this section is also relevant in relation to Question 9, as it addresses the procedures and mechanisms put in place between the EEA, Commission services and other stakeholders. While Q9 focuses on the Commission services leading on environmental and climate policies and involved in the generation of data and information, Q10 focuses on the Commission services involved in sectoral policies interlinked, to different extents, with environmental and climate topics.

7.3.1   Cooperation and coordination between the EEA and sectorial policy DGs

7.3.1.1   Overview of the general coordination mechanisms and interlinkages

Given the horizontal nature of environmental and climate concerns, the work of the EEA is relevant to several policy areas; accordingly, cooperation between the EEA and a number of European Commission's DGs is expected.

As mentioned in Q9, Unit A3 of DG ENV (Environmental Knowledge, EcoInnovation & SMEs) ensures coordination between the EEA and other European Commission's DGs. While this role is clear within the European Commission,

there is not a formal inter-service group or other mechanism for regular communication on the EEA. As a consequence, there have been examples of miscommunication on matters related to the EEA's work (e.g. relevant DGs not informed of publications of EEA's reports of their interest; lack of coordination among DGs in relation to participation in EEA's meetings). The only formal mechanism for general coordination within the European Commission, and between the EEA and the European Commission, is the inter-service consultation on EEA's programming documents (i.e. AWPs and MAWPs), discussed under 'Efficiency', Question 5. On the other hand, it should be mentioned that the EEA is not consulted on the Work Programmes of other policy DGs, with the exception of DG GROW in relation to the Copernicus Programme[387].

Finally, as mentioned in Section 7.2.2, the BLO follows the policy developments at EU level, in order to identify actions relevant to the EEA's work, and support operational meetings between the EEA and other DGs (DG MARE, REGIO, EPCS, NEAR). At policy level, contacts with other DGs have mostly been contacted by the EEA Heads of programme, with the support of the BLO when requested[388].

The establishment of the inter-service consultation suggests that there have been improvements compared to the previous evaluation period (up to the first half of 2012). Nevertheless, a systematic approach to the overall coordination between the EEA and the European Commission (including policy DGs different than DG ENV and DG CLIMA) is still missing and in progress[389].

Q2 assesses the mainstreaming of environmental/climate concerns by analysing the use of EEA information in other relevant policy areas. The findings under Q2 show that there is a relatively limited use of EEA information and outputs among the sector policy DGs (see Section 4.3.3.4). The following paragraphs assess whether and to what extent cooperation activities between the EEA and each relevant DG have been established, in order to ensure alignment and mainstreaming of environmental/climate issues.

7.3.1.2   DG AGRI

The interfaces between agriculture and environment have become increasingly important. The CAP 2014-2020 integrates environmental concerns, by including in its objectives those tackling climate change and the sustainable management of natural resources. However, as discussed in the following paragraphs, coordination between the EEA and DG AGRI has been rather limited between 2012 and 2016 and, despite the growing interlinks, there has not been an intensification.

The cooperation between DG AGRI and the EEA is mainly structured around a MoU on the Agri-Environmental Indicators (AEIs)[390], signed already in 2008 and establishing the framework for coordination between these two entities and Eurostat, JRC and DG ENV[391]. The progress in the development of the 28 AEIs has been the result of the

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[387] Interview with the EEA (written replies). As mentioned in Section 7.2.2, the EEA is also consulted on Eurostat Work Programme.

[388] Interview with the EEA.

[389] This conclusion was reached in the context of two interviews with DG ENV. This reflection was confirmed by an individual comment, raised during the stakeholder workshop, pointed to the need for better coordination within Commission services and argued that a more formal system could strengthen this (Stakeholder workshop held in the context of the support study for the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet on 05/12/2017).

[390] Following the Commission Communication on Agri-environmental indicators of 2006 (COM(2006) 508 final) [407], 28 Agri-environmental indicators were defined with the objective of tracking 'the integration of environmental concerns into the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) at EU, national and regional levels' (See Eurostat: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/agri-environmental-indicators/indicators).

[391] The MoU is implemented under the lead of Eurostat.

collaboration between the EEA and several Commission DGs (DG ENV, DG AGRI, Eurostat and JRC[392]). A MoU addresses the potential overlaps between: indicators defined by DG AGRI ('CAP Context Indicators'[393]) to assess the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2014-2020, and data and indicators produced by other entities, including the EEA. Therefore, coordination is important and the presence of a formal MoU represents a key a factor in ensuring good cooperation between the partners involved[394]. In relation to AEIs, there is regular interaction between DG AGRI and the EEA for coordination on technical issues[395].

Beyond the AEIs, during the evaluation period, there was no coordination or interaction between the EEA and DG AGRI, except for some cases, such as the feedback and input into the discussions about the CAP reform provided by EEA in 2014[396]. In this period, DG AGRI did not take part in the inter-service consultation on the EEA's AWPs (except that for comments made on the EEA's MAWP 2014-2020). The involvement of DG AGRI in this coordination activity started only in occasion of the EEA's AWP for 2017. Moreover, DG AGRI's comments on the 2017 AWP pointed to two issues that highlight the overall lack of dialogue between the EEA and the DG: the EEA's AWP mentioned, among the activities of the EEA, the mid-term review of the implementation of the CAP, which is responsibility of the Commission (and, furthermore, it was not planned in that year); DG AGRI, while noting that the DG was often identified as 'key partner' in the EEA's AWP, expressed the need for clarifications about 'what the 'key partner' status means' and the interest in being actually consulted on those activities where DG AGRI was indicated as key partner[397].

In an interview, DG AGRI has also expressed dissatisfaction about the lack of coordination before the publication of EEA's reports that might result in misleading messages on the agricultural sector and the CAP[398].

The need for strengthening the coordination between DG AGRI and the EEA is also suggested by the results of a recent internal audit, carried out in 2016 and focusing on agri-environmental-climate data[399]. The Internal Audit highlighted insufficient coordination and recommended that DG AGRI, DG CLIMA and DG ENV, together with the main data providers (including the EEA), reinforce the coordination of agri-environmental-climate data and indicators, in order to avoid duplications, inconsistent quality and reputational risks. The Internal Audit also identified weaknesses in relation to the coordination established through the MoU on AEIs, notably: the exclusion of DG CLIMA, although the MoU includes indicators on GHG; the development of indicators related to agri-environmental-climate data by DG ENV, Eurostat and the EEA, outside the framework of the MoU and coordinated set of AEIs. As a consequence, the partners of the MoU produce indicators addressing the same needs but formulated differently or giving different results (because of calculation methods), with subsequent duplications of effort and inconsistencies (see Box 7-4)[400].

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[392] [112] Commission staff working document - Fitness Check of Monitoring and Reporting in EU Environment Policy, SWD (2017) 230.

[393] [456] The CAP Indicators were introduced in 2014, as part of the Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) for the CAP 2014-2020 (https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-indicators/context_en).

[394] Interview with DG AGRI.

[395] COM survey.

[396] For more information, see [520] https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/agriculture/greening-agricultural-policy/cap-project

[397] European Commission's internal consultation documents.

[398] Interview with DG AGRI. Specific EEA's reports mentioned are [87]: the State of the Nature Report 2015 and the SOER 2015.

[399] Draft Audit Report on the process for managing and sharing data on agri-environmental-climate issues in DG AGRI, DG CLIMA and DG ENV (Internal Audit Service, 2016) [391]. The scope of the audit was defined as 'data and information related to the impact of agriculture on the environment and climate'. The audit included the review of the collaboration between DG AGRI, DG ENV, DG CLIMA and other EU bodies, including the EEA.

[400] Draft Audit Report on the process for managing and sharing data on agri-environmental-climate issues in DG AGRI, DG CLIMA and DG ENV (Internal Audit Service, 2016) [391]. Other issues related to the AEIs are due to the confidentiality of some data reported by Member States under the CAP; as a consequence, some AEIs build on

Box 7-4   Insufficient coordination on the indicators related to the agri-environmental-climate field – example from the Commission's Internal Audit[401]

> The Audit report provides an example in relation to a key performance indicator defined by DG AGRI: "*Minimum share of land with secific environmental practices/committments*". It covers: land under agri-environmental-climate measures, land under greening payment, and land under organic production.
>
> The set of AEIs under the MoU does not include this indicator needed by DG AGRI to assess the CAP, although there are similar indicators collected by the EEA.
>
> Under the set of indicators for assessing European biodiversity, the EEA uses the indicator 'Agricultural area under practices potentially supporting biodiversity', which covers: 'Areas with high nature value farmland' and 'Share of total organic crop area'.
>
> However, no direct link is made between the farmland areas favourable to biodiversity (i.e. *areas with high nature value farmland*) and areas under CAP measures such as greening or agri-environmental-climate measures. Moreover, while the EEA indicator *areas with high nature value farmland* is part of the AEIs, different methodologies are used for its calculation, making its use in the context of the CAP indicators difficult.

Overall, the analysis shows that despite the increasing relevance of environmental objectives in the context of agricultural policies, the cooperation between the EEA and DG AGRI has not been extensive, but rather limited to the implementation of the MoU on the AEIs.

7.3.1.3   DG REGIO

During the evaluation period, there have been high level meetings between the EEA and DG REGIO representatives (at Directors level), as means to identify the areas of common interest and mutual support[402]. DG REGIO has also designated an official for the relations with the EEA[403]. These coordination activities have led to the intensification of the cooperation or identification of opportunities for joint activities[404]. For example, as part of the EEA's SA1.8 Urban, land use and soil, the EEA has produced several reports on Green Infrastructure, starting from 2011, and has worked with DG REGIO on the development of specific indicators feeding into the interactive maps published in 2017. These maps build on the work done by the EEA in other areas, i.e. are based on Natura 2000 data and the Urban Atlas[405]. Moreover, EEA has been extensively used by DG REGIO in the Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion published in 2017[406].

A main area of cooperation between the EEA and DG REGIO is related to the Urban Atlas. Being urban development a central component of EU's Regional Policy, DG REGIO is one of the primary users of the Urban Atlas[407], which provides high-resolution land use maps for all major cities in Europe. While DG REGIO provides the budget for the production of the Urban Atlas, the EEA is responsible for project management, quality control and dissemination. This arrangement establishes a clear division of roles between the two institutions, and it is formalised

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other sources. This issue represents a well-known situation, also noted in the Internal Audit report, that is being addressed.

[401] Draft Audit Report on the process for managing and sharing data on agri-environmental-climate issues in DG AGRI, DG CLIMA and DG ENV (Internal Audit Service, 2016) [391].

[402] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[403] Interview with DG ENV.

[404] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[405] Several reports have been produced by the EEA over the evaluation period (Spatial analysis of green infrastructure in Europe, 2014. Exploring nature-based solutions: The role of green infrastructure in mitigating the impacts of weather- and climate change-related natural hazards, 2015). Interactive maps of Green Infrastructure Indicators have been published in 2017.

[406] European Commission, 7th Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion, 2017 [408].

[407] [496] The Urban Atlas is a joint initiative of DG Regio, DG GROW, ESA and EEA (https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/urban-atlas#tab-methodology).

through the Copernicus Annual Work Programmes. At working level, DG REGIO and the EEA interacts through informal exchanges (by mail and phone) and formal project meetings during the production of the Urban Atlas[408].

However, it should be considered that there are several initiatives on urban development and monitoring, involving different actors and calling for broader coordination.

For instance, DG REGIO, the EEA and the ETC for Land Use and Spatial Information (ETC/ULS) are all members of the Forum on Integrated Urban Monitoring in Europe (IUME). Launched in 2009 by the EEA, IUME brought together the EEA, ETC/ULS, several DGs (DG ENV, DG MOVE, DG REGIO, JRC, ESTAT, DG Employment and Social Affairs) as well as academic and Member State institutions. It was set up to coordinate initiatives on urban monitoring and share information, methodologies and assessments (for details see Box 7-5)[409]. During the stakeholder workshop, the IUME forum was mentioned as a positive approach for coordination[410].

Box 7-5   Integrated Urban Monitoring in Europe[411]

- IUME was initiated by the EEA with the goal of coordinating and integrating the different European urban monitoring initiatives. The integration is organised around the three main elements of urban monitoring and concerns:

- Identification of available data, data gaps and links between different datasets and available tools;

- Answering questions about urban development and its impacts;

- Development of a theoretical framework of the monitoring concept.

- The work is based on the participating organisations' understanding of upcoming needs and challenges and their collaboration through regular workshops.

7.3.1.4   DG GROW

Cooperation between DG GROW and the EEA is mainly structured around Copernicus and circular economy.

The EEA and DG GROW cooperate on Copernicus on the basis of the Delegation Agreement between the EU and the EEA signed in December 2014 (hereafter Delegation Agreement)[412], establishing EEA's responsibilities. Within the Commission, DG GROW is the main service responsible for Copernicus. DG GROW chairs the Copernicus Committee on behalf of the Commission, leads the preparation of the Copernicus Annual Work Programmes, and oversees the management of the different Copernicus services and entrusted tasks. In 2013-14, EEA seconded a staff member to DG Enterprise (the forerunner of DG GROW) to assist in the preparation of the Copernicus Programme. Overall, in relation to the management of Copernicus, no issue regarding the coordination between the two entities has been recorded[413]. The results of the survey with the Commission services show that, in relation to Copernicus, there is regular interaction between DG GROW and the EEA for coordination on technical issues and on work programmes[414].

Moreover, the EEA is a key user of the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), set up in 2014 and coordinated by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF). The EEA uses data produced under C3S

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[408] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[409] Interview with the ETC/ULS.

[410] Stakeholder workshop held in the context of the support study for the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet on 05/12/2017.

[411] Based on information available at the website: http://iume.pbe.eea.europa.eu/ (viewed 12 February 2018).

[412] Agreement Between the European Union, Represented by the European Commission, and the European Environment Agency on the Implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component, Ref. Ares(2014)4012930 - 01/12/2014 [16].

[413] See also the case study on Copernicus.

[414] COM survey.

for its work on indicators on Global and European temperature. The EEA started exploring collaboration with C3S, in relation to EEA's work on indicators and Climate-ADAPT[415]. The EEA is also a user of Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service (CMEMS), which provides information on the state of the physical oceans and regional seas. CMEMS data are used in the EEA's visualisation tools on Annual average sea surface temperature anomaly.

In other areas, the interaction between the EEA and DG GROW has intensified in 2015, in parallel with the preparation and adoption of the Circular Economy Action Plan. However, in providing comments to the EEA's AWP 2015, DG GROW expressed the interest in broadening cooperation with the EEA and exploiting synergies, by asking to be included as partner not only in relation to the work on circular economy and Copernicus. Outside these areas of work, cooperation between the two entities appears to be still under development, although there are some positive steps. An example in this regard includes the Raw Materials Scoreboard[416], developed by DG GROW in 2015 and on which the EEA provided feedback and input[417].

7.3.1.5   DG MARE

At a general level, there have positive steps in the development of a constructive and cooperative approach, supported by high-level meeting opportunities between the two entities[418]. For instance, in September 2015, the EEA provided a presentation of the report 'State of Europe's seas' to DG MARE, together with the SOER 2015[419]. DG MARE had provided comments on the report, although the timing of the consultation was considered tight[420]. In 2016, there was a meeting between the EEA's Executive Director and the Director-General of DG MARE[421].

DG MARE is also involved in the inter-service consultation on the EEA's programming documents (the DG provided comments on the MAWP 2014-2020 and on AWP 2015).

At working level, there are several issues of common interest, including the management of data and information systems (WISE-Marine) and ad-hoc interactions.

In 2011, a Service Level Agreement (SLA)[422] was drafted to formalise the cooperation between the EEA and DG MARE on the Atlas of the Seas (AoS), for which the EEA provides only web-hosting and some of the data (including on coastal erosion and sea level rise)[423]. However, such a SLA was never finalised, being superseded by the decision to design and develop WISE-Marine (Marine Information system for Europe), also connected with the reporting requirements under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). WISE-Marine went live only in 2017 and, like WISE[424], it is implemented by the EEA, in partnership with DG ENV, JRC and Eurostat[425]. DG MARE is a key contributor together with other entities, including EMODnet - a 'marine data initiative' promoted by DG MARE

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[415] [422] Overview of climate change adaptation platforms in Europe, EEA Technical Report 5/2015.

[416] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[417] Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (European Commission), Raw Materials Scoreboard, 2016. EEA report on waste (Movements of waste across the EU's internal and external borders, EEA Report No 7/2012) is referenced in the Raw Material Scoreboard.

[418] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[419] [7] EEA's Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2015.

[420] Interview with DG MARE.

[421] Interview with DG MARE.

[422] Service Level Agreement of 12.12.2011 (information provided by the EEA).

[423] The decision to launch a European atlas of the seas was included in the Commission's Communication [521] on Integrated Maritime Policy in the European Union (COM(2007) 575). The Atlas has been updated several times, with the release of the last version in 2017 (https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/atlas/maritime_atlas/).

[424] The Water Information System for Europe (http://water.europa.eu/).

[425] WISE-Marine website: https://water.europa.eu/marine/about-us.

and main source of marine data across several disciplines[426]. EMODnet also includes, among its partner organisations, several members of the ETC on Inland, Coastal and Marine waters (ETC/ICM)[427]. The development of WISE-Marine and the integration with EMODnet prevented the creation of overlaps, in terms of data and information systems management, between the EEA and DG MARE[428].

The EEA has also followed the design and implementation process of another key Directive under the responsibility of DG MARE, i.e. the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSP[429]), approved in 2014[430]. Direct cooperation with DG MARE, however, has been only recent and mainly falls outside the evaluation period[431].

Finally, positive examples of ad-hoc interactions between the two institutions have been collected. For instance, the EEA staff provided advice to DG MARE in the development of the EMODnet web portal (with focus on environmental data) and input to the "Marine Knowledge 2020"[432,433].

7.3.1.6   Other DGs

Cooperation activities exist also between the EEA and other DGs on specific outputs, notably:

- DG MOVE: interaction occurs only in the context of the annual TERM report and related indicators, produced by the EEA, where MOVE is an active partner in the steering committee (together with CLIMA, ENV, and ESTAT)[434].

- DG ENER: a main partner in the Trends and Projections (T&P) reports[435], regular annual reports on the progress towards climate mitigation and energy targets. In this case, as reported in interviews and analysed under the case study on T&P, coordination has worked well, and cooperation has improved over time. Although there is no written agreement, the coordination process has worked satisfactorily, also thanks to the proactiveness of the EEA's and DG ENER's officers involved[436].
  The cooperation between the EEA and DG ENER is expected to be influenced by the proposed Energy Union Governance framework[437], which will call for the integration of reporting of energy and climate data at the operational level[438].

- DG ECHO is involved in issues related to climate change and adaptation strategies. In the context of the Climate-ADAPT information system[439], informal cooperation has been initiated between the EEA, DG ECHO, DG

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[426] The European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) is a network of organisations supported by the EU strategy for integrated maritime policy. EMODnet gathers data from archives managed by local, national, regional and international organisations, across discipline-based themes (http://www.emodnet.eu/).

[427] E.g. Delatares, ICES, ISPRA, hcmr, JNCC, NIVA, SYKE.

[428] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[429] [522] Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning.

[430] Information provided by the EEA. The AWPs of the EEA mention the support of the Agency with regard to: the Impact Assessment (EEA's AWP 2012); the 'adopted implementation processes' (EEA's AWP 2013), and 'support actions' (EEA's AWP 2014) to the MSP.

[431] In 2017 the EEA joined the Member States Group of Experts on MSP.

[432] [423] Commission's Communication, "Innovation in the Blue Economy: realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth" (COM(2014) 254 final/2).

[433] Interview with DG MARE and DG MARE's comments on the EEA's AWP 2017.

[434] Interview with the EEA (written replies) and COM survey.

[435] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/trends-and-projections-in-europe

[436] Interview with DG ENER. Please see also the case study on Trends and Projections.

[437] [148] Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Governance of the Energy Union, COM(2016) 759 final/2.

[438] See also the case study on Trends and Projects reports.

[439] http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/

CLIMA, other DGs and international organisations. This cooperation recognises the relationship between climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction[440].

- DG NEAR: Cooperation with DG NEAR exists in the context of grant agreements (managed by the EEA) and focused on cooperation with neighbourhood and enlargement countries. Between 2010 and 2015, the EEA implemented the ENPI-SEIS project, aimed to cooperate with countries of the European Neighbourhood and 'improve national capacities for managing and sharing environmental data and information'[441]. Following discussions with the Commission services, in 2016, two follow-up projects were launched to support further cooperation with the European Neighbourhood partners, under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) funded by DG NEAR[442]. Cooperation activities with Western Balkans were also supported through the Instrument on pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) funding from DG NEAR[443]. Overall, the fact that the cooperation is channelled by grant agreements promotes a clear division of roles between the two institutions, with the EEA in charge of implementation of the agreements[444].

Finally, there have been interactions between the EEA and the European Political Strategy Centre (that does not fall under the relevant policy DGs, being an in-house think tank of the European Commission - see Box 7-6).

Box 7-6   European Political Strategy Centre

The European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC) is the European Commission's in-house think tank, established in 2014 and responsible for 'strategic analysis and policy advice to the [European Commission] President on matters related to the policy priorities as defined in his Political Guidelines'[445]. The organisation includes a 'Sustainable Development team'. Based on information provided by the EEA[446], the Agency has contributed to the work of the EPSC through:

- Written contributions by EEA to EPSC's notes and policy papers on EPSC's request (e.g. notes for the Heads of State and Government for the Social Summit; contribution on topics such as future trends/challenges for the next 5 years, European mobility transition, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), low-emission Mobility, air pollution).

- Presentations given by the EEA's Executive Director at meetings with EPSC and Commissioners' Cabinet Members on Transitions and system innovations.

7.3.2   Cooperation and coordination between the EEA and the European Parliament

Coordination between the EEA and the European Parliament was channelled through the following, formal and informal, mechanisms:

- Designation of experts by the European Parliament as members of the EEA's MB (in line with Article 8 of the founding Regulation);

- Participation in the consultations related to the EEA's MAWPs and AWPs;

- Annual exchange of views between the EEA's Executive Director and the European Parliament, during meetings of Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI Committee), and official delegation visits in Copenhagen (organised in 2013 and 2016);

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[440] [422] Overview of climate change adaptation platforms in Europe, EEA Technical Report 5/2015.

[441] http://enpi-seis.pbe.eea.europa.eu/.

[442] [7] EEA's Annual Activity Report 2015.

[443] [186-188], [40] EEA's Annual Activity Reports 2012 to 2016.

[444] Confirmed by an interview with DG NEAR.

[445] [501] Communication (C(2014) 9001 final) of 6 November 2014 from the President to the Commission on the European Political Strategy Centre: Mission, Tasks and Organisation Chart.

[446] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

- Regular contacts between the BLO and the ENVI Committee. This coordination was carried out through: networking activities of the BLO with MEPs and Rapporteurs; regular monthly contacts between the BLO and the Secretariat of the ENVI Committee, which has designated an MEP as an 'EEA contact points'[447].

The evaluation related to the period 2008-2012 found a 'well-established dialogue with the European Parliament'[448], which have continued during the current evaluation period.

The regular interaction between the two institutions has resulted in the involvement of the EEA in a range of support activities (e.g. preparation of briefings in response to requests for information, support to Rapporteurs during legislative processes), dissemination of EEA's reports (in targeted events and through regular announcement of recent EEA publications), and the participation of EEA staff or Executive Director in Public Hearings. Moreover, there were regular contacts and exchange and information between the EEA and the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)[449].

These mechanisms were considered as well-functioning and efficient[450], and the coordination activities ensured the alignment of the work of the two institutions, also at operation level. An example provided by the EEA is the decision, taken by the ENVI Committee in 2016, to align the workplan of the European Parliament's report on the Implementation of the 7th EAP[451] with that of the EEA's Environmental indicator report[452]. The EEA presented the results of the Environmental indicator report 2016 at the first shadow rapporteurs meeting of the EP's 7th EAP report. The publication of the European Parliament's report was postponed to ensure alignment with the updated 2017 edition of the EEA's report[453].

Moreover, as an example of the interlinkages between the EEA and the ENVI Committee, a section of the Newsletter of the ENVI Committee is dedicated to 'News from the Agencies', including a section dedicated to the EEA and disseminating information on new EEA's publications or events[454].

Although most of the interaction happens with the ENVI Committee, the EEA followed the work of several European Parliament's Committees and participated in several meetings for the launch of EEA's reports, hearings or presentations. Examples include:

- Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN Committee): Launch of EEA's annual 'Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism' (TERM) reports (2012 and 2013);

- Committee on Emission Measurements in the Automotive Sector (EMIS Committee): Preparation of written evidence and participation in a hearing on vehicle emissions (2016)[455];

- Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development: launch of the EEA's annual Air Quality report (2012 and 2014);

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[447] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[448] [185] COWI, Evaluation of the European Environment Agency, 2012.

[449] Elaboration of information provided by the EEA and the European Parliament.

[450] Interview with the EEA (written replies) and one interview with the European Parliament.

[451] [419] EPRS, Implementation of the 7th Environment Action Programme - Mid-term review, 2017.

[452] [420] EEA, Environmental indicator report 2017 — In support to the monitoring of the 7th Environment Action Programme, 2017 (EEA Report No 21/2017).

[453] Interview with the EEA (written replies).

[454] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/it/envi/newsletters.html?tab=2016.

[455] 24-05-2016 - Hearings of TNO and EEA (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/emis/events-hearings.html?id=20160524CHE00301)

- Science and Technology Options Assessment (STOA) Scientific Foresight service: presentations by the EEA's Executive Director (2015).

7.3.3   Key findings and conclusions for Q10

This question assessed the cooperation mechanisms established to ensure coordination between the EEA, institutions and other stakeholders acting in policy areas interlinked with environment and climate topics (e.g. agriculture, urban and regional policies, marine issues, transport, and energy). The judgement criterion focused on whether there are procedures and mechanisms supporting this cooperation. On this basis, the analysis has focused especially on cooperation between the EEA, other sectorial policy DGs (AGRI, REGIO, GROW, MARE, ENER, ECHO, MOVE and NEAR[456]), and the European Parliament.

The EEA has cooperated with other policy DGs in several **policy areas**, including agricultural policy in relation to AEIs (in collaboration with DG AGRI and other DGs), hearth observation systems (i.e. Copernicus, with DG GROW), environmental aspects of Regional policy and urban development (e.g. the EEA's work on Green Infra-structure and Urban Atlas, with DG REGIO), marine data and information systems (i.e. WISE-Marine, developed in partnership with other DGs and in collaboration with DG MARE), circular economy (DG GROW).

Coordination between the EEA and these policy DGs was channelled through **different mechanisms**. At horizontal/strategic level, most of the DGs were involved in the formal inter-service consultation on the EEA's MAWP 2014-2020 and, in some cases (GROW, MARE, MOVE), followed the EEA's AWPs, although their participation into the process has not been regular during the evaluation period. The inter-service consultation contributed to increase the involvement of different DGs in the EEA programming process and, thus, promoted, at least to some extent, an alignment between EEA's activities and priorities pursued under sectorial policies and cross-cutting issues. Coordination through high-level meetings (at Directors level) was also started, as a means to strengthen the coordination, ensure mutual understanding and identify cooperation opportunities. This is the case of meetings held between the EEA and DG REGIO and DG MARE. At working level, different **coordination mechanisms** were set up, and the **degree of actual cooperation varied across policy areas**. There has been a strong cooperation between the EEA and **DG GROW** on the Copernicus Programme, underpinned by the Delegation Agreement, although this area is outside EEA's core activities. In some cases, cooperation **focused on specific activities**: for example, regarding **marine issues**, mainly on WISE marine; regarding **transport**, on the TERM report; and on **regional policy**, focused on the Urban Atlas. In the area of agriculture policy, the **degree of cooperation** has been **weak** and did not go beyond the agreement on AEIs.

The different and, in some cases, limited level of cooperation across policy areas is coupled with a limited use of EEA information and outputs among the sector policy DGs, as highlighted under Q2 (see Section 4.3.3.4).

Overall, there have been improvements over the evaluation period, such as the strengthened consultation process on EEA's programming documents. However, different degrees of coordination were established at bilateral level and the examples of weak cooperation in some policy areas exist. The findings under Q2 and Q10 point to the need for improved cooperation across the EEA and relevant policy DGs, to ensure systematic cooperation and identification of opportunities for collaboration.

Conversely, the **coordination** established **between** the **EEA and the European Parliament has continued and has been strengthened**, compared to the previous evaluation period. The European Parliament takes part in the consultation on the EEA's programming documents and there are regular contacts between the EEA and the ENVI Committee of the European Parliament. Positive examples of cooperation and alignment of the work of the two institutions have been found.

These findings are based on desk research and interviews, and cover sectorial policy DGs selected on the basis of the areas of cooperation with the EEA. The input collected through interviews have been confirmed and consolidated through further desk research and interviews to ensure triangulation. It should also be considered that the

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[456] Selected on the basis of relevant policy areas and interlinkages with the EEA's activities.

work of the EEA is relevant to many policy areas. This broad scope limits the possibility to provide a detailed analysis across all policy areas.

8   ASSESSMENT OF EU ADDED VALUE

Q11: What has been the EU added value of the EEA? What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?;

Q12: What would be the most likely consequences at the EU level of stopping the EEA and Eionet?

This chapter presents the findings with respect to the evaluation criterion on EU added value (EAV). Two main questions have guided the evaluation:

- Q11: What has been the EU added value of the EEA? What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?; and

- Q12: What would be the most likely consequences at the EU level of stopping the EEA and EIONET?

EU added value is additional to the value created by actions of individual Member States. The assessment of EU added value brings together the findings of the other criteria listed in Sections 4 to 7 , presenting the arguments on causality and drawing conclusions, based on the evidence gathered on the performance of the EEA.

8.1   *Q11: What has been the EU added value of the EEA? What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?*

In this section, we present the evidence associated with the key benefits associated with the EEA and Eionet. The relevant judgment criteria are indicated in Table 8-1. When devising the judgement criteria, it was necessary to adopt a pragmatic approach that took in to consideration the need to develop an overall assessment, but also provided a degree of granularity to the assessment.

In respect of the intervention logic the Commission staff working documents SEC(2011) 867 final and SWD(2015) 124 final recommend that the EU added value test is performed on the basis of the following three criteria:

- **Effectiveness**: where EU action is the only way to get results to create missing links, avoid fragmentation, and realise the potential of a border-free Europe.
- **Efficiency**: where the EU offers better value for money, because externalities can be addressed, resources or expertise can be pooled, an action can be better coordinated.
- **Synergy**: where EU action is necessary to complement, stimulate, and leverage action to reduce disparities, raise standards, and create synergies.

The Better Regulation Guidelines provides advice that EU added value may be the result of different factors including coordination gains, legal certainty, greater effectiveness or efficiency, complementarities that could not have been achieved by Member States acting alone. These can be considered to be key benefits.

Given the diversity of the work of the EEA and Eionet, there are a wide number of potential benefits. The key benefits and added value of the EEA and Eionet are derived from the completion of its tasks and objectives that have been appraised in earlier sections of this report. For many of the tasks, there are a number of associated benefits associated with their delivery and there is not a one task, one benefit relationship.

The Better Regulation Guidelines also suggest that, where applicable, the assessment of EU added value should be done with reference to the subsidiarity analysis conducted in a related IA. Whilst there is no associated IA with the EEA and Eionet, this is an important consideration for this question. The principle of subsidiarity is contained within Article 5 of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) and requires the Union to act only if and insofar as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States at either central or local level. Instead, intervention at an EU level is justified on the basis that they can be better achieved for reasons of scale

or effectiveness. In order to appraise this principle, we've sought to appraise where the EEA and Eionet's contribution is considered crucial. Whilst this approach may overlook some of the more moderate contributions from the EEA and Eionet, it seeks to identify clear evidence of EU added value.

The EEA and Eionet comprises of 33 member countries and includes the 28 European Union Member States together with Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. Six West Balkan countries are cooperating countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as Kosovo under the UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99. The definition of EU added value (as provided by the Better Regulation Guidelines) does not extend to the full membership of the EEA and Eionet, as there are member and cooperating countries who are not EU Member States. Accordingly, within Q11 the added value of member and cooperating countries is also examined.

Table 8-1   Judgement criteria and indicators -Q11

Judgement criteria	Indicators
EEA and Eionet are responsible for the provision of key benefits and their contribution is considered crucial (i.e. could not have been achieved by Member States acting alone)	Identification of the key benefits that can be attributed to the EEA and Eionet Assessment of how crucial the EEA and Eionet's role has been in the provision of the key benefits against the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency and synergy
There are benefits with engaging with members beyond EU Member States	Identification of the key benefits that can be attributed to the EEA and Eionet that otherwise could not have been achieved.

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

8.1.1   Evidence of key benefits

As explored in Section 5.2.1.2, the EEA and Eionet have delivered a range of benefits throughout the evaluation period that relate to activities and outputs of the EEA. These benefits are wide-ranging and comprise of a number themes that help to complement, stimulate, and leverage action to reduce disparities, raise standards, and create synergies.

In the following sub-sections, a summary of the evidence from the surveys, case studies (and associated interviews) and stakeholder workshop is provided.

8.1.1.1   Evidence from the surveys

The identification of benefits from the surveys is shown in Section 5.2.1.2. Across the three mini-surveys (with Commission Staff, NRC/NFPs and Management Board Members) there was general agreement that a range of benefits were associated with the performance of the EEA and Eionet. However, each set of respondents expressed different levels of agreement with the various benefits presented in the survey questions which linked to their needs.

For example, the NFP/NRC mini survey highlighted that agreement was strongest for the following benefits:

- Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries
- It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting

These benefits align closely with the needs of the NFP/NRCs and relate to the delivery of effectiveness, efficiency and synergy.

For the Management Board members mini-survey, two other benefits were more strongly agreed to, these were:

- Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other
- Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making

Again, these benefits align with Management Board members' needs and highlight effectiveness and synergy being delivered. Overall the surveys provide some indication that the benefits have not been uniformly experienced. However, given the different needs of the respondents that is somewhat positive.

8.1.1.2 Evidence from the case studies and interviews

Table 8-2 provides a summary of the key benefits as identified in Section 5.2.1.2 alongside some illustrative examples that have been gathered from the case studies.

Table 8-2: Key Benefits alongside illustrative examples from Case Studies

Description of Key Benefits and Associated Examples
Key Benefit 1: Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other
Example from case study: Trends and Projections: Member States acknowledge that data is published and put in context for relevant policy purposes (through the T&P reports or through the Commissions Progress Reports), and address issues of relevance to national policy making. It also helps in benchmarking Member States against other Member States. Thus, it makes sense for Member States to keep on reporting data, and having a tangible deliverable, thus puts the topic more in the spotlight.   Relation to EAV: The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness and synergy. Benchmarking performance would unlikely to be able to be conducted with national countries acting alone.
Key Benefit 2: High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers
Example from case study: ETS: Data and resulting analyses report available to the Commission, Member States/member countries, carbon market, other regional emission trading schemes. Data crucial for compliance checking across the EU-28 and EEA-EFTA countries.   Relation to EAV: The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness. The delivery of high quality data may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.
Key Benefit 3: Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making
Example from case study: SOER: The SOER brings together a wide range of knowledge across a number of thematic areas that enables policy makers to see the bigger picture. Key beneficiaries are EU and Member State policy makers.   Relation to EAV: The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness and synergy. The delivery of EU wide assessments that is relevant to policy making may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.
Key Benefit 4: Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data
Example from case study: ETS: There is broad consensus among the interviewees that the tasks carried out by the EEA on the Article 21 reporting has provided EU added value in terms of streamlining reporting processes, monitoring in the form of collection and interpretation of data, QA/QC, and identification of non-compliance issues and pitfalls in the reporting.   Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness, efficiency and synergy. The delivery of standardised tools may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.

Key Benefit 5: Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries

Example from case study:

Copernicus: The work of the EAGLE group aims to compare and harmonise methodologies related to land monitoring. The involvement of NRCs in the implementation of the Copernicus tasks facilitates the exchange of good practices between national experts.

Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of efficiency and synergy. Exchange of knowledge and best practice may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.

Key Benefit 6: Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation

Example from case study:

F-gases: The Montreal Protocol spells out that member countries can chose to fulfil their reporting obligations at a regional rather than individual country basis. The Commission and EEA have taken this burden at EU level (so far concerning ODS and in the near future f-gases), hence providing a service to Member State authorities who would have otherwise had to set up their own systems. Having this work assembled at EU level avoids duplication of work.

Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of efficiency and synergy. Reduced burden on EU environmental and climate legislation may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.

Key Benefit 7: Coordination of activities between Member States and preparation for the future

Example from case study:

Nature: The support to Member States on harmonised data report supports the coordination of Member State activities. ETC/BD's work on biogeographical regions has helped to coordinate the designation of Natura 2000 sites among MS.

Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness, efficiency and synergy. Coordination of activities between Member States may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.

Key Benefit 8: Provision of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken

Example from case study:

SOER: The products associated with the SOER are valued by the Commission and MEPs alike. It is a unique product that provides a holistic assessment and therefore increases the amount of activity that otherwise would be taken.

Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness, efficiency and synergy. By its very nature, the completion of tasks that otherwise would not be conducted by national countries acting alone is a demonstration of EAV.

Key Benefit 9: Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments

Example from case study:

Trend and Projections: At international level, the EEA data work has been extremely important for the Commission in relation to the international negotiations, and has helped in providing best practises e. g. to both middle income countries and developing countries the incentive to commit to reduce GHG emissions because the EU has been in a position to show that it is possible to do this and still have a growing economy.

Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of efficiency and synergy. Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.

Key Benefit 10: Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)

Example from case study:

Nature: The strong partnership and collaborative working relationship between DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC/BD supported better coordination and coherence on work under the Nature Directives. EEA and ETC/BD have built unparalleled knowledge that supports DG ENV and MS in the implementation of the Directives.

Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness and synergy. Long-term partnership may not be achieved by national countries acting alone.

Key Benefit 11: Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality

Example from case study:

Nature: In relation to work on the Nature Directives, the EEA and ETC/BD are seen as trustworthy, reliable entities by DG ENV.

Relation to EAV:

The achievement of this benefit helps to demonstrate the delivery of effectiveness. An impartial, trusted, reliable entity may not be delivered by national countries acting alone.

Whilst each of these benefits have been identified, they are not understood to be universally delivered across all of the work and outputs of the EEA and Eionet. The case studies alongside the interviews, provide a useful summary of the extent by which they were deemed to exist in a range of thematic and horizontal aspects of the EEA and Eionet's work.

Table 8-3 provides a summary of the case studies identifying both a crucial and insignificant contribution to the delivery of these benefits throughout the evaluation period.

Table 8-3: Assessment of the Case Studies with a Crucial and Insignificant Contribution to Identified Key Benefits

Benefits	Case Studies Identifying a Crucial Contribution	Case Studies Identifying None or Insignificant Contribution
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	Copernicus, ETS, Nature, SOER, Trends and Projections and Freshwater	F-gases, Waste
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	Copernicus, ETS, F-gases, Nature and Trends and Projections	
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	Nature and SOER	Copernicus
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	Nature	Waste

Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	Nature	
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation	F-gases, Nature and Freshwater	Copernicus, ETS and Waste
Coordination of activities between Member States and preparation for the future	Nature	ETS and F-gases
Provision of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken;	Copernicus, F-gases and Nature	ETS and Trends and Projections
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	F-gases, Nature and Trends and Projections	Copernicus, Waste and Freshwater
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	Copernicus, ETS, F-gases, Nature and Trends and Projections	SOER
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	Copernicus, ETS, F-gases, Nature, Trends and Projections and Freshwater	

Source: Based on case studies' authors' assessment

Where the contribution to achieving a benefit is considered crucial, alongside little evidence of an insignificant contribution, then it provides some indication that there may be significant EU added value. Two key benefits emerge meeting these criteria:

- High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers; and
- Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality

Furthermore, there are other benefits that have been considered crucial in a large number of case studies, but also identified in a smaller number of case studies as having none or insignificant contribution. These provide indication that there may also be significant EU added value, but likely to be for certain aspects of the EEA's work. These benefits include:

- Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other;

- Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation;

- Provision of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken; and

- Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)

The benefit of high quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers was also asked in the mini surveys as identified in Section 5.2.1.2 and was highlighted as one of the key benefits in each of the surveys. The benefit of an impartial, trusted, reliable entity was not tested in the mini surveys.

8.1.1.3   Evidence from the Stakeholder Workshop

There was agreement amongst participants of the Stakeholder Workshop that many of the key benefits associated with EEA and Eionet were interconnected. In particular, participants highlighted that many of the benefits (and achievement of the EEA's objectives) were closely linked to tasks involved with (high quality) data collection and that this was a key activity that facilitated the delivery of other benefits.

During the workshop, participants were also asked to provide two votes on the benefits which they believed had provided the greatest EU added value. It should be noted that all of the benefits were highlighted in discussion in both sessions and the vote focussed on the benefits that offer the greatest EU added value. As presented in the slide during the plenary session, the three benefits which received the greatest share of the votes were:

- Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other;

- Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making; and

- Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data.

These results differ slightly from the case study findings, but again verify the overall finding that there have been significant benefits provided by the EEA and Eionet during the evaluation period and the EEA has been effective at supporting policy development and implementation of environment and climate policy at EU and national levels. The apparent difference is largely attributable to participants looking at benefits dependent on the EEA and Eionet providing high quality data collection and being seen as a credible impartial and trusted entity (which was confirmed in the discussions).

Participants highlighted that the EEA and Eionet provided both scale and a degree of independence that could not be achieved otherwise. The SOER and the collection, recording, and management of dataflows were the most commonly cited examples of activities that delivered such benefits.

Within the Stakeholder Workshop there was a strong view from participants that were significant benefits that otherwise could not have been achieved from engaging with members beyond EU Member States. These included the following remarks and discussion points:

- The inclusion of all countries ensures that the 'gaps in the maps' issues are minimised and that a more complete assessment can be undertaken.

- Similarly participants also highlighted the inclusion of non-EU28 members as an approach that allowed transboundary impacts to be better understood than otherwise.

- Participants highlighted a benefit of the Eionet and SOER that go beyond the EU. It was noted that representatives from China and USA had sought to learn from the approaches taken by the EEA.

- Furthermore, participants highlighted the point that there isn't a comparable organisation to the EEA and Eionet within the EU. The design of the Eionet was seen as key mechanism to ensure that the EU environmental and climate acquis was transposed effectively in national law, rather than just being copied. In that sense the EEA and Eionet were seen as key mechanisms to build capacity within candidate countries.

- Alongside the capacity building mechanisms, a final additional benefit was development was the exchange of values and priorities between the EU28 and non-EU28.

8.1.1.4   Benefits relating to engaging with members beyond EU Member States

The case studies also identified a range of specific benefits relating to engaging with members beyond EU Member States. For example, within the ETS Case Study, it was noted that as of phase II of the EU ETS (2008-2012), EEA-EFTA members Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway joined the EU ETS. The EEA report on the application of the EU

ETS is thus also covering the performance of these countries and encompassing all of the single market. This allows, in particular, member countries to draw on the EEA expertise and advice as part of the QA/QC processes, to consult on implementation of the legislation and to draw on EU Member State experiences and lessons learned when implementing the EU ETS and MMR legislation. The inclusion of the EEA-EFTA countries are thus ensuring the robustness of the EU ETS beyond the EU-28 and supporting harmonization of environmental legislation across the single market.

In relation to freshwater, the case study observed that EEA has worked with non-EU MS on SoE data flows, including capacity building for EU Accession Countries, including Turkey and countries in the Western Balkans. EEA has also supported non-EU Member States in the development of water body status assessments, to match the work of Member States under the WFD. The 2016 EIONET Freshwater Workshop included a session on the preparation of ecological and chemical status assessments in non-EU Member States, as well as their availability of spatial data. EEA's work beyond EU Member States is relevant as a high share of Europe's waters cross national boundaries and extend beyond the EU itself: for example, almost all Western Balkan countries (which are EEA collaborating countries) are part of the Danube River basin[457]. Norway shares river basins with Sweden and Finland, and Switzerland shares river basins such as the Po, Rhine and Rhone with EU Member States. Lichtenstein is within the Rhine River basin. The international commissions for both the Danube and Rhine have implemented the EU's Water Framework Directive, preparing overview river basin management plans that cover both EU Member States as well as non-Member States. EEA's work under the WFD, such as the recently published report on European Waters, covers the Danube and Rhine River basins.

Interviews with Management Board members from outside the EU28 also highlighted some of the added value of participating in the EEA. These have included the ability to pool resources and provide cost effective solutions that could not have been achieved by Member States acting alone. These benefits have delivered additional efficiency.

Furthermore, it has been noted that there has been an opportunity for the Member countries to influence the EEA, including non-EU Member States. Such members also identified that the EEA/Eionet works well with different countries at different stages of development.

8.1.2   Key findings and conclusions for Q11

The EEA and Eionet have achieved significant levels of EU added value during the evaluation period and the evidence suggests that action has been justified at the EU level. Through the delivery of its tasks the EEA and Eionet has delivered to a wide range of benefits over the evaluation period that could not have been achieved by Member States acting alone.

Perhaps most important is the EEA and Eionet's role in the collection of high quality data and information on environmental issues. This task/benefit is not exclusive to the EEA and Eionet, and can be undertaken by Member States acting alone. However, by undertaking this task at an EU level, there are opportunities to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and synergies associated with data collection.

For example, the gathering of high quality data can directly and indirectly influence the achievement of a number of other benefits that deliver EU added value. These include the ability to benchmark the performance of countries against each other. This was considered a crucial benefit in a number of case studies (including Copernicus, ETS, Nature, SOER, Trends and Projections and Freshwater). Comparable information enables the efficient collection of data and avoids fragmented assessments; thereby improving the effectiveness of policy making.

Other related benefits include the gathering of knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making, and the facilitation of reporting and reduced burden on EU environmental and climate legislation, thereby permitting collection of comparable data. These benefits were considered to be crucial in a large

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[457] Albania and Macedonia, however, have only small catchments within the Danube River basin, however.

number of case studies and enabled efficient data collection and provided synergies that were unlikely to be achieved for a number of thematic areas if the Member States acted alone.

Whilst there is an overall conclusion of the EEA and EIONET contributing to significant levels of EAV, it should be noted that this has not been universal across all of the benefits and some differences have been found in achievement between thematic areas and specific products. For example, there are some benefits which, whilst present, are unlikely to have delivered significant levels of EAV, as limited activity has been undertaken during the evaluation period.

The surveys provide some evidence that the benefits have not been uniformly experienced with different levels of agreement associated with the various benefits presented. Importantly, however, benefits which closely aligned to the respondent's needs were found to have higher levels of agreement.

Furthermore, based on the assessment of the case studies there was some strong evidence to suggest that the involvement of the EEA was not crucial for a number of areas. This includes the exchange of knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries (only identified as crucial in the Nature case study) and coordination of activities between Member States and preparation for the future (again, only identified as crucial in the Nature case study). These reflect the impression that whilst beneficial, the EEA's involvement is not always crucial and some activities can be completed by Member States in the absence of the EEA.

With regard to the engaging with members beyond EU Member States, there is evidence to suggest that a wide range of benefits have been derived that support the achievement of the subsidiarity principle. These have included the ability to pool resources and provide cost effective data gathering schemes (an example of improved efficiency). The benefits are considered by many participants to have flowed in both directions; towards the EU28 and other member and participant countries and demonstrate significant added value.

Overall the EEA has been found to contribute to the delivery of EAV. There is good evidence to suggest that additional effectiveness, efficiencies and synergies are associated with the delivery of many of its tasks; especially where data collection has taken place. The contribution of EAV is significant and crucial in several of the areas studied as case studies, notably climate and nature, but data also points to a very significant role for air quality.

8.2   Q12: What would be the most likely consequences at the EU level of stopping the EEA and Eionet?

For the purposes of this assessment (and in alignment with the research question) we have sought to appraise the added value associated with stopping the EEA and Eionet and instead the functions being completed by national environmental agencies and the European Commission acting alone. The relevant judgment criteria are indicated in Table 8-4.

A key inherent difficultly in this assessment is that the EEA and Eionet are longstanding, with no formal assessment made of alternatives by either Member States or the Commission during the evaluation period. When considering a potential value for money assessment it is not possible to undertake a quantitative assessment of the costs and benefits due to the lack of a quantifiable counterfactual (of by national environmental agencies and the European Commission acting alone), therefore this is not included in this assessment.

It should be noted that during the course of the research there was a general reluctance by participants in the research to consider the impacts associated with stopping the EEA and Eionet. Whilst not a barrier to undertaking the assessment, this has limited the ability to gather in depth evidence.

Given these inherent difficulties, the analysis rests primarily on a qualitative approach in alignment with the judgement criteria (see Appendix A for overview of judgement criteria and indicators applied).

Table 8-4   Judgement criteria and indicators Q12

Judgement criteria	Indicators
The EEA and Eionet's activities could not have been achieved by national environmental agencies and the European Commission acting alone	The EEA and Eionet is considered to be the best placed organisation to perform its various functions Identification of negative impacts associated with stopping the EEA/Eionet

Source: Support study evaluation matrix

8.2.1   Consequences at the EU level of stopping the EEA and Eionet

In the following sub-sections, a summary of the evidence from the surveys, case studies (and associated inter-views) and stakeholder workshop is provided.

8.2.1.1   Evidence from the surveys

Within each of the targeted surveys (MB; NFP/NRC; COM), questions were asked whether the activities and bene-fits associated with the EEA and Eionet could be delivered in their absence.

Within the survey with Commission Staff, respondents were asked to assess to what extent the national institu-tions and the European Commission could have provided the same benefits in the absence of the EEA. The results are shown in the figure as follows.

Figure 8-1   *To what extent could the national institutions and the European Commission have provided the same benefits in the absence of the EEA*
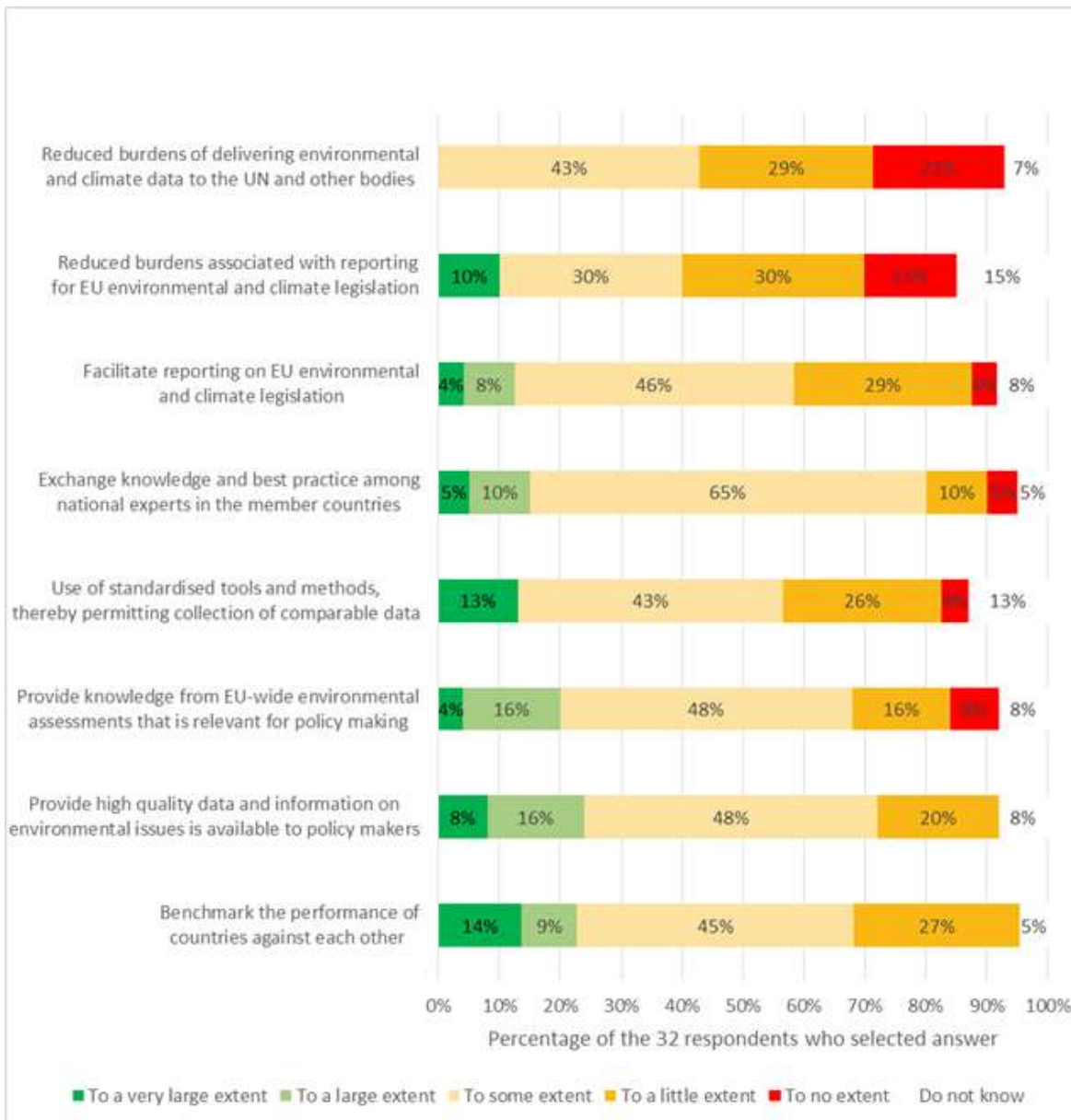
Source: Commission Staff Survey In the absence of EEA, to what extent could the national institutions and the European Commission have provided the same benefits? Valid Responses: 32

Generally, Commission Staff respondents did not appear to have strong opinions regarding the extent to which the existence of the EEA provides benefits beyond national institutions and the European Commission, with 43% - 65% selecting that national institutions and the European Commission could have provided the same benefits as the EEA 'to some extent'.

The survey of the Management Board also examined in the absence of EEA, to what extent could the national institutions provide the key benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries).

Figure 8-2   Q11 – Ability of National Institutions to Provide the Same Benefits in the Absence of the EEA
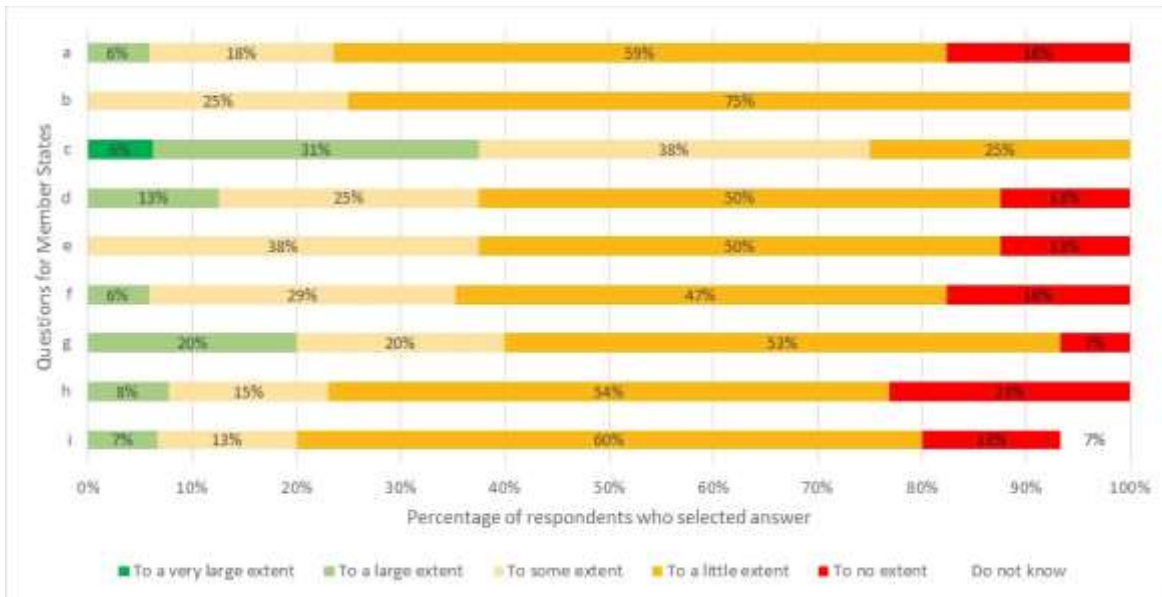
Source: Management Board Survey Question 11: To what extent could national institutions provide the same benefits in the absence of the EEA: a) Benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries; b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments; c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers; d) Development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data; e) Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries; f) Opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting; g) Reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation; h) Reduce burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation; i) Reduce burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies. Valid Responses: a) 17, b) 12 ,c) 16, d) 16, e) 16, f) 17, g) 15, h) 13, i) 15.

The figure above shows that the majority (60% or above) of member country respondents considered that, in the absence of the EEA, national institutions could provide the same benefits (either alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries) to little or no extent, with the exception of the provision of high quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers. Only 30% of respondents felt that national institutions could to little or no extent make high quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers, and 35% felt that they could make it available to a very large or large extent in the absence of the EEA. This finding is could be considered contradictory to the findings in the case studies (shown in Section 8.1.1), where this benefit was highlighted as being a crucial contribution from the EEA and Eionet. There are a number of hypotheses that can be made as to why this apparent contradiction exists:

- Stopping the EEA and Eionet does not imply that the EEA and Eionet never existed. Participants may have understood that data collection techniques established by the EEA and Eionet could be carried forward by the national institutions working alone; and/or
- The interpretation of high quality data may have overlooked the benefit of comparable data between different national institutions.

Both of these hypotheses are speculative and it is not possible to be definitive as to the reasoning why this apparent contradiction exists.

Within the NRC and NFP Survey respondents were also asked in the absence of EEA, to what extent they agreed that national institutions could have provided the key benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries).

Figure 8-3   Agreement with Statements Regarding the Benefits Provided by National Institutions in the Absence of the EEA/Eionet
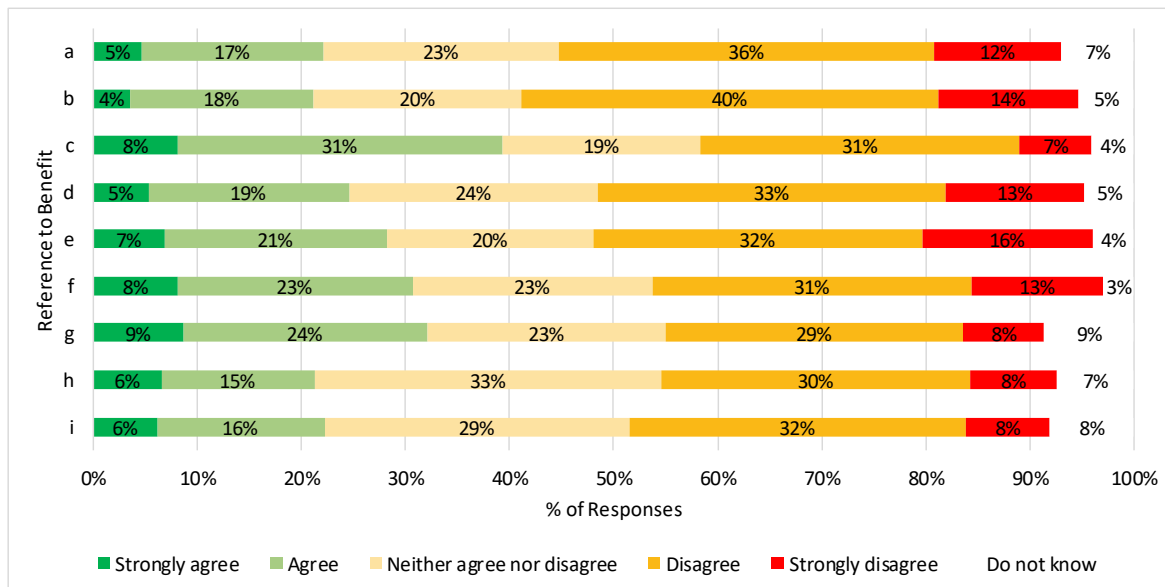
Source: NRC and NFP Mini-survey. Question: In the absence of EEA, to what extent do you agree that national institutions could have provided the same benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries). Benefit Statements (no. of responses): a) Benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries (172); b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments (170); c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers (173); d) Development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data (171); e) The exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries (177); f) Opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting (173); g) Report-ing on EU environmental and climate legislation (140); h) Reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation (108); i) Reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies (99).

In Figure 8-3 above, it can be seen that overall there were more respondents who disagreed (or strongly disa-greed) that national institutions can provide the same benefits as the EEA than there are respondents who agreed (or strongly agreed).

The exception to this is statement c, regarding high quality data and information on environmental issues being available to policy makers, as 38% disagree or strongly disagree with this whereas 39% of respondents agree or strongly agree that national institutions will provide the same level of benefit. This is the highest level of agree-ment for a benefit by a margin of 15 responses. Again, this could be interpreted as being contrary to the evidence collected in the case studies where this benefit was highlighted as being a crucial contribution from the EEA and Eionet (Section 8.1.1).

Considering the evidence presented in the mini-surveys it can summarised that there was some evidence of the added value of the EEA/Eionet. The evidence highlights mixed views across each of the surveys as which benefits provide the greatest added value.

Within the OPC, participants to the stakeholder survey were asked whether the EEA/Eionet best placed to perform its various functions. Over three quarters of respondents reported that the EEA/Eionet was either to '**a very large extent'** or '**large extent'**, best placed to perform all of its duties, as shown in Table 8-5.

Table 8-5: Q3.2 - Is the EEA/Eionet best placed to perform its various functions?

Composite: Is the EEA/Eionet best placed to perform its various functions? (To a very large extent & To a large extent)	No.	%
Setting up criteria and indicators for measuring the state of the environment in differ-ent sectors and themes across Europe	26	87%
Managing environmental monitoring and reporting data	26	87%
Publishing a European State of the Environment Report every five years	25	83%

Undertaking thematic assessments of the state of the environment in selected sectors and themes	25	83%	Source: OPC Stakeholder Survey. 3.2: Is the EEA/Eionet best placed to perform its various func-tions? Valid Re-sponses: 30
Providing environmental data and information to support policy development at EU and national level	24	80%	
Ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public	23	77%	
Supporting European-level knowledge creation and exchange among institutions and organisations dealing with environmental information and knowledge	23	77%	
Providing analyses of long-term economic, social and environmental megatrends	23	77%	

8.2.1.2   Evidence from the case studies and interviews

The case studies provide a framework by which the Article 1 and 2 objectives can be assessed. Within each of the case studies there are a range of negative impacts associated with stopping the EEA and Eionet. These are sum-marised in Table 8-6 alongside the corresponding case studies.

Table 8-6: Negative Impacts Associated with Stopping the EEA/Eionet

Negative Impacts	Case Studies Identifying Negative Impacts
Inability to meet international commitments	F-gases
Increase in costs for Member States	Nature, Waste, F-gases, SOER, Trends and Projections, Fresh-water
Lack of leadership on environmental data	ETS, F-gases, Freshwater
Poorer data quality	Nature, Copernicus, ETS, F-gases, SOER, Trends and Projec-tions, Freshwater
Divergence of standards and lack of comparability of data	Copernicus, Waste, F-gases, SOER, Trends and Projections, Freshwater
Loss of expertise	Nature, Waste, ETS, F-gases, Freshwater

Source: Case Studies, See Appendix D

Whilst many negative impacts of stopping the EEA were identified, the opinion that the EEA and Eionet are irre-placeable was not universal. For some aspects of the EEA and Eionet, their respective functions may be able to be provided by other organisations. As identified in the waste case study, the provision of data on waste and re-sources is collected by Eurostat, rather than the EEA and Eionet. This demonstrates that other EU organisations and institutions can develop and deploy data collection methods and standards in some limited circumstances. It is therefore feasible that other organisations and institutions can fulfil this role on behalf of the Commission, or in fact the Commission could do the activities themselves.

In respect of ad-hoc research to support EU policy making, it is noted that the EEA does not have exclusivity on this task and a significant quantity of research is already provided by alternative organisations and institutions to the Commission through various framework agreements as discussed in Section 7.2.3. Whilst it will be largely de-pendent on the nature of the specific research question, it does appear that this function is not exclusive to the EEA and could therefore be provided by alternative organisations and institutions to the EEA and Eionet, albeit at a greater cost.

8.2.1.3   Evidence from the Stakeholder Workshop

During the Stakeholder Workshop participants were strongly of the view that national actors and private organisa-tions could not deliver the EEA's tasks as effectively as the EEA and Eionet. Participants also highlighted the nega-tive impact of increased costs with the delivery of its tasks should the EEA and Eionet be stopped. However, par-ticipants were not able to elaborate on the particular details on what activities would deliver the additional costs.

Many of the participants were unable to envisage a scenario whereby the EEA and Eionet did not exist. It is clear some functions are entirely unique to the EEA and Eionet and cannot be easily provided by national environment agencies and the Commission acting alone. For example, the Eionet itself is unlikely to be provided by national environment agencies without a central coordinating institution.

8.2.2 Key findings and conclusions for Q12

Throughout the evaluation period the EEA and Eionet have provided a diverse range of activities and have interacted with a large number of institutions and organisations. The predominant view from these institutions and organisations was that the EEA and Eionet are trusted and well respected. They are seen by many as impartial and experts in their field. Given also that they have held this position for such a long period of time, for many tasks they are seen as extremely difficult to replace.

There was strong evidence gathered within the case studies on a number of negative impacts being identified as being likely if the EEA and Eionet were stopped. These included poorer data quality and a likely divergence of standards and lack of comparability of data. These negative impacts are closely aligned to the provision of high quality data and information. Hence, there is a degree of conflict with the case studies and the evidence derived from the mini-surveys.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of the impacts of stopping the EEA and Eionet was derived from participants in the Stakeholder Workshop. Many were unable to envisage a scenario whereby the EEA and Eionet could be stopped.

Participants pointed to increased costs if the EEA and Eionet were stopped. This provides some evidence to suggest that without the EEA and Eionet, the costs for achieving the objectives within the various Treaties may increase, however, a fully quantifiable assessment has not been made due to the lack of a quantified counterfactual scenario.

It is clear some functions are entirely unique to the EEA and the Eionet itself is unlikely to be provided by national environment agencies. For example, the Eionet itself is unlikely to be replicated in its current form and it would be difficult to envisage a scenario whereby a comprehensive state of the environment report could be provided to the same standard. Due to their legal status, national institutions have a natural monopoly on the gathering of environmental information; accordingly, this expertise is highly unlikely to be provided by other organisations and institutions.

The weakest evidence was derived from the mini-surveys. The response from the Commission Staff indicated that less than 25 per cent of respondents thought to a large, or very large extent that the key benefits could be provided by national institutions and the European Commission in the absence of the EEA. However, a sizable proportion (between 43% - 65%) selected to some extent to the same question; thus this does not indicate that Commission staff were of the view that the benefits of the EEA could be provided by national institutions and the European Commission alone.[458] The other mini-survey's and OPC also provided evidence of added value but interestingly, the evidence was weakest for the key benefit of the provision of high quality data and information on environmental issues being available to policy makers.

It would be expected that as the environment has a transnational character, the collection of high quality information for the whole of Europe is unlikely to be achieved by Member States acting alone or, indeed, without strong international co-operation. However, despite being identified as a key benefit, the evidence from the mini-survey results indicated that in the absence of the EEA/Eionet that national institutions could still collect high quality data; this might be explained by the fact that national respondents are likely to be gathering data at a local and national level and therefore it would be highly surprising for respondents to be of the view that they have no contribution could be made by national institutions.

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[458] Note that, in line with evaluation questions, the mini-survey question did not directly address the issue of subsidiarity as the alternative to the EEA and EIONET was not the use of national institutions alone, but the use of national institutions and the European Commission.

9   ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE COMMON APPROACH TO DECENTRALISED AGENCIES

Aside from the evaluation criteria in the Better Regulation Guidelines, the terms of reference also required that the support study assess the extent to which the EEA was acting in accordance with the Common Approach to decentralised agencies as set out in the Joint Statement of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission on Decentralised Agencies[459]. This assessment was carried out by considering each of the numbered points in the Joint Statement and assessing the formal conformity of the Founding Regulation with each point as well as the practical conformity through documents adopted by the Management Board, e.g. rules of procedure of the MB and SC, policies and work programmes.

Appendix E provides the detailed assessment of each point in a tabular overview. Based on the assessment documented in the table, the main findings are that:

- There is a high degree of conformity with the points in the Joint Statement;

- Where there are cases of non-conformity of the Founding Regulation, this must also been seen in the light that this was adopted at a time (1990) when fewer agencies existed and a common approach towards agencies was not developed. The main issue identified in relation to non-conformity of the Founding Regulation concerns that the Founding Regulation does not include provision for regular evaluation and does not include a 'sunset clause' (ref. point 4 and 60).

- In respect to the 'practical conformity', overall it is found that the EEA has adapted its practises during the evaluation period to conform to CADA requirements. The few points where conformity could be improved include:

  - Annual work programmes and reports were not entirely in conformity with the template provided by the Commission and there was a lack of specification of indicators and targets against specific activities and lack of reporting against key performance indicators and objectives set out in the MAWP (ref. point 27, 31, 32, 47)

  - Annual work programmes and reports were not very specific on how recommendations from evaluations were followed up (ref. point 30)

  - The MAWPs and AWPs were not very detailed on resource allocation to activities although the situation improved with the establishment of activity-based budgeting (ref. points 28, 40)

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[459] [117]

10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix A Evaluation matrix

This appendix describes the judgement criteria, indicators and data sources applied to address the evaluation questions. As mentioned in section 2.1 of the report, the evaluation matrix was fine-tuned as several stages of the support study compared to the first version which was presented in the draft inception report. The three main stages were:

1. Responding to comments on the draft inception report

The draft inception report was submitted in December 2016 and advance of the kick-off meeting held in the same month. It was then revised and resubmitted end January 2017 reflecting comments received during and after the ISSG kick-off meeting held in December 2016. The ISSG provided comments on the revised version on 27 February and the final version was submitted 2 May 2017.

The revision of the evaluation matrix following the kick-off meeting included first and foremost a revision of the approach to efficiency, which followed the agreement at the kick-off meeting that the support study should respond to the questions listed in the Evaluation Roadmap rather than the questions listed in the Terms of Reference as well as a comment that efficiency should address costs and benefits.

In addition, the approach to addressing effectiveness was further detailed and specific reference was made to relevant tasks of the Founding Regulation and judgement criteria were specified for assessing the effectiveness of the EEA in implementing a number of the tasks (ref Founding Regulation, Article 2).

The comment round during February 2017 included only two minor comments on the evaluation matrix and thus no major changes were done.

2. Revisions in connection with work on the interim report

After the submission of the final inception report on 2 May 2017, the work on data collection and consultation was in focus as well as preparation of the interim report, which was submitted 26 September 2017. During this period, the support study experienced some challenges in working with the evaluation questions. It was found that there were many overlaps and interlinkages between the questions, which led to a complex and unclear structure in the responses and uncertainty about where to present what evidence. Furthermore, the differences between the questions in the terms of reference and the Evaluation Roadmap further complicated the work. A progress meeting was held with the ISSG in June 2017. This meeting agreed that the support study should address the questions in the Evaluation Roadmap and the report from the support study should be structured accordingly. Consequently, the evaluation matrix was updated by the support study and the revised version was submitted in connection with the interim report.

The interim report was discussed with the Commission at a meeting on 7 November 2017 (based on comments received from the ISSG) and this resulted in additional changes made to the evaluation matrix to further clarify the structure of the responses to the questions in the Evaluation Roadmap.

As a result of the meeting 7 November, the evaluation matrix was revised and submitted on 14 November 2017. The main conclusions of the meeting which were factored into the revision of the evaluation matrix are reported in the box below.

Box: Conclusions of the meeting to discuss judgement criteria and indicators for each question on 7 November 2017

Coherence: Q10/Q11:
- Q10 will focus on EKC partners and their tasks as well as overlaps/synergy potentials with the EEA. This will be based on desk review of the mandates

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of the institutions as well as agreements and documentation of consultation for AWPs and information from interviews on other (more informal) mechanisms for cooperation.

- Q11 willl look at coherence with other (sector) DGs and will analyse coherence between Founding Reg/(M)AWP of EEA and strategies / management plans and APs of other DGs and the mechanisms in place to ensure coherence between them. It can also cross-reference to Q2, which will handle the question of mainstreaming (extent to which EEA products are used by other (sector) DGs in particular)

Relevance:
- Relevance will focus on the Founding Regulation and the relevance of the objectives, tasks, and areas of activity.

- Q7 will focus on objectives and tasks

- Q8 will focus on areas of activity and other aspects of the Regulation that are relevant to analyse

(the extent to which EEA work programmes and actual activities are responding to the policy framework will be considered under effectiveness Q3)

Efficiency and overlaps Q5 and Q6 with effectiveness Q3
- The analysis of the programming / governance issues will be focused under Q5 (this can be cross-referenced in Q3 and Q6)

- Q6 is effectively covered under Q3 and Q5 and will not be answered separately

3. Revisions in connection with the draft final report

The final revision of the evaluation matrix took place in connection with the analysis for the draft final report and final. This consisted mainly in some fine-tuning of indicators and data sources based on what turned out to be possible given data availability as well as evidence collected. In addition, some few adjustments to the judgement criteria were made – in particular under relevance to address comments from the ISSG on the draft final report – in the process of elaborating the final report.

Q1: To what extent has the Agency and the EIONET network achieved its objectives and implemented the tasks set out in its mandate and in its multi-annual work programme? What are the key factors influencing/restricting progress and how do they link to the agency (if at all)? Does the Agency consistently perform the same tasks with the same quality level?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
Judgement criteria	**Indicators**	**Data sources**
EEA planned activities and outputs achieved	Annual reports document that planned activities and outputs as set out in MAWP and AWP are achieved on time	Desk review of MAWP, AWP and annual reports Publication plan
EEA and Eionet established and coordinated in an effective way (Task (a))	No. of Eionet meetings held, and number held as planned vs. postponed or cancelled. No. of NFPs / NRCs per country and topic. 'Vacant' vs 'filled' NFP/NRC positions per country. Ref Common Approach, point 22. Clarity of roles of Eionet structure and roles of NFPs and NRCs ETCs/NFPs/NRCs consider that Eionet is coordinated effectively: Meetings considered useful. Work programming procedures considered suitable and effective. Well-functioning planning and reporting systems for Eionet entities (ETCs, NFPs, NRCs)	Documentation on meetings and participants from the EEA. Documentation on NFP/NRC positions. Work programmes. NFP/NRC survey Interviews / workshop / focus groups with NFPs, ETCs.
The EEA/Eionet is providing effective support for reporting requirements (Task (c))	Effectiveness of reportnet and other information tools used for reporting: Continued development to include agreed reporting requirements, up-time during the evaluation period, ease of use for member countries, EEA and Commission. Requirements of the Mechanism for Monitoring Regulation and the 5 other pieces of legislation which provide specific tasks to the Agency are met Requirements of reporting in other areas where a role for the EEA is legally required or otherwise agreed are met. Identification of areas where reporting requirements are considered not met. The support provided enables the European Union and the member countries to meet their international reporting obligations	Desk studies of documents which provide evidence as to whether reporting requirements are met. Notably study for the fitness check of monitoring and reporting requirements and study on reporting requirements for the energy and climate legislation. Interviews: Views from stakeholders (Commission, member countries) on level of satisfaction with EEA support for reporting requirements, including their satisfaction with relevant information tools. Case studies

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
The EEA / Eionet is providing an effective system for monitoring, informing, assessing and generating knowledge on the state of the environment in Europe (Task (e))	Indicators and assessment criteria are relevant to generate knowledge of SOE Data collected, processed, QA'ed and disseminated by EIONET according to agreed deadlines in a timely and reliable manner Datasets and indicators updated regularly (and accordance with stakeholders' needs) EIONET actors are satisfied with the tools and processes being applied to support the processes EIONET data are used for assessments of SOE	Desk studies of priority indicators report as well as other key documents providing evidence on effectiveness of the system, including EIONET user surveys Interviews with stakeholders in the Commission and member countries on suitability of indicators and knowledge creation Survey, interviews and workshop with EIONET actors to gain the assessment of effectiveness of system SOER case study. OPC
The EEA is effectively managing data and information systems	Effective IT management Effective systems for storing and sharing of data among the EEA, ETCs, NFPs and NRCs enabling joint work on analysis and assessment Effective management of thematic web-sites (focusing in particular on WISE, BISE and Climate-ADAPT) expressed in high user satisfaction as well as well-functioning cooperation between the EEA and the Commission. Progress towards Inspire-compliance of spatial data infrastructure in 2018	Data on IT systems and management from EEA Audit on data and information management Survey and interviews data on stakeholder assessment of thematic web-sites Documents relating to INSPIRE work. Survey data on degree of support provided by EEA to Inspire compliance.
The EEA / Eionet is effectively issuing a SOER every five years as well as indicator reports at suitable intervals (Task (h))	SOER published and providing an overview of state of, trends and prospects for the environment in Europe Indicator reports published (number/types) Stakeholders satisfied with the SOER and indicator reports	Desk study: SOER Case study: SOER Desk study: Number and type of indicator reports. EEA user survey on SOER and indicator reports. Open public consultation and interviews with stakeholders
The EEA / Eionet is effectively producing assessments other than SOER (Task e)	Assessments are produced according to plans and cover the various topics (art. 3 of Founding Regulation)	Desk study: Publication plans, MAWP, AWP, CAARs

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
The EEA / Eionet is effectively stimulating the development of environmental forecasting techniques (Task (i))	Timely delivery of activities and outputs in relation to long-term economic, social and environmental megatrends Stimulation of foresight oriented discussions about transitions to a more sustainable society	Desk review: Identification of such activities and their outputs through review of annual reports and work programmes. Interviews with Commission, member countries and research community on effectiveness of the EEA / Eionet in this area. Survey NFP/NRCs
The EEA is effectively ensuring the broad dissemination of environmental information (Task (m))	Communication strategy is coherent, relevant and coordinated with the Commission (Common Approach point 26) The EEA effectively engages in a wide range of dissemination activities, using targeted channels The EEA actively monitors stakeholder engagement	EEA Communication Framework MB Survey Media-monitoring data from the EEA Annual reports
The EEA is effectively assisting the Commission in the diffusion of the results of environmental research (task o)	The EEA has cooperated with DG RTD with the aim to exploit the insights that result from Horizon2020	Review of MAWP, AWP and CAARs OPC Interview RTD and EEA staff

Q2: How effective is the EEA's work against its core objectives, across all environmental topics and across all activities (management of reporting flows, policy assessment, prospective analyses)?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
Information provided by the EEA/Eionet is objective, reliable, comparable and accessible across the countries concerned	Citing and use of EEA information shows that it is regarded as authoritative source Key stakeholders find that the information is objective, reliable, comparable and accessible Factors identified for ensuring the above	Review of evidence of use & citations of EEA information Views from stakeholders in open public consultation, interviews, surveys and workshop Case studies

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
The information and knowledge created by the EEA/EIONET is widely disseminated	Level of awareness and use of EEA and its products Visibility of EEA among a variety of stakeholders (NGOs, research institutions, industry, stakeholders outside environment/climate area)	Results from analysis of tasks (h) and (m) above EEA user tracking documentation OPC Mini-surveys Interviews Case studies
The information and knowledge provided by the EEA/Eionet is useful for and applied in policy development and policy implementation for the Union and its members	Uptake of EEA findings in policy documents (key general policy documents in environment and climate policy as well as specific ones in case studies) Stakeholders (member countries, Commission and European Parliament) find that information is useful for policy-making and policy implementation and can provide specific examples (also of situations and outputs that are considered not useful) Timeliness, responsiveness and quality of input for selected policy processes (case studies). Results of analysis under relevance question 1	Views from stakeholders in open public consultation, interviews and NFP workshop NFP/NRC + COM surveys Analysis of a selection of key policy-making processes (7th EAP, EIR, energy union) to see how EEA products were used Analysis of use of EEA products for policy development and policy implementation in case studies Tracking citing and use of selected products (Dods information provided by the EEA) *NB: link to relevance*
Are EEA information and products being used by 'other DGs' (policy DGs in other areas – notably energy, transport, agriculture)? How have EEA information and products influenced 'non-environmental/climate' policies? (mainstreaming)	DGs (other than ENV and CLIMA) consider EEA information and products useful and can give concrete examples of their use Key policy documents from other DGs make reference to and actively use data and information from the EEA EEA (M)AWPs refer to other sector policies	Interviews with 'other' DGs COM survey Analysis of key policy documents identified on basis of their mentioning in MAWP and AWPs as well as COM survey and interviews to solicit nature of influence Case study on ETS – on link to DG ENER
Through better policy making and awareness creation, the EEA/Eionet is contributing to enhanced environmental protection in Europe as well as to sustainable development	Results from the other judgement criteria summarising: case study findings and stakeholder responses	Views from stakeholders Case studies

Q3: How appropriate is the balance of activities in relation to different environmental topics considering the evolving environment and climate policy landscape and the needs of the main stakeholders? How effective has the EEA been in anticipating and dealing with evolving policies?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
The EEA has responded to needs of its main stakeholders in relation to new policy making - 7th EAP - Juncker agenda -- IAS - Energy union - SDGs - Circular economy package	Mirroring of new policies in work programmes (EEA and ETC) Changes in EEA staff compared to policy development Changes in EEA expenses compared to policy development Changes in NFP/NRC/ETC set-up mirroring policy developments Perceived responsiveness of EEA by stakeholders Comparison of previous and current priorities	Data on resources (staff) and how they are distributed on topics/tasks. Document review: EEA staff and Eionet organisation + work programmes. Study on Agencies' contribution to Juncker agenda[460] COM survey and NFP/NRC survey Case studies Interviews with Commission officials (primarily DG ENV and CLIMA) and MB members

Q4: To what extent have the EEA and EIONET been efficient in implementing the evolving tasks set out in their mandate and programming documents?

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[460] The ISSG has informed that there is a recent study produced by the EU agencies' Network on agencies' contributions to the Juncker Agenda. The results of this study have not been verified by the Commission.

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
Positive cost-benefit ratio related to EEA / Eionet activities	Costs compared to benefits	Surveys to indicate time used by various stakeholders on Eionet tasks
		Analysis of budget figures and previous EEA assessments of time spent by NFPs
		Interviews with stakeholders
		Surveys to verify benefits
		Case studies
		Literature on monetised estimates of benefits
Extent to which efficiency gain potentials have been exploited by the EEA / Eionet during the evaluation period, including potentials for efficiency gains in relation to ICT management	Existence of an efficiency gain strategy in the EEA	Document review, MAWP, AWP, MB minutes
	Examples of efficiency gains achieved or not exploited identified through interviews and case studies	Case studies
	Cost of IT tools related to number of reporting and data flows supported by IT over time during the evaluation period	Interviews
	Identification of possibilities for reducing costs from interviews and case studies, e.g. through exploiting options for synergy between systems or tools, investments in tools to reduce operational costs.	Analysis of budget figures and estimates from the EEA (e.g. from monitoring and reporting fitness check)
		EEA interviews

Q5: To what extent are the internal mechanisms for programming, monitoring, reporting and evaluating the EEA adequate for ensuring accountability and appropriate assessment of the overall performance of the Agency while minimising the administrative burden of the Agency and its stakeholders? Have the recommendations from the previous evaluation been followed-up and what lessons have been learned since then?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
Transparent priorities and options expressed in draft (M)AWP enabling the MB to take part in strategic decision-making (ref. recommendation from the previous evaluation)	Clear communication on strategic choices and priorities (budget) to activities. Clarity of objectives and indicators (RACER). Adherence to guidelines and best practices on programming and budgeting Common Approach points 27-32 and 40-44 and 46-49).	Desk study: (M)AWPs, Guidelines on programming and budgeting Survey MB members

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
Transparent consultation procedures on (M)AWPs	Clear documentation of comments received and how they have been handled and clear feed-back to those providing comments on how the comments have been handled with rationale to decisions provided.	Interviews with key stakeholders Analysis of the documented consultation process on (M)AWPs: Comments and responses Audit IAS
There is an appropriate balance of interests in the MB considering policy areas handled by the EEA	Representation, voting rights and rules in the MB (as per Regulation and compared to Common Approach for Decentralised Agencies, point 10-20) Relevant stakeholders (member countries, Commission DGs, European Parliament) are sufficiently represented in MB / Bureau and their views thus heard and taken on board in a balanced way Views of stakeholders on whether there is an appropriate balance	Desk review of Regulation, Joint statement on Common Approach, MB and Bureau minutes MB survey Interviews with MB members
Decision-making systems / governance structure enable effective and efficient decision-making	• Amount of time and personnel resources devoted to governance functions • Clear roles and distribution of tasks between the MB and the Bureau • Clarity in strategic choices and priorities and involvement of MB in prioritisation	• Desk review: Founding Regulation, relevant documents on roles and procedures • Interviews with EEA staff and Management Board members (Commission and Member Countries), Scientific Committee • MB session • SC session • MB targeted survey
Procedures and systems in the agency support efficient programming and reporting	• Initiatives to streamline and simplify the work programming, monitoring and reporting (in particular those stemming from previous evaluations) • Adherence to guidelines and good practices in programme monitoring and oversight	• Internal documents and planning system review • Review of audit from 2012 • Interviews with senior management staff and administrative staff dealing with programming systems and IT

Q6: Are the objectives set out in the mandate of the EEA/EIONET founding regulation, including its priority areas in article 3, still fit-for-purpose given current needs? In particular:

- Is the balance of the EEA work sufficiently geared towards EU regulatory work?

- Have some of the initially non-core activities of the Agency become part of its core-business? What was the rationale in such cases?

- How well adapted are the EEA and EIONET to technological and scientific advances in the fields of e-government, earth observation and big data?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
The EEA's objective as specified in the Founding Regulation is appropriate for the EU's environment and climate legislation and policy	Objectives compared to existing policy framework	Desk review of the EEA Regulation and relevant policy documents
The EEA's priority areas of work as specified in the Founding Regulation	Comparison of areas listed in Article 3 with actual policy framework requirements and evolving practices of the EEA and Eionet	Desk review of the EEA Regulation and relevant policy documents
The Founding Regulation has an appropriate emphasis on regulatory work considering current policy framework and demands from stakeholders	Founding Regulation's focus on regulatory work versus expectations of stakeholders and actual balance of tasks towards regulatory work (regulatory work defined as work in support of implementation of legislation or development of new legislation)

Degree of focus on regulatory work in article 1 and 2 of the Founding Regulation | Desk review

Interviews with Commission and Member States

Stakeholder workshop |
| Agreement between EEA and European Commission on priorities among EEA core and non-core tasks

Activities not financed from core budget and their importance and history in the organisation / 'organisational fit' and relation with objectives of the EEA / Eionet | Existence of agreement(s) on EEA non-core activities

Integration of non-core activities in core business (Copernicus as detailed example) | Review of the EEA Regulation

Interviews with Commission (DG ENV and DG CLIMA)and EEA staff

MAWP and annual work programmes

Case study on Copernicus |
| Extent to which the EEA has used new technologies, including Earth observation, to improve the quality of information and of its outputs

Appropriateness of Founding Regulation in providing a sufficient framework for such tasks and activities | Use of Earth observation data in EEA outputs

Eionet organisation as set up by Founding Regulation and its appropriateness for facilitating use of Earth observation data

Continued relevance of data and information from Eionet considering extent to which Earth observation data is used | Review of the EEA Regulation

Document review: EU legislation and EEA work programmes

Interviews with Commission (DG ENV and DG CLIMA)

Case studies, e.g. CopernicusNFP/NRC survey |

Q7: How far are the Agency's tasks and resources aligned with key EU policies?

- Which Agency tasks are absolutely essential to deliver on these priorities?

- Which Agency tasks are necessary to continue implementing existing and evolving obligations under the Treaties and EU legislative framework?

- Which Agency tasks have become redundant / negative priorities?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
EEA's tasks as specified in Founding Regulation appropriate for the EU's environment and climate legislation and policy	Match / degree of consistency between tasks and activities/outputs/objectives in MAWP and AWPs Match / degree of consistency between tasks and key policy documents and ensuing requirements Degree of internal coherence between tasks seen in the context of the MDIAK chain Relevance of tasks in light of findings under relevance (other questions), effectiveness and coherence Stakeholders' perception of relevance of tasks seen in the light of prevailing policy landscape and their needs	Desk review of the EEA Regulation and relevant policy documents

Q8: How relevant is the EEA to EU citizens?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
Level of interest in environmental information and awareness among the general public of the EEA and its flagship publications (e.g. SOER) is high and positive.	Importance of environmental protection and information seen from the citizen perspective (Eurobarometer) Levels of awareness and use of EEA products by citizens or organisations representing citizens Use of social media and interest in postings/tweets etc. made by the EEA	Eurobarometer surveys Data on press coverage and downloads from EEA User survey Interviews with stakeholders (industry, NGOs) Interviews with the EEA, Commission Open public consultation
EEA public web pages are user friendly, visually appealing and easy to use for EU citizens	Interest organisation and citizens' assessment of EEA web pages Assessment of navigability and presentation of information of specific themes by support study team	Interviews with stakeholders (industry, NGOs) Case studies Open public consultation
Non-technical publications and data are regularly downloaded by various non-governmental actors (NGOs, industry) and reported on in the press.	Number of downloads of specific reports Usage of EEA web pages and map services Number of articles in the press on EEA reports	Data on press coverage and downloads from EEA
EEA engaged in citizen science initiatives during the evaluation period	Citizen science activities reflected in (M)AWPs or CAARs	M(AWP) and CAARs

Q9: To what extent is EEA acting in cooperation with the European Commission services, the member countries and other agencies that deal with comparable issues (e.g. the European Chemicals Agency, the European Maritime Safety Agency, the European Food Safety Authority) and bodies to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
EEA has clear roles, vis-à-vis the European Commission, in the management and assessment of data and information reported by the Member States for EU environment and climate policy and in knowledge creation, and duplications of efforts are avoided	Role and tasks of EEA across environment and climate themes as set out in formal mandate/work programmes, compared to role/tasks of other EC DGs (in particular, DG ENV, DG CLIMA, JRC, Eurostat and DG RTD) Relevant agreements, mandates and cooperation mechanisms are in place to avoid overlaps and create synergies Duplication of efforts is avoided; actions taken are complementary; roles reflect each body's comparative strengths	Review of the EEA's MWAPs and AWPs, mandates of other EC DGs Studies and evaluations at EU level (e.g. Fitness Check on environmental monitoring and reporting) Review of internal documents and agreements relating to cooperation, when available (e.g. Technical Agreement on data centres, internal EC documents related to the EKC, internal audits) Interviews with: EEA staff, officials at Commission (including interviews carried out as part of the case studies) Case studies EC mini-survey
The EIONET network has a clear role vis-à-vis bodies involved in EU environment and climate reporting obligations	Synergies established and duplication avoided between EIONET bodies and representatives to committees and working groups coordinated by DG ENV and DG CLIMA	Interviews with: EEA staff, officials at Commission (including interviews carried out as part of the case studies) NFPs workshop Case studies NRC survey Commission survey
EEA has cooperated effectively with other EU agencies on common environment and climate issues	Agreements or other cooperation mechanisms between the EEA and EU agencies working on common issues exist Examples of cooperation; clear delineation of roles in these cases	Review of internal documents and agreements relating to cooperation (when available) Interviews with EEA staff and relevant EU agencies in the scope of the analysis
EEA has cooperated effectively with bodies in member countries on common environment and climate issues as the Agency's work has evolved	Examples of cooperation	Review of internal documents relating to cooperation (when available) Case studies

Q10: To what extent are the procedures and mechanisms put in place effective to ensure that EEA cooperation activities are coherent with the policies and activities of its stakeholders? Are EEA contributions contributing to the mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
There are procedures and mechanisms supporting the cooperation and coordination between the EEA and policy stakeholders acting in other policy areas interlinked with environment and climate topics	Mechanisms and procedures for the coordination with other policy DGs (AGRI, ENER, REGIO, MARE) Mechanisms and procedures for the coordination with other EU institutions (European Parliament)	Review of the EEA's MWAPs and AWPs, mandates of other EC DGs Review of internal documents and agreements relating to cooperation, when available (e.g. inter-service consultation on EEA's MAWP and AWPs, internal audits) Interviews with: EEA staff, officials at Commission (including interviews carried out as part of the case studies) Case studies EC mini-survey
EEA products contribute to the mainstreaming of environmental/climate concerns in other policies	DGs (other than ENV and CLIMA) use EEA products	see Q2

Q12: What has been the EU added value of the EEA? What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?;

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
EEA and Eionet are responsible for the provision of key benefits and their contribution is considered crucial (i.e. could not have been achieved by Member States acting alone)	Identification of the key benefits that can be attributed to the EEA and Eionet Assessment of how crucial the EEA and Eionet's role has been in the provision of the key benefits against the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency and synergy	Interviews with Commission officials, MB members (including 3rd country), MEPs, NGOs, EEA staff, ETCs Mini-surveys Open public consultation NGO focus group NFP workshop Stakeholder workshop Case Studies (summarising many aspects of the above)
There are benefits with engaging with members beyond EU Member States	Identification of the key benefits that can be attributed to the EEA and Eionet that otherwise could not have been achieved.	As above

Q12: What would be the most likely consequences at the EU level of stopping the EEA and Eionet?

Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data sources
The EEA and Eionet's activities could not have been achieved by national environmental agencies and the European Commission acting alone	The EEA and Eionet is considered to be the best placed organisation to perform its various functions Identification of negative impacts associated with stopping the EEA/Eionet	As above under Q11

10.2   Appendix B Synopsis of consultation work

10.2.1   Introduction

This document provides a synopsis of the stakeholder consultation conducted by the support study for the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet. The study itself is described in full in the main report, to which this document is annexed. The stakeholder consultation undertaken as part of the study was based on the Evaluation Roadmap, the Terms of Reference, as well as the consultation strategy. The latter is further described below.

This document is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents the consultation strategy as agreed with the Commission

- Chapter 3 provides an overview of the consultation activities undertaken and the degree to which they were implemented as agreed in the consultation strategy. Where any deviations have taken place, these are explained.

- Chapter 4 provides an overview of the stakeholder groups that participated in the consultation and the interests they represented. This chapter also discusses the extent to which the identified stakeholders participated in the research as originally set out in the consultation strategy

- Chapter 5 provides an overview of the main inputs received with reference to relevant appendices which contain additional details

10.2.2   Outline of the consultation strategy

This chapter describes the consultation strategy process and the main elements of the strategy, as agreed with the Commission. It has three sub-sections:

- Section 2.1 describes the process for developing the consultation strategy

- Section 2.2 describes the stakeholders identified as part of the strategy

- Section 2.3 describes the consultation methods and tools, as set out in the consultation strategy

10.2.2.1   Consultation strategy process

The consultation strategy was developed during the inception phase of the study. The study was initiated in November 2016 and was shortly followed by a kick-off meeting (held in December 2016). Subsequently, a draft consultation strategy (as an appendix to the inception report) was submitted for review on 31 January 2017. Comments were received in during an ISSG meeting held on 16 March 2017. Following feedback a revised consultation strategy was submitted to the ISSG on 10 April 2017 by the support study team.

The ISSG provided some final feedback on the final version, however, emphasised that no further interaction was needed and required the support study team to integrate the comments in the work for the interim report. Subsequently, the support study submitted a final revised version of the consultation strategy together with the interim report on which no comments were received.

The subsequent sections in this chapter present the stakeholders identified and the methods and tools foreseen as per this final version of the consultation strategy.

10.2.2.2   Stakeholders identified

One of the aims of the consultation strategy was to identify stakeholders, who have a direct working relation with, are relevant for, or interested in, the EEA and Eionet. In line with Better Regulation Guidelines, stakeholders were

analysed according to the extent to which 1) they influence the EEA/Eionet, and 2) they have an interest in the EEA/Eionet (ref. Figure 10-1).

Figure 10-1   Stakeholder mapping
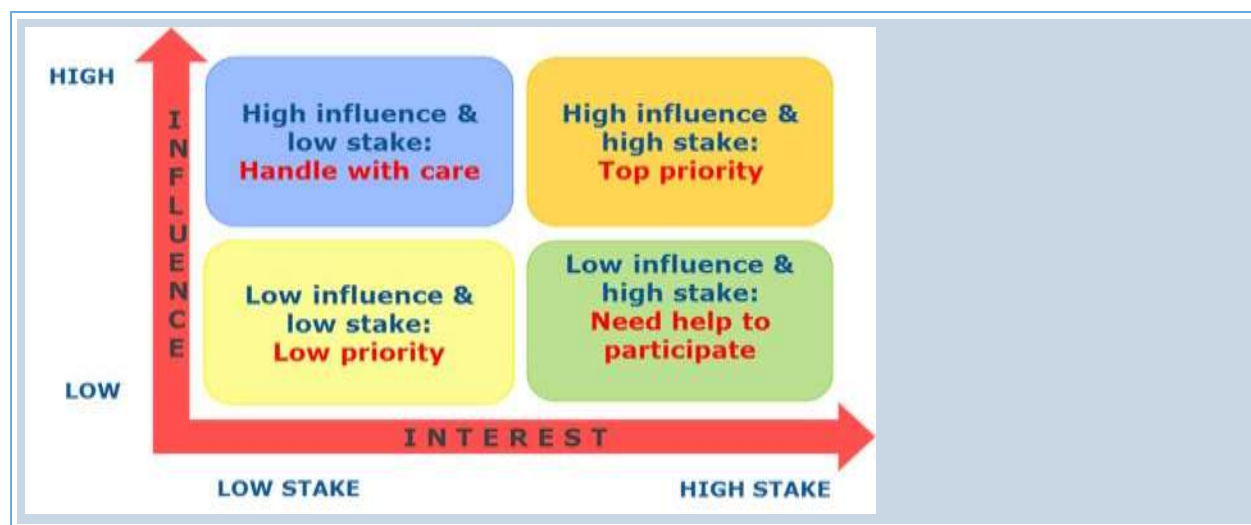
Source: Better Regulation Guidelines, Tool #50

In terms of influence, the Consultation Strategy distinguished between influence on the activities and tasks undertaken by the EEA/Eionet and influence on the outcomes and impacts generated on the basis of these activities/tasks (reference is made to the intervention logic as presented in the main report).

The consultation strategy presented the stakeholders according to the following main categories. Below, the stakeholders are presented as they were in the consultation strategy with the main considerations concerning how to approach them.

- Countries (EU Member States, member countries, cooperating countries)
- The Commission
- The European Parliament
- The scientific community
- The EEA itself
- The European Topic Centres
- Interest organisations (environmental/climate NGOs and other NGOs)
- International bodies
- The general public of the EU

Member States and other countries engaged with the EEA

The EEA has 33 member countries comprising the 28 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. The Regulation (EC 401/2009) does not define the membership in the EEA for countries that are not members of the EU, but Article 19 provides for the possibility to take part in the activities of the Agency for "countries which are not members of the Community but which share the concern of the Community and the Member States for the objectives of the Agency".

The EEA member countries form a direct part of the governance of the EEA through their membership in the Management Board (and Bureau). Furthermore, they are an integral part of the EIONET represented by the National Focal Points (NFPs) and the National Reference Centres (NRCs). Management Board Members and NFPs are usually, but not in every case, located in environment ministries or agencies. NRCs often come from a range of different institutions.

Table 10-1   Overview of national institutions represented in EEA MB and by NFPs

Country	Institution represented in MB	Institution represented by NFP
Austria	Federal Environment Agency (Alternate)	Federal Environment Agency
Belgium	Brussels Institute for the Management for the Environment	Belgian Interregional Environment Agency
Bulgaria	Executive Environment Agency	Executive Environment Agency
Croatia	Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature	Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature
Cyprus	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment
Czech Republic	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment	Czech Environmental Information Agency
Denmark	Danish Ministry of the Environment	Danish Ministry for Water and Nature Management
Estonia	Estonian Ministry of the Environment	Estonian Environment Agency
Finland	Ministry of the Environment	Finnish Environment Institute
France	Ministry for an Ecological and Solidary Transition	Ministry for an Ecological and Solidary Transition
Germany	Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety	German Environment Agency
Greece	Ministry of Environment & Energy	Ministry of Environment & Energy
Hungary	Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Agriculture
Iceland	Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources	Environment Agency of Iceland
Ireland (+ MB Chair)	Environmental Protection Agency	Environmental Protection Agency
Italy	Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea (MATTM)	Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)
Latvia	Ministry of the Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia	Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre (LEGMC)
Liechtenstein	National Office of Environment	National Office for Forests, Nature and Land Management
Lithuania	Environmental Protection Agency	Environmental Protection Agency
Luxembourg	Ministère du Développement durable et des Infrastructures	Ministère du Développement durable et des Infrastructures
Malta	Environment Resources Authority	Environment Resources Authority
Netherlands	Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment	Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency
Norway	Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment	Climate and Pollution Agency
Poland	Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection (alternate)	Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection
Portugal	Portuguese Environment Agency	Portuguese Environment Agency
Romania	National Environment Protection Agency	Ministry of Environment
Slovak Republic	Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic (alternate)	Slovak Environmental Agency
Slovenia	Slovenian Environment Agency	Slovenian Environment Agency
Spain	Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente	Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente

Country	Institution represented in MB	Institution represented by NFP
Sweden	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Switzerland	Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)	Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)
Turkey	Ministry of Environment and Urbanization	Ministry of Environment and Urbanization
United Kingdom	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

The environmental authorities of the member countries represent important clients of the EEA, making use of the information and products delivered by the EEA and the EIONET. Consultation with the member countries considers these different roles of the member countries and the individual representatives (members of the Management Board, NFPs, NRCs, non-EIONET actors).

The environmental/climate authorities in member countries have significant influence on activities and tasks of the EEA and Eionet through their direct participation in it, and via their decision-making powers as members on the Management Board, which adopts multi-annual and annual work programmes. They also have a high level of influence on the creation of outcomes and impacts, because they are the intended users of the outputs of the EEA/Eionet to improve their national environmental/climate policy-making.

As users of the EEA's services and products, they have a significant interest in the performance of the EEA and Eionet. For example, they rely on the EEA and Eionet for a number of services in relation to reporting on the implementation of the environmental acquis, understanding the state of the environment within their own country when compared to other member countries, updating methods and knowledge on environmental indicators and assessments, etc. Their interest in the performance of the EEA and Eionet is therefore high.

A suite of consultation methods were set up in the consultation strategy to address representatives from environmental/climate authorities of member countries. These included: a workshop with the NFPs, a targeted survey for NFPs/NRCs, a targeted survey for Management Board members, a mini-workshop with Bureau members, and interviews with individual Management Board members and NFPs.

In addition, there are other authorities in the member countries who may be users of some EEA/Eionet products and services. For example, Ministries of Economy, Finance, sector ministries (agriculture, energy, transport, health, etc.) as well as regional and local authorities. These may also, to some extent, be represented in the Eionet structure – for example in relation to NRCs handling energy data and reporting. These institutions could be indirectly impacted by the activities of the EEA in the sense that national environmental ministries/agencies can use the information and knowledge from the EEA to further an environmental agenda and seeking to mainstream environmental concerns in other policy areas governed by these authorities. Through their participation in Council, which is the budget authority for the EEA, Ministries of Finance can have a strong impact on the EEA. They also have an influence on national resources devoted to Eionet (ETCs as well as NFP and NRC work).

The consultation strategy found that it would be valuable to assess the actual level of interest of these stakeholders in the EEA, as well as whether they seek influence on the EEA/Eionet tasks and activities through their national Management Board member or Eionet NFPs/NRCs. However, found that due to the multitude of institutions and it would not be feasible to address these stakeholders comprehensively through targeted consultation. It was therefore determined that the primary consultation method capturing the views of these stakeholders would be the public consultation. In order to capture the extent to which EEA activities result in mainstreaming of environmental concerns in other policy areas, it was suggested that this could be addressed through consultation of environmental authorities.

In addition, the six West Balkan countries are cooperating countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as Kosovo under the UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99. EEA's cooperation activities with these countries are integrated into Eionet and are supported by the European Union under the instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (i.e. based on non-core funding as opposed to activities and cooperation with the member countries).

The environmental authorities in these countries are directly affected by the EEA who assists these countries with capacity building to set up their systems for monitoring and assessment of the state of the environment. Their level of influence on the EEA/Eionet tasks and activities is relatively low due to their status as cooperating countries. They have a degree of influence on achievement of objectives in the sense that many types of pollution and climate related issues are transboundary and as such the efforts of these countries are needed in order achieve an improved state of the environment in the EU.

The consultation strategy focused on capturing the views of the representatives of these countries through their participation in the NFP/NRC survey as well as the public consultation.

The Commission

The Commission is part of the EEA governance structure through its membership of the Management Board. In addition, the Commission is a key client of the EEA. The EEA has the task of providing the Commission with the information it needs to be able to carry out successfully its task of identifying, preparing and evaluating measures and legislation in the fields of the environment and climate.

In this regard, DG Environment (DG ENV) and DG Climate Action (DG CLIMA) are the key stakeholders. DG ENV represents the Commission on the Management Board, together with DG RTD, as well as JRC and ESTAT as alternates, while DG CLIMA has an observer status. These 5 DGs, together with the EEA, form the 'Environmental Knowledge Community'(see Figure 10-2). In a 2nd circle, there are a number of 'sector DGs' which are relevant for specific areas of the work of the EEA (DG ENER, DG MARE, DG AGRI, DG MOVE, DG ECHO, DG SANTE, DG NEAR, DG GROW), who have an interest in being provided with objective and reliable information to assist them when considering legislation which has an environmental impact. Furthermore, Central Services are important in relation to the functioning of the EEA, namely the Secretariat General, DG Budget and DG HR.

The consultation strategy distinguished between the different roles and types of representatives of the Commission.

Figure 10-2   Stakeholders in the Commission
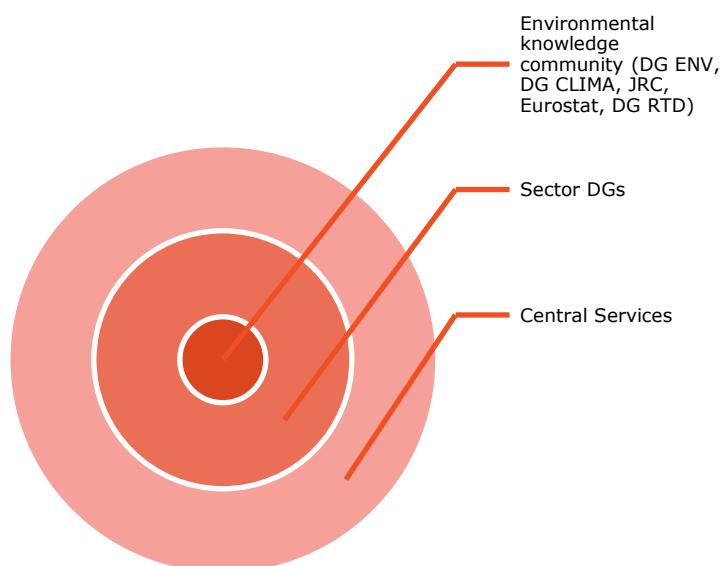
The Commission services in the EKC are the central stakeholders. They have a high level of influence on the tasks and activities of the EEA/Eionet through their representation in the Management Board and their day-to-day coordination of various tasks and activities through the EKC and otherwise. They are also the key recipients of the EEA services and products and intended to use these to improve environmental/climate policy making and as such have a high level of influence on achievement of outcomes and impacts. As key recipients of EEA products, they also have a high stake and rely on the EEA for provision of these.

The sector DGs can be important users of specific EEA services and products which have specific relevance to their sector. As with the 'sector ministries' in the member countries, this is important in relation to mainstreaming of environmental policy into other policies. These DGs can have important influence on achievement of outcomes and impacts.

The consultation strategy therefore focused on addressing EKC DGs and sector DGs through several consultation tools including a targeted survey for Commission staff as well as interviews at strategic/management level as well as interviews at the operational level (related to case studies).

The Central Service DGs have an important influence on the EEA in terms of administrative requirements and processes. This can have a bearing on the efficiency with which the EEA is able to deliver products and services (and thus ultimately the achievement of intended outcomes and impacts). Their interest relates to compliance with financial and administrative frameworks and how these frameworks can be set up to promote efficiency without comprising good administrative practise and rules for EU institutions and agencies, including the common approach to decentralised agencies. The consultation strategy envisaged interviews Secretary General.

The European Parliament

As a Community body, the European Parliament is also encompassed by the obligation of the EEA to provide information necessary for preparing and assessing legislation in the environment and climate fields. The Parliament designates two members of the Management Board (scientific personalities). Although not required specifically by the Regulation, it is common practice for the Executive Director to be interviewed by the Parliament's ENVI Committee before being confirmed. The Parliament as a whole does only to a limited extent represent 'a stakeholder' as it – by nature – covers a range of political interests of its individual Members. In that sense, it is also difficult to determine the influence and interest of the Parliament as such. However, seen from the birds-eye perspective, the members of Parliament have an obvious interest in being provided with objective and reliable information to assist them when considering legislation which has an environmental impact. The Parliament has influence on the tasks and activities of the EEA through its annual discharge process, where it scrutinises the implementation of the Agency's budget, providing its observations and recommendations if necessary. In addition, the Parliamentarians have a great deal of influence on achieving outcomes related to better policy-making.

The consultation strategy found that Members of Parliament could be expected to respond to the public consultation, but in an individual capacity – not on behalf of the Parliament as such. In addition, interviews with MEPs was envisaged in the consultation strategy.

The scientific community, including the EEA's Scientific Committee

The scientific community is a user of EEA products and data (as shown in the previous evaluation). Further, engagement and cooperation with the scientific community is important to the EEA as an institution which itself provides scientific assistance. DG RTD and two scientists representing the Parliament are represented in the Management Board and thus also give a voice to the scientific community in the governance of the EEA. Further, the ETCs which form part of the EIONET are in many cases run by consortia where scientific institutions are well represented.

The EEA Scientific Committee (SC), comprised of independent scientists, has a special designated role in bridging between the EEA and the scientific community and produces opinions on the scientific matters concerning the EEA's activities, including providing its opinion on the Work Programmes and hiring of scientific staff. In addition to

that, the chair of the Scientific Committee is invited to Management Board and Bureau meetings to report of the activities of the scientific committee.

The consultation strategy noted the challenge that the scientific community is not a single organised group of stakeholders and the connected difficulties associated with identifying good representatives to ensure that the interests and perceptions of the scientific community have been well-understood. The consultation strategy focused on consulting with those representatives of the scientific community who are closely related with the EEA, i.e. the Parliament representatives in the Management Board as well as selected members of the Scientific Committee. In addition, it was suggested that the case studies may offer the opportunity to consult with specific communities in the area organised through the framework programmes and understand more in detail how and to which extent they use EEA outputs.

The EEA itself (including its senior management team as well as other staff)

The EEA management and staff are clearly important stakeholders when it comes to the operation of the EEA. They have a high level of influence on the way tasks and activities are carried out (however, subject to the fact that overall multi-annual and annual work programmes are agreed in the Management Board). They obviously have a high level of interest in EEA/Eionet as it is their daily work place. However, they have limited influence on the achievement of outcomes and impacts, which are related to how other actors (the member countries, the Commission, the Parliament in particular) use the EEA products and services for policy assessment and evaluation, and how the public acts on being better informed about environmental and climate issues.

The consultation strategy emphasised consultation with the EEA to obtain information on factual matters and the management and procedures of the EEA and Eionet.

The European Topic Centres (ETCs)

The six ETCs are an important part of EIONET and central to implementation of EEA tasks. Their input will be particularly important when assessing effectiveness and efficiency of EIONET.

The EEA's relation with the ETCs is based on long-term framework contracts (5 years) – typically with consortia consisting of scientific institutions and consultancies. The members of ETCs are thus not permanent. The current ETC contracts have been in force since 2013, which aligns well with the evaluation period. The ETCs are 'internal' to the Eionet but at the same time consist of individual organisations who will have an 'external' view on the operation of the EEA and the Eionet. The members of the ETCs may also, in their own right (scientific institution, consultancy) be users of EEA products and services – and as such they have some level of influence at the outcome/impact level.

Given the limited number of ETCs, the consultation strategy considered that interviews, and in particular a focus group interview was the most suitable consultation tool.

NGOs and interest organisations

Environmental and climate NGOs

Environmental and climate NGOs such as Greenpeace, BirdLife, ClientEarth, Climate Action Network, European Environmental Bureau (EEB), European Wildlife and others are important clients to the EEA. They use the EEA information and products (as evidenced by the previous evaluation). They also, to an extent, represent the interests of the general public and are therefore particularly important to consult as part of the assessment of the relevance of the EEA to the general public.

NGOs operate at EU level as well as at national level. Most of the EU level NGOs are umbrella-organisations with national organisations affiliated in one way or the other. As such they represent the national NGOs as well to an extent. However, the NGOs at national level are typically more diverse with more organisations than those represented at EU level and covering a wider scope of topics with agendas more aligned with national policy developments (which may or may not coincide with the EU level ones).

The consultation strategy found it relevant to consult with key EU level NGOs through a focus group interview. Further, in order to capture the views of additional NGOs at both EU and national level, it was expected that these would respond to the public consultation.

Other NGOs / interest organisation

This category includes both general business organisations, such as Business Europe, as well as specific organisations in specific sectors, which can vary a lot depending on the subject at hand. Important organisations are those that represent agricultural interests (COPA-COGECA), interests of water/wastewater, waste management and other environmental services (e.g. EUREAU, Municipal Waste Europe), interests of green businesses (e.g. Eco-preneur), etc.[461].

The consultation strategy expected that these organisations would respond to the public consultation. In addition, a limited number of targeted interviews with some selected organisations was planned.

International bodies

The EEA facilitates national reporting to international bodies in respect to a number of treaties through the Report-net tool[462]. In addition, there is some cooperation between the EEA and international bodies in respect to standards on environmental and climate monitoring and reporting. The international organisations have very limited influence on the EEA tasks/activities and on the achievement of objectives and impacts. It is in the interest of the EEA and the recipients of the EEA products and services that the EEA/Eionet is aware of and complies with international best practise on environmental and climate monitoring and reporting. In this way, EU level data and reporting is comparable with that of the rest of the world.

The consultation strategy set out an approach building on short telephone interviews with relevant organisations to enquire about general aspects of cooperation. In addition, some more detailed interviews in connection with the case studies were envisaged where relevant.

The general public of the EU and non-EU EEA member countries who benefit from the information from the EEA

One of the tasks of the Agency is 'to ensure the broad dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information, in particular on the state of the environment, to the general public'[463]. The consultation strategy emphasised that consultation of the general public would happen exclusively via the public consultation.

10.2.2.3 Consultation methods and tools

The terms of reference emphasise two key elements in the consultation: Public consultation and interviews with selected stakeholders. In addition, a stakeholder workshop was also foreseen. In addition to these key tools, the consultation strategy also included targeted surveys, focus group interviews and workshops as consultation methods. The table below summarises the consultation methods planned.

Table 10-2   Consultation methods

Method	Purpose	Key considerations and intentions of the consultation strategy with regard to stakeholders and implementation of the method
Exploratory interviews	To gain an insight into key issues in relation to EEA performance – thus enabling targeting of methodology and questions	Interviews based on loose question frame with stakeholders representing the Commission (DG ENV and DG CLIMA) and the EEA.

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[461] The ISSG commented that a list of relevant organisations could be provided, but no such list was provided.

[462] http://rod.eionet.europa.eu/

[463] Founding Regulation, article 2(m)

Method	Purpose	Key considerations and intentions of the consultation strategy with regard to stakeholders and implementation of the method
Attendance Dec 2016 Management Board seminar	As above	To observe sessions and speak informally to MB members and NFPs to gain better understanding of how the Agency operates.
Public consultation	To allow a broad range of stakeholders, including organisations and individuals of the general public to voice their opinion on the EEA performance and relevance	Two-tier questionnaire consisting of a short general part and a more specific and technical part for stakeholders with deeper insight. Although the public consultation was, by nature, be open to all stakeholders, the intention was to gather the views of those stakeholders who are not consulted through other targeted methods mentioned below or where only some few selected representatives of a stakeholder group are consulted individually. This means that we were in particular looking for responses from public authorities (national, regional, local) who are not involved in EEA governance or EIONET, interested actors beyond environment sector, academia, NGOs (especially but no limited to NGOs at national level) and the public at large.
Interviews with key stakeholders	To gain in-depth understanding of the views of key stakeholders.	Interviews with Member States, the Commission, the Parliament, the Scientific community, international bodies, key interest organisations and the EEA itself, including the ETCs. Interviewees encompass key representatives of these stakeholders to capture the general views of these stakeholders as well as selected persons responding to the individual case studies. The case study related interviews will include a combination of general questions and specific case study questions. The terms of reference for the support study included the provision for approximately 50 interviews, however, already during the elaboration of the consultation strategy, it was clear that this would be insufficient if to cover all the relevant stakeholders. The consultation strategy envisaged 74-114 interviews (as ranges were given for some stakeholders).
Targeted surveys	To gain the views of particular stakeholder groups on particular subjects which are more specific than those covered by the public consultation. To enable comparison with previous evaluation.	Three mini-surveys using e-questionnaires. These target specific stakeholder groups and ask questions that are specifically addressed to each stakeholder group and target some key evaluation questions of particular relevance to that group. The three target groups are: - Commission staff from all relevant DGs (to be performed through informal inter-service consultation) - Members of the Management Board - The National Focal Points and NRCs
Workshops for specific stakeholder groups	To enable discussion on topics of key concern for a particular stakeholder group thus giving a more nuanced insight across all the individuals in the group	Workshop for Bureau members (in connection with the Bureau meeting) on 16 May 2017 Workshop with NFPs (in connection with the NFP-EIONET meeting) on 31 May - 1 June 2017). This is a way of targeting these stakeholders instead of performing a large number of interviews – in particular for the NFPs.
Workshop (task 5)	To validate findings and to deepen the understanding of key issues and give better foundation for producing useful recommendations	The workshop (task 5) is also an element in the consultation procedure and thus also an important element in the consultation strategy. The workshop will provide transparency in the evaluation and allow a broad range of stakeholders to comment and discuss the findings. This will help to validate findings and add deeper insight. To get the maximum benefit, the workshop should encompass break-out sessions.

10.2.3   Documentation of consultation activities

This chapter presents the consultation activities actually implemented in comparison to those that were planned in the consultation strategy (as presented in chapter 2 above).

10.2.3.1   Exploratory interviews

Exploratory interviews and meetings included:

- Information session and explorative interviews with the EEA (full day meeting on 13 January 2017 and half-day meeting on 24 January 2017)
  - The meeting was organised with a session with the EEA senior management team followed by sessions with the individual programmes. A loose question frame was followed and the sessions allowed for key documents to be identified and provided by EEA to the support study.
- Meeting with DG ENV to clarify issues in relation to the Fitness check on better reporting and monitoring of the environmental policy (16 January 2017)
  - The meeting gave the status of the study and discussed interlinkages with the evaluation
- Meeting with the Secretary General to clarify issues in relation the Common Approach to decentralised agencies as well as evaluation approach towards agencies (17 January 2017)
  - The meeting clarified that there were no guidelines specifically covering evaluation of decentralised agencies. In respect to the Common Approach, it was confirmed that assessing conformity against the points in the Joint Statement would be the key. Further, the representative of Secretary General gave some suggestions on how to develop the report of the support study.
- Information session and explorative interviews with DG CLIMA (half day meeting on 18 January 2017)
  - The session was organised by DG CLIMA. First, a general session was held with participation from the Director level, which also included an overall brief on the evaluation and scope of the support study. This was followed by individual sessions with relevant units that cooperated with the EEA during the evaluation period. Each session with a unit lasted approx. 15 minutes and thus offered opportunity for a brief overview of performance of the EEA in the area. The questions addressed included:
    - What has worked well to date in the cooperation with the EEA, and what may not have worked so well (any room for improvement)?
    - Interlinkages and synergies between climate change policy and other sectors - What has been successful, what may still be challenging?
    - EIONET activities - What has been successful, what may still be challenging?
    - Would there be specific *case studies* in the area of energy and climate change that could be relevant and illustrative for further in depth assessment of the EEA work and interlinkages with DG CLIMA (mitigation and adaptation)?
- Information session and exploratory interviews in DG Environment on 10 February 2017 (full day meeting).
  - The session was organised by DG ENV and followed a structure similar to that held in DG CLIMA. The questions addressed included:
    - Overall impressions: what has worked well / has not worked well?
    - Are the activities and outputs relevant to your needs? Where is there a good fit? What EEA activities/outputs are less useful? What is missing?
    - Are the coordination and interaction mechanisms well-functioning? How do you coordinate with the EEA (incl. ETCs and NRCs)?

Notes were prepared and stored by the support team for all of the above meetings. The notes from the meeting in DG ENV were sent to DG ENV. No comments were received.

10.2.3.2   Attendance at Management Board seminar

Attendance at the seminar of the Management Board on 6 December 2016 offered opportunity to speak to individual MB members and NFPs as well as insights gained through observing various sessions.

10.2.3.3   Open public consultation

The questionnaire for the open public consultation was developed in coordination with the ISSG during the period May 2017-July 2017 based on preliminary versions included in the inception report/consultation strategy. The consultation was launched on 17 July 2017 and remained open until 6 November 2017 (the original closure date was 23 October 2017, however, the period was extended in the hope of achieving a higher response rate. Thus, the results of the consultation were available to support the December workshop and were included in the workshop background document, however, limited time was available to analyse the results in advance of submitting the background document (which was sent to participants on 22 November 2017 – ref. below).

The consultation was based on two questionnaires – one for the general public containing a limited number of more general questions – and one for the informed person containing more specific and elaborated questions.

Despite the extended time period and also initiatives on the side of the EEA and the Commission to increase awareness of the consultation, only a limited number of responses were submitted. The general questionnaire received 21 responses and the specific questionnaire received 30 responses. This was disappointing, especially considering the substantial effort that went into developing questionnaires on the side of the Commission and the support team. The data obtained from the open public consultation thus had limited value as so few responses cannot be seen to represent the state of affairs with regard to the interaction between specific interests / the general public and the EEA or the public opinion at large.

The detailed questions and results of the open public consultation are reported in detail in Appendix I of the main report of the support study.

10.2.3.4   Interviews with key stakeholders

Interviews covered the stakeholder groups planned (Member States, the Commission, the Parliament, the scientific community, international bodies, key interest organisations and the EEA itself, including the ETCs). However, in some cases more interviews than originally planned were conducted, whereas in other cases, the situation was opposite. Table 10-3 below contains a detailed overview. It should be noted that the Consultation Strategy of May 2017 included provision for many additional interviews than foreseen in the terms of reference (based on comments from the ISSG as well as lessons learned from performing some initial and explorative interviews), but at the same time also cautioned that this was putting the resources of the support study under pressure as also numerous other additional consultation methods were being planned/implemented. So the actually implemented interviews also reflect a process where the support study and the Commission sought to reach a reasonable solution covering as much ground as possible without over-stretching the resources.

Interviews were semi-structured and conducted in person, whenever possible, and alternatively by phone. Interview questions were sent to interviewees in advance of the interview and notes taken to document the results of the interview were sent to interviewees for verification. Unless specifically authorised by the interviewees, the interview notes were kept on archive by the support study, but not made official, whereas the main report of the support study reflects the main results from the interviews without referring or quoting specific interviewees.

Table 10-3   Overview of interviews in consultation strategy versus those implemented

Stakeholder group	Interviews foreseen (note the numbers below reflect the plan as set out in the Consultation Strategy of May 2017)	Interviews actually conducted (agreed with the Commission during the process of implementing the consultation strategy)
Member countries	The consultation strategy foresaw 8-11 interviews (3-4 with MB members, 4-5 with other environmental authorities, 1-2 with representatives of cooperating countries).	The consultation included 12 interviews (6 of which comprised both the MB member and the NFP of the specific country). Compared to the strategy, there was more focus on interviewing MB members (10 interviews in total). This was based on expressed interest in being interviewed from MB members.
European Commission	The consultation strategy included 16-40 interviews with DG ENV/CLIMA, 6-8 with other EKC DGs, 6-7 with sector DGs and 2 with the Secretary General.	The consultation included 22 interviews with DG ENV and DG CLIMA, 7 with other EKC DGs, 5 with sector DGs (no interview with DG MOVE) and no interviews with the Secretary General. Compared to the plan in the consultation strategy, there was less focus on interviews at the strategic/top management level in DGs ENV and CLIMA (e.g. Cabinet not interviewed). The case studies showed to require often several interviews (at the operational level) just to cover the necessary ground for these specific topics.
Members of the European Parliament	The consultation strategy included 3-4 interviews with MEPs.	1

Stakeholder group	Interviews foreseen (note the numbers below reflect the plan as set out in the Consultation Strategy of May 2017)	Interviews actually conducted (agreed with the Commission during the process of implementing the consultation strategy)
		The support study contacted additional MEPs, but did not get responses, despite several reminders. After consultation with DG ENV, it was decided not to pursue this further.
Other EU agencies	The consultation strategy included 3 interviews with ECHA, EFSA, EMSA	3 interviews were conducted, but this included two interview persons at EFSA, whereas EMSA was not interviewed (repeated attempts were made at contacting the relevant persons)
International organisations	The consultation strategy provided for 3 interviews with UNFCCC, UNECE and UNEP	The interviews actually conducted included UNEP and OECD
Interest organisations	The consultation strategy included provision for 2-4 interviews with environment and climate NGOs and 2-4 interviews with organisations representing business and industry	3 interviews with climate and environment NGOs were conducted, one of which was a focus group comprising 3 organisations. 2 interviews with business interest organisations were conducted.
Scientific community	The consultation strategy included 4-6 interviews with SC members as well as the Parliament representative in the MB and independent academics	3 interviews were undertaken (no interviews with independent academics).
EEA	The consultation strategy included 18 interviews	20 interviews were conducted (and in addition, EEA staff were consulted for fact checking of presentation of data and evidence based on documents and information provided by the agency)
ETCs	The consultation strategy included 1-4 interviews including a focus group with ETC managers and individual interviews with ETC staff	Interviews conducted included a focus group with ETC managers as well as 3 interviews with ETC staff (for case studies).

10.2.3.5   Targeted surveys

In accordance with the consultation strategy, three mini-surveys were conducted using e-questionnaires and targeted the intended groups (Commission staff from all relevant DGs, members of the EEA Management Board, the National Focal Points and NRCs). The questions for the surveys were elaborated by the support study in close consultation with DG ENV and the ISSG. DG ENV launched the surveys in the EU Survey tool.

While the original intention expressed in the consultation strategy was to include questions that were identical or similar to those included in targeted surveys (of MB members and NFPs/NRCs) conducted under the previous evaluation of the EEA, these questions were removed from the questionnaires upon comments from ISSG. It was found that the questions should focus on more on gathering factual evidence rather than opinions and views from the stakeholders and therefore these questions were not considered relevant.

All three surveys were all launched on 24 October 2017 and closed on 16 November 2017

The detailed questions and results of the surveys are presented in Appendix J of the main report of the support study.

10.2.3.6   Workshops for specific stakeholder groups

The workshops foreseen in the consultation strategy were implemented (meeting with Bureau members held on 16 May 2017 and the NFP workshop was held in connection with the NFP-EIONET meeting on 31 May - 1 June 2017). In addition, a meeting with the members of the Scientific Committee was conducted in connection with its meeting on 18 May and a workshop with the Eionet in the United Kingdom on 17 July 2017 – in connection with the meeting of the network.

The agenda and proceedings from the NFP workshop as well as the UK Eionet workshop are included in Appendix M and L of the main report of the support study.

In regard to the meetings with the Bureau and the Scientific Committee, notes were taken and archived by the support study team to document the key views expressed by those present at the meeting. In addition, for the Bureau meeting, DG ENV and the EEA took notes and these were shared with the support study team.

10.2.3.7   Stakeholder workshop

The workshop was held on 5 December 2017 at COWI's premises, Lyngby, Greater Copenhagen, Denmark. Invitations were sent by DG ENV and the support study organised the registration of participants as well as travel arrangements for participants that were not Commission staff, MB members or NFPs.

Prior to the workshop, the support study drafted a background paper, which went through several comment rounds with the ISSG before being sent to participants on 22 November 2017. The background paper summarised key findings at the interim stage of the support study.

The workshop was a full-day event. It was kicked off with a presentation by the support study on the key findings summarised from the background document. This was followed by several break-out sessions and plenum sessions to discuss and elaborate on findings. The workshop was attended by representatives of the EEA Management Board, the NFPs, the Commission, the EEA Scientific Committee, and one interest organisation. The Commission had invited also several Members of Parliament as well as representatives of NGOs and interest organisations, however, attendance from these invitees was not achieved. The feed-back from interest organisations and NGOs with whom the support study team had contact was that input had been given during interviews and due to lack of resources/time, it was not possible to also take part in the workshop.

During the workshop, many participants expressed some dissatisfaction in regard to the process. This related to different elements, but most importantly in relation to the support study, there had been an expectation to see a full-fledged draft final report from the support study, whereas the background document provided to participants had a more interim nature and was shorter. Also, it was considered that the questions posed were too basic and not to a sufficient extent building on the findings but too much starting with the evaluation questions set out in the Evaluation Roadmap.

Despite these difficulties and the discussions associated with them, the workshop still provided valuable inputs to the support study and did serve to validate some findings and for others, to indicate to the support study where further work was needed in order to fully respond to the evaluation questions.

The workshop output document is provided in Appendix K of the main report and it provides an overview of the agenda, the inputs from participants in each session as well as details on notes from the individual sessions.

10.2.3.8   Summary and reflections on challenges

The consultation methods were implemented as planned although not all interviews were conducted as planned and other interviews not originally planned were conducted. In total, more interviews than foreseen in the terms of reference were conducted. Also, additional activities in the form of workshops and meetings with stakeholders which were not foreseen in the terms of reference were conducted.

The subject fields and topics covered by the EEA are quite diverse and it was challenging to cover these within the scope of the consultation strategy given the budget for the support study. Focus was given to the subject fields in the case studies meaning that other areas did not reach the same level of consultation activity and thus less in-sight of the support study. While the areas covered by the case studies were quite diverse and also covered different types of activities undertaken by the EEA and thus were representative to some extent, the approach still did not facilitate an equally detailed insight into all areas of activity of the agency.

The workshop was challenging to arrange. The timing between the interim and the draft final report in principle allowed for stakeholder inputs at a stage where the analysis of the evaluation questions was still on-going. However, clearly the expectations of the stakeholders were to see a more final product and this led to difficulties. Considering the broadness of the evaluation questions as well as the diversity in topics covered by the EEA and Eionet, an approach with smaller and more targeted workshops could potentially have yielded better results than bringing together the wide range of stakeholders and seeking to cover the entirety of the evaluation/support study.

10.2.4 Participation of stakeholder groups

This chapter provides an overview of stakeholder groups that participated and whether the intended coverage of stakeholder groups was achieved – based on the information presented above in chapter 3. The consultation strategy included a table cross-tabulating the stakeholders identified and the consultation methods thus identifying how the identified stakeholders would be reached. This table is reproduced below and with an added element. In the cases where stakeholders were reached by the method, the cell is coloured green. In the cases where stakeholders were not reached, the cell is coloured red. In the case where this is partially the case, the cell is coloured yellow. Note that for the open public consultation, the cells are only coloured where the open public consultation was the key means to reaching this stakeholder group – and in all these cases, the colour is red. This reflects on the one hand that the number of responses was very low and secondly also, a lot of respondents asked for their contribution to be anonymous, which means that it was not possible to identify precisely which stakeholder group they represent.

Table 10-4   Extent to which stakeholders were reached as intended by the various consultation methods

No.	Category	Stakeholders	Exploratory interviews	Public consultation	Targeted surveys	Interviews	Focus group interviews	Workshop	Mini-workshop
	EEA member countries	Management Board members			X	X		X	X (Bureau)
		NFPs			X	X			X
		NRCs		(X)	X	X			
		Environmental authorities		X		X			
		Sector authorities		X					
	The Commission	DG ENV and CLIMA	X		X	X		X	
		DG JRC, RTD and ESTAT			X	X		X	
		Sector DGs			X	X		X	
		Central Services	X			X		X	
	European Parliament	MEPs representing different political interests				X		X	
		Representative in MB				X		X	
	Scientific Community	Representatives in Scientific Committee				X		X	

No.	Category	Stakeholders	Exploratory interviews	Public consultation	Targeted surveys	Interviews	Focus group interviews	Workshop	Mini-workshop
		Representatives of leading environmental research institutions in Europe		X		(X)			
	The EEA	Director	X			X		X	
		Senior management team	X			X		X	
		Staff				X			
	The ETCs					X	X		
	NGOs (Environment and Climate)			X			X	X	
	Other NGOs, industry/business			X		X		X	
	International bodies			(X)		X			
	The general public			X					

The yellow and red cells above indicate where the support study experienced challenges in reaching the stakeholders. Below, some further details and comments are provided on these cases:

- <u>Environmental authorities (other than those already involved through a role in the MB and/or NFP/NRC) and sector authorities (e.g. transport ministries, agricultural ministries) in EEA member countries:</u> They were primarily targeted via the open public consultation in the consultation strategy. For environmental authorities, the support study considers that environmental authorities as a whole were quite well covered in the sense that MB members as well as NFPs and NRCs often represent environmental authorities and they were targeted and participated through targeted surveys and interviews. In respect to sector authorities, their participation was very limited/non-existent as only 9[464] took part in the open public consultation. This means that there was limited data on the extent to which these stakeholders used EEA information in their policy processes. As already mentioned in the consultation strategy, it is a challenge to reach these stakeholders given their multitude (33 member countries, some of which would have several dozens of relevant institutions – and within these institutions there would be thousands of specific persons who could be potential users of EEA data). Thus, doing a few interviews would not be very meaningful and would not provide a representative picture. Also, targeted surveys would not be possible, as there is no identification of relevant persons to target. Hence, the open public consultation was chosen as the method, however, not with success.

- Sector DGs: Sector DGs were targeted through the targeted surveys addressed to Commission officials, interviews and also invited to the workshop. The detailed picture in terms of the DGs targeted is shown in the table below.

Table 10-5   Participation of sector DGs

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[464] This based on the number that identified as providing a response on behalf of an organisation or institution, so could be even lower

DG	Targeted survey to Commission staff	Interview	Workshop
AGRI	1 participant	1 interview (with several partici-pants)	
ENER	0 participants	1 interview	Participated
GROW	1 participant	1 interview (focused on Copernicus)	
MARE	0 participants	1 interview	
MOVE	1 participant	No interview de-spite initial inten-tion. DG ENV de-cided it was not needed.	
NEAR	0 participants	1 interview	
SANTE	0 participants	No interview	Participated

Notes: Since the invitations for the stakeholder workshop were administered by the Commission, the support study does not have an overview of which DGs were invited.

- EU Commission Central Services: An explorative interview was carried out and this was deemed sufficient by DG ENV, so it was decided not to perform additional interviews. A representative of the Secretary General also participated in the stakeholder workshop.

- MEPs of the European Parliament: Despite contacting several MEPs, the support team was only successful in arranging one interview. The picture was the same for the workshop: The Commission sent an invitation en-couraging up to 8 participants from the ENVI Committee, but there were no participants.

- Representatives of leading research institutions in Europe:

- Environment and climate NGOs and industry and business organisations were invited to the workshop but did not participate. The understanding of the support study is that this was primarily due to resource constraints as well as considerations that the study was not about specific legal initiatives (environmental and climate NGOs) or not of primary interest to national member organisations (industry and business). Further, partici-pation through the open public consultation from these types of organisations was low (perhaps for similar reasons, however, this cannot be said with certainty).

- The general public: There were very few responses to the open public consultation, so it is not fair to say that the general public was reached as part of the consultation activity. The support team understood that both the EEA and the Commission took various steps to increase awareness of the open public consultation, how-ever, this apparently had little effect.

In summary: The 'core' stakeholders were reached (MB members in countries, the Commission, the Scientific Committee, the NFPs and NRCs, the ETCs and the EEA itself) – typically through several methods allowing both

breadth and depth. Challenges were encountered in reaching beyond these groups and out to a wider set of stake-holders, including other authorities in Member States, interest organisations in other areas than environment and climate, the scientific community and the general public.

10.2.5   Data processing

The survey data was extracted from the host site EU Survey[465] website in Excel format. The data was then checked for incomplete and/or duplicate records so to avoid any contamination. Data was also checked for any responses whereby the respondent had only selected the first answer option for each question. Following these checks, the data was analysed with summary statistics created for each question. These were then created for all respondents and various sub-groups. Summary tables and charts were then created and analysed.

The interview data was logged in notes (one for each interview) and structured according to interview questions to enable the team to quickly identify answers to specific questions. Analysis was then performed across interviews from similar stakeholders to identify patterns in responses to specific questions.

Data triangulation was an important part of the analysis of each evaluation question considering the data from the consultation activities in the context of data collected through desk research and considering whether data from different consultation methods pointed in the same direction or not.

10.2.6   Description of the results of the consultation

The results of the open public consultation, the three targeted surveys as well as the workshops held are described in the appendices as referred in chapter 4 above. This chapter therefore focuses on providing an overview of results of the interviews held. The focus is on the interviews conducted at the general level whereas the results of the interviews conducted specifically for the case studies are reported in the case study reports (see Appendix D of the main report). The reporting of interview results below is provided by stakeholder group as identified in the consultation strategy[466]. The presentation is structured around the questions posed to the interviewees. For under-standing of how the interview data has been used in the analysis of the evaluation questions, reference is made to the main report, which provides the analysis question-by-question.

As described above, interviews were conducted with an understanding that individual interviewees would not be quoted and interview results should be presented per stakeholder group rather than being referred to a specific institution or person unless specifically agreed. These guidelines were observed when drafting the sections below.

10.2.6.1   Management Board members from member countries

Table 10-6 provides an overview of key questions asked during interviews with the Management Board members from EEA member countries. Note that there was some slight variation in the list of questions based on lessons learned during the course of conducting the interviews.

Table 10-6   Interviews with Management Board members from member countries

Questions	Summary of responses
Does the EEA offer clear value to the countries that participate? In what way	All interviewees found that the EEA offered a clear value to countries. Various further descriptions of the ways in which this takes place were provided. The majority of MB members interviewed highlighted that EEA had helped to organise the internal coordina-tion with the country (especially, but not limited to, countries with a federal system). Other key factors mentioned in several interviews include: Support to development of

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[465] https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/home/welcome

[466] Note that interviews with EEA staff are not summarised as the purpose of these interviews was to obtain fac-tual information and not to 'consult'.The information obtained is referred in the main report where relevant as well as in the case study reports (see Appendix D of the main report).

Questions	Summary of responses
	high quality indicators, supporting consistency of data, providing evidence base for policy through data and reports, sharing of good practises and improvement of quality of national work with state of environment reports (and in some cases also mentioned various elements of the MDIAK chain), raising the profile of the environmental authorities in the administrative system, raising the profile of environmental issues more broadly speaking.
Do the EEA and Eionet make meaningful contributions towards stronger environmental and climate protection in Europe/in your country?	The answers to this question were often seen together with the answers to the previous question. Overall, the interviewees found that the EEA had made an important contribution – although it is generally seen as indirect. The majority of interviewees explain that EEA products are used in environmental policy in the countries as well as at European level. Especially, the SOER was mentioned. Also (again), the EEA support to setting up programmes for monitoring and implementing policies in the countries was mentioned by some interviewees.
Does the international cooperation and relationships of the EEA align with its mandate (including cooperation with accession countries and international institutions)?	Interviewees generally found the international cooperation very beneficial – allowing for a coordinated impact in Europe and beyond and helping to coordinate with UN agencies. Some interviewees noted the benefits (such as for example bringing collective lessons from outside Europe rather than each country spending time on this) but nevertheless considered that there was a need to be realistic about what the EEA can manage. They noted that during the evaluation period, there was a decision to reduce some of the international work due to budget constraints and those who mentioned this also found that this was the right decision.
How effective are the mechanism put in place to ensure that the EEA work programme is in line with its mandate and coherent with the policies and activities of member countries/the Commission?	Interviewees found that the EEA was responsive to the needs of the countries and the Commission and the EEA was found to perform well in managing the relations. One interviewee noted that this is particularly due to the strength of the 'informal processes' and daily working relationships with NFPs/NRCs that have been established over many years. One interviewee mentioned new stakeholders related to cities which are not reflected in current governance frameworks or organisation of the EEA and Eionet. One interviewee found that planning was clear and transparent but would like to see more focus on follow-up of the multi-annual work programme as well as better management of the complexity of the activities. Another interviewee shared similar views and added that the composition of the MB implied a risk that individual members can add things to the agenda of the agency that takes the EEA off track (based on their personal or national interest - tourism and migration mentioned as examples).
Does the EEA have an appropriate plan in place to improve efficiency in the context of its annual and multiannual strategy?	All interviewees regard the EEA as a well-managed organisation and efficiency is seen as driver for the decisions taken, however, it is also emphasised that this has not (and should not) affected the quality of the work performed. Several interviewees mention the budget constraints and said that these have been felt during the period and stated that the EEA has managed well under these constraints. One interviewee mention that a 'major risk' is that no one in the MB wants to take anything off the EEA work programme and it has been very difficult to arrive at negative priorities.
Are there topics or services that absorb a disproportionately large	Most interviewees state that the draft budget was closely scrutinised by the MB members and found no areas where there was a misallocation. One interviewee found the

Questions	Summary of responses
share of the budget versus its importance to the EEA mandate? Is resource allocation on tasks and topics clear?	question to be 'unfair 'and referred to the consultation done for the development of the MAWP and AWPs and the scrutinization done by the MB members. Two interviewees mentioned Copernicus and stated that this takes a large share of the budget while being outside the core budget – and one of these interviewees found a need for clarification in this regard. One interviewee found that the work programmes were too detailed and found that the role of the MB needed to be moved more to the strategic level and focus on the priorities rather than the details.
Does the framework of the Eionet system continue to serve the mandate of the EEA?	All interviewees expressed appreciation for the Eionet and its functioning. Several interviewees mention the role of technology and that new technologies for monitoring (e.g. satellite based) are available and will cause the role of the Eionet to adjust. Technology was generally seen by interviewees as enhancing rather than replacing the Eionet. Elements that could be improved were mentioned by some interviewees and included 1) governance: Agency could play a stronger role in supporting the work of the NFPs, 2) organisation: Challenges in handling cross-cutting issues since the system is set up according to topics.
Is the Scientific Committee fit for purpose and contributing to the EEA?	All interviewees find that the interaction with the SC developed in a positive direction during the evaluation period – especially in the later years after recruitment of new members. The interviewees found that the SC was very engaged and contributing in a positive way to the work of the EEA. Some interviewees mention that top-researchers applied for the positions in the SC and found this to be an indicator of the effectiveness of the EEA acting in the 'science-policy interface'. One interviewee found that even better use could be made of the SC by asking for their opinion more systematically.

Note that for several of these interviews, the NFPs for the respective countries also took part and therefore, the responses are to be regarded as valid for NFPs as well.

10.2.6.2   The Commission

The EKC (DG ENV, DG CLIMA, JRC, DR RTD, EUROSTAT)

The DGs which are members of the EKC were asked questions that were similar across all DGs as well as questions that varied depending on the role and specific working relations between the individual DG and the EEA. Below, the focus is on summarising the results on the set of similar questions that were posed.

Question	Responses
What agreements or other cooperation mechanisms were in place to govern cooperation between the DG and the EEA?	Interviewees explained that the cooperation was not guided by specific agreements or MoUs. It was framed by the work programmes and the processes in the MB, but at the operational level, it was more 'ad hoc' and depended on the personal relations between staff on both sides. In some DGs, meetings were held systematically at several levels in the hierarchy and this supported cooperation (level of Executive Director, level of Head of Unit/Heads of Programme and project officers). In other DGs, cooperation was more confined to specific topics and staff coordination in that regard with some more sporadic meetings at strategic level.

Question	Responses
Were there overlaps or duplications during the evaluation period?	Few overlaps or duplications were identified by interviewees. The interviewees found that cooperation was in general working well. The detailed results are reported in the main report, section 7.2.3.
Does the EKC work effectively as a coordination mechanism?	Interviewees found that the EKC has worked to ensure that the relevant entities are better informed and has provided a platform for working on common projects.
What factors determined successful cooperation between the DG and the EEA?	The interviewees found that the main factors that determined successful cooperation were good and effective interpersonal / working relationships, clear distinction of roles of the DG and the EEA as well as clear and strong role taken by one DG. Several interviewees emphasise that clear guidance on coordination should come from DG ENV.
What has been the cooperation with the Eionet entities (NRCs, NFPs, ETCs)?	The interviews showed that the cooperation between the DGs and the Eionet entities varied depending on the topic. Some DGs had no interaction with the Eionet entities. One interviewee found that the activities in the Eionet were not sufficiently transparent (e.g. overview of meetings and outcomes) and remarked that there were differences in the openness of the various ETCs and the way they communicated.
Were comments provided by the DGs on EEA work programmes taken into account?	Interviewees emphasised that it was positive that the consultation procedure for the work programmes was coordinated by DG ENV and found it important that the Commission response was coordinated. Interviewees found that comments provided were generally taken into account by the EEA.
Use of EEA data and outputs in the DGs	The information provided by the interviewees showed that EEA data and outputs are extensively used by DG ENV and DG CLIMA, whereas for the other DGs this is less the case. (Note that details on the use of EEA outputs and cooperation in relation to specific topics are explored in the case studies, see Appendix D of the main report).
Does the framework of the Eionet system continue to serve the mandate of the EEA?	(this question was not asked in all interviews) The interviewees found that the Eionet framework was appropriate with a potential scope for further specifying the roles of the entities.
Is the Founding Regulation fit for purpose?	(this question was not asked in all interviews) Interviewees found that overall the Founding Regulation has served well, however, found a certain need for amendment of some elements: the elements related to coordination with JRC and Eurostat were regarded as outdated and role of Eionet bodies not sufficiently clear. It was remarked that there was a need to take into account the Common Approach to Decentralised Agencies. One interviewee also remarked that not all tasks are clear and highlighted especially the task on forecasting in this regard.
Are there topics or services that absorb a disproportionate large share of the budget compared to their	(this question was not asked in all interviews) The interviewees state that the EEA wanted to make more foresight oriented work but cautioned that the organisation is not tuned for this considering its size and the resources involved

Question	Responses
importance to the EEA mandate?	in order to do this type of work, e.g. this requires considerable effort in modelling, which is very resource-demanding. It was also emphasised that the Commission was investing in this area and therefore it was not considered relevant by the interviewees that the EEA should also be engaged.

Sectoral DGs

Data from interviews with representatives of DG AGRI, DG MARE and DG ENER provided details and understanding of the use of EEA outputs in these DGs and about the mechanisms for cooperation between the DGs and the EEA (complementing data from desk reviews). While there is recognition of the work done by the EEA by the DGs, the interviews also expressed some concerns related to the understanding of the economic sector and the interplay between the environmental issues and sector issues. Further, there were concerns related to level of precision in the data provided in relation to e.g. reporting on the Habitat Directive and Water Framework Directive. On the other hand, there is also a concern that EEA in some cases mainly drew data from other sources, which were already available to these policy DGs and thus did not always add value to the knowledge base (seen in the eyes of the sector DGs). However, it is important to note that there are differences between the DGs, the intensity of the cooperation between the EEA and the DGs and the mechanisms ensuring this cooperation. Overall, the data from interviews indicated that cooperation with other DGs was limited but intensified towards the end of the evaluation period.

10.2.6.3 International organisations

As only two interviews were conducted and with different types of organisations, it is not possible to summarise these. The support study is checking with the relevant interviewees whether it is acceptable to make available instead the full length of the interview report.

10.2.6.4 NGOs and interest organisations

Four interviews were conducted: Two with environment and climate NGOs (one of which was a focus group interview involving three organisations: WWF, Birdlife and Wetlands International) and two with business interest organisations: BusinessEurope and Copa-Cogeca. The organisations were asked similar, but not completely identical questions. The interview notes from the interview with BusinessEurope are available (including overview of the results of a survey conducted by the BusinessEurope among their national organisations) as Appendix A to this document[467]. Therefore, they are not reported below.

Table 10-7   Interest organisations

Question	Responses
Extent of use of EEA products	The organisations make quite extensive use of the EEA reports and databases as part of the preparation of their work – the data is translated by the organisations into policy demands. The EEA is seen by the environmental organisations as a first port of call for all themes as data is considered validated and reliable,

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[467] BusinessEurope confirmed that the notes were regarded as an official consultation contribution to the evaluation.

Question	Responses
How important are the EEA products for the organisations and what could be improved?	Neutrality and independence were regarded as very important along with ensuring high quality of data from Member States. The strength of the EEA was seen as being able to provide unbiased scientific data and assessments. One interview raised a concern that some Member States were not reporting correctly on the implementation of some Directives and would like to see the EEA doing more extensive checks on the quality and correctness of Member State reporting. One interview pointed to data coverage being less adequate for South and East Europe. One interview considered that the independence was challenged by the Commission being able to modify EEA reports, which was found to be wrong.
	It was noted by the interviewees that the EEA has improved in communication – through advance information, the organisations can alert their networks and help to disseminate the information.
	One interview pointed to the need for being more specific about the sources of information. One interview called for clearer links between the information provided by the EEA and policies – reports were considered to sometimes be unclear about the policy context.
Are web-pages and services and products easy to use, accessible and suitable?	Interviewees found the web-site to be difficult to use unless one knows what to look for and how to navigate to it. However, it was found useful and one interviewee appreciated in particular that old pages were still available as 'archived'. One interview suggested a list of report by Directive as linkages to policy were considered unclear.
Is the information disseminated to the public?	Interviewees found that individual citizens may not have a lot of awareness of the EEA products. However, this was not necessarily considered a problem as the main value of the EEA was seen to be its independent analyses and data, which are often presented through other institutions and intermediaries. Many of the interviewees highlighted that dissemination of the EEA's work to general public would require adapting the language and translating it into all the national languages, which would lead to unnecessary burden for the EEA. Thus, they consider the EEA outputs not designed or targeted the individual European citizen as such, however, the EEA's outputs have an important role amongst others in fulfilling EU and international requirements on reporting on the state of the environment (e.g. according to the Aarhus Convention).
Awareness of the EEA Brussels office, EEA newsletter	None of the interviewees were aware of the EEA Brussels office. Some had signed up for the newsletter.

10.2.6.5   Scientific Committee /research community

Two interviews were undertaken: One with the Chair of the SC and one with the previous chair.

Table 10-8   Interviews with Scientific Committee/research institutions

Question	Responses
How has SC added value to the EEA during the evaluation period? What were the key factors that determined whether SC added value?	Mainly through arranging knowledge building activities, such as seminars and workshops. But also through providing advice or opinions on specific reports or strategic discussions. E.g. the SC was heavily involved in the SOER and provided comments and advise at several points in the process. The SC is seen as a 'critical friend' of the agency.

Question	Responses
	Key factors include: The 'investment' made by the agency – effort put into planning and attendance at SC meetings of EEA senior management. The composition of the SC. Nine new members chosen during the evaluation period with a very good fit with the Agency – increased the relevance of the SC.
	Factors that have challenged the SC: Time (members are busy and there is limited compensation), Scope: SC needs to add value in the science-policy interface – knowledge produced should be valuable to countries and EU institutions, Bureaucracy: Not all SC members were familiar with the EU requirements and planning documents and this has been a challenge when on-boarding many new members at the same time.
What could be improved?	Interviewees found meetings / organisation to work well, however, mentioned that planning of the meetings and ensuring the strategic overview and having an overview of the production plan for the year to enable the optimal involvement of the SC.
Role of SC in the Founding Regulation and tasks of the SC (a) opinion on work programmes, b) opinion on scientific staff, c) advise on matters submitted by agency	Interviewees found the role to be adequately described. The three main tasks were all found to be relevant, however, b) was seen as less relevant as the agency was seen as managing this very well – and this was also the reason why less effort went into this task during the evaluation period – the SC was only involved in top level positions with high scientific content.
Value of the EEA to the research community	Not possible for interviewees to provide clear evidence on use of EEA work in the research community as they consider it is not an area where clear knowledge exists. There are some examples (anecdotal) and it was emphasised that better linkages with FP7/Horizon research projects have been achieved in the later years of the evaluation period. One interviewee found that the EEA could be even stronger in its communication strategy and interacting with the scientific community.
	Interviewees emphasised that EEA produces specific knowledge. They synthesise and analyse scientific knowledge and data and frames and presents it in a way that is policy relevant. One interviewee found that the EEA is not unique in this respect, but found uniqueness as an EU institution – providing critical thinking inside the institutions.

10.2.6.6   Other agencies

Interviews were undertaken with EFSA and ECHA. The interviews served to support the analysis of coherence and questions were posed on areas of common interest and cooperation, interactions and mechanisms for coordination/cooperation, duplication/issues in cooperation and synergies (exploited or unexploited).

The interviews showed limited cooperation between the EEA and the two other agencies due to the different mandates. Cooperation was characterised as quite ad-hoc and not driven by formal mechanisms, which were not regarded as needed. Overall, the interviewees did not identify major issues in relation to duplications or synergies

and were positive on the cooperation that did take place. The interviews indicated some scope for expanding coop-eration based on the positive experiences during the evaluation period. The details are reported in the main report section 7.2.6.

10.2.7   Results of the consultation with BusinessEurope

Support study to the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet
Telephone conversation with Alexandre Affre (AA) and Cecily de Potesta (CP), 24 November 2017. This conversation was based on a mini-survey performed by BusinessEurope among their national members based on a set of questions supplied by the support study (see below).

Consultation with the national associations – members of BusinessEurope (see below)

AA and CP find that the outcome of the consultation is mixed: Limited feed-back was received despite asking members twice. The ones that replied have mostly positive feed-back and indicate that they use the EEA data and reports. AA and CP are convinced that many more national associations actually read/use EEA data and reports than those who answered. The main messages are: EEA reports, data and information are assessed positively and are useful and reliable information for business. However, there is room for improvement. There is a wish for more transparency of underlying data. Awareness of EEA in the business communities in the Member States may not be so high. The interaction of EEA with business/industry can be improved, i.e. by involving business organisations in EEA governance.

This indicates not very strong ground to engage fully in the evaluation exercise for BusinessEurope (i.e. participa-tion in workshop).

Perspective on the EEA from BusinessEurope at the EU level

Products and their use

AA explained that he has been using a few times information and reports from the EEA as well as the website. AA is not sure whether he is good representative of the industry as a whole. Overall AA's assessment is that EEA products are 'OK' – not outstanding and there is always room for improvement.

AA suggested that EEA should think more about how users access the information. There should be a first 'layer' with 'easy to catch' messages and key information that is very accessible. The second layer – for those who are interested in knowing more – with access to the details. Here, it is important to have good understanding of the raw data and the underlying assumptions (which are not always clear today).

EEA communication and outreach to Industry

AA explained that BusinessEurope at least once invited someone from the EEA – three/four years ago. The agency sent a representative and provided presentation as requested. This is a way of making the Agency better known. Concrete further action to improve the outreach would be to not hesitate to liase with business associations – for example the chemicals industry, power industry, etc. – they all have their specific associations at national and EU level. This can have a multiplier effect. AA expressed that BusinessEurope would be interested in engaging in such a dialogue.

Languages: AA and CP explained that - with a few exceptions – the business community English is very often the first languages or at least widely used. Translation of EEA material was not mentioned as an issue by any of na-tional responses. I.e. availability of products in other EU languages than English is not seen as important. How-ever, for SMEs this might be a bit different.

AA explained that he has been a few times in a panel with EEA, including the Executive Director and Busi-nessEurope has received invitations to various EEA activities. However, BusinessEurope has not been invited to speak or actively engage in another way. AA is not sure how the governance of the EEA is arranged - is there a business representative involved in MB?? This could be a way of improving the outreach. Such models exist - e.g. ECHA – where NGOs and business organisations are observers in MB.

Response of the consultation of national BusinessEurope members (December 2017):

EEA products and their use

Have you made use of EEA reports and data?	Yes - BusinessEurope (BE) members have so far made use of EEA reports and data.
– If yes, can you give some examples of key reports and datasets that have been used in your work and for what purposes?	• Figures on CO2-emissions in different sectors (in Europe) • 'Trends and projections in the EU ETS' • 'Signals 2017 - Shaping the future of energy in Europe: Clean, smart and renewable' • 'Circular by design - Products in the circular economy'. Reports have been used by some members to have reliable data concerning the contribution of different industrial sectors in reducing their environmental impact
– Have you used the State of the Environment Report (latest issue is the report from 2015)?	Yes
– Do you consider EEA reports and data to be robust and relying on solid evidence?	Yes
– Did EEA and reports and data cover the topics that were important to you? (if not, what do you miss?)	Yes. However: • Some members would prefer to not only have graphs, but also the underlying figures • Greater emphasis could be given to the inter-relations between climate and energy policy
– Were EEA reports and data presented in a way which facilitates their use by you?	Yes. However: • Having more underlying figures to the graphs would be useful • Tables and data bases are difficult to use ○ Example: looking for a primary/final energy consumption, what is including/excluding: Would be easier to use ready-made figures from the report for instance.
– Is there anything the EEA can do to improve in this regard?	• Making it simpler and adding more explanations • Reports, analysis, views should be shared. In preparation of reports or other studies more cooperation should be established at national or sectoral level
Have you participated in workshops and events arranged by the EEA?	Mostly No - apart from one member, who took part at a presentation
– If yes, can you give some examples?	• Presentation of the State of the Environment Report
– Were the workshops/events useful?	• The presentation was very useful to diffuse the SOER and to involve stakeholders in applying a comparative perspective when dealing with environmental matters
Have you used the EEA web-site?	Yes
– If yes, what is your assessment of its navigability and presentation of information?	User-friendly / Satisfactory: • Web site may be improved, in terms of navigability and also access. • Web search hits do not bring the EEA amongst the top results.
– Is it sufficiently targeted to users such as you and similar organisations to you?	Yes, but: • Not in terms of access: was not possible to make use of the outputs to the extent desired.

EEA communication

The EEA is (among other things) tasked with ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information. Do you consider that the EEA is effective in fulfilling this mandate vis-à-vis the business community at the EU level / at the Member State level?	Most members were not aware that EEA is canvassing its work. Especially at national level EEA's work is not so known yet. Therefore, it would be helpful to have thematic workshops or official presentations to be held on a constant basis.
– Have you (or colleagues) signed up to receive the EEA newsletter (quarterly)? (why/why not)	- Most members: No, because: - They were not aware of its existence - They use other Newsletters - EEA NL only covers environmental topics - One member Yes, but NL was not as useful as desired.
– Do you (or colleagues) follow the EEA on the social media? (why/why not)	Most members: No, because: - Social media is not as effective as it seems in terms of following up reports and analysis - The messages or other posts do not provide necessary content relevant to their work One member Yes (twitter)
– Are you aware that the EEA has an office in Brussels?	Only half of the members aware of it
– Have you been in contact with this office? If yes, for what purpose?	No
– Is there anything the EEA can do to improve its communication with the business community?	- More easy use of data banks - More communication at EU, national and local level - Putting links to EEA in the respective COM webpages (e.g. ENV, CLIMA) - Business communities should be more involved in data sharing and collection - Involving business organisations in EEA governance - More outreach to European business organisations

Benefits and added value of the EEA

Seen from the point of view of your organisation, which (if any) have been the key benefits of the EEA?	- To introduce a comparative perspective in environmental policy - Unbiased data, overview of MS data
– which value would you assign to the benefits listed below (high, medium, low, none)	
a) It is easier to benchmark countries' performance against each other	Medium – High
b) Knowledge gained from EU-wide environmental assessments	Medium – High
c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available	High
d) It facilitates development and use of standardized tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	Medium
– if you consider any of the above benefits 'high' or 'medium', do you believe that these benefits could be achieved if the EEA did not exist?	The above benefits are essential to the business community. They will be achieved whether the EEA exists or not.

	• DG Envi could produce reports based on Eurostat, but there should be anyway an organization to take care of that.

10.3   Appendix C - Detailed tables with planned and actual activities (by SA)

10.3.1   SA1.1 Air pollution, transport and noise

This Strategic Area covers three related policy areas: Air pollution, transport and environment, and noise. The Objective of this Strategic Area is to support policy development and implementation in these areas, via data, indicators and assessments.

Policy framework:

National Emission Ceilings (NEC) Directive (2001/81/EC)

Ambient Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)

Air Quality Implementing Decision (2011/850/EU)

Fourth Air Quality Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)

LRTAP Convention

Gothenburg Protocol

7th EAP: targets for air quality and noise

Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)

Regulations on CO_2 from passenger cars (No 443/2009) and vans (510/2011)

Fuel Quality Directive (2009/30/EC)

Transport White Paper (COM/2011/0044)

Main partners:

ETC - ACM

Eionet NRCs: Air Quality; Mitigation of air pollution and climate change; Environment and Transport; Noise

EU institutions: DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG MOVE, DG REGIO, DG AGRI, JRC, Eurostat, EP;

Others: WHO, Member States, EMEP, CEIP, LRTAP convention CCE

Activities

Activities under this strategic area focus on continuing development of EEA information systems to support countries with data reporting required under the legislation in the areas covered. Moreover, EEA's activities involve producing relevant data sets, fact sheets, development of indicators, and using those to track progress towards EU and international targets in terms of minimising air pollution and decarbonisation of the transport sector. Finally, EEA produces targeted reports assessing Europe's state in the areas of air quality, noise and transport, and associated impacts, including on human health.

In 2013, before the MAWP, this strategic area consisted of three sections in the Annual Management Plan. Air quality and noise covered the Air quality and noise aspects. Air pollutant emissions covered items related specifically to emissions as covered by NEC Directive and LRTAP. Finally, Transport section included activities related to monitoring and reporting related to transport emissions: Monitoring as mandated by the CO_2 Regulations and official emission inventory reporting.

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 9. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows

the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 9: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Air quality data, statistics, and maps, including maps showing exceedances of thresholds, in support of Air Quality Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC, and Implementing Decision 2011/850/EU	Annual	Updated compilations of air quality data and statistics **Status:** *Done: e-Reporting, updated statistics*	Updated compilations of air quality data and statistics, including for cities **Status:** *Done*	Updated compilations of air quality data sets, including for cities **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps	
		Updated maps of attainment status of air quality standards across EEA member countries **Status:** *interactive maps providing an overview of the extent of problem areas…*	Updated air quality maps for EEA member countries **Status:** *Done*	Updated air quality maps for EEA member countries **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps	
		Updated country air pollution fact sheets **Status:** *Published*	Updated country air pollution fact sheets **Status:** *Postponed to 2016*	Updated country fact sheets on air pollution **Status:** *Postponed until 2017 due to resource constraints: an earlier staff depar-*	Reports and assessments (including web publications)	In 2016 AWP, this item includes noise, which does not entirely correspond with this MAWP output

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				ture and subsequent reassignments		
		Updated air quality assessment maps in Europe for ozone, PM10 and PM2.5 **Status:** *not reported*				
Noise data in support of Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC	Annual	Updated compilations of noise data and statistics **Status:** *Data reporting continued via Reportnet concerning data for the Environmental Noise Directive and for up-to-date data from measurement stations with the addition of three new stations*	Updated compilations of noise data and statistics **Status:** *Done*	Updated compilations of noise data **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps	
				Updated country factsheets noise **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Near-real-time air quality data in support of Implementing Decision 2011/850/EU, and near-real-time noise data	Continuous		The EEA encouraged all countries to make the transition from the previously used near-real time air quality reporting system to the new 'Up-To-Date' system. The near-real time system has been switched off **Not in AWP**	No mention of near-real-time data in AWP		
Analysis of summer ozone situation in support of Air Quality Directive 2008/50/EC	Annual	Annual overview of summer ozone exceedances in Europe – 2014 (Summer estimates by November) **Status:** *2013 summer report published in March 2014*	Annual overview of summer ozone exceedances in Europe – 2015 **Status:** *Done*	Annual overview of summer ozone exceedances in Europe – 2016 **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments (including web publications)	
City air-quality indicators ranking cities according to air quality state	Annual	Updated city air quality statistics **Status:** *CAAR reports updated AQ statistics, but does*	/	/		

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		not refer specifically to city statistics or ranking				
EEA Core Set Indicators and other indicators at European and country level on air pollution, air quality, noise and transport and the environment tracking progress towards agreed EU objectives	Annual	Updated indicators at European level on air pollutant emissions, air quality, noise, transport and environment **Status:** *Four CSIs updated, and indicators for heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants*	Updated indicators at European level on air pollutant emissions, air quality, noise, transport and environment **Status:** *Done*	Updated indicators at European level on air pollutant emissions, air quality, noise, transport and environment **Status:** *Done*	Indicators	
Report on status and key trends in air quality in Europe, impacts on health and the environment in support of Air Quality Directives 2008/50/EC, 2004/107/EC	Annual	Annual air quality in Europe report **Status:** *published*	Air quality in Europe 2015 report **Status:** *published* **Not in AWP**	Air Quality in Europe 2016 report **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
Country capacity building on model use through the Forum for AIR quality MODelling in Europe, supporting the implementation of Air Quality Directives 2008/50/EC, 2004/107/EC (chaired jointly with the JRC)	Continuous	JRC Forum for Air Quality Modelling in Europe (Fairmode) **Status:** *Not reported in CAAR*	/	/		

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Air pollutant emissions data and reports on inventories in support of the National Emissions Ceilings Directive 2001/81/EC and the LRTAP Convention and its protocols.	Annual	Annual reports: reporting status under NEC Directive; EU emissions inventory report under LRTAP Convention **Status:** *both done*	Annual reports: reporting status under NEC Directive; EU emissions inventory report under LRTAP Convention **Status:** *Done*	Annual reports: reporting status under NEC Directive; EU emissions inventory report under LRTAP Convention **Status:** *Done (both reports)*	Reports and assessments	
		Updated compilations of air pollutant emission data **Status:** *Review of inventory data completed*	Updated compilations of air pollutant emission data **Status:** *Done*	Updated compilations of air pollutant emission data **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps	
		UNECE Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections (TFEIP)			Support and contributions	
Update of the EMEP/EEA Air Pollutant Emission Inventory Guidebook (and Eionet capacity-building) published in support of Directive 2001/81/EC and the LRTAP Convention.	2017–2018	/	Coordinating the stakeholder review of the updated chapters of the European Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (EMEP)/EEA air	A major update of the EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook was published in September 2016.	Publication	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
			pollutant emission inventory guidebook **Not in AWP**	*Not in AWP*		
Report assessing the integration of environmental considerations into transport policies in Europe (TERM) in support, inter alia, of EC Transport White Paper COM/2011/0044 and of Regulations 443/2009 and 510/2011	Annual	Annual Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism report (TERM) **Status:** *Published*	Annual Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism report (TERM) **Status:** *Done*	Annual Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism report (TERM) **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
Data on CO_2 emissions from new cars and vans in support of Regulations 443/2009 and 510/2011, and possibly on CO_2 from heavy duty vehicles, as well as reports under the Fuel Quality Directive	Annual	Preparatory work for reporting on fuel quality data under the Fuel Quality Directive **Status:** *Preparatory work has been undertaken* *In October 2014, the EEA published a technical report, Monitoring CO_2 emissions from passenger cars and vans in 2013* **(not in AWP)**	Monitoring CO_2 emissions from passenger cars and vans in 2014 – published EU fuel quality monitoring 2014, published **not in AWP**	Annual reports: Monitoring CO_2 emissions from passenger cars and vans; Fuel Quality Directive reporting **Status:** *both done*	Reports and assessments	MAWP left the possibility open for data on HDVs, but this is not in outputs of the AWPs (mentioned generally however).
		Updated compilations of data and statistics	Updated compilations of data	Updated compilations of data of	Data and maps	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		of CO_2 emissions from new cars and from new vans **Status:** *Done*	and statistics on CO_2 and NO_x emissions from new cars and from new vans **Status:** *Done*	CO_2 and NO_x emissions from new cars and vans **Status:** *Done*		
Reports analysing trends, underpinning reasons, interactions between various environmental areas, impacts on health, on the environment and on the economy (including direct costs and costs of inaction), and the effectiveness of policies in the fields of air and noise pollution, and transport and environment	Tbd	Options for reducing PM concentrations by mitigating ammonia emissions **Status:** *not reported in CAAR* Effects of air pollution on European ecosystems ***Not in AWP***	/	A briefing on *Electric vehicles and the energy sector — impacts on Europe's future emissions* and a guide, *Electric vehicles in Europe* *European Aviation Environmental Report 2016* *Explaining road transport emissions — A non-technical guide* ***Not in AWP***	Publications	While some of these reports are not explicitly in AWP, they appear to fit with the theme defined in the MAWP
Report on status and key trends in noise pollution in Europe, impacts on health and on	2014, 2017	First regular noise assessment report **Status:** *published*	/	/	Publication	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
the environment in support of Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC.						
		Good practice guide on quiet areas **Not in AWP**	/	*Quiet areas in Europe: the environment unaffected by noise pollution* report **Not in AWP**	Publication	Not directly related to the output in MAWP, but thematically relevant report
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/regular	Annual Eionet workshops on air pollutant emissions, on air quality, on transport and environment, and on noise **Status:** *Done*	Annual Eionet workshops on air pollutant emissions, on air quality, on transport and environment, and on noise **Status:** *Done*	Annual Eionet workshops on air pollutant emissions, on air quality, on transport and environment, and on noise **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	
		SOER 2015 contributions on air pollution, on transport and environment, and on noise **Status:** *Done*	/	/	Contributions and joint products	
Not a direct output in MAWP, but a general objective		Provision of direct policy support **Status:** *Done*	Provision of policy support **Status:** *Done*	Provision of policy support **Status:** *Done*	Contributions and joint products	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				Cooperation with Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS), including participation in expert meetings **Status:** *Done*	Contributions and joint products	
			Technical studies supporting air pollution, transport and noise assessment reports **Status:** *Done*	Technical studies supporting air pollution, transport and noise assessment reports **Status:** *Done*	Contributions and joint products	

10.3.2 SA1.2 Industrial pollution

The objective of SA1.2 is to support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of emissions from industrial sources by means of data, information/indicators, and assessments.

Policy framework:
F-Gas Regulation (842/2006/EC), repealed by:
F-Gas Regulation (517/2014/EC)
ODS Regulation (1005/2009/EC)
Montreal Protocol
EU ETS Directive (2003/87/EC)
Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU)
Large Combustion Plant Directive (2001/80/EC)
E-PRTR Regulation (166/2006/EC)
LCP Directive (2001/80/EC)
UNECE PRTR Protocol, LRTAP Convention, National Emission Ceilings Directive (2001/81/EC)

Main partners:
ETC – ACM
Eionet NRCs: Industrial Pollution and relevant thematic NRCs (air pollution, water, waste, energy)
EU institutions: DG CLIMA, DG ENV
Others: Member States, UNECE PRTR Secretariat, OECD PRTR Task force, UN Montreal Protocol, E-PRTR Committee, Expert groups (Industrial Emissions Expert Group, E-PRTR Expert Group), companies (industry).

Activities

Activities under this strategic area focus on continuing development of EEA information systems and *data flow* management processes to support countries and companies with data reporting required under the F-Gas Regulation and the Large Combustion Plant Directive. Moreover, EEA's activities involve producing relevant *data sets, fact sheets*, and internal EU reports on ODS and F-gases. In addition, tasks in this area involve development of *indicators,* and using those to track progress towards EU and international targets in terms of industrial pollution. Assessments done by EEA in this area involve evaluating pressures on the environment from industrial pollution, in the framework of E-PRTR, ODS and F-Gas Regulations, as well as the LCP Directive. Finally EEA's activities involve streamlining of reporting processes.

In 2013, before the MAWP, activities related to what currently lies under industrial pollution topic were split among the air pollution (PRTR, IED) and climate topics (ODS, F-gases). As of January 2017 (just after the evaluation period), the ODS and f-gas topics have moved in EEA's organisational chart from the Industrial pollution group (ACC2) to the Climate change mitigation and energy group (ACC3), with a view to have a better interaction of work on ODS and f-gases with work on the emissions inventory.

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 10. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 10: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
E-PRTR data in support of EU participation in the UNECE PRTR Protocol and the OECD PRTR Task Force	Annual	QA/QC review processes for national E-PRTR data; Publication of updated E-PRTR website Status: Done [annual E-PRTR data compiled and published; EEA provided feedback on data quality issues to all countries]	Updated compilation and publication of E-PRTR data sets (including publication on E-PRTR website hosted by EEA) Status: Done	Updated compilation and publication of E-PRTR data sets (including publication on E-PRTR website hosted by EEA) Status: Done Updated linkage between E-PRTR and LCP datasets Status: Done	Data and maps Information systems	
		Delivery of the upgraded reporting tools for E-PRTR **Status:** *No mention/ cannot be inferred from CAAR 2014*			Data and maps Information systems	
Facility data reported under the LCP Directive	2015, 2018	Support LCP data reporting: QA/QC of 2010-2012 data; Draft EU summary report for DG ENV with the review of 2010-2012 LCP data and comparison with data from industrial sources **Status:** *EEA established a new online LCP report-*	Updated compilation and publication of LCP data **Status:** *Done*	Updated compilation and publication of LCP data Status: Done	Data and maps	2014 output is listed as "support and contributions" in AWP and not "data and maps", presumably because back then EEA had a support function and not main responsibility. However this output

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		ing framework, streamlined with E-PRTR reporting [No specific mention of QA/QC in CAAR 2014]				fits thematically together with the outputs for 2015 and 2016
Reports on fluorinated greenhouse gas production and sales, and on EU exports and imports in support of the F-Gas regulation	Annual	Publication of the aggregated F-gases data and EEA technical report ***Status:*** *Done*	Annual technical reports on the trade and production of (ODS and) F-gases ***Status:*** *Done*	Annual technical reports on the trade and production of (ODS and) F-gases ***Status:*** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
	Annual	Confidential EU F-gases report ***Status:*** *Done*	Annual internal EU reports (confidential) on (ODS and) F-Gases ***Status:*** *Done*	Annual internal EU reports (confidential) on (ODS and) F-Gases ***Status:*** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
		Country-specific f-gas (and ODS) datasheets ***Status:*** *Done (provision of country-specific database extracts)*			Reports and assessments	
Reports on ozone-depleting substances and preparation of national statistical factsheets on ODS production and consumption in support of the	Annual	*Country-specific (f-gas) and ODS datasheets* ***Status:*** *Done (provision of country-specific database extracts)*		Country fact sheets on environmental pressures from industry ***Status:*** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
		Publication of the aggregated ODS data technical report ***Status:*** *Done*	Annual technical reports on the trade and production of ODS (and F-gases)	Annual technical reports on the	Reports and assessments	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
ODS regulation. Preparation of the EU submission under the Montreal protocol			*Status: Done*	trade and production of ODS (and F-gases) *Status: Done*		
		Confidential EU internal ODS report; *Status: Done*	Annual internal EU reports (confidential) on ODS (and F-Gases); *Status: Done*	Annual internal EU reports (confidential) on ODS (and F-Gases); *Status: Done*	Reports and assessments	
		EU annual report on ODS to UNEP *Status: Done*	EU submission on ODS to the Montreal Protocol *Status: Done*	EU submission on ODS to the Montreal Protocol *Status: Done*	Reports and assessments	
EEA Core Set of Indicators and other relevant indicators on industrial releases to air, water, soil, and waste transfers; production, sales and emissions of fluorinated gases; and production and consumption of ODS	Annual	Publish reviewed and updated ODS indicators *Status: Proposal for renewed indicator done and consultation initiated / indicator publication delayed to first half of 2015.*	Updated indicator at European level on ODS *Status: Done*	Updated indicator at European level on ODS *Status: Done*	Indicators	
		Publish reviewed and updated f-gas indicators *Status: Done - F-gas indicator updated with information up to 2012*	Updated indicators at European level on F-gases *Status: Done*	Updated indicator at European level on F-gases, and revision of indicator on F-gases *Status: postponed to 2017 due to the complexity for a*	Indicators	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				robust methodology and the need for further discussion with DG CLIMA		
		Propose a core set of indicators on new industrial releases to air, water, soil and waste Status: Work initiated / preliminary work done on the development of an indicator on pressures from industry.	Further development of the industrial pollution indicator framework **Status:** *Done*	Further development of the industrial pollution indicator framework **Status:** *Done*	Indicators	
Assessments of the effectiveness of industrial policies in reducing releases of pollutants and of the subsequent impacts on the environment, health	Regular	Support to DG CLIMA in the F-Gas Committee meeting **Status:** *Done – annual F-gas report findings presented in the F-gas Committee meeting*	Provision of policy support in relation to relevant regulations under SA1.2, incl. F-Gas Regulation, ODS Regulation, EU ETS Directive, LCP Directive, IED, PRTR Protocol, Montreal	Provision of policy support in relation to relevant regulations under SA1.2, incl. F-Gas Regulation, ODS Regulation, EU ETS Directive, LCP Directive, IED, PRTR Protocol, Montreal	Contributions and joint products / Policy support	The various areas in 2015 are all grouped together. The CAAR table assessing progress states the output is "done" but one cannot infer if this was provided for all or only some of the areas

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
and economy, including assessment of co-benefits of policy measures undertaken in these areas		Support to the Commission in E-PRTR Committee meeting and international PRTR meetings (UNECE, OECD) **Status:** *Unknown - not mentioned in CAAR 2014*	Protocol, E-PRTR Regulation **Status:** *Done*	Protocol, E-PRTR Regulation **Status:** *Done - Provision of policy support, including through the joint meeting of the IED and the E-PRTR expert groups, the F-gas Committee, and a meeting of Eionet NRCs on Industrial Pollution*		
		Draft report assessing the effects of the ODS Regulation and the F-Gas Regulation on GHG emissions in Europe; and corresponding report or working paper for consultation **Status:** *Unknown -cannot be inferred from CAAR or other publicly available information*	Support and contributions: Impact of ODS and F-gases Regulations on past GHG emissions **Status:** *Done as web article publication according to CAAR 2015; though this could not be retrieved online*			Not clear from the documents if 2014 and 2015 are separate outputs. It may be that the report mentioned in 2014 on the effects of ODS and F-Gas regulations was postponed to 2015 and that this was reduced to this web article

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Assist the Commission with the three-yearly review (2010-12) of the implementation of the E-PRTR Regulation *Status: Done [supported the E-PRTR Refit Evaluation through participation in the Commission steering group]*				
Technical support to the European Commission on developing reporting protocols and on streamlining the collection and reporting of industrial emissions data under IED, ETS, E-PRTR, etc. with national GHG and air pollutant emission inventory reporting	Continuous	[No specific mention of EU ETS technical report output in 2014 AWP] *Status (as per CAAR 2014):* *- Prepared a draft technical report on the application of the EU ETS in 2013 to be published in the first half of 2015* *- Establishment of EU ETS online reporting tool; provision of consolidate database with MS responses; supporting data files (and summary notes) with a first statistical digest of all MS implementation reports*	Annual technical report on EU ETS implementation in Member States (MS) *Status: Done*	Annual technical report on the application of the EU ETS in Member States *Status: Done*	Reports and assessments	Unclear if the report mentioned in 2014 CAAR is the same as the one in 2015

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Set-up of the IED reporting framework / First proposal of IED reporting protocols Status: Technical assistance provided (cannot infer further details from CAAR 2014)	Support to development of IED reporting and revision of E-PRTR reporting framework **Status:** *Done*	Support to development of IED reporting framework and integrated E-PRTR & LCP reporting framework, and to the update of the E-PRTR website Status: Done	Contributions and joint products	
		Identification of opportunities for consolidation and streamlining in accordance with IED reporting requirements across relevant reporting processes **Status:** *Unknown - Not mentioned / cannot be inferred based on CAAR 2014*	Streamlining of industrial emissions data collection processes under IED **Status:** *Done*	Streamlining of industrial emissions data collection processes under IED *Status: Done*	Contributions and joint products	
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/regular		Annual Eionet workshop on industrial pollution **Status:** *Done*	Annual Eionet workshop on industrial pollution **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	
/		SOER 2015 contributions on industrial pollution (provide thematic input,			SOER 2015 contribution	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		quality assurance, pro-duces thematic fiches un-derpinning indicators) **Status:** *Done - SOER 2015 briefing on indus-trial pollution finalised. Support was provided in relation to other aspects of SOER 2015.*				
/		EEA's F-gases database updated; Publication of the aggregated F-gases data EEA's ODS database up-dated; Publication of the aggregated ODS data **Status:** *Done*	Data reporting, tech-nical support to re-porting countries and companies, and qual-ity assurance related to plant-by-plant in-ventory data on LCPs, the E-PRTR, ODSs, F-gases and the imple-mentation of the EU ETS **Status:** *Done [men-tioned as a highlight in 2015 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR]*	Updated (confiden-tial) compilation ODS and F-Gases provided **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Delivery of upgraded ODS and F-Gas BDR **Status:** *Adjusted reporting platform done for F-gas BDR [No info can be inferred on ODS BDR upgrade from 2014 CAAR]*	Continued development of EEA information systems and data flow management processes, e.g. with regard to the amended reporting regime under the new F-Gas Regulation, The online tool for company-based reporting, in accordance with the revised F-gas Regulation, was brought to the final stage of development. **Status:** *Done [mentioned as a highlight in 2015 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR]*	An updated tool for company-based reporting of F-gases was implemented in 2016 [mentioned as a highlight in 2016 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR]	Reporting tools	
		Establishment of EU ETS online reporting tool [mentioned in CAAR 2014 not in AWP] **Status:** *Done*				

10.3.3   SA1.3 Climate change mitigation and energy

This Strategic area aims to provide support and relevant information to policy development and implementation in the area of climate change mitigation and energy. See T&P and ETS case studies for more detail.

Policy framework:
UNFCCC
Kyoto Protocol
IPCC
EU GHG Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (525/2013/EC) and Implementing/Delegated Acts
EU ETS Directive (2003/87/EC)
EEA/Eionet Regulation
Roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050
Energy Roadmap 2050
2030 Climate and Energy Framework
2020 and 2030 Climate and energy targets

Main partners:
ETC – ACM
EU institutions: DG CLIMA, DG ESTAT, DG ENER, DG RTD, DG JRC
Others: Member States, IEA

Programmed and reported activities
Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 11. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 11: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Assistance to the European Commission and EU Member States in form of data, reports, and assessments under the EU GHG Monitoring Mechanism Regulation	Annual	Support to European Commission and Member States: addressing non-functioning UNFCCC software tool (CRF reporter) used to report GHG emissions to the UNFCCC and under the EU Monitoring Mechanism Regulation **Status**: *Done*	Technical report: Energy-related GHG emissions from an end-user perspective **Status:** *Not done*	Implementation of the comprehensive review of Member States' GHG emission inventories under the Effort Sharing Decision **Status**: *Done*	Publication, Data and maps, Information system	
Assessment of progress by EU and EEA member countries towards meeting GHG emissions, energy efficiency and renewable energy targets, including progress towards EU 2020 headlines targets and support to the European Semester	Annual	EEA report: Trends and projections in Europe 2014; tracks progress towards climate and energy targets in Europe, and looks at progress towards the three main targets in the EU's Climate and Energy Package **Status**: *Done*	EEA report: Progress towards meeting GHG emissions, energy efficiency and renewable energy targets in Europe (Annual 'Trends and Progress' report) **Status:** *Done*	EEA report: Progress towards meeting GHG emissions, energy efficiency and renewable energy targets in Europe (Annual 'Trends and Progress' report) **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
Ex-post policy-effectiveness evaluation in the context of the	Tbd					

Emission Trading System and the Effort Sharing Decision					
European Union greenhouse gas inventory (for year-2) to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol	Annual	Technical report: EU GHG inventory 1990–2012 (Official EU submission to UNFCCC); support to emission inventory review activities; support to Member States, GHG inventory reporting; assessment of reasons behind past GHG emission trends **Status**: Done	Technical report: EU GHG inventory 1990–2013 (Official EU submission to UNFCCC); support to emission inventory review activities; support to Member States, GHG inventory reporting; assessment of reasons behind past GHG emission trends **Status**: Done	Technical report: EU GHG inventory 1990-2014 (Official EU submission to UNFCCC); assessment of reasons behind past GHG emission trends; support to Member States, GHG inventory reporting **Status**: Done	Publication
Support to the Commission with the preparation of inventory-associated reports related to the transition from the Kyoto Protocol's 1st commitment period to the 2nd commitment period	2014-2016		Provision of policy support to the EU in the context of UNFCCC and COP21, including support to the UNFCCC annual review process **Status**: Done	Provision of policy support to the EU in the context of UNFCCC and COP21, including support to the annual review of the EU inventory under the Convention and the Protocol, the review	Publication

			of the initial report for CP2 and the Biannual Report ***Status****: Done*	
Approximated complete EU GHG Inventory for year-1 ('the proxy')	Annual	Technical report: Approximated EU GHG inventory: proxy GHG estimates for 2013; preliminary estimates of GHG emissions in the EU and its Member States for 2013 ***Status****: Done*		Publication
Quality-assured GHG inventory information and co-ordination of annual and comprehensive inventory reviews for the compliance cycle under the Effort Sharing Decision and Article 19 of the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation. Contributing to UNFCCC reviews of the EU	Annual	Technical report: Annual European Union greenhouse gas inventory 1990–2012 and inventory report 2014 ***Status****: Done*	Implementation of the first annual review of Member States' GHG emission inventories under the Effort Sharing Decision ***Status****: Done*	Technical report: EU GHG inventory 1990-2014 (Official EU submission to UNFCCC); assessment of reasons behind past GHG emission trends; support to Member States, GHG inventory reporting ***Status****: Done*

EU greenhouse gas and energy datasets, including Policies and Measures (PAMS) and projections	Annual	Updated information in EEA database on national climate PAMs, including expected reductions in GHG emissions resulting from implementation of these PAMs, as estimated by countries **Status**: *Done*	Updated EEA Climate Change Data Centre with relevant EU greenhouse gas and energy data sets, including PAMS and projections and EU ETS information **Status**: *Done*	Updated EEA Climate Change Data Centre with relevant EU greenhouse gas and energy data sets, including policies and measures (PAMS) and projections and EU ETS information; country profiles **Status**: *Done*	Data and maps
Support to the Commission with the preparation of the report on the application of the EU ETS Directive (as required under Article 21)	Annual	Assistance to the European Commission regarding development of draft implementing acts under GHG MMR; preparation for reporting obligations in relation to EU ETS Directive **Status**: *Done*	Assistance to the European Commission in relation to Articles 6–9, 12–19, 21, 22 and 24 of the EU GHG Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (525/2013/EC) **Status**: *Done*	Assistance to the European Commission in relation to Articles 6-9, 12-19, 21, 22 and 24 of the EU GHG Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (525/2013/EC) **Status**: *Done*	Publication, Data and maps, Information system
Assessments of the environmental and health benefits of energy efficiency, including good practice on implementation. Assessments of potential	Regular				

future technological developments in the energy sector and their environmental and climate effects				
Assessments of the potential impacts, benefits and environmental pressures of different shares of renewable energies in different sectors, including interactions and trade-offs between sectors and associated external costs	Regular	Technical report: Energy support measures and their impact on innovation in the renewable energy sector in Europe **Status**: Done	Technical report: Progress in renewable energy including a section on methods to estimate avoided air pollutant emissions due to the deployment of RES (SOx, NOx, PM) **Status**: Done	Publication
Assessments of inter-linkages, synergies, and trade-offs between climate and air pollution mitigation policies — including short lived climate forcers, sectoral dimensions, externalities, and costs	Regular	Technical report(s): Long-lived energy infrastructures versus climate objectives for 2030 and 2050, energy transitions and ex post policy evaluation **Status**: In progress, delayed	Technical report: From vision to defining strategies and climate and energy policy: Evaluation of low-carbon development strategies of EEA member countries and role of currently implemented policies and measures	Publication

			Status: Done	
Further methodological reports on accounting methods for different greenhouse gases and air pollutants (including territorial, consumption, and production methods)	Tbd			
EEA Core Set Indicators and other relevant indicators on climate change mitigation and energy, including links to other relevant sectors	Annual	Most indicators on climate change mitigation and energy were updated to comply with indicator activity at the EEA **Status**: Partially done	Updated indicators at European level on climate change mitigation and energy **Status**: Done	Updated indicators at European level on climate change mitigation and energy including possible improvements to the current set of energy indicators taking into account new data sets and/or new perspectives **Status**: Done	Indicators
Participate in and contribute to EU activities within UN meetings on climate change (UNFCCC, IPCC, IMO, ICAO)	Continuous	Publication of technical notes to support the EU in high-level events (Informal Council of Environment Ministers, Greek Presidency and European Commission during Bonn			Support and contributions

	sessions in relation to Kyoto Protocol Ambition Mechanism, and Multilateral Assessment exercise in 20th COP) ***Status****: Done*				
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/regular		Annual Eionet workshops on climate-change mitigation and energy ***Status****: Done*	Annual Eionet workshop on climate change mitigation and energy ***Status****: Done*	Workshops and meetings

10.3.4 SA1.4 Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation

This Strategic area aims to provide support and relevant information to policy development and implementation in the area of climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation.

Policy framework:
EU Adaptation strategy (Commission communication)
7th EAP
EU Urban Agenda
Europe 2020 Strategy
EU civil protection and disaster risk reduction policies (including the Civil Protection Mechanism)
Copernicus regulation
EU Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (525/2013/EC)

Main partners:
ETC – CCA
Eionet NRCs: Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation
EU institutions: DG CLIMA, DG ENV, DG ECHO, DG JRC, DG RTD, DG REGIO, ECDC,
Others: ISDR, WHO, ECMWF, ICLEI, Regional conventions, EPA Networks, Mayors Adapt, UNFCCC, IPCC, UNEP-PROVIA, Copernicus climate change service

Activities
Activities under this area focus on assessments related to climate change impacts in Europe, vulnerability assessments, as well as related indicators. Another important task is the maintenance and improvement of the European Climate Adaptation Platform (Climate-ADAPT). Moreover, activities include assessing adaptation to climate change in Europe, including sectoral links, and specific support to adaptation policy development and implementation on national, sub-national and EU level.

Prior to the MAWP 2014-2018, Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation were considered two separate but related cross-cutting themes, rather than forming part of the environmental themes (2.0 Climate change impacts and 2.1 Vulnerability and adaptation).

Programmed and reported activities
Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 12. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. Only items in the AWPs and the corresponding performance table in the CAARs are included. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 12: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Assessment of climate change impacts and vulnerability	2016	**-**	Draft EEA report on 'climate change impacts and vulnerability' (indicator-based), to be published in 2016 **Status:** *Done*	Publication of the EEA assessment report on 'Climate change impacts and vulnerability in Europe' and related indicators (in close connection to and consistent with the report) **Status:** *Done (Publication of the finalised report was postponed until early 2017, to ensure more effective outreach)*	Reports and assessments	
Updated and improved indicators of climate change impacts and vulnerability	Annual	Indicators on Climate change impacts (update based on IPCC WGII report) **Status:** *Various climate change and impact indicators were*	Indicators on climate-change impacts and vulnerability (updated and improved) **Status:** *Done*	***Included in above***	Indicators	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		finalised and published in 2014, taking into account the fifth assessment report of the IPCC.				
Analysis and assessment of national and sub-national adaptation policies (first in 2014, and regularly thereafter) contributing to the development by the European Commission of the adaptation preparedness scoreboard.	2014 (tbd afterwards)	Report on national adaptation strategies and plans **Status:** *The EEA report National adaptation policy processes in European countries was launched in October 2014*	EEA technical reports on Overview of climate change adaptation platforms in Europe and Monitoring, reporting and evaluation of climate change adaptation at national level **Status:** *Done*	Follow-up work on monitoring, reporting and evaluation of national adaptation policies (follow-up to technical report in 2015) **Status:** *Done*	Contributions and joint products	
Further assessment report on adaptation in Europe by way of follow-up to 2013, developed in close connection with work on analysis of national and sub-national adaptation polices	2016	Technical report on uncertainty (analyse and summarise use of climate projections in countries (e.g. in their national vulnerability/risk assessments and/or national adaptation strategies) based on				This item is not clear; Technical report on uncertainty might also belong above.

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		the 2013 country survey) *Status: Not mentioned as a separate deliverable in CAAR, is related to the above item*				
Updated and improved European Climate Change Adaptation Platform Climate-ADAPT	Continuous	Updated and improved Climate-ADAPT, including establishing links with Copernicus climate change service: *Status: Update EU policy, transnational pages; new national information; published new or extended case studies*	Updated and improved European Climate Change Adaptation Platform Climate-ADAPT *Status: Done*	Updated and improved European Climate Change Adaptation Platform Climate-ADAPT (e.g. regular content updating and review, improved content on cities; various improved functionalities, migration to EEA content management system) *Status: Done*	Information systems	
Assessment of climate change impacts and adaptation in cities (scoping in 2014)	Tbd		Draft EEA report on 'urban adaptation', to be	Publication of the EEA assessment report on 'Cities coping	Reports and assessments	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
			published in 2016	with climate change'		
			Status: Done	*Status: Done*		
		Maps on Climate change and urban vulnerability *Status: No mention in the CAAR*				
Assessment of impacts of natural hazards (economic, human health, ecosystems) (scoping in 2014)	Tbd					
Assessment of climate change adaptation and transport systems, including analysis of member country actions	2014	Report on transport and adaptation *Status: The EEA report Adaptation of transport to climate change in Europe was published in December*				
Support to EU activities within UN meetings on climate change and disaster risk reduction (UNFCCC, IPCC, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (ISDR) Europe, World Health Organisation (WHO) Europe, and the	Continuous	• to organise a conference on urban adaptation with ICLEI Europe and the European Commission (to be confirmed) • to contribute to the organisation of the	Contribution to the organisation of the second European Climate Change Adaptation conference (2015, Copenhagen)	Contribution to the Commission (DG CLIMA) Mayors Adapt initiative and the annual ICLEI conference on	Workshops and meetings	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Environmental Protection Agencies (EPA) Network)		second European Climate Change Adaptation (ECCA) conference (2015, Copenhagen) • to contribute to and participate in relevant conferences and meetings including those organised by DG CLIMA, UNFCCC, IPCC, ISDR Europe, WHO Europe, EMS/ECAC, EPA network, Interreg and LIFE+ projects, EU research projects ***Status:*** *The EEA participated in meetings of the Climate Change Committee's working group on adaptation.* *The Open European day on climate change adaptation at the resilient cities conference in Bonn*	Contribution to the Commission (DG CLIMA) Mayors Adapt project and the annual ICLEI conference on urban adaptation Contributions to other conferences and meetings ***Status:*** *Done (ICLEI conference postponed to 2016)*	urban adaptation Contributions to other conferences and meetings Collaboration with ECMWF, including participation in expert meetings ***Status:*** *Done*		

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		An expert meeting on climate change adaptation platforms held at EEA				
		Meetings of the EPA network's Interest Group on Climate Change Adaptation.				
		Other international conferences and workshops				
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/regular	To organise the annual Eionet workshop, possibly combined with an expert meeting on web-based adaptation platforms **Status:** *The EEA organised the eighth Eionet workshop on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation in June 2014*	Eionet workshops on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation (linked with an expert meeting on adaptation platforms and/or on monitoring and evaluation) **Status:** *Done*	Eionet workshop on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation (and expert meetings) **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	
/				Developing an assessment report on disaster risk reduction	Reports and assessments	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				and links to climate change adaptation (to be published in 2017) ***Status:*** *Done*		
/			Support to reporting of climate change adaptation actions under the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation ***Status:*** *Done (updated country pages on Climate-ADAPT)*		Publication	
/		SOER 2015 contributions on CC impacts, vulnerability and adaption ***Status:*** *The SOER 2015 European briefing on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation was finalised. Support was also*			SOER 2015 contribution	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		provided in relation to other aspects of SOER 2015.				

10.3.5 SA1.5 Water management, resources and ecosystems

This Strategic area aims to provide support and relevant information to policy development and implementation in the area of water management, resources and ecosystems. See Freshwater case study for details.

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 13. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. Only items in the AWPs and the corresponding performance table in the CAARs are included. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 13: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
Upgrade of WISE to WISE 2.0 to establish an improved, consistent, common data structure for information pertaining to all water directives, enabling cross-cutting assessments of climate change, land use, and biodiversity. WISE 2.0 includes in particular the development of a more decentralised system, including Reportnet, in line with the SIIF concept and SEIS principles. This will first be developed in the UWWTD area, and later in other water directives and the WFD as feasible	2015 then regular	WISE, and WISE version 2: • to maintain and further streamline the established information flows with Member States, with improved business processes for quality control and assurance. • to develop further convergence of both WFD, SOE and information flows, in the context of developing new reporting sheets, linked with information from all other Water Directives • to add a module on water quantity, bringing water account methodology at the centre of the hydrological information organisation • to integrate relevant data on sectors, e.g. on pressures and economics (agriculture, water utilities, industries) • to provide the WISE output side with visualisation	In line with SEIS and Inspire, taking into account SIIF concepts, develop infrastructure for shared access, integrated assessments and efficient dissemination for all water data in preparation of the launch of WISE 2.0 in 2016. This includes the refit of 'waterbase' and all water data flows in content and process. ***Status:*** *Done*	Further develop the infrastructure for shared access and efficient dissemination of data and assessment via WISE and the Water Data Centre in line with SEIS and INSPIRE, taking into account the SIIF concept ***Status:*** *Partially done*	Information systems

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
		and download – facilities appropriate for main clients • to ensure establishment of a reliable common information structure on all water data at EEA including all SOE data, WFD, industry directives and FD. This should embrace and upgrade several elements of the Waterbase and WFD, FD and industry directives master database • to implement the first application of WISE-SIIF pilot for UWWTD in view of establishing first steps towards a distributed system • to establish a module for the visualisation and access of information under the Floods Directive • to integrate the WISE Marine first modules (see SA1.6) ***Status:*** *Done*			
Maintain and develop all relevant water data and indicators to provide the knowledge base	Regular	SOER 2015 contribution on water ***Status:*** *Done*	Updated core set of indicators on water	Update core set of indicators on water with the revised WISE SoE data flows	Data, maps, indicators

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
for the better implementation of water policies and EEA SOE information (in cooperation with Commission services and countries). This will include new data-handling and reporting streams under the UWWTD and DWD at the earliest date possible. At a later stage, and after a feasibility study, reporting under the Nitrates Directive might also be included into EEA reporting mechanisms		Updated water indicators *Status: Done* Two data reports on emissions of pollutions to Europe's waters (an analysis of data reported under European data flows) and on hazardous substances *Status: Done (Not in AWP)*	*Status: Done*	and Directive data flows as needed *Status: Partially done (postponed until 2017 due to late in-coming data)* Preparing a working document on emissions to water based on information from WFD, WISE SOE, E-PRTP, UWWTD and other data flows depicting diffuse and point sources from nutrients and as far as possible chemicals *Status: Done*	
Assessment of the results of the 2nd River Basin Management Plans and integrated reports on the status and pressures affecting Europe's waters (in cooperation with Commission services)	2018	Preparation for the next round of reporting under the WFD in 2015, the FD reporting and its respective assessments *Status: Done* Report on public participation under the WFD *Status: Done*	Assessment framework to analyse data under WFD 2nd reporting of RBMPs, including a report on water economics (cost of measures and impacts of investments) and assessment on policy evaluation in the water policies *Status: Done*	Based on the 2015's integrated assessment framework start to analyse the data reported by March 2016 under WFD 2nd RBMPs, with cross walks to assessments under Floods Directive (EEA 2015 analysis), BD2020 and MFSD. *Status: Done*	Support and contributions

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
Cross-assessment of the implementation of the UWWTD, the Nitrate Directive and the Bathing Water Directive. This will start with combining aspects of the UWWTD and Nitrate Directives in the annual Bathing Water report, gradually working towards an integrated report, as the data and information structure under the SIIFs develops	2015 and gradually more integrated in the following years	Integrated assessment Industry Directives report 2014, covering BWD, UWWTD and DWD **Status:** *Not done*	Industry Directives report 2014, covering the BWD, the UWWTD and the DWD **Status:** *Not done*	Regular update on the Industry Directives report, covering: BWD, UWWTD and DWD **Status:** *Done*	Publication
To support the Blueprint, the Biodiversity Strategy 2020, the Climate Adaptation Strategy, and the EU Resource Efficiency Roadmap. Work towards integrated assessments, including socio-economic aspects and environmental accounts, building on water-assets accounts and water balances. WFD targets and objectives are the key elements for ecosystem assessments and related services (including economics, in particular 'payments for ecosystem services')	Regular	Updated water indicators (finalise and disseminate European results for water accounts as the upgrade of the EEA's core set indicators on water resources; to develop ecosystem capital accounts for water and integrate economic information in a stepwise fashion) **Status:** *Done* ETC report on previous floods information (with information from 2013) **Status:** *Done (Not in AWP)*	European results for water balances as input for water accounts and environmental accounts **Status:** *Done* Report on floods in Europe, focusing on integration of possible measures under different policy areas. A water contribution to preparing EEA climate change assessment in 2016. **Status:** *Done* First draft European assessment in eutrophication across land-based sources	Provide regular European results for water balances as input for water accounts, environmental accounts **Status:** *Done* A report on water management aspects in large European cities **Status:** *Done* European assessment of eutrophication abatement measures, based on the 2015 EEA pilot study Partially done (postponed until 2017 due to the need	Indicators, publications

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
		Technical report on forest/water interactions and natural retention measures **Status**: *Not done (delayed for publication in mid-2015)*	(incl. point and diffuse pollution) for inland and coastal waters and a water module contribution to the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their services (MAES)ecosystem assessment (streamlining across water/marine/biodiversity directives) **Status:** *Done*	to perform further data work) Deliver contribution to integrated European assessment on eutrophication across land-based sources (incl. point and diffuse pollution) for inland and coastal waters (link to MAES ecosystem assessment) **Status:** *Done (ETC technical report)*	
Development of indicators of water-related resource efficiency to support the EU Resource Efficiency Roadmap and the European semester process	Annual	Updated water indicators (to finalise development of water efficiency indicators) **Status:** *Done*	European results for water balances as input for indicators on resource efficiency **Status:** *Done*	Provide regular European results for indicators on resource efficiency **Status:** *Done*	Indicators
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/ regular	Workshop (Eionet workshop to discuss aspects of the SOER assessment work and the next round of RBMPs) Technical meetings with Member States and EEA member countries to discuss the development of WISE 2.0 **Status:** *Done*	Chairing WISE technical group; co-chairing WFD CIS group on reporting and water accounts Done Eionet Freshwater Workshop on new reporting structure **Status:** *Done*	Charing WISE technical group; co-charing WFD-FD CIS groups where appropriate (e.g. reporting on water accounts), support to DG ENV in all other relevant WFD and FD CIS activities **Status:** *Done*	Support and contributions

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
				Eionet Freshwater Workshop to prepare the new data call for WISE SoE data after the 2015 review and to start discussions on the upcoming water assessment 2017-2018 **Status:** *Done*	

10.3.6   SA1.6 Marine and coastal environment and maritime activities

The aim of this Strategic area is to support policy development and implementation related to marine and coastal environment and maritime activities.

Policy framework:

Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)
Maritime Spatial Planning Directive
Integrated Maritime Policy
Common Fisheries Policy
Nature Directives (Habitats Directive and Birds Directive)
Water Framework Directive
7th EAP
EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy
EU Director's 'Vilnius process'

Main partners:

ETC – ICM
NRCs: Marine, coastal, maritime
EU institutions: DG ENV, DG MARE, DG JRC
Others: Member States, ICES, Regional Sea Conventions

Activities

Activities under this area include the implementation of the marine component of WISE, assessment of marine and coastal ecosystems, maritime activities and their environmental impact, developing and publishing indicators (marine, maritime, coastal), and data.

Prior to MAWP, activities related to this topic were similarly placed under "Marine environment" heading. In 2013, the State of Coasts in Europe report was planned under the Land Use heading.

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 14. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. Only items in the AWPs and the corresponding performance table in the CAARs are included. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 14: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Develop and deliver the marine component of WISE in partnership with Eionet, EU Member States, Regional Sea Conventions, and ICES. Specific activities include: - supporting MSFD reporting processes, through development and maintenance of reporting mechanisms for Member States; - supporting enhanced coherence and consistency of MSFD assessments and monitoring programmes. This will be achieved through development and implementation of data requirements, standards, and data flows, in accordance with MSFD Art. 19(3); - establishing links to the European Commission Marine Knowledge initiative (EMODnet) and the Copernicus marine service, as well as to relevant research initiatives	2014 then regular	Phase 1 of WISE-Marine **Status:** *Done*	Phase 2 of WISE-Marine and HOPE indicators development **Status:** *Done*	WISE-Marine and HOPE indicators development **Status:** *Done*	Information systems	
		WISE-SoE TCM dataset and Marine indicators **Status:** *WISE-SoE data and marine CSIs were updated for publication on the EEA website.*	Update of WISE SoE transitional coastal waters data set **Status:** *Done*	Update of WISE SoE transitional coastal and marine waters data set **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps	
		/	Support to MSFD policy process and implementation of MSFD art 19.3 (technical group Data workshop; working papers for WG DIKE) **Status:** *Done*	Support to MSFD policy process and implementation of MSFD art 19.3 through organising workshops and working papers **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings; Contributions and joint products	This activity is not in the MAWP, and is placed here because of the topic (support to MSFD art 19(3))
Support to the work under the Common Implementation Strategy of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, the proposed directive on establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and	Regular	*Substantial effort to prepare the State of Europe's seas report (reported in CAAR, no AWP item)*	*EEA, 2015, State of Europe's seas, EEA Report No 2/2015 (only in CAAR, not in AWP)*		Reports and assessments	MAWP output not directly in AWPs, but State of

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
integrated coastal management, and related policies						Europe's seas report supports the relevant areas
		Support to Directive for Maritime Spatial Planning: define support actions **Status:** *not in CAAR*			Support and contributions	In AWP 2014, but not specific anywhere else
Indicators for transitional, coastal, marine environment, maritime activities including fisheries, and climate change impacts on the marine environment, in order to support the implementation of the MSFD, in partnership with Eionet, Regional Sea Conventions and ICES	Annual/regular					No indicator outputs in any of the AWPs
Thematic marine assessments: - Marine Baseline assessment to support the implementation of the MSFD and preparation of an update post-2018; - Marine Protected Areas assessment; - other thematic assessments	2014; 2017	Marine assessments • a briefing to support DG ENV European Marine Conference • a Marine Baseline Assessment **Status:** *"Marine Messages" publication prepared before the conference*			Reports and assessments; Support and contributions	Baseline assessment not mentioned in AWPs 2015-2016

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Baseline assessment – no specific reference				
			EEA, 2015, Spatial analysis of marine protected area networks in Europe's seas, Technical report No 17/2015 *(CAAR only, not in AWP)*		Publication	
			Scoping and preparing 2016 publications: fisheries and aquaculture assessment **Status:** *Done*	Fisheries and aquaculture assessment report, with a focus on sea food system **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	Fisheries gained importance over the period under consideration
		Report on Marine Protected Areas **Status:** *Prepared but will be published in 2015*	*Marine protected areas in Europe's seas — An overview and perspectives for the future, EEA Report No 3/2015* *(CAAR only, not in AWP)*			MPA report not clearly identifiable in AWP 2015, probably since it is "carried over" from 2014

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Marine components to support European and Member State ecosystem assessments in support of activities under the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy	2014, 2015 (and 2020)	Marine component to support Member States and European ecosystem assessment *Status: concepts for the 'Development of an operational EU policy-based marine ecosystem (services) assessment framework, Establishment of marine ecosystems and services linkages at the European level', were developed*	Technical report on the development of European marine ecosystem (services) assessment *Status: Done*	Finalise draft report on a European analytical framework for developing European marine ecosystem (services) assessment *Status: Partially done (Finalisation postponed until 2017 due to a higher complexity than originally anticipated)*	Reports and assessments	
Harmonised data on marine Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas, together with an assessment of their ecological coherence	Regular and assessment in 2018		Technical report on criteria for assessing ecological coherence of marine protected areas *Status: Done*	Marine protected areas: technical paper on criteria for analysing MPAs ecological coherence *Status: Done*	Reports and assessments	
Shared European contributions to UN Regular process for marine assessments and UNESCO-International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) project on interoperable coastal atlases	2014–2018		No outputs in AWPs related to this MAWP output			

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Marine Litter Watch based on citizen science and supporting MSFD requirements	Continuous	Marine LitterWatch: • to complete the technical development of Marine LitterWatch (MLW), operate it, and maintain it • to evaluate MLW, including Eionet consultation **Status:** *The Marine LitterWatch App was launched on the EEA website. No comment regarding eval.*	Update of Marine LitterWatch **Status:** *A workshop on 'Marine Litter-Watch' was held with regional stakeholders*	Marine LitterWatch implementation and outcomes **Status:** *Not done. (Due to resource constraints the work has been postponed until 2017)*	Reports and assessments	No report on update of Marine Watch in 2015, only a workshop is mentioned.
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/regular		Eionet Marine Workshop **Status:** *Not done Postponed to 2016 to accommodate policy process (revision of GES).*	Eionet Marine Workshop **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	One workshop in the period (2016)
			Scoping and preparing 2016 publications: Thematic assessment on eutrophication measures in collaboration with SA1.5;		Reports and assessments	Follow-up activities on these items are not explicitly reported and

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
			Black Sea, Mediterranean and Arctic SoE assessment processes in collaboration with SA3.1. A marine contribution to preparing EEA climate change assessment in 2016 **Status:** *Done*			not listed in AWP 2016 (under SA1.6)
		SOER 2015 contributions on marine and maritime **Status:** *Done*				

10.3.7   SA1.7 Biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests

The objective of SA1.7 is to support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests by means of data, information/indicators, and assessments. See Nature case study for more details.

Policy framework:
EEA and Eionet Founding Regulation**;**
Habitats and Birds Directives;
EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020;
7th EAP,
INSPIRE Directive;
Bern Convention;
CBD.
Main partners:
ETC – BD
Eionet NRCs
European Commission: DG ENV, JRC, Eurostat
Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 15. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. Only items in the AWPs and the corresponding performance table in the CAARs are included. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

15: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

ut as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
ade and maintain BISE to support the mentation of the EU and global Biodi- y Strategies and broad expert public munication	Launch May 2014 then regular	Upgrade of BISE in-formation system Data **Status**: Done	Contributing to maintenance and development of BISE **Status**: Done	Contributing to maintenance and development of BISE **Status**: Partially done	Information System	
oved expert information systems on spe- and habitats and links to taxonomic ser- (EUNIS) with data producers-organisa- and projects (e.g. Catalogue of Life, LIFE Watch)	2014	Technical report on Conservation Status of Species and Hab-itats **Status**: Done	Technical report on Conservation Status of Species and Hab-itats **Status**: Done	Continued develop-ment of EUNIS (habitats and spe-cies) in support of ecosystems assess-ments **Status**: Done	Publications, Data and Maps, Infor-mation sys-tems	
re Natura 2000 datasets, sufficiency as-nts and Union lists according to EU ation, support bio-geographic seminars rds good conservation status while sup-g other pan-European designation pro-s	Annual	Natura 2000 data support and contri-butions **Status:** Done	Continuing to de-liver and make ac-cessible key data flows in Natura 2000 **Status:** Done	Continuing to de-liver and make ac-cessible key data flows in Natura 2000 **Status:** Done	Data, maps and web vis-ualisation	Relevant for the Case study: Nature
sis of the state, trends and conservation s of individual species and habitats, as red under the reporting of the Habitats Birds Directives. Advice on streamlining Water and Marine Directives, based on xperience with articles 12 and 17.	2014 – 2015 (every 6 years)	SOER 2015 **Status:** Done				Relevant for the Case study: Nature
		Preparation of Tech-nical report on Con-servation Status of	Technical Report on the conservation			Relevant for the Case study: Nature

ut as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Species and Habitats **Status**: *Delayed*	status of Species and Habitats **Status**: *Done*			
			Explore the results of SOER 2015 and the technical report in support of other assessments requirements **Status**: *Done*	Explore the results of SOER 2015 and the technical report in support of other assessments requirements **Status**: *Done*	Contributions and joint products	Relevant for the Case study: Nature
				Contribute to continuation of Reporting under the Nature Directives **Status**: *Done*	Contributions and joint products	Relevant for the Case study: Nature
bute to EEA indicator frameworks, in- ng the core set, streamlined European versity indicators (SEBI 2020), agri-en- ment indicators (AEI), to monitor pro- towards the EU and global Biodiversity egy targets	2014 and regular	Streamlined biodiversity indicators **Status**: *Done*	Update and upgrade SEBI and AEI indicators within the EEA core set of indicators framework **Status**: *Done*	Update and upgrade SEBI and AEI indicators within the EEA core set of indicators framework **Status**: *Done*	Indicators, Support and contributions	
bute to bio-physical mapping and as- ments of ecosystems and their services, elated processes under the Biodiversity egy to 2020, and related actions based oduced data/information (restoration,	2014–2020	Assessments in support of the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy	Technical report on mapping and assessment of ecosystems — overview of progress, related	Update of European ecosystem map and methodological assessment work on integrating time series information	Support and contributions	

ut as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
n infrastructure, no net loss, natural cap- ccounting)		*Status*: Done	assessment prod- ucts (under the MAES process) *Status*: Done	(MAES work pro- gramme) *Status*: Done		
s the impacts on biodiversity of agricul- and forests based inter alia on High Na- Value (HNV) concepts applied to farm- and forest as contributions to target 3 of U Biodiversity Strategy	2015 (and 2020)		Reports on forests ecosystems and HNV forests *Status*: Done		Publication	
t the EU2010 Biodiversity Baseline to in- the mid-term review of the Biodiversity egy to 2020 (baseline associated to the ts above)	2015	Technical report on EU 2010 Biodiver- sity Baseline - up- date based on MAES ecosystems classifi- cation *Status*: Not done	Adapted 2010 Biodi- versity Baseline (based on the eco- systems classifica- tion developed un- der the MAES pro- cess) *Status*: Done		Publication	
orced cooperation with global and re- l key partners including the Council of pe (e.g. on data reporting by Contracting es to the Bern Convention on Emerald and IUCN (e.g. on EU Red lists of spe- and invasive species)	Annual	/	Presentation deliv- ered for (IUCN) conference 'Little Sydney: Protecting Nature in Europe' *Status*: Done	Continued support to the establish- ment of the Emer- ald network *Status*: Done	Contribu- tions and joint prod- ucts	
eted contributions to and participations evant European and global processes ibuting to Biodiversity governance, i.e. onvention on Biological Diversity, Sub-	Regular	European data set production (via UNEP WCMC) re- garding CBD *Status*: Delayed	Continuing to de- liver and make ac- cessible key data flows in the area:	Contribute to con- tinuation of Inspire implementation: CDDA streamlining	Support and contributions	

ut as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
l ecosystems assessments and Interna- platform for biodiversity and ecosys- (IPBES)			CDDA; Art17/Art12; and, Natura 2000 Continuation of In-spire: CDDA and Emerald network streamlining pilot exercise **Status**: *Done*	pilot exercise; Re-porting under Arti-cle 12 (Birds Di-rective) and Article 17 (Habitats Di-rective) – exercise of 2013-18 **Status**: *Done*		
t workshops and similar	Annual/regu-lar		Eionet NRC meet-ings: Biodiversity Data and Information Systems Biodiversity and ecosystems indica-tors and assess-ments Agriculture (to-gether with SA2) **Status**: *Done*	Eionet NRC meet-ings: Biodiversity Data and Information Systems Biodiversity and ecosystems indica-tors and assess-ments **Status**: *Done*	Workshops and meet-ings	

10.3.8   SA1.8 Urban, land use and soil

The objective of SA1.8 is to support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of urban, land use and soil by means of data, information/indicators, and assessments.

Policy framework

7th EAP priorities 1, 5, and 8

Roadmap to resource-efficient Europe

follow-up for Communication on Land (originally planned for 2014, then 2015, then removed from the EU Work programme)

EU Biodiversity Strategy

Green Infrastructure strategy

Floods Directive and Water Framework Directive

Tourism Framework – COM(2010)352 and

Coastal tourism strategy COM(2014)86

Main partners

ETC: ULS

Eionet NRCs: Soil and Land Use and Spatial Planning (LUSP)

EU institutions: DG ENV, Eurostat, DG JRC, DG REGIO, DG ENTR, DG GROW

Others: UNWTO, Alpine and Carpathian Regional Convention Secretariats

Activities

Activities in this area include contributions to topics related to land use, including green infrastructure, urban atlas, soil assessments, territorial indicators and ecosystem assessments.

In 2013, before the MAWP, these activities were placed under the cross-cutting land use theme.

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 16. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. Only items in the AWPs and the corresponding performance table in the CAARs are included. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 16: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
European integrated data platform for spatial and thematic assessments	2014–2018	European integrated data platform **Status:** *Partially done (working paper planned for Q2 "progressed" according to CAAR, not stated as completed; other activities harder to evaluate)*	2012 update of CSI 014 Land-take indicator and Country analysis based on Corine Land Cover (CLC) 2012 and Corine Land Cover change data 2006–2012 **Status:** *Done* CLC2012 data became available in December (incomplete coverage)	EEA technical report on CORINE Land Cover past trends and integration with current European data on land monitoring and statistics. **Status:** *Partially done (Postponed until 2017 due to late in-coming data delivery)*	Indicators Reports and assessments	Not completely clear if the 2015 and 2016 output belong under this MAWP output
				EEA Technical reports on methodological approaches for land degradation (productivity loss) and spatial data integration by analysing effects of drought on European ecosystems. **Status:** *Partially done (Postponed until 2017 due to resource constraints as a result of unex-*	Reports and assessments	Not completely clear if the 2016 output belongs under this MAWP output

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				pected higher work-load on data man-agement; to be published as an EEA briefing)		
Assessments of resource efficiency in relation to land take, land recycling, and virtual land use in Europe and third countries, supplemented by direct assessment of imperviousness (soil sealing) change	2015–2016		EEA technical report on land recycling; contribution to joint EEA/JRC report supporting land communication. **Status:** *Done (Land recycling report)* *EEA/JRC report cancelled due to postponement in policy* See also below (MAWP output 4)		Publication	
Integrated land assessments based on land multi-functionality concepts to support planned land use and soil policy targets; maintain and develop related map-based indicators. This will contribute to ecosystems mapping and assessments	2014–2015	Ecosystem mapping and assessment **Status:** *A draft of the technical report on ecosystem assessment was completed and presented for final internal review with the aim of*			Support and contributions	2014: Reporting in CAAR does not match operational objectives set out in AWP, hence hard to judge achievement.

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		publication in 2015, and a number of other activities				
		Approach to integrated land assessment **Status:** *Not explicitly in CAAR*			Support and contributions, Workshop	
Evaluation of the direct and indirect impact of EU policies on land and soil use in the EU and globally	2015–2018		Technical report on evaluation of EU policies and their direct and indirect impact on land take and land degradation, supplemented by direct assessment of imperviousness (soil sealing) change **Status:** *Done*		Publication	2015 output is related to second MAWP output (on imperviousness)
Assessments of green infrastructure (GI) and other alternatives to 'grey' infrastructure focusing on the multiple functions, benefits, and services that GI can provide (2017 EU progress report on Green Infrastructure Strategy)	2014–2017	Knowledge base on green infrastructure **Status:** *Spatial analysis of green infrastructure in Europe Report*	Technical report on green infrastructure and climate change mitigation and leaflet on green infrastructure inside and around cities **Status:** *Done*	Technical report on Green infrastructure and flood management (in cooperation with NSV2) **Status:** *Partially done (EEA report postponed until*	Support and contributions Reports and assessments	2014: Reporting in CAAR does not match operational objectives outlined in AWP, hence hard to judge achievement.

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				2017 due to resource constraints as a result of staff workload and reprioritisation)		
Indicators and assessments of urban areas and sustainable cities, integrating environmental and socio-economic information, and addressing the resource efficiency targets	2014–2015	Technical report on urban areas and sustainable cities **Status:** *The technical report on efficient cities progressed with a view to publishing in 2015*	Reports on sustainable urban areas (development of cities typology; urban sprawl) and related indicators **Status:** *Done*	Methodological support for sustainable urban areas and related indicators (typologies and land monitoring data) **Status:** *Partially done (Publication of Eionet ETC report until 2017 due resource constraints as a result of SNE leaving EEA without being replaced)*	Reports and assessments	2014: Objective and reported outcome are not explicitly linked, hence it is not clear whether the report in the plan is that mentioned here
Datasets and indicators to track sustainability trends, and the environmental and territorial impacts of land use-dependent economic sectors (agriculture, forest management, tourism)	2014–2018			First draft indicator for Fragmentation of ecosystems and habitats (terrestrial), based on 2012 land data. **Status:** *Done*	Indicators	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Knowledge base on environmental impacts of tourism **Status:** *Partially done (Feedback from countries was collected and implemented to provide guidance for first pilot reporting activity in 2015)*	Pending the conclusions of the 2014 scoping study, initiate the development of a set of indicators for 'tourism and environment reporting mechanism — TOUERM' **Status:** *Done*	Technical report on methodological approaches for the development of the first set of indicators for a tourism and environment reporting mechanism (TOUERM) **Status:** *Partially done (EEA report postponed until 2017 owing data quality and availability issues for indicators underpinning the report)*	Support and contributions	
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/regular		Eionet Soil and Land Use and Spatial Planning (LUSP) NRC meetings **Status:** *Done*	Eionet Soil and Land Use and Spatial Planning (LUSP) NRC meetings **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	
/				EEA Technical report on European soil nutrients balances and critical loads of N, P and Cd, and land related pressures in view of	Reports and assessments	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				food, soil and water quality *Status: Partially done (Postponed until 2017 due to resource constraints as a result of unexpected loss of staff; to be published as an EEA briefing)*		
/				EEA technical report and underpinning ecosystem capital accounting tables (V 1.0) *Status: Partially done (EEA report postponed until 2017 owing late availability of CORINE landcover data and complexity higher than anticipated)*	Reports and assessments	
/				Maintain mutual cooperation with partner regional conventions (Alpine,	Contributions and joint products	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				Carpathians), linking information systems and sharing assessments tools and methods (indicators) **Status:** *Done*		
		SOER 2015 contributions on urban areas, land use, soil **Status:** *SOER 2015 European briefings on land systems, soil, tourism and urban systems were finalised. Support was also provided in relation to other aspects of SOER 2015.*				

10.3.9 SA1.9 Waste and material resources

The objective of SA1.9 is to support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of waste and material resources by means of data, information/indicators, and assessments. See Waste case study for more details.

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 17. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. Only items in the AWPs and the corresponding performance table in the CAARs are included. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 17: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Review of member countries' waste prevention programmes according to the EEA mandate described in the Waste Framework Directive	Annual	Waste prevention in Europe report **Status:** *Done*	Analysis of second review of member country waste prevention programmes **Status:** *Done*	Third annual analysis of EEA member country waste prevention programmes **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	All outputs were provided
Assessments of progress in countries towards implementation of waste policies and the effectiveness of different measures, focused on priority waste streams in line with the outcome of the 2014 review of waste policies and using, inter-alia, the European reference model for waste	Regular	[AWP 2014] Publish update of selected elements of 2012 report on managing municipal solid waste **Status:** *Unclear, AAR 2014 reports that an ETC working paper on capacities for municipal waste management was finalised*	Assessing progress on the implementation of waste-management policies in countries **Status:** *Done*	Assessing progress on the implementation of waste-management policies in countries **Status:** *Done*	Publication	
			Detailed review of waste modelling tool as early warning system for monitoring progress by countries towards waste targets	Framework for monitoring progress towards waste targets using the European reference model **Status:** *Done*		Not clear where these items belong

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
			Status: Done			
Indicators on waste and material resources, including new indicators developed under the Resource Efficiency Roadmap	Annual	The waste EEA core set of indicators was further developed in January and February. Findings from the process have been used as the input to the SOER 2015 process, including the briefings on waste.	New CSI waste indicators and update of current WEEE indicator **Status: Done**	European-level trends for waste management across the waste hierarchy **Status: Done**	Indicators, Support and contributions	
Integrated environmental and economic accounts and databases, with material flows and associated environmental pressures, including on climate change	Regular	*Progress on resource efficiency and decoupling in the EU-27* report was published. The report is part of a coherent package on environmentally extended input-output accounting, together with the 2013 report on the accounting methodology and an interactive web platform.	Interactive web tool for input–output analysis **Status:** *Not done, The prototype web-tool has not been further implemented as a revision of the I-O work is ongoing in view of external developments*	No Evidence	Information system	
Catalogue of material resource efficiency policies, objectives,	2015, 2018	The second inventory of the national imple-	No Evidence on AAR, but evidence here	No Evidence on AAR, but evidence here		

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
targets and indicators in countries and at the EU level		mentation of resource efficiency policies was prepared. As part of the 2014 action plan for the ETC/WMGE, a questionnaire was developed	https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste/resource-efficiency/resource-efficiency	https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste/resource-efficiency/resource-efficiency		
Eionet workshops and similar	Annual/Regular	Webinar for NRCs on waste on the role of regional municipal waste policies. **Status:** Done	Eionet workshop on waste **Status:** Done	Capacity building on waste prevention (reach-out Eionet interaction, webinar) **Status:** Done	Workshops and meetings	

10.3.10 SA2.1 Resource-efficient economy and the environment

Policy framework:

Waste Framework Directive

EEA/Eionet Regulation

7th EAP

Communication on CE

RE Roadmap implementation

MAWP 2014-2018

EU 2020

UN SDGs 2015

European Strategy on Environmental Accounting

Main partners:

ETC – WMGE

Eionet NRCs: Waste and Resource Efficiency, Resource-efficient economy and environment NRCs

EU institutions: DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG GROW, DG SANTE, DG RTD, DG ESTAT, DG JRC, DG AGRI, DG Eurostat, DG ENTR

Others: Member countries, OECD, UNEP, Global Green Growth Forum, World Economic Forum, WHO, WBCSD, UNSC

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 18. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 18: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Briefing on progress towards a circular economy in Europe using established indicators and results from relevant research activities	Annual	Report and briefing on progress towards a green economy in Europe using results from relevant research activities **Status:** *Done*		Report on progress on selected elements of a green economy in Europe **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
		SOER 2015 contributions on a resource-efficient green economy **Status:** *Done*	Report on progress on selected elements of a circular economy (CE) in Europe **Status:** *Done*	Analysis of progress towards a circular economy (CE briefing) **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments (2016), publication (2015), Contributions (2014)	
			Country review resource efficiency policy implementation **Status:** *Done*	Follow-up to country review resource efficiency policy implementation (Reach-out, Eionet interaction (webinar)) **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings (2016) Publication (2015)	
Delivery of EEA indicators in support of the scoreboard being	Annual	Delivery of EEA indicators in support				

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
implemented under the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe		of the scoreboard being implemented under the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe *Status:* Done (The Environmental indicator report 2014 Environmental impacts of production — consumption systems in Europe - published)			Support and contributions	
Production of environmental composite index for Europe under the 'GDP and Beyond' policy process and in cooperation with Eurostat and JRC (*) (*) Scope, expectations, and working conditions for this activity to be clarified in discussions with relevant Commission services.	Annual			Indicators and integrated accounting approaches for environment and well-being assessment in line with the three priority objectives of the 7th EAP *Status:* Done	Contributions and joint products	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
			Updates and publication of selected SCP in-dicators ***Status:*** *Done*		Indicators	
		Provide analyses for, and finalise En-vironmental indica-tor report 2014 ***Status:*** *Done (The Environmental indi-cator report 2014 Environmental im-pacts of production — consumption sys-tems in Europe - published)*			Publication	
Regular participatory processes with business and other stake-holders exploring options for wider uptake of sustainable business models enabling a cir-cular economy	Annual			Reach-out activ-ity Circular Economy ***Status:*** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Participatory process with business and other stakeholders on options for wider uptake of sustainable business models enabling a resource-efficient green economy **Status:** *Done*			Support and contributions, workshop	
Capacity building and networking with Eionet through the NRCs on SCP and resource use (and possible future NRCs on environmental economics)	Continuous		Assessment of long-term transition perspectives for the food system **Status:** *Done*	Follow-up to food-system analysis (Reach-out, Eionet interaction (webinar)) **Status:** *Partially done (Owing to unexpected loss of staff resources at the end of 2015. Nonetheless, substantial progress made on establishing new networks and*	Workshops and meetings (2016) Support and contributions (2015)	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
				contacts through Eionet and EU processes. EEA report post-poned until 2017)		
		Continuous capacity building and net-working with Eionet through the NRCs on SCP and re-source use **Status:** *Done*			Support and contributions	
			Eionet workshop on resource-effi-cient economy **Status:** *Done*	EIONET work-shop on re-source efficient economy **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	
Workshops with selected coun-tries on opportunities for envi-ronmental fiscal reform	Tbd	Workshops with in-terested countries and liaison with Commission ser-vices on opportuni-ties for environmen-tal fiscal reform **Status:** *not clear*				Workshop

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Integrated accounts, indicators, and databases across DPSIR on circular economy trends	Regular/annual					
		Ecosystem capital accounting ***Status:*** *Done (ecosystem capital accounting, data layers for carbon, water and landscape/biodiversity were reviewed, validated and partially updated. Key underlying concepts were presented and discussed)*				Support and contributions

10.3.11 SA2.2 Environment, human health and well-being

Policy framework:

EEA/Eionet Regulation

7th EAP

MAWP 2014-2018

RE roadmap

GDP and beyond

Main partners:

ETC – no main ETC partner stated in AWP

Eionet NRCs: Environment and health

EU institutions: DG ENV, DG JRC, DG RTD, DG SANTE, DG ESTAT, DG ENTR, EFSA, ECHA

Others: Stakeholders (research community, NGOs), WHO, OECD

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 19. The table shows expected *outputs* in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 19: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Implement a web forum and briefings that further develop the knowledge base of the 2001 and 2013 Late Lessons reports in support of risk-man-agement policies regarding new technologies, chemicals and human health impacts	2014, regu-lar updates thereafter	Follow-up of the Late Lessons 2 report **Status:** *Done*	Late Lessons 2 summary report – science, policy and innovation **Status:** *Done*	/	Publication (2015) Web publication, Support and contributions (2014)	
Deliver contributions and other support to IPCHEM, and assess the potential for a greener chemicals sector in a green economy	Continuous	Support to the Euro-pean Commission's IPCHEM **Status:** *Done*	Data support to IPCheM on envi-ronmental me-dia and human biomonitoring **Status:** *Done*	Data support to IPCheM on envi-ronmental me-dia and human biomonitoring **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps (2015, 2016) Data Network-ing, Information system (2014)	
Develop a common conceptual framework with Eionet for as-sessing environmental risks to health and well-being in a green economy building on work with Eionet under Article 5 of the EEA Regulation	2015	Environment, human health and well-being assessments **Status:** *Done*	Analytical sup-port to system-atic approach to risk manage-ment **Status:** *Done*	Analytical sup-port to system-atic approach to risk manage-ment **Status:** *Done*	Contributions and joint prod-ucts	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Develop methods and indicators for describing environmental risks to human health and well-being in partnership with WHO, OECD and EU research activities	2014, 2016, 2018			Support to European Human Biomonitoring Initiative - Secretariat and SC participation **Status:** *Done*	Contributions and joint products	
		Indicators on chemicals **Status:** *not clear*	Indicators and integrated accounting approaches for environment and well-being assessment in line with the three priority objectives of the 7th EAP **Status:** *Done*		Support and contributions (2015) Indicators, Support and contributions (2014)	
Run workshops aimed at capacity building with the Eionet and with relevant partners (e.g. WHO)	Annual		Eionet workshop on Environment, Health and Well-being **Status:** Not done	Eionet workshop on Environment, Health and Well-being **Status:** *Done*	Workshops and meetings	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
			(owing to competing calls on staff resources)			
Publish a 1st European Environmental Risks to Human Health and Well-being assessment report in cooperation with Eionet	2018					
		SOER 2015 contributions on environment, human health and well-being **Status:** *Done*			SOER 2015 contribution	

10.3.12 SA2.3 Megatrends and transitions

Policy framework:

MAWP 2014-2018

EEA/Eionet Regulation

Main partners:

ETC – ICM (listed among partners, no main ETC partner stated in AWP)

Eionet NRCs: FLIS, WB

EU institutions: DG ENV, DG JRC, DG RTD, DG ESTAT

Others: OECD, countries providing content voluntarily, BEPA, IIASA, OSCE

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 20. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 20: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
Global megatrends assessments that address key social, technological, economic, environmental and political developments, their inter-linkages and implications for Europe. In partnership with Eionet and relevant EU bodies (e.g. European Commission BEPA)	2014, 2018–2019			Transitions to a Green Economy **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments	
		SOER contribution on megatrends and transitions **Status:** *Done*	SOER 2015 - Assessment of Global Megatrends (Part A) **Status:** *Done*		Publication (2015) Contribution (2014)	
			Environment and Security **Status:** *Done*		Publication	
		Assessment of Global Megatrends (GMT) **Status:** *Done*	Global Megatrends background documentation **Status:** *Done*		Web publication (2015) Support and contributions, Indicators (2014)	
			Western Balkans – Climate change impacts and water security		Web publication	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
		Status: Done				
		Forward-looking assessments *Status:* Done			Publication, Web publication	
Develop in partnership with transition networks and others, methodologies for assessing transition pathways using research and other findings as relevant	Ad-hoc			First results of pilot studies of co-created information with Eionet NRCs FLIS, i.e. Impacts of Global megatrends at national level and horizon scanning trends *Status:* Done		
Further developed web-based platform on Forward Looking Information and Services (FLIS) in order to strengthen institutional capacity in a transparent and efficient way by sharing experiences, information and (co-creation of) knowledge within the network (FLIServices) in close cooperation with Eionet and relevant Commission services	Continuous	FLIS web-based platform and services *Status:* Done	FLIServices - Eionet shared information platform on the web *Status:* Done	FLIServices - Forward looking information Platform - Eionet shared information platform on the web *Status:* Done	Information systems (2015, 2016) Support and contributions, Information system, Workshop (2014)	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Comments
			Three web tools for content sharing with Eionet; i.e. 1) FLIS Glossary; 2) Horizon scanning/trends; 3) FLIS cooperation (e.g. regional cooperation) ***Status:*** *Done*	Two web tools for content sharing with Eionet; i.e. 1) Horizon scanning 2) Methods and Methodologies ***Status****: Partially done (Good progress made with NRCs on reaching a common understanding of how to take forward work in these areas towards SOER 2020)*	Information systems	
Improved capacity within NRC FLIS in developing and using forward-looking information in policymaking, via regular meetings, tailored workshops and webinars, training courses, hands-on sessions, the use of the FLIServices, and possibly country collaborations through contracts under Article 5 of the EEA Regulation	Regular	Continuous capacity building and networking with Eionet ***Status:*** *Done*	Eionet workshops on forward.looking information tools, content and services ***Status:*** *Done*	Eionet workshops on forward looking information tools and services ***Status:*** *Done*	Workshops and meetings (2015, 2016) Continuous capacity building and networking with Eionet (2014)	

10.3.13 SA2.4 Sustainability assessments and state of the environment reporting

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 21. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

See SOER case study for more details.

Table 21: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
SOER 2015	2015		SOER 2015 — Synthesis report **Status:** *Done*		Reports and as-sessments	
SOER 2015	2015		SOER 2015 — a series of fiches (i.e. global meg-atrend fiches, thematic fiches, cross-country comparison fiches, country fiches, regional fiches) **Status:** *Done*		Web publication	
SOER 2015	2015		Eionet workshop on State of the Environment Re-porting (focus-ing on SOER 2015) **Status:** *Done*		Workshops and meetings	
SOER 2015	2015		Communication of SOER 2015 **Status:** *Done*		Communication activities	

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
SOER 2015	2015		SOER 2015 — Assessment of Global Mega-trends (Part A) ***Status:*** *Done*		Publication	

10.3.14 SA3.1 Networking and partnerships

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 22. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 22: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
Revised Eionet functional structure fitting MAWP	2014	Strengthened cooperation and communication within Eionet and between Eionet and the EEA MB/SC	Review completed. Structure endorsed by MB 2014. Eionet WG on strategic development est.	New experts nominated. Group created on supporting streamlining of ICT tools. Steps to intensify ETC coordination incl. cross-review of ETC APs.		
Monitoring member country satisfaction with Eionet cooperation	Regular	Increased satisfaction of countries with Eionet as a means to streamline data and knowledge sharing Increased relevance of EEA/Eionet outputs to countries		Publication on member country satisfaction done.	Marked as 'done' – same comment as for 2015	
Country contribution to SOER + SOE online	2014-2018	SEIS extension and regular reporting in the pan-European region established as part of SOE-on-line	Countries provided inputs to SOER. Eionet instrumental.	Countries provided inputs to SOE-online	Countries provided inputs to SOE-online	
New and strengthened partnership with stakeholders beyond Eionet	2014-2018	Growing contributions from stakeholders beyond Eionet Becoming a hub in policy-relevant network on long-term transitions	EPA meeting Mapping of stakeholders beyond Eionet and needs for structuring relationships identified	EPA meeting and speech by ED	EPA plenary (May) + network meeting (autumn). Various EPA Interest Group meetings.	
Data and info from neighbourhood	2014-2018	SEIS extension and regular reporting in the pan-	Contr UNECE Friends of SEIS meet.	SOE-online not developed but activities to increase availability of	Batumi Ministerial conference support + interven-	

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
countries in SOE on-line		European region established as part of SOE-on-line		data undertaken 'SEIS implementation benchmarking'.	tions on SEIS – led to further dialogue implementation of SEIS in the region.	
Support EU+countries in UNEP assessment post-Rio+20	Continuous	EEA/Eionet indicators and knowledge incorporated in EU contributions to UNEP and RIO+20 processes	UNEA support to EU+countries	'Done'. Dialogue with UNEP/UNECE on better alignment of reporting processes. Work on SDGs matured – EEA support to ESTAT on environmental data.	Support to Global Env Outlook Report Dialogue and inputs to SDG monitoring and measurement mechanisms	
		EEAcademy established by 2016		EEAcademy business plan developed.	Advisory Committee met 3 times. Three main event held: seminar on knowledge for sustainability transitions, summer school on precaution and risk, EEA hosted 5th European Evaluators Network Forum on evaluation for better regulation in environment and climate policies.	
			Horizon2020 Med project. Support to EU on Arctic Council.	Framework for international engagement completed. Engaged with stakeholders on Arctic report (publication postponed to fit with EU Arctic policy)		

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
					NFP/Eionet meetings March, June, October. ETC coordination meetings. Management Board semi-nar	

10.3.15 SA3.2 Technical systems development

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 23. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Table 23: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
The reportnet suite of tools	2014-2018	Reportnet tools efficiently supporting fulfilment of reporting requirements	Generic improvements to Reportnet: Helpdesk, compression tools, etc. Development of systems in relation to air and climate change+Natura2000.	Improved Reportnet suite of tools	Problems encountered in Reportnet water and air. Due to volume and complexity, data could not be handled within normal time frame. Triggered need for upgrade: Reportnet 2.0 started (3 year project).	
Near real-time data collection tools, INSPIRE-compliant	2014-2018					
Indicator Management System	2014-2018	High user satisfaction with the Indicator Management System	Updated indicators were produced, and listed on EEA website. Unclear if these contribute to Indicator Management System	The workflow for production of indicators improved with copy-edit phase + PDF fact sheets	Data management frw and data quality frw adopted and implemented.	
Eionet portal and related networking tools	2014-2018	Networking tools efficiently supporting knowledge management and appreciated by networking partners				
Spatial data infra-structure, INSPIRE-compliant	2014-2018	INSPIRE compliant by 2018	Platform migration + preparation for INSPIre web services. New workspace and Extract Translate Load server in	Support for developing European spatial data infrastructure through participation in WG+meetings+discussion	Supported the Inspire maintenance and implementation work programme. Prepared concept note with DG ENV on	

			production. Web-tool – Discomap – in production.	around fitness check of Inspire Dir.	e-reporting and link to Inspire. NFP Eionet WG established for discussion of priorities on Inspire/reporting.
SOE on-line tools, SEIS-compliant	2015+	Tools fulfilling their role in continual update of SOE info after 2015		New fiche management system launched – major step in improving on-line access to SOE data and info.	
The EEA website modernised workflow for publishing	2014-2018	Usability of the web-site ranked high and increased no. of visitors every year	New platform for managing report production (Fiche Management) developed and launched and used for SOER2015. Data visualisation tool (DaViz) improved.	Improvements focused on optimising for desktop, tablet and mobile browsers	
Thematic websites (EUNIS, BISE, E-PRTR, Climate-ADAPT, Natura2000, etc.)	2014-2018		BISE launched and made operational, EUNIS redesigned. Climate-ADAPT upgraded. FLIS horizon tested.		Continued upgrading of infrastructure, migration to cloud services, improvements of data flows

10.3.16 SA3.3 Monitoring, data and information management

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 24. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Note that several objectives under this SA go much beyond the listed outputs; these are not included. In addition for 2015: All outputs marked as 'done' in the table – but outputs differ from those in MAWP.

Table 24: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
On-line regularly updated European environmental datasets	Annual	Annually updated European datasets online within three months of deadline for national deliveries At least 90% average scoring Eionet flows by 2018	81% average score.	EPDF (70 data flows) average score 78% The CAAR does not mention the score for core indicators.	MB agreed on revised set of 18 core data flows and new way of reporting on the annual performance scoring in first quarter 2017 80 dataflows are reported through Eionet Reportnet.	
EEA dataservice (archive, catalogue, view, download, transform)	Continuous					
Report on Eionet priority data flows	Annual	Annually updated indicator assessments online within three months of data publications	17th annual progress report publ.	Report produced.	Report delayed until 1st quarter 2017	
SOE-on-line content management (indicators, maps, graphs, data)	Continuous		42 indicators updated.	New available updates of datasets published (19 datasets. 253 interactve maps and dataviwers, 102 maps and graphs published) Data sharing with European and national data providers optimised – moving towards 'single and seamless European	New datasets + updates of exsisting ones: 31 databases, 245 interactive maps and data viewers, 110 maps and graphs, 56 indicators of which 13 are the core set	

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
				data and indicator landscape'. 52 indicators updated, 23 of which are CI		
European environmental data contributions to global initiatives	Continuous	European environmental data regularly updated in global datasets	GEO meeting. EEA granted status as observer in UN-GGIM-Europe.	GEO workshop hosted MoU with ESA on earth observation	GEO: Leveraging GEO to make EEA data outputs more visible and available globally, EEA best practise into GEO and Copernicus, provision of support to EC/DG Research. GEO portal updated with over 100 EEA datasets.	
				Overview of regular data flows produced and EPDFs reviewed – proposal adopted by MB in Nov 2015		

10.3.17 SA3.4 Communication, outreach and user analysis

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 25. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

For 2015: Almost all items marked as 'done' in Annual Report table, but outputs listed not identical to MAWP – more specific.

Table 25: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
Strategic communication (thematic communication plans, adapted channels, tools, products…)	Continuous	Findings communicated regularly and objectively, full and easy access to info	Annual priority Green Economy, Resource Efficiency and Waste'. SOER communication activities following SOER comm plan.	SOER outreach: 78 events, 1835 new items published. Google Ad-Words campaign. COP21 organised two side events in cooperation with COM	Signals 2016 focusing on sustainable transport and mobility	
Web-content	Continuous	Input to national agendas, key stakeholders engaged in dialogue and networking, activities aligned with priorities of the EU and countries	Produced 50 web highlights		Web-improvement project: thematic restructuring of EEA homepage + work on design, tagging, content update. Adm documents register complying with requirements to grant access to documents (Ombudsman).	
Media relations	Continuous	Specific target audiences know and addressed as directly as possible	More than 7400 articles mentioned the EEA. 7 press releases. Responded to alm 500 media enquiries.	Alm 8000 articles mentioned the EEA. 30 press releases. Responded to 550 media enquiries.	9937 articles mentioned the EEA. 43 press releases. Responded to 278 media enquiries.	
Social media relations	Continuous		Issued 740 tweets generating 2.5 million targeted Twitter users. Issued 300 Facebook posts, generating 3 million views.	Issued 1100 tweets and increased Twitter followrs to 40000. Issued 350 Facebook posts, generating 2.2 million views.	Issued 442 tweets and increased Twitter followers to 40000. Generating 1 million + FB views.	

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
Public awareness activities	Continuous		Participated in 7 exhibitions/conferences, responded to 670 public enquiries, hosted 34 external visiting groups. Environment and me photo competition	Participated in 8 exhibitions/conferences, responded to 876 public enquiries, hosted 32 external visiting groups.	Participated in 7 exhibitions/conferences, responded to 812 public enquiries, hosted 40 external visiting groups. Photo competition: My city.	
Publications / audovisuals	3-7 per year					
Editing of publications, presentations, speeches	Continuous					
Dissemination of EEA products	Continuous		New corporate comm frw and design guidelines impl. Development of dissemination platform – corporate newsletter developed and first editions published. Briefing of new MEPs and Commissioners. BLO active in SOER comm. activities.	Updated version of EEA corporate design. Design toolkit for ETCs. EEA product type review resulting in grouping into 8 categories – reduction from 28 to 14 products – notably merging EEA reports and EEA technical reports. Four issues of newsletter publ	Four issues of newsletter publ. Intensive work on product type review: Integration of production flow into management plan, new product request form, development of MPS reporting functionality, testing/launch and communication on the system	

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
			First meeting NRC communication. Scoping study on links between public communication, environmental policy and behavioural science together with NRC communication.		Annual NRC Communication meeting held – focus on prep for SOER2020.	
			High-level meetings DG ENV/CLIMA to plan common work streams and EKC. ED presentation to DG ENV colleagues. Visit to EEA by Commissioner Vella. Close collaboration with EP committees. EEA assistance to numearous EP workshops and reports.		EEA hosted meeting with participation of 32 EU agencies on the topic of writing, editing and pubishing in an online world. Stronger shared understanding and assess need for further mutual learning.	
					Internal communication: Four projects validated during 2016 to improve internal communication practises, promote staff engagement and collaboration across programmes (internal thematic sessions, staff input to SMT,	

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
					ICT tools and integration on Intranet, co-creation of corporate values.,	
					Monitoring of uptake: in Jan 2016 started monitoring of mention of EEA in docs of COM, Council, EP, EU Agencies and selected interest groups (through Dods).	

10.3.18 SA3.5 Quality management and operational services

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 26. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Note: several objectives under this SA go much beyond the listed outputs; these are not included. For 2015: All marked as 'done' in table – but not one-to-one with MAWP.

Table 26: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
Quality statement	Annual				EEA took a number of actions. Agreeing to an overall quality policy, decided to use ISO9001-2015 as a model for restructuring the QMS. A significant number of the 60 procedures were assessed as in need of updating – 6 were updated.	How many is "significant number"?
Environmental statement	Annual		EMAS audit without remarks.	EMAS audit without remarks.	EMAS audit without remarks.	
Internal audit capacity activity report	Annual					
Report of the ED to the Discharge Authority	Annual					
Overview of IT systems	Annual		ICT Steering Committee established to improve coordination across IT groups + develop IT strategy. SC explored cloud services options and many IT systems being moved to cloud.	Update of ICT strategy approved by management. After IAS audit in 2014, the IAS and EEA agreed action plan. All elements in this action plan were completed	EEA IT Steering Comm recommended eight IT development projects to go ahead as overall business cases were positive	The report states that this reflects a recommendation to use business cases – but not clear who made this recommendation

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
				during 2015: ICT strategy, ICT security policy, data management frw, data quality frw, mapping of data flows.		
			Improved document management system.			
			Policy evaluation informal group working on internal guidance + generating overview of policy evaluation approaches. Contacts made with various networks and orgs.			

10.3.19 SA3.6 Copernicus operational services

Policy framework:

Copernicus Regulation (377/2014)

Delegation Agreement: Agreement Between the European Union, Represented by the European Commission, and the European Environment Agency on the Implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component (Ref. Ares(2014)4012930 - 01/12/2014)

EEA Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2018 (MAWP)

EEA Annual Work Programmes (AWPs) 2014, 2015 and 2016

EEA Annual report 2014 and EMAS environmental statement 2014 (AR)

EEA Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) 2015 and 2016

Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ component, Annual Implementation Report 2014 (Copernicus AIR 2014)

Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ component, Annual Activity Reports (Copernicus AARs) 2015 and 2016

Main partners:

ETCs: ETC/ULS

Eionet NRCs: Land Cover

EU institutions: DG ENV, DG GROW, JRC

Others: ESA, GSA, EuroGeographics

Activities:

The EEA Copernicus activities concern the management of the pan-European and local components of the CLMS and the cross-cutting in-situ component (for details see the detailed table on the next page).

Table 27 shows Outputs as they appear in the MAWP and links these to outputs set out in the Delegation Agreement. "**Status**" shows situation as reported in the corresponding year's (Consolidated) Annual Activity Report. See Copernicus case study for more details.

Table 27: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs, CAARs and Copernicus Agreement

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
Pan-European component of CLMS							
Land-cover data on changes in artificial surfaces, forest areas, agricultural areas, wetlands, water bodies	Regular from 2015 onwards	Production of Pan-European image mosaics and intermediate products	Two high resolution satellite image mosaics have been included in the Copernicus land portal.	Two high-resolution satellite image mosaics covering the EEA member countries have been included in the Copernicus land portal.	For the pan-European CLMS area, the activities focused on the update of the HRLs. However, preliminary versions of the EU-DEM and EU-Hydro datasets were made publicly in 2016.	Data and maps	Preliminary versions of the EU-DEM and EU-Hydro datasets were made publicly available but the preparation of final versions has been postponed.
See above	See above	Update all five HRLs in 2015 and then in 2018	The initial production of the HRLs took place throughout 2014. .	All HRLs reached 100% coverage for all 39 EEA member and cooperating countries at 20m resolution.	The Copernicus AAR 2016 reports that a call for tenders was launched and awarded for preparing HRLs for the 2015 reference year.	Data and maps	By 2016, preparations for the production of HRLs for the 2015 reference year were completed.
See above	See above	Update Corine Land Cover (CLC) datasets in 2018	24 countries finished and delivered CLC and CLC change (CLCC) products for 2012–2013. Six West Balkan countries also delivered	All the EIONET member and cooperating countries finished and delivered the CLC and the CLCC products for 2012–2013 for final	Planning of the CLC update for 2018 started in mid-2016, with the ambition of ensuring the full use of the CLC 2018 in the next SOER 2020	Data and maps	By 2016, the production of the CLC for the 2012 reference year was finalised and planning for the production of

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
			CLC and CLCC by December 2014.	validation. The corresponding and revised ecosystem type map, derived from CLC and additional spatial explicit European data sets, was released.	report. A dedicated survey was conducted by the ETC/ULS in 2016 to collect information on lessons learnt from the CLC 2012 production.		the CLC 2018 version started.
Local component of CLMS							
High-resolution land-cover data for Urban Atlas, European riparian zones, Natura 2000 and coastal zones	Regular from 2015 onwards	Urban Atlas (UA) update in 2017	The following updates took place: publication of a revised UA2006 for 131 Larger Urban Zones (LUZ); production of UA2006–2012 change layer for 86 LUZ; extension of UA2012 for 38 LUZ; update of UA2012 was for 46 LUZ.	No specific information	The implementation of UA2012 entered its final phase in 2016. At the end of the year, the UA covered 657 Functional Urban Area (published in January 2017).	Data and maps	The previous versions of the UA were updated while the implementation of UA2012 entered its final phase.
See above	See above	Riparian Zones	A framework contract to produce a tailored Very High Resolution (VHR) mapping of Land	No specific information	Technical specifications for the new phase of the production of Riparian	Data and maps	The production of Riparian Zones datasets is ongoing.

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
			Cover/Land Use along riparian zones of the hydrographic networks in Europe was signed and implementation began during the reporting period.		Zones were developed.		
See above	See above	Natura 2000	A framework contract (bulk production) and an extension to selected Nature 2000 areas were under preparation.	No specific information.	Preparations for the continuation of the work on Natura 2000 were finalised and the following activities were contracted to external service providers: an assessment of VHR satellite data availability; a study on the applicability of the new continuous change detection approach in monitoring Natura 2000 evolution.	Data and maps	The production of Natura 2000 datasets is ongoing.
Both CLMS components							

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
Not explicitly defined	Not explicitly defined	Service evolution to meet user needs	No specific information	No specific information	By 2016 the work on a coastal zone monitoring service entered its definition phase; technical specifications were being prepared for a snow and ice monitoring service	Data and maps	The work on developing new CLMS products has started.
Not explicitly defined	Not explicitly defined	Stakeholder consultation to support service evolution	No specific information	The final results of the initial GIO phase and the outlook of the CLMS were presented at the conference 'New Horizons for European and Global Land Monitoring' organised by the EEA in cooperation with the JRC.	The validation of the newly created or updated CLMS products was carried out in time with the exception of the beta version of EU-Hydro where due to the complexity of the dataset the validation is planned for 2017.		Progress has been made.
Supporting activities							
Archive, catalogue, view and download services for Copernicus land monitoring	Continuous	Maintenance of Copernicus Land Portal in cooperation with JRC	Maintenance of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service web pages	Maintenance of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service web pages	A new layout of the Copernicus land portal (for the pan-European and local component) was	Information systems	The Copernicus land portal is operational.

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
					launched in November 2016 to allow easier navigation and increase overall visibility.		
See above	See above	Liaison with EIONET/EAGLE to integrate national databases	No specific information	The Copernicus AAR 2015 reports that integration and enhancement of tasks in the network was outsourced to industry and EIONET ETC/ULS.	Two EIONET NRC Land Cover meetings took place in 2016 focused on the expected contributions from the NRCs in the upcoming pan-European and local service production, and training needs of the national teams. EAGLE concepts (model and matrix) were fine-tuned and documented. Preparations for the EAGLE activities concerning CLC 2018 began.		Cooperation is ongoing in the context of the NRC Land Cover meetings and the EAGLE group.
See above	See above	User liaison, including via Copernicus User Forum	No specific information	The EEA participated in the regular meet-	The Copernicus AAR 2016 reports that the EEA participated in a wide range of the Co-		Progress has been made

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
				ings of the Copernicus Committee and User Forum.	pernicus in situ related events at national and European scale including the Copernicus User Forum meeting in September 2016.		
See above	See above	Revision of Communication Plan (every three years)	No specific information	The Copernicus AAR 2015 reports that archiving was outsourced to industry.	A new specific contract was signed in December 2016 for further increase of the visibility of the Copernicus land portal, exploration of the ways to promote pan-European and local land products and the functional improvement as well as enrichment of the search engine of the portal.		Progress has been made
Access to in-situ data and reference data for Copernicus services	Continuous	Maintain an overview of the state of play of in-situ services	No specific information	A pool of NRC experts was selected through a call for expression of interest and formed the	EEA focused on identifying and documenting critical in situ data gaps across all six services with the help of the		Progress has been made

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
				EIONET In-Situ Task Force.	EIONET In-Situ Task Force. The first Copernicus in situ newsletter issue was finalised in December 2016.		
See above	See above	Operation provision of in-situ data	No specific information	The 'Copernicus Reference Data Access Node (CORDA)' became operational.	The number of users and services provided by CORDA increased. The evaluation of the European Location Framework (ELF) platform started. The provision of air quality observations from EIONET members to CAMS continued.	Information systems	Progress has been made
See above	See above	Manage partnerships with data providers	No specific information	No specific information	The Copernicus AAR 2016 reports that negotiations with national and regional in-situ data providers were primarily carried out as an integral part of the CORDA contract. The new partnership agreement between		Progress has been made

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	Output as per Delegation Agreement	2014 AWP, AR and Copernicus AIR	2015 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	2016 AWP, CAAR and Copernicus AAR	Type of output	Brief note on status at the end of 2016 vs MAWP
					the EEA and EuroGeoSurveys was signed and draft agreements with EUMETNET and GeoScience Austrial were prepared.		
See above	See above	Support to Commission and Copernicus services on in-situ data issues	No specific information	No specific information	The Copernicus AAR 2016 reports that the EEA contributed to the GEO Foundational task GD06 'In Situ Earth Observation Resources' and participated in various in-situ related events at national and European scale where it offered ad-hoc support.		Progress has been made

10.3.20 SA3.7 Capacity building in West Balkan and European Neighbourhood countries

Programmed and reported activities

Analysis of the MAWP, AWPs 2014-2016 and the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) is summarised in Table 28. The table shows expected outputs in the order in which they appear in the MAWP. The columns for AWP 2014-2016 show corresponding outputs programmed in each AWP. "Status" on each output shows the situation as reported in the corresponding year's CAAR. The 2015 and 2016 reports include a table which states the outcome of the expected outputs from the AWPs. Meanwhile the 2014 Annual Report did not have such overview, meaning that the judgement for 2014 is more difficult and subjective.

Note that for 2015, all items are marked as done but not identical to MAWP.

Table 28: Outputs presented in MAWP, AWPs and CAARs

MAWP outputs	Target year	Performance indicator	AR 2014	AR2015	AR2016	Comments
Maintenance and further development of Eionet structures in the WB countries and ensuring their contribution to main EEA products	Continuous	Integration of WB countries in EEA/Eionet activities and products	New IPA contract scoping paper and roadmap 2020.	EEA's cooperation with WB countries evaluated	(AR gives description of support – but not specific activities or outputs produced)	2015: not clear whether this is an external evaluation
Establishing a regular data flow process for the ENP partner countries	Continuous	Strong performance of WB countries in priority data flows. Annual data flows for ENP countries.	ENPI-SEIS project produced regional set of indicators and progress in est more reg data production. Regional assessment report (Horizon2020)	ENPI-SEIS project finalised. InSEIS project completed. Two new grant agreements signed of EUR 6.6 (ENP East) and 4 (ENP south) million. This enables continued cooperation until 2019.	Two new projects launched. Batumi conference Recruitment of five new contract agents bringing the ENI team members in the EEA to 7. Hosted meeting of EU agencies working with preaccession and neighborhood programmes.	
ENP countries input to major EEA products/services	Continuous					

10.4   Appendix D1 - Case study Trends and Projections Report

10.4.1   Introduction

Scope and subject matter of the case study

The EEA's Trends & Projection reports (T&P reports)[468] are regular annual reports that each year presents the trends and projections in Europe with an updated assessment of the progress of the EU and European countries towards their climate mitigation and energy targets. The T&P reports are prepared by the EEA and its European Topic Centre for Air Pollution and Climate Change (ETC/ACM), with the EEA in charge of overall coordination.

The reason for choosing the T&P reporting as a specific case study is that the data flows handled and monitored by the EEA are substantial. On an annual basis, this has constituted one of the largest outputs from the EEA in reporting on the EU's progress towards the energy and climate change targets. The T&P also feeds into the EU international reporting obligations to the UNFCCC and the Commission annual progress reporting according to Article 21 of the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation 525/2013/EU (in the following 'MMR').

Originally, the T&P reports focused on the Kyoto Protocol targets, but then changed focus into the 2020 mitigation targets[469] starting with the GHG targets, and now also the renewable energy and energy efficiency targets. Focus has now also moved beyond the 2020 targets, towards the 2030 and 2050 targets to adapt to the EU's long term energy and climate change policy. Over time, the reports have been condensed to focus now on the essential key data and key trends, with country profiles as a side product of the report. Also, the reports are now only available in electronic formats.

The 2016 report concludes that whereas the EU is on course to meet each of its 2020 targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, renewable energy and energy efficiency, the progress towards the 2030 targets is not as evident and would fall short of both the 40 % target for GHG reductions under the EU ETS and also fall short of the 30 % reduction in the sectors covered by the Effort Sharing legislation. Likewise, the reaching of the RE and EE targets by 2030 is not necessarily straightforward either. And last, considertable efforts at a much higher speed than today would be needed to reach the EU's energy and decarbonisation objectives for 2050.

The T&P reports are based on and linked to a number of other yearly reports. The 2016 edition is thus linked to the EEA report No 23/2016, Approximated EU GHG inventory: Proxy GHG emission estimates for 2015, and the EEA report No 24/2016, Trends and projections in the EU ETS in 2016 — The EU Emissions Trading System in numbers.[470] Data wise, the 2016 T&P report is based on national data on GHG emissions, renewable energy and energy consumption for 2014, preliminary ('approximated' or 'proxy') data for 2015 and projections reported by Member States concerning expected trends in GHG emissions until 2035.

Description of the role of the EEA and Eionet in the case study area

The EEA's role in elaborating the T&P reports and in supporting the Commission is spelled out in recital 28 and Article 24 of the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation 525/2013/EC , according to which the EEA shall assist in compiling the Union GHG inventory and preparing the Union GHG inventory report and perform QA/QC procedures in relation to the preparation of the inventory, including preparing estimates for data not reported in the national GHG inventories. The EEA assists the Commission's Directorate-General for Climate Action (DG CLIMA)in conducting reviews, and in compiling the Union approximated GHG inventory.

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[468] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/trends-and-projections-in-europe

[469] The EU's 2020 package sets a target of 20 % cut in GHG emission (based on 1990 levels), a target of 20 % of EU energy from renewables, and a target of 20 % improvement in energy efficiency.

[470] eea.europa.eu

The EEA's role is also to compile the information reported by Member States on policies and measures and projections; perform QA/QC procedures on the information reported by Member States on projections and prepare estimates for data on projections not reported by the Member States. The EEA also assists in compiling data as required for the annual progress report to the European Parliament and the Council prepared by the Commission[471]. Finally the EEA's role is also to disseminate information collected under the MMR Regulation including maintaining and updating a database on Member States' mitigation policies and measures. The EEA does not produce the data for the T&P reports itself but compiles and analyses 28 country set of data according to Member States reporting obligations and as provided by the Eionet.

According to the SA1.3 of the Multiannual Work Programme (MAWP), the EEA should each year produce an assessment of progress by EU and EEA member countries towards meeting GHG emissions, energy efficiency and renewable energy targets, including progress towards EU 2020 headlines targets and support to the European Semester. The T&P reports have been issued each year by the EEA according to the MAWP and annual work programmes as confirmed also by the consolidated annual activity reports (CAAR). The T&P reports originally grew out of the EEA's own independent initiative on request of the Management Board, and has since the 2013 T&P report also covered reporting on renewable energy and energy efficiency trends, albeit with no direct link to related Commission reporting requirements.

The EEA is supported by the ETC/ACM in its work on the annual T&P report and the tasks are identified in the ETC-ACM Action Plan agreed beween the EEA and the ETC[472]. The ETC thus assists on collection of data and meta data, in ensuring consistency of data and information used, in analysing and comparing the respective GHG targets of the Member States and EU-28 assessing the progress towards the GHG targets, assessing the progress towards the renewable energy targets and the progress towards the energy efficiency targets.

10.4.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP

Data from interviews shows that the EEA's role and performance on the T&P report is highly regarded by DG CLIMA in terms of the GHGs data compiled for the inventory and the T&P report is considered to be a 'near to perfect' compilation. The T&P reports are harmonised with the requirements of the MMR. Inconsistencies – if any - in interpretations between the EEA and DG CLIMA are identified at an early stage and are typically stemming from different assumptions regarding compliance periods or the basis for comparisons. Such issues are thus addressed in due time before publications of the report. The EEAs work on the Effort Sharing Decision (ESD) is also reported by the Commission to be excellent, including in terms of comparability across countries. Important factors for this are referred to be good and frequent working liaisons built over the years between the EEA and the Commission and with good liasons also to the Member States and close coordination on the QA/QC checks on the information provided by the Member States and member countries.

During interviews, some delineation problems have however been reported with regards to working relations with Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER) and challenges related to the T&P reporting on the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency targets. The EEA has been faced with difficulties in obtaining the same level of data certainty and accuracy also for renewable energy targets and the energy efficiency targets, thus making it difficult to build a fully comparable methodology and analysis for the three respective mitigation targets. DG ENER has concerns about the data certainty and accuracy of the energy data published by the EEA, because data wise, these reports are based on n-2 data with the n-1 data sets being approximated based on GHG emissions proxies. DG ENER is reported to have been active in providing data on targets and cross-checking their sources whenever they have been consulted.

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[471] Annual Progress Report required under Article 21 of Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions
[472] ETC/ACM Action Plan section 1.3.2.2 on Assessment of progress towards climate and energy targets in Europe

The EEA has felt that DG ENER has put less emphasis on ranking Member State performances in policy implementation or to identify the Member States with weaker performances, compared to the approach taken by the EEA on the GHG targets. However, it should be recognised that it is not straightforward to assess the countries level of ambition and that the EE targets require a slightly different approach than the other targets. The situation have thus impacted on the effectiveness in streamlining objectives and methods.

Some progress can already be noted during the evaluation period in terms of increasing effectiveness in these activities. The 2016 Commission proposal on the Energy Union Governance[473] has clarified in some detail the role of the EEA in assisting the Commission in its work as regards the decarbonisation and energy efficiency dimensions of the Energy Union. Within this framework, additional work is now ongoing between DG CLIMA and DG ENER and other key stakeholders agreeing on the procedures and methods for the further integrated assessment under the framework of the Energy Union Governance.

Inconsistencies and incoherences in the energy and climate reporting and monitoring methods had been perceived by all parties in particular in relation to the launch of the State of the Energy Union Report in November 2015. Though steps have been taken within the Commission to mitigate these difficulties, the necessary integration of reporting of energy and climate data at the operational level is still a matter of concern among those stakeholders interviewed from mid to late 2017.

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

The Commission is to a significant extent provided with information and support for its policy needs through the T&P reports both in terms of policy development and policy implementation.

In terms of **policy development**, the EEA's work on the data collection, data assessments and T&P reports have proven effective in providing the Commission with relevant information in terms of status and projections on the climate and energy targets for 2020 and beyond. The data work has thus been of crucial importance as input to the Commission's further development of the energy and climate change policy for 2030 and 2050, e.g in showing and confirming trends across the EU as a whole, whether the EU is on track on each of the three mitigation targets and how the situation may differ at individual country level, and also providing information on in which sectors progress is insufficient.[474]

In terms of **policy implementation**, it is also found that the EEA has been effective in providing the Commission with relevant data and information on whether countries are on track on their climate and energy targets.

The Commission interest is mainly in the data behind the T&P reports, that are used for going into dialogue with Member States on their performances on their individual national targets. The Commission appreciates the EEA for its close contacts with Member States on data compilation and data quality assurance, enabling high quality data. Also, the data from the Member States are seen to have considerably improved thanks to the EEA and not least since their quality procedure has also included considerable elements of capacity building to the Member States in improving their data.

The Commission also uses the data behind the T&P reports in relation to the data gap filling procedures set out in MMR according to Article 14(3). It allows for communication with MSs to take place in WG and ensures a quality gap filling procedure. The T&P data are thus used to feed into the Commission own Climate Progress Reports which is more of a political nature and goes broader than the EU-28 and the EEA products.

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[473] COM (2016) 759

[474] As example, 17 countries are reported to be on track with their 2020 targets in all three areas in 2016, which is a slight improvement from the year before, where only 13 countries were on track.

The data from the T&P reports are also used for the Commission reporting to the UNFCCC, and also broader for the Commission's establishing its position to the COP. Thus, there is a considerable policy uptake by the Commision of the EEA's T&P related data work and assessments.

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

Indicative findings, as reported in interviews with the Commisison and the EEA, show that Member State stakeholders consider the T&P reports to be of high value as a comprehensive analysis of what the EU countries are doing. Since the reports are based on data and information that countries report themselves, this leads to a high level of credibility. Published T&P reports are referred in national media of the Member States and used by national stakeholders in pushing the national energy and climate agenda forward and keeping focus on the fulfilling of the national targets. The data are provided by the Member States and quality assessed by the EEA, that in this function by Member States are regarded as playing and impartial role in a very transparent process.

Where Member States have reacted negatively to the EEA's assessment, in most cases they have not paid enough attention to the quality of data in the previous steps, e.g. providing the data, or providing insufficient quality of the data. The EEA is then going back to the Member States and essentially guide the Member State to deliver better data quality themselves.

Member States have in general appreciated that the EEA focuses in its data processing and quality assurance entirely on whether the countries are on their way to achieve their targets, and does not discuss the ambitiousness of the targets.

The EEA emphasizes that despite the Member States general 'reporting fatigue' (e.g. repetitive production of information, inefficiencies and incoherences related to parallel reporting in several reporting tools in a number of energy acquis legislation, different methodological approaches and differences in periodicity as identified in the fitness check of the energy acquis[475]), the T&P publication keeps Member States motivated to stick to the deadlines. Member States acknowledge that data is published and put in context for relevant policy purposes (through the T&P reports, through the Commissions Progress Reports), and address issues of relevance to national policy making. It also helps in benchmarking Member States against other Member States. Thus, it makes sense for Member States to keep on reporting data, and having a tangible deliverable, thus puts the topic more in the spotlight.

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

The T&P reports are reported by the Commission to have provided very good and consistent data and information across the EU-28, allowing for solid analyses and inputs to further work by the Commission on defining policies and measures.

Effectiveness in dissemination of information

The EEA is found to effectively disseminate the T&P reports. Whereas the T&P reports before 2016 were also distributed in hard copies, the last 2016 T&P is a virtual version only and more interactive. The EEA is found also to effectively disseminate the trends and projections through the data viewer, making the data set accessible to the public. The GHG data viewer includes the same data as in the TP report.

As the T&P data forms part of the basis for the Commission's Climate Progress Reports, the content is logically well-known to the Commission. The Commission is releasing its own Commission Progress Report also every autumn, at a similar time as the T&P report.

Even though the data for the T&P reports are the same as those used for the Progress Reports, the Commission report is more of a political nature and the T&P reports focus more on presenting facts and go more into country

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[475] Commission Staff Working Document: Fitness check Reporting, Planning and Monitoring obligations in the EU Energy Acquis (SWD (2016) 397)

specific data and provides a more nuanced picture at country level. The T&P report is available in English only, whereas the Commission Progress Report is translated into all official languages of the EU. The T&P report was the second most popular EEA publication overall on the EEA's website in 2016 (climbing up from a 3rd place in 2015) on a list of the 10 most popular reports[476], also showing that annual or recurring reports receive greater uptake than e.g. new themes.

As regards the uptake of T&P reports internationally, the reports are accessible on the EEA website. The EEA has also presented the T&P reports and related GHG reports in relation to the COPs, at UNFCCC side events.

The EEA's T&P reports are also used as basis for the larger NGO and business community communication on the EU and Member State progress towards the climate and energy targets. E.g. Sandbag and other carbon related organisations make frequent references to the projections by the EU.

10.4.3 Coherence

Role and coordination mechanisms

The tasks of the EEA in relation to the annual T&P reports have included mainly the handling of data as provided by the Member States including QA/QC, and further capacity building and coordination e.g. in terms of gap filling on data, as well as publishing and dissemination activities related to the T&P reports.

Coherence between the climate and energy areas and related coordination mechanisms are reported not to be sufficiently clear towards the end of the evaluation period. As mentioned, the 2016 Commission proposal on the Energy Union Governance has clarified in some detail the role of the EEA with respect to renwable energy and energy efficiency. Ongoing changes at the time led to some uncertainty among stakeholders on how streamlining of objectives and methods would take place across the energy and climate area. As stated, work is still ongoing between DG CLIMA and DG ENER and other key stakeholders agreeing on the procedures and methods for the further integrated assessment under the framework of the Energy Union Governance.

Coordination with the Commission and EU agencies

The EEA is found to have carried out the tasks in relation to the GHG reporting in very good cooperation and coherence with other EU and MS stakeholders and have had a clear role in the management and quality assurance of data. As the GHG reporting obligations are clearly set in the MMR, there is better coherence in the cooperation between data reporters and EIONET on GHG emission, GHG projections, information on policy and measures compared with the coherence among stakeholders regarding the other targets on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

In the point of view of DG CLIMA, the EEA is performing well and encourages further EEA involvement as DG CLIMA is highly dependent on the EEA deliverables for its own reporting and policy making. Working relations and communication lines on substance issues are smooth and on a near to daily basis, and the responsiveness of the EEA as well as its strength as independent institution is emphasised in this respect. Lack of lead time on communication and coordination before launch of communication is however sometimes a challenge.

Unclear delineation and elements in terms of coordination between DG CLIMA and DG ENER has had a slight negative impact on coherence. As to cooperation with DG ENER, this is reported to be complicated due to the ongoing process of integrating and streamlining the energy and climate acquis[477]. While integration as a clear objective is

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476 Based on a sum of visits to the reports page, subscribers opening the notification, online media coverage, and social media reach.

477 Commission Staff Working Document: Fitness Check Reporting, Planning and Monitoring obligations in the EU Energy Acquis (SWD (2016) 397).

spelled out in the proposed Regulation for the Energy Union Governance, it is also clear from the interviews con-ducted[478] that further harmonisation and agreements on consistent and comparable methods of reporting on and assessing the progress towards the renewable energy and energy efficiency targets are still needed at the detailed level, including agreements on clear lines of cooperation and coordination. It is at the time of the interviews still unclear how this may affect the elaboration of and the methodology used for the EEA's T&P report in the future.

As mentioned also under relevance in terms of policy needs, communication lines between the EEA, the DG ENER and DG CLIMA were not well established in sufficient time before the planned releases of Commission reports. Dif-ficulties were thus perceived by all parties in particular in relation to the launch of the State of the Energy Union Report in November 2015, however measures had been taken within the Commission to mitigate these difficulties. How the EEA's role will be enhanced in practical terms along with the role of other institutions is thus still a bit un-certain, besides its role as defined in the MMR and integrated into the proposed Governance Regulation.

The role of EIONET

The EIONET has had a clear role in the GHG reporting obligations and knows very well the T&P report. EIONET ex-pects to be consulted every year around summertime on the T&P reports. EIONET plays a crucial role in providing the data to the T&P reports. The EEA interviews report to have received very good feedback from the EIONET on the consultation process.

Coherence in Tasks and Activities

The role of the EEA is expected to be influenced by the proposed Energy Union Governance framework and further governance streamlining. Whereas Article 35 in the proposal on the Energy Union Governance already provides a significant clarification on the role of the EEA, other issues may lead to a need for renewed clarity on cooperation mechanisms and structures between the EEA and the Commission, for instance in implementing regulations to the Governance Regulation.

10.4.4 Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

The development of the EU policy work in the time span of the evaluation has had a major impact on the scoping of the EEA's T&P reports and data work, from originally focusing on the Kyoto Protocol targets, then focusing on the 2020 GHG targets followed by the renewable energy and energy efficiency targets, and most recently with fo-cus on the 2030 and 2050 targets. Commission DG CLIMA officials state that the EEA has been very responsive in this respect adjusting and adding additional frameworks to the data reporting systems, and the outputs have been of major importance for the Commission's reporting on progress.

Areas that need further attention for the EEA's reporting on progress towards targets include agriculture and for-estry. Though this has always been a source for GHG emissions, there is a need for going deeper into the sector also to understand cross-cutting challenges with other sectors. Another area to include more in the EEA work is sustainable bio energy use.

The T&P reports may however not be the only data needs in the future. In order to ensure further policy develop-ment, not least to ensure the actions needed towards the 2030 targets in an Energy Union Governance framework relying more on integrated national energy and climate plans than on binding national targets, the Commission recognises that more work could be done in the future with respect to assessment of the effectiveness of policy and measures (PAMs) in the Member States[479]. Connecting the information between the T&P reports and whether Member States actual policy measures are effective is not a straightforward exercise, and the EEA sees this as a

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[478] Interviews with the EEA, DG CLIMA, DG ENER
[479] Interview with DG CLIMA

task primarily for the Commission[480]. The Energy Union Governance proposal specifies the envisaged EEA assistance as performing quality assurance and quality control procedures on the information reported by Member States on policies and measures.

Notably, the EEA's indirect role in future policy development is foreseen to expand in the climate and energy field due to the implementation of the Energy Union Governance process, as mandated by the Article 35 of the proposed Energy Union Governance regulation. The EEA will thus cover all the tasks in the existing MMR (525/2013/EC) including additional tasks related to biennial reporting on RE and EE, and new tasks related to E-reporting.

The process will require *inter alia* integrated national energy and climate plans from Member States taking into account the five dimensions of the Energy Union including of the energy systems and greenhouse gas emissions and removals and based on consistent use of projections, data and assumptions. The role of the Commission will be to asses these plans and their updates in the form of monitoring reports including whether these targets and contributions are sufficient for the collective achievements of the Energy Union objectives. The role of the EEA will be to assist the Commission as appropriate and in accordance with its annual work programme with assessment, monitoring and reporting work. Though the main focus of the EEA's work will still be on the data compilation, processing and quality assurance and information dissemination, a potential move towards more Commission focus on PAMs will evidently also impact the work areas of the EEA if not directly, then indirectly.

Acknowledging that the Commission besides its work on the MMR obligations also will have to address more closely the policy and measures of the Member States in order to assess whether these are sufficient and appropriate to reach the targets, the EEA's work on PAMs can be further improved, however it is acknowledged that is is a very complex task. The PAM database that EEA has in place is an enabler in this respect, however the database needs coherence and completeness checks to become a more solid database. Going further down the PAM road requires in any case a clear pre-agreements between the EEA and the Commission and clear work delineation on how PAM related data should be collected, who should do what in terms of further analysing the PAMs and not least in terms of presenting results from the analyses.

10.4.5 EU value added

Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthesised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET. This is summarised in the table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

* Crucial contribution
* Some contribution
* Little or no contribution

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the following benefits.	Justification
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	*Crucial contribution*	The T&P reports have provided a high degree of comparability
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	*Crucial contribution*	Data and resulting analyses report available to the Commission, Member States/member countries, carbon market

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[480] Interview with EEA

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the following benefits.	Justification
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	*Some contribution*	T&P reports so far not linked explicitly with implementation of Policy and Measures (PAMs)
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	*Crucial contribution*	The T&P report has been a crucial driver of the significant improvement of standardised tools and methods for Member States/member country reporting on GHG projections
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	*Some contribution*	The T&P report has assisted in raising awareness of specific country performance compared to other countries ('benchmarking')
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies	*Some contribution – over time*	Has improved standardised tools and reporting methodologies
Coordination of activities between members states and preparation for the future	*Some contribution*	Has contributed to better awareness of progress towards future targets
Provision of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken	*Some contribution*	Has contributed to the presentation of a comparable view of EU country performances and of the EU as a whole. Has helped in providing information to middle income countries and developing countries giving the incentive to commit to reduce GHG emissions
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	*Crucial contribution*	The T&P reports have provided a high degree of transparency on the side of EU/Member States progress towards the GHG emission targets and later all three mitigation targets
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	*Crucial contribution*	Efficiency gains from reoccurring activities in the form of QA/QC, dialogue on pitfalls and challenges in data and implementation. Recognised trend in terms of increasing data and report quality.
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	*Crucial contribution*	EEA has fulfilled the role of an impartial, trusted advisor

Source: Assessment by the support study team

The key role on data compilation and data quality assurance of Member States data performed by the EEA is of utmost importance to the Commission to assess whether the Member States and the EU as a whole is on track towards the EU's mitigation targets. This access to accurate and quality assured data in a robust and reliable data system enabling transparent cross-country comparisons is somewhat unique and cannot be provided by national institutions or external institutions without questioning the integrity of data. The EEA can thus be said to be very progressive in this regard. The EEA's GHG data viewer is another example of an output that is not available from others.

At international level, the EEA data work has been extremely important for the Commission in relation to the international negotiations, and has helped in providing best practises e. g. to both middle income countries and developing countries the incentive to commit to reduce GHG emissions because the EU has been in a position to show that it is possible to do this and still have a growing economy.

Also, as the work load and the obligations under the MMR/Energy Union Governancethe Effort Sharing legislation and the UNFCCC will continue and in the energy parts will be even enhanced at least until 2030, the Commission will continuously be dependent on high quality data for assessing progress towards the targets and ensuring compliance checking.

The EEA is found to provide essential work and EU added-value to the Commission on the data processing and quality assurance. An alternative option for carrying out the tasks e.g. in the form of outsourcing to external consultancies or solely relying on national agencies is not seen to provide the same certainty in data handling and processing. It may de facto be less cost efficient and may imply a risk of leading to less coherence and consistency in assessing data across Member States. Also, institutional memory may diminish over time if tasks are outsourced. A central actor is needed in this respect that can step back from the national views and ensure that the same approach is used across countries.

A lot of streamlining and efficiency gains have already taken place e.g. within the EEA in the inner workings of dealing with data and integrating data. As example, the ODS and F-gases has recently been integrated into the climate mitigation group of the EEA to bring further efficiency gains in terms of the relevant policy perspectives.

10.5   Appendix D2 - Case study F-GAS Business Data Repository

10.5.1   Introduction

To control emissions from fluorinated greenhouse gases[481] (the so-called F-gases) that are among the gases covered by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the European Union has adopted the F-gas Regulation. The 'old' F-Gas Regulation (EC No 842/2006)[482] applied until the end of 2014 and included measures on leak prevention, recovery, certification of technicians and selected restrictions on the use and marketing of F-gases. Following a review of the 'old' F-Gas Regulation, the provisions of the 'new' F-Gas Regulation (EC No 517/2014)[483] are applicable as of 1 January 2015, and aim overall to reduce F-gas emissions by two thirds of the 2010 level by 2030. The new regulation maintains many of the previous measures and introduced novel measures, including a hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) 'phase down' that progressively caps allowed sales of HFCs on the EU market and is implemented through a quota system, as well as a number of new bans of F-gases with a high Global Warming Potential (GWP) in specific sectors.

In terms of reporting obligations, Article 19 of the new Regulation requires - similar to Article 6 of the old Regulation - that companies report annually on produced, imported and exported quantities of F-gases (bulk gases), and in addition establishes reporting obligations for companies that import products or equipment containing F-gases (which were not covered under the old F-Gas Regulation).

Scope and subject matter of the case study
Since 2012, the EEA supports the company reporting under the F-Gas Regulation (2011 was the last year for which the Commission worked on f-gases with an external consultant). In this respect, the timing of EEA involvement in f-gas work fits well with the period of the EEA evaluation (summer 2012 – end 2016).
This case study thus covers the EEA involvement in this area from its very beginning until end 2016, covering the evolution in reporting needs and corresponding EEA activities emanating from the repeal of the old F-Gas Regulation by the new F-Gas Regulation adopted in 2014. The new Regulation (2014 being the first reporting year under the new Regulation) requires, similar to the old Regulation, that companies report annually on produced, imported and exported quantities of fluorinated greenhouse gases (bulk gases). Although not new as such, this type of reporting requirement has attained increased significance with the new Regulation, as the Commission relies on the reported data for tracking implementation and compliance with the newly introduced HFC phase-down. Furthermore, the new Regulation established a new type of reporting obligation for companies that import products or equipment containing fluorinated greenhouse gases, which were not covered under the old F-Gas Regulation. The covered period thus allows to consider the ability of the EEA to respond to evolving needs and policy frameworks. Moreover, we note that reporting entities for the case of the F-Gas Regulation are companies that report on commercially sensitive information. The EEA maintains the so called F-gas Business Data Repository (BDR) which is used by companies to fulfil their reporting obligations on trading of F-gases. BDR is part of the Reportnet architecture maintained by the EEA, however it is distinct in that it encompasses data reports as submitted by companies to the European Union, i.e. sensitive trade data relating to company commercial activities. F-gases is one of the three areas where the EEA maintains a BDR and handles confidential company reports, the other two areas being ozone depleting substances (ODS), as well as cars & vans. The case study thus also allows to touch on the topics of IT system security, data protection and confidentiality.
Activities performed
A desk review was performed covering the key reports from the EEA and the Commission in this area, further supported by interviews with key stakeholders, including the European Commission, the EEA, the European Topic Centre on Air Pollution and Climate Change Mitigation (ETC/ACM) and a Member State F-Gas coordinator. Reviewed documents included among others the EEA Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2018 (MAWP), EEA Annual

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[481] 'fluorinated greenhouse gases' includes hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6) and other greenhouse gases that contain fluorine, or mixtures containing any of those substances
[482] Regulation (EC) No 842/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases
[483] Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on fluorinated greenhouse gases and repealing Regulation (EC) No 842/2006

Work Programmes (AWP) and corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAAR), the annual EEA non-confidential Fluorinated greenhouse gases reports and other information on f-gases found on the EEA website, as well as documents published by European Commission pertaining to the implementation of the new F-Gas Regulation.

Description of the role of the EEA and Eionet in the case study area

Since 2012 and concerning reporting year 2011 (5th reporting year) under the old F-Gas Regulation, the European Commission has given the responsibility for collecting, archiving, quality checking and aggregating information from individual company reports to the European Environment Agency (EEA). Previously, these tasks were carried out by consultants in the context of service contracts with the European Commission.

The following table provides an overview of the EEA key tasks in the area of F-gases, as well as the role of other involved actors, including the European Commission DG Climate Action (DG CLIMA) and Member State f-Gas coordinators.

Table 29 Overview of key tasks, roles and involved actors in the area of F-gases

Task ref EEA Founding Regulation	Tasks/activities of the EEA (incl. ETC/ACM)	Description of EEA's (incl. ETC/ACM) role	Mandate	Role of the EC (DG CLIMA, unit A2)	Description of the role of EIONET
Support to reporting requirements (task c)	Data handling for reporting by businesses (since 2012) / Provision of the f-Gas Business Data Repository - BDR (since 2013)	Enable reporting, support reporting companies through helpdesk, data management and QA Flag possible compliance issues to the Commission Provide, maintain and update reporting platform as relevant. Technical implementation of the reporting questionnaire hosted in the BDR.	EEA mandate: letter agreements between CLIMA and EEA, as well as MAWP/AWPs; EEA is explicitly referred to in the preamble of Implementing Act No 1191/2014, determining the format and means for report submission Mandate for reporting: Article 6 and Article 19 concerning reporting of the 'old' and 'new' F-Gas Regulations	Peer Reviewer as well as Recipient and User of EEA f-gas annual reports, incl. confidential one Interpret legislation and facilitate implementation Handle compliance issues Lead the work on the reporting questionnaire that is hosted in the BDR and evolves over time, as new aspects of the Regulation enter gradually into force Decide on allocation of HFC quotas under the phase down	The EIONET is not involved in f-gas BDR activities; rather the data flow is the other direction with the Member States receiving national level information from the EEA. National reporting coordinators have been assigned in Member States to facilitate the purpose.
As above	Preparation of annual F-gas reports (synthesis of company reported information), including a confidential one and a publically available one	Author of the annual reports	As above	Recipient of annual reports, incl. confidential one.	Recipients of annual reports, incl. confidential one.
Manage data and information systems (task e)	Production of F-gas indicator based on data reported	Update of indicator, revision of its meth-	MAWP/AWPs	Contribute to methodology revision; Oc-	

		odology, and publica-tion of the indicator on EEA website		casional user of indi-cator for communica-tion purposes	

The F-gas Business Data Repository in brief

In the first year of EEA's involvement, the reporting was done based on Excel files, similarly to how it was done by consultants before EEA's involvement. Since 2013 and concerning reporting year 2012 (6th reporting year under the old F-Gas Regulation) companies report their F-gas transactions via a multilingual online platform, the Business Data Repository[484] (BDR). The BDR for F-gases is part of the Reportnet architecture maintained by the EEA. New elements have been (and are still being) added to the F-Gas BDR to accommodate new reporting require-ments of the new F-Gas Regulation (Regulation No (EU) 517/2014).

Business undertakings such as importers of bulk f-gases and importers of pre-charged equipment use it to fulfil their annual reporting obligations on the production, import, export, feedstock use and destruction of the sub-stances listed in Annexes I or II to the F-Gas Regulation. The EEA manages the delivery process and is the key actor in the compilation of the company reports, in other words EEA is responsible for data management and the provision of support to reporting companies. The EIONET is not involved in these activities; rather the data flow is the other direction with the Member States getting national level information from the EEA.

Based on the reported data, the EEA produces a set of annual reports on F-gases, as well as the f-gas indicator.

10.5.2   Effectiveness

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP

The EEA's role in terms of supporting EU legislation in the f-gas area is set out in Strategic Area 1.2 'Industrial Pol-lution' of the MAWP 2014-2018 includes:

Data management for reporting by industry including collection, compilation, quality control, and analysis of the companies' reports and encompassing also the:

Provision and further development and maintenance of the reporting platform (F-Gas BDR)

Provision of support to the reporting companies (Helpdesk, guidance documents)

Preparation of annual f-gas reports (a set of two reports, including a confidential one and one for the wider pub-lic), based on company reported data that enables the Commission to track progress with the implementation of the F-Gas Regulation and informs the industry as well as public

Production of f-gas indicator (Production, sales and emissions of fluorinated greenhouse gases)

In the near future and on the basis of the data from the BDR, EEA will also support the Commission in new inter-national reporting obligations with respect to f-gases (to start in 2020 for reporting year 2019) under the Montreal Protocol. Similar activities are performed by the EEA for the related area of ozone depleting substances (ODS), as regards yearly EU company reporting and reporting obligations to the Montreal Protocol.

MAWP and AWP completion status

We have reviewed the MAWP and AWPs 2014-2016 status with respect to delivered outputs based on information provided in the CAARs 2014-2016 for the specific area of this case study (see table below). From this exercise as well as from information collected during interviews, it can be inferred that the EEA has completed the majority of the planned activities in the area of F-gases as set out in MAWP and to a high level of satisfaction of the Commis-sion. The quality and sophistication of the deliverables have reportedly been improving from year to year.

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[484] Eionet Business Data Repository https://bdr.eionet.europa.eu/

Table 30 MAWP review for case study elements

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
Reports on fluorinated green-house gas production and sales, and on EU exports and imports in support of the F-Gas regula-tion	Annual	Publication of the aggregated F-gases data and EEA technical report **Status:** *Done*	Annual technical reports on the trade and production of (ODS and) F-gases **Status:** *Done*	Annual technical reports on the trade and production of (ODS and) F-gases **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments
		Confidential EU F-gases report **Status:** *Done*	Annual internal EU reports (confi-dential) on (ODS and) F-Gases **Status:** *Done*	Annual internal EU reports (confi-dential) on (ODS and) F-Gases **Status:** *Done*	Reports and assessments
		Country-specific f-gas (and ODS) datasheets **Status:** *Done (provision of country-specific database extracts)*			Reports and assessments
EEA Core Set of Indicators and other relevant indicators on in-dustrial releases to air, water, soil, and waste transfers; pro-duction, sales and emissions of fluorinated gases; and produc-tion and consumption of ODS	Annual	Publish reviewed and updated f-gas indicators **Status:** *F-gas indicator updated with information up to 2012*	Updated indicators at European level on F-gases **Status:** *Done*	Updated indicator at European level on F-gases, and revision of indicator on F-gases **Status:** *postponed to 2017 due to the complexity for a robust method-ology and the need for further dis-cussion with DG CLIMA*	Indicators
Assessments of the effective-ness of industrial policies in re-ducing releases of pollutants and of the subsequent impacts on the environment, health and economy, including assessment of co-benefits of policy measures undertaken in these areas	Regular	Support to DG CLIMA in the F-Gas Committee meeting **Status**: *Done – annual F-gas report findings presented in the F-gas Committee meeting*	Provision of policy support in rela-tion to the F-Gas Regulation, Mon-treal Protocol etc. **Status:** *Done*	Provision of policy support: con-cerning implementation and net-working facilitation across a number of areas, including through the F-gas Committee **Status:** *Done*	Contributions and joint products / Pol-icy support
		Draft report assessing the effects of the ODS Regulation and the F-Gas	Impact of ODS and F-gases Regula-tions on past GHG emissions		Support and contributions

Output as stated in MAWP	Timeframe in MAWP	2014 AWP and AAR	2015 AWP and CAAR	2016 AWP and CAAR	Type of output
		Regulation on GHG emissions in Europe; and corresponding report or working paper for consultation **Status:** *Unknown -cannot be inferred from CAAR or publicly available information*	**Status:** *Done as web article publication according to CAAR 2015; however this could not be retrieved online*		
/	Annual	Updated EEA F-gas database / Data management and quality assurance of confidential F-gases data reported. **Status:** Done [*mentioned as a highlight in 2014 CAAR*]	Data reporting, technical support to reporting companies, and quality assurance related to F-gases **Status:** *Done* [*mentioned as a highlight in 2015 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR*]; In addition EEA published in March 2015, aggregated dataset concerning 2007-2013 ([see link](#))	Updated (confidential) compilation ODS and F-Gases provided **Status:** *Done*	Data and maps
/	Regular	Delivery of upgraded ODS and F-Gas BDR **Status:** Adjusted reporting platform done for F-gas BDR	Continued development of EEA information systems and data flow management processes, with regard to the amended reporting regime under the new F-Gas Regulation [*mentioned as a highlight in 2015 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR*] **Status:** *Done* - the online tool for company-based reporting, in accordance with the revised F-gas Regulation, was brought to the final stage of development. [*mentioned as a highlight in 2015 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR*]	An updated tool for company-based reporting of F-gases was implemented in 2016 [*mentioned as a highlight in 2016 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR*] **Status:** *Done* [*mentioned as a highlight in 2016 CAAR but not outlined as output in AWP or CAAR*]	Reporting tools

In particular, according to interviews with the Commission the set of annual reports on F-Gases (the confidential internal EU reports and the technical report) produced by EEA is considered a success, with the reports and the quality of underlying data having improved greatly since the activities were taken over by EEA compared to previous periods when they were carried out by external consultants. They are detailed, comprehensive and not subject to criticism by Member States and this is partly attributable to the support provided by the ETC. According to interviews with the Commission and confirmed by a national expert, the feedback of Member States is growing increasingly positive with respect to the quality of EEA work. This contentment has been expressed during annual F-Gas committee meetings where EEA presents its work: Member States recognise that the quality of work is increasing despite increasing data volumes (progressively additional reporting requirements are introduced stepwise by the Regulation) and increasing reporting entity volumes (e.g. for 2014, which was the first reporting year under the new F-Gas Regulation, the number of reporting companies tripled compared to 2013[485]).

One exception where planned work has not been completed according to initial plan, is the EEA planned activities in relation to updating and revising the methodology of the F-gas indicator that tracks trends over the years in aggregated trade data concerning the production, imports, exports and consumption of F-gases. The existing indicator, which has not been updated in recent years, builds on the information under the old F-Gas Regulation and the EEA will update it based on a new methodology suitable for presenting information under the new F-Gas regulation. This work has been postponed from 2016 to 2017-2018 due to the complexity of developing a robust methodology to take into account the changes brought about by the new F-Gas Regulation but also for communications purposes. Based on interviews, this delay has been discussed with DG CLIMA. The EEA has done some scoping work in 2017 with a view to publishing in 2018 a revised indicator that will illustrate the progress with the EU HFC phase-down, as well as compliance with the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol.

The work on the indicator is mentioned in the MAWP, however its publication is not required by the regulation and as such is not critical for its implementation. It has rather originated on EEA's initiative, and the Commission has found the indicator useful for communication purposes (e.g. they use it to present trend lines at events organised in the context of international policy). Overall, the dialogue between CLIMA and EEA on the indicator's revised methodology and the timing of its publication alludes towards a case of successful cooperation: CLIMA can contribute in "shaping" the indicator so that it is most useful for its own communication work and published at the right moment in the policy cycle.

Text box 4 EEA indicator on the production, sales and emissions of F-gases

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The EEA F-gas indicator with information from the old F-Gas Regulation has two strands (Indicator codes: CSI 044, CLIM 048):

One that tracks trends since 2007 in the aggregated production, bulk imports, bulk exports and consumption of F-gases, differentiated, where available by HFCs, PFCs and SF_6. It presents aggregated data in units of million tonnes of CO2-equivalents, which is the physical amount of F-gases produced, imported, exported or consumed, multiplied by their respective GWP. It presents aggregated data based on company reporting under Article 6 of the 'old' F-gas Regulation 642/2006, provided by EEA.

One that tracks trends since 1990 in anthropogenic emissions of the fluorinated greenhouse gases, differentiated by HFCs, PFCs and SF_6. It presents GWP-weighted emissions of F-gases as officially reported by the EU-28 Member States to the UNFCCC and to the EU Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Mechanism, provided by UNFCCC.

The soon to published revised F-gas indicator will illustrate:

Progress with the EU HFC phase-down, as well as

Compliance with the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol

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In the near future and on the basis of the data from the BDR, EEA will also support the Commission in new international reporting obligations with respect to f-gases (to start in 2020 for reporting year 2019) under the Montreal Protocol. The EEA/Commission intend to have one test round before the obligation starts in 2020, i.e. have it ready so for the reporting in 2019 concerning year 2018. Therefore the 2018 reporting round on 2017 year will be the last year in the current BDR format. The needed adjustments to BDR for the new international reporting obligations are however only moderate.

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[485] EEA (2015), Fluorinated greenhouse gases 2014, p. 6

Data quality

Data quality is of paramount importance, affecting all f-gas related EEA outputs. Data quality checks by the EEA is also a means to flagging non-compliance, e.g. incomplete reporting, human errors, data inconsistencies. The checks also facilitate the work of the Commission technical desks. The EEA points these cases out from the database and hands them over to the Commission who then takes on the correspondence with reporting entities on their compliance with the quota system (clear distinction of responsibilities).

The EEA approach to quality checking encompasses a two phase approach (this approach is not unique to f-gases), comprising a) an automated QA/QC routine and b) a manual one:

a) The automated one is associated with the online web form (data entry form for reporting entities). As soon as a company submits the form, an automatic check is performed on the information filled in and a report is generated. This automatic check is programmed based on the quota information that EEA gets from the Commission, which enables creating some rules for automatic cross-check comparison (this can be thought as a sophisticated level of error messages generated when entering invalid/wrong values). An automatically generated quality-feedback report is automatically uploaded and accessible to the respective companies in their own company folder so that they can easily do self-checks. If the feedback report raises further questions, companies take these on to the helpdesk.

b) Following data entry, EEA does certain manual checks: i.e. consistency checks that numbers add up when following the waste flow, for example in relation to the fact that companies can allocate part of their quota to another company.

The ETC/ACM uses timewise 20% of their budget on BDR helpdesk work as part of their QA/QC tasks (both ODS and F-gases). During 2016, there were 400 BDR helpdesk tickets related to F-gases comprising of 2,500 messages, in addition to which the BDR Helpdesk frontline received approximately 2,000 messages related to general helpdesk questions (e.g. regarding access to the reporting platform, passwords, etc). The number of messages is growing with the gradual increase in reporting requirements and entities covered by the F-Gas Regulation and between 1 January 2017 and 21 September 2017, the EEA and ETC/ACM had already dealt with 8,385 messages.

Overall, interviewees from the Commission state that they are happy with the inputs and quality assurance / controls coming from ETC who has built in the system algorithms that do automatic cross checking of values as they are entered. They have also built in checks that are directly useful for the Commission, e.g. when a company exceeds their quota this is automatically flagged and the Commission is eventually informed by EEA on all such cases. According to the Commission and as confirmed during an interview with a national F-gas contact point, Member States also recognise that the quality of reported data and EEA work is increasing, despite increasing reporting volumes.

Finally, the EEA with support of the ETC/ACM prepares a number of manuals and additional guidance documents to support reporters with the reporting procedures and technical questions and these also underpin good data quality. For example, the EEA puts together a detailed reporting manual that is a step by step guide, as well as '*frequently asked questions*' documents. These documents are translated into several national languages when there are stable versions. Manuals are an established practice (in general), that saves resources/ time responding to email requests. The F-Gas BDR helpdesk also makes frequent use of these documents in their ticketing system, i.e. the manual provides guidance to both reporting entities and is also a reference document that EEA staff can refer back to in order to organise/classify requests before they forward it internally to the right individual who can address it.

Confidentiality, security and usability

Initially, when the BDR reporting system was being set up, some discussions took place between EEA and the Commission on how to handle confidentiality. The EEA, in agreement with the European Commission, endeavours to take appropriate measures to protect confidentiality and prevent the publication of commercially sensitive information. These measures include public reporting of fluorinated gas data at higher levels of aggregation only, to protect data that are the result of reports from less than three corporate groups, and additional steps to prevent deduction of sensitive information. An interview with a Member State revealed high confidence in these confidentiality measures.

Similarly, according to interviews with the Commission, reporting entities raised some questions with respect to the treatment of confidential data only in the beginning of the process. A stress test for IT security was organised by DG DIGIT and EEA IT experts. Results identified issues according to high, medium and low priority. Any critical issues identified were dealt with immediately. The test also listed a number of "nice-to-develop" elements – which

have become relevant for the development work for EIONET Reportnet 2.0 and not just for the f-gas BDR. Moreover, there are meetings on IT matters twice a year where any security issues are discussed. At the same time, the Commission IT department has been strengthening the security of the Commission's own IT system that is coupled with the EEA system that holds the data. Overall, there have not been any major instances in the last 2-3 years and interviewees from the Commission describe the EEA as generally willing to be accommodating on security issues, however always with a very close look at resource implications this may have, given their limited availability..

In terms of the usability, there is some scope for making the reporting system more user friendly from an IT perspective, according to an interview with a Member State and there is ongoing work on such improvements.

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

Policy development

In the context of EU policy development, technical work in relation to reviewing the application of the old F-Gas Regulation and the proposal for a new Regulation took place prior to the EEA having taken over the work in relation to f-gas reporting and outside the period of this evaluation[486]. In terms of future policy development in this area, high-quality reported data will feed into assessing the effectiveness of the current Regulation and also linking reported data to f-gas emissions will be critical for tracking progress towards the achievement of emission reduction targets and assessing the impact of the current Regulation within a wider context. CLIMA measures the impact of policy based on company reported data and EEA synthesis reports, and therefore the role of the EEA activities supporting implementation (see next sub-section) enables the gathering of information that will inform policy development in the future.

In the context international policy development, the EU has been able to demonstrate the establishment of an ambitious reduction (phase down) system of HFCs (most common f-gases). In the view of the Commission, the BDR has facilitated monitoring and compliance checking with the phase-down, thus establishing a high credibility of the EU delivering on its emissions reduction commitments. Demonstrating that the EU has put in place a transparent and robust system has rendered it credible in the negotiations, and has been useful in efforts to convince other partner countries to the Montreal Protocol like the US, China, India, Brazil to move the same direction.

Besides increased credibility, the BDR has provided very useful input for determining which timelines to use for the Montreal Protocol amendment and for which countries. In the same vein, in the view of the Commission the EEA F-gas annual reports have been important in providing a benchmark for the international negotiations leading to the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol. The EU was the first major player to take strong action on HFCs, and through these annual EEA f-gas reports it could credibly illustrate its domestic action. The work has contributed to encouraging other countries to follow suit (e.g. Japan, US) and it continues to do so, as the EU continues to show how EU policy develops. Finally, the EEA work on f-gas indicators provides yardsticks showcasing what the EU is doing and can be expected to become increasingly important with the Kigali amendment in communicating/ substantiating the EU case as best practice worldwide. CLIMA use the indicator for communication purposes already now, e.g. when participating at country network meetings in South America or other regions.

In summary, the EEA work has to date provided little contribution in relation to EU policy development simply because of the timing of the policy cycle and the relatively recent involvement of the EEA in the work; however, the EEA work can be expected to have an important contribution in future policy developments in this area in the EU. Internationally, EEA work has already provided some contribution to international policy development and the international negotiations leading to the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol.

Policy implementation and compliance

Based on interviews with the Commission, the EEA has provided information the Commission needed to implement the F-Gas regulation to a very large extent (crucial contribution).

In addition to enabling the measurement of policy impact, the EEA work supports the year-to-year implementation of the F-Gas Regulation, as well as follow up compliance actions. The HFC phase down in particular is implemented through a quota system - with gradually decreasing quota allocations - and the BDR reported data form the basis

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[486] E.g. The report from the Commission [COM (2011) 581] on the application, effects and adequacy of the Regulation (EC) No 842/2006 on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases was published on 26/09/2011; The proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on fluorinated greenhouse gases [COM(2012) 643] and accompanied Impact Assessment documents were published on 07/11/2012;

for a) assessing whether companies comply with quotas; b) tracking the progress with the HFC phase-down[487]; and also c) informing the allocation of future quotas (every three years the Commission recalculates/determines by means of implementing acts the quota reference values for the companies on the basis of reported quantities) including through the assessment of the quota allocation method itself[488]. In sum, the collected data serves a dual purpose of compliance and implementation.

In the international arena, there are some upcoming changes brought about by the Montreal Protocol agreement in 2016 in Kigali to include f-gases under the gases covered by the Protocol. The EU will have to report for the first time in 2020 for year 2019, and in the run up to this date, the EEA will work on enhancing and further developing the BDR reporting system to serve this need and enable the EU to fulfil its future international reporting obligations with respect to f-gases.

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

The Montreal Protocol spells out that member countries can chose to fulfil their reporting obligations at a regional rather than individual country basis. The Commission and EEA have taken this burden at EU level (so far concerning ODS and in the near future f-gases), hence providing a service to Member State authorities who would have otherwise had to set up their own systems. Having this work assembled at EU level avoids duplication of work. To fulfil these international reporting obligations, CLIMA gets the data needed from the BDR and feeds it to the Montreal Protocol process. EEA helps the Commission to report under the Montreal Protocol (so far this has concerned ODS international reporting obligations), and for f-gases this work is set to start in 2020 (for reporting year 2019), making use of the BDR reported data.

In addition, some EU Member States (i.e. typically those with additional national regulatory or fiscal measures on f-gases) collect data at national level. The data collected at EU level through the BDR is of service to these Member States, as it allows them to access company-level data. The BDR also allows those Member States with national F-gas measures and databases to access data and do cross comparisons of results and increase the robustness of analysis prepared for national ministries.

Overall, the BDR reduces the burden for Member States.

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

The establishment of the F-Gas BDR has resulted in significant efficiency gains in ensuring a uniform database, as compared to previous times when the reporting was done via spreadsheets, where reporting entities would customise them, not only making the import of the data in a database a tedious task, but also increasing the risk of non-comparable data. Comparability and reliability is also ensured through a data QA/QC approach which encompasses both automatic checks, manual checks, as well as close interaction with reporting entities. Relevant guidance documents are also available in different languages to ensure.

Moreover, the mere fact that the companies operating in different Member States report through the same platform and are supported by the same helpdesk and technical experts already ensures comparability.

One area where there could be some scope for improvement is to keep fully (100%) aligned the data in the EEA BDR database (reporting), with information in the Commissions' HFC Registry (compliance) where DG CLIMA store data on company compliance with their quotas. There is in general some interface between the two, however once a compliance case occurs, it is subject to a case-by-case decision by the Commission, and the conclusion might or might not be reflected back into the EEA database depending or whether or not there is a resubmission of the report by the company. E.g. The EEA database generates a report, based on which there is a preliminary assessment that the company in question might not comply with their allocated quota. In this case, DG CLIMA enters into bilateral dialogue with the company, requests further information / clarifications and comes to a conclusion. Once the case is closed, this conclusion and any modifications to the data might not be reflected back into the company's report in the EEA BDR database (there is sometimes but not always a resubmission of the report by the company through the BDR). Currently, the EEA database can replicate the Commission compliance decisions

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[487] DG CLIMA, October 2016, Progress of the HFC Phase Down: https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/f-gas/docs/phase-down_progress_en.pdf

[488] E.g. A 2016 briefing paper with a preliminary assessment of the quota allocation method draws on F-Gas BDR data, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/20161201_briefing_paper_en.pdf ; A 2017 Report from the Commission assessing the quota allocation method, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/f-gas/legislation/docs/com_2017_377_en.pdf

99.5% but not 100%, and although it is not straightforward how this could be done effectively, there could be some room to improve on this.

EEA GHG emissions viewer and emissions inventory

F-gas BDR data does not feed directly into the EEA GHG emissions viewer[489]. However, according to the EEA, there could be scope for some benchmarking work between the emissions data and the trade data collected on f-gas consumption and production. This is not a straightforward exercise, as F-gas emissions are typically calculated on the basis of leak rate assumptions, however the availability of accurate leak rate data to inform these assumptions is somewhat limited. This can be expected to improve with time as Member States gradually establish national reporting systems to acquire emissions data according to Art. 20 of the F-gas Regulation.

From the EEA's perspective, the next level is to work on synergies with climate change mitigation and try to make the connection to emissions data reported under UNFCCC. With a view to having a better interaction with the work on the emissions inventory, as of January 2017 the ODS and F-gas topics have moved in EEA's organisational chart from the Industrial pollution group (ACC2) to the Climate change mitigation and energy group (ACC3). The move is in good anticipation of evolving policy needs with respect to higher quality F-gas emissions data that provide coherence with the Greenhouse gas Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR), as underlined also in the preamble as well as Article 20 of the new F-Gas Regulation.

Effectiveness in dissemination of environmental information

Use of reports and services

Based on the reported data, the EEA publishes on an annual basis a set of two reports on fluorinated greenhouse gases: 1) a confidential report for DG CLIMA and MSs, which is crucial for the year-to-year implementation of the F-Gas Regulation and will in the future inform EU policy development in the area, and which have provided a benchmark for the international negotiations under the Montreal Protocol; 2) a report for the wider public which is relevant for industry, NGOs and specialised press.

The public reports are of high interest to the specialised technical community in this field, i.e. industry stakeholders, civil society representatives and researchers. The EEA measures yearly certain metrics on the external performance of its publications to understand the outreach of its work. The following table presents these metrics for the two most recent non-confidential annual F-gas reports.

Table 31 Outreach of Fluorinated greenhouse gases 2014 and 2015 publications

	Fluorinated greenhouse gases 2014* [published in Dec. 2015]	**Fluorinated greenhouse gases 2015*** [published in Dec. 2016]
Web Downloads of EEA reports	613	n.a.
Visits to report web page	n.a.	1,240
Social media reach (Twitter impressions)	5,388	6,492
Online media coverage / No of articles	13	3
Email notification views	1,243	1,302

*Note: Figures concern the period from the publication date until March of the following year

Source: Based on information provided by EEA

The publication of the non-confidential yearly annual f-gas report is accompanied by news releases issued by both the EEA and DG CLIMA[490]. Every year, the publication of the EEA annual f-gas report is picked up very quickly in the press, primarily the specialised press. The interest by the dedicated press is linked to a need for a strong push

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[489] http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/data-viewers/greenhouse-gases-viewer

[490] E.g. EEA news release on the EEA report 'Fluorinated greenhouse gases 2015', December 2016: https://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/fluorinated-gases-continue-to-be ; DG CLIMA news release on the EEA report 'Fluorinated greenhouse gases 2015', December 2016: https://ec.europa.eu/clima/news/articles/news_2016121301_en

for a switch to climate-friendly alternatives to f-gases. Occasionally (e.g. around the time of the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol), the work is also picked up by the general press.

Moreover, the old EEA f-gas indicator and the upcoming revised one plays a role for communication purposes of the Commission, in the context for example of international negotiations (see section 0 for more details).

Web-site assessment

In terms of the usability, there is room for making the BDR reporting system more user friendly from an IT perspective, according to an interview with a Member State and there is ongoing work on such improvements. The room for improvement is somewhat limited though by the technical nature of f-gases as a topic.

10.5.3 Coherence

The EEA views as key success that they have managed to put in place an effective cooperation process involving the various stakeholders shown in the figure below, including DG CLIMA, Member States, ETC/ACM, EEA's IT units, external IT service providers etc. An EEA unit placed within the ACC2 - Industrial pollution group (moved as of January 2017 to ACC3 - Climate change mitigation and energy group) has been coordinating this. The cooperation process also benefits from synergies emanating from the fact that one of the key ETC/ACM involved organisations is also a consultant to DG CLIMA with hence additional insights into the Commission's needs and thinking.

Figure 3 F-Gas BRD involved stakeholders
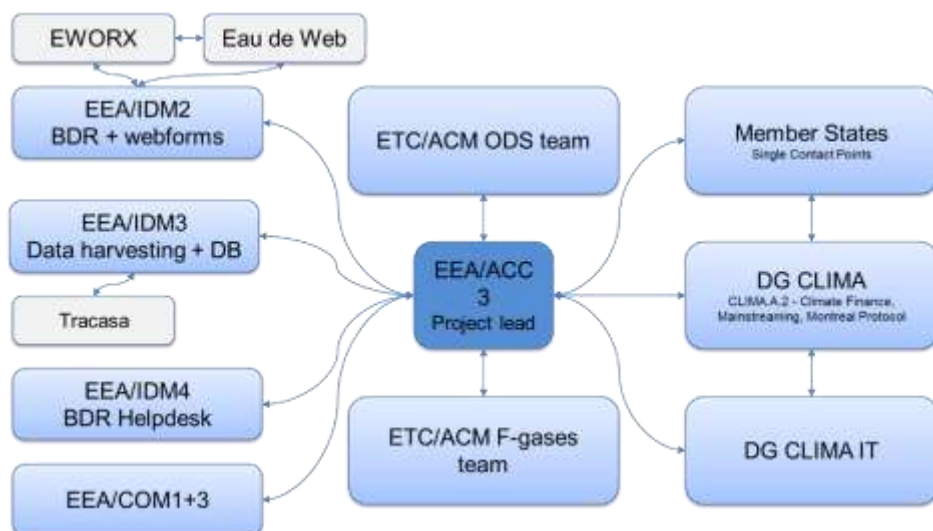
The EEA manages the BDR delivery process and is the key actor in the compilation of the company reports, based largely on external assistance from the ETC/ACM. To that end, the EEA's BDR helpdesk and other staff carry out bilateral communications with the reporting companies and data quality checks. The EIONET is not involved in BDR f-gas activities; rather the data flow is the other direction, with the Member States getting national level information from the EEA and national reporting coordinators in Member States have been assigned to facilitate the purpose[491].

The EEA (with support from ETC/ACM and external IT service provider) has worked on the IT development for setting up the BDR reporting system for the new F-Gas Regulation[492], which was completed in just one year with intensive use of resources. The IT system set up involved close cooperation between the EEA and the Commission and several visits to Copenhagen, emails and teleconferences, an overall good cooperation both ways. EEA was initially challenged by the task at hand, but it ended up being manageable, and EEA managed to build a stable

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[491] List of Member States coordinators as of January 2017, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/f-gas/docs/contact_list_en.pdf

[492] According to preamble paragraph (18) of Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 "*The Commission should ensure that a central electronic registry is in place to manage quotas, for the placing of hydrofluorocarbons on the market, and the reporting […]*".

system (there has not been any major crash – that was especially crucial the first year) in a short timeframe. Following the main development work, EEA carries out some "lighter" IT development tasks with the focus being about modifying or adding some new elements to the system.

Based on reported data, the EEA publishes on an annual basis a set of two reports on fluorinated greenhouse gases: a confidential one for CLIMA and MSs, and a report for the wider public[493] relevant for industry, NGOs etc. Confidentiality requirements apply to data reported under the F-Gas Regulation (Article 19.8) and to protect data confidentiality only aggregated data are published, while no information is disclosed on the content of a report by a single undertaking.

The ETC/ACM is involved in the preparation of the annual reports and deals with the more technical f-gas BDR helpdesk requests. The BDR compiled data on f-gases also feeds into EEA's indicators on the production, sales and emissions of f-gases[494].

Cooperation between the EEA and EU bodies
Basis of cooperation
The basis for initial cooperation and EEA involvement in F-gas reporting is an agreement at director level in autumn 2010 with some work already featuring in EEA's 2011 Annual Management Plan, i.e. it was not written directly into the old F-Gas regulation (which was adopted several years earlier). Cooperation was further formalised with an agreement between DG CLIMA and EEA at the end of 2011 with effect from 2012 for work on F-gases (and ODS). EEA's interest in the topic emanated from getting direct access to F-gas data for the F-gas indicator, while for the Commission (DG CLIMA) on their side sought continuity and quality of work.
Since then, a series of letter agreements at the director level between DG CLIMA and EEA have defined the EEA role/activities, which are also reflected in the MAWP and Annual WPs. The new F-Gas Regulation adopted in 2014 and applicable as of January 2015 does not mention a specific mandate for EEA in the Article concerning reporting (Article 19) or any other Article. Nonetheless, a reference to EEA's role has been included among the recitals in the preamble of Commission Implementing Act No 1191/2014[495], which determines the format and means for report submission[496]. Although recitals/preambles to EU laws are not in themselves legally binding, the inclusion of a reference to the EEA F-Gas BDR signals a certain confidence in a well-functioning reporting system and an aspiration for its continuity.
Internationally, the EEA is on behalf of the EU the operating body in charge of fulfilling reporting obligations under the Montreal Protocol, which as of 2020 (reporting year 2019) will also cover f-gases. As for the case of EU reporting activities, it is an exchange of letters between CLIMA and the EEA Executive Director that sets out a commitment that EEA will carry out BDR work taking into account the Kigali amendment. The aim is to have the BDR ready for a test round of reporting in 2019 concerning year 2018.
Division of roles
Overall, there is a clear division of roles between the EEA who deals with reporting issues, the Commission who deals with compliance issues as well as the general understanding /interpretation of the F-Gas Regulation, and Member States who are responsible for the overall implementation of the Regulation. In cases where data quality checks and analysis performed by EEA indicates possible non-compliance, the EEA points them out in the database and hands them over to the Commission who then handles the further communication and action with reporting entities as necessary.

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[493] For example, Fluorinated greenhouse gases 2015 http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/fluorinated-greenhouse-gases

[494] Indicator Assessment - Prod-ID: IND-354-en; Also known as: CSI 044 , CLIM 048, http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/emissions-and-consumption-of-fluorinated/assessment-2

[495] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R1191&from=EN

[496] Relevant extract from the recitals in the preamble of Implementing Act No 1191/2014: "*With a view to ensuring uniformity and coherency in the collection of data and to limiting administrative burden, undertakings should submit the information required under Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 by means of an electronic reporting tool containing the relevant forms for their individual activities provided by the European Environmental Agency, accessible from the website of the European Commission*"

This division is not always clearly perceived from the point of view of reporting entities. When engaging with the BDR Helpdesk for example, an exchange with a reporting entity on reporting matters could lead to follow up questions on how to achieve compliance or interpret the Regulation, which is out of EEA's scope of work. The EEA would then have to refer the companies to the Commission who runs a separate enquiry mailbox. From the reporting entities' perspective, it may be somewhat unclear when not all enquiry replies can be sourced from a one-stop service, however there have not been any related complaints from companies.

Cooperation mechanisms

The coordination between EEA (together with ETC) and CLIMA is ensured through regular phone calls, as well as email and documents exchange.

The EEA works day-to-day with the ETC providing external support, and liaises regularly with CLIMA. Overall, there is an ongoing dialogue between CLIMA and EEA concerning the various activities, which allows coordination of approaches, and consolidation of priorities and policy messages, as the case of a coordinated approach on the revised f-gas indicator demonstrates (see more in section 2.1). There is also regular correspondence between EEA and CLIMA IT staff.

Cooperation with bodies in member countries

The EIONET is not involved in f-gas BDR activities; rather the data flow is the other direction with the Member States receiving national level information from the EEA through receipt of the detailed confidential annual report and country-specific database extracts. National reporting coordinators in Member States have been assigned to facilitate the purpose. The BDR allows those Member States with national F-gas measures in place and databases to access company-level data and do cross comparisons of results, thereby increasing the robustness of any analysis prepared for national ministries. There is regular correspondence between EEA and Member State national reporting coordinators assigned typically from Environment Ministries, especially in the context of company enquiries.

Some interaction with Member States also takes place at the (annual) meetings of the 'Committee on fluorinated greenhouse gases' (F-gas Committee), where the EEA participates and presents the annual F-gas report findings. The F-Gas Committee - established under Article 24 of the new F-Gas Regulation - is composed of representatives from EU countries and assists the Commission with the implementation of the regulation through providing opinions on draft implementing acts in relation to the various topics. More specifically, several Articles of the F-Gas Regulation, empowers the Commission to adopt implementing acts in accordance with the examination procedure on a series of matters, which range from determining reference values used for the allocation of quotas for placing HFCs on the market and authorising certain exemptions to the placing on the market restrictions of products and equipment, to specifying requirements for leak checks, determining the format for record keeping, adapting training requirements etc.

10.5.4 Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

The cooperation between CLIMA and EEA has spanned for about 3 years under the old F-Gas Regulation, followed by about 3 years of cooperation under the new Regulation.

Although the type of activities by EEA has not changed as such, the tools used to perform them as well their relevance to EU policy has increased since the revision of the F-Gas Regulation: previously the data was used for measuring environmental impacts, while with the new Regulation having introduced a quota system the data is used also for implementation and compliance purposes.

The establishment of the F-gas BDR and the transition away from Excel-based reporting data collection came in time for the transition to new and increased reporting requirements by the new Regulation. This meant a need for managing increased data flow volumes from an increased number of reporting entities at the first reporting year under the new Regulation, but also progressively increasing since then as additional reporting requirements are being introduced stepwise by the Regulation. The relevance of the F-gas BDR increases with time and the ongoing process of the system is evolving to accommodate additional data volumes. The new system has also allowed a more sophisticated and automated harvesting of the reporting data.

With a growing number of companies every year falling under the regulation's reporting requirements, the BDR is a key enabler of success in making the reporting process efficient and manageable.

Relevance in relation to technological development

IT security is of high importance, as the data included in the f-Gas BDR relates to sensitive commercial activities. A stress test for IT security listed a number of elements that have informed the development work for EIONET Reportnet 2.0.

With respect to data management, the EEA approach to data quality checking encompasses an automated QA/QC routine (this approach is not unique to f-gases) prior to manual checks. Interviewees from the Commission state that they are content with the algorithms that are built in the system by the ETC and which perform an automatic cross checking of values as they are entered. The ETC has also built in other automatic checks that directly notify the Commission when e.g. a company exceeds their quota.

10.5.5 Efficiency

Benefits and costs
Benefits
The establishment of the F-Gas BDR has resulted in significant efficiency gains in ensuring a uniform database, as compared to previous times when the reporting was done via spreadsheets (reporting entities would customise them, making the import of the data in a database a tedious task). Moreover, the nature of the activities at hand requires specialised technical expertise of often high complexity, and while for a Member State with a well-developed f-gas industry and thus several reporting entities the set up and management of a national reporting system could possibly be worthwhile the effort and investment, this would certainly not be the case for countries with fewer players but equal level of complexity.

Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthesised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET. This is summarised in the table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

Crucial contribution
Some contribution
Little or no contribution

Table 32 Benefits accruing from EEA tasks

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the benefit	Justification
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	*No contribution*	Not relevant, as the reporting is at the company level
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	*Crucial contribution*	Uniform database. Data and resulting reports available to the Commission and Member States. Data crucial for implementation of the HFC phase-down and for compliance checking.
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	*Some contribution*	Annual reporting cycle, and annual reports, with trends over time and which allows to measure policy impact.
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	*Some to crucial contribution*	Reporting done through Business Data Repository, part of Reportnet architecture. Learnings from F-gas BDR feed into Reportnet 2.0.
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	*Some contribution*	Member States have access to all data including those of other Member States, and could use it for benchmarking
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation for other bodies	*Crucial contribution*	Main focus of EEA involvement.

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the benefit	Justification
Coordination of activities between members states and preparation for the future	*No or insignificant contribution*	
Increase in the volume of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken and provide an efficient uptake of them	*Crucial contribution*	The requirements of the new F-Gas Regulation requires the handling of an increasing number of reporting companies and reported data volumes with time. This has been managed by the EEA thanks to the provision of technical support to reporting companies and the decline in reporting errors every year, as well through efficiency gains from reoccurring activities.
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	*Crucial contribution (in the future)*	This will be the case in the future where EEA will support the international reporting obligations emanating from the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol. (currently the EEA provides such support for the case of ODS related international reporting obligations)
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	*Crucial contribution*	Efficiency gains from reoccurring activities, allowing to handle larger volumes of reporting entities and data. Recognised increasing data and report quality.
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	*Crucial contribution*	Reported data is commercially sensitive trade data reported by companies

Costs

The IT development for the new reporting system was completed in one year, involving intensive use of resources during that 1 year. The IT system set up involved close cooperation between the EEA and the Commission and several visits to Copenhagen, emails and teleconferences, an overall good cooperation both ways.

Following the main development work, EEA carries out some "lighter" IT development tasks with the focus being about modifying or adding some new elements to the system. As part of the work EEA/CLIMA try to improve/make things easier and each year the system is adapted as needed (e.g. can simply be changing the wording for clarification purposes). Companies report typically between mid-February and mid-April every year, a period that also involves more intensive use of resources from the ETC (BDR helpdesk). The reporting is done until end of March each year, and in the summer there is room for thinking what needs to be changed for the following year round of reporting.

EEA has one Project Manager (unclear what share of their time is dedicated to f-gas BDR) and budget for ETC/ACM consultant. Involved staff in the work include:

EEA has a Project Manager on the f-gas BDR which coordinates all the work

One EEA colleague acts as "wave breaker" for both f-gas and ODS BDR requests, organises requests into two different queues, corresponding to the two relevant ETC team dealing with the two issues.

The European Topic Centre on Air Pollution and Climate Change Mitigation (ETC/ACM) who is involved in the preparation of the annual reports and deals with the f-gas BDR helpdesk related requests among other things.

The EEA IT department – with a lot of the work being outsourced to ETC/ACM and also external IT resources.

The following table, provides an overview of estimated resources in the area of f-Gases, in full-time equivalents for EEA's staff, and in kEuro for the ETC/ACM and external IT consultants.

Table 33 Estimated overview of resources in the area of F-gases

	Unit	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

EEA Air and climate change (ACC)	FTE*	0.24	0.29	0.35	0.60	0.60
EEA ICT and data management (IDM)	FTE*	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
ETC on Air Pollution and Climate Change Mitigation (ETC/ACM)	kEuro	34.7	25.1	49.9	44.6	50.8
IDM2 IT consultants	kEuro	n.a.	n.a	n.a.	20.2	33.0

Source: Estimates provided by the EEA;

*Note: FTE estimates are based on recorded time sheets and assuming equal share of time between ODS and f-Gas work

Cost-efficiency

EEA delivers their work as agreed, however, in the general climate of resource constraints work has to be limited to what is strictly needed, and CLIMA and EEA always have to closely coordinate regarding what can be done and what cannot be done in order to ensure best use of available resources.

Efficiency factors

This is attributed to the challenge of handling an increasing number of companies and reported data volumes with time, as well as the fact that the f-gas BDR is continuously being built up to take into account additional reporting requirements gradually phased in by the regulation. Nonetheless, thanks to the provision of technical support to reporting companies things are running smoother every year in terms of declining reporting errors. Such efficiency gains free up some resources that can be dedicated to additional needs in the f-gas area in the short- and medium-term (e.g. integrating international obligations, or providing for IT security). This means that ceteris paribus at a certain point in the longer term EEA could scale down.

The nature of data confidentiality gives an extra layer of administrative burden, while the helpdesk function though essential is highly time consuming. With respect to confidentiality, there are stringent processes in place (overseen by internal auditors) with respect to who can access the servers, the issuance of passwords for new personnel and immediate revoking of passwords for outgoing staff etc. EEA handles more than 100 data flows and is used to working with Member States that each have own specificities and challenges, however they are confronted with the fact that liaising with close to 2,000 reporting entities puts stress on their systems. Measures to counterbalance this stress have been taken, for example, the Commission have since 2015 taken over administrative tasks in relation to company information metadata and the HFC Registry, releasing some resources for EEA to deal with increasing data volumes. For example, each year the Commission sends out reminder emails to registered reporting entities regarding upcoming deadlines.

In addition, language can sometimes be a communication barrier that can complicate things or reduce efficiency, as Helpdesk support is provided in English, a language that might sometimes not be spoken by a reporting company. Even in such cases, the Helpdesk is according to interviews proactive and resourceful in its correspondence with and advice to companies.

F-gas BDR and ODS BDR synergies

F-gases and ODS are similar policy areas, and EEA's type of work and role in supporting the Commission is similar for the two BDRs. In that sense EEA profits from expertise developed from working on both the F-gas BDR and ODS BDR. On the output side (interpretation/ of the data for the annual report), there are no synergies as the data are measured differently (e.g. f-gas data measured in tonnes of CO_2 equivalent, while ODS in Ozone Depletion Potential tonnes). Although there is a link between decreasing ODS use and increasing f-gas use, this relation is highly complex partly because the number of gases and types of applications/sectors covered by the relevant Regulations are not the same, and the two issues are kept separate in the reports. The ETC/ACM is involved in the preparation of the annual reports and deals with the f-gas BDR helpdesk related requests. In terms of activities, however, there are some synergies between the two areas in the way the respective BDR helpdesks are organised: one EEA colleague acts as "wave breaker" for both f-gas BDR and ODS BDR requests and then filters those requests that require specific technical expertise into two different queues that correspond to the ETC experts dealing with the specific issue.

Efficiency gains for reporting entities

Some of the efforts to gain efficiency from the reporting entities' perspective concerns the successful bridging of the f-gas BDR system (where the reporting / data entry by registered reporting entities is done) with the 'HFC registry' (this is the registry of companies for requesting/managing quotas under the HFC phase-down and where reporting entities need to register before they can access the BDR to report their data). Although the two processes

are separate, the former one through the EEA system and the latter through the Commission system, the experience from the users experience it as a single process.

10.5.6   EU value added

Prior to the start of this cooperation, the Commission carried out data gathering reporting and analysis with support from consultancies, which however meant some deficiencies in terms of work continuity and quality of work. CLIMA found overall the quality of reports by consultancies simply satisfactory, while since taken over they are of better and increasing quality, complexity and informative value. The increasing quality is partly attributed to the involvement of ETC/ACM, and learning by doing and efficiency gains when carrying out reoccurring tasks.

Overall EEA added value in the area of f-gases:

- Capitalising on the reporting infrastructure that has been built (BDR system), encompassing an IT system that is flexible to handle different type of reporters and confidential data. EEA have managed to implement a reporting system that takes into account various legislative requirements.

- The involvement of EEA ensures continuity of work (no need to go through the process of hiring consultancies at regular intervals). For the same reason it is also easier to assure confidentiality of data, as fewer transfers of data are involved and cleaning up activities required at the end of a consultant's term.

- EEA brings credibility of an impartial / trusted entity: EEA cannot be related to or have an interest in the reporting companies. EEA does not do work for any of the reporting companies, while a consultancy might have a conflict of interest. EEA shares the Commission's aspiration of wanting to be as close to the truth as possible when it comes to obtaining environmental data of the highest quality as a basis for the f-gas reports; and that means being independent from companies.

- Prior knowledge / expertise in interpretation of the data: Although others could in principle do data interpretation, EEA have an advantage in terms of prior experience (good efficiency). This might not be the case for an institute for which a one-off publication would not justify the effort / investment.

- Similarly, expertise with respect to understanding the F-Gas Regulation that is technical in nature and which would be a prerequisite with respect to supporting the reporting entities is limited to very few companies.

- Finally, BDR data at EU level is of service to EU Member States that collect data at national level (i.e. typically those with additional national measures on f-gases), allowing them to access company-level data and do cross-comparison of results. In the near future, the Commission and EEA will make use of F-gas BDR data to fulfil international reporting obligations under the Montreal Protocol at a regional rather than individual country basis, therefore reducing the burden for Member States (for more details see section 0).

10.6   Appendix D3 – Case Study EEA report on the application of the EU ETS

10.6.1   Introduction

Scope and subject matter

This case study focuses on the Application of the EU ETS technical reports prepared by the EEA during phase III of the EU ETS (from 2013-2016). The reason for selecting this as a case study is to assess whether and to what extent the EEA supported the Commission in the context of the Art. 21 reporting under Directive 2003/87 as amended. The case study thus focuses on the EEA's role in summarising and analysing the implementation of the existing EU ETS legislation based on the Member States national reporting according to Article 21; whether EU ETS data reported by EEA member countries and/or economic operators has been collected, processed QA'ed/QC'ed and disseminated by the EEA in an appropriate and timely manner, supporting the Commission (DG CLIMA) in its activities, and whether issues of non-harmonisation and resulting risks have been identified. The case study thus focuses on the EEA's support to the Commission regarding implementation of existing rules.

The EU Climate and Energy package covers a range of inter-linked pieces of legislation to help deliver the EU 2020 targets, including the EU Emission Trading System (EU ETS). The EU ETS is regulated by the EU ETS Directive (2003/87/EC) and is the EU's flagship as the world's largest cap-and-trade system for GHG emissions putting a cap at EU level on overall emissions from energy intensive industry sectors (more than 11 000 energy intensive installations and nearly 600 aircraft operators limited to flights within the European Economic Area). The EU ETS puts a price on carbon giving a financial value to each tonne of CO_2 saved, a price that is determined by the market in allowances. In total, the EU ETS covers around 45 % of EU GHG emissions[497]. For the EU ETS to be well-functioning and fit for purpose, the integrity of the system as a market-based mechanism needs to be protected and the scheme needs to be correctly implemented.

Article 21(1) of the EU ETS Directive requires the Member States to submit an annual report to the Commission on the application of the ETS directive, based on the Article 21 questionnaire in Implementing Decision 2014/166/EU. The questionnaire covers a number of topics related to the countries' implementation of the EU ETS. The reporting deadline for the Member States is 30 June every year.

Article 10(5) of the EU ETS Directive requires the Commission to monitor the functioning of the European carbon market and to submit, each year, a report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the functioning of the carbon market including implementation of the auctions, liquidity and volumes traded. At the same time, according to Article 21 (2), the Commission shall publish a report on the application of the EU ETS Directive on the basis of the national reports submitted by Member States. The annual report is to be published within 3 months of receiving the reports from the Member States.

The EEA provides a technical Article 21 report which serves as input to the Commission's reports on the implementation of the EU ETS Directive and on the functioning of the carbon market. The Commission's carbon market report is partially based on Article 21 data and refers to the EEA Article 21 reports provided by the Member States in terms of overview on coverage of activities, installations and aircraft operators, in terms of implemented or envisaged changes to national legislation, monitoring methodologies applied as well as organisational structure on EU ETS of each Member State.

The overall purpose of the technical Art. 21 report is to support the evaluation of the implementation of the EU ETS. Based on the Member State data, the purpose of the EEA's Article 21 report is to summarise and analyse the

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[497] All EU-28 are covered, as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

responses of the countries to the questionnaire and provide a synthesis of all the country reports on the implementation of the EU ETS in the given year and a comparison with the data from the previous years, where feasible.. The EEA's technical report building on the national reporting provides insight primarily into how the member countries fulfil their monitoring and implementation roles. Secondly, the Article 21 report can also give insight into areas where the implementation of the EU ETS could be further improved across the EU-28 and member countries or whether or not there are areas in which further guidance or support to Member States, for improved application of the EU ETS Directive, would be useful.

Description of the role of the EEA and Eionet

The EU ETS Directive is silent on the role of the EEA in terms of the Article 21 reporting. Also, Article 24 of the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation 525/2013/EU (MMR) only specifies the role of the EEA in terms of other types of greenhouse gas reporting.

The activities of the EEA in relation to the EU ETS Directive during the evaluation period were mandated by the Multiannual Work Programme (MAWP). In line with the four objectives of the MAWP SA1.3 on climate change mitigation and energy, the EEA assisted the Commission as appropriate in the data collection, monitoring and reporting on the application of the EU ETS Directive (2003/87/EC). The EEA supported the Commission with the preparation of the annual technical report, following Article 21(2) of the Directive[498], in line with the expected outputs from SA1.3.[499] [500] The reports were prepared by the EEA and its European Topic Centre for Air Pollution and Climate Change Mitigation (ETC/ACM).

The specific ETC/ACM contribution and input to the Application of the EU ETS report is further specified in yearly EEA–ETC/ACM Action Plans. The tasks included inter alia reporting on the compilation and analysis of Member State submissions, support with the update of the online reporting tool for Member State and member country reports, and reporting and analysing on the Member State reporting into the EEA technical report to be readily available for Eionet review.

The work on the Application of the EU ETS report started in 2014 and related closely in the initial stages with the development of the tool on Eionet's central data repository (CDR) for reporting. The task on the Article 21(2) reporting is closely related also with the other MAWP tasks on reporting of data under the EU ETS and on evaluation of climate mitigation policy.

The following table provides an overview of the EEA key tasks in the area of the Application of the EU ETS technical report, as well as the role of other involved actors, including the European Commission DG Climate Action (DG CLIMA) and Eionet.

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[498] The annual Article 21-reports are publicly available via the European Environment Agency's ReportNet system
[499] SA 1.2 on industrial pollution is indirectly relevant for this case study, as the EEA provides technical support to the Commission on developing reporting protocols and on streamlining the collection and reporting of industrial emissions data *inter alia* under the ETS with national GHG and air pollutant emission inventory reporting.
[500] It should be noted that from 2018, the EU ETS Article 21 report will no longer be published by the EEA.

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (specify if NRCs, NFPs)	Description of the role of ETCs (if any)	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)
Support to reporting requirements (task c)	Providing a reporting platform (Reportnet)	The EEA hosts Reportnet	None			
	Data handling for reporting by MS (QA, initial processing)	The EEA provides QA/QC of data provided by the MS annual reporting and assess MS submissions to the COMM on the application of existing rules, supported by the ETC/ACM.		The ETC/ACM assists the EEA in publishing data received under Art. 21(1) on EEA's data service, in data QA/QC and undertakes dialogue with countries on the reported data to improve data quality. The ETC also supports with remaining updates of the online reporting tool for member countries reports	Based on tasks and outputs laid down in the MAWP and AWPs, a gentlemen agreement based on exchange of letters at the level of Director Generals	
	Preparation of regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (e.g. annual reports on implementation)	The EEA supported the COMM with preparation of the annual technical report on the application of the EU ETS, cf. Article	The EEA Application of the EU ETS report is sent to Eionet (NRCs) for comments.	The ETC/ACM assists the EEA in carrying out the analysis for the application of	Ibid.	The COMM reports in the annual Carbon Market Report on the application of the EU ETS, cf. Article 21(2). The EC relates mainly with the Climate Change Committee (CCC) and related

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (specify if NRCs, NFPs)	Description of the role of ETCs (if any)	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)
		21(2) of the ETS Directive, in line with the expected outputs from SA1.3		the EU ETS report		working groups (mainly WGI and WG III) on ETS art. 21 matters.

Activities performed for the case study

The study team conducted a desk review covering the legislative framework, the key reports and documents from the EEA, the Commission and the Court of Auditors in this area, further supported by interviews with key stakeholders. Key reports and documents included:

- Analysis of the national responses under art. 21 of the EU ETS Directive in 2016 (EEA report No 4/2017)
- Analysis of the national responses under art. 21 of the EU ETS Directive in 2015 (EEA report No. 6/2016)
- Analysis of the national responses under art. 21 of the EU ETS Directive in 2014 (EEA Technical Report No 3/2015).
- The Integrity and Implementation of the EU ETS (Court of Auditors Special Report, 06/2015)
- Commission Implementing Decision 2014/166/EU on the questionnaire for reporting on the implementation of Directive 2003/87/EC
- Final Explanatory Note for the EU ETS Questionnaire for Phase III
- The MMR Regulation (525/2013/EU)
- Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Report on the functioning of the European carbon market, COM(2017) 48 final
- Carbon Market Report 2015, Climate action progress report, including the report on the functioning of the European carbon market and the report on the review of Directive 2009/31/EC on the geological storage of carbon dioxide, COM(2015) 576
- EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) data viewer
- MAWP 2014-2018 and related annual ETC/ACM Action Plans

10.6.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP

The EEA MAWP 2014-2018 contains a list of outputs under Strategic Area (SA) 1.3 on climate change mitigation and energy. One of these outputs, which is relevant to the scope of this case study, is "Support to the Commission with the preparation of the report on the application of the EU ETS Directive (as required under Article 21).

The EEA's technical Article 21 reports have been elaborated by the EEA each year in accordance with the planned schedule, and the reviewed documents and interview data confirms that the EEA delivered according to the objectives in terms of data collection, processing and analysis of data. The data was collected and processed by the EEA according to plan, based on Member States own annual Article 21 reporting to the Commission.

A key factor that previously made the EEA's timely delivery of QA'ed data difficult has been the Member States' delay in submissions of their national reports. This has previously led to criticism by the Court of Auditors.[501] However, this situation has improved in phase III of the EU ETS. The EEA is thus acknowledged by the Commission for establishing a structured data collection process with the countries.

The 2015 Court of Auditor report[502] raised criticism of the EU ETS; whether the scheme was managed adequately and its integrity as a market-based mechanism was sufficiently protected. The criticism focused on phase II of the EU ETS (2008-2012), thus prior to the focus of this evaluation, and focused also on issues in relation to the submission of Article 21 reports on the Member States implementation of the EU ETS directive, concluding that the Commission's monitoring of the level of harmonisation was too limited.

A number of important steps were taken by the Commission and the EEA during 2013-2016 for phase III to meet the Court's criticism and recommendations, e.g. relaunching the scope for Article 21 reports, ensuring the regular publishing of the reports, specifically addressing issues of non-harmonisation and resulting risks. These initiatives, e.g. the adoption of new Commission regulations as well as Commission implementing decision 2014/166/EU (questionnaire as well as guideline document, data repository to extract data automatically, user manual for the repository) have impacted positively on the EEA's work on the Art 21 data in phase III, providing a better framework for harmonised approaches and guidance to Member States on implementation and reporting.

Within the current evaluation period (2013-2016), interviews with Commission officials show that the Commission has been very satisfied with the efforts done by the EEA in this respect. The reports are found to provide useful information on the implementation of the EU ETS, for individual countries as well as across the Member States. Staff officials and management level have a clear perception that there has been good progress in improving Art. 21 data from the Member States and in making the Art. 21 reporting process more effective and the findings well-founded. The ETS report (EEA report No 4/2017) as well as interviews with both Commission and EEA staff show that, based on the improved guidance to the Member States by the Commission and the efforts made by the EEA in following up and consulting with the Member States on their reporting, Member States' reporting improved each year including in 2016 compared to previous years, however with a number of areas still open for improvements. Identified areas for improvement include *inter alia* insufficient submission of installation improvement reports, issues in relation to verification processes, reporting of aircrafts' biofuel use and MMR implementation by aircraft operators, and issues in relation to penalties and non-compliances.[503]

The interviews conducted shows that an important factor underpinning the high level of effectiveness relates to the independence of the EEA. The Commission acknowledges the EEA independence and neutrality as a positive feature that enabled the EEA (and the ETC) to engage in a follow-up dialogue with countries on their data as well as provide an independent analysis of the data in their report.

It should be mentioned though that some Member States have noted that the EEA has sometimes been slow in opening the system earlier (around 1 May) and would prefer to have a couple of months to populate it. Timing is of essence, due to the annual cycle on which Member States and member countries will have to report to the Commission by 31 June upon which the Commission has to synthesize the information.

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

The EEA's role and importance in the elaboration of the Article 21 reports and thus as input to the reporting on the *policy implementation and implementation of the existing rules* in the carbon market during the evaluation period was substantial. The analysis of the national Article 21 responses was a key output from the EEA primarily focusing on the monitoring and implementation role by Member States and member countries. Secondly,

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[501] The Integrity and Implementation of the EU ETS (Court of Auditors Special Report, 06/2015

[502] European Court of Auditors, Special Report No 06/2015

[503] EEA report No 4/2017

the EEA's report also provided key input to the Commission Carbon Market Reports (since 2012) on the functioning of the European carbon market, in particular on the administrative arrangements in the Member States and whether these can be considered effective or needs further improvements. As the EU ETS Article 21 report receives considerable attention from the broader carbon market, the data and analysis needed to be of highest quality and the data from document review and interviews show that the EEA has made a significant contribution to ensuring this. One of the key factors that contributed to this has been the close consultation between the EEA and the Commission before the publishing of data, which is considered essential by the EEA and the Commission. In practice, this consultation has mainly taken place through daily interaction and interpersonal relationship rather than through formalised structures.

The EEA has also provided relevant information to the Commission for further *policy development* of the EU ETS, albeit more indirectly. The reform and revision of the EU ETS as part of the Commission agenda on the resilient Energy Union, ensuring the robustness of the EU ETS and the ETS as a cost-effective driver for low-carbon investments, is based on the findings and lessons learned from the implementation of the previous three phases of the EU ETS, including the data provided in the annual Article 21 reports. EEA's data quality assurance, identification of implementation challenges and assessment of Member State performance have thus provided an important indirect contribution to the rules to be designed and applied in Phase 4 (2021-2030).[504] The Article 21 data and reports were also used for other purposes in the Commission's work, e.g. for assessment of the compliance system under the recent 2015 Evaluation of the ETS Directive, carried out within the project 'Support for the Review of the EU Emission Trading Scheme'[505]

The EU ETS data summarised and assessed under the Article 21 reports are closely linked to other outputs from the EEA, e.g. the annual Trends and Projections report (T&P reports). The data is also used in other policy areas, e.g. with industrial emissions data collection under the Large Combustion Plant Directive (2001/80/EC) and the Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU) as well as the E-PRTR (Pollutant Release and Transfer Register). It also links with the activities at international level to support the Commission in the context of UNFCCC reporting including the annual review of the EU inventory under the UNFCCC and the Protocol.

The results from the Article 21 reports, the Carbon Market Reports and the Trend and Projections report were used and reflected upon in the State of the Environment 2015 Report and Outlook in terms of state, trends and prospects. It thus informed not only the policy implementation for 2015-2020 but also the prospects for reaching the climate change targets for 2020, 2030 and 2050.

In conclusion, the EEA's role and support to the Commission on the EU ETS has been important in terms of analysing implementation of existing rules. The EEA support has furthermore had an important role in identifying room for improvements in the Member States data quality and also in identifying challenges to be addressed as part of the ongoing EU ETS reform, and in providing data and quality assurance also feeding into other policy areas.

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

EEA's work in relation to the Article 21 reports also supported need for more guidance to the Member States to ensure harmonised and streamlined reporting from the Member States. This led inter alia to the issuing of the Commission Implementing Decision 2014/166/EU providing a questionnaire for reporting on the application of the ETS Directive, which has provided better guidance to the Member States e.g. in the form of explanatory notes. Interviews as well as a review of the reports show that this had positive impacts at two levels: First, it provided for the EEA receiving information in a more coherent way thus enhancing the effectiveness of the reporting process as

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[504] COM (2015) 80 final

[505] Service contract No. 340201/2014/694083/SER/CLIMA.B.1. The review highlighted that very little information is publicly available on the functioning of the EU ETS compliance system or on how the MRVA system works in practice, with reference to the individual Member State reports pursuant to Article 21 and the EEA's summarising report of the results of the national reports.

well as the quality of information. Secondly, this led to better data and information for Member States' own policy decision making.

The EEA's compiling of Member State data and quality assurance work in relation to the Article 21 reports has also proven effective in providing overview of Member States' monitoring and reporting in relation to the Commission Monitoring and Reporting Regulation[506] applying to emissions and activity data occurring from 1 January 2012, and in relation to verification systems established in the Member States.

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

The EEA work summarising and analysing across the EU-28 and participating countries based on the national reports has been important in ensuring comparability across the Member States and participating countries and in pinpointing to specific difficulties in implementing the existing rules under the EU ETS. The EEA has also been effective when it comes to ensuring objectivity and comparability of information. This is further elaborated under EU Added Value (ch. 5).

Effectiveness in dissemination of environmental information

Individual Member State reports are available at ReportNet[507].

The EEA's technical report on the Application of the EU ETS is published at the EEA's website and is mainly targeted at the Commission in terms of (non-) compliance aspects as well as the Member State policy makers. The Article 21 Member State reports are referred to in the Carbon Market reports explaining the ETS published via CLIMA website. Third countries interested in setting up similar systems or performing similar systems, and other market experts working in the carbon market interviewed have been held are users of the reports as well. As the focus is primarily on whether the EU ETS has been implemented appropriately, the general public is thus not really a target group for the Article 21 reports as such.

The EEA disseminates the Article 21 reports mainly through its EEA website. Also, the EEA analytical report is disseminated by WG1 and WG 3 (emissions trading) of the EU Climate Change Committee.

In terms of broader media outreach and data on downloads of reports, in 2015 the Application of the EU ETS report was downloaded 861 times, tweeted 2724 times, and was received by subscribers to EEA notifications 1065 times.[508] Compared to 2015, the Application of the EU ETS report saw an increasing interest in 2016 through website visits (1885), subscribers to notifications (1381) and social media read mainly through twitter (17375)[509]. It can be noted that the EEA's own tracking of media coverage seems to catch less coverage than what is actually found in international media references and coverage (see under chapter 4.2 regarding relevance to other stakeholders). The report, the website and data products related to the EU ETS and related climate change mitigation products, e.g. the data viewer, are generally considered to be of a high quality among users and are also found to be relatively user friendly.

10.6.3   Coherence

Role and coordination mechanisms

As explained in Chapter 1, the Art 21 data and reporting work by the EEA has not been mandated in legislation but is based on the tasks and outputs laid down in the MAWP and AWPs, a gentlemen agreement based on exchange of letters at the level of Director Generals and a well-functioning day-to-day cooperation between the EEA and the Commission.

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[506] Commission Regulation No. 601/2012 on the monitoring and reporting of GHG emissions pursuant to Directive 2003/87/EC.

[507] http://rod.eionet.europa.eu/obligations/556/deliveries

[508] Based on information provided by the EEA Communication service

[509] Ibid.

The EIONET/NRCs are not performing an active role on this subject matter. As the Article 21 reporting is anchored directly with the relevant competent authorities in the Member States, and these report directly to the Commission, there is less need for EIONET on this matter. The involvement of EIONET is thus more historically related to its constituency. EIONET is consulted on the Article 21 reports, however the feedback from this is reported by the EEA to be limited, and the ExtraNet (non-EIONET groups) are found more responsive and interested in the topic.

Cooperation between the EEA and other EU bodies

Overall, there is found to be good coherence and synergies between the work carried out by the EEA and the related Commission work on the application of the EU ETS. The Commission Article 21(2) reporting in the carbon market report is compatible with the EEA technical report on the Application of the EU ETS summarising and analysing the member countries individual reports (albeit referring to the member countries own national reports as the data basis).

A continued matter has been the need for synergies in the messages provided by the EEA and the Commission on the well-functioning of the ET ETS, in order to send consolidated and well-balanced signals to the carbon market.

The EEA consults with the Commission before the launch of the technical Article 21 reports and related data. A number of instances have been reported to the evaluation team on examples where time pressure has led to unbalanced or 'less consolidated' messages by the EEA and the Commission. In these instances the Commission felt that the EEA was going beyond its mandate in terms of drawing conclusions on the policy choices by Member States, with the risk of sending confusing signals to the market. It is the evaluator's impression from the interviews held that more attention were put on these processes in the second half of the evaluation period, including from the respective communication departments, so that coordination issues are sufficiently checked and coordinated before press releases and publishing are made.

For the assessment of the robustness of the market and the certainty and accuracy in data, there is a continued need for an analytical report at a more detailed level that complements the Carbon Market Report and can form the basis for other Commission implementation and policy development initiatives.

10.6.4 Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

For phase III of the EU ETS, the reporting framework (questionnaires, guidelines, etc.) has been in place since 2013, thus there has been no major policy shift in the frameworks in this period (unlike in phase II). Changes and updates have thus been mainly of technical nature due to growing complexity and in order to present data in a transparent way, e.g. the data viewer had to be adjusted. Also when Croatia joined in 2013, it was a technical matter only of adding another country report.

The importance of the EEA work in phase III in further establishing a structured data collection process and quality assurance process in close interaction with Member States has however been major, leading to substantial progress and a certain consolidation in the Member States reporting in terms of completeness and level of details. Though the EEA is felt sometimes by Commission stakeholders to have provided a bit un-balanced messages on the analytical part with the risk of market misinterpretation, the overall relevance of the EEA's work is being highly acknowledged as important for the Article 21 reporting. The dis-integration of data collection done by the EEA and data analysis activities (the latter being outsourced) is seen by the Commission as a short term risk to the EU ETS monitoring and implementation process.

Relevance to other stakeholders

As mentioned, other regional emission trading systems have an interest in following the general performance of the EU ETS. EU ETS market experts and analysts working in the carbon market uses the EEA Article 21 reporting and Commission reporting in their own market analyses, discussing the current state of play of the EU ETS and providing independent contributions to the policy debate, to ensure that the EU ETS is "fit for purpose."

Examples of this include the Sandbag reports (https://sandbag.org.uk/reports/) and reports and commentaries by the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) aiming at supporting effective market-based trading systems for GHG emissions, such as their assessment of the EU Emission Trading Case Study. Online coverage is found e.g. by CarbonPulse[510] that reports through *CP Daily* to subscribers on findings from inter alia the Application of the EU ETS – analysis of national responses report, along with the Trends and Projections reports and annual EU GHG inventories, with a focus on the emissions trading markets and other methods of using taxes and market-based mechanisms to cut greenhouse gas output. Other examples include for instance the 2017 State of EU ETS report, a collaborative effort by the European Roundtable on Climate and Sustainable Transition (ERCST), the Wegener Centre, Nomisma Energia and the Institute for Climate Economics (I4CE). http://www.ictsd.org/themes/climate-and-energy/research/2017-state-of-the-eu-ets-report

10.6.5 EU value added

What has been the EU added value of the EEA?

Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthesised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET. This is summarised in the table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

- Crucial contribution
- Some contribution
- Little or no contribution

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the following benefits.	Justification
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	*Some to crucial (important) contribution*	
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	*Crucial contribution*	Data and resulting analyses report available to the Commission, Member States/member countries, carbon market, other regional emission trading schemes. Data crucial for compliance checking across the EU-28 and EEA-EFTA countries.
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	*Some contribution*	Annual Article 21 reporting cycle, with trends over time and which allows to pinpoint difficulties for the MS in compliance with the legislation.
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	*Some contribution*	Has contributed to pinpointing implementation challenges and need for more harmonised data
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	*Some contribution*	
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies	*Insignificant contribution*	As MS report through national reports to the Commission, the value of the report is mainly in summarising the status across the EU-28 and the EEA-EFTA countries, and in reporting on the common challenges.

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[510] https://carbon-pulse.com/category/eu-ets/

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the following benefits.	Justification
Coordination of activities between members states and preparation for the future	*Insignificant contribution*	
Provision of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken	*Insignificant contribution*	
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	*Some contribution (however future role of this report is not known)*	Clear contribution to other regional Emission Trading systems, carbon market analysts, etc.
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	*Crucial contribution* [511]	Crucial contribution for increased coherence and consistency. Efficiency gains from reoccurring activities in the form of QA/QC, dialogue on pitfalls and challenges in data and implementation. Recognised trend in terms of increasing data and report quality.
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	*Crucial contribution*	EEA has fulfilled the role of an impartial, trusted advisor. EU level monitoring is needed to monitor the progress of implementation across the EU, cannot be done through uncoordinated national action.

Source: Assessment by the study team

There is broad consensus among the interviewees that the tasks carried out by the EEA on the Article 21 reporting has provided EU added value in terms of streamlining reporting processes, monitoring in the form of collection and interpretation of data, QA/QC, and identification of non-compliance issues and pitfalls in the reporting. Furthermore, the work has been important in ensuring comparability across the Member States. In that sense, the EEA is providing a unique product not delivered by other institutions.

The EEA has fulfilled the role of an impartial, trusted advisor in this respect, also in the perspective of the Member States. EU level monitoring is needed to monitor the progress of implementation across the EU, and this activity cannot be done through uncoordinated national action. It is thus somewhat difficult to see or recommend other agencies or more consultancy-based institutions performing this role without risking loss of expertise and continuity in terms of interaction with Member States.

The yearly costs for the support by the ETC/ACM to this area were EUR 47.000 in 2015 and 35.000 EUR in 2016. For the EEA's analytical work on the Article 21 reports (not the data handling), the EEA has provided an estimate of EUR 25,000 and 68 person days per year for that part, as tentative estimates to the Commission for the part that will be outsourced in the future[512]. Noteworthy, these figures are heavily dependent on the efficiency and analytical capacity continuously built within the EEA over the years including the working liaisons established with the Member States. Thus, it is expected that outsourcing of activities to external consultants would imply a considerable rise in the costs until the same capacity is reached by the external expertise.

What has been the added value of engaging with member countries beyond the EU Member States?

As of phase II of the EU ETS (2008-2012), EEA-EFTA members Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway joined the EU ETS. The EEA report on the application of the EU ETS is thus also covering the performance of these countries.

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[511] Comments on the categorisation has pointed to the 'important' may be a more correct category-level for this theme, however this was not an option in the template

[512] Based on information provided by the EEA and DG CLIMA

This allows in particular member countries to draw on the EEA expertise and advice as part of the QA/QC processes, to consult on implementation of the legislation and to draw on EU Member State experiences and lessons learned when implementing the EU ETS and MMR legislation. The inclusion of the EEA-EFTA countries are thus ensuring the robustness of the EU ETS beyond the EU-28.

10.7   Appendix D4 – Case Study Freshwater

10.7.1 Abbreviations

AAR	Annual Activity Report
AIR	Annual Implementation Report
AWP	Annual Work Programme
BWD	Bathing Water Directive (2007/7/EC, replacing Directive 76/160/EEC)
DG ENV	Directorate General Environment
DG RTD	Directorate General Research and Innovation
DWD	Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
ETC	European Topic Centre
ETC/BD	European Topic Centre Biological Diversity
ETC/ICM	European Topic Centre on Inland, Coastal and Marine Waters
FD	Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)
JRC	Commission's Joint Research Centre
MAES	Monitoring and Assessment of Ecosystem Services
MAWP	Multiannual Work Programme
ND	Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)
NFP	National Focal Point
NRC	National Reference Centre
UWWT	Urban waste water treatment
UWWTD	Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)
WFD	Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

10.7.2 Introduction

Scope and subject matter of the case study

This case study is part of the '*Study to support the evaluation of the EEA and EIONET*' and evaluates the activities of the European Environment Agency (EEA) to support EU water legislation during the evaluation period. The EU has an articulated set of legislation to protect Europe's common water resources and ecosystems, and this case study focuses on six directives:

- The Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC), which provides an overarching approach to attain good water status across freshwater (and coastal) waters
- Floods Directive (FD, 2007/60/EC), establishing common approaches for flood risk management
- the Urban Waste Water Directive (UWWD, 91/271/EEC)
- the Bathing Water Directive (BWD, 2006/7/EC)
- the Nitrates Directive (ND, 91/676/EEC)
- The Drinking Water Directive (DWD, 98/83/EC))

EEA's work varied across the six directives[513]. It included: provision of a reporting platform, data handling and QA/QC, the production and dissemination of indicators and maps, and the preparation of analytical reports. This case study covers EEA work to support these directives as well as EEA's work overall for the strategic area (SA) 1.5 "Water management, resources and ecosystems" of the Agency's Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2018 (MAWP).

The following key documents were reviewed for this case study:

- The six directives cited above
- EEA's Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP)
- Annual Work Programmes for 2014, 2015 and 2016
- Annual Activity Report (AAR) for 2014 and Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAARs) for 2015 and 2016
- Action Plans for the European Topic Centre for Inland, Coastal and Marine Waters (ETC/ICM),

The document review was supplemented by a series of interviews, including with officials at EEA, ETC/ICM, the European Commission and Member States (members of the National Reference Centres, NRCs, for water[514]).

Description of the role of the EEA and Eionet in the case study area

In the evaluation period, EEA carried out a broad range of activities on freshwater, including work related to the six Directives addressed in this case study. Table 1-1 on the following page sets out EEA's work, that of ETC/ICM and the NRCs, as well as work by DG ENV and other bodies.

EEA supported reporting requirements for EU freshwater legislation (task c of Art. 2 in EEA's Founding Regulation), by providing a reporting platform for all six Directives addressed in this case study; carrying out data handling for the BWD and UWWTD (and the DWD before 2015); and publishing the annual report for the BWD as well as reports for the WFD (2012 and upcoming in 2018). The ETC/ICM supported EEA in data handling work for the BWD and UWWTD, while DG ENV carried out data handling and published reports for the Directives where EEA does not have this role. The work of EEA and ETC/ICM to support these six Directives was closely linked to work by DG ENV and is described further in section 2.2.2 below. While the NRCs do not directly contribute to reporting for EU freshwater directives, they are informed about the work of EEA and ETC/ICM – in particular at annual EIONET meetings – on reporting and assessment for the Directives and comment on draft reports (see section 3.2).

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[513] EEA's role for the DWD also changed over the evaluation period.

[514] There are three NRC groups – for water emissions, water quality and water quantity.

EEA collected, recorded and processed SoE data (task e)) on freshwater provided by the NRCs. EEA used this data, as well as data and information gathered for EU legislation and from other sources, to prepare the freshwater section of SoER (task h). ETC/ICM supported the work on SoE dataflows.

EEA managed data and information systems (task e), including WISE (Water Information System for Europe), a collaborative initiative with Commission services (WISE is discussed in section 2.1 below). EEA prepared indicators, maps and interactive maps based on data reported under EU legislation as well as SoE dataflows. The ETC/ICM supported EEA on both WISE and on indicator and map preparation.

In addition to SoER, EEA published other assessments on freshwater issues (task h), supported by ETC/ICM (EEA also drew on inputs from consultants and experts for some reports – see section 2.1 for further information).

EEA disseminated information on freshwater (task m) – specifically, its indicators, maps and reports – via its web site. The WISE web portal, managed by EEA, provided links to EEA's freshwater pages as well as related pages on the web sites of Commission services (DG ENV, DG RTD, JRC and Eurostat).

EEA has disseminated research results via selected freshwater publications. ETC/ICM has supported these publications and moreover the Topic Centre's members include research bodies.

Table 10-34   EEA roles on freshwater across key tasks in the Foundation Regulation

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of NRCs and NFPs	Description of the role of ETC/ICM	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)	Role of other EU bodies (e.g. EU Agencies)
Support to reporting requirements (task c)	Providing a reporting platform (Reportnet)	Reportnet is the reporting platform for all six freshwater Directives considered in this case study (BWD, DWD, Floods Directive, Nitrates Directive, UWWTD and WFD)					
	Data handling for reporting by MS (QA, initial processing)	EEA carried out initial data handling for the following freshwater Directives: • BWD • DWD (before 2015) • UWWTD		ETC/ICM supported data handling for the BWD, UWWTD		DG ENV carried out data handling for the DWD (from 2015), FD, ND and WFD (via contractors)	
	Preparation of regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (e.g. annual reports on implementation)	EEA published the annual BWD report and will publish the 2018 report on the State of Europe's Waters, focusing on the WFD	NRCs have reviewed draft reports	ETC/ICM drafted the annual BWD report and has supported the upcoming report on the State of Europe's waters	Only for the WFD: Art. 18(2)(b) refers to EEA reviews of water status	DG ENV publishes regular reports for five of the six Directives considered (BWD is the exception)	
Collect, record data for SOE (task e)		EEA collected, recorded and processed SoE data on freshwater	NRCs provided SoE data on freshwater	Support on data models and databases for SoE reporting			
Manage data and information systems (task e)	Production of indicators, maps or interactive maps	EEA prepared indicators, maps and indicators for data reported under EU legislation.	NRCs have discussed EEA plans for indicator and map preparation	Support for the preparation of water indicators		DG ENV chaired the WISE Steering Group and	

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of NRCs and NFPs	Description of the role of ETC/ICM	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)	Role of other EU bodies (e.g. EU Agencies)
	based on data reported under EU legislation	EEA managed the WISE web portal and WISE information systems to support water data. EEA helped to organise the WISE Steering Group meetings alongside DG ENV				JRC and Eurostat participated DG ENV has commissioned a SIIF map viewer for UWWT and other freshwater data	
	Production of indicators, maps or interactive maps based on SOE data collected and recorded	EEA prepares indicators, maps and indicators for SoE data	NRCs have reviewed draft indicators and maps	ETC/ICM prepares the core set of indicators related to water, and also works on indicators for WEI and water efficiency			
Publish SOER (task h)		SoE dataflows and other data and information gathered by EEA were used to prepare the freshwater quality section of SoER 2015					
Publish other assessments (task h)	Preparation of other reports: ad hoc, etc.	Publication of: • 2012 State of Europe's Waters • Annual BWD reports • Ad hoc reports on other freshwater issues	NRCs have reviewed draft reports	ETC/ICM drafted and otherwise contributed to EEA reports and published its own technical reports			

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of NRCs and NFPs	Description of the role of ETC/ICM	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)	Role of other EU bodies (e.g. EU Agencies)
	Evaluation of policies in the area of the case study (in line with the Better Regulation initiative)	No work in this area, though EEA data and analysis contributed to the European Commission's 2012 Fitness Check				2012 Fitness Check of freshwater legislation	
Dissemination of environmental information (task m)		EEA's web site published indicators, maps and reports on freshwater. EEA coordinated the WISE web site, which provides a gateway to web pages on freshwater at EEA and the European Commission (DG ENV, JRC and Eurostat).				Commission services (DG ENV, JRC, RTD and Eurostat) are on the WISE Steering Committee along with EEA	
Forecasting and mega-trends (task i)		EEA does not publish outlooks on freshwater issues				JRC prepares projections of water indicators	
Diffusion of results of environmental research (task o)		EEA publications have incorporated research results – e.g. 2016 Report on Floods risks and environmental vulnerability		Link via ETC members that are research institutions

Support to and drafting of EEA reports incorporating research results | | DG RTD funds freshwater research and disseminates their results

JRC carries out freshwater water research and disseminates results | |

10.7.3   Effectiveness

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP

EEA's Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) sets an overall objective for strategic area (SA) 1.5:

> 'To support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of water management, resources and ecosystems by means of data, information/indicators and assessments.'

The specific elements of the SA1.5 objective are to:

*   'collect, process, quality-assure, and disseminate relevant data underpinning freshwater related policies;'
*   'support countries with the reporting of data to the European Commission and the EEA;'
*   'further develop the Water Information System for Europe (WISE) so that it: better supports the implementation of water-related policies, links to marine policies, and accommodates changes in country reporting;'
*   'track progress towards — and provide outlooks for — the achievement of targets as defined in relevant EU legislation, including the objective of achieving good ecological status in Europe's water bodies;'
*   'assess the state of Europe's water resources and ecosystems and the effectiveness and co-benefits of policies and measures in these areas as well as in related environmental areas.'

The MAWP defines seven outputs to be fulfilled in the freshwater area in the period 2014-2018. Reference is made to the Appendix C of the Support Study Report, which presents an overview of these outputs and links them to the activities outlined in the EEA Annual Work Programmes (AWP) for 2014, 2015 and 2016 and the results presented in the EEA Annual Activity Report (AAR) 2014 and the Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAAR) 2015 and 2016.

The analysis identified several overall issues concerning these programming and reporting documents:

*   For SA1.5 (as for other parts of the MAWP), the specific objectives, performance indicators and outputs are not directly linked one to another
*   The seven outputs in the MAWP vary significantly: some focus on a single topic and others cover a wide range of activities, and there overlaps among the outputs
*   The MAWP does not list all the major EEA activities in the water sector: an example is the preparation of the annual Bathing Water Report
*   It is not always clear how EEA's annual activities on water fit with the MAWP's outputs: while the AWPs refer to the performance indicators for SA1.5, the activities set out in the AWPs do not always reference the outputs of the MAWP (as an example, the AWP 2016 lists two outputs for analysis of eutrophication – this topic can be related to one and perhaps more MAWP outputs, but the MAWP does not indicate the links[515])
*   In 2014, the tasks in the AWP and the results in the AAR do not fully correspond: the AAR does not provide information on all activities listed in the AWP (in contrast, activities in the AWPs and results in the CAARs for 2015 and 2016 do correspond)

The following paragraphs of this section provide an overview of the results by MAWP output (six of the seven outputs are covered – the seventh, organising EIONET workshops, is not included as it is not related to work on EU freshwater legislation). It should be noted that many of the activities themselves were carried out by the European Topic Centre for Inland, Coastal and Marine Waters (ETC/ICM), an EIONET body working under contract to EEA: ETC/ICM's role for each output is outlined.

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[515] It can be noted that the AWP 2015 indicates, for the floods report, that this is a contribution to the EEA climate change assessment in 2016; however, the MAWP, under SA1.4, on Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation does not refer to floods.

Output 1: Upgrade WISE to WISE 2.0

The Water Information System (WISE) is the EU's portal to information about European water related issues. The main WISE portal[516] is hosted by EEA, and is composed of four elements: Policy, Data and Tools, Modelling and Projects and Research. The term WISE extends beyond the portal itself to include data flows for Member State reporting, the databases holding water information and the visualisation of European water data and information. Consequently, EEA's work to improve WISE is closely related to its other outputs for SA1.5.

WISE was initially developed on the basis of an Implementation Plan for the period 2006-2010, agreed among EEA, DG Environment, DG Eurostat and the Joint Research Centre (JRC). It was launched in 2007. A Second Implementation Plan of WISE 2011-2015[517] sets out a series of improvements. EEA's MAWP 2014-2018 identifies as its first output the development of a 'WISE 2.0', building on the 2011-2015 WISE Implementation Plan. While the WISE Implementation Plans set out improvements to be made, no document has elaborated the concept of a 'WISE 2.0' as cited in the MAWP. As described in the MAWP, WISE 2.0 will 'establish an improved, consistent, common data structure for information pertaining to all water directives, enabling cross-cutting assessments of climate change, land use, and biodiversity'. The MAWP sets out a performance indicator: '…full operation of WISE 2.0 achieved, linking with BISE and Climate-ADAPT…'.

EEA carried out a series of improvements of WISE over the evaluation period[518]. These included developing a common approach to QA and to map viewers. Dataflows were harmonised with INSPIRE. A key result was the integration of WFD and SoE dataflows in a common spatial data reference set: interviewees at EEA, ETC/ICM and DG ENV all said that this had been a major task. ETC/ICM has supported several activities for WISE, including the development of the common spatial data set, of databases to support the core indicators on freshwater as well as of data reported for the BWD, DWD and UWWTD. The Topic Centre has also supported the development of GIS reference layers and interactive maps.

EEA's overall progress on WISE, however, was slow and the achievement of WISE 2.0 was not completed as planned. Delays can be seen across EEA's work programmes and activity reports for 2014 to 2016. EEA's Annual Work Programme for 2014 includes a specific objective, 'to prepare for and launch WISE 2.0', as well as a series of operational objectives related to WISE, and three performance indicators:

- WISE version 2.0 delivered – Q4
- Underpinning data sets published
- DG ENV and MS provided with relevant tools and services

The Annual Activity Report for 2014 states that '…upgrade of the information system WISE 2.0 developed as planned…'. This report does not, however, refer specifically to progress in terms of the specific or operational objectives or the performance indicators – and does not indicate whether WISE 2.0 was delivered.

EEA's AWP 2015 states, among its 'highlights for 2015': 'Finalising the upgrade to WISE 2.0…'. The Plan identifies, in its expected outputs: '…develop infrastructure for shared access, integrated assessments and efficient dissemination for all water data in preparation of the launch of WISE 2.0 in 2016', thus identifying a new target date. The Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2015 indicates that this output was completed, and in the highlights, the report states that: 'All technical developments, carried out in cooperation with… [DG ENV], are on track.'

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[516] http://water.europa.eu/info

[517] https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/1ff1bf3e-b6f0-438f-b74b-c6b0caf07744/WISE%20Implementation%20Plan_FINAL.pdf

[518] Among the improvements, EEA added a WISE marine component, though this is outside the scope of this case study.

The AWP 2016 refers to 'Closing the first phase of the restructuring and upgrading of WISE 2.0, in line with the start of the reporting under the WFD (deadline 22 March 2016) …. Start the second phase of WISE 2.0 which includes other water data flows from the industry directives….' The CAAR for that year reports: 'Partially done (Progress made but finalisation postponed until 2017 due to WISE Steering Committee postponed by EC to 2017)'. Consequently, WISE 2.0 was not completed by the end of the evaluation period.

Among the planned improvements to WISE that were not completed, it does not appear that links to BISE and Climate-ADAPT, among the elements set out in the MAWP, were achieved in the evaluation period. Not all Member States have supported SoE freshwater data at RBD level. Moreover, in the initial plans, the WISE portal was intended to cover all EU water data. The WISE web site contains a link to the Eurostat web site; however, plans to present Eurostat freshwater data via WISE have not been implemented during the evaluation period. According to interviews at Eurostat, IT compatibility problems have been an obstacle.

One issue is that different EU bodies working on WISE in part have not always had a common understanding on what WISE should be: the meetings of the WISE Steering Group have not always yielded consensus on the features the data portal. One interviewee in the Commission noted that WISE itself has been a vague concept without a clear structure – it brings together several elements, such as Reportnet, which are also used as broader tools within EEA. As noted above, no document specifically outlined a concept for 'WISE 2.0'.

A WISE Steering Group met regularly up to 2015. The Group is chaired by DG ENV and co-organised by DG ENV and EEA, with JRC and Eurostat also participating. It did not meet in 2016, as key participants focused efforts on reporting for the WFD[519]. Within EEA, a gap in a WISE staff position for part of the evaluation period created delays, according to an interview at DG ENV. The Second WISE Implementation Plan ran through 2015 and was not replaced by a follow-up plan before the end of the evaluation period.

The European Commission (DG ENV) has supported IT work on WISE and on reporting for the WFD and FD through consulting contracts that have been managed together with EEA. In the evaluation period, the following two consulting contracts were in place:

- Service contract for the development of tools and services for the water information system for Europe (WISE), awarded to Atkins Danmark A/S for 240,000 Euros/year (late 2011 to late 2014)

- Development of tools and services for the water information system for Europe (WISE) and the structured information and implementation framework (SIIF), awarded to Bilbomática S.A., 152,880 Euros/year (late 2014 to late 2017)

DG ENV and EEA have cooperated on the management of these contracts; however, according to interviews at both EEA and DG ENV, EEA has not always been able to provide sufficient human resources for this.

Output 2: Maintain and develop water data and indicators (including data-handling and reporting) and new data-handling for reporting streams for the UWWTD and DWD and possibly the Nitrates Directive

In 2014 and 2015, EEA carried out the activities set out in its AWPs: water data and information were prepared for SOER and the water indicators in EEA's core set were updated. EEA led a major effort to restructure SoE data flows to align with the WFD and provide reporting by River Basin Districts (RBDs).

In 2016, a further update of water indicators with revised SoE data flows and Directive data flows was only partially achieved due to delays in data provided by Member States.

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[519] The WISE Steering Group met again in 2017 and 2018. According to interviews in early 2018, the WISE Steering Group was at the time discussing a new plan for WISE drafted by EEA.

Although the AAR 2014 and CAARs 2015 and 2016 state that activities in this area were completed, DG Environment has raised concerns that some EEA map viewers for water data have been discontinued.

Regarding the Drinking Water Directive, the MAWP indicates among the outputs for SA 1.5: '…new data-handling and reporting streams under the UWWT and Drinking Water directives at the earliest date possible.' Moreover, the MAWP includes in the performance indicators '…additional data reporting flows (UWWTD, Drinking Water Directive) established in line with the SIIF developments…'.

The AWP 2014 includes an output for: 'Coordination of the reporting processes for the UWWTD and Drinking Water Directive'. In terms of outputs, the consolidated AAR 2014 reports that: 'An Eionet workshop… in June, allowed for further technical developments including the clean-up of a 20 year time series in all water databases and some business processes for the coverage of the Drinking Water Directive.'

In 2015, however, EEA unilaterally informed DG Environment that it would end data handling for the DWD (it can be noted that the AWP 2015 does not include an output on DWD data). DG ENV asked EEA to reverse this change, but in 2016 EEA confirmed that it would end its work on the DWD. According to interviews at EEA, resource constraints were among the reasons for this decision[520], together with an assessment that drinking water did not fully enter EEA's mandate related to the state of the environment. This change is not identified in EEA's Consolidated Annual Activity Reports for 2015 or 2016.

With regard to SoE indicators, EEA revised the structure of water data to be reported by NRCs to align with the Water Framework Directive, i.e. to be categorised by river basin district (RBD).

Output 3: Assessment of 2nd RBMPs and reports on status and pressures affecting Europe's waters

Member States were to prepare their second cycle of River Basin Management Plans by December 2015 and to report them by March 2016. The reporting was carried out via EEA's Reportnet.

DG ENV supported Member State reporting on the RBMPs (as well as MS reporting for the Floods Directives) via contracts for IT work: these contracts, financed by DG ENV, were jointly managed with EEA (see the previous page for details on the contracts).

From 2014, EEA was involved in preparations for its second assessment of Europe's waters, set out in the MAWP for 2018. Work in 2014 and 2015 included: integration with assessments for the nature directives and input to WFD reporting and guidance (2014)[521]; development of an assessment framework, a report on water economics (covering the costs of measures and their impacts) and an assessment on policy evaluation for water policies (2015)[522]. A key goal, according to interviews, was to improve the quality of data reported.

The CAAR 2016 reports that work under this output was completed for that year. However, reporting of Member State data was delayed, due in part to technical problems with the reporting infrastructure: Member States were due to deliver by March 2016, but reporting started only at the end of 2016. Problems included the late preparation and revisions of the reporting schema (reportedly due to handover in consulting contracts during the process). A further issue is that Member States encountered problems when uploading large datasets (notably for spatial data), due to capacity limitations of Reportnet.

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[520] EEA also commented in writing that WFD-related work took priority, which required allocating most resources to corresponding activities.

[521] EEA, Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2014

[522] EEA, Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) 2015

Output 4: Cross-assessments of the implementation of UWWTD, Nitrates Directive, and BWD (integrated assessment)

For this output, the MAWP refers to a time frame of outputs from 2015, with greater integration in subsequent years. The MAWP includes in its description of the output the following: 'This will start with combining aspects of the UWWTD and Nitrates Directives in the annual Bathing Water report, gradually working towards an integrated report…'

The Annual Work Programme for 2014 includes work for an integrated assessment of the 'Industry Directives', covering the BWD, DWD and UWWTD (it does not refer to the Nitrates Directives, which is cited in the MAWP). The AWP 2015 refers to an 'Industry Directives report 2014, covering the Bathing Water Directive (BWD), the Urban Waste-Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD), and the Drinking Water Directive (DWD)'. The AWP 2016 indicates as an expected output: 'Regular update on the Industry Directives report, covering: Bathing Water; Urban Waste Water Treatment; Drinking Water.'

EEA's annual reports provide some information on the results of the work planned. The CAAR 2014 does not refer to an assessment of the industry directives but does note that the bathing water report was published and that 'There are on-going reflections to better link this stand-alone product to the other water directives, particularly to information stemming from the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) (also known as UWWTD) and the Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC).'

The CAAR 2015 refers in a table to the AWP 2015 output for an 'Industry Directive report 2014' (as listed above), and in terms of outcomes it indicates: 'Done (Bathing water report 2014). Combined report to be finalised mid-2016.'

The CAAR 2016, in reference to the output above on the Industry Directive report, simply states 'Done'.

When looking at EEA's publications, the report on *European bathing water quality in 2014*, published in 2015, contains only one reference to waste water and no references to drinking water or the DWD. While it does not contain any references to nitrates pollution, it does refer to diffuse pollution from farms, including an example of measures addressing diffuse pollution to protect bathing waters in the United Kingdom[523].

The report on *European bathing water quality in 2015*, published in 2016, describes the UWWT Directive and discusses its role in improving bathing water quality, including via the presentation of several examples from Member States[524]. There is a single reference to the Drinking Water Directive but no analysis. This report does not refer to nitrates, but it does refer to diffuse pollution from farms (though in somewhat less detail than the previous year's report).

Consequently, with regard to the output in the MAWP, EEA's report on bathing water in 2014, published in 2015, does not combine 'aspects of the UWWTD' as per the MAWP. It refers to diffuse pollution from farms, though it does not refer directly to the Nitrates Directive. The following year's report includes analysis related to the UWWTD, thus addressing the MAWP output, and refers to diffuse pollution from farms, though again it does not refer to the Nitrates Directive.

Both the AWP 2015 and AWP 2016 refer to an integrated report that incorporates the DWD: reference to the DWD was not seen in the bathing water report for 2015 (indeed, drinking water issues are not as relevant to bathing water quality as issues related to urban and agricultural water pollution). An integrated report was published in December 2016: *European water policies and human health*[525], which – as indicated in its Executive Summary –

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[523] Box 4.2, p. 25 of the report
[524] See for example Box 1.1 on p. 12
[525] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/public-health-and-environmental-protection

focuses on the BWD, DWD and UWWTD. The report also refers to the Nitrates Directive, among others, and discusses potential impacts of nitrates pollution on human health – and more generally, the report highlights issues related to agricultural runoff. The ETC/ICM played a central role in preparing this report under EEA's direction[526].

Consequently, a key element of this output – the publication of an integrated report – was achieved. It appears that this output was somewhat delayed, a point confirmed in interviews: among the factors cited in interviews for the late completion of this work were delays in Member State reporting (e.g. for the DWD). While the MAWP refers to a report addressing the UWWTD, the BWD and the Nitrates Directive, the latter has a secondary role in the 2016 report.

Outputs 5 and 6: Work towards integrated assessments, including socio-economic aspects and environmental accounts, building on water-asset accounts and water balances. Develop indicators of water-related resource efficiency to support the EU Resource Efficiency Roadmap and the European semester process.

These outputs areas are linked and addressed together. Output 5 is intended to support for the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Waters, the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Climate Adaptation Strategy and the EU Resource Efficiency Roadmap.

In 2014, according to that year's AWP, focus was given to the work on water quantity, on issues around water use efficiency and on the eco-systemic aspects of the EU's Biodiversity Strategy 2020. Water related indicators were updated with a focus on the information required for SOER 2015. This work sought to address assessment needs for the Blueprint and the European Semester processes.

In the evaluation period, ETC/ICM supported work on water accounts and the water quantity indicator. The ETC also developed indicators of water efficiency the urban sector[527], first published in 2014, and for agriculture[528], first published in 2017. ETC/ICM contributed to an EEA technical report on *Performance of water utilities beyond compliance – Sharing knowledge bases to support environmental and resource-efficiency policies and technical improvements*[529].

Other outputs: EEA publications on freshwater

Over the evaluation period, EEA published a series of reports on freshwater issues[530]. Many of these reports were not indicated in the MAWP, and key among these has been the annual BWD report, noted above, which has been a long-standing, high-profile activity (see section 2.5 below)[531].

In total, EEA published nine freshwater reports in the period 2014 to 2016, following ten reports published in 2012 and 2013 (see Table 3-2): none of the reports published between 2014 and 2016 were cited in the MAWP except for the December 2016 report on water policies and human health (related to output 4 on cross-assessments). As shown in the table, many of these reports were based on work by ETC/ICM; others drew on work by external consultants and experts.

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[526] ETC/ICM also played a central role in preparing the bathing water reports under EEA's direction (based on interviews and the Annual Action Plans for the Topic Centre).

[527] A search of the EEA web site in mid-2017 found links to only one indicator: Emission intensity of the domestic sector in Europe, https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/emission-intensity-of-domestic-sector/assessment

[528] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/economic-water-productivity-of-irrigated-1/assessment

[529] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/performance-of-water-utilities-beyond-compliance

[530] EEA has also published indicator fact sheets: these are addressed in Section 2.4.

[531] Many of these reports were mentioned in EEA's Annual Work Programmes.

Table 10-35   EEA publications on freshwater, 2012 to 2016

Title and date	ETC/ICM contribution	Other contributors
European water policies and human health — Combining reported environmental information, EEA Report No 32/2016, November 2016.	✓	
Rivers and lakes in European cities, EEA Report No. 26/2016, October 2016.	✓	
European bathing water quality in 2015, EEA Report No. 9/2016, May 2016.	✓	
Flood risks and environmental vulnerability — Exploring the synergies between floodplain restoration, water policies and thematic policies, EEA Report No. 1/2016, January 2016.	✓	ETC/CCA
Water-retention potential of Europe's forests, EEA Technical Report No. 13/2016, September 2015.	✓	
European bathing water quality in 2014, EEA Report No. 1/2015, May 2015.	✓	
Public participation: contributing to better water management, EEA Report No 3/2014, October 2014.		Contractors
Performance of water utilities beyond compliance, EEA Technical Report No 5/2014, May 2014.	✓	Experts*
European bathing water quality in 2013, EEA Report No. 1/2014, May 2014.	✓	
Assessment of cost recovery through pricing of water, EEA Technical Report No 16/2013, September 2013.		Contractors
Results and lessons from implementing the Water Assets Accounts in the EEA area, EEA Technical Report No. 7/2013, May 2013.		Contractors
European bathing water quality in 2012, EEA Report No. 4/2013, May 2013.	✓	
Water resources in Europe in the context of vulnerability, EEA Report No 11/2012, November 2012.	✓	ETC/CC
European waters - current status and future challenges - a synthesis, EEA Report No. 9/2012, November 2012.	✓	
European waters - assessment of status and pressures, EEA Report No 8/2012, October 2012	✓	
Territorial cohesion and water management in Europe: the spatial perspective, EEA Technical Report No 4/2012, August 2012.		Contractors
EEA Catchments and Rivers Network System – ECRINS v1.1, EEA Technical Report No 7/2012, July 2012.		Contractors ETC/LUSI
European bathing water quality in 2011, EEA Report No 3/2012, May 2012.	✓	
Towards efficient use of water resources in Europe, EEA Report No 1/2012, March 2012.	✓	

Note: information on contributions taken from the acknowledgements pages of each report

In addition to contributions to EEA publications, ETC/ICM published 10 technical reports on freshwater over the evaluation period[532]. According to ETC/ICM, during the evaluation period there were occasionally questions whether a report should be published by EEA or ETC/ICM. From 2016, EEA has no longer published technical reports and has set a policy that ETC/ICM publications should be building blocks for EEA outputs.

Overview of key activities planned and status of their fulfilment.

EEA carried out a broad range of work on information systems, data flows, indicators, maps and assessments on freshwater in the evaluation period. When considering the outputs in the MAWP 2014-16, however, the achievement by 2016 was partial for some outputs (see Table 10-36).

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[532] The reports were published on the ETC/ICM web pages. Please see: http://icm.eionet.europa.eu/ETC_Reports

As described in the previous pages, the upgrade of WISE was only partially achieved. While EEA maintained and developed water data and indicators – and notably adapted its SoE dataflows to RBD scale, enhancing compatibility with the WFD – EEA stopped its work on the DWD, one of the Directives specifically cited in the MAWP. EEA's work for the second assessment of RBMPs was largely on track through 2016, but in that year EU Member States encountered problems uploading large datasets to Reportnet. Regarding cross-assessments of the EU freshwater directives, this was achieved via one integrated assessment and the inclusion of analysis of waste water treatment and agricultural impacts in the bathing water reports; however, some aspects, such as the Nitrates Directive, were not fully addressed.

Table 10-36   Achievement of MAWP outputs

MAWP output	Level of achievement	Comments
1. Upgrade WISE to WISE 2.0	Partial	Important progress made on aspects including spatial data framework, but not for all elements of WISE
2. Maintain and develop water data and indicators (including data-handling and reporting) and new data-handling for reporting streams for the UWWTD and DWD and possibly the Nitrates Directive	Partial	Maintenance of a broad array of water data and indicators EEA ended work on DWD Data handling for Nitrates Directive did not change
3. Assessment of 2nd RBMPs and reports on status and pressures affecting Europe's waters	Full	EEA work in 2014-16 largely on track, though Reportnet problems occurred in 2016 (main work to be completed in 2018)
4. Cross-assessments of the implementation of UWWTD, Nitrates Directive, and BWD (integrated assessment)	Nearly full	Bathing water reports have addressed the UWWTD and agricultural pollution (not directly the ND) A single report was published in 2016, covering the BWD, DWD and UWWT (the ND was covered but had a secondary role)
5 and 6. Work towards integrated assessments… building on water-asset accounts and water balances. Develop indicators of water-related resource efficiency	Nearly full	Work set out in AWPs largely completed

Key EEA outputs in 2014-16 – notably, the annual BWD reports and other publications on freshwater – were not specified in the SA1.5 outputs presented in the MAWP. Some of the publications in this period reflect work carried out under the previous MAWP. Many of these reports, though not specified in the MAWP, are identified in EEA's Annual Work Programmes.

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

This section discusses how the EEA is supporting 1) policy development, and 2) policy implementation.

Policy development

EEA's work has contributed to at least two policy development initiatives in the water sector in the evaluation period: the preparation of the *Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources* and the Fitness Check of Water Policy; and the formulation of an EU policy for water reuse under the Circular Economy Package.

The European Commission's ***Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources***[533], released at the end of 2012, aimed to strengthen the implementation of EU water legislation, the mainstreaming of EU water policy objectives and the inclusion of water quantity and efficiency issues in water policy. The *Blueprint* indicates EEA's 2012 report on the *State of Europe's Waters* among its main sources[534], and the Impact Assessment for the Blueprint cites EEA data in areas including flood and drought trends, land take and natural water retention measures and water pricing[535].

In an interview at the European Commission, however, several drawbacks were cited in terms of EEA's inputs to the *Blueprint*: gaps in water data, a lack of integration among data series (for example, data for different water statistics could not accessed together on a common platform). In this interview, EEA's input to the *Blueprint* was judged "somewhat important". (It should be noted that EEA's work for these 2012 policy documents started before 2012, i.e. before the evaluation period.)

EEA information and analysis have been cited in recent policy documents on **water reuse** (an area of that supports the Circular Economy Package). In June 2016, the EU Water Directors endorsed *Guidelines on Integrating Water Reuse into Water Planning and Management in the context of the WFD*: this document cites EEA indicators, an EEA report and an ETC/ICM report[536]. The 2016 Inception Impact Assessment for a possible new EU legislative instrument on *Minimum quality requirements for reused water in the EU* cites EEA when reporting that freshwater resources are under increasing stress[537].

> EEA provided *some contribution* to policy development. EEA provided information and analysis for the 2012 *Blueprint* and EEA's work was cited in documents for the Commission's recent initiative on water reuse. In neither case, however, was EEA's work reported to be crucial.

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[533] European Commission, A Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources, COM(2012) 673 final, 14 Nov. 2012.

[534] The Commission Staff Working Document (SWD(2012) 382 final/1) for the Blueprint cites other EEA reports, including *Towards efficient use of water resources in Europe* (EEA Report No 1/2012) as well as reports produced in earlier years.

[535] Commission Staff Working Document (SWD(2012) 382 final/2). The Impact Assessment cites EEA reports including *State of Europe's Waters* and *Territorial cohesion and water management in Europe: the spatial perspective* (EEA Technical report No 4/2012).

[536] EEA, Towards efficient use of water resources in Europe (Report No 1/2012); and ETC/ICM, Vulnerability to Water Scarcity and Drought in Europe (ETC/ICM Technical Report 3/2012)

[537] European Commission (DG ENV), Inception Impact Assessment: Minimum quality requirements for reused water in the EU (new EU legislation), 7 April 2016. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2017_env_006_water_reuse_instrument_en.pdf

Policy implementation

Freshwater Directives

As noted in sections 1.2 and 2.1, across all six water directives considered, EEA provides the platform for Member State reporting, Reportnet. Otherwise, however, EEA's role and the division of work between EEA and the European Commission varies considerably (see the table below). Moreover, EEA's role has varied across time, in particular for the DWD, as described below. ETC/ICM has supported EEA's work on several Directives, as shown in the table below.

Table 10-37   EEA, ETC and Commission roles in relation to freshwater Directives

Directive	EEA role	ETC/ICM	Commission role
BWD	Reportnet		
	Data handling	✓	
	Indicators and map viewer	✓	
	Annual report	✓	
DWD	Reportnet		
	Data handling (to 2015)	✓	Data handling (from 2015)
			Implementation report
FD	Reportnet		Data handling
	Map viewer		Implementation report
Nitrates Directive	Reportnet		Data handling
	Indicators and map viewers		Implementation report
UWWTD	Reportnet	✓	Implementation report
	Data handling	✓	Map viewer
	Indicators and map viewer		
WFD	Reportnet	✓	Data handling
	Indicators and map viewers		
	State of water report	✓	Implementation report

Sources: EEA web site; interviews with EEA and ETC/ICM; MAWP and AWPs

The role of EEA (with ETC/ICM) specifically on reporting is further detailed for each of the six Directives in the tables below, which identifies EEA's role for main recurring reporting requirement, based on information provided by DG ENV: EEA's role varies from 100%, for annual reporting under the BWD, to 25% for the Nitrates Directive among other reporting requirements.

Table 10-38   Share of EEA role for water reporting requirements

Directive	Reporting requirement	Inclusion in EEA data repository	Frequency of reporting	EEA role (2016)
WFD	Programmes of Measures	Yes	Every 6 yrs	25%
WFD	River Basin Management Plans	Yes	Every 6 yrs	50%

Directive	Reporting requirement	Inclusion in EEA data repository	Frequency of re-porting	EEA role (2016)
FD	Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk	Yes	Every 6 yrs	25%
FD	Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Maps	Yes	Every 6 yrs	25%
FD	Flood Risk Management Plans	Yes	Every 6 yrs	25%
BWD	Monitoring and Classification of Bathing Waters	Yes	Annual	100%
BWD	Identification of Bathing Areas	Yes	Annual	100%
UWWD	Information on monitoring results	Yes	Every 2 yrs	50%
UWWD	Situation report on the disposal of ur-ban waste water and sludge in MSs' ar-eas	Yes	Every 2 yrs	50%
UWWD	National implementation programmes	Yes	Every 2 yrs	25%
ND	Monitoring and Implementation report	Yes	Every 4 yrs	25%

Sources: Rayment et al, Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation: Final Report (published by the European Commission), Annex 1 (Excel), March 2017; and information provided by DG ENV

Notes: Only recurring reporting requirements are presented; ad hoc and on-off reporting requirements are not included. EEA role includes work by ETC/ICM.

For the **Bathing Water Directive**, EEA carries out all tasks leading to the preparation of the annual report on the EU's bathing water quality for the Directive (the report is jointly published by EEA and the Commission, which comments on the drafts). ETC/ICM supports EEA on data handling and on assessment reports, as well as the prep-aration of a map viewer.

For the **Drinking Water Directive**, the data model is prepared by DG ENV, and Member States submit data to Reportnet. As noted in section 2.1, EEA took over the reporting mechanism, data handling and QA – but in 2015, the Agency discontinued data handling and QA for this Directive. ETC/ICM supported the work on data handling until this was discontinued.

Officials at DG ENV have stated that this remains "an issue of major concern", underlining that EEA had agreed to undertake this work in the Annual Work Programme[538]. EEA's Annual Work Programme for 2015 refers to "addi-tional data-reporting flows (UWWTD, Drinking Water Directive)", though it does not specify if EEA's work would include data handling and QA.

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[538] In January 2018, the European Commission launched a recast of the Drinking Water Directive. Its proposal specifies a role for EEA in gathering MS data for and preparing a regular EU-wise report based on the data (p. 56, Art. 15). The proposal (p. 13) states that EEA will not need additional resources. 2017/0332 (COD), available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-drink/review_en.html

Interviews at EEA show that the rationale provided for this decision was lack of resources – including a need to provide sufficient resources to support EEA's work on the WFD – combined with an assessment by the EEA that drinking water did not fully enter EEA's mandate related to the state of the environment.

EEA provides Reportnet for Member State reporting on the **Floods Directive**; however, the Agency was not involved in further steps during the evaluation period, and the reporting schema are prepared by the European Commission via contractors. EEA published a map viewer[539] of areas of potentially significant flood risk under the Floods Directive in 2014. EEA has compiled a database of European past floods, based on MS reporting under the Floods Directive[540].

EEA is involved in other activities related to flood management, but interviews suggest that these do not strongly support the Commission's policy activities. For example, EEA holds a database on historical floods, but it is not linked to the FD reporting. In 2016, EEA produced a report on *Flood risks and environmental vulnerability — Exploring the synergies between floodplain restoration, water policies and thematic policies*[541] that was presented to Member State representatives in the Working Group on Floods under the Common Implementation Process coordinated by DG Environment; however, according to interviews the report is not seen as having had a strong impact on current policy work for the implementation of the Floods Directive. At the same time, EEA's AWP 2016 notes that this report is a 'contribution to preparing EEA climate change assessment in 2016'.

As noted in section 2.1, in the evaluation period Member States used EEA's Reportnet for their annual reporting on the **Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive**. (Until about 10 years ago, and thus prior to the evaluation period, the work was carried out by a contractor to the European Commission). The definition of the data model, however, is led by DG ENV. Data handling, QA and data analysis are still carried out by the European Commission via a contractor, which also supports the preparation of the regular implementation reports.

The EEA has developed a map viewer for the UWWTD[542]. Separately, DG Environment engaged a contractor to prepare a map viewer for this Directive, which was launched in 2017 (the Commission viewer was intended to support the SIIF approach[543]).

Under the **Nitrates Directive**, Member States report every four years on their monitoring results via Reportnet (water quality and Art. 10 report and Annex V of the ND). EEA sets up the reporting schema and carries out automatic QA/QC checks. DG Environment then undertakes a more specific QA and an assessment of data and information reported (using an external contractor) and prepares the report on the implementation of the Directive.

The most recent DG Environment report on the Nitrates Directive was published in 2013 and covered 2008-2011 data. The preparation of the next report is underway.

In addition, EEA gathers data via EIONET on nutrients pollution of waters for state of the environment reporting. The data collected under the Nitrates Directive focuses on pollution from agricultural areas in vulnerable zones and

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[539] http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/interactive/floods-directive-pfra-apsfr

[540] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/european-past-floods. Additional sources include data from the Dartmouth Flood Observatory, International Disaster Database and information provided by national authorities during consultation – see: https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/european-past-floods#tab-metadata.

[541] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/flood-risks-and-environmental-vulnerability

[542] https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/water-pollution/uwwtd/interactive-maps/urban-waste-water-treatment-maps

[543] Structured Implementation and Information Framework

Member State actions to address it. For EEA's SoE work, the focus is broader, on nitrates in a broad sample of water bodies; this work also addresses pollutants from non-agricultural sources is linked to EEA data on other pollutants, such as phosphorus.

EEA publishes two map viewers: one for the Directive[544] and the other using SoE data[545]. EEA also publishes a range of indicators and static maps based on SoE data. According to interviews, outputs from both reporting and SoE data flows are useful for DG Environment: for example, outputs based on EEA's SOER data inform broader policy discussions, as they indicate that major actions are still needed to reach water quality objectives.

For the **Water Framework Directive**, Member States use Reportnet to submit their reporting on water conditions and on their River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) on a six-year cycle[546]. EEA has supported the Commission on the preparation of reporting schema and related guidance. An interview at DG ENV indicated that cooperation with EEA on the 2016 reporting for the WFD, including the development of guidance, had been good.

One problem, noted in the Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting[547] and in interviews, is that EEA's Reportnet had difficulties handling some of the large files that Member States needed to upload, including spatial information for the WFD.

EEA has used WFD reporting, together with state of the environment reporting, in its State of the Environment Report. The SOER and SOE data are used as background information by the Commission in its work on the WFD. However, according to a Commission representative, their value was hampered by a lack of a common spatial framework with data reported under the WFD (as noted in section 2.1, under its MAWP output for WISE, EEA was revising its SOE data framework to be compatible with WFD data over the course of the evaluation period).

Other EEA outputs have been useful for DG Environment in work on the WFD, according to interviews: this includes EEA's work on the watch list of substances of possible concern under the WFD, although it has been delayed due to external factors, as well as EEA work on water quantity indicators, including the water exploitation index.

Environmental Implementation Reviews

The Environmental Implementation Reviews, carried out by DG Environment, are intended to support the objectives of EU environmental policy and legislation by identifying the main implementation gaps in each Member State, as a basis for a structured, bilateral dialogues on achievement and challenges. In 2017, the Commission published country reports for all Member States.

All Member State reports published in 2017 draw on EEA for information on bathing water quality, including EEA data and the 2016 report on *European bathing water quality in 2015*. The reports cite data on implementation of other freshwater directives – including the Nitrates Directive, UWWTD and WFD – for which, as described above, EEA provided Reportnet and data handling[548].

Agri-environmental indicators and CAP context indicators

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[544] http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/interactive/soe-wfd/nitrate-directive-viewer

[545] http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/explore-interactive-maps/nitrate-in-rivers

[546] In addition, Member States report annually under the Directive on Environmental Quality Standards (2008/105/EC), which is linked to the WFD, on the result of monitoring of substances included in the Watch List.

[547] Rayment et al, Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation: Final Report (published by the European Commission), Annex 1 (Excel), March 2017

[548] European Commission, The EU Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) package – Communication: The EU Environmental Implementation Review: Common Challenges and How to Combine Efforts to Deliver Better Results – Annex: Guidance to Member States: Suggested Actions on Better Environmental Implementation – 28 Country reports (SWDs), 2017. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm

Three water indicators form part of the 28 Agri-environmental indicators (AEIs) that track the integration of environmental concerns into the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP): water abstraction, water quality/nitrate pollution and water quality/pesticide pollution[549]. Some of the AEIs are incorporated in DG AGRI's **CAP context indicators**, which "form part of the monitoring and evaluation framework for the CAP 2014-2020 and are used in rural development programmes for a comprehensive overall description of the current situation of the programming area"[550]: EEA data on nitrates were included in the CAP context indicator on water quality for 2014, 2015 and 2016; however, the CAP context indicator on water abstraction uses data from Eurostat and does not cite EEA[551].

In interviews at DG AGRI, it was stated that the DG had requested detailed data from EEA, for example on groundwater pollution and pesticides at regional level, to support policy development and implementation – however, during the implementation period EEA did not have data available to meet the requests.

Overview of EEA importance to policy implementation

EEA has contributed to the implementation of all six water directives considered here. However, EEA ended activities in relation to the DWD – a decision considered by the Commission to be an issue of major concern. EEA has played a crucial contribution in terms of providing Reportnet as a platform for Member State reporting.

In addition to reporting for the directives, EEA's manages SoE data flows on freshwater. These provide a broader perspective that was useful for DG Environment during the evaluation period. Moreover, EEA has worked to increase compatibility between SoE and directive data.

Over the evaluation period, EEA and ETC have produced a range of reports on water issues outside of those directly mandated by directives (see section 2.1.). In interviews carried out so far, officials in the water units at DG Environment said that they had been consulted informally to provide comments on drafts of EEA reports before publication[552]. However, they did not cite any of these reports as being important for their work on the implementation or development of EU water legislation and policy. In the mini-survey of Commission officials, EEA's 2015 Technical Report on the *Water-retention potential of Europe's forests*[553] was identified by one response as being among EEA products not directly relevant to EU policy. A related comment stated that "Water is an area where some more synergies could be found".

> Overall, EEA has provided between *some* contribution to policy implementation. Its role has varied across EU Directives.
>
> For the WFD, EEA's role has been crucial in supporting reporting and data handling as well as in the preparation of an overview report on the state of Europe's waters. Similarly, for the Bathing Water Directive, carries out all tasks leading to the preparation of the annual report on the EU's bathing water quality.
>
> For the Floods Directive, Nitrates Directive and UWWT Directive, EEA in particular supports reporting and prepares data and map viewers for the FD and

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[549] The development and maintenance of the agri-environment indicators is a joint effort involving DG AGRI, DG ENV, Eurostat, JRC, EEA and DG SANTE.

[550] European Commission (DG AGRI), CAP context indicators, web page consulted in January 2018: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-indicators/context_en

[551] Indicator sheets available from: European Commission (DG AGRI), CAP context indicators, web page consulted in January 2018: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-indicators/context_en

[552] In an interview, officials working on water issues at DG ENV said that drafts of an EEA report on renewable energy had contained conclusions on hydropower that did not properly integrate the Water Framework Directive.

[553] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/water-retention-potential-of-forests

UWWTD. For the DWD, EEA ended its role and thus did not make the contribution expected by DG ENV.

EEA has provided some contribution to the EIR process and has worked with Commission services in the development and preparation of the agri-environmental indicators, some of which are used as CAP context indicators.

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

Member countries have used EEA freshwater data and indicators to compare national performance with that of other European countries and to provide a European context for national data. For example, France used EEA data to present information on national and EU implementation of the Water Framework Directive in a 2012 brief[554]. The UK government provided links to EEA data in a 2017 publication on environmental indicators[555]. The Irish Environmental Protection Agency provides a link to EEA's freshwater pages as part of its own pages on water[556].

A focus group of NRC officials working on water reported that in general national institutions mainly use national data – however, EEA data and reports on water are used for comparisons with other countries. One of the NRC officials reported using EEA results in presentations and referring to EEA reports on practices in other countries for inspiration on good practices and possible policy developments. Some of the officials stated that EEA could have undertaken more sophisticated analyses of data: one comment was that the state-of-the-environment data on water was not fully utilised; another was that EEA's reporting on the Bathing Water Directive was somewhat restricted, responding only to Commission needs.

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

This assessment focuses on three freshwater indicators that were part of EEA's core set during the evaluation period. Indicator CSI 024 on waste water treatment covers EU Member States; while the other two indicators, CSI 018 on the use of freshwater resources and CSI 019 on Oxygen-consuming substances in rivers seek to cover all EEA member countries as well as cooperating countries.

Table 10-39   EEA Core Set indicators on freshwater

Title and hyperlink	Publication date	Previous version	Data sources
IND-15-3n / CSI-024 / WAT 005 Urban waste water treatment[557]	Jan. 2013ª		Waterbase/UWWTD (DG ENV) Eurostat (water statistics)
IND-11-en / CSI 018 / WAT 001	Mar. 2016	Dec. 2010	Waterbase/EEA Waterbase/UWWTD (DG

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[554] Commissariat Général au Développement Durable, Mise en oeuvre de la directive cadre sur l'eau : position de la France en Europe en 2009, Chiffres & statistiques no. 367, November 2012 (available at: http://www.statistiques.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/fileadmin/documents/Produits_editoriaux/Publications/Chiffres_et_statistiques/2012/chiffres-stats367-directive-cadre-eau2009-novembre2012.pdf). Curiously, this document does not cite EEA itself but the IT contractor that prepared the data for EEA and DG ENV.

[555] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, England Natural Environment Indicators, November 2017 (available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669769/England_Natural_Environment_Indicators_2017_Revised.pdf)

[556] Environmental Protection Agency, Water, available at: http://www.epa.ie/irelandsenvironment/water/

[557] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/urban-waste-water-treatment/urban-waste-water-treatment-assessment-3

Use of freshwater resources[558]			ENV) Eurostat (pop. stats) JRC (LISFLOOD model)
IND-20-en / CSI 019 / WAT 002 Oxygen consuming substances in rivers[559]	Feb. 2015	Oct. 2012	Waterbase/EEA

Note: [a] updated in Dec. 2017, when an interactive map on UWWT with detailed data was released

The indicator on urban waste water treatment, CSI 024, is based on data from the European Commission: reporting for the UWWT Directive (as noted above, MS report via Reportnet but DG ENV carries out data handling and the publication of reports); and reporting to Eurostat. The indicator page provides an overview of the methodology and links to data. Countries are presented in large geographical groupings – North, Central, South, East and Southeast Europe – and thus at a higher level of aggregation than the original Eurostat data, though individual country results are also provided. The web page provides a link to the complete Waterbase data on UWWT. Alongside the indicator, EEA also published interactive maps on UWWT: in the evaluation period, a map was released in January 2014.[560]

Indicator CSI 018 on the use of freshwater is also referred to as the water exploitation index (WEI+). Results are available by river basin district (RBD), as defined under the WFD. This indicator brings together data from EEA sources (via EIONET) and Commission sources, as well as meteorological data from the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI). JRC's LISFLOOD model is used to cover gaps in data. Definitions and an overview of the methodology and a brief overview of data set uncertainties are presented on the indicator page, along with links to references and the detailed underlying data sets used.

Indicator CSI 019, Oxygen consuming substances in rivers, provides overall trends for Europe and for 20 EEA countries plus Macedonia: the indicator, published in early 2015, shows data from 1992 to 2012. The data is also available by regional groups: East, North, Southeast and West Europe. An overview of the methodology is provided, along with information on uncertainties, and a link is provided to the detailed underlying Waterbase dataset.

In sum, the indicator pages clearly present the sources used and provide an overview of the methodology and assumptions employed. Moreover, for CSI 018 on the Use of freshwater and CSI 019 on Oxygen consuming substances, links are provided to underlying data. The range of sources highlights EEA's ongoing cooperation with Commission services[561].

Effectiveness in dissemination of environmental information

Use of reports and services

Launch events for EEA freshwater reports

Over the evaluation period, EEA organised launch events for several freshwater publications.

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[558] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/use-of-freshwater-resources-2/assessment-1

[559] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/oxygen-consuming-substances-in-rivers/oxygen-consuming-substances-in-rivers-7

[560] This map replaced an earlier (2011) version, and was itself archived and replaced in 2017.

[561] It can also be noted that all three indicators are cited in the EEA's recent report on *European waters: Assessment of status and pressures 2018*, supporting the assessment of the second river basin management plans under the WFD: one figure, for example, shows results from indicator CSI 019. Figure 6.5 on p. 66 of the report.

A recurring, event is the launch of the annual bathing water report, organised jointly with DG ENV, including via a joint press release[562]. Through 2013, joint press conferences were held as well[563].

Other launch activities include the following[564]:

- Presentation of the 2012 report, *Towards efficient use of water resources in Europe*[565], at the Sixth World Water Forum in Marseille by EEA's Executive Director.
- Launch of the report on *Water resources in Europe in the context of vulnerability*[566] at the first Pan-EU Drought Dialogue Forum (Cyprus, 30 October 2012)[567].
- Presentation of the report *on European waters - assessment of status and pressures*[568] at the European Parliament Water Group on 14 November 2012.
- Presentation of four EEA water reports at the EU Water Blueprint Conference[569], organised by the European Commission in Nicosia, Cyprus, in November 2012.
- Launch of the report on *Public participation: contributing to better water management* at the European River Restoration Conference, 27-29 October 2014[570], where EEA also contributed to a session on the role of the WFD in river restoration.
- The report on *Rivers and lakes in European cities*[571], was presented at the 2016 Conference on Cities and Water[572], organised by the City of Bratislava.

EEA's work on water was also presented at other events, including the European Conference of the International Water Association (Oslo, May 2014); the fourth EU Water Conference (Brussels, March 2015); the China-Europe Water Platform (Copenhagen, May 2015); the Informal meeting of EU Environment/Climate Ministers on water management in the context of climate change impacts in Europe (Bratislava, July 2016); and the EurEau Congress (Copenhagen, September 2016).

Downloads and ranking of EEA freshwater publications

EEA's annual report on Bathing Water Quality in Europe has consistently rated among the Agency's "bestsellers". In 2016, there were 8839 downloads of the report (which covered bathing water quality in the previous year, 2015)[573]. In 2015, there were 5265 downloads of the bathing water report (covering 2014), the second-highest of all EEA reports for that year; EEA identified 999 media quotations, the third-highest of its reports that year (with

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[562] See for example: European Commission, Forty years of investments have improved Europe's bathing water, press release. Available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1759_en.htm

[563] Information provided by EEA

[564] Information provided by EEA

[565] EEA, Towards efficient use of water resources in Europe, EEA Report No. 1/2012, available at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/towards-efficient-use-of-water

[566] EEA, Water resources in Europe in the context of vulnerability, EEA Report No. 11/2012, available at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/water-resources-and-vulnerability

[567] http://www.eu-drought.org/Nicosiameetingday1

[568] EEA, European waters - assessment of status and pressures, EEA Report No. 8/2012, available at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/european-waters-assessment-2012. The report on European waters - current status and future challenges - a synthesis (No. 9/2012) was also presented at the meeting.

[569] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/water/waterblueprint_cyprus/index.html

[570] http://www.ecrr.org/newsevents/errc2014/tabid/3704/default.aspx

[571] EEA, Rivers and lakes in European cities, Report No. 26/2016, available at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/rivers-and-lakes-in-cities

[572] http://www.bratislava.sk/vismo/dokumenty2.asp?id_org=700000&p1=11050194&id=11051830

[573] EEA, EEA Bestseller list 2016 – outreach performance of 2016 publications (internal memorandum SMT(2017)16), 12 June 2017

SOER 2015 the highest), and EEA's internal ranking (based on a combination of web views, media notifications and social media) put the report on bathing water quality in 2015 at fourth place[574].

Among other EEA publications on water, the report on *Flood risks and environmental vulnerability* received just over 3200 web page visits in 2016, placing it among the top 20 EEA publications for that year, while the report on *Rivers and lakes in European cities* received almost 1500[575]. Not all EEA publications received such high attention: the 2015 technical report on the Water-retention potential of Europe's forests was downloaded only 464 times that year[576].

In the NGO focus group, participants cited the 2012 report on the State of Europe's Waters among the EEA materials they most frequently used. They said that this and other EEA reports, data and maps on freshwater are used to prepare and cross-reference NGO work. In an interview with the agricultural sector (COPA-COGECA), EEA's reports on water were also cited as being of value.

Survey results

The Open Public Consultation asked about the use of WISE, as did EEA's 2017 online user survey.

In EEA's 2017 online user survey[577], 26% of respondents said that they used WISE (the survey received about 730 responses, indicating that about 190 answered the questions on WISE). Among those who used WISE, 66% rated its usefulness high and 21% rated it very high[578]. In the largest user group among the respondents, policy makers at national level, 69% rated the usefulness of WISE high; a further 14% rated it very high. The second largest user group, scientists, gave a higher overall score: 61% rated the usefulness of WISE high and 30%, very high. Other user groups had smaller responses, though it can be noted that about two-thirds of NGO respondents rated the usefulness of WISE high, and one-third, very high.

Figure 10-4   OPC results: overall frequency of the use of information in WISE
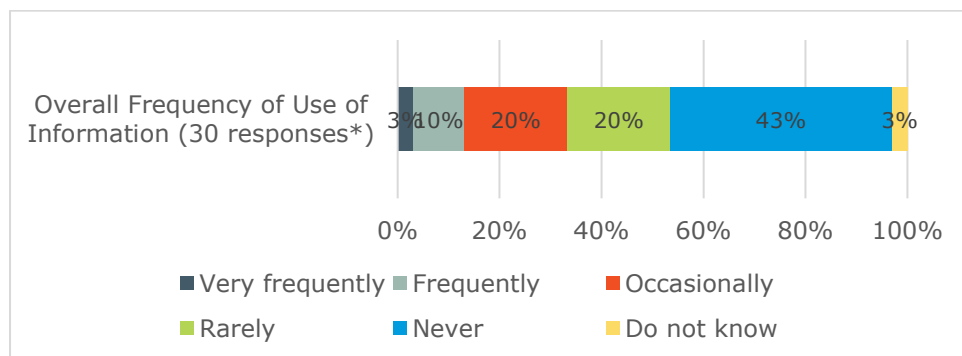
Note: 30 respondents. See text for definitions of the answer options.

The Open Public Consultation reached a small group of respondents, of which 30 indicated their use of WISE, along with other EEA data sources (see Figure 10-4). Of these, only 13% of respondents indicated that they used

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[574] EEA, EEA Bestseller list 2015 – an attempt to rate outreach performance and measure production costs based on the 2015 publication plan (internal memorandum), 9 September 2016

[575] EEA, EEA Bestseller list 2016 – outreach performance of 2016 publications (internal memorandum SMT(2017)16), 12 June 2017

[576] EEA, EEA Bestseller list 2015 – an attempt to rate outreach performance and measure production costs based on the 2015 publication plan (internal memorandum), 9 September 2016

[577] In mid-2017, EEA carried out an online survey of the subscribers to its online email service. The report for this survey notes that the subscribers may have a positive bias towards EEA products compared to all online users.

[578] Pomilio Blumm, Survey of EEA's product categories 2017: Overview and results (draft report v1.1), 2017

WISE very frequently (10+ times a year) or frequently (4-9 times a year); a further 40% indicated that they used occasionally (1-3 times a year) or rarely (<1 times a year)[579].

OPC Respondents were also asked about the accessibility of WISE and about the quality of its information (see Figure 10-5 below). Only a small number of respondents, 16 people, answered these questions and of these between 25% and 31% responded "do not know".

Regarding accessibility, over 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that information is provided in a format that is easy to use and in a language that they understand. About 50% of respondents indicated that the website is easy to use to access information, and just under 60% said that the information is easy to access.

Figure 10-5   OPC results: judgements on the information in WISE
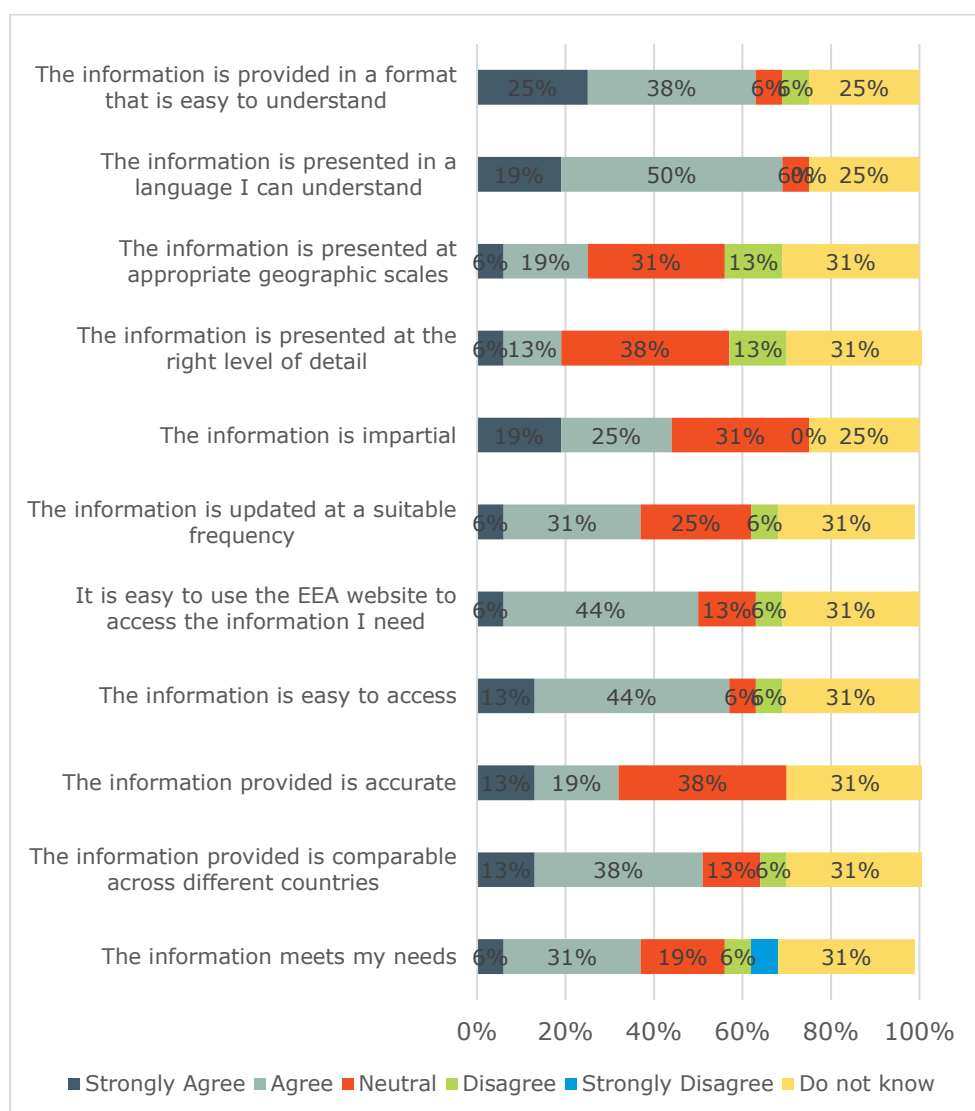
Note: 16 respondents

In terms of the quality of the data, just over 50% agreed or strongly agreed that the information provided is comparable across countries. On other questions, however, WISE received lower scores. Just under 45% agreed or strongly that information was impartial; 32% agreed or strongly agreed that the information is impartial; only 25% agreed or strongly agreed that it was presented at appropriate geographic scales and under only 19% that it is presented at the right level of detail. When asked if WISE met their needs, 31% agreed and a further 6%

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[579] Out of 30 respondents who completed the questions on sources of information.

strongly agreed. Across all the questions, WISE received fewer positive responses than many other sources of information, such as Climate-ADAPT.

In sum, the respondents to this survey gave fairly high scores to the usefulness of WISE data; however, some of the scores on the data itself, including geographic scale and accuracy, are rather low. Overall, however, few respondents provided survey information on WISE, limiting the value of these results.

Web-site assessment

A review was carried out of EEA main pages on freshwater in early 2018, together with a review of one interactive map and one indicator.

EEA's main page provides a link to an initial **web page** on water and the marine environment[580], available in 26 European languages: the pages on water are thus easy to access.

From the initial page, a button entitled "more" leads to a further page, again in 26 languages, with an introduction to water issues, EU policies and EEA activities as well as external links. Separately, the initial page leads to six short pages introducing freshwater issues (water pollution, status and monitoring, water management) plus one long page on Europe's seas and coasts: these pages, however, are in English only. They in turn lead to further sub-pages on more specific topics (e.g. the page on water pollution leads to pages on point sources, diffuse sources and prevention strategies). All these pages provide introductory information – however, the relationship among them is not clear. Moreover, the pages on specific topics do not lead to further EEA information: for example, the page on the floods does not provide a link to EEA's flood maps[581]. The initial water and marine page also leads to EEA's 'catalogue' of news, articles, publications and data and maps. In sum, a wealth of information is available, but the architecture is not clear, nor navigation between these pages.

With regard specifically to the user friendliness of navigation, the freshwater pages have navigation bars at both the right and top of the pages leading to categories outside freshwater. Navigation among the various introductory pages and sub-pages, however, is not clear. Moreover, it is not always easy to find specific material: for example, when clicking on the "data and maps" from the initial page on water and the marine environment, links were provided to 13 items, only a small share of EEA's outputs. For bathing water, two links appeared: the first to a graphic[582] illustrating bathing water quality scores for 2016; and the second to a graph[583] on bathing water quality in the EU in 2011-14 (consequently out of date). No link appeared to EEA's interactive map on bathing water quality[584], which shows results for all reporting sites. This map can be found by making a targeted search via the link to the "data centre", or a search for "bathing water map". EEA's web site provides a wealth of indicators, maps, publications and underlying data on freshwater – it does not provide a clear navigation system.

In terms of visual presentation, the initial and introductory pages use mainly text and some photographs or graphics. The information is presented clearly in a clear and open layout. Nonetheless, the approach is not fully up to date. In fact, while some of the introductory pages and sub-pages have been updated in 2017, others date to 2008.

The first item that comes up when "data and maps" were selected from the initial EEA page on water and the marine environment is an interactive figure showing the Water intensity of crop production[585]. This is in fact an extract from EEA's page for the indicator by the same name[586], which is the second item that is provided from when

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[580] https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water

[581] https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/water-resources/floods

[582] https://www.eea.europa.eu/media/infographics/excellent-water-quality-at-most-2/view

[583] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/figures/bathing-water-quality-in-the-6

[584] http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/interactive/bathing/state-of-bathing-waters

[585] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/daviz/water-intensity-of-crop-production#tab-used-in-indicators

[586] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/economic-water-productivity-of-irrigated-1/assessment

"data and maps" are selected from the initial page on water and the marine environment. The sub-page provides data by country in a simple, interactive bar graph: the user can choose data by year and by country.

Key methodological information, however, is found on **the indicator page**. While the visual appearance of the figure is clear, the indicator page contains extensive information without clear navigation: it is likely a written publication on a lengthy web page. Moreover, the fact that there are two pages with the same title is not user friendly – indeed, only those experienced in the logic of the EEA web site would find the main indicator page from the interactive figure that appears first on the list.

EEA's **interactive map** on bathing water[587], when initially opened, provides an overview by country, with a single bar for each showing the share of sites by water quality. At a more detailed scale, however, a point is shown for each bathing water site. These points are colour-coded by bathing water quality status, and by clicking on a point, a pop-up box shows bathing water quality status for all years available. The map thus provides detailed, location-specific data. Its visual appearance is not always appealing: the bar graphs at the highest level appear destined for policy makers rather than the public, and the instructions also are written for a policy audience.

These three examples provide a basis for overall ratings of the freshwater information on EEA's web site. It should be noted that the freshwater pages provide information for a range of audiences, from introductory pages for the public to detailed datasets for researchers, and it is difficult to address these different audiences in a single web site. In addition, these examples were reviewed in early 2018, and thus do not necessarily reflect the situation in the evaluation period[588].

	Rating	Comments
Accessibility (easy to find)	Moderate	Easy to find main water and marine page from EEA home page.
User friendliness (easy to navigate)	Low	Navigation within the water pages – and in general, information on water available on the EEA web site – is not clear. Information can be found through targeted searches.
Visual appearance (easy to understand)	Moderate	Text, figures and maps are for the most part easy to understand. The overall approach, however, is somewhat out of date and appears to be geared to a policy and technical audience rather than the broad public.

10.7.4 Coherence

Cooperation between the EEA/EIONET and other EU bodies

Cooperation with Commission services

The MAWP and the Annual Work Programmes provided a framework for EEA activities, and DG Environment provided comments on drafts of the MAWP and AWPs via its representative on the EEA Management Board. However, in interviews, officials working on the freshwater directives at DG Environment said that these programming documents did not provide sufficient details on EEA's work on water, nor the appropriate context for coordination.

For WISE, the Steering Group discusses tasks and roles: the Group was chaired by DG Environment (unit C1) with support from EEA. Participation included other units in DG Environment (C2 for UWWTD, DWD and BWD and D1

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[587] http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/interactive/bathing/state-of-bathing-waters. The current version of this map was published in May 2016 and updated in July 2017.

[588] While many of EEA's older pages remain accessible online, some functions, such as the interactive elements of map viewers, no longer work.

for ND), plus JRC, Eurostat and EEA. The Steering Group met about once a year in the period from 2012 to 2015 but did not meet in 2016: according to an interview at DG ENV, key participants focused their attention instead on preparations for WFD reporting. According to several interviews, the participation of JRC and Eurostat in the Steering Group has not been strong.

EEA had many links to DG ENV in its work on freshwater, and the following paragraphs focus on their coordination. Eurostat also worked on freshwater data and indicators, and this bilateral coordination is addressed in the next section. EEA cooperation with JRC has mainly occurred within the WISE Steering Group and in other meetings. Interviews did not find examples of coordination on freshwater issues with other DGs, such as DG AGRI.

Coordination with DG Environment

Few documents, formal or informal, were used to coordinate work between DG ENV and EEA in the evaluation period. DG ENV provided comments on EEA's Freshwater Roadmap for 2015-18, outlining the DG's priorities in this period: the Roadmap, however, was an internal working document for EEA and ETC/ICM. For EEA's work on the assessments of the WFD and FD, EEA and DG ENV developed an informal concept note: discussion of the draft helped to identify and address potential overlaps, according to an interview at DG ENV.

Interviews at DG Environment and EEA indicated that informal interpersonal connections have been the main form of coordination. During the evaluation period, this occurred mainly on a directive basis: for each directive, there was a contact person at EEA responsible for organising the reporting cycle who was in contact with counterparts working on the directive at DG ENV.

DG ENV and EEA jointly managed the IT contracts that provided IT support for WISE: the main mechanism was to hold regular, joint teleconferences, often weekly, with the contractor. As noted in section 2.2, EEA did not always have sufficient human resources for management of this contract. In addition, DG ENV occasionally provided input to EEA's own IT support contracts.

There have been difficulties in at least two areas of cooperation between EEA and DG ENV. As noted above (see section 2.2), EEA decided in 2015 to end work on data analysis for the DWD. For officials interviewed in DG ENV, this was "an issue of major concern". For the UWWT Directive, both EEA and DG ENV prepared separate map viewers, which are currently in place (second half of 2018) for Member State implementation of the Directive (see section 3.1.2 below).

There were missed synergies: as noted in section 2.1, some of EEA's publications on freshwater could have had stronger links to work at DG ENV.

Over the evaluation period, EEA and DG ENV held occasional meetings on freshwater work, including at Director level. Since 2016, DG ENV, EEA and JRC have held regular meetings at head of unit level to agree on priorities for work: interviews at both DG ENV and EEA indicated that relations were becoming more formalised.

Coordination with Eurostat

Although EEA and Eurostat do not have a formal agreement in place, the agreement on Environmental Data Centres, under which EEA holds the data centre for water, is considered in place.

In October 2013, the Director General of Eurostat and the Executive Director of EEA reached an informal agreement on joint indicators work – however, according to Eurostat interviews, there has not been significant follow-up cooperation under this agreement.

According to an interview with Eurostat, Eurostat and EEA officials regularly participated together in working groups:

- Eurostat regularly participated in the WISE Steering Group, along with EEA, DG ENV and JRC

- EEA usually attended meetings of the Eurostat Working Group on Water Statistics, which met annually (more recently, every two years)

- Eurostat has frequently participated in freshwater meetings organized by EEA, including EIONET meetings

At an informal level, there were regular working contacts between Eurostat and EEA, in particular in the period when they worked together on harmonising data collection on water use; however, the two bodies each continued to publish a water exploitation index (see the box below). Working relations have always been good, but contacts have become less frequent: this is determined by the work programmes of the two bodies (and is also linked also to budget constraints on both sides).

Freshwater use and the water exploitation index

Both Eurostat and EEA collect data on freshwater use. Eurostat does so via the OECD/Eurostat Questionnaire, which goes to statistical offices. EEA collects data via the EIONET NRCs. EEA collects data on freshwater use at finer resolution than the OECD/Eurostat approach, including at river basin district level rather than national level and at least quarterly rather than annual frequency.

For 2010 and 2012, there was an effort to harmonise the two data-gathering initiatives: EEA adapted some of its data definitions to fit those in the OECD/Eurostat Question-naire; plus, it was agreed that EEA data would be used to "pre-fill" the OECD/Eurostat Questionnaire, to avoid having Member States fill out the information twice. The prac-tice of pre-filling was not continued in 2014 and 2016: both Eurostat and EEA found that this form of cooperation involved a high workload – one reason is that their IT sys-tems were not compatible. According to Eurostat, Some MS statistical offices indicated that they would have preferred to keep the harmonised approach, but others said that they preferred ending it; among these, some raised questions about the quality of EEA's data.

Eurostat[589] and EEA[590] separately published indicators for the Water Exploitation Index (WEI). Under the original versions, Eurostat presented groundwater and surface water in addition to total freshwater, while EEA considered total freshwater use. DG ENV led a working group to improve the index (leading to the EEA's WEI+): this included a dis-tinction between water used and returned to the environment (e.g. as for cooling wa-ter).

The two indicators at present contain somewhat different parameters: as indicated above, EEA provides data on a quarterly basis and at the level of river basin districts. Data can be visualised on a map. In contrast, Eurostat data is available on an annual basis by MS. The EEA table allows a choice of specific datasets, such as precipitation, outflows to the sea and recharges to aquifers.

Coordination with JRC

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[589] European Commission (Eurostat), Water: Water Exploitation Index, Water Productivity, web page consulted January 2018: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/environmental-data-centre-on-natural-resources/resource-effi-ciency-indicators/resource-efficiency-scoreboard/dashboard-indicators/water

[590] EEA, Use of freshwater resources, web page consulted January 2018: https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/use-of-freshwater-resources-2/assessment-2

JRC's work on freshwater includes scenario analysis and modelling, an area where EEA was not active, as well as scientific assessment on chemicals and water.

JRC used data provided by EEA and ETC/ICM for several activities, including support to DG ENV on the Bathing Water Directive and the UWWT Directive. For JRC's work on intercalibration for the Water Framework Directive, ETC/ICM provided data on ecological status reported under the Water Framework Directive. JRC collaborated with EEA on water pressure indicators under the Water Framework Directive: JRC's modelling filled gaps in data collected by EEA from Member States. JRC's modelling of water data, which included forward-looking scenario analysis, used EEA data – for example on water abstraction – and also filled in gaps in EEA data[591].

In addition, JRC cooperated with EEA on the preparation of the chapter on freshwater in SOER 2015 and provided input to EEA reports on freshwater.

Key overlaps and synergies

EEA and DG ENV worked closely together on WISE, on the freshwater Directives and on other activities – in most cases, this relationship exploited synergies, with EEA's data gathering and analysis supporting the implementation of EU legislation. In aligning SoE dataflows on freshwater on RBD scales, EEA sought to strengthen synergies with EU legislation: as noted above, the Fitness Check of Reporting and Monitoring states that this avoided duplication and ensured complementarity[592].

EEA and DG ENV also cooperated in the framework of the Environmental Knowledge Community (EKC). EEA has led the EKC project entitled WILOP on planetary boundaries for resource issues and their implications at European level; officials at DG Environment working on nitrates have been involved in this project.

Overlaps included the development of separate map viewers for the UWWTD by EEA and DG Environment (see the box below).

Map viewers for the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive

As noted in section 2, both EEA[593] and DG Environment[594] (via a contractor) have produced map viewers for this Directive. Both map viewers are based on data reported by Member States under the Directive and show data reported for individual agglomerations and treatment plants – and indicating compliance for treatment plants. The EEA map viewer shows sensitive areas designated under the Directive; this layer does not appear to be found in the DG ENV map viewer. The DG ENV map viewer provides layers showing Natura 2000 sites as well as bathing water sites, as well as data on biological oxygen demand and other parameters in rivers (taken from EEA SoE datasets). A further difference is that the EEA map viewer provides a single page for all Member States, while for the DG ENV viewer, detailed data (e.g. on individual agglomerations and treatment plants) are found on national maps available on separate web pages. The DG ENV map viewer indicates that it has been prepared as part of the DG's Structured Implementation and Information Framework (SIIF) concept. Moreover, it indicates that it is a 'Beta version' and 'inconsistencies… will be corrected during the next reporting exercise'.

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[591] EEA includes JRC among the sources for its indicator, Use of freshwater resources: https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/use-of-freshwater-resources-2/assessment-2

[592] European Commission, Fitness Check of Reporting and Monitoring of EU Environment Policy (accompanying the document Actions to Streamline Environmental Reporting), SWD(2017) 230 final, p. 97

[593] https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/water-pollution/uwwtd/interactive-maps/urban-waste-water-treatment-maps

[594] http://uwwtd.oieau.fr/

DG ENV's web pages on the UWWTD provide links to both map viewers[595].

In terms of other Commission services, an overlap in work was also seen in terms of EEA and Eurostat's separate work on the water exploitation index.

The interviews also suggest that synergies between EEA and Commission services could have been stronger during the evaluation period: as indicated in section 2.2, some EEA publications and outputs were not directly used by DG ENV, for example. Other examples of missed synergies are seen for WISE: for example, the WISE web site does not contain a link to JRC's water portal[596], which provides projections for water indicators.

Factors influencing coordination between EEA and Commission services

EEA worked with Commission services on a broad range of freshwater activities in the evaluation period. In most areas, such as support to the BWD, ND and WFD, coordination overall worked well – though as noted in section 2.2.2, EEA's role in terms support to reporting and assessment varies across these directives. For the BWD and ND, EEA has essentially continued its roles vis-à-vis reporting that were in place before the evaluation period. While this has been the case also for the WFD, EEA and DG ENV devoted significant efforts, together and with ETC/ICM and external contractors, to update reporting methods for the second cycle of RBMPs.

For the DWD and the UWWTD, as described above, there were overlaps and missed synergies. EEA's decision to end work on the DWD in 2015 represented, according to officials interviewed at DG ENV, a "serious breakdown" in cooperation.

The information gathered has indicated several possible factors hindering cooperation between EEA and DG Environment in the evaluation period. Interviews at DG ENV and EEA noted the following: changes in personnel, in particular at DG ENV; the split in responsibility for EU water directives across three units in DG ENV; and a lack of clarity in the delineation of the roles of EEA and the Commission (including DG ENV).

Further factors may relate to the lack of a legislative mandate for EEA's work on reporting for EU freshwater legislation: this is seen only for the WFD (as shown in Table 1-1 above). (While EEA does not have a legislative mandate for its work on the BWD and ND, its roles for these two Directives have nonetheless been stable since before the evaluation period.)

During the evaluation period, EEA and DG ENV did not develop regular, mutually agreed plans for work in the sector[597]; this is seen in other areas (described for example in the nature case study), where it is also used to strengthen cooperation with other Commission services such as JRC.

Towards the end of the evaluation period, DG Environment and other Commission services were working to strengthen their coordination on water issues with EEA. In both 2016 and 2017, two coordination meetings were held, bringing together EEA, DG Environment, JRC and Eurostat. According to interviews, DG Environment intended to prepare a roadmap for EEA's freshwater work, to be agreed with the Agency, following the successful experience for the nature directives.

Cooperation with bodies in member countries

Cooperation with committees and working groups coordinated by DG ENV and CLIMA

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[595] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-urbanwaste/index_en.html (accessed in July 2018). At the time of access, a link to the DG ENV viewer was provided under 'latest news' at the top of the page and a link to the previous EEA map viewer at the bottom of the page.

[596] See: http://water.jrc.ec.europa.eu/waterportal

[597] The WISE Implementation Plan for 2011-2015 was prepared before the implementation period.

While NRCs are responsible for SoE dataflows, committees and working groups convened by DG Environment under EU water legislation discuss and oversee reporting issues for these directives. According to an interview at EEA, the two groups differ as many NRC members come from environmental agencies, while national experts to the working groups organised by DG ENV often come from ministries; however, the situation varies across Member States and some national institutions send participants to both sides.

EEA and DG Environment supported coordination by attending meetings on both sides. For example, EEA regularly attended working groups under the Common Implementation Strategy for the WFD, and EEA has co-chaired WG DIS (data information systems), which focuses on reporting, together with DG Environment. The ETC/ICM participated in working group meetings when relevant: these has included expert groups of the BWD and UWWTD (and until 2015, also for the DWD); and meetings of the CIS process for the WFD and FD.

DG ENV attended yearly EIONET freshwater meetings and informed members of the ETC/ICM and the NRCs about key issues regarding reporting for EU freshwater legislation. For example, at the 2013 EIONET Freshwater Workshop, the agenda included discussion of lessons learned from reporting on the first cycle of river basin management plans under the WFD[598]. At the 2015 EIONET Freshwater Workshop[599], DG ENV presented an overview of the WFD reporting process for the second cycle, and at the 2016 Workshop[600], DG ENV discussed plans for the WFD and FD assessments. Also at the 2016 Workshop, EEA presented that year's BWD report as well as the upcoming report on health and the BWD, DWD and UWWTD. The EIONET freshwater meetings have also discussed actions to strengthen compatibility between SoE dataflows and those for the WFD, including the shift to SoE reporting on an RBD basis. Thus, while NRCs are not involved in reporting for EU freshwater legislation, they follow the work of DG ENV, EEA and ETC/ICM in this area.

The work of the two sides has become more closely linked in other ways[601]. This report, prepared to support implementation for the WFD, is mainly based on information reported under the directive rather than SoE data reported via the NRCs. On the one hand, this discussion indicates stronger coordination; on the other hand, it brings NRCs closer to policy discussions – and this raises possible overlaps between NRC work and that under the committees and working groups convened under the Directives.

Another aspect of coordination is seen in the WISE Technical Group, which worked alongside the WISE Steering Group and met about twice a year during the evaluation period. This group involved Member State experts, who were invited via the WG DIS.

In an interview, EEA freshwater officials said that they had encouraged NRC members to strengthen cooperation with their counterparts who participate in committees and groups convened by DG Environment. DG ENV officials said in an interview that they encouraged CIS working group members to cooperate with NRCs. According to both interviews, while cooperation has improved, the situation varies across Member States, with coordination already in place in some but in others a lack of contact between NRC members and representatives to the committees and expert groups.

A focus group discussion with four NRC officials working on water reported that in the evaluation period, both sides – NRCs and WG DIS (as well as other working groups under the CIS) – were willing to communicate and have had active exchange of information: in contrast, a decade ago the two groups had little interaction. At the same time, the focus group felt that there was now some confusion in the roles of the two groups, as their work can overlap (for example, discussing the EEA report on the State of European Waters). Moreover, an overview of dataflows – those for the State of the Environment, via NRCs, those for EU water Directives and those for the SDGs – was

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[598] EEA, 2013 Freshwater EIONET workshop – Water data flows: quality – structure – purpose (19-20 September 2013, Copenhagen), MINUTES v.1.0 – FINAL
[599] EEA, Freshwater Eionet Workshop 2015 (18-19 June 2015, EEA, Copenhagen): Final Minutes
[600] EEA, Freshwater Eionet Workshop 2016 (7-8 June 2016, EEA, Copenhagen): Final Minutes
[601] For example, an NRC meeting in June 2017 discussed EEA's upcoming report on the State of Europe's Waters.

lacking; and NRCs did not have a clear picture about the use of the different dataflows in policy development or implementation.

In contrast, according to an interview at DG ENV, there is not an overlap between the NRCs and the CIS groups, first as they have different mandates – with the NRCs focusing on SoE reporting; and second due to cooperation between DG ENV and EEA, including participation in CIS and EIONET meetings, to ensure coordination.

10.7.5 Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

A large share of EEA's work on freshwater in the evaluation period was linked to EU legislation and policy, in particular its support for the freshwater Directives.

One key development in EU policy over the evaluation period was the 2012 *Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources*: to support its implementation, EEA expanded its work on water accounts, water use and water efficiency to respond to the Blueprint, which placed new emphasis on water quantity issues. The *7th Environmental Action Programme*[602], published in 2014, moreover emphasises resource efficiency in the water sector, including the development of methodologies for the measurement of resource efficiency in the water sector – EEA's work on water efficiency addresses this policy priority.

Indicators and reports prepared by EEA on water reuse (with the support of ETC/ICM) have to some extent supported DG ENV's policy development in this area (see section 2.2.1), such as the DG's 2016 *Guidelines on Integrating Water Reuse into Water Planning and Management in the context of the WFD*.

Relevance in relation to technological development

Over the evaluation period, EEA developed IT tools for the collection and dissemination of freshwater data. The European Commission's Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting identified WISE as an initiative that "contributed significantly to… modernising reporting"[603]. While WISE was launched in 2007, before the evaluation period, the Fitness Check highlights among its actions the streamlining with EEA's State of the Environment Reporting to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity, an activity undertaken in this period (see Output 1 under Section 1).

Nonetheless, as noted above, EEA also encountered technical problems in 2016 with Reportnet when Member States tried to upload large data files for the WFD.

10.7.6 EU value added

What has been the EU added value of the EEA?

Benefits

Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthesised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET on freshwater. This is summarised in the table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

- Crucial contribution
- Some contribution
- Little or no contribution

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[602] Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/action-programme/

[603] European Commission, Fitness Check of Reporting and Monitoring of EU Environment Policy (accompanying the document Actions to Streamline Environmental Reporting), SWD(2017) 230 final, pp. 8 and 97

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the following benefits	Explanation
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	Crucial contribution	EEA gathers cross-country SoE data as well as data reported for EU Directives
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	Some to crucial contribution	EEA provides crucial data and information for some freshwater directives, notably the BWD and WFD, but a less important role for other Directives.
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	Some contribution	EEA published a series of EU-wide assessments in the evaluation period, including the 2012 report on the State of the Europe's Waters. Their value for EU policy making has varied.
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	Some contribution	EEA has provided standardised tools and methods for the collection of comparable SoE data and has contributed to tools and methods for some EU freshwater Directives.
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	Some contribution	The NRCs provide forums for the exchange of knowledge and best practice. In parallel, the committees and working groups under DG ENV, including the CIS process for the WFD and FD, provide key forums for exchange of knowledge and best practice at EU level.
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies	Crucial contribution	EEA's Reportnet has provided a platform for reporting for nearly all EU freshwater legislation, and EEA's work reduces reporting burdens in general, according to the 2017 Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting.
Coordination of activities between member states and preparation for the future	Some contribution	EEA's work on the WFD supports cooperation among MS on this central piece of EU water legislation, including on actions strengthen its implementation.
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	Not relevant	
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and	Some contribution	A long-term partnership is evident in several key areas,

Benefit	Extent to which the tasks have provided the following benefits	Explanation
consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)		including WISE, SoE data, WFD and BWD: here EEA has provided a crucial contribution. EEA also has in place a long-term partnership with NRCs for freshwater. In other areas, EEA has had less contribution – notably, the partnership on DWD ended.
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	Crucial contribution	DG ENV and NRC officials, as well as NGO representatives, highlighted independence as a key benefit.

Source: Elaborated by the support study

The most important benefits of EEA's work on freshwater are:

- Cross-country data allows benchmarking of countries against each other
- High-quality data and information on freshwater issues that supports EU policy (in particular for the WFD): EEA brings together and maintains a broad range of water data across Europe
- Reportnet provides a common platform for reporting, now well-known for Member States and the Commission, reducing the burden of reporting and associated costs
- The Agency itself provides an impartial and trusted entity that provides independent data

EEA and ETC/ICM provide a range of further benefits – for example, their long-standing expertise on freshwater issues: The level of expertise of staff at EEA and ETC/ICM is an important support for DG Environment's work on water policy. The ETC provides flexibility to address new issues without losing continuity.

Other areas have provided less added value. For example, interviews at DG ENV questioned the value of EEA reports based largely on information from sources outside EEA, without the use of data that the Agency has collected or managed: it was felt that such EEA work has not provided significant added value over the work of consultants or other experts.

It could be possible to organise some of EEA's activities through other mechanisms: notably, DG ENV carries out data handling and assessment of data for several freshwater Directives and took over this work for the DWD when EEA stopped its support for this Directive. DG ENV carries out such work through consulting contracts, which brings potential disadvantages compared to the EEA: lack of continuity and accumulation of expertise; and less assurance that data is regarded as impartial and comparable by key stakeholders such as NGOs.

In several interviews at DG Environment, it was noted that many of EEA's tasks on freshwater could be theoretically be carried out by other institutions. For the Commission to carry them out with present staffing levels would imply outsourcing the work to consultants, which would be costly and would affect continuity. Research institutes in Member States could also potentially carry out some of EEA's task. However, in this case, the work would lose neutrality, credibility and authority as many research institutes partly depend on private funding, as well as EEA's role as an EU institution.

Other Commission services, notably Eurostat, collect water data, and they could take over some EEA data functions, though this is likely to entail major costs. According to the focus group of NRCs, EEA products that use WISE reporting provide unique information at EU level.

In sum, the consequences if EEA and EIONET were terminated would likely include:

* Lack of leadership on environmental data
* Divergence of standards and lack of comparability of data
* Lack of continuity
* Loss of expertise

What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?

EEA has worked with non-EU MS on SoE data flows, including capacity building for EU Accession Countries, including Turkey and countries in the Western Balkans.

EEA has also supported non-EU Member States in the development of water body status assessments, to match the work of Member States under the WFD. The 2016 EIONET Freshwater Workshop included a session on the preparation of ecological and chemical status assessments in non-EU Member States, as well as their availability of spatial data.

EEA's work beyond EU Member States is relevant as a high share of Europe's waters cross national boundaries and extend beyond the EU itself: for example, almost all Western Balkan countries (which are EEA collaborating countries) are part of the Danube River basin[604]. Norway shares river basins with Sweden and Finland, and Switzerland shares river basins such as the Po, Rhine and Rhone with EU Member States. Lichtenstein is within the Rhine River basin. The international commissions for both the Danube and Rhine have implemented the EU's Water Framework Directive, preparing overview river basin management plans that cover both EU Member States as well as non-Member States. EEA's work under the WFD, such as the recently published report on European Waters, covers the Danube and Rhine River basins.

Within the ETC/ICM, the Norwegian Institute for Water Research, based in an EEA member country that is not an EU Member State, provides expertise.

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[604] Albania and Macedonia, however, have only small catchments within the Danube River basin, however.

10.8   Appendix D5 – Case Study Nature Directives

10.8.1   Abbreviations

AAR	Annual Activity Report
AIR	Annual Implementation Report
AWP	Annual Work Programme
CAAR	Consolidated Annual Activity Report
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDDA	Common Database on Designated Areas
DG ENV	Directorate General Environment
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
ETC	European Topic Centre
ETC/BD	European Topic Centre Biological Diversity
FTE	Full-time equivalent
JRC	Commission's Joint Research Centre
MAWP	Multiannual Work Programme
NFP	National Focal Point
NRC	National Reference Centre
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCI	Site of Community Importance
SPA	Special Protected Areas

10.8.2   Introduction

Scope and subject matter of the case study

EU Nature The Birds Directive (79/409/EEC[605]) protects the more than 500 wild bird species naturally occurring in the EU, including via the creation of Special Protected Areas (SPAs). The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) protects rare, threatened and endemic animal and plant species as well as habitats in the EU. Under the Habitats Directive, Member States designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs): these areas together with the SPAs under the Birds Directive form the EU-wide Natura 2000 network of protected areas. This case study refers to the Birds and Habitats Directives as the EU Nature Directives.

This case study considers the work of the EEA to support the Birds and Habitats Directives. It reviews the role of EEA and highlights the successful coordination mechanisms in place between the European Commission and EEA.

The case study does not cover the EEA's closely related work to support the EU Biodiversity Strategy; nonetheless, the case study notes the links between these intertwined policy areas.

A desk review was performed covering the key reports from the EEA and the Commission in this area, further supported by interviews with key stakeholders. Key reports and documents included are:

- EEA Multiannual Work Programme (MAWP) 2014-2018
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- EEA Annual Management Plans for 2012 and 2013EEA Annual Work Programmes for 2014, 2015, and 2016
- EEA (Consolidated) Annual Activity Reports (CAAR) for 2014, 2015, and 2016
- ETC/BD Action Plans for 2015 and 2016
- Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 on EEA and EIONET
- Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)
- Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)
- Commission Staff Working Document - Fitness check of the EU Nature Legislation
- DG Environment Website
- EEA Website
- EIONET website

Description of the role of the EEA and Eionet in the case study area

The role of the EEA in supporting the EU Nature Directives is set out in its Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) and Annual Work Programmes. In the EEA's MAWP for 2014-2018, this role is set out in Strategic Area (SA) 1.7, which covers biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests. The objectives for SA1.7 include supporting the European Commission and Member States in data reporting under the Nature Directives. The outputs set out under SA also address the Nature Directives and Natura 2000.

The role of the EEA in supporting the Nature Directives relates largely to the reporting requirements for Member States and European Commission under Article 12 of the Birds Directive and Article 17 of the Habitats Directive. Under these articles, Member States are required to report on the implementation of the measures taken under the Directives. The Commission is then required to prepare reports based on the Member State information provided. The EEA provides the platform for reporting under the two Directives, data handling and produces indicators and maps based on the data. The European Commission and the EEA collaborate on preparing the reports required under the Directives based on Member State information. In May 2015, the European Commission published a report on the State of Nature in the EU, covering both directives. At the same time, EEA published a technical report on the conservation status and trends of the species and habitats covered by the two Directives.

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[605] The Directive was codified as 2009/147/EC

In its work on the Nature Directives, EEA draws heavily on the work of the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD). The ETC's activities for the EU Nature Directives include:

- Support to reporting under the Nature Directives,

- Maintenance of Article 12 and Article 17 reference portals for reporting, and

- Provision of guidance for discussions on Natura 2000 site management within the "New biogeographical process".

The ETC works extensively on Natura 2000 data and reporting issues as well as on analysis of these datasets, whereas the EEA undertakes much of the IT work, oversees ETC work, and produces publications. The role of the ETC in ongoing work is set out in the annual rolling plans agreed between EEA and DG ENV (see section 3.1), and its workplan is defined each year in the ETC/BD Action Plan.

The specific tasks relating to the Nature Directives, and the roles of the EEA and other actors in these tasks, stemming from the EEA's founding regulation[606] is set out in the table below.

Table 40 Overview of EEA tasks as set out in its founding regulation and work plans

Task (ref Founding Regulation)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (NFPs/ NRCs)	Description of the role of ETC/BD	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the DG ENV
Support to reporting requirements (task c)	Providing a reporting platform for Member State reporting under the Nature Directives (Reportnet)	Establishing and maintaining platform, help-desk for IT issues Chairing of ad hoc working groups on reporting issues (with ETC/BD)	Although not involved in reporting for the Nature Directives, NRCs report on nationally protected areas (for the Common Database on Designated Areas)	Contributing to reporting format, providing technical specifications, testing reporting tool, preparing reporting guidelines, clarifications to ensure consistent reporting, help-desk for reporting issues Chairing of ad hoc working groups on reporting issues (with EEA)	MAWP, AAP and ETC/BD Action Plans	Coordination of MS input via Habitat Committee and its Expert Groups Coordination of ad hoc groups on specific reporting issues
	Data handling for reporting by MS (QA, initial processing)	Coordination of data handling process		Preliminary QA of data reported by MS, clarifications with MS, final quality check	MAWP, AAP and ETC/BD Action Plans	

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[606] Regulation 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network

Task (ref Founding Regulation)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (NFPs/ NRCs)	Description of the role of ETC/BD	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the DG ENV
	Preparation of regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (e.g. annual reports on implementation)	Coordination of preparation of EEA Technical Report on the State of Nature Coordination of other reports prepared by ETC/BD Preparation of policy-oriented reports based on data reported	Review of State of Nature Technical Report	Preparing national summaries based on data reported Drafting of the EEA Technical Report on State of Nature Drafting of technical and working papers, supporting reporting and the analysis of data reported (see Table 2)	MAWP, AAP and ETC/BD Action Plans	Publication of State of Nature – European Commission Communication
Manage data and information systems (task e)	Production of indicators, maps or interactive maps based on data reported	Coordination of the preparation of Natura 2000 datasets and assessments		Preparation of Natura 2000 datasets, assessments of reported data (conservation status assessments, sufficiency assessments)	MAWP, AAP and ETC/BD Action Plans	Management of contract for population assessment for bird species
Other tasks	Support to new Natura 2000 biogeographic process	Planning and coordination of the process		Preparation of documents and presentations for seminars; attending seminars	ETC/BD Action Plan	

Task (ref Founding Regulation)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (NFPs/ NRCs)	Description of the role of ETC/BD	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the DG ENV
	Development of method for the possible modification of Nature Directives' Annexes	Coordination of method development		Developing methods for the possible adaptation of the Annexes to the Nature Directives	ETC/BD Action Plan	
	Support to the implementation of the Emerald network under the Bern Convention, including ensuring consistency with Natura 2000 implementation	Coordination		Participation in Emerald Convention processes; adaptations to Nature Directives processes to ensure consistency	MAWP, AWP and ETC/BD Action Plan	Coordination of Expert Group input

10.8.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP

The EEA and the ETC/BD play a significant role in supporting the implementation of the Nature Directives, as set out in the objectives of the MAWP and in the ETC/BD's Action Plans. The ETC/BD is responsible for carrying out much of the substantive work, with the EEA playing a coordinating role.

Strategic Area (SA) 1.7 in the MAWP 2014-2018 sets out the EEA's objectives "to support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests". These objectives include the following specific objectives relevant to the EEA's role in supporting the EU Nature Directives:

- "to collect, process, quality-assure and disseminate data and information on genes, species, habitats and ecosystems to support the Birds and Habitats Directives, the EU Biodiversity Strategy and related multilateral, regional and global policy agreements;"

- "to assist the European Commission and the Member States with the reporting of data towards the implementation of the nature directives".

There are 11 outputs under SA1.7, two of which directly relate to these specific objectives on the Nature Directives. The others are linked to the EEA's other roles under SA1.7 in supporting policy development and implementation in relation to biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests (i.e. supporting the EU Biodiversity Strategy and other initiatives), and do not have a direct link to the Nature Directives. The two outputs relevant to this case study are:

- "Prepare Natura 2000 datasets, sufficiency assessments and Union lists according to EU legislation, support bio-geographic seminars towards good conservation status while supporting other pan-European designation processes" (Annual)

- "Analysis of the state, trends and conservation status of individual species and habitats, as required under the reporting of the Habitats and Birds Directives" (2014-2015, i.e. every 6 years)

Appendix C of the main report outlines the planned outputs for this topic in the MAWP, the activities described in the AWPs 2014-2016 and their achievement, as per the (Consolidated) Annual Activity Reports for 2014, 2015, and 2016.

The two MAWP objectives related to the Nature Directives are closely related, and the work of EEA and ETC, presented in the following pages, covers both. The analysis below is structured according to the two outputs in the MAWP related to the Nature Directives. Unless otherwise noted, the information below on the respective roles of the EEA and the ETC/BD in these tasks was sourced from interviews.

Natura 2000 datasets and other related work

Under the Directives, Member States have a continuous reporting obligation on Natura 2000 sites (Special Protected Areas (SPAs) under the Birds Directive and Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive). Effectively, this is an annual reporting obligation for Member States: Areas designated under national legislation for the purpose of nature protection need to be reported every 12 months. For each Natura 2000 site, national authorities submit a standard data form containing an extensive description of the site and its ecology. The data is submitted using the Reportnet tools under EIONET.

The EEA and the ETC/BD play a significant role in supporting this process. This work involves the following annual tasks:

- Analysing data on designations reported annually by Member States under the Directives, including assessing the sufficiency of the designations made by Member States;

- Preparing Union lists of designated sites, to be formally approved by the Habitats Committee;
- Preparing and updating datasets on the Natura 2000 network, including the dataset of designated sites and the Natura 2000 Barometer;
- Supporting the site designation processes.

The following paragraphs provide detail on these tasks and on the respective roles of the EEA and the ETC/BD.

Analysis of data, including sufficiency assessments

The ETC/BD analyses the changes to national databases and assesses the potential consequences of these changes on the sufficiency and the coherence of the network per biogeographical region. The outcomes of this analysis of changes are reflected in the annual Conclusion database update by the ETC/BD.

Preparation of Union lists

The EEA merges the data reported by Member States (i.e. the national databases). The ETC/BD is then responsible for validating this data, preparing the annual "Union list" of designated sites to be approved by the Habitats Committee.

Support to the site designation process

This task is primarily carried out by the ETC/BD and supports the assessment of the sufficiency of site designations under the Habitats Directive at the biogeographical region-level. As opposed to the Birds Directive, which applies at the national level, the approach for the Habitats Directive is according to the biogeographic regions within each country. As noted above, as part of the ETC/BD's role in analysing Nature Directives data, the ETC also carries out EU-level biogeographical assessments.

To support Member States in making site designations that take into account biogeographical considerations, since 2009[607] DG ENV, supported by the ETC/BD, has held bilateral meetings with Member States to discuss issues in Member States. The purpose of these meetings has been to allow a dialogue between the Member States, DG ENV, the ETC/BD NGOs, landowner organisations and independent experts on the sufficiency of site designations based on a preliminary assessment prepared by ETC/BD. In addition, in 2016, three marine regional seminars were held involving countries from the Atlantic, the Macaronesian and the Mediterranean marine regions. (Please see Table 41 for a list of the bilateral meetings and regional seminars.) For each meeting and seminar, final conclusions on insufficiencies provided a roadmap for further site designation within each country per biogeographical region[608].

Table 41   Bilateral meetings and regional seminars on site designations organised by ETC/BD, 2012-2016

2012	Bilateral meeting Slovakia	Alpine and Pannonian regions
	Bilateral meeting Cyprus	Mediterranean
	Bilateral meeting Romania	Alpine, Continental, Pannonian, Black Sea, Steppic
	Bilateral meeting Bulgaria	Alpine, Continental, Black Sea

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[607] Prior to 2009, rather than bilateral meetings, seminars involving all Member States relevant to a biogeographical region were held.
[608] Interview, ETC/BD

2014	Bilateral meeting Slovenia	Alpine, Continental, Mediterranean
	Bilateral meeting Croatia	Alpine, Continental, Mediterranean
2015	Bilateral meeting Austria	Alpine and Continental
	Bilateral meeting Italy	Alpine, Continental, Mediterranean
2016	Atlantic seminar Marine region	BE, DK, FR, DE, IE, NL, PT, ES, SE, UK
	Marine seminar Macaronesian region	ES, PT
	Marine seminar Mediterranean region	HR, CY, FR, GR, IT, MT, SI, ES

Preparation of datasets

Data reported annually be Member States is the key input into the Natura 2000 datasets prepared annually by the EEA and the ETC/BD. Reported data is used to create an EU-wide descriptive database of designated sites[609]. The spatial data (borders of sites) submitted by each Member State is integrated into a spatial database and, after validation with a specifically developed GIS tool, linked to the descriptive data. This descriptive data includes data on the conservation status of habitats and species, on compensation measures taken for projects having a negative impact on Natura 2000 sites or on derogations they may have applied to the strict protection measures.   In preparing this dataset, the ETC/BD has the main role in terms of data analysis, while the EEA leads the collection of data from Member States and providing and maintaining the IT systems (including automated QA).

Some important changes to this process have occurred since 2012. For example, the EEA modified the Data Exchange Model for Natura 2000 to support the non-EU countries of the Bern Convention (the so-called Emerald countries) in 2014[610].

The descriptive data is used to prepare the Natura 2000 Barometer[611], a summary table giving an overview of the total number and total area designated as SCI, SPA, and Natura 2000 sites / Member State and the relative proportion of land area / type of designation and Member State. The Barometer statistics are produced by the EEA.

Other relevant datasets

The EEA and ETC/BD also develop and maintain other datasets relevant to their work on the Nature Directives:

- In parallel to the work on Natura 2000 data, the EEA also maintains the Common Database on Designated Areas (CDDA), an Eionet core data flow[612]: the CDDA holds information on protected areas under

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[609] https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/natura-8

[610] EEA consolidated AAR 2014

[611] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/barometer/index_en.htm

[612] The Eionet core data flows are a subset of existing key data flows reported by EEA member and cooperating countries using the Reportnet tools. The reported data is used by the EEA for its main assessments, products and services.

national legislation and provides common reporting to the World Database of Protected Areas, managed by IUCN.

- The EEA has developed and maintains the European Nature Information System, EUNIS, a web application that brings together European data for protected areas and data on species and habitats.
- The EEA maintains an extensive set of indicators, grouped by environmental theme. For biodiversity, the EEA hosts the indicator set developed under the Streamlining European Biodiversity Indicators (SEBI) process. Within this context, the indicator SEBI 007 indicates the status of the nationally designated protected areas and SEBI 008 indicates the status of sites designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.
- Elaboration of Geographical Information System (GIS) technology features for Natura 2000 have been developed by the EEA and include a public Natura 2000 viewer, which was developed by a contractor under the supervision of the EEA[613].
- The EEA and ETC/BD also maintain BISE, the Biodiversity Information System for Europe, which sets out biodiversity information in support of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for Europe. While it provides links to Natura 2000 data, BISE is not directly linked to the EEA's work under the Nature Directives. As such, BISE is not considered in any detail in this case study.

In collecting data for these datasets, which are not specifically linked to reporting under the Nature Directives, it appears that the EEA and the ETC/BD has considered opportunities to streamline the reporting of this data with reporting of data under the Nature Directives. In the case of data for the CDDA, the fact that this dataset compiles information on protected areas under national legislation gives rise to questions on whether there are overlaps between the CDDA and Nature Directives legislation. As each country has its own approach to protected areas, nationally protected areas and Natura 2000 protected areas correspond to varying degrees between countries. Furthermore, more detailed data needs to be reported for Natura 2000 than for nationally protected areas under the CDDA. Thus, while there may be some overlaps in some countries, Member States need to report separately under each framework. Nonetheless, there are opportunities to achieve synergies between CDDA and Nature Directives reporting. In theory, Member States could use data reported under the INSPIRE Directive and re-use it for the CDDA and Nature 2000 data reporting. According to interviews, the EEA is currently (i.e. after the evaluation period) looking into technical questions concerning this option; consideration will also need to be given to legal aspects.

The EEA and ETC/BD have also made efforts to compile the data from the CDDA with data on Natura 2000 sites[614]. Since the evaluation period, in 2016-17, the EEA and ETC/BD reviewed the reporting model for CDDA, resulting in a new reporting model under which Member States can re-use data reported in the context of the INSPIRE Directive for CDDA reporting. This model will be used in 2018 for the first time.

Analysis of the state, trends and conservation status of species and habitats (every six years)

During the evaluation period, in 2013, Member States were required, under Article 12 of the Birds Directive and Article 17 of the Habitats Directives, to report on the implementation of actions taken under the Directive for the period 2007-2012. A composite report based on Member States' reporting was published in 2015 as part of the *State of Nature in the European Union* report. This report included an evaluation of the progress achieved under the Directive and the contribution of the Natura 2000 network to the objectives of the Directive. This was the second assessment of conservation status since the introduction on the Directive.

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[613] http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/

[614] *Protected Areas in Europe – An Overview*, EEA 05-2012, https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/protected-areas-in-europe-2012 and *Growth of the nationally designated protected areas and site number,* SEBI Indicator 007, https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/nationally-designated-protected-areas/nationally-designated-protected-areas-assessment-3

The EEA and ETC/BD played a key role in supporting this reporting, which accounted for the main tasks of the EEA and the Topic Centre in this area during 2014[615].

In May 2015, the EEA published the *State of nature in the EU*[616] as a technical report. This is a companion document to the European Commission's report on *The State of Nature in the EU — Reporting under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives 2007–2012 on trends for habitat types and species covered by the EU Nature Directives*[617]. The EEA's technical report is the first assessment that covers both Directives and is the result of the largest collaborative nature-related data collection and assessment exercise ever undertaken across Europe. It was presented by the Executive Director to the European Parliament and the European Council. The report was the key document to provide the results on Target 1 for the mid-term review under the Biodiversity Strategy to 2020.

During the evaluation period, the ETC/BD published a number of technical and working papers related to the assessment and analysis of Natura 2000 data. Examples of these papers are provided in Table 42.

Table 42   Examples of ETC/BD outputs linked to reporting under Nature Directives, 2012-2016

Guidance for analysis of sensitivity to pressures of water dependent habitats & species listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives (Milestone), ETC/BD Working paper N°B/2016
Contribution of Copernicus in support to monitoring of habitats, species and the Natura 2000 network, ETC/BD Working paper N°D/2016
Short topic assessment on Forests and Article 17 related data. Analysis of Articles 12 and 17 reporting data from 2007-2012 for woodland and forest ecosystems, ETC/BD Technical paper N°5/2015
Short topic assessment on Agriculture and Article 17 related data. Analysis of Articles 12 and 17 reporting data from 2007-2012 for agricultural ecosystems, ETC/BD Technical paper N°4/2015
Pre-scoping document for the Continental/ Pannonian/ Steppic and Black Sea biogeographical regions, ETC/BD Technical paper N°7/2014
Literature Review: The ecological effectiveness of the Natura 2000 Network, ETC/BD Technical paper N°5/2014
Article 17 Reporting – Assessments of conservation status at the EU biogeographical level. Public consultation, ETC/BD Technical paper N°3/2014
Article 17 Reporting – Habitats Directive: Guidelines for assessing conservation status of habitats and species at the biogeographical level (2007-2012), ETC/BD Technical paper N°2/2014

In addition, the data related to the Habitats and Birds Directives was also used to contribute inputs related to targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020[618]. A technical report on *Terrestrial habitat mapping in Europe* was also published in 2014, and was the result of a collaboration between the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle (French NRC for biodiversity) and the ETC/BD. The joint report reviews natural habitat practices in Europe and their use in nature conservation.

Reporting on conservation status

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[615] Consolidated AAR 2014

[616] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/state-of-nature-in-the-eu

[617] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/info/pubs/directives_en.htm

[618] Consolidated AAR 2014

During the evaluation period, this work included the support to the reporting on conservation status of species and habitats, as required every six years under Article 12 (Birds Directives) and Article 17 (Habitats Directive). In supporting the reporting on conservation status made by Member States in 2013, the EEA and ETC/BD carry out the following tasks:

- Coordination of process (EEA)
- Maintaining reporting tool (Reportnet) (EEA)
- Providing the technical specifications to allow the EEA to prepare the reporting tool and the tool for displaying results (ETC/BD)
- Support to the definition of the reporting format through dialogue with MS and approved by Habitats Committee (ETC/BD)
- Testing the reporting tool before delivery to MS (ETC/BD)
- Preparing guidelines for reporting (with a consultant to the Commission, as ETC does not have sufficient internal capacity on birds) (ETC/BD)
- Providing a help-desk function on issues with the reporting platform during MS reporting (EEA)
- Providing a help-desk function on technical reporting issues during MS reporting (ETC/BD)
- Preliminary quality control and seeking further clarification and information from MS (ETC/BD)
- Second, detailed, quality check (ETC/BD)

Since 2015, the EEA and the ETC/BD have been involved in preparations for the 2013-2018 reporting cycle. This has involved an analysis of lessons learned from the previous reporting cycle. To address these lessons, DG ENV organised a series of ad hoc groups to address key issues where clarifications were needed to ensure harmonised reporting (e.g. "structure and functions", "future prospects", "trends"). According to interviews with the ETC/BD, these groups were chaired by either the EEA or the ETC/BD and clarifications were incorporated into reporting guidelines.

Other work to support the Nature Directives

New Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process

Prior to the evaluation period, in 2011, the ETC/BD was asked by DG ENV to support the Commission in setting up a voluntary process for the exchange of good practices between Member States on the management of designated sites. The focus was on priority habitats, which, due to their bad conservation status, would require coordinated efforts between MS to ensure proper Natura 2000 management within the biogeographical region. During the evaluation period, in 2015, DG ENV asked the ETC to develop an additional approach for identifying habitats where MS cooperation would be likely to yield quick results. This work has been detailed in the ETC Action Plan for 2016, where it is called the "low-hanging fruit" approach. The ETC established an approach and criteria for identifying these habitats. This approach was provided by the ETC to the external contractor to the Commission to manage the process.

Overview

The evidence reviewed in this case study – EEA work programmes and activity reports, ETC/BD action plans, and interviews – indicates that EEA has fulfilled the objectives set out in the MAWP to collect, process, quality-assure, store and disseminate data reported by Member States under the Nature Directives. The EEA has also been effective in supporting EEA member countries in their reporting activities. The expected outputs for the EEA relating to the Nature Directives set out in the MAWP have been met: the EEA, with the ETC/BD, has achieved the data collection and analysis outputs relating to annual reporting under the Nature Directives. It has also delivered on its outputs in relation to the six-yearly reporting requirements under the Directives, with the publication of the State of Nature Technical Report in 2015. The CAARs for the evaluation period show that outputs have been delivered within the timeframes set out in the MAWP and AWPs. While interviews with the EEA and the ETC/BD suggest that the volume of work within the evaluation period was challenging and resources can be strained, particularly in relation to the State of Nature reporting, timelines were mostly able to be met. In some cases, according to the in-

terview with DG ENV, there were challenges in responding to ad hoc requests, but these were not significant. Success factors seem to be effective cooperation between DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC/BD, with a clear understanding of roles and expected outcomes. This is likely to have been supported by the collaborative process of developing the rolling plans.

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

The EEA's data and assessments have supported DG Environment on both policy development and policy implementation.

Policy development

Both the Natura 2000 data and the data and results from the *State of Nature Report* were used for the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives (2016)[619]. EEA data was used to assess the effectiveness of the Nature Directives by providing trends on the development of the Natura 2000 network. The Natura 2000 Barometer was particularly useful as it indicated progress of the establishment of Natura 2000 sites in each Member State. The Fitness Check also drew on data developed by the EEA on the different approaches used by Member States to delineate boundaries of sites and on the frequency of management plans[620]. In its reporting on the Fitness Check, the Commission states that the *State of Nature* report, together with the mid-term review of the Biodiversity Strategy, were the key inputs to the Fitness Check[621], complemented by stakeholder and public consultation and a review of existing literature. In answering questions on the efficiency of the Directives in meeting their objectives, the evaluation relies primarily on the analysis by the EEA and the ETC/BD of data reported by Member States[622].

The *State of Nature* report was also a key input in assessing progress on Target 1 (Fully Implement the Birds and Habitats Directives) in the mid-term review of the Biodiversity Strategy.

In preparation for the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats, the EEA and ETC/BD helped develop a methodology to revise the Annexes to the Nature Directives, should the Fitness Check identify such a need (this method was not eventually required). In this work, EEA and ETC/BD supported the Commission on potential policy changes.

EEA and ETC/BD's work on Natura 2000 indicators is incorporated in the Agri-Environmental Indicators, published by Eurostat to track the integration of environmental concerns into the Common Agricultural Policy, as well as the CAP Context Indicators, which are used by DG AGRI to support evaluation and programming under the CAP. In particular, the indicator on agricultural areas under Natura 2000 is included in the CAP context indicators.

> The EEA's datasets developed in support of the Nature Directives has made crucial contributions to policy development in this area, in particular for the evaluation how the Directives met their objectives under the Fitness Check of the Directives. The work of the ETC/BD in compiling and analysing reported data supported the Fitness Check as well, and informed policy development a under the CAP, as seen in the use of EEA indicators on nature protection in the Agri-Environmental Indicators.

Policy implementation

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[619] DG ENV website - Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directive. Accessed 20.09.2017 at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/index_en.htm
[620] EC (2016) Fitness check of the Birds and Habitats Directives
[621] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/index_en.htm
[622] Milieu Ltd for European Commission, *Evaluation Study to support the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives*, 2016, Chapter 5.1

According to interviews at DG Environment, EEA's reports and assessments have strongly supported the Commission's work in implementing the Nature Directives.

In terms of supporting reporting under the Nature Directives, the EEA and ETC/BD have strongly supported the work of the Commission by supporting Member States in their reporting, handling and analysing reported data and preparing the *State of Nature* technical report. The ETC/BD prepares regional-level biogeographical assessments for habitats and species of the Habitats Directive, thus providing a transboundary broader picture than that at national level. In doing this work, the ETC compares what has been designated by different Member States within a same region, providing the Commission with a broader perspective.

The work of the ETC-BD in analysing and compiling data reported by Member States informed the Commission's assessments of nature protection in the Member States. For example, the European Environmental Implementation Review package published by DG ENV in 2017 included country reports for each Member State incorporating data on the implementation of measures as reported by the Member States and the sufficiency of site designations in Member States.

Regarding ensuring Member State compliance with the Nature Directives, the interviews suggested that there is a common understanding that the work of the EEA and the ETC/BD is not intended to be used directly for compliance purposes. However, DG ENV reported that outputs from the EEA and ETC/BD can be used to inform the DG ENV's work in formally assessing the compliance of Member States. In interviews, DG ENV reported that the EEA and ETC/BD's work on sufficiency assessments is used by the Commission in more formal assessments on whether Member States should designate additional sites.

> The work of the EEA has been effective in supporting the European Commission in implementing the Nature Directives. In particular, the EEA and ETC/BD played a strong role in Member State reporting under the Directives and assessment of the data reported by Member States: this role included maintaining the reporting platform for Member States; support to Member States throughout the reporting period; assuring the quality of data reported; analysis of data reported; preparation of key reports, including the State of Nature in the European Union Technical Report.

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

A number of activities of the EEA and the ETC/BD's work supporting the Nature Directives has been important in supporting Member State policy development in the area.

The ETC/BD has followed and supported the Member States in the site designation process:

- The sufficiency assessments under the Habitats Directive, under which the ETC/BD assesses the sufficiency of Member States' site designations at the biogeographical scale, have helped provide Member States with a perspective on how their designations support habitat protection at a broader scale[623].
- In addition, the EEA and the ETC/BD hold bilateral meetings each year for the Member States, involving the relevant Member States, the Commission, the ETC/BD, NGOs, representatives of landowner organisations and individual experts. According to the ETC/BD, this has supported a dialogue between relevant actors in the biogeographical regions on Member State site designations.

The "low-hanging fruit" approach developed by the ETC/BD has been used to support Member State cooperation on actions likely to yield quick results to improve the management of key habitats. Given this work commenced in

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[623] Interview, ETC/BD

2016, outcomes of this work in terms of improved management are unlikely to have been observed during the evaluation period.

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

The EEA and, in particular, the ETC/BD have been highly effective in ensuring the comparability and reliability of information generated through reporting under the Nature Directives. Datasets prepared in support of the Nature Directives provide data from all Member States compiled at the European-level in a comparable format. These datasets provide, where appropriate, synthetic information on the significance of Member State data at the European-level; for example, the Natura 2000 Barometer totals the data provided by all 28 Member States so that users can obtain a view of the cumulative impact of Member State designations under the Nature Directives, and a view of a Member State's designation as a proportion of land covered.

An example, as part of the 2015 reporting for the 2007-2012 period under the Nature Directives, the ETC/BD carried out a number of activities to support consistent reporting. In some areas, there was a need to harmonise reporting approaches, reconcile different interpretations of reporting requirements, and address difficulties in reporting. The ETC/BD held ad hoc working groups and prepared guidelines to address these issues.

Regarding the objectiveness and reliability of the information produced by the EEA and the ETC/BD, interviews with DG ENV suggest that information is considered to be reliable and objective due to the substantial efforts to ensure its quality. Key challenges in this area, according to DG ENV, are inconsistencies and gaps in data reported by Member States. The efforts of the EEA and the ETC in addressing these issues is thus highly valued.

Effectiveness in dissemination of environmental information

Use of reports and services

During the evaluation period, the key dissemination action taken in relation to the EEA's work on the Nature Directives was the publication of the State of Nature Technical Report in 2015. This report was ranked equal-sixth among EU publications that year, in the EEA "Bestseller List, based on four indicators: web downloads, social media tweet views, media quotations and email notification views[624]. It was downloaded 3378 times in 2015 and mentioned in EU media sources 288 times.

In the focus group held with Brussels-based NGOs, participants said that they extensively used EEA's Technical Report on the State of Nature in a broad range of policy areas, including the Fitness Check on the Nature Directives as well as water, climate and agricultural policies.

Web-site assessment

Information on the EEA's work under the Nature Directives is available on a number of different sites:

-    The [EEA topic page on Biodiversity and Ecosystems](#) provides information on nature protection, including introductory information about EU nature protection policy and legislation targeted to a general, non-expert audience. Links are provided to datasets (e.g. the dataset of Natura 2000 protected sites, European Nature Information System, or EUNIS). Under "Biodiversity – Ecosystems" on the [Indicators page](#), indicators relevant to nature protection can be found. The EEA site also provides links to other relevant pages, including the [Natura 2000 Viewer](#).

     The [ETC/BD](#) pages on the EIONET web site provide more detailed, technical information relevant to the work of the EEA and the ETC in relation to the Nature Directives.

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[624] EEA, Internal Note, "EEA Bestseller list 2015 – an attempt to rate outreach performance and measure production costs based on the 2015 publication plan", 9 September 2016

An assessment of the EEA topic page on Biodiversity and Ecosystems[625] and the ETC/BD pages on the EIONET site[626] is presented in the table below. The assessment considers the accessibility, user friendliness, and visual appearance of the sites. For the EEA topic page, the assessment considers the content on the main pages, as well as the content under the tabs presenting news, articles, publications, data and maps. For the ETC/BD site, the assessment included the main page content, as well as the content provided on the structure, activities, location, newsletters and reports pages.

	Rate (high – moderate – low – very low)	Comments (rationale for assessment)
Accessibility (easy to find)	Low-Moderate	Information on the Nature Directives is not centrally located on one site, and there is no clear link from the EEA site to the ETC/BD site.
User friendliness (easy to navigate)	Moderate-High	The EEA site is relatively easy to navigate. The "Browse Catalogue" tabs make it easy to identify all products relevant to the topic. Similarly, the use of tabs in the ETC/BD site make navigation reasonably straightforward.
Visual appearance (easy to understand)	Moderate-High	The EEA site is visually attractive and easy to understand. The ETC/BD site is perhaps slightly less easy to understand due to the visual appearance and strong reliance on text rather than visual communication. However, as this site is not intended for a general audience, this is unlikely to be a barrier to dissemination. In any case, the textual information provided is concisely presented.

The EEA has also created, together with DG Environment, the Biodiversity Information System for Europe. This site focuses on the EU Biodiversity Strategy and not the Nature Directives. Nonetheless, it includes easily-found links to the Natura 2000 map viewer and to Natura 2000 data on EEA's web site.

10.8.4 Coherence

Cooperation between the EEA/EIONET and other EU bodies

Cooperation with DG Environment

Coordination between EEA and DG ENV is based on both systematic planning and frequent interpersonal communications. It ranges from coordination on planning, technical details or coordination and review on the content of work. Coordination and collaboration between the EEA, the ETC/BD and DG Environment is perceived on all sides to be very good. In an interview, officials at DG ENV said that the EEA was a motivated partner, keen to support

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[625] https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/biodiversity
[626] https://bd.eionet.europa.eu/

the work of the DG. This strong cooperative relationship appears to be due to the comprehensive work and re-source planning process (the rolling plans), strong interpersonal communications and the stable and long-standing nature of the relationship.

Rolling plans

An important factor in this successful collaboration seems to be the "rolling plan". An informal rolling plan process coordinating the work of the EEA, the ETC/BD and DG ENV was introduced in 2008. Rolling plans are used to detail the actions foreseen in the EEA annual work programme and find consensus on the use of available resources.

The rolling plans are drafted by DG Environment, based on its upcoming needs, and then discussed with the EEA. The rolling plans list actions for the coming year and beyond and identify the bodies to carry out each action. The rolling plans focus on work to be carried out by DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC, but relevant actions by JRC and other bodies are also identified. One rolling plan is prepared each year for each of the two relevant units within DG ENV: Unit D2 (Biodiversity) and Unit D3 (Nature Protection). The rolling plan for Unit D3 is most relevant to the EEA's work on the Nature Directives.

After the finalisation of the plans, their resources implications for the EEA (including the ETC-BD or any other rele-vant ETCs) are fine-tuned and incorporated into the EEA's Annual Work Programme for the coming year. Based on these discussions, the EEA reviews the plans and resource implications with the ETC, for the preparation of ETC Activity Plan. The resource allocation discussion related to the activities in the rolling plan allows resource limita-tions to be identified and the clarification of priority settings.

The interviews at both the EEA and DG Environment indicated that the rolling plans have been effective in aligning resources and have helped schedule outputs (e.g. in terms of linking outputs to activities under an upcoming Pres-idency). According to the interviews, the rolling plans have avoided overlaps between DG Environment, the EEA and the ETC/BD and ensured a clarity of roles. It was noted that the rolling plans developed by Unit D3 and the EEA tend to be more detailed than those with other units (such as Unit D2 working on the EU Biodiversity Strat-egy), whose work is less technical and more policy-oriented.

Communications

Moreover, frequent direct, informal communication between DG Environment, the EEA and ETC/BD reinforces co-ordination. For the activities carried out by ETC/BD, EEA is the direct interlocutor and oversees the work and the collaboration between ETC and the units of DG ENV.

Since 2010, DG ENV is systematically invited to participate in the ETC/BD Management Committee meetings. Of the two Management Committee meetings typically held each year, DG ENV typically attends the autumn meeting, where the following year's ETC/BD Action Plan is discussed. Interviews with both DG ENV and ETC/BD suggested the participation of DG ENV in these meetings has been valuable for both sides, since it gives the DG a chance to explain the policy context and priorities directly to the members of the ETC/BD consortium, beyond the coordinat-ing partner.

DG ENV reported that a lot of time is invested in communicating and coordinating with the EEA, to verify that the tasks are understood by both sides and carried out as needed: according to the interviews, this coordination en-sure synergies and the avoidance of overlaps. DG ENV emphasised that this investment of time in communication was worthwhile as it helped to ensure the quality of work delivered by the EEA and the ETC/BD and avoid over-laps. In a few cases, staff have moved between DG ENV, the EEA and ETC/BD, which has provided each organisa-tion with insight into the needs and working modalities of partner organisations and strengthening rapport be-tween individuals in the organisations. Moreover, project officers in DG ENV underlined that they invested time in communications with the EEA, and mentioned that they made efforts to acknowledge the contributions of the EEA (for example, at meetings with Member States). They reported that the EEA is responsive to feedback provided by DG ENV.

It was noted in one interview at DG ENV that the strong communications and working relationships are people-dependent and would be at risk should staff changes occur. The interviewee suggested that opportunities should be explored to formalise the strong working modalities, including temporary staff exchanges between the organisations.

Other factors supporting cooperation

The stability of the working relationship between DG ENV and the EEA appears to support cooperation. The structure for this relationship was established prior to the evaluation period, through a letter from the Director-General of DG ENV. Previously, some technical work now carried out by the EEA and ETC/BD was performed by contractors. DG ENV reported that once the EEA was involved, work progressed more quickly. The interviews also reported that the stability in staff at EEA, ETC/BD and the nature unit at DG Environment supported strong cooperation and continuity of work, noting turnover in staff in Unit D3 is lower than elsewhere in the DG and the Commission. The current stable working relationship is likely to be underpinned by the fact that the role of the EEA and DG ENV on the Nature Directives has a long-standing legislative basis, providing a clear and stable framework for the responsibilities of each partner in the work.

The EEA reported that the complementarity of the expertise and roles of the partners supported strong cooperation by providing each partner with strong standing in their roles. The technical expertise, and their long-term experience in the area of Nature Directives reporting, of the ETC/BD provides them with a clear role in the technical support of the Commission; the EEA performs analysis at the biogeographical-level, going beyond the Member State perspective. In this respect, the EEA and ETC/BD are able to demonstrate their value to the partners and define their role in the implementation of the Nature Directives.

Cooperation with committees and working groups coordinated by DG ENV and CLIMA

According to the interviews, overlaps are not seen between the work of the NRCs and that of the DG Environment Habitats Committee (and the expert groups under the Committee: NADEG and the Reporting Expert Group), due to the rolling plans, ongoing communication between EEA and DG Environment, as well as the EEA and ETC/BD's involvement in the Expert Groups.

The EEA and ETC/BD attend the meetings of the Habitats Committee and the related Expert Groups that are coordinated by DG ENV. The ETC/BD also attends ad hoc meetings on reporting issues, coordinated by DG ENV.

The NRC network and the Habitats Committee and its Expert Groups are also consulted on key outputs. Comments were provided on the State of Nature Technical Report by both the NRC network and the Expert Group on Reporting. The "Union list" of designated sites prepared by the ETC/BD each year is approved by the Habitats Committee. The reporting format for Article 12 and Article 17 reporting is also approved by the Habitats Committee.

In general, Member State input into the work of the EEA and the ETC/BD appears to occur primarily via the Habitats Committee and its Expert Groups, rather than the NRCs.

Coordination with other policy DGs

To some extent, the rolling plan process supported coordination between the EEA and other EU bodies, as, where relevant, actions by the JRC and other bodies are identified.

The EEA also cooperated with Eurostat on the Agri-Environmental Indicators (AEIs), which are used to track the integration of environmental concerns into the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) thus supporting coherence in EU policy development in the areas of agriculture and environment protection. The AEIs include four indicators relevant to the Nature Directives: Agricultural areas under Natura 2000 (for which EEA is responsible); Land-use change (EEA); High nature value farmland (DG Agri); Population trends of farmland birds (EEA). The EEA's data

on agricultural areas under Natura 2000 is also a CAP context indicator, which are used in programming and eval-uation under the CAP. This work was coordinated via a Memorandum of Understanding between the EEA, Eurostat, the JRC and DG AGRI.

According to interviews with the ETC/BD, interactions between the ETC/BD and other DGs are indirect and occur via DG ENV. For example, if DG AGRI seeks statistical information from the ETC/BD, this request is made through DG ENV.

Overlaps and synergies

According to the interviews, roles are clearly understood and overlaps between the work of DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC/BD are not seen due to strong communication between DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC/BD and the active involvement of each party in the 'rolling plans' to coordinate work.

Interviews suggested that there are no overlaps between the work of the NRCs and the Habitats Committee and its Expert Groups. On the one hand, the NRCs do not have a role in the reporting for the Nature Directives. On the other hand, EEA and ETC/BD are also closely involved in the work of the Expert Groups organised by DG ENV. This helps to ensure that work planning is informed by an overview of the work of the NRCs and the Committee and its Expert Groups and avoids overlaps.

Cooperation with bodies in member countries

Interviews suggested that the ETC/BD is involved in some cooperation with bodies in Member States, including NGOs and landowner organisations, through the bilateral seminars held in relation to the assessment of the suffi-ciency of site designations.

10.8.5 Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

The EEA and ETC/BD's work in supporting the Nature Directives is directly relevant to EU policy, given that it is explicitly linked to the requirements of EU legislation. During the evaluation period, adjustments to the work of the EEA were seen in response to policy developments, indicating that the work of the EEA is able to adapt to remain relevant to policy needs. A particular example of this is the EEA and ETC/BD's work to develop a methodology to revise the Annexes to the Nature Directives, should the Fitness Check for the Directives identify such a need (this method was not eventually required). The use of rolling plans to programme such work allows EEA and ETC/BD to respond to policy needs and support the Commission on potential policy changes.

Relevance in relation to technological development

During the evaluation period, the EEA and the ETC/BD started to test the use of spatial data from Copernicus in its work on the Nature Directives. One pilot involved the development of a very high-resolution layer to analyse habi-tat mapping and connections with water management. Other pilots have involved the development of high-resolu-tion or very high-resolution layers and trialling their use in assessment of designated sites.

10.8.6 EU value added

What has been the EU added value of the EEA?

Benefits

Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthe-sised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET. This is summarised in the table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

- Crucial contribution
- Some contribution

- Little or no contribution

Across a broad range of areas, EEA (and ETC/BD) have provided crucial contributions to the implementation of the EU Nature Directives (see Table 43).

Table 43 Benefits of EEA (and ETC/BD) work on the Nature Directives

Benefit	*Extent to which tasks have provided benefits.*	**Explanation**
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	*Crucial contribution*	Data presented in the State of Nature Technical Report allows the comparison of countries' performance. For example, the report provides data for on the proportion SCIs designated as SACs by Member State, percentage of designated sites with a management plan by Member State, etc.
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	*Crucial contribution*	**The EEA and ETC/BD's work on the Nature Directives generates a significant amount of information on nature protection in the EU relevant to policy makers.**
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	*Crucial contribution*	The knowledge on how Member State actions under the Nature Directives contribute to an understanding of the cumulative impact of these actions, for example, through the ETC/BD's assessments of sufficiency at the biogeographic region level.
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	*Crucial contribution*	The work of the EEA and ETC/BD on the reporting for Nature Directives, including the platform itself and guidance in technical papers, makes a crucial contribution to the collection of comparable data.
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	*Crucial contribution*	The EEA and ETC/BD's engagement with Member States through the Habitats Committee and its Expert Groups supports this exchange of knowledge.
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies	*Crucial contribution*	There was evidence that the EEA and the ETC/BD facilitates Member State reporting. The assessment by biogeographic region by the EEA and the ETC/BD and their work on the Art. 12 and Art. 17 reporting supported the Commission, who would have to carry out this work in the absence of the EEA.
Coordination of activities between member states and preparation for the future	*Crucial contribution*	The support to Member States on harmonised data report supports the coordination of Member State activities. ETC/BD's work on biogeographical regions has helped to coordinate the designation of Natura 2000 sites among MS.
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	*Crucial contribution*	The EEA and ETC/BD provide common reporting for the EU under the Bern Convention, as well as to the World Database of Protected Areas, managed by IUCN
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	*Crucial contribution*	The strong partnership and collaborative working relationship between DG ENV, the EEA and the ETC/BD supported better coordination and coherence on work under the Nature Directives. EEA and ETC/BD have built unparalleled knowledge that supports DG ENV and MS in the implementation of the Directives

Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	*Crucial contribution*	In relation to work on the Nature Directives, the EEA and ETC/BD are seen as trustworthy, reliable entities by DG ENV.

Source: Assessment by the support study

The EEA, with ETC/BD, has made a strong contribution to EU added value in its work on the Nature Directives. In supporting Member State reporting under the Directives, it has played a crucial role in ensuring the consistency, comparability and quality of data reported. In addition, the ETC/BD has carried out assessments on the sufficiency of site designations at the biogeographical level and EU-level that Member States are not able to prepare. The ETC/BD has also supported the identification of areas where cooperation of Member States is likely to yield positive outcomes in terms of improved management of habitats.

In the absence of the EEA, it is likely that data reported by Member States would not be of the same quality and it is extremely likely that the data would not be comparable. It was noted in an interview with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre that the ETC/BD plays an invaluable role in ensuring the harmonisation of data in the EU and in EEA member countries. According to this interview, the ETC is able to bridge the gap between data collection in the field and the needs of policy-makers, so that the ETC is able to help ensure that data collection approaches yield data useful to policy-makers without imposing too high a burden on those responsible for data collection and reporting at the Member State-level.

Without EEA and ETC/BD – if, for example, DG ENV were to use contractors – the biogeographic level assessments and the analysis of Member State data would most likely not be performed to the same level of quality, as the extensive expertise gathered by these institutions would not be available.

What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?

In relation to the Nature Directives, the EEA has engaged with members of the Emerald Network under the Bern Convention. This has helped to ensure that protection actions in neighbouring countries are coherent with those in the EU, creating a wider European network of protected areas.

10.9   Appendix D6 – Case Study Waste and Resource Efficiency

10.9.1   Introduction

This document provides a case study of the European Environment Agency's (EEA's) role in the thematic area of waste and material resources.

Scope and subject matter of the case study

The EEA's role is to support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of waste. This is by means of data, modelling, information/indicators and assessments.

This role is performed in close coordination with Eurostat, which has the responsibility for collecting statistics on waste. Using waste as a case study therefore provides a good opportunity to examine the extent to which the EEA is coherent with the activities of other Directorate-General's within the Commission.

Furthermore, the EEA's role involves monitoring progress to improve the environment in Europe in accordance with a circular economy perspective. For example, through annual briefings on progress towards a circular economy in Europe, participatory process with businesses exploring options for more sustainable models and holding workshops with selected countries on opportunities for environmental fiscal reform.

Description of the role of the EEA and EIONET in the case study area

Table 44: Role of the EEA and EIONET

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (specify if NRCs, NFPs)	Description of the role of ETCs (if any)	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)	Role of other EU bodies (e.g. EU Agencies)
Support to reporting requirements (task c)	Review of member countries' waste prevention programmes	Article 30(2) of the Revised Waste Framework invites the EEA to include in its annual report a review of progress in the completion and implementation of waste prevention programmes	Role of NRCs in EU Member States and EEA to provide evidence and quality assure reports	ETC/WMGE support the EEA in a wide range of activities including conducting waste prevention review in Europe	MAWP/ Revised Waste Framework Directive	DG Environment review the reports	Eurostat data centre on waste collect supporting data
Manage data and information systems (task e)	Production of indicators, maps or interactive maps based on data reported	Development of waste and material resource indicators	Consultation with NRCs	ETC/WMGE support the EEA in developing indicators	MAWP	DG Environment review the indicators	Eurostat data centre on waste collect relevant data
Publish other assessments (task h)	Preparation of ad hoc reports	Develop reports on the implementation of progress on waste management e.g. ex-post analysis of municipal waste management	Consultation with NRCs and quality assurance	ETC/WMGE support the EEA in developing the reports	MAWP	DG Environment review the reports	Eurostat data centre on waste collect relevant data

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (specify if NRCs, NFPs)	Description of the role of ETCs (if any)	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)	Role of other EU bodies (e.g. EU Agencies)
Forecasting and megatrends (task i)		Hosting of the European Reference Model for Waste	Collection of bespoke data sets by NRCs for modelling inputs	ETC/WMGE maintain and update the model	MAWP	DG Environment were the previous owners of the model and utilise the results	

The EEA's work on waste falls primarily within two strategic areas (SA) of the EEA's multi-annual work programme (MAWP) for 2014-2018: SA1.9, which focuses on informing policy implementation related to waste and material resources, and SA2.1, which focuses on assessing systemic challenges in relation to a resource-efficient economy and environment.[627]

The EEA MAWP's strategic areas are a product of the broader EU and global policy context. A range of EU policy instruments have called for a fundamental transition to a greener economy, including the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe[628], the Low Carbon Economy Roadmap[629], and the 7th EAP[630]. Key to developing a greener economy is the promotion of resource efficiency and the development of a more circular economy. The Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe, which is a key aspect of the resource-efficient Europe flagship initiative within the Europe 2020 Strategy, sets out a framework for how to achieve a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy, and outlines the structural and technological changes needed by 2050. It also sets out the waste milestones to be achieved by 2020, which include:

- full implementation of waste policies;
- the absolute reduction of waste generation using waste as a resource; and
- the phasing out of the use of landfill across Europe.

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[627] EEA (2014) Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2018: *Expanding the knowledge base for policy implementation and long-term transitions,* available at:http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/envi/dv/eea_promo_/eea_promo_en.pdf

[628] COM (2011) *Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM(2011) 571 final):* http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0571&from=EN

[629] COM (2011) *A Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 (COM(2011) 112 final):* http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0112&from=EN

[630] COM (2013) Decision No 1386/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on a General Union Environment Action *Programme to 2020 'Living well, within the limits of our planet' Text with EEA relevance,* http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013D1386&from=EN

The 7th EAP lends support to these milestones, and also calls for concepts such as life-cycle thinking, cradle-to-cradle, and industrial symbiosis to be applied.

To ensure that these various targets and objectives are achieved, and to develop policy within the context of the Europe 2020 strategy, SA 1.9 was tasked with the overall objective to

"*support and inform policy development and implementation in the area of waste and material resources by means of data, modelling, information/indicators and assessments, in close cooperation with Eurostat.*"

The specific objectives of SA1.9 outlined with the MAWP include:

- monitoring and assessing progress towards implementation of EU waste policies, covering the whole waste hierarchy, through hosting and using the European reference model for waste;
- supporting the Commission and the countries in their efforts to implement the waste acquis, through indicators and assessments of waste management and prevention;
- providing analyses of material resource flows, including primary and secondary (waste) resources within Europe and to and from Europe; and
- providing information and knowledge on policies on waste and material resource management in European countries, in light of stated long-term goals of shifting from waste management to materials management.

SA2.1 of the EEA MAWP also incorporates a range of waste-related work, as its overarching objective is to:

"*monitor progress and identifying opportunities to improve the environment in Europe, and indirectly in other regions of the world, in accordance with a resource-efficient economy perspective.*"

The specific objectives of SA2.1 outlined with the MAWP include:

- carry out assessments of production systems, consumption and lifestyle patterns, and new business models; and
- develop and implement indicators based on integrated environmental and economic accounts, including input-output tables, ecosystem capital accounts, and other concepts and methods such as life-cycle thinking and analysis.

10.9.2 Effectiveness

In the following sub-sections evidence is presented on the effectiveness of the EEA and EIONET's work in the themes of waste and resource efficiency.

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP

Between the period 2014-2016 there has been a significant amount of work completed by the EEA and EIONET in respect of waste and resource efficiency. The work within the waste and resource efficiency theme has been dynamic, and characterised by significant change in both the evidence base and related policy on resource efficiency, circular economy.

The work of the EEA and EIONET is somewhat different to that undertaken in the other thematic areas in that, principally, that neither are the primarily responsible for the collection of waste statistics and data. Waste and resource data is typically collected by Eurostat, and analysed by the EEA to support the development of stand-alone assessments and indicators. For example, the EEA maintains two indicators: waste generated and waste recycled. Both sets of data come from Eurostat.

The EEA played a role in the development of the Resource Efficiency Scoreboard. Specifically, the Agency was involved in the process of designing and selecting the 30 indicators used to assess progress of resource efficiency. The data for the four waste-related indicators was also sourced from Eurostat.

To support policy implementation the EEA and NRCs have collected primary data on member countries' waste prevention programmes (in accordance with Article 30 of the revised Waste Framework Directive. 631 This is done on the basis of an annual survey that assesses the status of waste prevention programmes in each member country. This is the only primary data that the EEA collects on waste. It is separate to any data collected by Eurostat.

Existing waste-related EU directives contain many waste policy targets and objectives to be met by EU member states in the period 2014–2020. Progress towards them varies significantly throughout the EU, and therefore a significant focus of the MAWP was based on activities involved in policy implementation. The key outputs outlined in the MAWP include:

- Review of member countries' waste prevention programmes;
- Assessments of progress in countries towards implementation of waste policies and the effectiveness of different measures, focused on priority waste streams;
- Indicators on waste and material resources, including new indicators developed under the Resource Efficiency Roadmap;
- Catalogue of material resource efficiency policies objectives, targets and indicators in countries and at the EU level;
- Briefing on progress towards a circular economy in Europe using established indicators and results from relevant research activities;
- Capacity building and networking with EIONET through the NRCs on SCP and resource use (and possible future NRCs on environmental economics); and
- Integrated accounts, indicators, and databases across DPSIR on circular economy trends

Table 45: Effectiveness in Implementing Key activities Outlined in MAWP

MAWP output	Level of achievement (full, partial, none)	Comments, explanation
Review of member countries' waste prevention programmes	Full	The EEA is 'invited' to review waste prevention programmes as part of the Revised Waste Framework Directive. Annual reports were provided in 2013, 2014 and 2015. The report in 2015 focussed exclusively on hazardous waste.
Assessments of progress in countries towards implementation of waste policies and the effectiveness of different measures, focused on priority waste streams in line with the	Full	The EEA hosts the model and has uses it to provide ongoing advice to DG Environment.

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[631]COM (2008) *Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on waste.*

MAWP output	Level of achievement (full, partial, none)	Comments, explanation
outcome of the 2014 review of waste policies and using, inter-alia, the European reference model for waste		
Indicators on waste and material resources, including new indicators developed under the Resource Efficiency Roadmap	Full	Working with Eurostat and DG Environment, these indicators have been developed
Integrated environmental and economic accounts and databases, with material flows and associated environmental pressures, including on climate change	Partial	Accounting techniques emerged during evaluation period. EEA inputed in to nput to UN-led discussions on the development of Part II of the Strategy for Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA). Ad hoc release of assements undertaken, for example, report in to environmental pressures from European consumption and production using integrated environmental and economic analysis
Catalogue of material resource efficiency policies, objectives, targets and indicators in countries and at the EU level	Full	Release of More From Less report
Briefing on progress towards a circular economy in Europe using established indicators and	Full	EEA published its first assessment report Circular economy in Europe — Developing the knowledge base following the release of the

MAWP output	Level of achievement (full, partial, none)	Comments, explanation
results from relevant research activities;		Circular Economy Package
Capacity building and networking with EIONET through the NRCs on SCP and resource use	Full	Regular workshops have been organised. Furthermore waste prevention policies have been actively disseminated amount the
Integrated accounts, indicators, and databases across DPSIR on circular economy trends	Partial	Release of Circular economy in Europe Developing the knowledge base following the release of the Circular Economy Package. Annual accounts not issued.

Based on a review of the MAWP, annual reports and interviews, it can be concluded that the EEA **has completed the activities described in the MAWP;** recognising that the policy landscape has changed since its development (as described in Section 4.1). An assessment of the activities outlined in the MAWP is provided in Appendix C in the main report.

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

The work of the EEA and EIONET has supported a number of needs with the Commission.

Policy development

A large proportion of the work of the EEA has been in supporting the Commission in the area of policy development. This has included the development of the Circular Economy Package as it has developed since 2014. The EEA's activity has included the maintenance and further development of the European Reference Model for Waste (hosted by the ETC) alongside the provision of suitable indicators. The European Reference Model for Waste seeks to evaluate how Member States are performing, and how they seem likely to perform in the future. In this manner, the model can serve an "Early warning system" function aimed at identifying potential future problems of implementation of the main European recycling, recovery and landfill diversion targets as set out in the revised Waste Framework Directive.The provision of waste and resources indicators often incorporate socio-economic data; thus helping to fulfil one of the key objectives of the EEA (as per Article 3 of the Founding Regulation[632]). Such indicators include trends in absolute expenditure in household consumption and electric and electronic equipment put on the market, WEEE collected and recycled/reused in 28 European countries (kg/capita/year). These indicators are based upon data collected by Eurostat.

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[632] Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network, Article 2(h)

Beyond the monitoring activities the EEA also provided a number of reports aimed at policy makers. These included an analysis of progress towards a circular economy, and the report "Circular economy in Europe — Developing the knowledge base". This was released in 2016 and the first in a series of annual 'circular economy' reports with a focus on developing the knowledge base. The reports and indicators have been cited by the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) in its work to support Members of the European Parliament.

The overall impression from interviews with DG Environment staff of the provision of support from the EEA was satisfactory and that the EEA has contributed to the development of policy. Interviewees that have worked with the EEA found them responsive and delivered high quality and thorough outputs. However, other staff (who have not worked as closely with the EEA) reported that some reports can be based on a lack of comprehensive data and be too generalised for their needs. It was largely recognised, however, that the underlying data was not comprehensive and that the EEA was not responsible for its collection.

It should also be noted that the EEA and EIONET are not the only organisations providing support to DG Environment to develop policy in the waste and resources thematic area. Significant support has been provided by contractors on an ad-hoc basis. It is worthy of note that the Reference Model for Waste was originally developed by external consultants for DG Environment before being handed over to the EEA.

Overall it is judged that **some contribution** has been made by the EEA to the development of waste and resource policy. The continued development and refinement of the Reference Model for Waste has provided an early warning mechanism for DG Environment and enabled them to understand what future policy interventions might be necessary in the future. Furthermore the provision of waste and resource indicators, help to further understand the underlying trend of performance across Europe.

Policy Implementation:

In respect of policy implementation, far less activity has been conducted by the EEA and EIONET, when compared to the development of policy. This can, to some extent, be explained by the limited reference to the EEA within existing legislation and the historic role of Eurostat in data collection. For example, the key cornerstone of waste legislation during the evaluation period is the revised Waste Framework Directive. This Directive allows the EEA to provide an annual review of member countries' waste prevention programmes (via Article 30). The EEA has successfully utilised the NRC's to collect this information via the use of an agreed template sent to Eionet national reference centres on waste that has been refined over the evaluation period. With regards to the quality of the information gathered, some staff within DG Environment have seen this as something of a descriptive, box ticking exercise, feeling that the EEA could have been more analytical in really assessing where the problems of waste generation and potential for waste prevention lay.

Member States have various reporting obligations concerning implementation of waste legislation. The two main types of reports include:

Reporting on targets: Reports are sent directly to Eurostat via EDAMIS portal.

Implementation Reports: these three-annual reports are based on questionnaires established in Commission Decisions together with the Member States, and cover the main aspects of implementation of waste legislation. These reports are to be sent directly to DG Environment.

There is no reference to the EEA in either of these tasks. This is position is supported in the Waste Statistics Regulation[633], where no reference is made of the EEA. Instead duties are placed on Eurostat (via the Environmental Data Centre on Waste).

The EEA has supported the Commission by monitoring the achievement of various waste targets (via the EU waste reference model); though it is noted that support from external consultants has also been used in an ad-hoc basis for specific policy needs. This has included for example, whether relevant waste legislation has been transposed in to national law via the review of the Implementation Reports that are sent from Member States directly to DG Environment..[634]

Based on a review of the Environmental Implementation Review Country Reports[635] it is evident that there has been little use of EEA data for waste chapters. Principally, data is collected by Eurostat therefore demonstrating the limited involvement of the EEA in such activities.

> The overall impression by DG Environment staff of the provision of support from the EEA is broadly satisfactory and that **some contribution** has been made to the implementation of policy; though noting that less overall activity has taken place. DG Environment staff were reported to be generally pleased with the quality of the information provided by the EEA.

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

In respect of the provision of support to member states, the EEA and the members of the EIONET do not provide any outputs that are specifically targeted at Member States. That said, qualitative information – especially via the dissemination of NRCs via reports and workshops has the capability of providing Member States an improved understanding of activity in other member countries.

As part of the evaluation, a survey was undertaken with NRC members. This asked a series of questions about the effectiveness of EEA support for national policy needs. It found that 92% (of 11 respondents) of members of the 'waste' and/or 'resource efficient economy and the environment' NRCs believed that national policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments undertaken by the EEA and EIONET. 100% believed that membership of the EEA and EIONET provided high quality data and information to policy makers.

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

One of the objectives of the EEA and EIONET, as set out in the founding regulation, is to provide the Community and the Member States with objective, reliable and comparable information at European level. Based on interviews with DG Environment, staff generally found EEA outputs to be impartial.

Given that the primary sources of information flows are directed from the Member States to DG Environment (in the form of implementation reports), Member States to Eurostat (in the form of data and indicators), there is a limit to the EEA's impartiality, but the EEA does what it can to test data consistency against other sources and, relative to all the data available in general (e.g. from consultants).

The results of the NRC survey found that 58% (of 11 respondents) of waste and/or resource efficient economy and the environment NRC members felt that the quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures in place ensure that EEA/EIONET data is objective and reliable. This figure was low because 42% of respondents felt that

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[633] Regulation (EC) No 2150/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2002 on waste statistics

[634] See for example: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/reporting/index.htm

[635] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/country-reports/index2_en.htm

they couldn't answer and therefore responded 'do not know'. This is could reflect the view that the EEA has a limited role in the collection of data, and that particpants were unaware of the EEA's specific responsibilities.

Effectiveness in dissemination of environmental information

In respect of the dissemination of environmental information, the role of the EEA and EIONET is somewhat less significant, when compared to other thematic areas. The primary source of data on waste and resource efficiency is Eurostat, as the EEA is not responsible for the collection of statistics on waste.

The EEA does not specifically target its reports on waste and resource efficiency at the wider public and NGOs; instead the main audience for the EEA outputs is DG Environment. That said, the reports are well utilised and as noted in the following sub-section two of reports were ranked in the top 10 (based on downloads and media attention). This perhaps demonstrates the interest in this area.

Use of reports and services

Based on a review of publications in 2015, two waste and resource efficiency publications were ranked in the top 10 (based on downloads and media attention); these were "Waste prevention in Europe — the status in 2014" and "Enabling resource-efficient cities".[636] It therefore appears that some wider dissemination of the work of the EEA has taken place.

Web-site assessment

When searching for "EU Waste Data", the EEA website does not feature in any of the top 5 sites in any key search engines.

The resource efficiency and waste page is relatively easy to navigate to from the EEAs homepage. The content, however, is somewhat generic and perhaps not targeted to the current issues featured in the EEAs research. For example one key fact and message explains about forest resources, whilst important, it does not capture the key messages emanating from the EEA's work in this thematic area.

Figure 6: Snapshot of the EEA's Resource management and Waste

Source: https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste

Table 46: Review of https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste
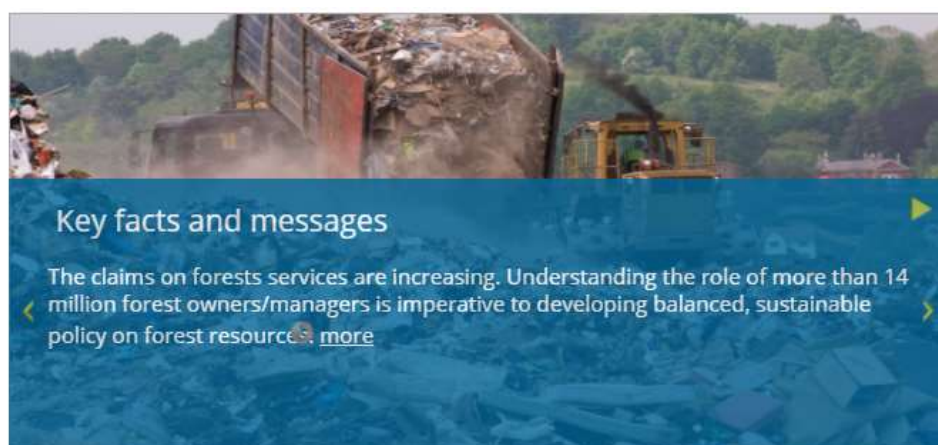
	Rate	Comments

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[636] EEA (2016) Internal Note EEA Bestseller list 2015, EEA

Accessibility (easy to find)	Moderate	Not easily identifiable from search engines, but navigable from the EEA's homepage.
User friendliness (easy to navigate)	Moderate	A clear menu is provided on the right hand side of the relevant page
Visual appearance (easy to under-stand)	Low	Maps and indicators are not partic-ularly user friendly. For example it is not possible to change the period of assessment and the functionality of the webpages appear dated.

10.9.3   Coherence

In the following sub-sections evidence is presented on the coherence of the EEA and EIONET's work with other bodies and organisation in the themes of waste and resource efficiency.

Cooperation between the EEA/EIONET and other EU bodies

Similar to other thematic areas, the coordination of work is managed primarily via the MAWP and Annual Work Programmes. Within the work programmes there are two strategic areas: SA1.9 and SA2.1. Like other thematic areas, these are consulted with the Management Board and Commission staff prior to being finalised. The degree of review that is undertaken appears to be non-uniform. Based on interviews with DG Environment, representatives from DG Environment have a clear understanding of the planned activities, whilst others (who did not have a direct relationship with the EEA) lacked precise details on what activities were being planned.

As discussed in previous sections, the Commission is also responsible for the commissioning of studies in the field of waste and resource efficiency; for example framework agreements are established for the economic analysis of environmental and resource efficiency policies and providing assistance to the Commission on the implementation of the revised waste legislation, assessment of Waste Management Plans and monitoring of compliance with the Waste Framework Directive.

There has been a close working relationship between some staff within DG Environment and the EEA. This, in large part, is attributable to the stability and longevity of the staff at the EEA. For DG Environment staff who do not have a close working relationship with EEA staff, the coordination is less satisfactory. Issues, such as the discontinuing of the release of certain indicators, have caught staff by surprise and demonstrates that that coordination could be improved.

The coordination with ETC appears to be well managed. The ETC on Waste and Materials in a Green Economy (ETC/WMGE), started its activities in July 2014. After six months of collaboration with the EEA and a number of strategic meetings, a multi-annual approach to the work of the ETC/WMGE was developed. A multi-annual strategy was based on the MAWP, the Circular Economy Briefing, the 7th EAP and the EU 2020 Strategy, identifying those fields where the work of the ETC/WMGE could contribute most to the EEA. Supplementing the multi-annual strategy, yearly action plans were developed. These have strong coherence with the annual work programmes developed by the EEA.

Alongside these mechanisms, the EEA is invited to include in its annual report a review of progress in the completion and implementation of waste prevention programmes. This is the only legislative role of the EEA in respect of the theme of waste and resource efficiency, and it is optional.

Cooperation with committees and working groups coordinated by DG Environment

Representatives from the EEA have been present at the Working Group meetings on waste statistics. These meetings are led by Eurostat, but include representatives from the EEA and DG Environment. There has been a standing agenda item in each meeting allocated for the EEA to provide an update on its ongoing and new activities – thus demonstrating a clear coordination of work.[637]

Coordination with other DGs

Of key importance to the coherence of SA 1.9 is the close cooperation between Eurostat and the EEA and NRCs, as there is a need to avoid duplication of efforts between these parties. This is especially the case in respect of the collection of the statistics and data. Based on interviews with Eurostat and EEA staff, it is understood that the two organisations try to be complementary: while Eurostat is purely a statistical office, EEA is involved in assessment of waste and resources policies.

Indeed, interviews with Eurostat staff did not reveal any major concerns about duplication. Several coordination measures are in place at different levels to maximise co-operation and minimise duplication. These include:

- Consultation processes in relation to programming documents (Eurostat reviews and comments on relevant EEA programming documents and vice versa);
- High level meetings (i.e. between Eurostat's Director-General and EEA's Executive Director);
- Regular meetings or phone calls at the level of Heads of Unit/Heads of Programme; and
- Cooperation on thematic areas, at the level of project officers (i.e. operational cooperation).

Beyond the EEA itself, the Eurostat staff dealing with waste statistics participate in EIONET meetings on waste, when possible. In the past, Eurostat participated in the NFP meetings, however this has been very much reduced (to three or four meetings per year, due to budget constraints) depending on the topics to be addressed at the meetings. If data issues are on the agenda, Eurostat will reportedly still participate. Eurostat does not have direct contacts with ETCs.

The EEA at times detect issues with data and informs Eurostat, but this is not done on systematic basis. A recent case was in the field of hazardous waste, relating to a discrepancy between data on treatment and generation. The issue was discussed in Eurostat working group meetings and subsequent action was taken to resolve the issue.

DG Environment staff considered there to be some duplication with the activities of the EEA. For example, with regards to the compliance promotion exercise on the implementation of waste legislation. Whilst contractors hired by DG Environment had been gathering information about Member States and their performance, the EEA issued a report containing similar information – most notably in the theme of waste prevention. However, it was felt by an interviewee from DG Environment that the EEA has to build up its knowledge base, and so sometimes the duplication of work is necessary – going through the process of information gathering gives a deeper knowledge of the data and subject matter.

Cooperation with bodies in member countries

Two thirds of respondents to the NRC survey who were involved in 'waste' or 'Resource-efficient economy and the environment' felt that the EEA had sought to develop synergies with environmental agencies and other knowledge

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[637] https://circabc.europa.eu/web-dav/CircaBC/ESTAT/envirmeet/Library/meeting_archives_1/Meetings%202015%20-%20archive/Copy%20of%2002)Waste%20Statistics%20Working%20Group%204-5%20March%202015/1.WASTE%20WG_01_2015%20Draft_Agenda_4-5%20March_rev3.pdf and https://circabc.europa.eu/webdav/CircaBC/ESTAT/envirmeet/Library/meeting_archives_1/Meetings%202016%20-%20archive/01)%20Working%20Group%20on%20Waste%20Statistics%20(1-2%20March%202016)/1.%20WASTE%20WG_01_2016%20Draft_Agenda_1-2%20March_rev3%20doc.pdf

centres in Member States to a 'large' or 'very large' extent. The remaining third were unable to answer and responded 'Do not know'.

10.9.4   Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

The work of the EEA is agreed with the Commission in the annual work programmes. In general, interviewees from DG Environment reported that the EEA has been found to be responsive to the needs of the Commission and has in the past adjusted some of the timelines for its own work to better fit in with DG Environment schedules (for example, with the compliance promotion initiative the EEA checked with DG Environment and prioritised producing fact sheets on those Member States which DG Environment would visit first).

When developing the annual work programmes, the needs of the Commission have been based on a number of documents, including the MAWP, Circular Economy Briefing, the 7th EAP and the EU 2020 Strategy. One criticism presented by some DG Environment staff is that the annual work programme is somewhat superficial and lacking in sufficient detail required for them to understand the actual activities due to be conducted. Such staff have recognised the need to supplement the email communication via dialogue with EEA staff members so to further understand the types of activities due to be undertaken.

With respect to the Founding Regulation, a reference to 'waste management' is included as one of the thematic areas in Article 3. [638] The term 'resource efficiency' and the 'circular economy' are not included in the regulation, as they are relatively new concepts. Accordingly, there has been a need for the EEA to adopt a broader definition of 'waste management' so that includes such terms.

As explored in earlier sections, the EEA is not responsible for the collection of data; a task that is allocated to it for many other environmental themes. A key need for DG Environment is high quality and comparable data – and this is met by Eurostat rather than the EEA.

Recent years have seen a change in the nature of waste and resources policy: a focus on resource efficiency has transitioned to a more systemic policy model in the context of the circular economy package. This shift was anticipated in the MAWP, which included outputs relating to both resource efficiency and the circular economy. These outputs are also reflected in the EEA's Annual Work Programmes. For example, in 2015, a report was published on the progress towards a circular economy in Europe.[639] The EEA has also explored options for the wider uptake of sustainable business models. In this way the EEA's outputs have stayed relevant in the context a changing policy landscape.

Relevance in relation to technological development

During the evaluation period, investment has been directed towards further developing the European reference model for waste. Used to monitor progress towards the implementation of EU waste policies, and identify potential future problems of implementation of the main European recycling, recovery and landfill diversion targets, it represents an increased focus on ex-ante assessment in the area of waste.

10.9.5   EU value added

What has been the EU added value of the EEA?

Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthesised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET. This is summarised in the

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[638] Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network, Article 2(h)
[639] EEA (2015) Circular Economy is Europe: Developing the Knowledge Base, 18th January 2015
https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/circular-economy-in-europe

table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

- Crucial contribution
- Some contribution
- Little or no contribution

The EEA is considered to have made either 'no or insignificant contribution' or 'some contribution' in each case. There are no instances where the organisation's contribution is considered to be very significant. The reason for this is that the EEA's role is relatively small, compared to some other organisations. For example, Eurostat, as the statistical office of the EU, plays a greater role with regard to data collection and reporting. This is not to say that the outputs produced EEA are not important, rather that its contribution to this area is less than for others.

Table 47: Benefits and Costs

Benefit	*Extent to which the tasks have provided the benefit*	Justification
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	*No or insignificant contribution*	The EEAs role in data collection is minor compared to Eurostat.
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	*Some contribution*	**The EEA, via the NRCs, are able to collect accurate data and information on some member country policies.**
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	*Some contribution*	Data is collected by the Eurostat and assessed by the EEA. However, as the data collected is not always complete, it is not possible to always provide comprehensive assessments.
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	*No or insignificant contribution*	The responsibility lies with Eurostat.
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	*Some contribution*	The exchange of policy intervention between NRCs may help build capacity and share best practice.
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies	*No or insignificant contribution*	Reporting is primarily undertaken by Eurostat.
Coordination of activities between members states and preparation for the future	*Some contribution*	Regular workshops and the use of the reference model for waste are helpful interventions.
Provision of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken	*Some contribution*	The EEA provide assessments that otherwise might not be completed.

Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	*No or insignificant contribution*	Reporting is primarily undertaken by Eurostat.
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	*Some contribution*	The EEA staff have been able to develop strong relationships with some staff in DG Environment.
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	*Some contribution*	The EEA are seen as impartial and trusted by a number of participants in the research.

Source: Assessment by the support study

For the waste and resource efficiency themes the presence of EU value added is somewhat weak. As explored in previous sections the provision of data on waste and resources is collected by Eurostat, rather than the EEA and the EIONET. Therefore this role has been proven to be able to be completed in the absence of the EEA.

In respect of ad-hoc research to support EU policy making. It is noted that the EEA does not have exclusivity on this task and a significant quantity of research is already provided by other organisations and institutions. Whilst it will be largely dependent on the nature of the specific research question, it does appear that this function could be provided by alternative organisations and institutions to the EEA and EIONET. This might, however, have a detrimental effect on the quality of the work. The EEA has built-up a track record in this area. Interviews with DG Environment staff felt that because the EEA's work is a continuous exercise, it brings a lot of value - it is useful to have a single body of knowledge being developed that can be referred to. For example, when Member States provide questionable data to DG Environment the EEA can check it against its own data very quickly.

The EEA also adds value through its ownership of the reference model for waste. If the model was to be brought within DG Environment, there might not be a separate dedicated budget for it, and so it would not be continually maintained, but rather simply updated on the occasions it was needed. If it was contracted out, it would become less accessible to Member States and other organisations wishing to refer to it.

What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?

A significant amount of the work of the EEA has focused on identifying policies associated with waste and resource management. The effect of engaging non-EU member states in these exercises has supported capacity building and raised awareness of the policies in place in European countries.

10.10 Appendix D7 – Case Study SOER 2015

10.10.1 Introduction

This document provides a case study of the European Environment Agency's (EEA) State of the Environment Report (SOER) 2015. This case study is produced to support the evaluation of the EEA and EIONET.

Scope and subject matter of the case study

The EEA is mandated in Article 2 of its founding regulation to publish a SOER every five years, to address the state of, trends in and prospects for the environment in Europe. The SOER 2015 aims to satisfy the achievement of this Article, which reads as follows: [640]

> *"The task of the Agency shall be […] to publish a report on the state of, trends in and prospects for the environment every five years, supplemented by indicator reports focusing upon specific issues."*

Like previous SOER's an overarching goal of SOER 2015 was to provide policymaking agents and the public with a credible, legitimate, relevant and accessible assessment, based on objective, reliable and comparable environmental information. It aimed to inform European environmental policy implementation between 2015 and 2020, and analysed the opportunities to modify existing policies (and the knowledge used to inform those policies) in order to achieve the European Union's 2050 vision of living well within the limits of the planet. Accordingly the SOER 2015 sought to draw upon the evidence and knowledge base available to the EEA and the EIONET.[641]

SOER 2015 was released in March 2015, although the key messages were available to DG ENV and DG CLIMA before actual release. The SOER 2015 was comprised of a number of products:

- SOER 2015 Synthesis Report;
- Assessment of Global Megatrends Report;
- Global Megatrends Briefings (11 in total);
- European Thematic Briefings (25 in total);
- Cross-country Comparison on Environmental Indicators Briefings (9 in total); and
- Countries and Regions Briefings (39 in total)

SOERs seek to inform the development of current and future environmental policy both in general, and more specifically by being one of the key inputs to European Action Programme (EAPs). SOERs also represent the primary EU input to a wide range of international policy processes, which include:

- the Environment for Europe process;
- UNEP's Global Environment Outlook (2017); and
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (up to 2015 and beyond).

The choice of SOER 2015 as a case study is key in helping to support the evaluation of the EEA and EIONET. As the EEA's flagship product, it represents a microcosm of the wider products offered by the EEA. That is, a combination of briefings, indicators, data, maps, country fact sheets and comparisons brought together in one package. The case study provides an opportunity for a consideration of a range of environmental themes (a horizontal approach).

Description of the role of the EEA and EIONET

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[640] Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network, Article 2(h)

[641] EEA (2014) Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2018: *Expanding the knowledge base for policy implementation and long-term transitions,* available at:http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/envi/dv/eea_promo_/eea_promo_en.pdf

A summary of the role of the EEA and EIONET is shown in the following table.

Task (ref Founding Regulation and task list used for the analysis)	Sub-task	Description of the role of the EEA	Description of the role of EIONET (specify if NRCs, NFPs)	Description of the role of ETCs (if any)	Mandate/ agreement	Role of the EC (specify the DG)	Role of other EU bodies (e.g. EU Agencies)
Collect, record data for SOE (task e)	n/a	Leading the collection of data, drafting and development of the report	NRCs and NFPs were responsible for helping to draft the country-level SOE information and for providing quality assurance.	n/a – ETCs did not have responsibility for authoring. Their role was mainly technical support with the production of maps and graphs.	EEA and EIONET role set out in Founding Regulation	One of the target audiences of the report. JRC also co-authored the fiche on soils.	One of the target audiences of the report
Publish SOER (task h)	n/a						

The EEA set up a dedicated Coordination Group (also referred to as SOER 2015 Project Team) to deliver the report. The team utilised EEA staff and NFP/NRCs to develop the SOER 2015. The NRCs and NFPs also acted as external quality assurers, through the provision of peer reviews and comments.

Figure 7: SOER 2015 Coordination Group

(*) Also serves as primary contact point for SOER 2015 Coordination Group

Source: EEA (2014) *The European Environment: State and Outlook 2015 (SOER 2015) – Implementation plan*

The final sign-off of SOER 2015 as a package, as well as its respective constituent parts, lied with the Executive Director of the EEA, in consultation with and based on input from the EEA senior management.

The overall SOER 2015 lead and responsibility for delivering a version for final sign-off lied with Jock Martin, Head of Programme for Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEA). He oversaw the planning and full implementation of the SOER 2015 process, provided regular updates on the project's status to senior management, and ensured coordination and linkage with related activities and flanking activities across the EEA.

A broad outline of the development of SOER 2015 over the evaluation period were conducted:

- In 2012, the focus was on 'planning' the SOER 2015, taking into account the lessons learned from the SOER 2010 process. The project plan was the main output of this activity;
- In 2013, the focus was on 'preparing' and 'assessing', i.e. doing much of the analytical work needed to prepare the actual report. This included stakeholder workshops as well as updating EEA indicators;
- In 2014, the focus was on 'drafting' and 'reviewing' the various elements of the SOER 2015, i.e. much of the actual text was developed in this period based on the information gathered; and
- Early in 2015, the main SOER 2015 report(s) and the briefings were published. In 2015, the focus was on 'disseminating' the various SOER 2015 elements throughout the year as well as on developing targeted spin-off products for specific audiences and occasions.[642]

There was a clear process of consultation in the development of SOER 2015 through its development. This included input from the following:

- **NFP and NRCs** helped ensure that the country level input into the SOER 2015 process was credible and reliable by:

  - The NFPs coordinated reviews by the respective thematic NRCs and/or other country-level experts; and

  - The NFPs, together with the NRC, channelled country-level input to the SOER 2015.

- **The Management Board's** (MB) overall role was to guide the project to ensure a legitimate and transparent process by:

  - The MB was regularly updated on progress at its meetings and provided guidance as appropriate; and

  - The Management Board reflected on the findings of the Synthesis stakeholder workshops at a dedicated seminar in 2014.

An analysis of MB meeting minutes indicates that the SOER was included as a recurring agenda item. The MB made a number of recommendations on the different parts of the SOER 2015 report and its communication strategy. No concerns were captured in the meeting minutes of any recommendations that had not been taken on board.

- The **Scientific Committee's** role was to ensure that the outcomes were credible and reliable by:

  - Regularly reviewing the various elements of SOER 2015; and

  - Contributing to the SOER 2015 Synthesis through a dedicated seminar.

10.10.2 Effectiveness

In the following sub-sections evidence is presented on the effectiveness of the SOER 2015.

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP

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[642] Internal Audit Services (2016) *Performance Audit on the 2015 State of the Environment Report (SOER) preparation process IAS.A-2015-W EEA-001*

SOER 2015 was conducted as part of strategic area (SA) 2.4 of the EEA's multi-annual work program (MAWP) 2014-2018. SOERs are produced every five years, and are the key mechanism that allows the EEA to achieve the overarching objectives of SA2.4: to keep under review the state of, trends in, and prospects for the environment in Europe. In addition to producing SOER 2015, SA2.4 also requires that work is initiated on SOER 2020, that annual indicator reports are produced, and that support is provided for the pan-European 'Environment for Europe' process.

MAWP output	Level of achievement (full, partial, none)	Comments, explanation
SA2.4 - to produce SOER 2015;	Full	The report was issued in 2015

Given that the prior edition of the SOER was released in December 2010, it can be concluded that the release of SOER 2015 in March 2015 met the requirement to release a report every five years. Furthermore, the objectives and activities in the MAWP were delivered as forecasted. Appendix C of the main report outlines the outputs outlined in the MAWP, alongside a detailed appraisal of whether the activities were completed.

The EEA set up a dedicated Coordination Group (also referred to as SOER 2015 Project Team) to deliver the report. The handling of data was managed through SOE Online and SOE Online 2015. SOE Online is the infrastructure that supports the exchange and management of SOE information using web technologies, of which SOER 2015 Online is one user experience product.

A new platform for managing report production, the 'Fiche Management System' was also utilised. It was used for the web-publishing of the SOER 2015. The website for the SOER included a mechanism to generate PDF files of the SOER 2015 briefings from the web content management system. The EEA Data Visualisation tool (DaViz) was further improved and used for preparing graphics for SOER 2015 briefings as well as other EEA reports and indicators.

A key issue with the development of the SOER 2015 is the interface with other EEA and EIONET commitments. The SOER 2015 is the EEA's largest and most complex output; but relies on the input from staff across all thematic areas as well as those that are members of the specific project teams. Interviewees noted that its development created a tension between other workloads within the EEA.

The SOER 2015 drew upon the evidence and knowledge base available to the EEA and the EIONET. Accordingly, the EIONET partners (NRCs and NFPs) played a key role in the preparation of the SOER 2015. In the five years before the SOER production; the NRCs were responsible for the collection of data. Finally, at the stage of report preparation, the NRC and NFP members, as individuals (not only as representatives of nominated institutions), contributed to the development of content and acted as key external quality assurers through peer review.[643] Throughout the development of the reports, the Management Board were also consulted on the contents.

Assessing the quality of the SOER 2015 has the potential to be a very complex process. As highlighted earlier, there is no single product associated with the SOER 2015 – it is made up of a number of individual components. These are used by a multitude of different stakeholders: individuals, policy makers, private companies, NGO's and the scientific community. Each of these will have different needs. It is therefore not feasible to appraise each individual aspect of the SOER 2015 from the perspective of each stakeholder. Instead, the SOER 2015 is appraised on the basis of an overall assessment of quality.

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[643] Performance Audit on the 2015 State of the Environment Report (SOER) preparation process in The European Environment Agency (EEA), March 2016

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

The Commission requires support for two aspects:

- Policy development; and
- Policy implementation.

Policy Development

The aim of the SOER 2015 is to provide a baseline of the state of the environment. Explicitly, the aim of the SOER 2015 is not to support specific policy making, but to ensure that the overall direction of policy is informed. Additionally, the SOER 2015 does not aim to replace regular thematic assessments that illuminate specific issues, or underpin dedicated policies.

The SOER 2015 included a change towards a new type of report. Whereas previous iterations have been more 'problem focused', the latest report is the first to take a more 'solutions-orientated' approach. This reflects the language used in the 7th EAP, which refers to the need to address global systemic trends and challenges. The SOER 2015 Synthesis Report includes a chapter entitled 'Responding to systemic challenges: from vision to transition' that considers the range of policy approaches and frameworks that could support the transition to a green economy. It is also reflected in other areas of the SOER2015. The European briefings, for example, include discussion around ways to improve the prospects of key environmental themes, such as air pollution and the marine environment.

The overall approach to incorporating transitions is not uncontroversial. There were some views from Commission staff that such an approach may overlap with other organisations work (e.g. DG RTD, JRC and EPSC (the European Political Strategy Centre) and may not be considered a primary function. However, these views were not made specifically about the SOER2015 and the overall feedback from Commission Staff on the effectiveness of the SOER2015 was positive.

One of the key methods of measuring its effectiveness is to consider the timeliness of the SOER 2015 and its interaction within the wider policy debate on the state of the environment. Within the Implementation Plan[644] of the SOER 2015 it was noted that by 2015 a new EU Environmental Action Programme (the 7th EAP) would be setting a policy framework to 2020. In fact, the 7th EAP was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union in November 2013; some time before the planned release of the SOER. It was also noted that a new European Commission was expected to be in place by late 2014, with a new European Parliament elected in 2014.[645]

An interviewee explained that the decision to release the SOER 2015 after the adoption of a new Commission was based on a view that some of the key messages from the SOER 2015 may be lost if it was released whilst the new Commission was being planned. Representatives of the Commission strongly advised an early release of the report, with previews of main findings to be made available in late 2014.[646]

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[644] The European Environment: State and Outlook 2015 Implementation Plan, March 2014

[645] It should be noted that whilst the SOER 2010 may have had some influence on the 7th EAP, this is out of the scope of this case study as it falls outside of the evaluation period.

[646] EEA Management Board Meeting 66, Meeting Minutes

The SOER 2015 has a number of products associated with its delivery. Some of these, namely the Synthesis Report and Global Megatrends Report are directly targeted at policy makers at the Commission and in member countries. Based on interviews with staff throughout the Commission, these appear to be well received and are seen as reliable sources of information that have helped provide a backdrop to related policy.

One way to assess the effectiveness of SOER 2015 is to assess the extent to which it is used to inform European policy. Based on an assessment on the minutes of the weekly College of Commissioners meeting throughout spring 2015, it does not appear that the SOER 2015 was discussed by the 28 Commissioners. The SOER is referenced in two written reports to the parliamentary committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety [647,648] since its release, and one parliamentary question.[649] This serves to demonstrate that the SOER 2015 is being used as source of information in EU parliamentary processes. There is less evidence of it being used in the development of policy, however. In areas where one might expect the SOER 2015 to be a valuable source of information – such as the circular economy package – there is no mention of it.

It was reported in an interview that it was considered prudent to feed in the findings to the Commission in its early months, with the aim of providing a frame of reference for the work the new Commissioners and a new European Parliament in 2015, and thus serve as a knowledge base for the next legislative period. For example, the SOER has been used in the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 – Societal Challenge 5, and is used as a reference to prepare FP9, the statistical Annex of the IA on Common Agricultural Policy.

Regarding the timing of the release of SOER 2015, the interaction with the 7th EAP is aimed at demonstrating progress against the nine priority objectives. It was outlined in the Implementation Plan that the topics of the SOER were intended to be:

> *"…relevant to European policy, in particular the priorities set out in the 7th EAP and the Europe 2020 strategy"*

The SOER was intended to follow the 7th EAP, rather than influence it. Given that the 7th EAP was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union in November 2013 it would have been difficult to release a new version of the SOER so soon after SOER 2010. The SOER cycle is therefore not consistent with the EAP cycle (and also the Commission Programming cycle, which is the same as that of the EAP). Harmonising the two cycles would allow the findings from the SOER to feed into the development of environmental policy and programming at this level.

In 2015, the EEA performed a mapping exercise of the monitoring needs of the 7th EAP to available EEA indicators on the basis that the 7th EAP in its Article 4 stipulates a support role for the EEA as the EEA's indicators on the state of the environment are to inform the monitoring of the 7th EAP. The result was a working paper (June 2015)[650] with a comprehensive overview of the monitoring needs of the 7th EAP taking into account the priority objectives 1-9 and their sub-components. This was mapped against existing EEA indicators and assessment was made as to whether the EEA indicators corresponded to the 7th EAP monitoring need.

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[647] Report on the mid-term review of the EU's Biodiversity Strategy (2015/2137(INI)), 8th January 2016, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A8-2016-0003&format=XML&language=EN
[648] Report on a European Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility (2016/2327(INI)), 14th November 2017, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A8-2017-0356&format=XML&language=EN
[649] Parliamentary Question on Water Protection Policy, 31st January 2017, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2017-000660&format=XML&language=EN
[650] [405]

In 2015 and 2016, the EEA published an annual indicator report (in line with the outcome of the indicator review described above, where the fourth action was to revive the annual publication of indicator-based assessment[651]). This indicator report was framed within the monitoring needs of the 7th EAP, but responding only to the first three priority objectives and drawing on existing EEA indicators. This corresponds to the mapping of 7th EAP monitoring needs to available EEA indicators[652] where the first three priority objectives are best covered by EEA indicators. From interviews with representatives of DG ENV, the support study learned that there was some extent of disappointment that the EEA was not able to support the monitoring of all nine priority objectives, however, also a recognition that the EEA had consulted with DG ENV on the approach, however, the consultation was considered to be insufficient. This is judged by the support study (on the basis of interview information) to be caused as much by internal coordination issues within DG ENV and with the external coordination between the EEA and DG ENV. Accordingly, it was necessary to draw upon external data in to the SOER 2015 so to demonstrate progress across the nine priority objectives in the 7th EAP.

With respect to the European Parliament, the SOER 2015 was presented to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety in March 2015. The Parliament welcomed the publication of the SOER 2015[653]. Furthermore, the SOER was highlighted by an MEP as a very crucial document with regard to policy development.

Overall the importance of SOER 2015 to policy development can be measured of having **some contribution**. The products associated with the SOER are clearly valued by the Commission and MEPs alike. It is a unique product that provides a holistic assessment. However, factors which reduce its contribution include its timing (provided every five years as opposed to EAPs that have a seven-year cycle) and the issue that other (targeted) reports are provided on a regular basis by the EEA.

Policy Implementation

It would be inappropriate to assess the role of the SOER in the context of policy implementation, as this was never its intended use.

The role of the SOER can be viewed in the context of the establishment of the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) in May 2016. The EIR is a tool designed with the specific objective of improving the implementation of EU environmental law and policy. By providing country-specific reports on a two-year cycle, it offers more current information than the SOER. As observed in the Communication on the establishment of the EIR[654], the SOER was used to help justify the introduction of the EIR by 'setting the scene' and can be seen as providing an overview rather than a tool that enables the detailed appraisal of environmental policy.

Therefore, it is considered **not applicable** to judge the contribution of the SOER to the implementation of policy.

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

In respect of Member States the SOER 2015 also has a number of products which have been specifically aimed at Member States; most notably the Country Fiches, Megatrends and Synthesis Reports. The policy needs of Member States are not homogenous, and like the needs of the Commission the aim of the SOER is not to support specific policy development in an individual area, rather to provide background information for the overall direction of environmental policy. Member States considered the SOER to be a valuable source of knowledge. Primarily, provides a comparison against what is happening in the rest of Europe, and provide a benchmark to measure progress.

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[651] [316]

[652] [405]

[653] European Parliament resolution of 27 April 2017 with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2015 (2016/2166(DEC))

[654] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2016%3A316%3AFIN

Similarly, participants at the stakeholder workshop (which included EEA, the Commission and ETCs) felt that the SOER provided useful perspectives on the strategic level for policy development and implementation.

A key interaction with Member States is their own state of the environment assessments, required as being signatories to the Aarhus Convention (discussed further in Section 0).

Article 4 of the Aarhus Convention states:

"Each Party shall ensure that environmental information progressively becomes available in electronic databases which are easily accessible to the public through public telecommunications network. Information accessible in this form should include:

(a) Reports on the state of the environment as referred to in paragraph 4 below;

(b) Texts of legislation on or relating to the environment;

(c) As appropriate, policies, plans and programmes on or relating to the environment, and environmental agreements, and

(d) Other information, to the extent that the availability of such information in this form would facilitate the application of national law implementing this Convention, provided that such information is already available in electronic form.

The country briefings that form part of the SOER 2015 draw upon the indicators and data in these national state of the environment assessments. These are drafted by national environmental ministries or departments. Although this means that information is not always comparable across member countries (as they might collect or present data in different ways), this approach is more logical than trying to recreate information that is already prepared at a national level.

On the other hand, the cross-country comparisons on selected topics use EEA indicators. For example, the indicator 'average concentration of nitrate-nitrogen in rivers' is used to assess fresh water quality, whilst 'municipal waste per capita' is used for waste. This suggests that the indicators developed by the EEA align with those used by member countries for the purpose of national reporting.

The SOER 2015 "communication package", included short briefings in national languages to try and disseminate the findings as widely as possible.

One of the key issues determining the effectiveness of the SOER 2015 for Member States policy needs is the timing of its release. Many Member States provide annual assessments of the state of their environment (though not necessarily in report form). As signatories to the Aarhus Convention there is a requirement to provide an assessment of the state of the environment not exceeding three or four years. The timing of the EEA's SOER as stated in its Founding Regulation (every five years) is therefore not aligned with this requirement.

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

The SOER 2015 is a perhaps one of the clearest examples of the EEA providing objective, comparable and reliable information. The method of producing the SOER 2015 involved the EEA, NRCs, NFPs, the Scientific Committee and the Management Board. Furthermore, a set of guiding principles were developed as part of the SOER 2015 implementation plan. These four principles were intended to govern the development of SOER 2015 and were as follows:

- **Principle 1 -** SOER 2015 should be based on credible and reliable sources;
- **Principle 2** - SOER 2015 should address relevant and timely topics;
- **Principle 3 -** SOER 2015 should be developed in a legitimate and transparent manner; and

- **Principle 4 -** SOER 2015 should provide targeted and accessible information.

There was a clear process of consultation in the development of SOER 2015 which included a scientific review (by the Scientific Committee) and consultation with country-level experts (from EIONET). The data sources feeding in to the products were clear and trackable.

Within the OPC a range of questions were asked of respondents associated with the SOER 2015. Over 75% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the SOER 2015 was impartial, provided comparable information, accurate and easy to access. This is supported by evidence provided by the EEA itself, whereby over 85% of respondents found that the SOER 2015 was rated as being high quality.[655] It should be noted that EEA staff have a clear vested interest in providing a positive response to this question. Furthermore, many of the respondents to the surveys have a working relationship with the EEA and these results should be interpreted in this context.

The SOER 2015 draws upon a wide range of sources. This includes EEA, Eionet and Commission data, as well as that from national reports (such as national state of environment assessments) and wider sources (such as OECD and UNEP). As the focus of the SOER moved away from identifying problems, towards discussion around solutions, the breadth of information sources has increased. This is especially true for Global Megatrends, whereby a number of sources were derived from outside the EEA and EIONET. For example, the Global Mega Trend on "Diverging global population trends" required robust information and on migration and population to be gathered.

In the table below we have provided a brief overview of the data flows for each section of the SOER 2015. Overall, EEA sources represent a large proportion of the information drawn upon, supplemented by Eurostat and other EC data, and wider sources such as academia and international bodies in some cases. This varies according to the relevant section of the SOER 2015, with reporting in some areas (such as cross-country comparisons) more closely aligned to EEA data gathering exercises than others (e.g. global megatrends).

Table 48: Assessment of Sources of Data for SOER 2015

SOER 2015 Product	Description of Sources
Synthesis Report	In the synthesis report section, the vast majority of quantitative data is sourced from the EEA. For qualitative information, other European sources (such as the 7th EAP and the JRC), global sources (such as WHO and Ecolabel Index) and academic sources are also drawn upon.
Global Megatrends	The nature of the topics covered in this section (e.g. technological change, economic growth, approaches to governance) do not align neatly with the information collected by the EEA and EIONET. EEA data is rarely cited within Global Megatrends, with reports published by global organisations (OECD, UN, WHO, World Bank, etc.) and academic papers featuring prominently.
European Briefings:	Overall EEA and Commission sources constitute most of the information referenced in the European Briefings section, providing most of the quantitative data. At the same time, academic papers and EC sources feature heavily. This appears slightly at odds with the SOER

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[655] The SOER 2015 online survey (2016) *Question 4: How would you rate the overall quality of SOER 2015?*

	2015 Implementation Plan which states that other official sources should be used only in exceptional cases. The briefings are separated in to three main sections:
	• **Context:** The information in these sections is largely derived from the EU, OECD and UNEP. These are aimed at providing the policy and legislative context associated with the relevant theme.
	• **Key Trends:** The information in these sections are largely directly derived from EEA and EIONET indicators, or reports provided by the EEA. In some cases, external sources are used, especially when discussing socio-economic dimensions.
	• **Prospects/Response:** The information in these sections are generally derived from qualitative sources. These include the widest range of sources from academic papers, institutes, individual country ministries alongside EEA reports.
Cross-country comparison	This section is exclusively sourced by the EEA, the EC and Eurostat – with only a couple of minor exceptions. It draws heavily on indicators created for the purpose of comparisons between countries
Country briefings	In Appendix A we have provided an assessment of the sources of information used by the EEA in the production of each of Member Country briefing. Unsurprisingly, the main sources of evidence are national state of the environment reports. However, in almost all cases the EEA draws upon additional national information sources to develop the briefings further. This is particularly relevant for countries such as Iceland that do not publish national reports on a regular basis (with the last one in 2009). This is also the case for the UK, which releases independent country-level products rather than a single report. The UK country briefing therefore ties this information together. However, such reports are not always available (for example, the UK does not produce such a report, and in Iceland national reports are published sporadically).

The wide range of sources drawn upon suggest that EEA and EIONET data streams could be more closely aligned to the SOER 2015. However, in cases where data of the appropriate scale and scope is being collected in a robust manner elsewhere, there is little value in re-creating it solely for this purpose. Therefore the value of the SOER lies in collating these data sources in a coherent and informative manner to enhance its effectiveness. Whilst the precise approach is not detailed in the Founding Regulation of to what extent 'external' information sources should be used (if at all), the SOER was discussed in the MB and the implementation plan (which outlined this approach) was agreed.

Effectiveness in dissemination of environmental information

Use of reports and services

The delivery of the SOER 2015 was supported by a range of dissemination events that were aimed at mainstreaming the key messages from the SOER 2015. One of the key considerations was to achieve "a year of conversation". Accordingly it was decided to release the report in early 2015, so that effective dissemination could occur.[656]

Alongside the report the SOER 2015 was also supported by a number of outreach events coordinated by the NFPs. Over 44 events were held in 30 countries with over 3,000 participants. The make-up of the participants was varied, with policymaker/public servant at national level attending 94% of events. A wide range of individuals attended the events including researchers, scientists and NGOs (each 63%), Teachers (25%) and Students (38%).[657]

Representatives of member countries that sit on the management board felt that that the EEA had a very good communication strategy that was able to engage the general public. Two interviewees stated that the SOER communication and presentation strategy had influenced the approach to reporting on environmental information at a national level.

Communication was discussed at the NFP workshop. Overall, the participants think that communication is handled well at the EEA. There was broad agreement among the participants that the SOER "communication package", including short briefings in national languages, available for countries was excellent. Participants felt that a similar communication could be applied to other EEA reports to increase their outreach.

The SOER 2015 was ranked by the EEA as the top publication of 2015. It was ranked 1st by downloads, social media, media and notifications.[658] Additionally, a total of 1,835 news articles across 59 countries were written in 2015.

Further evidence from an EEA user survey indicated that the SOER was perceived by subscribers in the EEA's CRM as having high quality information and presentation (>80% of respondents).[659] The EEA also conducted a web-survey that found that only 0.75% of users found the SOER "not useful".

Furthermore, within a workshop with NGOs, the participants highlighted the use of the SOER 2015 in their advocacy work, thus demonstrating the wide reach of the products. It was noted that the EEA has improved in coordinating with NGOs to prepare the ground for the launch of new information products (such as the SOER). By knowing in advance of upcoming products, the NGO network can be alerted and disseminate the information. However, it was felt that there was still room for improvement.

Web-site assessment

The SOER is hosted on a dedicated website on the EEA's website (https://www.eea.europa.eu/soer). The website is well structured and logically organised. A review of the pages dedicated to the SOER is summarised as follows

	Rate (high – moderate – low – very low)	Comments (rationale for assessment)
Accessibility (easy to find)	Moderate	The SOER is not visible on the homepage of the EEA. The use of the term 'state of the environment' may not be

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[656] The European Environment State and Outlook 2015: Evaluating the year of dialogue – communication and outreach

[657] ibid.

[658] SMT Internal Note, 9th September 2016

[659] EEA (2017) Survey of EEA's product categories 2017

		apparent to all users and therefore there may be difficulty navigating to the SOER pages.
User friendliness (easy to navigate)	High	The website is easy to navigate with a clear menu system.
Visual appearance (easy to understand)	Moderate	Some of the reports are presented in Pdf format, whilst others on webpages. It is not always clear that the relevant sections can be downloaded.

10.10.3 Coherence

With regard to the SOER 2015, the requirement is clearly defined both in the Founding Regulation, and the MAWP and Annual Work Programmes.

The delivery of the SOER 2015 required significant levels of resources to be coordinated; including EEA staff and the members of the EIONET (NRCs and NFPs). This arrangement is a long understood convention that is considered by the EEA interviewee to be a core function.

A SOER 2015 Coordination Group (also referred to as SOER 2015 Project Team) was tasked with ensuring implementation of the respective SOER 2015 parts. For this, six dedicated SOER 2015 Teams were established. This team interfaced with members of staff in the EEA, EIONET (NRCs and NFPs), the Scientific Committee, an Advisory Group (including experts from IIASA (International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis); JRC; OECD; BEPA (Bureau for European Policy Advisors) and also key stakeholders – such as staff within the Commission. There was also a small use of ETCs/consultants for technical support with regard to the production of maps and graphs.

The project team undertook significant coordination with staff members responsible for the delivery of the SOER 2015; thus ensuring that the expertise within the EIONET (NRCs and NFPs) was well utilised and that the product avoided duplication with other EEA products. The coordination was led by a number of key documents:

- The implementation plan;[660]
- The project plan; and[661]
- A communication plan.

These documents outlined a number of coordination mechanisms and are judged to be robust.

With respect of the internal processes within the EEA, it was noted in the audit of the SOER that the assignment of roles and responsibilities was not always sufficiently clear in the approved working procedures and plans pertinent to the SOER 2015 preparation process.

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[660] EEA (2014) *The European Environment: State and Outlook 2015 (SOER 2015) – Implementation plan*
[661] The European Environment: State and Outlook 2015 Project Plan, April 2013

The role of the EIONET (NRCs and NFPs) was to provide contributions to the content of the SOER 2015 via the collection of data and indicators. Some other intuitions (e.g. JRC), also provided key inputs on certain fiches.

Alongside contributing to the delivery of the SOER, the NRCs and NFPs also acted as external quality assurers, through the provision of peer reviews and comments. However, the level of resources provided by the EIONET should not be overstated. For example, the fiche on Soils received feedback from 10 EIONET countries, along with DG ENV and CLIMA.[662] There was a key reliance on a small number of EEA staff for the delivery of SOER 2015 that was well understood by all parties.

Cooperation between the EEA/EIONET and other EU bodies

In developing the SOER there was a need for a level of cooperation with a range of other EU bodies. For a small number of organisations, there was a need to coordinate the drafting of certain sections of the SOER. For example, the JRC co-authored the Soil Fiche chapter because it operates the European Soil Data Centre (ESDAC), which is the thematic centre for soil related data in Europe.

Other levels of coordination were more focussed on the quality assurance aspects. For example an Advisory Group (including experts from IIASA (International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis); JRC; OECD; BEPA (Bureau for European Policy Advisors) nominees was established to help review the global megatrends.

Cooperation with committees and working groups coordinated by DG ENV and CLIMA

The nature of coordination with the Commission, in particular DG ENV and DG CLIMA is a key aspect to consider. Coordination was focussed on the most effective means of disseminating the findings from the SOER 2015, rather than helping to form the key messages stemming from the analysis. In this case, there was a clear distinction between the role of the EEA and the policy officers within the Commission ensuring that an independent assessment was undertaken.

Officials from DG ENV and DG CLIMA were given access to early versions of chapters of the SOER to review early key messages. Whilst they didn't influence the messages, they did have early sight of them.

No evidence of coordination with meetings of committees and working groups convened by the Commission has been identified for this case study.

Coordination with other policy DGs

With regard to coordination with other policy DGs, it is understood that there is no real coordination, apart from with DG ENV, DG CLIMA and JRC as discussed above.

Overlaps and synergies

It is judged that the roles and coordination mechanisms used in the development of the SOER 2015 were robust. Duplication of effort was avoided and the development of the SOER 2015 was managed effectively. There was a clear division of roles between the Commission and the EEA.

Cooperation with bodies in member countries

The SOER draws upon a wide range of sources. This includes EEA and Commission data, as well as that from national reports (such as national state of environment assessments) and wider sources (such as OECD and UNEP). As the focus of the SOER moves away from identifying problems towards discussion around solutions, the breadth

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[662] https://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/InternationalCooperation/ESP/EIONET2014/EIONET_NRC_Soil_2014_meeting_report_final.pdf

of information sources has naturally increased. As expected, this is especially true for Global Megatrends. Euro-pean Briefings draw more heavily on EEA data, although in some areas where external data is more comprehensive (such as soil and land systems), this is used to inform the discussion.

One other aspect to consider is the external coherence between the SOER 2015 and national state of environment assessments. Each of these assessments provided by Member States is conducted separately from the EEA assessment. As identified in Section 0, the timing of such assessments are often not aligned with the release of the EEA's assessment; thereby avoiding the risk of the similar assessments being provided at the same time. However, the country briefings within the SOER 2015 are developed by NFPs and NRCs within Member States and seek to utilise national SOE assessments. This ensures that there is a degree of coherence between member countries assessments and the SOER 2015 products.

10.10.4 Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

The overarching goal of SOER 2015 was to provide policymaking agents and the public with a credible, legitimate, relevant and accessible assessment of the state of the environment, based on objective, reliable and comparable environmental information. The SOER 2015 was not aimed at enabling policy in one single thematic area; as other EEA data and products are more suited to this role. Instead, the SOER 2015 aimed to provide the overall context by which environment and climate policy making can be framed.

For SOER 2015, a wide range of sources were utilised to ensure that the report did not just reflect the EEA data flows and indicators gathered routinely. These included data (primarily qualitative in nature) from sources external to the EEA. This approach was agreed in the implementation plan, alongside an estimate of the associated resource implications. This plan was discussed with the MB, thereby ensuring that its needs were met.

As outlined in Section 0, one of the key interfaces between the SOER 2015 and environmental policy making is the connection between the 7th EAP. The SOER 2015 allowed progress against the objectives of the 7th EAP to be measured; however, and importantly, the timing of the release of the SOER 2015 ensured that it did not aid the development of 7th EAP.

Another aspect to consider is the relevance of the SOER 2015 over time. The product, like others, reduces in relevance over time as newer data becomes available. Accordingly, within the first two years of release, the relevance of the findings are greatest. As this research has been conducted in 2017, it has been difficult to appraise how quickly the messages in SOER 2015 will no longer become relevant.

As signatories to the Aarhus Convention there is a requirement to provide an assessment of the state of the environment not exceeding three or four years. The requirements are codified within Article 7(3) of the Environmental Information Directive and Article 4(4) of Aarhus Regulation. It should be noted that the timing of the EEA's SOER as stated in its Founding Regulation (every five years) is not aligned with this requirement.

Relevance in relation to technological development

Unique to the development of the SOER 2015, was the establishment of the SOE online information system. SOE online was developed to manage information and data in an interactive format was aimed at laying the foundations for the development of SOER 2015 and beyond.

A new platform for managing report production, the 'Fiche Management System' was also utilised. It was used for the web-publishing of the SOER 2015. The website for the SOER included a mechanism to generate PDF files of the SOER 2015 briefings from the web content management system. The EEA Data Visualisation tool (DaViz) was further improved and used for preparing graphics for SOER 2015 briefings as well as other EEA reports and indicators.

Considering the use of new technologies, such as Earth Observation, much of the development of the content for SOER 2015 took place before Copernicus services)were targeted at environmental issues.. Whilst there were Earth Observation technologies available at a time, these lacked the remote sensing capabilities of recent Copernicus services and needed to be procured from third parties. Therefore such technologies were not utilised.

10.10.5 Efficiency

A key issue with the development of the SOER 2015 is the interface with other EEA and EIONET commitments. The SOER 2015 is the EEA's largest and most complex output; but relies on the input from staff across all thematic areas as well as those that are members of the specific project teams.

The scope of the SOER 2015 went beyond the priority data flows for the EEA and EIONET and therefore it was necessary to collect data from other sources. This is reflected upon in Section 0. With regard to the efficiency of this process, interviewees noted that its development created a tension between other workloads within the EEA.

Based on the interviews conducted with staff, it is unclear of the overall impact of had within each of thematic areas.

Benefits and costs

The EEA committed significant time in to the preparation of the SOER 2015. In total over 3,800 days were recorded in timesheet data provided by the EEA. The largest demand for resources stemmed from the IEA team utilising approximately 50% of the resources.

The overall resource requirements were larger than the number that were budgeted for during the period, as identified in the external performance audit of the SOER (see Figure 8).[663]

Figure 8: Timesheet Data for SOER 2015

Person days budgeted and reported in MPS+ for SOER2015 preparation Per EEA Programme								
	2013		2014		2015		Total	
EEA Programme	Budget	Used	Budget	Used	Budget	Used	Budget	Used
ACC	8.0	3.7	202.0	144.7	64.0	31.0	274.0	179.4
COM	0.0	16.6	229.0	447.0	355.0	543.7	584.0	1,007.3
EDO	0.0	0.0	35.0	12.8	0.0	48.2	35.0	61.0
IEA	264.0	361.8	831.0	1,113.0	468.0	430.0	1,563.0	1,904.8
IDM/SES	54.0	0.6	125.0	117.0	60.0	113.5	239.0	231.1
NSS	40.0	20.5	176.0	204.7	35.0	56.1	251.0	281.3
OSE	0.0	22.5	0.0	75.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	97.6
PAN	0.0	0.0	70.0	57.0	10.0	15.8	80.0	72.8
GAN	0.0	42.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	42.8
TOTAL	366.0	468.5	1,668.0	2,171.3	992.0	1,238.3	3,026.0	3,878.1

Source: Internal Audit Services (2016) *Performance Audit on the 2015 State of the Environment Report (SOER) preparation process IAS.A-2015-W EEA-001*

Beyond staff time, the EEA also logged a total of €917,000 of expenses associated with the development and release of the report.

Cost-efficiency

As identified in the Internal Audit Services Report, the total resource requirements were some 28% larger than budgeted/forecast for. This impacted negatively on the EEA as resources were taken from other vital tasks. The

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[663] Internal Audit Services (2016) *Performance Audit on the 2015 State of the Environment Report (SOER) preparation process IAS.A-2015-W EEA-001*

adoption of the SOE-online aimed to provide a common platform for data collection. However, it appears that the greatest amount of time was associated with the interpretation, synthesis and quality assurance of the data – rather than its collection.

As noted IAS Audit on the 2015 SOER preparation process in EEA, there is no written report analysing the significant differences between the total resource estimates, and those which were used. As there is little information on the breakdown of these tasks, it is not clear whether the development of the SOER could have been more efficient.

It has been noted that a more streamlined version of the SOER, based on implementing a routine aggregation/integration process across the MDIAK chain could have been achieved. However, no assessment of this approach has been identified in the evaluation period, and the effectiveness and relevance of this approach does not appear to have been appraised.

10.10.6 EU value added

What has been the EU added value of the EEA?

It is clear from all of the interviews and surveys that the efforts involved in the development of the SOER 2015 represented a significant benefit. Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthesised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET. This is summarised in the table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

- Crucial contribution
- Some contribution
- Little or no contribution

Table 49: Identified Benefits for the SOER 2015

Benefit	*Extent to which the tasks have provided the benefit*	Justification
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	Crucial contribution	The SOER is seen as one of the key products that enables easy comparison of countries. This benefit falls on EU institutions, Member States and wider society. There is no other product produced by the EEA that brings together such a wide range of environmental information and indicators in this way.
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	Some contribution	**The SOER brings together a wide range of high quality data and information on a range of environmental information (e.g. from robust sources such as the EEA and member country environmental ministries) which benefits EU institutions, Member States and wider society. As the report is only issued on a five yearly cycle and is aimed at the general public, as well as policy makers, the information in the report has a limited impact.**
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	Some contribution	The SOER brings together a wide range of knowledge across a number of thematic areas that enables policy makers to see the bigger picture, rather than focus on specific environmental themes or issues. Key beneficiaries are EU and Member State policy makers.
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	Some contribution	Much of the data collection takes place outside of the development of the SOER, however, the SOER process provides an opportunity to discuss this process and enable the capture of EEA and EIONET data. In some in-

		stances data from outside the EEA is used; there is limited evidence that standardised tools were used to capture external data and information.
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	Some contribution	The SOER process allows national experts to engage on the content of the report and allows the sharing of best practice.
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies	Some contribution	As a signatory of the Aarhus convention, the development and release of the SOER helps the European Union to meet some of the demands under the convention. By providing a coordinated approach, the risk of duplication is minimised and thus the burden is decreased.
Coordination of activities between members states and preparation for the future	Some contribution	Members of the NRCs and NFPs were contributors to the development of the SOER 2015; thus the process helped to maintain coordination
Increase in the volume of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken and provide an efficient uptake of them	Some contribution	The SOER is a unique product and therefore increases the amount of activity that otherwise would be taken.
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	Some contribution	The SOER helps meets some of the requirements of Aarhus Convention. The main beneficiary from this is the European institutions.
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	No or insignificant contribution	The SOER process is undertaken in 5 year intervals and therefore there is a reduced ability to maintain an institutional memory of how to complete an SOER.
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	Some contribution	The SOER required quality assurance from a range of organisations (including Management Board, NRCs, NFPs) - this ensured that the results were impartial, trusted and reliable.

Source: Assessment by the support study team

In the case of EU value added, there are a number of benefits provided by the SOER 2015 that otherwise would not be provided.

As outlined in the previous sections, there are understood to be a range of significant benefits that are related to the development of the SOER 2015. In particular, **'knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making'** and '**easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other'** were highlighted at providing a significant benefit.

In the absence of the EEA, and based on Member States and the Commission acting alone, it appears that these benefits would be difficult to replicate. As identified in other sections, there are already a number of national organisations and NGOs which currently compile state of the environment assessments. The provision of these, however, have different aims to those of the SOER 2015 and in particular, the **impartiality** and **reliability** of the information contained in the SOER 2015 is not replicated. Furthermore, not all signatories to the Aarhus convention

provide a single report to appraise the state of their environment. The development of a single report that includes all member countries is therefore a unique product

In Appendix A we have provided an assessment of the sources of information used by the EEA in the production of each of Member Country briefing. Unsurprisingly, the main sources of evidence are national state of the environment reports. However, in almost all cases the EEA draws upon additional information sources to develop the briefings further. This is particularly relevant for countries such as Iceland that do not publish national reports on a regular basis (with the last one in 2009). This is also the case for the UK, which releases independent country-level products rather than a single report. The UK country briefing therefore ties this information together.

However such reports are not always available (for example, the UK does not produce such a report, and in Iceland national reports are published sporadically).

Indeed, if the EEA and EIONET were not to exist, it would appear difficult for alternative organisations, without access to a network of national experts (such as those which are members of the EIONET), to provide an assessment as **comprehensive, impartial and reliable** as the SOER 2015. It would appear more likely that such assessments would be conducted in silos and may lead to:

- incomparable information being presented;
- an inability to present a detailed assessment of Europe's State of the Environment;
- increased costs to Member States; and
- divergence of standards of environmental information.

What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU members States?

The SOER 2015 included assessment of environmental issues beyond EU Member States. The inclusion of these countries ensured a wide range of benefits. These included the ability to consider environmental issues beyond country boundaries. This is particularly reinforced by the issue that much of the EU environmental legislation is relevant to the single market (European Economic Area) and therefore goes beyond EU Member States. The SOER 2015 also provided key mechanisms to engage with candidate countries for the EU and represented an opportunity to help improve capacity.

10.10.7 Sources of information in Member Country briefings

The following table provides an assessment of the source of information used in the Country Briefings of SOER 2015.

Table 50: Assessment of Member and Co-operating Country Briefings and Sources of Information Used

Coun-try	Report TypeSource			National SOERs		Comments
	Na-tional SOoER	EEA/EC	Other*	Publishing Frequency	Year of Latest Report	
Alba-nia	✓			Annual	2013	
Aus-tria	✓		✓	Every 3 years	2013	The 'Data Facts and Figures' (2014) from the Austrian Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management was referenced.
Bel-gium	✓		✓	Federal version every 4 years (since 2010); Brussels, Flanders and Walloon	Federal: 2013	Environmental areas mainly have regional level setup, though some areas are dealt with at the federal level. Other two reports are the Annual Air Quality in Belgium (2011) and a MIRA Study: *Are there signs of a greening tax system in Flanders?* (2013).

Coun-try	Report TypeSource			National SOERs		Comments
	National SOoER	EEA/EC	Other*	Publishing Frequency	Year of Latest Report	
				have their own reports		
Bosnia and Herze-govina	✓			First edition	2012	
Bul-garia	✓			Annual	2012	
Croa-tia	✓		✓	Every 4 years	2012	Other national reports referenced are the Air Quality Report 2008-2011, River Basin Management Plan 2013-2015, and Report of Municipal Waste 2012.
Cyprus	✓		✓	-	2012 (?)	Other national reports used are a report submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat (2014) and, for a figure, the 'Aair qQuality in Cyprus'.[664]
Czech Re-public	-		✓	Annual	-	Czech Hydro-meteorological Institutee[665] supplied a fig-ure.
Den-mark	✓		✓	-	2014	Other reports used are the Affaldsstatistik (Waste sta-tistics - 2012) and Grønne Varer og Tjenester (Danish Statistics - 2014).[666]
Esto-nia	✓		✓	Every 4 years	2013	Other reports: Statistics Estonia - ENERGY EFFICIENCY INDICATORS (2014); Estonian Environment Agency, Waste Data Management System (WDMS); and Esto-nian Informative Inventory Report 1990-2012.
Fin-land	✓		✓	-	2013	Another source of information was Statistics Finland (2013).
France	✓		✓	Every 4 years	2014	Two reports from the 'Service de l'Observation et des Statistiques' were referenced.
Ger-many	✓		✓	Next planned for 2015	2010 (covering 2006-2010)	Other reports published by the Federal Environment Agency, Federal Statistical Office, and Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy were cited.
Greece	✓		✓	Previous SOoER pub-lished in 2009	2014 (covering 2008-2011)	The report on Special Secretariat for Water (OECD) and two academic papers were referenced.
Hun-gary	✓	✓	✓	Annual	2013	Fact and Figures from the European Commission (2013) was cited. Birdlife Hungary supplied a figure.
Ice-land	✓		✓	Irregular	2009	Reports published by the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources and *Iceland: Environmental Per-formance Review* (OECD - 2014) were cited.
Ire-land	✓			Every 4 years	2012	

Country	Report TypeSource			National SOERs		Comments
	National SOoER	EEA/EC	Other*	Publishing Frequency	Year of Latest Report	
Italy	✓		✓	Every 2 years		Most of the information for the State of the Environment Report comes from the Environmental Data Yearbook (published annually by ISPRA). ISPRA reports are heavily referenced
Kosovo	✓		✓	Annual	2011-2012	A variety of other national reports on subjects such as air quality, water services, forest inventory, energy and GHG emissions were also cited.
Latvia	✓			At least every 4 years	2013	
Liechtenstein			✓	-	-	Other national references include Liechtenstein's National Inventory Report (2014) and the State environmental statistics, which are published regularly.
Lithuania	✓		✓		2013	Figures were from the Lithuanian EPA.
Luxembourg	✓		✓	Irregular	2003	An academic paper, a report from the Department of Environment and a National Inventory Submission (2014) to UNFCCC were also cited.
Malta	✓			-	2010	The SOER is supplemented by yearly Indicator Reports.
Montenegro	✓			National Information on SoE – Annual Indicator-based SOER – Every 4 years	2013	
Norway	✓		✓	SoE Norway (website) updated regularly	2014 (online)	Central Database for Air Quality Data (2014) supplied a figure.
Poland	✓		✓	At least every 4 years	2014	The Ministry of the Environment, National Centre for Emission Management supplied a figure. Central Statistical Office (2013) was also cited.
Portugal	✓			Annual	2014	
Romania	✓		✓	Annual	2012	UNESCO was referenced, providing minor input.
Serbia	✓		✓	Annual	2013	
Slovakia	✓		✓	Annual	2012	A figure was from the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute
Slovenia	✓		✓	Annual (?)	2014	A figure was from the National Institute of Public Health (2013) and Automatic Air Quality Measurement Database (DMKZ).
Spain	✓		✓	Annual	n/a	A figure was from the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Since 2012, SOERs have been continuously updated through an app.
Sweden	✓		✓	Every 4 years	2012	A figure was from Swedish EPA (2014).

Country	Report TypeSource			National SOERs		Comments
	National SOoER	EEA/EC	Other*	Publishing Frequency	Year of Latest Report	
Switzerland	✓		✓	-	-	Figures were from the Federal Office of the Environment
Macedonia			✓	Every 4 years	-	They also publish other reports: Quality of the Environment report – Yearly (2013); Environmental Indicators report - biennial (2012); Environmental statistics - biennial (2013).
The Netherlands	✓			Every 2 years	2012	There, the SOER is called the "Assessment of the Human Environment" instead.
Turkey	✓		✓	Every 4 years	2011 (covers 2007-2011)	Provincial State of the Environment Reports and Environmental Indicator Reports are published annually and are the main sources for the national SOER. OECD Environmental Performance Review of Turkey was referenced.
United Kingdom			✓			The UK does not have a national report. It has a devolved administration each with their own reports.

*Other indicates data sources which are national but not the SOERs; they can provide data in the text or the figures.

10.11 Appendix D8 – Case Study Copernicus

10.11.1 Abbreviations

AAR	Annual Activity Report
AIR	Annual Implementation Report
AWP	Annual Work Programme
C3S	Copernicus Climate Change Service
CAMS	Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service
CEMS	Copernicus Emergency Management Service
CLC	CORINE Land Cover
CLMS	Copernicus Land Monitoring Service
CMEMS	Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service
CORDA	Copernicus Reference Data Access Node
CORINE	Coordination of information on the environment
CSS	Copernicus Security Service
DG ENV	Directorate General Environment
DG GROW	Directorate General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
DG REGIO	Directorate General Regional and Urban Policy
DG RTD	Directorate General Research and Innovation
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
ETC	European Topic Centre
ETC/BD	European Topic Centre Biological Diversity
ETC/ULS	European Topic Centre Urban, Land and Soil Sytems
GIO	GMES Initial Operations
GMES	Global Monitoring for Environment and Security
HRL	High Resolution Layer
IUME	Integrated Urban Monitoring in Europe
JRC	Commission's Joint Research Centre
LUCAS	Land Use/ Cover Area frame Survey
MAES	Monitoring and Assessment of Ecosystem Services
MAWP	Multiannual Work Programme
NFP	National Focal Point
NRC	National Reference Centre
QIR	Quarterly Implementation Report

10.11.2 Introduction

Scope and subject matter of the case study

Copernicus is the EU's Earth observation programme previously known as Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES). Copernicus combines satellite and in-situ observations with the goal of offering near-real-time and free of charge data with global coverage. It provides six monitoring services across the following six thematic areas: atmosphere (CAMS), marine environment (CMEMS), land (CLMS), climate (C3S), emergency (CEMS) and security (CSS). While the overall coordination of the Copernicus programme is led by the European Commission's DG for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), the management of the different Copernicus services is shared between Commission services (DGs), European agencies and industry[667]. The EEA is responsible for the management of two of the three CLMS components and is the sole manager the cross-cutting in-situ component that provides in-situ data[668] and supports all six Copernicus services. In this work, EEA is supported by the European Topic Centre on Urban, Land and Soil Systems (ETC/ULS), by National Reference Centres (NRCs) and by private contractors.

This case study is part of the '*Study to support the evaluation of the EEA and EIONET*' and focuses on evaluating the EEA's work in relation to Copernicus. The Copernicus programme itself was assessed in a separate evaluation that concluded recently[669] and is not evaluated here. More specifically, the scope of this case study is the EEA's work under the Delegation Agreement between the EU and the EEA signed in December 2014 (hereafter Delegation Agreement)[670], which outlines the EEA's Copernicus responsibilities for the period 2014-2020. As outputs under the Delegation Agreement draw on Earth observation data gathered beforehand, the case study makes some reference to previous EEA Earth observation work (for details see *Box 7*). This case study covers also the EEA's cooperation with Commission services, the EIONET National Reference Centres (NRCs) and European Topic Centres (ETCs) in relation to its Copernicus activities.

Description of the role of the EEA and EIONET members in relation to Copernicus

The EEA is responsible for the management of the Pan-European and local components of the CLMS (the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) is responsible for the global component of CLMS) and the cross-cutting in-situ component of all six Copernicus services. These tasks are defined in the Delegation Agreement and constitute a direct continuation of the EEA's activities on the GMES Initial Operations phase (GIO)[671] in the period 2011-2013 where the Agency was responsible for the pan-European, local and in-situ components of the GIO Land Services (for details see *Box 7*).

Box 7 EEA GIO activities (2011-2013) and transition to Copernicus[672]

The GIO Land Services built on the work of the Geoland2 FP7 project (2008-2012) which developed methodologies for five thematic High Resolution Layers (HRLs) on land cover characteristics and change detection methods for the Urban Atlas. The goal of the GIO land services was to provide multi-purpose information to a large community of users (i.e. land cover/land cover change at various scales and periodicity; biophysical variables for dynamic land monitoring, and improved access to reference data) through four components:

- global component producing biophysical variables at global scale;

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[667] Copernicus website: http://www.copernicus.eu/

[668] According to the Copernicus Regulation (377/2014) 'in-situ data' is observation data from ground-, sea- or air-borne sensors as well as reference and ancillary data licensed or provided for use in Copernicus

[669] European Commission, 2017, Mid-term evaluation of the Copernicus programme (2014-2020), COM(2017) 617 final

[670] Agreement Between the European Union, Represented by the European Commission, and the European Environment Agency on the Implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component, Ref. Ares(2014)4012930 - 01/12/2014

[671] EEA and the European Commission sometimes refer to work under GIO as part of Copernicus.

[672] EEA, 2017, GIO Land website, viewed 15 Sep 2017 at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/landuse/gio-land/gio-land; European Commission, 2013, Future Brief: Earth Observation's Potential for the EU Environment, February 2013, Issue 6

- pan-European component providing data about land cover, land cover change and land cover characteristics;
- local component providing very high resolution information on specific areas of interest;
- in-situ data and access to reference data.

The GIO Land Services contributed to operationalising the Copernicus land monitoring components, the continuation of the CORINE (Coordination of information on the environment) Land Cover data series and the introduction five new pan-European land cover products with better resolution than CORINE for five different land characteristics (artificial surfaces, forests, grasslands, wetlands and small water bodies).

While the global component was coordinated by the JRC, the other three components were managed by the EEA under a Delegation Agreement signed between the EU and the EEA for the period 2011-2014.

Under the 2014 Copernicus Regulation[673], implementation tasks for specific Copernicus services can be entrusted to service providers through delegation or other contractual agreements: the EEA is listed among the 'entrusted providers' or 'entities'. In the same year, the European Commission and the EEA signed a Delegation Agreement to define the Agency's role and 'entrusted tasks' within the Copernicus programme. According to the Delegation Agreement the management of the Pan-European and local components of CLMS and the horizontal in-situ component are the 'entrusted tasks' of the EEA and the Agency is expected to fulfil them with a budget of EUR 87 million for the period 2014-2020. The particular outputs and work on these 'entrusted tasks' are defined in the EEA's Multiannual Work Programme (MAWP), Annual Work Programmes (AWPs) and Copernicus Work Programmes (for details see section 2.1).

The Delegation Agreement sets out also a role for EIONET bodies. It stipulates that the EEA can delegate some of the activities for the implementation of its 'entrusted tasks' to 'EIONET members: according to Art. 7.3(c) '*The Agency shall not delegate any of the entrusted tasks referred to in Article 2 nor assign any of its rights and obligations deriving from the Agreement to a third party. This provision does not apply to Eionet members and in particular the topic centres as defined in Article 4(4) of Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of 23 April 2009.*' Moreover, the description of the tasks available in Annex I of the Delegation Agreement foresees cooperation between the EEA and EIONET bodies on the implementation of the 'entrusted tasks', especially the coordination of the in-situ component.

While the Copernicus Regulation lays down the general objectives and activities within the Copernicus Programme, the Delegation Agreement translates these into concrete tasks and outputs for the EEA in the period 2014-2020. According to Art.5.1(c) of the Copernicus Regulation the CLMS is expected to provide information on '*land use and land cover, cryosphere, climate change and biogeophysical variables, including their dynamics, in support of the global-to-local environmental monitoring of biodiversity, soil, inland and coastal waters, forests and vegetation, and natural resources, as well as implementation in general of environment, agriculture, development, energy, urban planning, infrastructure and transport policies*'. Therefore, the Delegation Agreement foresees the EEA to work on the production of High Resolution Layers (HRLs) of different land cover characteristics, CORINE Land Cover (CLC) data series, and Urban Atlas, Riparian Zones and Natura 2000 data sets.

Concerning the in-situ component the Copernicus Regulation (Art. 7.1) expects it to include provision of in-situ data to the operational services; coordination and harmonisation of the provision of in-situ data; technical assistance to the Commission; cooperation with in-situ operators; identification of gaps in the in-situ observations. The Delegation Agreement translated these into the following EEA tasks: establishment of overview of the state-of-play of in-situ data; provision of cross-cutting in-situ data including reference data; management of partnerships

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[673] Regulation (EU) No 377/2014 […] establishing the Copernicus Programme […]

with data providers; and supporting to the EC and Copernicus Service providers/ entrusted entities concerning in-situ data needs.

The following table provides a summary of the key Copernicus tasks of the EEA as specified in the Delegation Agreement.

Table 51 Overview of the EEA's Copernicus tasks, as defined in the Delegation Agreement

Task	Sub-tasks	Role of EEA	Role of NRCs	Role of ETCs	Mandate/ agree- ment	Role of the EC	Role of other EU bodies
Coordination of the technical implemen-tation and manage-ment of the pan-Eu-ropean component of CLMS	Production of Pan-European image mosaics and in-termediate products; updating and improving the High Resolution Layers (HRLs); updating the CORINE Land Cover (CLC) datasets	Coordi-nation and manage-ment	Not specified in the Dele-gation Agreement	Not specified in the Dele-gation Agreement	Annex I of the Delega-tion Agree-ment	Overall management of the Co-pernicus programme (e.g. defini-tion of strategy and priorities, adoption of Annual Work Pro-grammes, monitoring of imple-mentation)	Not speci-fied in the Delegation Agreement
Coordination of the technical implemen-tation and manage-ment of the local component of the CLMS	Management and update of the Urban Atlas; de-velopment of datasets on Riparian Zones and Natura 2000	Coordi-nation and manage-ment	Liaison with Participating Countries and users	Assistance to EEA for the technical co-ordination	Annex I of the Delega-tion Agree-ment	Overall management of the Co-pernicus programme (see above)	Not speci-fied in the Delegation Agreement
Management of the in-situ component	Establishment of overview of the state-of-play of in-situ data; provision of cross-cutting in-situ data including reference data; management of partner-ships with data providers; Supporting to the EC and Copernicus Service providers/ entrusted enti-ties concerning in-situ data needs	Coordi-nation and manage-ment	Access to and provi-sion of in-situ data	Not specified in the Dele-gation Agreement	Annex I of the Delega-tion Agree-ment	Overall management of the Co-pernicus programme (see above)	Not speci-fied in the Delegation Agreement
Supporting activities	Service evolution; stakeholder consultation; ser-vice and product assessment; archiving and dis-semination; liaisons with participating countries and users; Delegation Agreement management	Coordi-nation and manage-ment	Not specified in the Dele-gation Agreement	Not specified in the Dele-gation Agreement	Annex I of the Delega-tion Agree-ment	Overall management of the Co-pernicus programme (see above)	Not speci-fied in the Delegation Agreement

10.11.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness in implementing key activities outlined in MAWP and Delegation Agreement

Overview

As outlined in the previous section, the EEA's role and 'entrusted tasks' within the Copernicus programme are de-fined within the Delegation Agreement. While the Commission is responsible for adopting annual work pro-grammes in the context of the Copernicus Regulation (Art.7.1), the EEA is responsible for '*the adoption each year of an implementation plan detailing the operational activities needed for the implementation of the entrusted tasks, […] a description of processes for validation and quality control, and a risk management approach*' (Art. 7.2).

Consequently, the EEA's MAWP sets out the work for Copernicus under Strategic Area 3.6 noting that it is financed outside of EEA's core budget. The EEA's specific annual activities for Copernicus are elaborated both in the Agency's AWPs and in annual Copernicus Work Programmes, which together serve as the 'implementation plan' referred to in the Delegation Agreement. These activities reflect the priorities defined by DG GROW in the annual Copernicus Work Programmes, even though the EEA has some degree of freedom to prioritise the products and services that are the most important and most used in subsequent assessments. Although broadly in line, the specific activities defined in the EEA's AWPs and the Copernicus Work Programmes provide different levels of detail as to actions planned. Overall, the Copernicus Work Programmes are more detailed than the EEA's AWPs.

It should be noted that, while the EEA provides overall coordination and management for the tasks defined in the Delegation Agreement, many of the underlying activities have been outsourced to EIONET bodies (including NRCs and ETCs) as well as to industry or other service providers[674].

The overall division of tasks among EIONET bodies and industry/service providers for EEA's **CLMS components** is:

- The ETC Urban, Land and Soil Systems (**ETC/ULS**) supports the EEA Copernicus team with the following activities:
    - methodological support (support to technical specifications of products e.g. for the HRLs to meet the user needs or for new services of the local component on coastal and snow and ice cover);
    - quality control support (mainly semantic checks of products e.g. HRLs, Urban Atlas);
    - explore the various possibilities for using CLMS data in reports and assessments e.g. for green infra-structure or ecosystem services;
    - technical support to the NRCs for the CLC (training and guidance of national teams; verification of CLC production).

- The ETC Biological Diversity (**ETC/BD**) supports the development of some datasets of the local CLMS com-ponent (e.g. Riparian Zones).

- The **NRCs**, mainly those on Land Cover[675], support the EEA's work on the CLMS by:
    - producing national versions of the CLC products for later integration in the pan-European level by the EEA and the ETC/ULS;

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[674] Information provided by the EEA and ETC/ULS.

[675] Currently, the NRCs Land Cover are the most involved NRCs as the CLMS products primarily relate to land cover and land cover aspects. However, enrichment of these products with land use information (e.g. for the Urban Atlas) is expected and this is likely to involve the NRCs Land Use and Spatial Planning.

- performing content verification and enrichment (based on in-situ data) of some products e.g. HRLs, Urban Atlas.

- **Service Providers** selected via open calls for tenders are responsible for the production of different CLMS products e.g. HRLs (imperviousness, forests, grasslands, wetness & water, small woody features), Urban Atlas, Riparian Zones, Natura 2000; and the independent geo-statistical validation[676] of Copernicus products.

The overall division of tasks among EIONET bodies and industry/service providers for the **in-situ component** is as follows:

- An **EIONET Copernicus In-Situ Task Force** has been set up to deal with the following tasks[677]:
  - Design and elaborate a Copernicus in-situ roadmap;
  - Make a preliminary in-situ requirements analysis;
  - Perform an analysis of potential partnership agreements;
  - Ensure the finalisation of the in-situ scope report.

- The **NRCs** provide access to critical in-situ data sets, notably:
  - They provide all in-situ data needed for the CLC production;
  - The EIONET air quality data flow is provided to the CAMS;
  - .

- **Service Providers** contribute to in situ activities as follows:
  - Design, set-up and maintenance of the Copernicus Reference Data Access Node (CORDA) database and service;
  - Dissemination and communication activities (e.g. website, newsletter, info sessions);
  - Development of an in-situ requirements database (critical gap analysis);
  - Provision of access to meteorological data for CAMS, C3S, CMEMS (e.g. EuMetNet and partners).

In addition, an **EIONET NFP working group** on Copernicus meets back to back with standard NFP meetings, dealing with both CLMS and in-situ topics and supporting coordination with the NRCs.

This is in line with the approach from the phases pre-dating Copernicus. Service providers and participating countries played a significant role in the production of CLMS products already under the GIO land delegation agreement for the period 2011-2014. This is evidenced by the distribution of production costs for the production of pan-European CLMS products, namely the HRLs and the CLC datasets, in that period. The majority of the costs went to service providers (47%) and participating countries (46%) while 7% went to ETC/ULS. The distribution of costs for the period 2015-2016 covered by the Copernicus Delegation Agreement are reported to be similar (for details see section 5.1.2).

In 2015, a series of 23 tasks related to the CLMS were outsourced to the ETC/ULS through 'requests for services', while six experts from the EIONET member organisations were selected to support the in-situ activities through

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[676] Any product in the CLMS portfolio undergoes an independent validation of its accuracy, precision, completeness, conformity to specifications etc. to confirm its fitness for purpose. The validation is based on a geo-statistical analysis of the CLMS products against external reference data. It is carried out by a consortium through a framework contract and the results of the validations are published in validation reports, available in the technical library of the Copernicus land portal.

[677] The EEA has also indicated that a new call is under evaluation to establish an in-situ data expert group, which will work on e.g. increasing the awareness and understanding of the in-situ component at national level, explaining in-situ data requirements to data providers at national level, illustrating the how and why national in-situ data is used by Copernicus.

the EIONET Copernicus in-situ task force[678]. This task force comprises of NRC experts on geo-spatial data works on a roadmap for in-situ coordination activities. In 2016, a negotiated procedure addressing the EIONET NRCs on Land Cover was launched in relation to a series of mapping, verification and enrichment activities in the Copernicus pan-European and local land monitoring component, planned for the period 2017-2021. In the same year, one member of the EIONET Copernicus in-situ task force won a procurement procedure to analyse the extent to which Copernicus may benefit from Member States' implementation of INSPIRE[679]. (The conclusions from this task indicate that so far there has been little benefit for Copernicus from the implementation of INSPIRE: although Copernicus may benefit from better level of INSPIRE implementation at Member State level, this is likely to occur in the long-term and in the evaluation period (as well as at present) the work on the two occurred in parallel[680].)

Key activities and status of their implementation

Progress and results of the EEA's Copernicus activities are described both in the Agency's Annual Activity Reports (AARs) and in the Quarterly and Annual Implementation Reports (QIRs and AIRs) or AARs for the Copernicus Programme specifically. These reports indicate that the implementation of the EEA Copernicus activities is on track (for a summary see the next table and for details see Appendix C of the Support Study Report). It should be noted that the EEA's tasks are continuous, and no specific deadlines have been set for their outputs in the MAWP. Even though the Copernicus Work Programmes provide more details, they define only indicative timetables for all pan-European or local CLMS 'deliverables' together and no deadlines for the in-situ outputs. Overall, in the period 2015-2016 the Copernicus Work Programmes expected different updates to be made to the pan-European and local CLMS products together with an overview of the in-situ data requirements and a database of the available in-situ data. These expected updates have been completed, while work on the next updates has begun. The continuous work on the in-situ component is on track and the Copernicus Reference Data Access Node (CORDA) was completed in 2016.

The following table provides a summary of the Copernicus outputs defined in the EEA's MAWP together with an assessment of their implementation based on the information available in the AARs and AIRs.

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[678] Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ component, Annual Activity Report 2015, p.7 and p.10.

[679] Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ component, Quarterly Implementation Report 2017-1, p.6 and p.16.

[680] Information provided by the EEA.

Table 52 Overview of the implementation of the EEA's Copernicus activities based on the EEA's AARs and Copernicus AIRs/AARs

MAWP output	Level of achieve-ment	Comments, explanation
Pan-European component of CLMS		
Land-cover data on changes in artificial surfaces, forest areas, agricultural areas, wetlands, water bodies	Partial/ Ongo-ing	The implementation of this output is continuous; the MAWP has not defined a deadline. By 2016: preparations for the production of HRLs for the 2015 reference year were completed; the production of the CLC for the 2012 reference year was finalised and planning for the production of the CLC 2018 version started; preliminary versions of the EU-DEM and EU-Hydro datasets were made publicly available.
Local component of CLMS		
High-resolution land-cover data for Urban Atlas, European riparian zones, Natura 2000 and coastal zones	Partial/ Ongo-ing	The implementation of this output is continuous; the MAWP has not defined a deadline. By 2016: the implementation of Urban Atlas 2012 entered its final phase; technical specifications for the new phase of the production of Riparian Zones were delevoped; the work on Natura 2000 continued; the work on a coastal zone monitoring service entered its definition phase; technical specifications were being prepared for a snow and ice monitoring service.
In-situ component		
Access to in-situ data and reference data for Copernicus services	Partial/ Ongo-ing	The implementation of this output is continuous; the MAWP has not defined a deadline. By 2016: CORDA became operational; the provision of air quality observations from EIONET members continued; partnership agreements with national, regional and other data providers (e.g. EuroGeoSurvers) were established or renewed; the EEA participated in a wide range of in-situ related events at national and European scale and provided support to the EC.
Supporting activities		
Archive, catalogue, view and download services for Copernicus land monitoring	Partial/ Ongo-ing	The implementation of this output is continuous; the MAWP has not defined a deadline.

MAWP output	Level of achieve-ment	Comments, explanation
		By 2016: the Copernicus land portal is operational with a new layout was launched in November 2016; the first meetings of the EIONET NRC Land Cover took place; the EAGLE concepts were fine-tuned and documented and preparations for the next phase began.

Quality and challenges

The EEA's tasks and activities are continuous and as such they are ongoing and generally on track. Nevertheless, there have been some delays primarily due to human resources constraints. While these constraints are partly due to the evolution of the tasks since the GIO phase and the time needed for recruitment, the main reason is the insufficient number of staff supported by the Delegation Agreement. It stipulates that the implementation of the tasks is expected to involve six EEA staff members. However, this has proven insufficient and the actual work so far has involved nine staff members devoted to Copernicus and other staff members who performed ad-hoc tasks (for details see section 5.1.2). The human resource constraints have resulted in minor delays of few months for the production of established products, more significant delays of up to a year for the production of new products (e.g. coastal zones, snow and ice cover) and low priority for products necessary for validation purposes (e.g. the satellite image mosaics)[681]. Interviewees from DG ENV also mentioned that the overall time between data acquisition and availability of the final dataset of CORINE data is significant, taking about three years in total. At the same time, interviewees at EEA noted that the development of the Copernicus Programme has reduced the time required for CORINE Land Cover data compared to previous cycles.

Incorporating Copernicus data in EEA indicators and outputs

EEA's work on Copernicus does not stand separate from its other activities: the MAWP refers to the use of Copernicus data for EEA data and information products in several areas, including air quality (SA1.1), climate impacts (SA1.4), marine environment (SA1.6), bio-physical mapping and assessments of ecosystems and their services (SA1.7), and land use (SA1.8).

The results of the EEA's work on the Pan-European and local components of the CLMS have provided the Agency with data for several indicators and reports in the evaluation period. Overall, Copernicus data is increasingly incorporated into EEA products and nine EEA indicators published on the agency's website rely on Copernicus (from its different services) as an input. Of these four indicators rely on CLMS data:
- Ecosystem coverage – this indicator uses on CLC data;
- Fragmentation of natural and semi-natural areas – this indicator uses CLC data;
- Imperviousness and imperviousness change – this indicator uses HRLs Imperviousness;
- Land take – this indicator uses CLC data.

The latest EEA report on the State of the Environment in Europe, published in 2015 (SOER2015), relied to some extent on Earth observation data from Copernicus. The preparation of the report coincided with the pre-operational phase of the Copernicus project. However, information from Copernicus, in particular CAMS and CLMS, were among the key sources used to produce the report. In particular, data from the Copernicus HRL Imperviousness data set that provides information on built-up and non-built-up areas in Europe and from GMES/Copernicus precursor activities were used for the European briefing on land systems to show the trends in annual land take. The Copernicus HRL Imperviousness data was also used to estimate the urban sprawl per country in the European briefing on urban systems[682]. Furthermore, information from the Copernicus Urban Atlas was also used to project possible solutions for urbanisation issues in the future. For example, the Copernicus Urban Atlas data was used to show the proportion of urban green spaces across European cities by extracting data about certain land cover types and comparing them to the total urban area in core cities[683].

Moreover, since 2013 the use of Copernicus data (from its different services) in EEA reports has grown significantly as evidenced by the following table. EEA reports that use Copernicus data cover topics including climate

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[681] Information provided by the EEA.

[682] EEA, 2017, SOER 2015 – The European Environment – state and outlook 2015, European briefings website, viewed 19 Dec 2017 at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/soer#tab-thematic-briefing

[683] Copernicus Newsletter, 2016, Copernicus services contribute to EEA report on the state of the EU Environment, Issue 15, October 2016, viewed 7 Sep 2017 at: http://newsletter.copernicus.eu/issue-10-april-2015/article/copernicus-services-contribute-eea-report-state-eu-environment

change, urban environment, flood risks, forests, nature, biodiversity and ecosystems[684]. Examples of EEA reports since 2013 that used CLMS data (e.g. CLC, HRLs) are: 'Water-retention potential of Europe's forests' (No13/2015); 'Urban sprawl in Europe, joint EEA-FEON report' (No11/2016); 'European forest ecosystems, State and trends' (No5/2016). As mentioned in section 2.1 the possibilities for further integration of CLMS data into EEA indicators and reports is being explored by ETC/ULS.

Table 53 Number of EEA reports that use Copernicus data

	2013	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**(Q1-Q2/ 2017)**	**Total since 2013**
No of EEA reports using Copernicus data	2	5	8	10	(2)	(27)

Source: Information provided by the EEA.

Effectiveness in providing the Commission with relevant support for policy needs

Mini-surveys completed by 32 Commission officials indicate that nearly half of the respondents worked with Copernicus data in the period 2012-2016. However, only 6% worked with Copernicus frequently and the majority (41%) used it only occasionally. Furthermore, the Commission officials provided mixed responses concerning the adequacy of the EEA's support to assist them in working with the Copernicus data. Around 30% found that the EEA provided adequate or somewhat adequate support, while 22% found this support not adequate. 28% of the respondents reported that the EEA's support was not relevant for their role. Furthermore, interviews with various Commission officials indicate that certain CLMS products have been used for policy development and monitoring of policy implementation since 2014. Nevertheless, the uptake of Copernicus and its outputs, particularly CLMS, by the different Commission services has not yet reached its full potential. The following sub-sections discuss in more detail the current and potential uses of the CLMS across different DGs.

Policy development:

The Commission service on Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) is a frequent user of the Urban Atlas, which supports different geospatial analyses such as accessibility of public transport in large European cities, the nearness of green areas in cities in relation to heat waves and the quality of living in the urban environment and assessments of urban sprawl. For instance, DG REGIO used some data for Copernicus in its latest Cohesion Report[685]. In particular, the Copernicus Urban Atlas was used to estimate and map the residential, industrial and commercial areas per inhabitant by city and the changes in those areas for the period 2006-2012. Together with other urban statistics the Urban Atlas served to compare major cities in Europe and assess what investments can be prioritised e.g. in city public transport.

> The CLMS products had some contribution to policy development in the study period. Even though there has been some uptake by certain Commission services, the potential of the EEA-managed CLMS products to inform policy development is not fully exploited.

Policy implementation:

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[684] Information provided by the EEA.

[685] DG REGIO, 2017, Seventh Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion, viewed on 19 Dec 2017 at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/cohesion-report/

According to the recently published mid-term evaluation of Copernicus[686] 11 DGs use Copernicus data from all its services, including DG ENV, DG AGRI and DG MOVE. More specifically, CLMS provides indicators useful for biomass production or energy infrastructure monitoring (e.g. dams) and information on vegetation health and condition (e.g. measure of dry matter productivity or burnt areas). However, the evaluation does not specify which CLMS products are currently being used by which Commission services for monitoring and assessment of policy implementation.

One of the most obvious clients for Copernicus products is DG ENV. Although there are some examples of reference to CLMS products in the DG ENV's work, it remains unclear to what extent the DG has used Copernicus LMS to implement and monitor environmental policies. The technical reports[687] of the Monitoring and Assessment of Ecosystem Services (MAES) initiative made numerous references to how the CLC datasets, HRLs, the Urban Atlas and the Riparian Zones datasets can be used to support the initiative and monitor ecosystems. Furthermore, draft results from the CLC datasets for 2012 were used in the latest Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) package[688] to report the annual land take rate in the Member States. In addition, DG ENV used the Natura 2000 CLMS datasets in assessments of the network.

Finally, DG ENV and other Commission services may have used Copernicus outputs indirectly through EEA publications that incorporated results from CLMS products (described in section 2.1).

Nevertheless, in the interviews, some DG ENV officials expressed concern that policy use of Copernicus outputs has not matched expectations in terms of their breadth and schedule. Information gathering has not, however, found written documents setting out time scales or specific plans for the uptake of Copernicus outputs in EU policy work. The European Commission is looking to integrate Copernicus data into environmental monitoring, reporting and compliance. The recently completed Action Plan[689] following the Fitness Check on Reporting and Monitoring of EU environmental legislation highlights an important role of Copernicus for reporting and monitoring in the EU: making better use of the data produced by Copernicus is one of the ten actions stemming from the findings of the fitness check. Copernicus can support reporting as well as compliance promotion and better policy implementation. One concern raised within DG ENV is that the development of Copernicus products to support policy needs can be lengthy and requires dedicated attention: in this regard, staff turnover within the DG can be an obstacle.

The table below presents an initial overview of the current and expected use of Copernicus outputs resulting from the EEA's 'entrusted tasks' for EU policy.

> The CLMS products had some contribution to policy implementation in the study period. Although this contribution has not reached its full potential, there are examples of how the CLMS products under the management of the EEA directly or indirectly informed policy implementation reports, particularly in the field of environment.

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[686] European Commission, 2017, Commission Staff Working Document accompanying […] Mid-term evaluation of the Copernicus programme (2014-2020), SWD(2017) 347 final

[687] European Commission, 2016, Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services, Mapping and assessing the condition of Europe's ecosystems: Progress and challenges, Technical Report - 2016 – 095; European Commission, 2016, Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services, Urban ecosystems, Technical Report - 2016 - 102

[688] The EU Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) package, 2017, downloaded on 26 Jan 2018 from: http://ec.eu-ropa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/full_report_en.pdf

[689] European Commission, 2017, DG ENV, Streamlining environmental reporting – action plan, viewed 15 Sep 2017 at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/reporting/fc_actions_en.htm

Table 54 Overview of current and expected policy use by the European Commission of the Copernicus outputs managed by the EEA

Copernicus output	Brief description[690]	Current policy use[691]	Planned/ expected policy use[692]
Pan-European component of the CLMS			
High Resolution and Very High Resolution Image Mosaics	The high resolution imagery captured by Sentinel satellites form the basis for a number of outputs, such as land cover classification assessments. The EEA publishes this base data in the form of a Pan-European orthorectified image mosaic at High and Very High Resolutions, at regular intervals, covering all 39 member countries.	Direct use of the mosaics is not foreseen	Direct use of the mosaics is not foreseen
Reference Data Layers	The EEA oversees the production of two layers containing reference data, mainly used internally within the CLMS, but remaining freely available to third-party stakeholders as well. These layers, EU-DEM and EU-Hydro, are respectively a Pan-European Digital Elevation Model mapping elevation across Europe, and a hydrographic dataset mapping water bodies in the drainage network of European rivers.	No information	These layers can be used for hydro-economic modelling and water accounts.
CORINE Land Cover (CLC)	The CLC inventory predates Copernicus and provides information on land cover and land use, and its production as time series allows for monitoring of changes. While its spatial resolution is not particularly high, CLC gives policy makers at European level a complete overview of land cover and land use, produced with a consistent methodology across all member countries.	DG ENV has used information from CLC for land and biodiversity policy (Natura 2000). CLC data has been used for the Urban Atlas, described below.	CLC can be used for measurement of land use change related to biofuels (Renewable Energy legislation).
High Resolution Layers (HRLs)	The EEA contributes to producing five thematic HRLs (imperviousness, forest, grasslands, wetlands and permanent water bodies) that are complementary to the CLC classification exercise. While they share the same	DG ENV is developing uses for the High Resolution Layers (HRLs).	Each HRL may serve specific policy needs: the Imperviousness HRL is useful in the context of urban planning

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[690] Based on information available on the CLMS website: http://land.copernicus.eu/

[691] Based on information gathered through stakeholder interviews and available on the Copernicus website: http://www.copernicus.eu/

[692] Based on information gathered through stakeholder interviews and available on the Copernicus website: http://www.copernicus.eu/

Copernicus output	Brief description[690]	Current policy use[691]	Planned/ expected policy use[692]
	framework as CORINE, the HRLs go into further detail regarding the specific theme they cover.		e.g. flood risk management; the For-ests HRL is useful to the monitoring of forest policies.
Local component of the LMS			
Urban Atlas	The Urban Atlas provides pan-European comparable land use and land cover data for Large Urban Zones with more than 100.000 inhabitants.	DG REGIO has used the Urban Atlas to assess urban mobility and public transport investment needs.	DG REGIO is expected to continue us-ing the Urban Atlas for urban policies.
Riparian Zones	Under Copernicus, the EEA has contributed to the production of a very high resolution land cover classification exercise, focused on Europe's riparian zones. This information complements the lower resolution, but Pan-Euro-pean CLC and the local Urban Atlas classification exercises.	DG ENV was greatly engaged in the development of the different local component products e.g. by defining the new riparian zones and mapping the Natura 2000 sites and coastal areas for maritime spatial planning.	DG ENV can use this information to monitor the implementation of various EU policies explicitly targeting riparian zones, such as agricultural policies, the Nature Directives, the Water Framework Directive, the Floods Di-rective, etc.
Natura 2000	The EEA has already overseen, in the early stages of the Copernicus pro-gramme, the production of a dataset covering a selection of 750 Natura 2000 sites characterised by the presence of grassland, mapping vegetation cover and threats to these grassland habitats linked to land use and land use change. The EEA is continuing this exercise by covering un-mapped grassland areas and other types of habitats.	DG ENV was greatly engaged in the development of the different local component products e.g. by defining the new riparian zones and mapping the Natura 2000 sites and coastal areas for maritime spatial planning.	DG ENV can use the Natura 2000 LMS to monitor the implementation of the EU nature legislation.
In-situ component for all six Copernicus services			
In-situ component	EEA is also responsible for coordinating the programme's in-situ component, using data derived from ground observations to validate Earth observation. EEA's in-situ work covers all six Copernicus services: Atmosphere (CAMS),	Data on currents, water levels, salin-ity or water temperature supports the monitoring of the Marine Strat-egy Framework Directive.	The Copernicus services beyond CLMS are expected to have a broad range of policy applications.

Copernicus output	Brief description[690]	Current policy use[691]	Planned/ expected policy use[692]
	Marine (CMEMS), Land (CLMS), Climate (C3S), Emergency (CEMS) and Security (CSS).		

Effectiveness in providing the Member States with relevant support for policy needs

According to interviews carried out so far, Copernicus services are being slowly taken up by Member States, especially for the implementation of EU environmental and agricultural policies. Overall, larger EU countries with previous experience in land and satellite monitoring (e.g. Germany, France, Sweden and Spain) are major users of Copernicus so far. Even though they might have more detailed national or local data, CLMS provides data for comparison and further calibration of the information. For some EU13 Member States, CLMS is often the only source of satellite data. Examples of the use of Pan-European and local CLMS components[693] include:

- 3D flight simulation application using Very High Resolution mosaic and the five HRLs in the Czech Republic and Greece;
- artificial land take (quarries, dump sites, roads/railways), using the Imperviousness HRL in Italy;
- anthropogenic pressure on coastal zones, using the Imperviousness HRL time series in Italy and Portugal;
- coastal zone vulnerability, using EU-DEM in Italy;
- forest damage detection, using Forest HRLs in France and Germany;
- assessment of soil cover in Vienna using the Imperviousness HRL in Austria.

The Urban Atlas was also used within the DECUMANUS FP7 project[694] which supported local urban planning by providing services to urban managers dealing with societal challenges including climate change and health. Furthermore, it is possible that some CLMS outputs are indirectly used by the Member States e.g. through the EEA report on urban sprawl[695] or other EEA reports (see section 2.1 for more details about EEA indicators and reports that use Copernicus data).

Nevertheless, the uptake of CLMS outputs by public administrations in the EU remains limited. An analysis of Copernicus user uptake found that outreach to public administrations should be improved to increase their awareness of Copernicus and clearly explain how its services can support the work of national authorities or public administrations[696].

Effectiveness in providing objective, comparable and reliable information at European level

The CLMS products under the responsibility of the EEA provide data comparable at the EU level. While some Member States have their own satellite monitoring and more detailed data at the national or local level (as well as local aerial monitoring), their programmes use different approaches and methodologies which impedes the comparison and integration of datasets. Therefore, CLMS products allow for comparisons at the European level and for calibration of the different national products[697].

Even though Copernicus data is produced by service providers, products and deliverables are quality checked and verified by the ETC/ULS or the NRCs.

The EEA has employed the necessary technology and IT capacity to manage and deliver the Copernicus services under its responsibility. The production of datasets is similar to their work on CLC pre-dating Copernicus and uses some of the same software tools and content management systems. Since the launch of the Copernicus programme, the following processing techniques (e.g. visual interpretation, automated variable calculations, geo-sta-

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[693] Information provided by the EEA and ETC/ULS.

[694] http://www.decumanus-fp7.eu/home/

[695] EEA, 2016, Urban sprawl in Europe, EEA Report No 11/2016

[696] European Commission, 2016, Copernicus User Uptake, Engaging with public authorities, the private sector and civil society, Final version, viewed 7 Sep 2017 at: http://copernicus.eu/sites/default/files/library/Copernicus_User_Uptake_Engaging_with_Users_0.pdf

[697] Interview with the ETC/ULS.

tistical supervised classifications and time series analyses) have been used. The EEA had to meet the security requirements set by the Copernicus Security Board and started using cloud services to process the greatly increased volume of data. According to EEA staff working on Copernicus, this experience provided an opportunity to use cloud computing also for the EEA's other data work[698].

Effectiveness in dissemination of environmental information

Use of reports and services

According to the recently published mid-term evaluation of Copernicus, the number of registered users in the main dissemination hub (the Open Access Hub) and the number of products downloaded exceeded the original expectations for the programme[699]. Concerning the products managed by the EEA, in the period 2015-2016, the top three CLMS that were most viewed were the CLC, the HRLs and the Urban Atlas. In the same period, the most downloaded products were CLC, the Urban Atlas and the HRLs. Nevertheless, download statistics are not available for all products. Appendix A provides information about the views and downloads of the relevant CLMS products for 2015-2016 period (data for 2014 is not available). In 2016, Corine Land Cover products received about 46,000 views; the high-resolution layers about 28,000; and the urban atlas, about 20,000 (see Appendix A).

The use of the EEA's Copernicus products was reported as lower than that of the Agency's other products in a survey[700] of over 700 users who signed up EEA newsletters and other products. This survey found that the EEA's thematic platforms (including Copernicus) are only the ninth most used EEA products after e.g. EEA reports, website, data, maps and indicators, and are used by 30% of the respondents. Nevertheless, among the thematic platform users (a little over 200 of the respondents) the CLMS is in the top three most known services with 35.5% of the users familiar with it. The Copernicus in-situ platform is less known and only around 25% of the thematic platform users are familiar with it. Moreover, the users of these platforms are highly satisfied. Among the CLMS users, 89% give a 'high' or 'very high' assessment to the usefulness of the platform. For the Copernicus in-situ platform the assessment of its usefulness is 'high' or 'very high' among 88% of the respondents. Here, it should be noted that this survey is based on users of products on the EEA web site, and they may make up only a share of users of users of the Copernicus web site and products.

EEA's Monitoring of the media coverage shows that in 2014 EEA Copernicus products (primarily the CLMS) were mentioned in 54 publications; in 2015, in 34 publications; and in 2016, in 87 publications[701]. The level of citations is significantly below other EEA work, such as its reports on air quality and bathing water quality. At the same time, EEA's outputs on the Copernicus web site may be covered without referring to EEA itself.

Web-site assessment

All land monitoring datasets and related supporting information are available on the Copernicus land portal (www.land.copernicus.eu). Datasets are grouped under each of the main CLMS outputs and can be downloaded from the portal. Furthermore, a library of technical documents provides information about methodologies, datasets and differences between versions. The Copernicus land portal is easy to find via search engines (it is the first result when searching for 'Copernicus land monitoring') and the Copernicus website. However, the EEA website does not provide easy-to-find direct link to the Copernicus land portal. The following table provides an assessment of the Copernicus land portal based on the evaluation team's experience with the portal.

Table 55 Assessment of the Copernicus land portal

	Rate	Comments

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[698] Interviews with the EEA.

[699] European Commission, 2017, Mid-term evaluation of the Copernicus programme (2014-2020), COM(2017) 617 final

[700] EEA, 2017, Survey of EEA's product categories 2017, Overview and results

[701] Information provided by the EEA.

Accessibility (easy to find)	Moderate	The portal is easy to find via direct search or the Copernicus website but it is not directly referenced on the EEA homepage. CLMS datasets can be accessed through the 'Data and maps' menu and 'Datasets' sub-menu of the EEA website.
User friendliness (easy to navigate)	High	The portal has clearly defined menus and pages and finding raw data is straight-forward.
Visual appearance (easy to understand)	High	The portal uses different graphics and heading to distinguish the different components and menus of the CLMS.

10.11.4 Coherence

Cooperation between EEA and other EU bodies

Cooperation and coordination

As noted in section 1.2 of the introduction, the EEA's key 'entrusted activities' concerning Copernicus are set out in the Delegation Agreement with the EU. The EEA's annual activities for the Copernicus Programme are set out both in the AWPs and in the Copernicus Work Programmes. The cooperation mechanisms are the same for all of the EEA's Copernicus tasks and reflect formal agreements and processes that regulate the coordination of the EEA Copernicus activities with the Commission and other EU institutions. The different Commission services can review the EEA AWPs and participate in the Copernicus Committee, which approves the Copernicus Work Programmes. Formally, the ETCs and NRCs interact with the Commission services via the EEA. Nevertheless, informal contacts based on personal relationships also play a role and support the official coordination mechanisms. This section summarises the main coordination activities between the EEA, EIONET bodies and key EU institutions.

DG GROW

The main service responsible for Copernicus within the Commission is DG GROW. For instance, DG GROW chairs the Copernicus Committee on behalf of the Commission, leads the preparation of the Copernicus Work Programmes each year and oversees the management of the different Copernicus services and entrusted tasks.

JRC

The implementation of the CLMS is shared between the EEA (responsible for the pan-European and local components) and the JRC (responsible for the global component). Nonetheless, the EEA and JRC components of the CLMS have common elements and coordination to avoid potential overlaps is crucial. Formally, as part of the Commission services the JRC is on the EEA Board and reviews the EEA work programmes. Formal coordination on the CLMS includes cooperation on the shared LMS website and a shared responsibility to report to Member States, to the Copernicus User Forum and to the Copernicus Committee. In addition, there are informal meetings between Copernicus staff of the EEA and the JRC to address common issues and problems. Although these meetings are not formally set, in practice they take place twice a year, including on the sidelines of the formal Copernicus meetings[702]. However, there is no formal agreement for Copernicus coordination between the EEA and JRC.

DG ENV

DG ENV is the main Commission service overseeing the work of the EEA and as such, it coordinates the review of the Agency's work programmes by other Commission services. In practice, DG Environment and EEA staff rely also on informal personal links to exchange information and coordinate work, including concerning Copernicus.

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[702] Interview with the JRC.

As a key potential user of Copernicus outputs, DG Environment has set up an internal process to identify potential for further use and applications and wider integration of the Copernicus products and services into the DG's work.

Other DGs

The Directorate General Research and Innovation (DG RTD) coordinated a lot of the underlying work in the GMES phase and oversees research projects that can contribute to the development of the Copernicus programme (see Box 9). Like other Commission services, DG RTD is on the EEA Board and reviews the Agency's work programmes.

DG REGIO is one of the primary users of the Urban Atlas. During the development of the product, the EEA and DG REGIO agreed that the Commission service will provide a budget for the production of the Urban Atlas and the EEA will be responsible for project management, quality control and dissemination. This arrangement was incorporated in the formal Copernicus Annual Work Programmes.

At working level, coordination between DG REGIO and the EEA concerning the Urban Atlas consists of informal exchanges by mail and phone on an ad-hoc basis and formal project meetings during the production of the Urban Atlas[703]. Furthermore, DG REGIO, the EEA and the ETC/ULS are all members of the Forum on Integrated Urban Monitoring in Europe (IUME). IUME was set up to discuss methodologies, issues, reports, policy developments etc. concerning urban areas among different stakeholders such as Commission services, the EEA, ETCs and Member State institutions. IUME meets twice a year (for details see the box below)[704].

Box 17 Integrated Urban Monitoring in Europe[705]

IUME was initiated by the EEA with the goal coordinating and integrating the different European urban monitoring initiatives were ongoing. The integration is organised around the three main elements of urban monitoring and concerns:

- Identification of available data, data gaps and links between different datasets and available tools;
- Answering questions about urban development and its impacts;
- Development of a theoretical framework of the monitoring concept.

The work is based on the participating organisations' understanding of upcoming needs and challenges and their collaboration through regular workshops. The IUME participating organisations include: the EEA, ETC/ULS, DG ENV, DG REGIO, JRC, Eurostat and others.

Eurostat

The EEA is the sole manager of the cross-cutting Copernicus in-situ component. Nevertheless, this component relies on local, national and European in-situ information collected by various data providers for validation and calibration. One of the main European-level data sources for the in-situ component is the Land Use/ Cover Area frame Survey (LUCAS). Through LUCAS, Eurostat regularly collects information about land cover and use throughout Europe through on-the-ground observations. LUCAS gathers data based on statistical methods and data and the latter relies on Earth observation data. Nevertheless, interviewees indicated that the LUCAS database can be an important source for the validation and calibration of e.g. the CLC data or the HRLs of the pan-European LMS. The Delegation Agreement between the EU and the EEA emphasizes the need for liaison with Eurostat to synchronise and complement the two datasets but does not provide details on the formal procedures for the coordination. However, the 2014-2016 EEA AARs and Copernicus AIRs/AARs do not indicate if this cooperation was put in place

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[703] Information provided by the EEA.

[704] Interview with the ETC/ULS.

[705] Based on information available at the website: http://iume.pbe.eea.europa.eu/ (viewed 29 Jan 2018).

in the evaluation period. The EEA reports that there was coordination with ESTAT about LUCAS e.g. LUCAS point observations were adjusted to the 20m size to be better aligned with Copernicus raster data.

EU agencies

One of key organisation for the implementation of the Copernicus Programme is the European Space Agency (ESA). In 2015, the EEA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the ESA, which is responsible for the management of the Copernicus satellites, including Sentinel 2A that provides data for the CLMS. The MoU sets objectives for the exchange of scientific expertise and technical information and for mutual access to data between the two organisations[706].

The MoU not only sets a generic framework for cooperation between both agencies but also specifies the cooperation between the two agencies for the planning and procurement of satellite image data from Copernicus Contributing Missions (CCMs), mainly before the launch of Sentinel 2. This is important as in the past there were delays and issues with the image quality and accessibility of the data from the 2012 and 2015 reference years. Therefore, there was a need to ensure that ESA applies correctly the land monitoring user requirements in the calls for tender for the reference years[707].

The EEA has also cooperated with the European Global Navigation Satellite System Agency (GSA) in cases where the combination of satellite remote sensing and geolocation services could provide added value. For example, there has been cooperation in the domain of precision farming (through the latest prize 'Farming by Satellite') and communication (for the promotion of the two European flagship programmes to a broader public). In that context, EEA has contributed with Urban Atlas based products to the European Space Expo managed by GSA and through presentations to each of the European Space Solutions conferences and the EGNOSS user conferences[708].

Overlaps and synergies

In the current organisational structure of Copernicus, the management of the CLMS is shared between the EEA and the JRC. The former is responsible for the Pan-European and local component that provides information about land cover and land use and offers higher resolution data on specific areas of interest. The latter is responsible for the global component that offers bio-geophysical data about the status and evolution of the land surface (e.g. vegetation, water cycle, energy and the terrestrial cryosphere) at mid to low spatial resolution. Currently, pan-European information about vegetation, water cycle or terrestrial cryosphere are thus provided by the global CLMS component[709].

The division of work was based on the mandates of the two organisations. The EEA has a mandate to gather data for the EU countries and generally at European level, while the JRC has a mandate to provide policy-relevant scientific evidence to the Commission on all topics, with specific mandates including global issues and policies, development cooperation and disaster management. Consequently, the JRC had a clearer mandate to take over the collection of global level data and the coordination of the global component of the CLMS[710].

Generally, the JRC and the EEA have complementary roles with the main difference in their LMS work being the scale of the images. The EEA has focused on high-resolution products (10m and 2m) with a low temporal frequency (e.g. frequency of images every three years or so), as seen in the Urban Atlas prepared for DG REGIO. While the JRC has focused on low-resolution products (1 km and 100m) with high frequency (up to daily for ad hoc needs), the JRC's work has been useful for DG AGRI, for monitoring CAP implementation, and DG DEVCO among

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[706] EEA, 2015, Strengthening cooperation on Earth observation and the environment, News published 15 Jul 2015, viewed 14 Dec 2017 at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/strengthening-cooperation-on-earth-observation

[707] Information provided by the EEA.

[708] Information provided by the EEA.

[709] EEA, 2017, GIO Land website, viewed 15 Sep 2017 at: https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/landuse/gio-land/gio-land

[710] Interview with the JRC.

others. JRC's global products also covered Europe, however. In the evaluation period, consequently, there was not an issue of duplication of work between EEA and JRC.

Potential overlaps between the components of the CLMS may need to be considered in the near future, however. Thanks to developments in computing power, EEA and JRC products are starting to converge with the JRC being able to produce high-resolutions products too[711]. As the different CLMS components are moving towards similar resolutions and entail similar management tasks, the EEA and the JRC need to ensure adequate coordination to avoid potential overlaps or duplication of work.

Another area where JRC-EEA coordination is important concerns the Copernicus Emergency Management Service (CEMS), which is managed by the JRC. The CEMS provides monitoring and warning services on hazards and can use data produced by CLMS (such as HRL, CLC, EU DEM) as inputs for forest fire and flood monitoring [712].

As mentioned in the previous part of this section, DG RTD oversees a variety of research projects (see examples in Box 9) that can support the development of the Copernicus programmes and the CLMS products particularly. It is unclear to what extent this opportunity has been exploited so far. However, this is an important synergy whose benefits can be maximised.

Box 9 Examples of ongoing research projects that may be relevant for Copernicus

A search through the database of approved Horizon 2020 projects[713] indicates several examples of projects that can have synergies with the EEA's Copernicus activities:

EO4wildlife – this project explores the opportunities to use of European Sentinel Copernicus Earth Observation to monitor wildlife.

DataBio – this project explores the opportunities to use data, including from Earth Observation, for difference aspects of the bio-economy.

ECoLaSS - aims to develop prototypes for the future improvement and development of specific CLMS services.

As noted above, potential synergies between EEA's work on CLMAS and the LUCAS data collected by Eurostat were not achieved in the evaluation period.

Cooperation with bodies in member countries and other organisations

Cooperation and coordination

The ETC/ULS and the NRCs play a substantial role, alongside the EEA, in both the CLMS and the coordination of in-situ activities. Regarding the former, the ETC/ULS contributes significant technical expertise to maintaining data-bases, verifying and processing data, developing new methodologies, tools and products, among other tasks. This work is partially provided through separate procurement within the EEA Copernicus budget (the work in support of CLMS implementation) and through the ETC/ULS Annual Action Plans covered by the EEA core budget (the use and application of CLMS products and services for various environmental assessments/ reports). Another significant contributor to the EEA's Copernicus activities are the NRCs for Land Cover, which supports the production of the

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[711] Interview with the JRC.

[712] Interviews with the EEA.

[713] CORDIS, 2018, EU research projects under Horizon 2020 (2014-2020), viewed on 2 Feb 2018 at: https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/cordisH2020projects/resource/010f269b-9ee3-45a0-afea-c43aa1ef61ac

CLC classification and the Copernicus in-situ tasks. This work is carried out under grant agreements, and the coordination, quality assurance and control and final integration is carried out by the EEA itself. [714]

The coordination of ETC and NRC work with the EEA, Commission services and Member States takes place in various forms. NRCs formally coordinate their work with the EEA through their annual meetings, while the ETCs hold regular coordination meetings with the EEA. There are both dedicated meetings of the ETC/ULS with the EEA Copernicus team and general meetings between ETC/ULS and the EEA where Copernicus topics are also discussed. Other ETCs are kept informed about Copernicus through overarching ETC meetings where ETC/ULS provides Copernicus updates and through direct contact in relation to Copernicus products in their domain (e.g. ETC/BD). In addition, the National Focal Points (NFPs) created a working group on Copernicus that meets three times per year and holds meetings with the EEA Copernicus team to discuss the work and needs concerning national reporting and involvement of the Member States. Feedback from the work of working group shared at the plenary NFPs meeting. While the NRC Land Cover contributes directly to the Copernicus outputs, other thematic NRCs are informed of Copernicus topics on an irregular basis i.e. when a Copernicus topic is considered of interest to them[715].Another platform for collaboration is the EIONET Action Group on Land monitoring in Europe (EAGLE). EAGLE is funded by the EEA and consists of technical experts from NRCs Land Cover and other interested stakeholders. The purpose of the group is to support the coordination and synchronisation of national data. The work of the group focuses on developing a methodology to translate national land monitoring initiatives to common European nomenclatures such as CLC, improve the permanent grassland HRLs and support the involvement of Member State products in the Copernicus framework[716]. As ETCs and NRCs do not directly interact with the Commission services, the EAGLE group and IUME serve as platforms for informal coordination between the Commission services, the EEA, the ETC/ULS and the NRCs Land Cover concerning the Copernicus activities.

In the context of its in-situ coordination task, the EEA cooperates also with the different organisations responsible for delivering the other Copernicus monitoring services. To ensure coordination the EEA[717]:

- Sets up regular meetings (at least once a year) with representatives from the core service entrusted entities;
- Prepares fact sheets on the core services to create awareness raising on the need for in situ data;
- Provides a state-of-play concerning in-situ, as well as a gap analysis to identify action priorities;
- Establishes MoUs with key European data custodians (e.g. EuroGeographics, EuroGeoSurveys, EuMetNet) to improve and ease the access to in-situ data by the core services entrusted entities, and meet the latter's requirements;
- Publishes an in-situ newsletter promoting achievements.

An important potential source of in-situ information for Copernicus is EuroGeographics – an association of European National Mapping, Cadastre and Land Registry Authorities in 46 countries. Its Copernicus Knowledge Exchange Network (CoKEN) is set up to support the development of Copernicus services by arranging and/or facilitating access to reference in-situ data from National Mapping and Cadastral Authorities (NMCAs)[718]. EEA worked with EuroGeographics across the evaluation period and has signed several cooperation agreements with the association covering different periods (the latest cooperation agreement is from March 2017 [719]). Starting with the predecessor of the Copernicus Programme, agreements between the EEA and Eurogeographics have aimed to enable

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[714] Information provided by the EEA and ETC/ULS.

[715] Information provided by the EEA.

[716] Copernicus Programme 2014, Work Programme and Implementation Plan, CC-2014-04

[717] Information provided by the EEA.

[718] EuroGeographics, 2017, website, viewed 15 Sep 2017 at: http://www.eurogeographics.org/home

[719] Copernicus, 2017, News: EEA and Eurogeographics sign agreement, viewed 19 Dec 2017 at: https://insitu.copernicus.eu/news/partnership-agreed-to-improve-access-to-pan-european-maps-for-copernicus-users

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access to national reference data for GMES emergency mapping together with information about administrative and settlement boundaries, topographic features including transport networks, critical infrastructure and DEMs[720]. However, the cooperation between the EEA and Eurogeographics has been challenging. The MoU does not outline specific outputs or deliverables but rather objectives, roles and responsibilities of the parties. Requirements and specifications for outputs were defined in the GISC project, led by EEA[721]. Despite specifications provided by the Commission, the EEA and under the INSPIRE implementation, the organisation has not delivered geospatial data products useful for the CLMS[722].

Overlaps and synergies

As noted in the section on effectiveness, some member countries have national or local services that provide data similar to that of CLMS that creates the risk of overlaps. To ensure such duplications of work are avoided, all products and services are discussed within the NRCs Land Cover meetings. Possible overlaps can occur due to the fact datasets that cover the same land cover theme apply very different technical specifications (e.g. nomenclature, resolutions, updates) which make them non-comparable with European-level data. Another possible reason can be differences in the license and use conditions, which make the use or integration of national datasets in Copernicus impossible. Despite the availability of similar national datasets and products CLMS remains the only product that offers European-level data with the same specifications. An important development in the future will be the harmonisation of different national approaches and methodologies and making them comparable to those of Copernicus[723].

10.11.5 Relevance

Relevance to EU policy

The Copernicus programme and its services managed by the EEA (CLMS components and in-situ activities) are of particular importance for EU policy. Although the uptake of Copernicus services, including those managed by the EEA, has been slower than expected, the Copernicus products have a great potential for monitoring EU policy implementation and for supporting the development of new policies. This is highlighted in the Action Plan following the recently completed Fitness Check on Reporting and Monitoring of EU environmental legislation[724]. In addition, the new regulation on greenhouse gas emissions and removals of Land use, Land Use Change and Forestry requires the use of geospatial information for tracking land use change and refers to Copernicus for data collection and methodology improvement[725].

Even though the EEA's Copernicus activities are defined as separate tasks through the Delegation Agreement, many of these activities are closely inter-connected or reliant on the Agency's core tasks. For example, CLMS provides comparable data at the EU level that can support the implementation and development of climate, environment, agriculture and other policies. This contribution is broadly in line with the core mandate of the EEA to provide Member States with '*objective, reliable and comparable information at European level enabling them to take the requisite measures to protect the environment, to assess the results of such measures and to ensure that the public is properly informed about the state of the environment*' as defined in Art.1(2a) of Regulation

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[720] EEA, 2012, Agreement between European Environment Agency and Eurogeographics, presentation by E. Schuren, viewed 19 Dec 2017 at: http://www.eurogeographics.org/sites/default/files/01b%20EEA-EuroGeographics%20agreement%20in%20support%20of%20GMES%20Emergency%20Management%20Service.pdf

[721] GMES in-situ coordination (GISC) is an FP7 project (2010-2013) that aimed to connect data providers or networks of providers and to develop a management system for in-situ data: http://gisc.pbe.eea.europa.eu/

[722] Information provided by the EEA.

[723] Information provided by the EEA and ETC/ULS.

[724] European Commission, 2017, DG ENV, Streamlining environmental reporting – action plan, viewed 15 Sep 2017 at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/reporting/fc_actions_en.htm

[725] Information provided by the EEA.

401/2009 on EEA and EIONET (the 'Founding Regulation')[726]. Furthermore, the EEA Copernicus tasks on the pan-European and local CLMS components and in-situ component can also be considered relevant for some of the core tasks defined in Art.2 of the Founding Regulation, for instance:

- Art.2(a) on collecting, processing and analysing environmental data – both the CLMS and the in-situ activities contribute to the collection of data relevant for environmental policies;
- Art.2(b) on providing objective information necessary for framing and implementing sound and effective environmental policies – Earth Observation data generated by the CLMS can be considered objective as it does not rely on Member State reporting;
- Art.2(f) on ensuring that environmental data are comparable at the European level and harmonisation of methods is encouraged – the CLMS provides comparable land use across Europe, while the involvement of the ETCs and NRCs allows Member States that have their own similar services to discuss, compare and harmonise their national approaches.
- Art.2(m) on the dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information – CLMS like the other Copernicus services is free of charge and accessible to all stakeholders.

According to Art.5 of the Founding Regulation, the EEA can agree with the organisations and entities comprising EIONET on specific tasks that it issues to entrust them. Hence, the involvement of ETCs and NRCs/NFPs in the implementation of the EEA Copernicus tasks is largely in line with the Founding Regulation.

Overall, the relevance of the EEA's Copernicus activities to its core tasks (as they are defined in the Founding Regulation) remains broad and open for interpretation. At the same time, according to Art.11 of the Copernicus Regulation, implementation of specific tasks can be defined for 'entrusted entities' such as the EEA through delegation or contractual agreements. After the end of the GIO phase the most appropriate set-up for the EEA's involvement and role was considered. According to Minutes from meetings of the EEA Management Board provided by the Agency, the Commission considered that the management of Copernicus tasks to be outside the EEA's core activities as such a role would be in the scope of an executive agency whereas the EEA is a regulatory agency. Therefore, the EEA's Copernicus tasks were defined in the Delegation Agreement for the period 2014-2020, separate from the Agency's core budget.

Nevertheless, the implementation of these tasks through a Delegation Agreement has created some additional costs and efficiency issues for the EEA (see the section on efficiency for more details). As Earth observation is expected to play a growing role in reporting for EU environmental policies, the importance of the EEA's Copernicus tasks is also likely to grow. This in turns puts in question the relevance of the EEA Founding Regulation if it cannot appropriately frame the role of the EEA in the implementation of Copernicus activities: although Copernicus fits broadly within the mandate, the Commission judged that the Regulation does not provide scope for EEA's current role under Copernicus to be part of its core activities. In interviews with DG GROW, DG ENV and EEA, a revision of the Founding Regulation was suggested as a way forward that would ensure the long-term continuity of the EEA's contributions to Copernicus and provide a more efficient budgeting process after 2020.

10.11.6 Efficiency

Benefits and costs

Benefits

The main benefits of EEA's Copernicus work relate to the provision of comparable land cover data at the European level and consistent in-situ information for all six Copernicus services. For most aspects, the EEA's Copernicus work has had crucial or at least some contribution e.g. in making the benchmarking of different countries easier, providing high quality environmental data to policy makers and acting as a trusted entity that provides credible data. The following table provides a summary of the assessment of the EEA's Copernicus work contributions based

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[726] Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 […] of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network

on the information collected through desk research and interviews. Based on the evidence and assessments provided in the preceding chapters, the support study team has synthesised an overview of the main benefits provided through the work of EEA and EIONET. This is summarised in the table below, which distinguishes between three main categories marking the extent to which benefits have been provided:

- Crucial contribution
- Some contribution
- Little or no contribution

Table 56 Assessment of the benefits from the EEA's Copernicus work

Benefit	Contribution	Explanation/comments
Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	Crucial contribution	Although some countries have similar national services, the CLMS provides comparable data at the European level and is the main source of Earth observation data for the other member countries. As such the CLMS is the main source of Earth observation data for European policy makers and some emerging services.
High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	Crucial contribution	The CLMS can provide data for the monitoring of different environmental policies (e.g. forests, nature, ecosystems), climate and urban policies, which can inform EU and national policy makers.
Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	Not relevant	CLMS depends on Earth observation data not on environmental assessments.
Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	Some contribution	The work of the EAGLE group aims to compare and harmonise methodologies related to land monitoring.
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	Some contribution	The work of the EAGLE group aims to compare and harmonise methodologies related to land monitoring. The involvement of NRCs in the implementation of the Copernicus tasks facilitates the exchange of good practices between national experts.
Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies	Not relevant	CLMS is not (yet) used for reporting.
Coordination of activities between member states and preparation for the future	Some contribution	The coordination with the NRCs, including via the EAGLE group, and the development of Earth observation as a source of environmental data ensure activities are coordinated with the Member States.
Increase in the volume of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken and provide an efficient uptake of them	Crucial contribution	CLMS contributed to the launching of a Europe-wide approach to Earth observation data that can be used to inform policy makers on environmental, climate and urban policies.
Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments	Not relevant	CLMS is currently not used for international reporting.

Benefit	Contribution	Explanation/comments
Long-term partnership allows for increased coherence and consistency in work and conservation of institutional memory (vs if outsourced to e.g. an external consultancy)	Crucial contribution	EEA and ETC/ULS provide institutional memory for Copernicus work, linked also to their previous work in the GIO phase.
Credibility of an impartial/trusted, reliable entity and assurance of confidentiality	Crucial contribution	The EEA has a mandate to collect European level information while the NRCs and the ETCs ensure the quality of the final products.

Source: Assessment by the support study team

Costs

Budget

EEA's budget for fulfilling its Copernicus tasks (land monitoring and in-situ component) is defined in the Delegation Agreement and is separate from the Agency's core budget. The total Copernicus budget for the period 2014-2020 is set at EUR 87 million, while the budget for the evaluation period 2014-2016 foreseen in the Delegation Agreement was EUR 38.6 million.

The Copernicus budget is quite large compared to EEA's core budget. In the period 2014-2016, the core EEA budget amounted to EUR 125.2 million (see Table 3-1 in the main report for further details). In 2016, the core budget amounted to EUR 41.7 million, while that year's Copernicus budget reached EUR 15.7 million. Consequently, Copernicus in 2016 was about 38% of the volume of the core budget[727]. For 2017 and 2018, the Copernicus budget was projected to grow further. Consequently, the effective management of Copernicus resources has become an important factor in the Agency's overall financial performance.

Information provided by the EEA shows that the majority of the overall Copernicus budget – EUR 16.8 million out of 18.3 million in actual commitments in the evaluation period and EUR 82.8 million planned of 87.0 million total for the period from 2014 to 2020 – is expected to cover procurement related to the implementation of the tasks as per the Delegation Agreement. The rest of the budget is earmarked for remuneration of EEA activities implementing its Copernicus tasks and covers the staff costs; it is divided, from 2015, in equal annual amounts of EUR 680,000. (See the table below for the actual commitments so far and the annual commitments for the remaining period under the Delegation Agreement).

Table 57   Annual budget commitments for implementation of EEA's Copernicus tasks (in million EUR)

Commitments	2014	2015	2016	Total 14-16	*2017*	*2018*	*2019*	*2020*	*Total*
Procurement (land & in-situ)	-	1.7	15.1	**16.8**	*17.1*	*23.4*	*15.9*	*9.7*	*82.8*
Remuneration (land & in-situ)	0.107	0.680	0.680	**1.467**	*0.680*	*0.680*	*0.680*	*0.680*	*4.2*
Total	**0.107**	**2.4**	**15.7**	**18.3**	***17.8***	***24.0***	***16.6***	***10.4***	***87***

Source: Information provided by the EEA

Notes: Actual payments and commitments are reported from 2014Q4 to 2017Q1. The forecast for the full project is based on a full work programme and procurement forecast. Adjustments have been made to match the total budget of EUR 87 million.

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[727] It should be noted that the Copernicus budget information provided by EEA refers to commitments rather than expenditures, and some of the spending on procurement will take place in subsequent years.

In the period 2014-2016, the **procurement budget** mainly covered CLMS activities provided by industry (around 77% of the total Copernicus procurement budget in the period). Information provided by the EEA on the value of the contracted work (commitments) between CLMS and in-situ activities and between EIONET (ETCs and NRCs), industry and other service providers (services contracted by Commission framework contracts and a public/private consortium) since the start of the Delegation Agreement to the end of 2016 is summarised in the next table.

Table 58 Split of the procurement commitments in the period 2014-2016 (EUR)

Commitments 2014-2016	EIONET	Industry	Other	Total
CLMS	1,761,270	12,847,741	68,750	14,677,761
In-situ	135,302	1,405,598	402,174	1,943,074
Total	**1,896,572**	**14,253,339**	**470,924**	**16,620,835**

Source: Information provided by the EEA

The EEA's activities for implementing the Delegation Agreement include the development and maintenance of Copernicus websites and web services. Information provided by the EEA suggests that the total ICT expenditure for the implementation of its Copernicus tasks in the period December 2014 - August 2017 was around EUR 1.8 million. These expenditures include the development and maintenance of web applications, ICT infrastructure (e.g. data storage, archiving, IT security), software licence costs and costs of cloud services and were covered by the procurement budget.

In addition to procurement for CLMS, in-situ and ICT services, the EEA is also responsible for overall quality assurance, processing of outputs and management of the Delegation Agreement. During the evaluation period, the EUR 680,000 annual **remuneration** received under the Delegation Agreement was largely used to cover the salaries and staff costs for the staff recruited under the Delegation Agreement (see the next section for further details) and to a smaller extent to cover the indirect costs and overheads[728].

While the Copernicus budget was sufficient to cover the indirect costs in 2014-2015 and no core budget contribution was required, in 2016 the contribution from the EEA's **core budget** amounted to EUR 320,000[729]. This contribution reflects the difference between the annual remuneration received under the Delegation Agreement and the EEA's calculation using a standard costing model of the actual costs of the time worked by both Copernicus staff and core staff on Copernicus (see the next section for a breakdown of the time): the cost calculation includes both direct costs (salaries and all other staff related costs) and indirect costs (premises, facilities, personal IT and other equipment, consumables) but excludes overheads (management and internal support), which would also be covered by the core budget. (The estimated core budget contribution for 2017 is even higher and according to the EEA amounts to EUR 360,000)[730].

Human resources

Annex Ibis of the Delegation Agreement outlines the profiles of six EEA staff members who are expected to implement the tasks in the Agreement. Nevertheless, information reported by the EEA shows that the implementation of the entrusted Copernicus tasks is fulfilled by more than the six staff members previewed in the Delegation Agreement. In practice, the Copernicus team has nine members specifically recruited for Copernicus. The Copernicus coordinator (Project Leader) was recruited in 2011 under the statute of Temporary Agent and is paid from the core EEA budget. The role of the Project Leader is to coordinate the Copernicus team and deal with governance. Six

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[728] Information provided by the EEA.

[729] Information provided by the EEA

[730] Information provided by the EEA.

Contractual Agents, recruited partly during the GIO phase and partly in 2015, are paid from the Delegation Agreement staffing budget i.e. the remuneration budget. Each of them has a specialised responsibility in one of the six areas: procurement, finances, reporting, planning and dissemination, pan-European products, local component products, and cross service in-situ coordination. Another Copernicus team member was hired on an interim basis and is paid by the Delegation Agreement remuneration budget. Finally, one in-house consultant is paid from the procurement budget of the Delegation Agreement[731].

Other 35 EEA staff have also been at least partially engaged in Copernicus tasks in the period 2015-2016. This contribution from core staff was needed to cover the work by unfilled contract agent positions in 2014-2015 and support the Copernicus staff with the increased workload in 2016.

Overall, the amount of days worked on the implementation of the entrusted Copernicus tasks by all categories – the Project Leader, Copernicus staff and EEA core staff – has increased significantly from 2015 to 2016 as shown in the table below. This surge is in line with the annual budget commitments for procurement activities, which grew significantly in this period. According to information provided by the EEA, the time recorded for Copernicus is primarily from administration staff (e.g. finance, procurement, legal, recruitment and human resources) and includes also the management and operational support from ICT and Data Management (IDM), communications and other operational units in the EEA. It should be noted that the two administration contract agents (working on finance and procurement) funded by the Delegation Agreement do not work full time on Copernicus and perform also core activities.

Table 59   Breakdown of the working days booked to Copernicus by EEA staff for the period 2015-2016

EEA staff	Working days 2015	Working days 2016	Total
Copernicus Project Leader	100	200	**300**
Copernicus staff	96	1119	**1215**
Core staff	223	367	**590**
Total	**419**	**1686**	**2105**

Source: Information provided by the EEA

Notes: Hours for Project Leader estimated as booked to core project codes. Hours for Copernicus staff may include leave and training.

Conclusions

The Copernicus budget rose to close to EUR 16 million in 2015, large compared to the EEA's core budget. Staff costs and any overheads resulting from the implementation of the Delegation Agreement are primarily covered by the Copernicus remuneration budget: however, EEA's work on Copernicus has also involved contributions from the EEA core budget. In 2016, these amounted to EUR 320,000 according to the EEA.. Moreover, the implementation of the Copernicus tasks was carried out by more staff than originally planned in the Delegation Agreement – in practice the Copernicus team comprises of nine staff members (instead of six), and other EEA staff contribute to and support the Copernicus team.

During the evaluation period (2012-2016), work on Copernicus proper started only in 2014. A limited amount of work and budget was carried out in 2014 as the Delegation Agreement started only in late 2014; however in 2015-2016 both the budget and the workload increased significantly. In 2015, the recruitment of part of the Copernicus team was still ongoing, resulting in contributions by core EEA staff that covered the work until the Copernicus staff positions were filled. Nevertheless, the Copernicus budget in that year was sufficient to cover the costs

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[731] Information provided by the EEA.

of both Copernicus staff and core staff. In 2016, Copernicus activities increased and more resources were required, including further support from EEA core staff as well as contributions from the core budget of EUR 320 000.

Cost-efficiency

Managing the EEA's responsibilities in implementing Copernicus tasks through a Delegation Agreement with the EU has created challenges, according to EEA officials interviewed. As the budget for Copernicus is a delegated budget, the EEA has to keep separate accounts and its staff need to report the time worked on Copernicus separately. However, separating activities can be challenging, for instance, ICT services are performed as part of the core EEA ICT activities and reporting separate time for staff is difficult.

Consequently, while the implementation of the Copernicus activities supports the core activities of the EEA and provides new data for its outputs, the Delegation Agreement creates some costs for the EEA in the form of duplications in the administrative parts of the work (ranging from planning and accounting to reporting). As it is not possible to hire permanent staff under the Delegation Agreement, EEA can only hire contract agents (whose contracts are each renewable once) under it, creating risks of losing in-house expertise and spending time needed for new recruitments[732].

Furthermore, the EEA has only a limited number of staff devoted to Copernicus and their work is largely focused on managing external contracts. As explained in the previous section, one of the EEA Copernicus staff deals exclusively with procurement while staff responsible for specific products deal with contract management. Even though the EEA's Copernicus tasks have evolved over time, the Delegation Agreement involves staffing limits as it implies that the EEA can hire only contract agents . Consequently, the technical expertise available in the ETCs is key to carrying out the Copernicus work[733]. As mentioned in the effectiveness section, the human resources limitations have resulted in some delays in the delivery of Copernicus products. According to interviewees, the current set-up with a delegation agreement between the European Commission and the EEA is more suitable for a project rather than a long-term programme. The Copernicus tasks of the EEA are becoming integrated in the EEA core activities and as noted under relevance, interviewees in both EEA and DG ENV have stated that this should be better reflected in the institutional and regulatory set-up governing EEA's work on Copernicus[734].

10.11.7 EU value added

What has been the EU added value of the EEA?

Copernicus products, including the CLMS and the in-situ components managed by the EEA, offer comparable, consistent and easy-to-access data across Europe on a variety of environmental topics. Some of these benefits would not be possible without the EEA's contribution, hence, the purpose of this section is to evaluate the value added of the EEA to the Copernicus programme.

Even though Copernicus products duplicate to some extent information available at local, regional and national levels, they are developed using consistent methodologies and as such offer comparable results across Europe with consistent quality over time, which would not be possible with scattered local or national data sources using different methods. Furthermore, an initiative at a Europe-wide scale can only by implemented at the EU level rather than the national level, especially the activities for deployment of the space infrastructure, the promotion of interoperability at international level and distribution[735]. Therefore, within the overall Copernicus Programme, an important added value of the EEA's management of the CLMS is the production of land use datasets that have European coverage and can be used for monitoring and analysing environmental policies.

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[732] Interviews with the EEA.

[733] Information provided by the EEA.

[734] Interview with a representatives of the EEA.

[735] European Commission, 2017, Commission Staff Working Document accompanying […] Mid-term evaluation of the Copernicus programme (2014-2020), SWD(2017) 347 final

Furthermore, the EEA is uniquely placed to provide the pan-European and local CLMS products and in-situ component of Copernicus thanks to its technical expertise and network. According to the stakeholders interviewed, DG ENV does not have the technical expertise to carry out this work in-house, while the JRC does not have the mandate for it: therefore, the EEA's contribution is vital. More specifically, interviews highlight that the EEA provides access to other environmental data not directly collected through Copernicus, notably Member State data via the EIONET network, which connects national experts that might not otherwise coordinate with each other. Consequently, EEA and EIONET are able to link CLMS outputs to work in Member States, and at the same time to draw on Member State expertise. The EEA also has the technical expertise and institutional memory to carry out the CLMS (thanks to its involvement in the GIO phase) and process information collected from different sources (thanks to its core task and mandate for data collection on a variety of environmental topics and policies).

The interviewees also point out the EEA's core task of aggregating environmental information on different topics has created considerable experience in managing information flows and negotiating with data providers, including NRCs, which is particularly valuable for the coordination of the in-situ component. Moreover, the EEA is closely tied to the EIONET making the Agency uniquely placed to coordinate the in-situ component. Without the involvement of the EEA and EIONET, interviewees imagined that the Copernicus tasks (CLMS and in-situ component) would be performed on an ad-hoc basis by external contractors with negative effects on quality assurance, continuity and long-term planning.

Another key aspect making the EEA's contribution particularly important, according to the officials interviewed, is the EEA's reputation and network, which help with the uptake of Copernicus services by other users. The EEA is seen as the key user of environmental data offered by Copernicus. As local expertise and information is needed for some of the Copernicus products, the EEA also has the formal network to facilitate the provision of such expertise and to stimulate the uptake of Copernicus services. The involvement of the ETCs and NRCs ensures that the national needs and Member State knowledge contribute to the Copernicus tasks of the EEA and serve to improve the products making them more user-friendly.

What has been the added-value of engaging with members beyond EU Member States?

The involvement of countries beyond the EU Member States ensures the consistency and coverage of the in-situ data and provides additional expertise from national land monitoring programmes e.g. in Norway.

10.11.8 Copernicus land portal statistics

Table 60 View and download statistics from the Copernicus land portal for the period 2015-2016

Product	Views 2015	Views 2016	Downloads 2015	Downloads 2016
Pan-European component: Image mosaics	~6,391	~7,997	N/A	N/A
VHR Image 2012	1,597	3,624	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2012 COV1	768	550	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2012 COV2	390	0	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2012 COV2 20m	367	682	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2012 COV2 5m	395	632	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2009	38	0	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2009 COV1	408	859	N/A	N/A

Product	Views 2015	Views 2016	Downloads 2015	Downloads 2016
HR Image 2006	763	0	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2006 COV1	474	533	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2006 COV2	368	486	N/A	N/A
HR Image 2000	823	631	N/A	N/A
Pan-European component: Reference layers	~3,290	11,191	~318	2,252
EU-DEM v1.1	N/A	2,700	N/A	881
EU-DEM v1.0	3,290	5,942	318	637
EU-Hydro beta	N/A	2,549	N/A	734
Pan-European component: HRLs	19,810	27,986	~665	~2,073
HRL Imperviousness 2012	3,674	5,330	197	730
HRL Imperviousness 2009	988	764	N/A	N/A
HRL Imperviousness 2006	1,229	1,317	43	0
HRL Imperviousness Change 2009-2012	542	1,732	10	78
HRL Imperviousness change 2006-2009	1,047	761	N/A	N/A
HRL Tree Cover Density 2012	2,652	4,030	186	527
HRL Forest Type 2012	3,664	5,134	154	506
HRL Permanent Water Bodies	2,107	3,013	46	88
HRL Grassland	2,167	3,476	0	79
HRL Wetlands	1,740	2,429	29	65
Pan-European component: CLC	32,462	46,457	3,845	7,771
CLC 2012	19,718	27,441	2,950	6,335
CLC 2006	4,511	4,582	252	396
CLC 2000	1,943	2,542	143	296
CLC 1990	2,661	4,442	245	394
LCC 2006-2012	1,481	5,387	171	241
LCC 2000-2006	1,287	895	32	59

Product	Views 2015	Views 2016	Downloads 2015	Downloads 2016
LCC 1990-2000	861	1,168	52	50
Local component: Urban Atlas	12,617	20,770	2,904	4,952
Urban Atlas 2012	8,891	14,213	2,585	3,317
Urban Atlas 2006	3,112	3,936	315	814
UA Change 2006-2012	614	2,621	4	821
Local component: Riparian Zones	2,045	4,200	104	1,115
RZ Delineation of Riparian Zones	1,143	2,698	52	675
RZ Green Linear Elements	902	1,502	52	440
Local component: Natura 2000	708	5,664	10	105
Natura 2K 2012	406	3,751	7	69
Natura 2K 2006	302	1,913	3	36

Source: Information provided by the EEA.

Notes: N/A=Not Available. Download statistics became available from 1 July 2015. Red colour indicates the top three products that viewed or downloaded.

10.12   Appendix E   Common approach: Conformity analysis

As part of the support study, an assessment of conformity with the elements included in the Joint Statement of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission on Decentralised Agencies. To document this assessment, the table below shows four columns:

• Each item in the Joint Statement with numbers corresponding to the Joint Statement (far left column);

• Assessment of formal conformity of the FR with the Joint Statement (middle left column);

• Assessment of practical conformity through documents adopted by the Management Board, e.g. rules of procedure of the MB[736] (hereafter MB RoP) and SC[737] (hereafter SC RoP), policies and work programmes, (middle right column);

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[736] Adopted by MB decision 016/EEA(74)-GOV/2015
[737] Adopted by MB decision 017/EEA/MB(74)-GOV/2015 on 26 November 2015 and amended on 16 March 2016 (by Decision EEA/MB/2016)

- Comments in relation to relevance of the item or its practical implementation in the context of EEA and Eionet (far right column).

Based on the assessment documented in the table, the main findings are that:

- There is a high degree of conformity with the points in the Joint Statement;

- Where there are cases of non-conformity of the Founding Regulation, this must also been seen in the light that this was adopted at a time (1990) when fewer agencies existed and a common approach towards agencies was not developed. The main issue identified in relation to non-conformity of the Founding Regaultion concerns that the Founding Regulation does not include provision for regular evaluation and does not include a 'sunset clause' (ref. point 4 and 60).

- In respect to the 'practical conformity', overall it is found that the EEA has adapted its practises during the evaluation period to conform with CADA requirements. The few points where conformity could be improved include:

  - Annual work programmes and reports were not entirely in conformity with the template provided by the Commission and there was a lack of specification of indicators and targets against specific activities and lack of reporting against key performance indicators and objectives set out in the MAWP (ref. point 27, 31, 32, 47)

  - Annual work programmes and reports were not very specific on how recommendations from evaluations were followed up (ref. point 30)

  - The MAWPs and AWPs were not very detailed on resource allocation to activities although the situation improved with the establishment of activity-based budgeting (ref. points 28, 40)

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
I. Role and position of agencies in the EU's institutional landscape			
1. standard term for all agencies 'European agency for…'	The FR does not conform		Changing would involve considerable cost and not in line with established image of agency
2. Decision to create new agency should rest on impact assessment			The EEA was created before the requirement for impact assessment came about
3. Start-up phase: Management and empowerment of the Commission to take management measures			Not relevant due to the age of the agency

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
4. Sunset or review clause to be included in Founding act	No sunset or review clause in FR.	However, evaluations have been conducted since 2003. In connection with the budget discharge procedure in 2005, the Parliament established that an evaluation of the Agency should be carried out before 2010 and every five years thereafter.	
5. Common and objective criteria should be used to assess opportunities for disbanding and/or merging agencies			Not relevant for the agency. For the Commission to decide on such criteria.
6. Decision on agency's seat			Not relevant for the agency
7. Concerning the specific criteria of accessibility: - Member States currently hosting an agency could consider if and how accessibility can be improved in order to increase agencies' overall efficiency and ensure an even better interaction with stakeholders - during agencies' regular evaluations, the accessibility to the agency could also be assessed.		No evidence of such specific considerations having been made by Denmark. However, accessibility to the agency (in terms of location and transport to/from airport) is good. The metro goes directly from the airport to the seat of the agency in 17 minutes and departs every four minutes on weekdays.	
8. Formal commitment by host state in connection with adoption of founding act			Beyond the scope of this study.
9. Headquarters agreements before the agency starts operation			Beyond the scope of this study.
II. Structure and governance of agencies			
10. Composition should be one representative from each Member State, two representatives of the Commission, one member designated by the European Parliament (where appropriate), a fairly limited number of stakeholders (where appropriate) Four years renewable term for MB members Two-level governance MB + Executive Board	FR conforms with regard to MS and Commission representatives. It provides for **two** rather than one designated member from the EP. No other stakeholders. No fixed term for MB members is mentioned in FR. FR conforms with two-level governance: MB and Bureau. (Article 8, 2)	Chairman and vice-chairman elected by members for 3-year term (re-election possible for another term, ref RoP, Art. 1).	

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
Management Board 11. A coherent policy on preventing and managing conflict of interests concerning members of the Management Board, whether or not they sit in personal capacity, should be developed and applied in all agencies.		The EEA has a policy for prevention and management of conflict of interest (adopted by the MB 7 Dec 2016), which includes the MB members as well as members of the SC and the EEA staff. The support study finds that this strategy comprehensively deals with the relevant issues. All MB members are required to sign statements on absence of conflict interest.	
12. The power to appoint staff should be with the MB, however, delegating the power for staff appointments to the Director	The FR partially conforms: The ED is appointed by the MB (**but on a proposal from the Commission**). The ED is responsible for recruitment of staff, but should get the opinion of the SC for recruitment of scientific staff (Article 9)		
13. For the sake of consistency, agencies' boards should in principle take decisions with the same voting rules: - absolute majority voting for current business matters - 2/3 majority for the appointment and dismissal of the director, the designation of the chairperson of the board, adoption of the annual budget and of the work programme. Exceptions to this approach can be foreseen, if justified in specific cases.	The FR partially conforms (ref Article 8.3) as all decisions of the Management Board require for their adoption a two-thirds majority of the members of the Board. In order to apply absolute majority for current business matters, this would require amendment.	MB RoP specifies that some matters can be decided by the Bureau (Article 2, 8), which decides by consensus (this includes largely current business matters, which can thus be decided by less than a majority of the MB as the Bureau constitutes the Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and one MB member representing the Commission and one member representing the EP).	
14. Director is the legal representative of the agency	FR conforms, ref. Article 9		

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
15. Agencies' Directors are, first and foremost, accountable to their Management Board, to which they submit an annual report, including accounts. They are also accountable to the European Parliament and the Council for the use of the EU contribution through the annual discharge procedure. However, the discharge procedure focuses on accountability and regulatory compliance, rather than on performance per se. This is due, inter alia, to the lack of performance indicators. Agencies' Directors should therefore be more clearly accountable for performance. To this end, tailored performance indicators should be introduced allowing for effective assessment of the results achieved in terms of objectives.	Performance indicators not mentioned in FR.	The MAWP 2014-2018 includes key performance indicators. However, annual reports during the evaluation period have not systematically reported on the achievement of these. I.e. the indicators have not fully helped to achieve the purpose of allowing for effective assessment of the results achieved in terms of objectives. For details, see answer to Q5 in the main report.	
16. MB should appoint Directors based on shortlist from Commission	FR conforms although it only mentions a 'proposal' from the Commission, not a shortlist (Article 9)		
17. Directors' term of office defined in constituent acts and may be extended by MB. A Director not participate in the selection procedure for the next Director.	FR establishes term of office: 5 years (Article 9) (Article 9 establishes that the period of 5 years shall be 'renewable' – but does not establish whether it is renewable once or more.	The EEA's policy on prevention and management of conflict of interest could potentially be amended to clarify that the ED should not take part in selection procedures for his/her successor	
18. Policy for preventing and managing conflict of interest concerning the Director should be developed and applied.		The EEA's policy on prevention and management of conflict of interest meets this requirement.	
19. Procedure for dismissing the Director in case of misconduct or unsatisfactory performance should be foreseen	The FR does not foresee such a procedure, however, Article 9 establishes that the ED is responsible for the 'proper preparation and execution of the decisions and programmes adopted by the Management Board' (Art. 9 (a)) as well as several other points (b-e).		

Joint Statement on decen-tralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
20. The functioning of scientific committees should be improved: a) agencies should exchange information b) Selection procedures should be periodically reviewed, notably in the context of the agency's evaluations. The following elements should be assessed: their degree of transparency, their cost-effectiveness, and their suitability to ensure independence and competence of members of scientific committees and to prevent conflicts of interests. c) independence should be fully ensured		a) this has not been investigated as part of the support study b) The SC RoP in Article 2 sets out the procedures for evaluation of candidates for the SC. It states that the MB shall list priority areas of expertise and make a call for expression of interest which shall be made public. It also establishes a set of selection criteria to be applied. During the evaluation period, calls for expression of interest were made in 2014 and 2016. Transparency: They were published on the EEA website and contained selection criteria based on the RoP and also provided a clear overview of the procedure for selection and the requirements. Cost-effectiveness: There is no data on the exact costs involved. The SC RoP provides for a review of applications and interviews with up to nine selected candidates. Obviously, personal interviews are resource-demanding, however, also necessary in a selection procedure. Interviews with SC members from the period, MB members and EEA staff have not pointed to any concerns about cost-effectiveness of selection procedures. Rather, they have indicated that selection procedures worked well. Suitability: According to interviews, selection procedures have worked well during the period.	
21. Boards of appeal			Not relevant for EEA
22. Advisable for Member States to review adequacy of staff/resources assigned to agency. Important that they ensure information flows and appoint contact points.	This is enshrined into the FR through the establishment of the Eionet (Article 4)		
III. Operation of agencies			

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
23. In order to deliver administrative support that agencies need to operate efficiently, the following options can be envisaged: - improving or extending services provided by the Commission - merging smaller agencies - sharing services between agencies	n.a.	The EEA was using some Commission services for translation and for payroll management, however, this dis not improve efficiency as the charges were higher than what the private market can offer according to EEA staff. Interviews have indicated a few examples of shared services with other agencies and with the Commission (IT procurement, Cloud services in the IT area). This saved costs but only a small proportion of the budget according to interviews.	*Note! 'smaller agencies' not defined.*
24. Agencies should apply the same level of protection as Council and Commission to classified information - relevant provisions should be included in Founding Acts (decision to be taken by MB for existing agencies) – but should not be detrimental to the European Parliament's right to access	No provision on this in FR.	No records identified of MB decision on this within the evaluation period.	
25. Agencies' international relations should be streamlined - when international cooperation foreseen in mandate agency should have clear strategy for those activities – approved by the MB - this should ensure that agency operating within mandate and not seen to represent EU position - early exchange of information on activities between agency, Commission and relevant EU Delegations		The strategy for international cooperation is embedded in the MAWP. In addition, the EEA developed an 'international framework' in 2015, which was discussed in the MB and consulted with the Commission and subsequently, 'welcomed' by the MB at the November meeting in 2015. Interviews with Commission staff have indicated a high level of appreciation for the work of the EEA in relation to international activities (including support to the UN SDG process and UNECE Environment for Europe as well as pojects to implement SEIS in neighbourhood countries). Interviews indicate that EEA was operating within its mandate and was not seen to represent the EU position.	
IV. Programming of activities and resources			

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
26. Agencies entitled to engage in communication activities - agency's communication strategy should be coherent, relevant and coordinated with the Commission and other institutions - communication activities should not be detrimental to agency's tasks - agencies' access to central communication tools and coordinating structures should be facilitated + can make use of Commission's framework contracts	Communication is a core task for the EEA, ref FR, Article 1 and 2 (m)	The agency had a communication framework, which elaborates further on the communication strategy as set out in the MAWP. It is assessed as coherence, relevant and coorindated with the Commission (see Q1 in main report and the section on implementation of task (m) on dissemination. The EEA was obliged to use the Commission's translation services, however, these were slower and more expensive than what could be provided from the private market according to the agency.	
IV Programming of activities and resources			
27. As far as possible annual work programmes to be based on a template	No mention of template or specific content requirements in the FR.	The Commission issued guidelines on template through a Communication in 2014 (C(2014) 9641) to be applicable from 2015. The annual WPs followed the same structure for the years 2014 and onwards. Overall, the main structure from the template was followed (two key chapters: 1. Executive summary and 2. Activities). However, the EEA AWPs did not include the annexes prescribed in the template. Also, the template is quite elaborate on how the annual activities are supposed to be described and the AWPs of the EEA (2014-2016) do not follow the template in e.g. providing specific indicators and targets for each activity.	
28. Agencies should draw up MAWPs linked with resource planning	MAWP, including budget estimate is required by FR (ref Article 8,4)	The MAWP 2014-2018 included budget and staff elements, but only at the level of SA (highest programme level).The previous MAWP(strategy 2009-2013) did not include an indicative resource allocation on strategic areas, only a general budget forecast. AWPs since 2014 have included more details on planned resource allocation going to the SA2 (sub-strategic area) level	

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
29. Commission should be consulted on MAWP and AWP. The EP should be consulted but in a non-binding manner. ED should present AWP to EP Committees.	FR states that MB should adopt MAWP and AWP upon receiving the Commission's opinion (article 8,4 and 8,5) There is no formal requirement to consult with the EP or for the ED to present AWP to Parliament, however, since (following the FR) representatives of the EP are members of the MB, there is indirectly a consultation channel.	The Commission was taking part in the consultation procedure for MAWPs and AWPs and issued opinions on these during the evaluation period. See answer to Q5. In practise, the ED was presenting the AWPs to the EP ENVI Committee during the evaluation period through an 'annual exchange of views' in the ENVI Committee. Also, there were activities and communication between the Agency and the Committee during the years of the evaluation period (evidenced by EEA documents and interviews).	
30. MAWP should include actions necessary to respond to outcomes of overall evaluations	No mention of this in FR	The MAWP/strategy 2009-2013 mentioned the 2008 evaluation in some paragraphs and stated that the recommendations had been acted on in shaping the MAWP, but did not provide much detail on how exactly. Similarly, the MAWP-2014-2018 referred the 2013 evaluation and stated that recommendations would be followed up, but the MAWP itself did not provide much detail on this. However, separate to the MAWP, the MB issued a response to the evaluation and the EEA Management issued a feed-back to the MB. The SC also issued an opinion. All these are available on EEA's website.	

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
31. Key performance indicators should be developed by the agencies and the Commission and adapted to agencies' specificities. Links between actions and financial/human resources should be reinforced as should the link between MAWP and AWP.	The FR requires that AWPs are developed 'under the MAWP' (article 8,5)	The MAWP 2009-2013 did not include KPIs. The agency developed KPIs in the MAWP 2014-2018 (however, these are not based on a set of common indicators for agencies[738]). The MAWP 2014-2018 provides links between actions and resources, but only at SA level. Under the MAWP 2014-2018, there was a strong linkage between the MAWP and the AWPs – same structure used throughout. However, AWPs did not always reflect on the objectives, KPIs and outputs outlined in the MAWP (see answer to Q5).	
32. The Director should report to the MB on the agency's progress in implementing MAWP	FR requires MB to adopt the annual report on the Agency's activities (article 8,6), however it does not specify clearly that the ED is responsible for this report and it does not state that the annual report should report on the progress in implementing the MAWP	The practise during the evaluation period was that ED reports to the MB in every MB meeting (standard agenda point). Also, the annual reports have to a large extent reported on the progress in implementing the MAWP, however, their main focus was to report on the relevant AWP and there was no systematic reporting against the KPIs set out in the MAWP 2014-2018. (see answer to Q5)	
33. Effort to be made to simplify agencies' HR procedures	FR states that staff of the agency shall be subject to Regulations and Rules applicable to other servants of the European Communities (article 17)		Not relevant to assess this specifically for the EEA as it is a cross-agency initiative.
34. Staff policy plans (SPP) should provide full picture of staff needs	SPP not mentioned in FR. FR mentions only establishment plan (Article 12,1)		
35. Calendars of presenting SPP and establishment plans should be aligned and draft submitted to the Commission by 31 January	The FR states submission of draft establishment plan along with budget on 31 March (Article 12,1)		
36-37 technical accounting issues in relation to revenue forecasting and surplus recovery 38-39 on self-financed agencies			These points assessed as either not relevant (38-39) or beyond the scope of the evaluation (36-37)

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[738] Guidelines on KPIs for Executive Directors of Agencies were available from 2015 (SWD (2015) 62 final)

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
40. All agencies should apply activity based budgeting (ABB)	No requirement for this in the FR	The EEA has during the period 2014-2016 implemented a system of ABB, which provides a clear link between activities, budgets and actual expenses (human and financial resources). The implementation and accuracy of the system has improved during the period, but there is still scope for further improvements. (see answer to Q5)	
41. All actors to respect their duty to provide adequate justification for requests with regard to agency's budget			Not relevant to the agency (applies to other actors).
42. + 43. To justify the need for additional resources in the case of agencies being entrusted with new tasks, a legislative financial statement should be presented	This is not stipulated in the FR	The case of the Invasive Alien Species Regulation: The The Programming Document for 2017-2019 states that the EEA request for an additional post for supporting the reporting on the IAS Regulation was not taken into account in the 2015 budget process[739]. It does thus not indicate that a legislative financial statement was presented, but not evident from existing information (no legislative financial statement on the matter identified through document search).	The mandate of the agency is so broad that it is difficult to determine what a 'new task' entails.
44. Modification of the agencies' budgets which does not require approval by budget authority, should be communicated to the budget authority	Partial conformity: The FR requires that budget authority is informed about intention to implement any project which may have significant financial implications		
45. Effort to simplify implementation of Financial Regulation rules			Not relevant for evaluation to assess
V. Accountability, controls and transparency and relations with stakeholders			

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[739] [36]

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
46. Agencies reporting obligations need to be streamlined and harmonized. In principle, agencies should produce one single Annual Report; exceptions should however be possible. 47. The single Annual Report should include information on the implementation of their annual work programme, budget and staff policy plan, management and internal control systems, internal /external audit findings, the follow-up to the audit recommendations and to the discharge recommendation, as well as the statement of assurance of the Executive Director. The single Annual Report could also include the information resulting from the Financial Statements and from the report on budgetary and financial management foreseen in the context of the discharge procedure, provided the time constraints of the preparation of the EU annual consolidated accounts are respected.	FR requires only one Annual Report (article 12,6), however it does not clearly state all the contents mentioned in point 47.	The Commission issued guidelines on a template for the annual activity report through a Communication in 2014 (C(2014) 9641) to be applicable from 2015. The EEA adopted the practise of preparing only one annual report since 2014. The structure of the report has followed the template issued by the Commission. However, Part 1 did not report on KPIs.	
48. As far as possible, the structure of the single Annual Report should include a number of common elements based on best practice across agencies, with a view to easing comparison. The Commission should develop an indicative template in cooperation with agencies.	No elements mentioned in the FR	See above.	
49. This single Annual Report should be drawn by the agency's Director, who should present it to the agency's Management Board for assessment. The Director or the Board itself should then transmit the Report and the assessment of the Management Board to the Court of Auditors, to the Parliament and Council and to the Commission by 1st July.	FR complies (ref article 8,6) although it does not specify that ED should draw up the report.		

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
50. costs of IAS should be covered by the Commission. IAS will undertake risk assessment.			Not relevant for the evaluation to assess this point
51. IAS should discuss audit planning with agency management			Not relevant for the evaluation support study to assess this point
52. Internal auditor to report to Director and MB. MB to organise follow-up to audits	This is not mentioned in the FR	In practise, this has been followed as evidenced by MB meeting minutes. However, in terms of organising follow-up, this has also involved the senior management team of the Agency, however, as authorised by the MB.	
53. Agencies should have the possibility to set up internal audit services to complement the work of the IAS. Therefore, Agencies (Executive Directors and Boards) may decide to set up an Internal Audit Capability (IAC) that follows internationally recognised standards of internal auditing and coordinate audit work and exchange information with IAS. If this is not cost-effective or possible, agencies may decide to contribute resources and share a fullfledged IAC with another agency. IACs should also be required to coordinate audit plans with the IAS.	This is not mentioned in the FR.	The annual reports 2014-2016 report on the activities by the internal audit cabability (IAC) of the EEA, including the coordination of audit activities with IAS and the confirmation that IAC audit plans have been approved by the Management Board (however, no evidence that IAC has coordinated the audit plans with the IAS).	
54. Private sector auditors might have to be involved if lack of resources in ECA. In such case, ECA will manage and remain fully responsible.			Not relevant for the support study to assess this.
55. Cooperation should be promoted between all audit bodies			Not relevant for the support study to assess this.
56. Agencies should inform their partner Directorate General + Directorate General Budget of results of audit of ECA	Partial conformity: FR requires that the ED sends his reply to the observations made to the ECA and that this reply should also be sent to the MB (this implies that the MB should also receive the ECA observations). However, no mention of the Commission or specific DGs.		

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
57. More rigorous differentiation between the responsibilities of the Commission and those of agencies in discharge decisions and resolutions	FR specifies that discharge is given by the EP on recommendations from the Council.		Not relevant for the support study to assess this.
58. democratic accountability for self-financed agencies			Irrelevant for EEA
59. Alert/warning system to be established by Commission if reason for concern that MB is about to take decisions incompliant with mandate			Not relevant for the support study to assess this. Commission action.
60. Each agency's founding act should provide for a periodic overall evaluation, to be commissioned by the Commission. The first evaluation should take place five years after the agency has started its operational phase. Subsequent evaluations should be conducted every five years and on the occasion of every second evaluation the sunset/review clause should be applied. Evaluations should be conducted in a manner that provides solid grounds for a decision to continue or discontinue the agency's mandate. The feasibility of a common template for agencies' evaluation should be explored.	See point 4		Requires amendment of the FR if to comply.
61. Ex-ante evaluation of agencies' activities/programmes should be either made mandatory for programmes/activities of a significant budget, or done at the request of the Management board or the executive board, if deemed necessary. Ex-post evaluation should be mandatory for all programmes/ activities.	Not specified in FR.	No requests made by MB or Bureau during the evaluation period for ex-ante evaluation. No ex-post evaluations conducted for specific activities, however, evaluation of the agency as such conducted, ref. point 4. This could be relevant for an activity like the SOER, however, this was subject to an audit. Many other activities are recurrent and as such not relevant for ex-post assessment.	

Joint Statement on decentralised agencies	Conformity with the EEA Founding Regulation (FR), and EEA Rules of Procedures of the Management Board and the Bureau (RoP)	Conformity at the practical level (documents adopted by the Management Board)	Comments (relevance of item and implications of non-conformity)
62. Agencies should prepare a roadmap with a follow-up action plan regarding the conclusions of retrospective evaluations, and report on progress bi-annually to the Commission. Follow-up to evaluations should be a task of the Management Board, and of the Executive Board if there is one.	Not required by FR	No such roadmap prepared after the 2013 evaluation, however, see point 30 about follow-up from MB, the EEA and SC.	
63. Commission should provide information on evaluations to the EP and Council if requested			Commission action. Not relevant.
64. Agencies' websites should be as multilingual as possible and agencies should provide via websites information necessary to ensure transparency, including financial information	No requirement on this in FR	Check of web-site as per September 2017: Main pages of the EEA website are available in all European languages. However, not all details. Translation of website content is expensive. Documents on management and finances of the agency are available (in English) and there is a high level of transparency.	
65. Agencies' relations with stakeholders should be coherent with their mandate, the institutional division of tasks in international relatins, EU policies and priorities and Commission's actions. Agencies should exercise their function in coordination with the different actors charged with the definition and implementation of the given policy.	FR requires coordination with key stakeholders (articles: 2(l), 3,3, 15 and annex 1)	See answers to coherence questions (Q9 and Q10)	
66. OLAF's role vis-à-vis agencies should be formalised, enhanced and made more visible. In order to preserve evidence and/or to avoid inadvertently alerting persons concerned, agencies should refrain from carrying out investigations on facts liable to lead to an investigation by OLAF, in conformity with relevant EU legislation. In addition, agencies should be more active in relation to fraud prevention and should also better communicate on those activities.	FR conforms in the sense that it does not call for the agency to carry out such investigations.	No evidence found of EEA carrying out such investigations. The EEA's policy for prevention and management of conflict of interest also includes elements in relation to fraud prevention. The EEA has an anti-fraud strategy adopted by the MB in 2014 and annual reports document that the internal audit service did advisory work on the implementation of this strategy.	

Sources: Joint Statement of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission on de-centralised agencies, Founding Regulation (EC 401/2009), Rules of Procedure for the Management Board and the Bureau, Rules of Procedure for the Scientific Committee, (Multi)Annual Work Programmes of the EEA (2012-2016), Annual Reports of the EEA (2012-2016), see footnotes.

10.13 Appendix F Reference documents

The table below contains all sources used for the support study, including work plans, reports, spreadsheets, and presentations (sorted by document number). The vast majority of these documents are currently available on COWI's ftp server, and will be made available on CircABC at the end of the study. The exception to this are documents that are confidential in nature. In the table below, title in *italics* indicates a confidential document.

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
1	Internal Note, 2.1 - The road to SOER 2020: lessons learnt from SOER 2015	EEA	2016
2	Copernicus Programme 2014 Work Programme and Implementation Plan	EC	2014
3	SOER 2015, Evaluating the year of dialogue – communication and outreach	EEA	2016
4	SOER 2015, Production, Communication and Outreach Process Feed-back	EEA	2016
5	Annual Accounts for the EEA, Financial year 2015	EEA	2016
6	Statement of revenue + expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2013 (2013/C 91/03)	OJ C 91/13	2013
7	Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) 2015	SC	2016
8	Annex to the Commission Implementing Decision on the adoption of the 2017 Copernicus Work Programme, Draft 1.0 – CUF-2016-18	EC	2016
9	Annex to the Commission Implementing Decision concerning the adoption of a Financing Decision for 2016 in the framework of the Copernicus Programme, CC-2015-27 rev1	EC	2015
10	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ component, Annual Activity Report 2015	EEA	2016
11	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ component, Annual Activity Report 2016	EEA	2017
12	Annex to the Commission Implementing Decision concerning the adoption of a financing decision for 2015 in the framework of the Copernicus Programme, CC-2014-37	EC	2014
13	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ component, Annual Implementation Report 2014	EEA	2015
14	Current organisation details	EEA	n.d.
15	Advance Draft Report, Performance Audit on the 2015 SOER preparation process	IAS	2016
16	Agreement between the EU, represented by the EC, and the EEA on the implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component (Ref. Ares(2014)4012930)	EU/EEA	2014
17	Agreement between the EU, represented by the EC, and the EEA on the implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component - Annex I, Description of Tasks	EU/EEA	2014

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
18	Agreement between the EU, represented by the EC, and the EEA on the implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component - Annex Ibis, Staff Profiles	EU/EEA	2014
19	Agreement between the EU, represented by the EC, and the EEA on the implementation of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service and the In Situ Component - Annex II, Estimated Budget	EU/EEA	2014
20	Statement of revenue + expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2014 (2014/C 90/03)	OJ C 90/13	2014
21	Statement of revenue + expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2015 (2015/C 110/03)	OJ C 110/11	2015
22	Statement of revenue + expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2016 (2016/C 530/03)	OJ C 530/11	2016
23	Environment Knowledge Community one year on: progress and future challenges, ANNEX 1 - AGENDA POINT 1.a	DG ENV + EEA	2015
24	ETC leaders input to Management Board Seminar 'Future EEA-Eionet'	ETCs	2016
25	Annual Accounts for the EEA, Financial year 2013	EEA	2014
26	Annual Accounts for the EEA, Financial year 2014	EEA	2015
28	Knowledge challenges at the science-policy interface	A. Saltelli	2016
29	EEA and Eionet, Shaping out future together (background paper)	EEA	2016
30	EEA and Eionet - Shaping out future together	H. Bruyninckx	2016
31	Highlights from the World Café discussions (put together by the CSCP team)	EEA	2016
32	Regulation EU No 377/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Coucil of 3 April 2014 establishing the Copernicus Programme and re-pealing Regulation (EU) No 911/2010	OJ L 122/44	2014
33	Reporting process estimated costs [answer to external request / eval-uation?]	EEA	2016
34	Internal Note - The road to SOER 2020: lessons learnt from SOER 2015	EEA	2016
35	Annex – SOER2015 Internal evaluation	EEA	2016
36	EEA Programming Document 2017-2019, Expanding the knowledge base for policy implementation and long-term transitions	EEA	2016
37	Annual report 2014 and EMAS environmental statement 2014	EEA	2015
38	Report on Budgetary and Financial Management accompanying the annual accounts, EEA - Financial Year 2014	EEA	2015
39	Statement of amending budget and expenditure of the EEA for the fi-nancial year 2014 - Amending Budget No 1 (2014/C 322/01)	OJ C 322/1	2014
40	Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2014	EEA	2015
41	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2015 - amending budget No 1 (2016/C 519/02)	OJ C 519/4	2016
42	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2015 - amending budget No 2 (2016/C 519/03)	OJ C 519/10	2016
43	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2015 - amending budget No 3 (2016/C 519/04)	OJ C 519/16	2016
44	Report on Budgetary and Financial Management accompanying the annual accounts, EEA - Financial Year 2015	EEA	2016
45	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2016 - amending budget No 1 (2016/C 513/??)	OJ C 513/1	2016

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
46	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2016 - amending budget No 2 (2016/C 443/01)	OJ C 443/1	2016
47	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - Programming of human and financial resources for de-centralised agencies 2014-2020 (COM(2013) 519 final)	EC	2013
48	Amended proposal for a Coucil Regulation laying down the multian-nual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 (COM(2012) 388 fi-nal)	EC	2012
49	Strategic budget and procurement plan	EEA	n.d.
50	Strategic budget and procurement plan, General context - EU	EEA	2017
51	Strategic budget and procurement plan, General context - Internal	EEA	2016
52	Strategic budget and procurement plan, General context - Net-work/partners	EEA	2016
53	Strategic budget and procurement plan, General context - Non-core	EEA	2016
54	Strategic budget and procurement plan, Forecasting & estimations, Supply	EEA	2016
55	Strategic budget and procurement plan, Forecasting & estimations [not finished?]	EEA	2016
56	Strategic budget and procurement plan, Forecasting & estimations - Demand	EEA	2016
57	Strategic budget and procurement plan, Planning process (adjust-ments) - Planning	EEA	2016
58	Strategic budget and procurement plan, Planning process (adjust-ments) - Planning	EEA	2016
59	Strategic budget and procurement plan, Planning process (adjust-ments) - Utilisation	EEA	2016
60	Human resource planning: An approach towards 2020 (Hans, 25/03/2016)	EEA	2016
61	*Int. staff plan: Strategic staffing plan*	EEA	n.d.
62	*Int. staff plan: General context - EU*	EEA	2017
63	*Int. staff plan: General context - Interal*	EEA	2016
64	*Int. staff plan: General context - Network/partners*	EEA	2017
65	*Int. staff plan: General context - Non-core*	EEA	2017
66	*Int. staff plan: Forecast&estim., supply*	EEA	2016
67	*Int. staff plan: Forecast&estim., learning&development framework*	EEA	2016
68	*Int. staff plan: Forecast&estim., demand*	EEA	2016
69	*Int. staff plan: Planning adjustments*	EEA	2016
70	*Int. staff plan: Utilisation adjustments, 2013-16*	EEA	2016
71	*Int. staff plan: Utilisation adjustments, 2014-15*	EEA	2016
72	Internal Note, Strategic staffing plan	EEA	2016
73	*Capacity overview (split by staff groups)*	EEA	2016
74	*draft BD age stat staff-pension-01 2017 - TA and FP*	EEA	2017
75	*raft BD age stat staff-pension-2016 - TA and FP*	EEA	2016
76	*draft BD age stat staff-pension-2016 - TA and FP-APM*	EEA	2016
77	Recruitment Plan 2016 - 2017 - for SMT use	EEA	2016
78	Seconded National Experts (SNEs) status - 10 March 2016	EEA	2016
79	Establishment table development	EEA	2016
80	*Part-time overview 2015 incl other special conditions*	EEA	2016

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
81	*Staffing types at EEA - 01 05 2014*	EEA	2016
82	Time consumption	EEA	2016
83	Annual report 2012 and Environmental statement 2013	EEA	2013
84	Annual report 2013 and Environmental statement 2014	EEA	2014
85	EEA Programming Document 2017-2019, Expanding the knowledge base for policy implementation and long-term transitions	EEA	2016
86	Annual Work Programme 2016	EEA	2015
87	The European Environment State and Outlook 2015 - Synthesis Report	EEA	2015
88	Annual Work Programme 2015	EEA	2014
89	Annual Work Programme 2014	EEA	2013
90	Multiannual Work Programme 2014-2018: Expanding the knowledge base for policy implementation and long-term transitions	EEA	2014
91	Annual Accounts for the EEA, Financial year 2012	EEA	2013
92	Statement of revenue + expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2012 (2012/C 95/03)	OJ C 95/11	2013
93	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2012 - Amending budget No 1 (2012/C 397/01)	OJ C 397/1	2012
94	EEA Annual Management Plan 2012	EEA	2012
95	EEA Annual Management Plan 2013	EEA	2013
96	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2013 - Amending budget No 1 (2013/C 281/01)	OJ C 281/1	2013
97	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the EEA for the financial year 2013 - Amending budget No 2 (2013/C 281/02)	OJ C 281/5	2013
98	Eionet priority data flows, May 2011 - April 2012	EEA	2012
99	Eionet priority data flows, May 2012 - April 2013	EEA	2013
100	Eionet priority data flows, May 2013 - April 2014	EEA	2014
101	Eionet priority data flows, May 2014 - April 2015	EEA	2015
102	Report on Budgetary and Financial Management accompanying the annual accounts, EEA - Financial Year 2012	EEA	2013
103	Impact Assessment accompanying the document Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Councilon the Governance of the Energy Union, amending Directive 94/22/EC, Directive 98/70/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC, Regulation (EC) No 663/2009, Regulation (EC) No 715/2009, Directive 2009/73/EC, Council Directive 2009/119/EC, Directive 2010/31/EU, Directive 2012/27/EU, Directive 2013/30/EU and Council Directive (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013. (SWD(2016) 394 final)	EC	2016
104	Commission staff working document - Guidelines on key performance indicators (KPI) for directors of EU decentralised agencies (SWD(2015) 62 final)	EC	2015
105	Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2009 on the EEA and EIONET	OJ L 126/13	2009
106	Evaluation and Fitness Check (FC) Roadmap - Evaluation of the European Environment Agency and of its EIONET network	EC	2016
107	Service Request – Annex: Specific Terms of Reference	EC	2016

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
108	Commission staff working document - Towards a Fitness Check of EU environmental monitoring and reporting: to ensure effective monitoring, more transparency and focused reporting of EU environment policy (SWD(2016) 188 final)	EC	2016
109	Report from the Commission - Progress report on the implementation of the Common Approach on EU decentralised agencies	EC	2015
110	EEA Programming Document 2017-2019, Expanding the knowledge base for policy implementation and long-term transitions - DRAFT	EEA	2016
111	Commission Opinion of 10.9.2015 on the draft 2016 Annual Work Programme of the European Environment Agency (C(2015) 6097 final)	EC	2015
112	Commission staff working document - Fitness Check of Monitoring and Reporting in EU Environment Policy	EC	2016
113	Report on the annual accounts of the EEA for the financial year 2013 together with the Agency's replies	ECA	2014
114	Report on the annual accounts of the EEA for the financial year 2014 together with the Agency's replies	ECA	2015
115	Special Report - Agencies' use of grants: not always appropriate or demonstrably effective	ECA	2016
116	The future of eReporting and the link to INSPIRE, concept note (version: 17 October 2016)	EC + EEA	2016
117	Joint Statement of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission on decentralised agencies	EC, EP + Council	2012
118	Annex Ib, EEA/IEA/13/003-ETC/WMGE, Work programme 2015, Action Plan 1 (Version 3.0)	EEA + ETC	2015
119	Annex I, EEA/IEA/13/003-ETC/WMGE, Work programme 2016, Action Plan 1 (Version 3.0)	EEA + ETC	2015
120	Annex Ia, EEA/ACC/13/001-ETC/ACM, Work programme 2016, Action Plan - first amendment (Version 2.0)	EEA + ETC	2016
121	Annex 1a, EEA/ACC/13/001-ETC/ACM, Work programme 2015, Action Plan - first amendment (Version 2.1)	EEA + ETC	2015
122	Annex 1a to Specific Agreement No 3333/B2015/EEA.56041, Implementing FPA EEA/NSV/13/001-ETC/BD, Work programme 2015, Action Plan 2015-1 (Version 2.0)	EEA + ETC	2015
123	Annex 1a to Specific Agreement No 3333/B2016/EEA.56430, Implementing FPA EEA/NSV/13/001-ETC/BD, Work programme 2016, Action Plan 2016-1 (Version 2.4)	EEA + ETC	2016
124	Annex I, EEA/ACC/13/002-ETC/CCA, Work Programme 2016, Action Plan 1 (Version 1.0)	EEA + ETC	2015
125	Annex Ib, EEA/ACC/13/002-ETC/CCA, Work Programme 2015, Action Plan 3 (Version 1.0)	EEA + ETC	2015
126	Annex 1c to Specific Agreement No 3332/B2015/EEA.56039, implementing FPA EEA/NSV/13/002-ETC/ICM, Work programme 2015, Action Plan 2015-1 (Version 4.0)	EEA + ETC	2015
127	Annex 1a to Specific Agreement No 3332/B2016/EEA.56432, implementing FPA EEA/NSV/13/002-ETC/ICM, Work programme 2016, Action Plan 2016-1 (Version 3.0)	EEA + ETC	2016

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
128	Annex Ia to Specific Agreement No 3334/B2015/EEA.56053, Implementing FPA EEA/NSV/14/001-ETC/ULS, Work programme 2015, Action Plan 2015-1 (Version 2.0)	EEA + ETC	2015
129	Annex Ia to Specific Agreement No 3334/B2016/EEA.56421, Action Plan 2016-1 (Version 1.3)	EEA + ETC	2016
130	Cross-cutting coordination of the Copernicus in situ component - in a nutshell	EC / EEA	n.d.
131	Meeting on EEA-evaluation, 10 Feb. 2017 - SA1.7. Nature protection, ENV D3 - Questions for discussion	EC	2017
132	EEA evaluation. SA1.7 - Biodiversity, ecosystems, agriculture and forests. Input from ENV.D2 Biodiversity unit	EC	n.d.
133	ENV.D2 contribution to EEA and ETC annual programming	EC	n.d.
134	Cooperation between DG ENV and EEA/ETC in the area of Biodiversity & Ecosystems; Draft rolling work plan Unit D2-2017 (September 2016) [incl. comments]	EC	2016
135	Annex I - Tender Specifications, EEA. Framework service contract for providing services in the area of Natural capital and ecosystems assessment to 1. the EEA and 2. the EC (DG ENV)	EEA	2016
136	Common Implementation Framework - Orientations Version: After Nature Director Meeting	EC	2012
137	Internal note - EEA working relations with the European Parliament, State March 2017	EEA	2017
138	EEA mentions in European Parliament documents 2016	EEA	2016
139	EEA mentions in European Parliament documents 2016 - excel file	EEA	2016
140	Proposed MEP contacts for COWI interviews	EEA	2017
141	Communication Framework 2014-2018	EEA	2014
142	Stakeholder mapping	EEA	2017
143	COWI table_list of interviewees	COWI	n.d.
144	Final Report Performance Audit on the 2015 SOER preparation process in EEA	EEA	2016
145	IAS Audit on the 2015 SOER preparation process in EEA – Proposed Action Plan	EEA	2016
146	EEA and the energy union presentation on the Role of EEA, Jaques	EEA	2017
147	EEA input to MB seminar	EEA	2016
148	Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Governance of the Energy Union	European Commission	2016
149	Data centres waste and natural resources	EEA	2016
150	Responses to interview questions regarding EEA costs	EEA	2017
151	EEA Evaluation - Copernicus Delegation Agreement	EEA	2017
152	Spending overview for ETS and TnP, prepared by EEA	EEA	2017
153	EEA Evaluation - Freshwater Case Study	EEA	2017
154	EEA Evaluation - Nature Protection Case Study	EEA	2017
155	EEA Evaluation - SOER 2015 Case Study	EEA	2017
156	EEA Evaluation - Waste & Circular Economy Case Study	EEA	2017
157	EEA Evaluation - IT Infrastructure & Data Management	EEA	2017
158	EEA Evaluation - Eionet & Partnerships	EEA	2017
159	List of project codes	EEA	2017
160	List of budget lines	EEA	2017

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161	EEA Framework for International Engagement	EEA	2015
162	Eionet Review Process	EEA	2014
163	Report on the Management Board Seminar 6th December 2016	EEA	2017
164	EEA communication outreach into the UK	EEA	n.d.
165	NFP and ETC questionnaire on Sustainability Transitions and Niche In-novations	EEA/Eionet	2015
166	MINUTES OF THE 66th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING held on 20 March 2013	EEA	2013
167	MINUTES OF THE 67th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING held on 26 June 2013	EEA	2013
168	MINUTES OF THE 68th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING held on 27 November 2013	EEA	2014
169	MINUTES OF THE 69th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING 26 March 2014	EEA	2014
170	DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 70th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING held on 17 June 2014	EEA	2014
171	MINUTES OF THE 71st MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING 19 November 2014	EEA	2015
172	MINUTES OF THE 72nd MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING 18 March 2015	EEA	2015
173	MINUTES OF THE 73rd MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING 23-24 June 2015	EEA	2015
174	MINUTES OF THE 74th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING Vienna, 26 November 2015	EEA	2016
175	MINUTES OF THE 75th MANAGEMENT BOARD (MB) MEETING Copen-hagen, 16 March 2016	EEA	2016
176	MINUTES OF THE 76th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING Copenhagen, 22 June 2016	EEA	2016
177	MINUTES OF THE 77th MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING Copenhagen, 7 December 2016	EEA	2017
178	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ compo-nent, Annual Activity Report 2016	EEA	2017
179	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ compo-nent, Quarterly Implementation Report 2017-1	EEA	2017
180	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ compo-nent, Quarterly Implementation Report 2016-1	EEA	2016
181	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ compo-nent, Quarterly Implementation Report 2016-2	EEA	2016
182	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ compo-nent, Quarterly Implementation Report 2016-3	EEA	2016
183	Copernicus land monitoring services and cross-cutting in situ compo-nent, Quarterly Implementation Report 2016-4	EEA	2017
184	Minutes of the 70th Bureau Meeting, held in Copenhagen on 4 Octo-ber 2016	EEA	2017
185	Evaluation of the European Environment Agency	COWI/EEA	2013
186	Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2016	EEA	2017
187	Annual report 2013 and Environmental statement 2014	EEA	2014
188	Annual report 2014 and EMAS environmental statement 2014	EEA	2015

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
189	Report on the annual accounts of the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2015, together with the Agency's reply (2016/C 449/16)	ECA	2016
190	European Information and Observation Network in Finland	SYKE	n.d.
191	An introduction to EEA-Eionet	Defra	2017
192	All subscribers to the EEA mailing list	EEA	n.d.
193	2015-2016 Product type review, summary	EEA	2017
194	Internal note to SMT: Product type review – categories for AWP 2016	EEA	2015
195	Internal note to SMT: Product type review – EEA products as from 2016	EEA	2015
196	Internal note to SMT: Product type review – objectives, scope	EEA	2015
197	Signals 2014 evaluation survey	EEA	2015
198	Signals 2015	EEA	2016
199	2015 EEA Report dissemination statistics	EEA	2016
200	Communication, environment and behaviour: A scoping study on the links between public communication, environment policy implementation and behavioural science	EEA	2016
201	USER SURVEY OF EEA PRODUCT TYPES. Phase 1 - Scoping Study	EEA	2017
202	Note to SMT: Dods reporting on 'EEA mentions' covering 2016	EEA	2017
203	The European Environment - state and outlook 2015 (SOER 2015)	EEA	2015
204	"Study to support the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet – Interview guide. Follow up and requests for additional documents"	EEA/COWI	2017
205	EEA Bestseller list 2015 – an attempt to rate outreach performance and measure production costs based on the 2015 publication plan	EEA	2016
206	EEA Bestseller list 2016 – outreach performance of 2016 publications	EEA	2017
207	Overview of ENV/EEA reporting obligations	EEA	2017
208	Cost estimates for data flows (bands, not actual values); based on an extract from EEA Reporting Database	EEA	2017
209	"NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF MR. FALKENBERG DIRECTOR GENERAL DG ENV; Subject: Collaboration with the European Environment Agency"	EC	2014
210	Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation	EC	2017
211	"Draft Agenda "EEA SOER 2015 seminar" Tuesday 25 March 2014, Zagreb"	EEA	2014
212	"Management Board seminar Doc. EEA/69MB-sem/02 05 March 2014 Subject: EEA SOER 2015 Seminar – 25 March 2014 in Zagreb"	EEA	2014
213	EEA SOER 2015 Seminar background material	EEA	2014
214	SOER 2015 Synthesis (DRAFT) Annotated Outline - VERSION FOR EEA INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK -	EEA	2014
215	SOER 2015 Workshops. EEA Management Board Seminar 25 March 2014 Zagreb. Seminar Report	EEA	2014
216	"ITEM 08 69th Management Board Doc EEA/MB/69/08 26 March 2014 Subject: EEA SOER 2015 Seminar 25 March 2014"	EEA	2014
217	Cascade briefing	EEA	2017
218	Adoption of EEA Financial Regulation	EEA	2008
219	Relationship between the IAC, the MB and the Bureau	EEA	2014
220	Overview of audits	EEA	2014

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221	"First EEA 2016 Budget amendment to include the 2016 finances for the Copernicus Delegation Agreement with DG GROW"	EEA	2016
222	Copernicus land monitoring services 2016-2020; Annex: Proposed framework and financial instrument for Copernicus land monitoring activities undertaken by the EEA in cooperation with Eionet during 2016-2020.	EEA	2016
223	Update by the Executive Director (March – May 2016)	EEA	2016
224	Resource outlook and implications for EEA work programmes	EEA	2016
225	Adoption of the draft EEA Programming Document 2017-2019, includ-ing the draft AWP 2017	EEA	2016
226	Job satisfaction survey 2012	EEA	2012
227	Staff engagement survey results	EEA	2014
228	2015 Staff Engagement Survey Results	EEA	2015
229	2016 Staff Engagement Survey Results	EEA	2016
230	Action Plan in response to, inter alia, the Staff Engagement Survey (SES)	EEA	2015
231	Decision of the Management Board of the European Environment Agency on the Financing of Action plans for the European Topic Cen-tres for the Financial Year 2017	EEA	2016
232	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2014 — Amending Budget No 2	OJ C 517/1	2014
233	Statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2014 — Amending Budget No 3	OJ C 43/01	2015
234	Report on Budgetary and Financial Management accompanying the annual accounts	EEA	2014
235	List of internal audits conducted during the evaluation period 2012-2016	EEA	2017
236	Request COWI - Overview of the use of Copernicus data in EEA indi-cators and reports	EEA	2017
237	Request COWI - Overview of MS use of Copernicus Data	EEA	2017
238	AWP 2013 - Draft AWP for MB approval	EEA	2012
239	AWP 2013 - Draft AWP for MB approval - revised	EEA	2012
240	AWP 2013 - Comments on draft AWP and replies	EEA	2012
241	AWP 2013 - Cover and Forum comments, Parliament Comments as well as opinions of the EC and SC	EEA	2012
242	AWP and MAPW - Letters between DG CLIMA and EEA re MAWP and AWP 2014	EEA	2013
243	AWP and MAPW - Eurostat comments on MAPW and AWP 2014	EEA	2013
244	AWP and MAPW - EP ENVI committee comments and EEA response	EEA	2013
245	AWP and MAPW - SC opinion	EEA	2013
246	MAWP - adoption by MB	EEA	2013
247	MAWP - final draft	EEA	2013
248	AWP 2014 - final draft	EEA	2013
249	MAWP - comments	EEA	2013
250	AWP 2014 - comments	EEA	2013
251	AWP 2014 - adoption by MB	EEA	2013
252	AWP and MAWP - Cover letter for decision with annex list	EEA	2013
253	AWP 2015 - SC opinion and EC opinion with EEA comments	EEA	2014

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254	AWP 2015 - revised final draft	EEA	2014
255	AWP 2015 - cover for decision with annex list	EEA	2014
256	AWP 2015 - ENVI comments and Forum consultation	EEA	2014
257	AWP 2016 - EEA response to SC opinion	EEA	2015
258	AWP 2016 - EEA response to ENVI comments	EEA	2015
259	AWP 2016 - Forum consultation with responses	EEA	2015
260	AWP 2016 - cover for decision	EEA	2015
261	AWP 2016 - final draft	EEA	2015
262	AWP 2016 - EC opinion and EEA response	EEA	2015
263	NFP Eionet minutes 2012	EEA	2012
264	NFP Eionet minutes 2013	EEA	2013
265	NFP Eionet minutes 2014	EEA	2014
266	NFP Eionet minutes 2015	EEA	2015
267	NFP Eionet minutes 2016	EEA	2016
268	NFP attendee lists from 2012 meetings	EEA	2012
269	NFP attendee lists from 2013 meetings	EEA	2013
270	NFP attendee lists from 2014 meetings	EEA	2014
271	NFP attendee lists from 2015 meetings	EEA	2015
272	NFP attendee lists from 2016 meetings	EEA	2016
273	NFP attendee lists from 2014 webinars	EEA	2014
274	NFP attendee lists from 2015 webinars	EEA	2015
275	NFP attendee lists from 2016 webinars	EEA	2016
276	MB decision num. 016/EEA/MB(74)-GOV/2015	EEA	2015
277	"EEA data policy: The policy provides guidelines about EEA's handling of data"	EEA	2013
278	The Cost of Non-Europe in Water Legislation	EPRS	2015
279	Profiles of the National Reference Centres of Eionet 2014-2018	EEA	2014
280	"NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS OF THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY ROLE DESCRIPTION"	EEA	2014
281	Dates and locations of NRC meetings	EEA	n.d.
282	"The Arctic environment European perspectives on a changing Arctic"	EEA	2017
283	Survey of EEA's products	EEA	2017
284	"Building environmental knowledge for EU policies Roadmap for the knowledge base for the 7th EAP "Environment Knowledge Community Roadmap""	EC	2015
285	"Environment Knowledge Community Stocktaking document"	EC	2017
286	"COMMISSION DECISION of 8.2.2010 on appointing the two Commission representatives and alternates to the Management Board of the European Environment Agency"	EC	2010
287	Dates and locations of NFP meetings	EEA	n.d.
288	Subject: EEAcademy: 2016 Work Plan, ToR and Advisory Committee composition	EEA	2015
289	The EEA emission inventory review tools	EEA	2017
290	"How do EU agencies and other bodies contribute to the Europe 2020 Strategy and to the Juncker Commission Agenda? "	Deloitte	2016
291	Raw answers to NFP questionnaire 2016	EEA	2016
292	Raw answers to NFP questionnaire 2013	EEA	2013
293	"Survey of EEA's product categories 2017 Overview and results"	EEA	2017

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294	"Survey of EEA's products Overview and results: final report: Annex I"	EEA	2017
295	Draft report of user survey on EEA products to COWI	EEA	2017
296	SOER 2015 Synthesis Translation Approach	EEA	2014
297	SOER 2015 Synthesis Translation – status, risks and solutions incl timeline	EEA	2014
298	List EIONET NRCs	EEA	n.d.
299	EEA publication plan 2013: Progress report 31 October 2013	EEA	2013
300	EEA publication plan 2014: Progress report 29 October 2014	EEA	2014
301	EEA publication plan 2015: Progress report 23 November 2015	EEA	2015
302	EEA publication plan 2016: Status end 2016	EEA	2016
303	EEA online media coverage 2013	EEA	2013
304	EEA online media coverage 2014	EEA	2014
305	EEA online media coverage 2015	EEA	2015
306	EEA online media coverage 2016	EEA	2016
307	Eionet Forum : NFP survey 2015	EEA	2015
308	20160315_NFP meeting_March2016	EEA	2016
309	NFP meeting_June 2016	EEA	2016
310	NFP_survey_October_2016	EEA	2016
311	Memorandum of Understanding Between The European Environmental Agency and The European Space Agency Concerning The Establishment of Their Cooperation	EEA	2015
312	Reflection paper on Environmental Data Centres beyond 2017	EEA	2017
313	Technical Arrangement between DG ENV, ESTAT, JRC and EEA on Environmental Data Centres	EEA	2005
314	EEA Data quality framework	EEA	2015
315	EEA Data/Information management framework	EEA	2015
316	The revised Core Set of Indicators: state of implementation	EEA	2017
317	E-PRTR data reporting	EEA	2016
318	Review of Eionet priority data flows	EEA	2015
319	EEA indicator review	EEA	2013
320	Application for IT project approval	EEA	n.d.
321	IT Steering Committee terms of reference	EEA	2014
322	Statistics for webservices	EEA	2017
323	Monthly page views	EEA	2016
324	Reportnet Architecture: an Overiview	EEA	2017
325	Introduction to environmental reporting using Reportnet	EEA	2017
326	Tickets per queue and agent	EEA	2017
327	BDR HELPDESK Manual	EEA	2015
328	List of MoUs	EEA	n.d.
329	COWI Request for Documents - Round 2	EEA	2017
330	Survey of EEA's products: Overview and results	EEA	n.d.
331	Survey of EEA's products Overview and results: final report - Annex I - Technical considerations and graphs	EEA	2017
332	Survey of EEA's product categories 2017: Overview and results	EEA	2017
333	EEA working relations with the European Parliament - State March 2017	EEA	2017
334	Developing the knowledge to guide policy	EEA	2014

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335	Overview on EEA-EP interaction	EEA	2017
336	Speaking points for Jacqueline McGlade : Appearance before Euro-pean Parliament Envi Committee, 20th September 2012	EEA	2012
337	Overview of EEA assistance and presence provided to EP (Committee reports, workshops, etc.)-Period: mid 2012 – end 2016	EEA	2017
338	Management Board Seminar "The future EEA-Eionet" (6 December, 2016)	EEA	2016
339	EEA input to MB seminar	EEA	2017
340	Reporting on ozone-depleting substances (ODS) and fluorinated greenhouse gases (F-gases): Reporting process and products	EEA	2017
341	Case study on Business Data Repository (BDR) for F-gases - Inter-view questions	COWI	2017
342	EEA Evaluation - Summary of interview in EEA on BDR for F-gases	EEA	2017
343	Minutes of the visit to EEA dated 03 September 2010	EC	2010
344	Hand-over tasks related to the handling of data reported by under-takings under Regulations (EC) No 1005/2009 and 842/2006	EC	2011
345	Update of F-gas Regulation reporting tool	EC	2016
346	Impact of the Kigali Amendment on reporting needs	EC	2016
347	no title	EC	2017
348	IT security and F-gas reporting	EC	2017
349	Debrief from Bonn KPAM ministerial	EC	2014
350	Technical Paper - Kyoto Ambition Mechanism Report	EC	2014
351	RE: COWI Request for Documents	EEA	2017
352	Review of the Brussels Liaison Office's contribution to EEA objectives	EEA	2014
353	IAS Audit on Data and Information management (including IT compo-nent) in EEA - Final Audit Report	EC	2015
354	Final Audit Report on Stakeholders Relations Management and Exter-nal Communication within the European Environmental Agency	EEA	2012
355	Client Relations Manager Tool - Extract	EEA	2018
356	Client Relations Manager Tool - all subscribers	EEA	2017
357	EEA subscription form categories	EEA	2017
358	Copy of programme contributions	EEA	n.d.
359	RE: Document request	EEA	2017
360	FW: EEA report: why so biased?	EEA	2017
361	Partnerships Beyond Eionet – Outline	EEA	2014
362	Partnerships Beyond Eionet – Update	EEA	2014
363	Partnerships beyond/involving Eionet (AWP 3.1.4)	EEA	2015
364	Request for Info on Stakeholders Beyond Eionet	EEA	2018
365	Partnerships beyond/involving Eionet - Stock-taking and proposals for the future	EEA	2015
366	Stakeholder mapping	EEA	n.d.
367	EEA F-gases monitoring and reporting investments	EEA	2018
368	Request for Information on F-Gas BDR Costs	EEA	2018
369	Document Request - Commission charge-back to the EEA	EEA	2018
370	EEA evaluation - Commission services and charge back to EEA	EEA	2018
371	Questions Related to "Coherence" and Coordination with the Commis-sion's Policy on DGS and Other Agencies	EEA	2018

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372	Summary of main points from the 53rd Scientific Committee meeting, 15-16 February 2012	EEA	2012
373	"Summary of main points from the 54th Scientific Committee meeting, 2-3 October 2012, Ljubljana, Slovenia"	EEA	2013
374	"Summary of main points from the 55th Scientific Committee meeting, 26 February 2013, Copenhagen"	EEA	2013
375	"Summary of main discussions from the 56th Scientific Committee meeting, 1 October 2013, Copenhagen"	EEA	2014
376	Summary of the main discussions from the 59th Scientific Committee meeting, 2 October 2014, Copenhagen	EEA	2014
377	Summary of the main discussions from the 61st Scientific Committee meeting, 3 June 2015, Zurich	EEA	2015
378	Summary of the main discussions from the 63rd Scientific Committee meeting, 25 February 2016, Copenhagen	EEA	2016
379	Summary of the main discussions from the 64th Scientific Committee meeting, 19 May 2016, Copenhagen	EEA	2016
380	Summary of the main discussions from the 65th Scientific Committee meeting, 6 October 2016, Copenhagen	EEA	2017
381	Comments received ISC F3 - No3236951	EC	2018
382	Comments received ISC F4 - 1016193	EC	2018
383	Comments received ISC F3 - No 2906724	EC	2018
384	Comments DGs on EEA WPs	EC	2018
385	Comments DGs on EEA WPs	EC	2018
386	Eionet core data flows 2016	EEA	2017
387	EEA IT systems oerview	EEA	2017
388	Draft Audit Report on the processes for managing and sharing data on agri-environmental-climate issues in DG AGRI, DG CLIMA and DG ENV	EEA	2016
389	Annual Accounts for the EEA, Financial year 2016	EEA	2017
390	EEA Framework for International Engagement	EEA	2017
391	HoPs and HoGs	EEA	n.d.
392	COWI Questions on translations	EEA	2018
393	Questions for meeting tomorrow	EEA	2018
394	Fitness check reporting and monitoring	EEA	2018
395	Kick-Off Meeting with COWI and adelphi: Evaluation of EEA and Eionet regulation	EEA/COWI	2017
396	Technical Arrangement between DG ENV, ESTAT, JRC and EEA on Environmental Data Centres, 14 November 2005	EC	2005
397	Environmental Data Centres Review 2013-2014, Conclusions as agreed by DGs ENV, ESTAT, JRC and EEA and their meeting 14 March 2014	EC	2014
398	Digest of EEA indicators 2014	EEA	2014
399	Environment and climate policy evaluation	EEA	2016
400	Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 – Societal Challenge 5, Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials	EC	2017
401	European Aviation Environmental Report 2016	EASA	2016
402	Agreement between European Environment Agency and Eurogeographics, presentation by E. Schuren	EEA	2012

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
403	EPA Brochure	EEA	2014
404	131202 RPT EDC wrkshp final	EC	2018
405	mapping of 7eap monitoring needs to available EEA indicators 04062015 FINAL FINAL	EC	2018
406	Commission Opinion within framework of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1210/90 7 May 1990	EC	2018
407	"Development of agri-environmental indicators for monitoring the in-tegration of environmental concerns into the common agricultural policy (COM(2006) 508 final)"	EC	2006
408	European Commission, 7th Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion	EC	2017
409	Fitness Check of the EU Nature Legislation (Birds and Habitats Direc-tives)	EC	2016
410	"Report of the EEA Scientific Committee seminar on knowledge for sustainability transitions"	EEA	2016
411	EEA Signals 2016: Towards clean and smart mobility	EEA	2016
412	Dods reporting on 'EEA mentions' covering 2016	EEA	2017
413	Dods analysis of EEA mentions in documents of EU institutions	EEA	2017
414	Dods total 2016	EEA	2017
415	Notes to SMT Dods Jan-June 2017	EEA	2017
416	"Estimating the Overall Economic Value of the Benefits provided by the Natura 2000 Network"	Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)	2011
417	Cost-benefit Analysis of Final Policy Scenarios for the EU Clean Air Package	EEA	2014
418	"Costs of air pollution from European industrial facilities 2008–2012 — an updated assessment"	EEA	2013
419	Implementation of the 7th Environment Action Programme Mid-term review	EPRS	2017
420	EEA, Environmental indicator report 2017 — In support to the moni-toring of the 7th Envi-ronment Action Programme, 2017 (EEA Report No 21/2017)	EEA	2017
421	Joint Research Centre's multi-annual work programme for 2016-17	EC	2016
422	Overview of climate change adaptation platforms in Europe	EEA	2015
423	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Com-mittee of the Regions: Innovation in the Blue Economy - realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth	EC	2014
424	Count of Reportnet deliveries by year	EEA	2018
425	Common Workspace - Project Implementation Plan	EEA	2015
426	IT systems overview	EEA	n.d.
427	Analysis of reporting requirements and complaint procedures	Stephans Moore	2014
428	Internal Note: EEA's Brussels Liason Office - revised terms of refer-ence	EEA	2011
429	Return on Investment report (ROI) for the Natura 2000 dataflow	EEA	n.d.
430	Summary note - Review and recommendations for future reporting of Eionet core data flows	EEA	2015

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
431	Summary of joint EEA/Eionet proposal to update the current Eionet priority data flows	EEA	2015
432	Environment Knowledge Community - Main achievements and way forward	EKC	2017
433	Materials from Jacques	EEA	2018
434	Bonn KPAM ministerial statement	EC	2014
435	Analysis of reporting requirements and complaints procedures draft final report	EC	2014
436	Annex 1 - Questionnaire on Member State and Commission Reporting	EC	n.d.
437	Annex 2 - Detailed Questionnaire Results	EC	n.d.
438	E-mail exchange on 2013 report "early warnings"	EC	2013
439	COWI question re: translation costs	EEA	n.d.
440	EEA Policy - Translations	EEA	n.d.
441	Environmental Data Centres Review Workshop, 7 November 2013	EC	2013
442	Mapping of monitoring needs of the 7th Environment Action Pro-gramme to available EEA indicators - EEA Working Paper	EEA	2015
443	Commission Opinion of 25.11.2013	EC	2013
444	Commission Staff Working Document, Evaluation accompanying the report on the implementation of Directive 2007/2/EC (INSPIRE), COM (2016) 478 final/2 and SWD (2016) final/2	EC	2016
445	The EU Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) package	EC	2017
446	Trends and projections in Europe 2016 - Tracking progress towards Europe's climate and energy targets	EEA	2016
447	About EIONET	EEA	2016
448	Biodiversity-rich Croatia becomes 33rd full EEA member country	EEA	2013
449	Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Actions to Streamline Environmental Reporting, COM(2017) 312 final	EC	2017
450	Process leading to the 7th EAP	EC	2016
451	Energy Union Package, Communication from the European Parliament the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Com-mittee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank: A Frame-work Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy	EC	2015
452	Progress of the HFC Phase Down	EC	2016
453	Briefing paper: Preliminary assessment of the quota allocation method	Wolfram Jörß, Barbara Gschrey, Bastian Zei-ger	2016
454	Report form the Commission Assessing the quota allocation method in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 517/2014	EC	2017
455	"Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Delivering the benefits of EU environmen-tal policies through a regular Environmental Implementation Review "	EC	2016
456	CAP context indicators	EC	2017

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
457	DECISION No 1386/2013/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 20 November 2013 on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'	EP, Council	2013
458	"A New Start for Europe: My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change"	EP	2014
459	The Sustainable Development Goals	UN	2015
460	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	UN	2015
461	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030	EC	2014
462	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Towards a circular economy - A zero waste programme for Europe	EC	2014
463	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Closing the loop - An EU action plan for the Circular Economy	EC	2015
464	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Our life insurance, our natural capital - an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020	EC	2011
465	Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species	EP, Council	2014
466	List of Invasive Alien Species of Union concern	EC	2017
467	Streamlining environmental reporting – action plan	EC	2017
468	Resolution of the European Parliament of 29 April 2015 on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union agencies for the financial year 2013: performance, financial management and control	EP	2015
469	Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network	EP, Council	2009
470	Special Eurobarometer 459 Report: Climate Change	EC	2017
471	Special Eurobarometer 435 Report: Climate Change	EC	2015
472	Special Eurobarometer 409 Report: Climate Change	EC	2014
473	Special Eurobarometer 468 Summary: Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment	EC	2017
474	Special Eurobarometer 436 Attitudes of European towards biodiversity	EC	2015
475	Special Eurobarometer 416 Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment	EC	2014
476	Eurostat - Policy Context	EC	2018

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
477	Commission Staff Working Document: The implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system" five years after its publication- achievements and challenges	EC	2016
478	"Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Assessment of the progress made by Member States towards the national energy efficiency targets for 2020 and towards the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU as required by Article 24 (3) of Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU"	EC	2015
479	Biodiversity - Ecosystems	EEA	2018
480	Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the council of 21 May 2013 on a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions and for reporting other information at national and Union level relevant to climate change and repealing Decision No 280/2004/EC	EP, Council	2013
481	Directive 2009/147/EC	EC	2009
482	Directive 92/43/EEC	Council	1992
483	Directive 2007/60/EC	EC	2007
484	Directive 91 / 676 /EEC	Council	1991
485	Directive 2000/60/EC	EC	2000
486	Directive 98/83/EC	Council	1998
487	Directive 2006/7/EC	EC	2006
488	Directive 9 1 /271 /EEC	Council	1991
489	Directive 2008/98/EC	EC	2008
490	Water Exploitation Index	EC	n.d.
491	Use of freshwater resources - Indicator Assessment	EEA	2016
492	Joint Research Centre Water Portal	EC	2018
493	Urban Waste Water Treatment Maps	EEA	2015
494	Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive: dissemination platform	OIEAU	2017
495	Website Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies	EC	2018
496	Urban Atlas - Methodology	EC, EEA	2010
497	Regulation (EC) No 1367/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 September 2006 on the application of the provisions of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters to Community institutions and bodies	EC	2006
498	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Better regulation for better results - An EU agenda	EC	2015
499	Commission Staff Working Paper Better Regulation Guidelines	EC	2017
500	"Evaluation of progress under the EU National Emission Ceilings Directive"	EEA	2012
501	Communication to the Commission, European Political Strategy Centre: Mission, Tasks and Organisation Chart	EC	2014
502	Circular economy in Europe - Developing the knowledge base	EEA	2016
503	About foresight in research and innovation	EC	2018

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
504	International Futures Programme (IFP) publications and studies	OECD	2014
505	OECD Environmental Outlook to 2050	OECD	2012
506	Foresight Brief: Early Warning, Emerging Issues and Futures	UNEP	2018
507	Global Environment Outlook	UNEP	2018
508	Foresight and Horizon scanning	EC	2016
509	The junction of health, environment and the bioeconomy	EC	2016
510	EPSC Strategic Notes: Sustainability Now!	EC	2016
511	Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers	EP, Council	2011
512	"Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency "	EP, Council	2002
513	"Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC"	EP, Council	2006
514	Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food SafetyAuthorityand laying down procedures in matters of food safety	EP, Council	2002
515	"Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2002 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency"	EP, Council	2002
516	"Regulation (EU) No 912/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 setting up the European GNSS Agency, repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1321/2004 on the establishment of structures for the management of the European satellite radio navigation programmes and amending Regulation (EC) No 683/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council"	EP, Council	2010
517	"Regulation (EU) No 512/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Regulation (EU) No 912/2010 setting up the European GNSS Agency"	EP, Council	2014
518	Regulation (EC) No 851/2004 of the European Parliament and of the council of 21 April 2004 establishing a European centre for disease prevention and control	EP, Council	2004
519	"Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the council of 20 February 2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Council Directive 91/670/EEC, Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 and Directive 2004/36/EC"	EP, Council	2008
520	Green CAP project	EEA	2012

Num-ber	Title	Author	Year
521	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union	EC	2007
522	Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning	EC	2014
523	Project Work Plan - Reportnet 2.0	EEA	2017
524	Internal Note - Plan for Reportnet 2.0	EEA	2016

10.14   Appendix G - List of persons interviewed

Table 61 presents the list of people interviewed sorted by stakeholder type. The column on 'subject' to the very right indicates whether the interview focused on general issues in relation to the five evaluation criteria or whether the interview concerned mainly one of the eight case studies conducted.

Table 61   Interviews conducted

Name	Title/work description	Stakeholder	Type of interview	Date	Subject
Group interview (Mr. Alfonso Gutierrez Teira (Unit D.4 Environment, climate change, forestry and bio-economy); Mr. Olivier Diana (Unit D.4); Mrs. Laura Aguglia (Unit C.3 Farm economics); Mr. Andrea Furlan (Unit D.2 Greening, cross-compliance and POSEI); Angelo Innamorati (Unit D.4).)	DG AGRI, several Units (Units C.3; D.2; D.4)	EC - DG AGRI	Face-to-face	24/11/2017	General (focus on coherence)
Cécile Hanoune; Ismaël Aznar Cano; Rob Gemmill; Thomas Brunhes	B1; B3; C2 (Rob and Thomas)	EC - DG CLIMA	Face-to-face	12/06/2017	EU ETS
Yrjo Makela; Thomas Brunhes; Alexander Jevsejenko; Ana Danila	C2	EC - DG CLIMA	Face-to-face	13/06/2017	T&P
Arno Kasch and Thomas Brunhes	Policy Officers, Units A2 and C2	EC - DG CLIMA	Face-to-face	15/06/2017	F-gas
Artur Runge-Metzger; Hans Berg; Thomas Brunhnes	Director C and C2	EC - DG CLIMA	Face-to-face	29/06/2017	General

Name	Title/work description	Stakeholder	Type of interview	Date	Subject
Ms Serena Pontoglio and Henrik Dam	DG Energy C.3 / Policy Officer (energy efficiency) (Serena), DG Energy C.1 Policy Officer (renewables) (Henrik)	EC - DG ENER	Phone and face-to-face	30/10/2017	T&P
Ioannis Kavvadas and Lourdes Alvarellos	Ioannis Kavvadas - floods; Lourdes Alvarellos - WFD, C1	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	14/06/2016	Freshwater
Joaquim Capitao; Thomas Petitguyot	C1 (WFD)	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	07/06/2017	Freshwater
Barbara Bacigalupi	A2	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	08/06/2017	Waste
Monica Pisani	F3	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	08/06/2017	SOER 2015
Paola Migliorini	B1	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	08/06/2017	Waste
Rozalina Petrova and Mal-gorzata Golebiewska	B3	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	08/06/2017	Waste
Hugo De Groot	E4	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	09/06/2017	Copernicus
Els De Roeck	C2 (water industry)	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	13/06/2017	Freshwater
Robert Konrad	E4	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	13/06/2017	Copernicus
Bruno Rakedjian	C2 (UWWTD and SIIF)	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	19/06/2017	Freshwater
Angelika Rubin and Frank Vassen	Working on nature protection legislation	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	19/06/2017	Nature Protection
Jérémie Crespin	Integration into CAP and Biodi-versity Strategy	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	19/06/2017	Nature Protection
Josianne Masson	D1, land unit, former Coperni-cus desk	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	19/06/2017	Copernicus
Marco Bonetti; Alia Atitar de la Fuente	D1 (Nitrates Directive)	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	21/06/2017	Freshwater
Anne Teller	Integration into CAP and Biodi-versity Strategy	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	28/07/2017	Nature Protection
Gilles Gantelet and Jacques Delsalle	ENV.A Policy	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	21/09/2017	General
Jacques Delsalle	ENV.A Policy	EC - DG ENV	Phone	30/11/2017	General
Thomas Henrichs	C3	EC - DG ENV	Face-to-face	08/06/2017 and 28/06/2017	SOER 2015
Karin Blumenthal	Eurostat, E.2 Environment sta-tistics and accounts, sustaina-ble development - Team leader waste statistics	EC - DG ESTAT	Phone	31/10/2017	General (focus on coherence)

Name	Title/work description	Stakeholder	Type of interview	Date	Subject
Catharina Bamps	I2	EC - DG GROW	Face-to-face	03/08/2017	Copernicus
Iain Shepherd	DG MARE, Maritime innovation, Marine Knowledge and Investment	EC - DG MARE	Face-to-face	08/11/2017	General (focus on coherence)
Guillemette Vachey	Environment and Climate action expert; DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations – NEAR Western Balkans Regional Co-operation and Programmes Unit – D5	EC - DG NEAR	Phone	06/11/2017	General, with focus on ENI
Jesus Sabadie	Policy officer	EC - DG RTD	Phone	20/10/2017	General
Gilles Ollier	Head of Sector	EC - DG RTD	Face-to-face	22/11/2017	Copernicus
Juergen Foerster	Eurostat E3 Environment and Forestry Statistics	EC – DG ESTAT	Phone	22/11/2017	Freshwater
Peeter Part	Directorate D, Advisor in Human Health and Environment Interactions	EC - JRC	Face-to-face	11/10/2017	General
Guido Schmuck	Head of Unit, Bio-economy unit	EC - JRC	Phone	13/10/2017	General
Alan Belward	Head of Unit	EC - JRC	Phone	22/11/2017	Copernicus
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy	ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe)	Member of European Parliament	Phone	24/10/2017	General
Mr. Wim De Coen	ECHA	Other EU agency	Phone	30/11/2017	General (focus on coherence)
Mr Tobin Robinson	EFSA	Other EU agency	Phone	06/12/2017	General (focus on coherence)
Mrs Elina Karhu	ECHA	Other EU agency	Phone	08/12/2017	General (focus on coherence)
Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler	Chair of Management Board until 2017 (Austria)	MS - Management Board	Face-to-face	16/05/2017	General
Nuno Lacasta	Vice-chair (Portugal)	MS - Management Board	Phone	10/07/2017	General
Elisa Rivera Mendoza	Management Board (Spain)	MS - Management Board	Phone	11/07/2017	General
Laura Burke	Chair of the Management Board (Ireland)	MS - Management Board	Phone	18/10/2017	General
Julia Werner and Christina Pykonen	MB member and NFP (Germany)	MS - NFP/MB	Phone	12/07/2017	General
Jan Voet (NFP) + Francis Brancart (MB)	MB member and NFP (Belgium)	MS - NFP/MB	Phone	13/07/2017	General

Name	Title/work description	Stakeholder	Type of interview	Date	Subject
Doina Catrinoiu	MB member and NFP (Romania)	MS - NFP/MB	Phone	14/07/2017	General
Valery Morard Thomas Kochert	MB member and NFP (France)	MS - NFP/MB	Phone	24/07/2017	General
Laura Hoijer	MB member and NFP (Finland)	MS - NFP/MB	Phone	15/08/2017	General
Marc Chardonnens Nicolas Perritaz Martine Rohn-Brossard	MB member and NFP (Switzerland)	MS - NFP/MB	Phone	23/08/2017	General
Manuela Pfeiffer, Rudy Vannevel, Falk Hilliges	Manuela Pfeiffer (Scientific Officer), Representative of German Working Group on Water Issues (LAWA) Rudy Vannevel, NRC Belgium (Flemish Environment Agency) Falk Hilliges, NFP Germany, German Environment Agency), Section II 2.2 Discharges and Inputs to Surface Waters	MS – NFP/NRC	Face-to-face	20/06/2017	Freshwater
Janusz Kozakiewicz	Member State (Poland F-gas national coordinator)	Member state	Phone	06/10/2017	F-gas
Brian MacSherry	Senior Programme Officer, UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre	International organisation	Phone	02/02/2018	General
Anthony Cox	Acting Director, Environment Directorate, OECD	International organisation	Phone and written response	14/02/2018	General
Patricia Buckley	Sandbag	NGO	Phone	25/10/2017	EU ETS
Evangelos Koumentakos	Senior Policy Advisor responsible for Climate change, air, soil, waste, emissions, Copa-Cogeca	NGO	Phone	30/10/2017	General
Mr Andreas Baumueller, WWF; Mr Ariel Brunner, Birdlife; Mr Cy Griffin, Wetlands International	NGO Focus group	NGO	Face-to-face	07/11/2017	General + focus on climate & nature
Alexandre Affre	Industrial Affairs Director, BusinessEurope	NGO	Phone	24/11/2017	General
Mr Wendel Trio	Climate Action Network, Director	NGO	Phone	29/11/2017	General
Sybille van den Hove	Former Chair of the Scientific Committee	Scientific Committee	Phone	06/11/2016	General
Per Mickwith	Chair of Scientific Committee	Scientific Committee	Phone	26/10/2017	General

Name	Title/work description	Stakeholder	Type of interview	Date	Subject
Michael Scoullos	Management Board (Member designated by the European Parliament)	Scientific Community - Management Board	Face-to-face	17/05/2017	General
Hans Bruyninckx	EEA Executive Director	EEA	Face-to-face	03/07/2017	General
François Dejean	Head of Climate Change Mitigation and Energy group	EEA	Face-to-face	10/05/2017	T&P
François Dejean	Head of Climate Change Mitigation and Energy group	EEA	Face-to-face	10/05/2017	EU ETS
Peder Gabrielsen, François Dejean	Project officer industrial pollution, and François Dejean, Head of Climate Change Mitigation and Energy group	EEA	Face-to-face	16/05/2017	F-gas
Almut Reichel, Ybele Hoogeveen	Almut Reichel, Project manager sustainable production and consumption, and Ybele Hoogeveen, Head of Green Economy group	EEA	Face-to-face	16/05/2017	Waste
Stéphane Isoard, Beate Werner	Stéphane Isoard, Head of Water and Marine group, and Beate Werner, Head of Biodiversity group.	EEA	Face-to-face	16/05/2017	Freshwater
Jeff Huntington	Senior Advisor	EEA	Face-to-face	16/05/2017	General
David Stanners	Head of Partnerships and Networks (PAN)	EEA	Face-to-face	16/05/2017	General
Chris Steenmans	Head of Programme ICT and data management	EEA	Face-to-face	16/05/2017	General
Teresa Ribeiro	Teresa Ribeiro, strategic coordinator	EEA	Face-to-face	17/05/2017	SOER 2015
Hans Dufourmont, Chris Steenmans	Hans Dufourmont, project manager, Copernicus land monitoring, and Chris Steenmans, Head of ICT and Data Management programme.	EEA	Face-to-face	17/05/2017	Copernicus
Ivone Pereira Martins, Ronan Uhel	Ivone Pereira Martins, former HoG Biodiversity and Ronan Uhel, Head of Natural System and Sustainability (NSS)	EEA	Face-to-face	17/05/2017	Nature Protection
Søren Brostrup Nielsen	Head of Administrative Services	EEA	Face-to-face	17/05/2017	General
Søren Brostrup Nielsen/Alan Lloyd (joint interview)	Head of Programmes/groups	EEA	Face-to-face	22/06/2017	General

Name	Title/work description	Stakeholder	Type of interview	Date	Subject
Katja Rosenbohm	Head of Programme Communications	EEA	Face-to-face	22/06/2017	General
Sigfus Bjarnason	Head of group Executive Director's secretariat and quality management	EEA	Face-to-face	22/06/2017	General
Ronan Uhel	Head of Programme Natural system and sustainability	EEA	Face-to-face	23/06/2017	General
Jock Martin	Head of Programme Integrated environmental assessments	EEA	Face-to-face	23/06/2017	General
Lars Mortensen	Head of group Eionet coordination and international cooperation	EEA	Face-to-face	23/06/2017	General
Paul McAleavey and Søren Nielsen	Head of Air and Climate Change Programme, Head of Administrative Services	EEA	Face-to-face	20/02/2018	General
Chris Steenmans	Head of Programme ICT and data management	EEA	Phone	23/02/2018	General (focus on data flows)
Josiane Rivière	Head of the Brussels Liaison Office (BLO)	EEA	Face-to-face	10/04/2018	General (focus on coherence)
Anita Kuenitzer	Director	ETC	Phone	30/08/2017	Freshwater
Sabine Gores	ETC/ACM; Senior Researcher, Energy & Climate, Öko-Institut	ETC	Phone	24/10/2017	EU ETS
Wolfram Jörß	ETC/ACM partner Öko-Institut e.V.	ETC	Phone	06/11/2017	F-gas
Evelien Dils, ETC WMGE; Andreas Littkopf, ETC ULS; Silvia Medri, ETC CCA; Dominique Richard, ETC BD; Paul Ruyssenaars, ETC ACM; Anita Künitzer, ETC ICM	ETC focus group meeting	ETC	Face-to-face	30/05/2017-01/06/2017	General

10.15   Appendix H - EEA publications classified as policy evaluations and activities supporting monitoring and reporting requirements

Overview of EEA's publications classified as "policy evaluations"

Title	Brief description	Partner	Reference to Better Regulation criteria/methods	EEA's mandate
Environment and climate policy evaluation	Methodological document addressed to the professional environmental evaluation community.	-	√ Methodological documents based on the Better Regulation Guidelines.	General mandate set out in the EEA/Eionet regulation (no specific legislation/mandate)
Communication, environment and behaviour (EEA Report No 13/2016)	Scoping study on the role of public communication to improve the implementation of environmental legislation.	-	-	General mandate set out in the EEA/Eionet regulation (no specific legislation/mandate)
Overview of climate change adaptation platforms in Europe (Technical report No 5/2015)	Overview on the state of play of most adaptation platform in Europe including 14 national adaptation platforms.	DG CLIMA, ETC on Climate Change impacts, vulnerability and Adaptation (ETC/CCA)	-	EU Adaptation strategy (Commission communication) 7th EAP
Mid-term evaluation report on INSPIRE implementation (Technical report No 17/2014)	The report analyses the state of implementation of the Directive at the mid-point of its implementation. It reports on the state of implementation (including costs and benefits), the links to other environmental legislation and to environmental policies, and other policies and activities (e.g. Galileo, Copernicus, etc.)	DG ENV, DG JRC	√ General evaluation questions addressed (based on the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, EU added value)	Directive establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (Inspire) (2007/2/EC).
Digest of EEA indicators 2014 (Technical report No 8/2014)	Overview of and guide to EEA indicators.	-	-	General mandate set out in the EEA/Eionet regulation (no specific legislation/mandate)
Assessment of cost recovery through water pricing (Technical report No 16/2013)	Synthesis of the conceptual and theoretical issues, literature review and assessments of current water pricing for selected MS and accession countries. Definition of practical recommendations on the development of pricing models and water pricing reporting.	-	-	General mandate set out in the EEA/Eionet regulation (no specific legislation/mandate)

Title	Brief description	Partner	Reference to Better Regulation criteria/methods	EEA's mandate
Towards a green economy in Europe - EU environmental policy targets and objectives 2010-2050 (EEA Report No 8/2013)	Detailed overview of the key objectives and targets in EU environmental policy and legislation for the period 2010–2050 (intended for supporting decision)	-	-	General mandate set out in the EEA/Eionet regulation (no specific legislation/mandate)
Air Implementation Pilot - Lessons learnt from the implementation of air quality legislation at urban level (EEA Report 7/2013)	Description of a European pilot project to help identify and address the reasons underlying this 'gap' in implementation of air quality policy in 12 European cities, and thereby draw lessons of wider relevance.	DG ENV	-	General mandate set out in the EEA/Eionet regulation (no specific legislation/mandate)
Managing municipal solid waste (EEA Report 2/2013)	Assessment of the implementation of EU waste policies in the area of municipal solid waste, with a focus on progress towards the EU targets. outcome of the 2012 activities within the joint DG Environment-EEA pilot project on the implementation of waste policies.	DG ENV	-	General mandate set out in the EEA/Eionet regulation (no specific legislation/mandate)

10.16   Appendix I - Report on public consultation

10.16.1 Objectives of the Public Consultation

COWI, alongside Milieu, Eunomia and adelphi have been commissioned by DG Environment to support an evaluation of the European Environment Agency (EEA) and its European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET) between the period mid-2012 until 2016.

The EEA was founded 27 years ago in 1990 and since then, the Founding Regulation (EC/401/2009) was amended in 2009 widening the tasks of the Agency. There is no direct requirement on evaluation in the Founding Regulation of the Agency; however, evaluations have been conducted since 2003. In connection with the budget discharge procedure in 2005, the Parliament established that an evaluation of the Agency should be carried out before 2010 and every five years thereafter.

The public consultation is part of a wider consultation exercise that also includes targeted surveys, interviews and focus groups with selected stakeholders. This part of the consultation will provide crucial information with regards to the perceived performance of the EEA and EIONET.

This document provides a full analysis of the results of the survey.

10.16.2 Approach to the Public Consultation

Two separate questionnaires were developed for the purposes of the public consultation:

- **A general questionnaire.** This was aimed at interested citizens or representatives of organisations with only a general interest in the EEA and EIONET; and
- **A stakeholder questionnaire.** This was aim at individuals who had specific knowledge and interest about EEA and EIONET activities and products.

Both questionnaires were made available in English, German and French and uploaded to the EU Survey tool. The questionnaire was launched on 18th July 2017 and closed on 6th November 2017 (a total of 17 weeks). To maximise the response rate, alongside the efforts of the EEA and European Commission to raise awareness, a link to the surveys was disseminated to a database of relevant stakeholders, and a number of organisations were also contacted directly and asked to help disseminate the link to the surveys.

10.16.3 Stakeholder Questionnaire

About the Respondents

This survey received a total of 30 responses to the questionnaire.

Question 1.1: In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?

The first question of this survey aimed to assess whether the respondent was answering on behalf of an organisation or as an individual in either a professional or personal capacity.

Table 10-62: Q1.1 - Capacity of Respondents

In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?	No. of Responses	%
As an individual in a professional capacity	16	53%
As an individual in a personal capacity	4	13%
On behalf of an organisation	10	33%

Source: Stakeholder Survey. Question 1.1: In what capacity are you responding to this consultation? Valid Responses: 30

It was found that 53% (16) of all (30) responses were from individuals acting in a professional capacity. There was only a small portion (13%) responding in a personal capacity.

Question 1.2: What type of organisation or institution do you work for?

Out of the 30 respondents, 26 were asked the type of organisation or institution they represented out of the possibilities listed in Figure 10-9.

Figure 10-9: Q1.2 - Type of Organisation or Institution
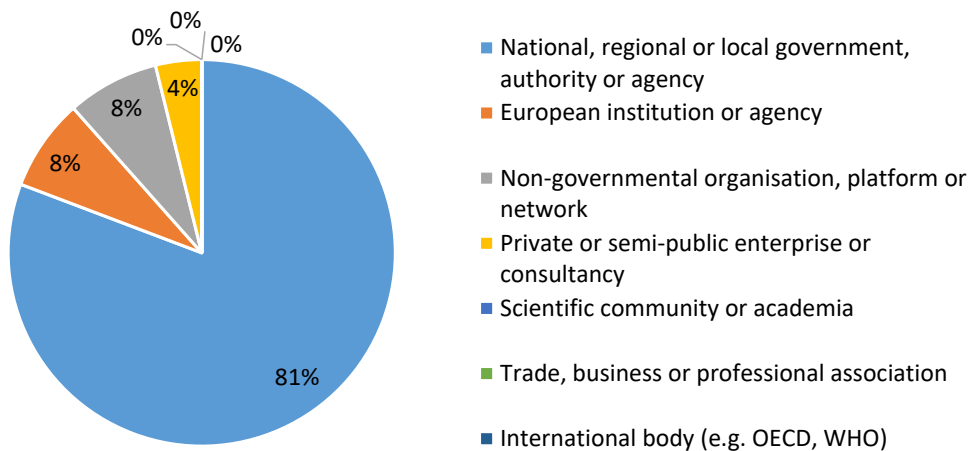
Source: Stakeholder Survey. Question 1.2: What type of organisation or institution do you work for? Valid Responses: 26

The vast majority of respondents, 81% (21), were from a national, regional or local government, authority or agency. It can be noted that the three fields:

- Scientific community or academia;
- International body; and
- Trade, business or professional association.

Question 1.3: Is your organisation or institution part of the EEA or EIONET?

Establishing whether a respondent's organisation or institution is part of either the EEA or EIONET could be significant when considering how much they might use the products and services provided by the EEA/EIONET and the extent of the value they believe these services add.

Table 10-63: Q1.3 - Part of the EEA or EIONET

Is your organisation or institution part of the EEA or EIONET?	No. of Responses	%
Yes	21	81%
No	5	19%

Source: Stakeholder Survey. Question 1.3: Is your organisation or institution part of the EEA or EIONET? Valid Responses: 26

Table 10-63 shows that 81% (21) of respondents to the stakeholder survey were from organisations or institutions which are part of the EEA or EIONET.

Question 1.5: Is your organisation or institution registered on the EU Transparency Register?

The EU Transparency Register lists organisations which influence policy and its implementation process. This database shows the organisations' interests and certain budgets, allowing citizens to monitor activities of lobbyists.

Table 10-64: Q1.5 - EU Transparency Register

Is your organisation or institution registered on the EU Transparency Register?	No. of Responses	%
Yes	2	8%
No	8	31%
Do not know	16	62%

Source: Stakeholder Survey. Question 1.5: Is your organisation or institution registered on the EU Transparency Register? Valid Responses: 26

Although 21 of 26 respondents knew their organisation was part of the EEA / EIONET, 16 of 26 respondents (62%) did not know if their organisation or institution was registered on the EU Transparency Register.

Question 1.8/1.9: In which country are you located? / In which country is your organisation or institution located?

As the EEA and EIONET are spread across the continent and different countries embrace their services differently, the locations of the respondents or the locations of their organisations (depending on which was more relevant) was determined and the results can be seen in Figure 10-10.

Figure 10-10: Q1.8/1.9 - Countries in which Respondents and their organisations/institutions are located (30 responses)
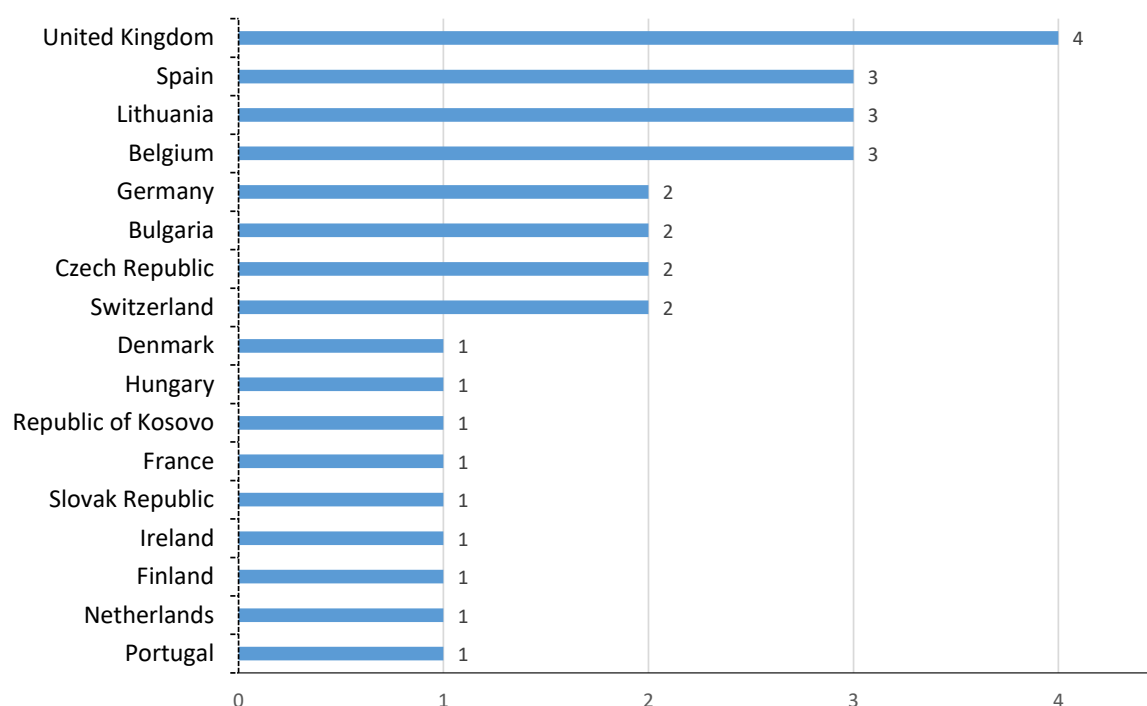
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 1.8/1.9 In which country are you located? / In which country is your or-ganisation or institution located? Valid Responses: 30

Overall, 17 different countries were represented with the largest number of responses being from the UK (4), Spain (3), Belgium (3), and Lithuania (3). Three responses were received from non-EU28 member states (Switzer-land [2], and Republic of Kosovo [1]). The distribution between countries is fairly even with no one country having significantly more respondents.

Brief Section Analysis

Overall a poor response to the survey given the population of the EIONET and the number of organisations that feed in directly to the work of the EEA and EIONET. Generally responses are dominated by organisations that are part of the EEA and EIONET and therefore likely to have provided an informed view. Responses were from a range of countries, with no single country dominating.

Products and Services

Question 2.1: The EEA gathers and provides information across a range of themes. Please select the themes which are associated with your needs.

The EEA gathers and provides information across a range of themes which can be broadly split into three groups: Systemic, socio-economic, and environmental. Respondents were asked select any themes relating to their needs.

Figure 10-11: Q2.1a - Environmental Themes Associated to the Respondents (30)
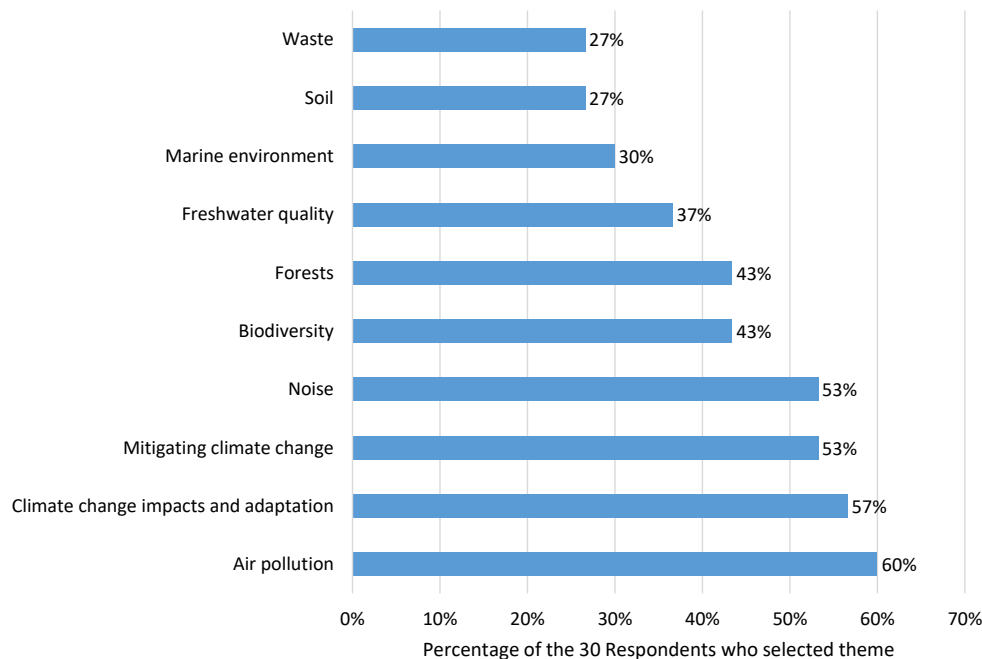
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.1: The EEA gathers and provides information across a range of themes. Please select the themes which are associated with your needs. Environment Themes. Valid Re-sponses: 30

As shown in Figure 10-11, **Air pollution** (60%, 18 responses) was the most selected environmental theme. **Cli-mate change impacts and adaptation** (57%) and **Mitigating climate change** (53%) received the second and third most responses (respectively).

Figure 10-12: Q2.1b - Socio-economic Themes Associated to the Respondents (30)
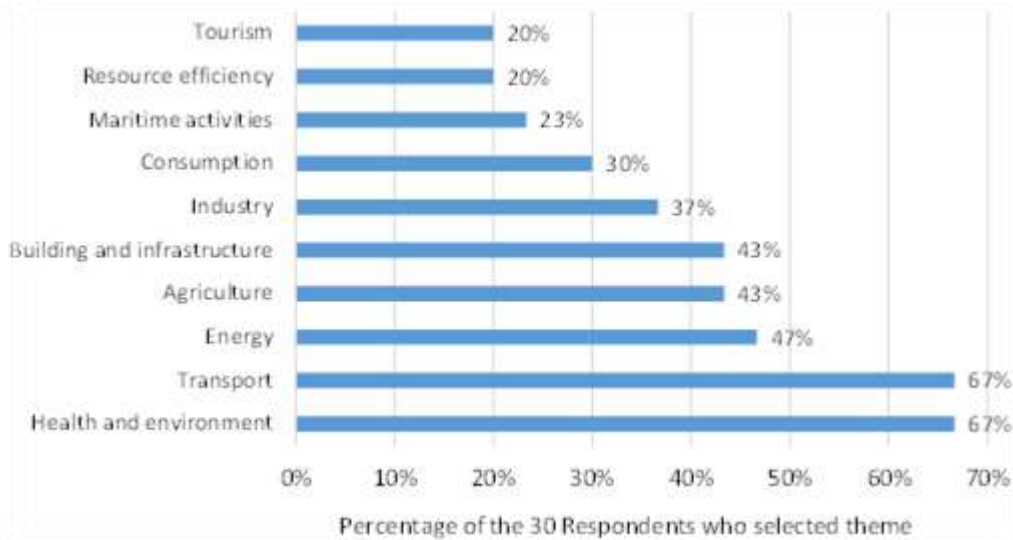
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.1: The EEA gathers and provides information across a range of themes. Please select the themes which are associated with your needs. Socio-Economic Themes. Valid Responses: 30

20 of the 30 respondents (67%) had needs in the themes of **Health and the Environment** and **Transport**, as shown in Figure 10-12**.** The themes with the least selections were **Resource efficiency** (20%), **Tourism** (20%) and **Maritime activities** (23%).

Figure 10-13: Q2.1c - Systematic Themes Associated to the Respondents (30)
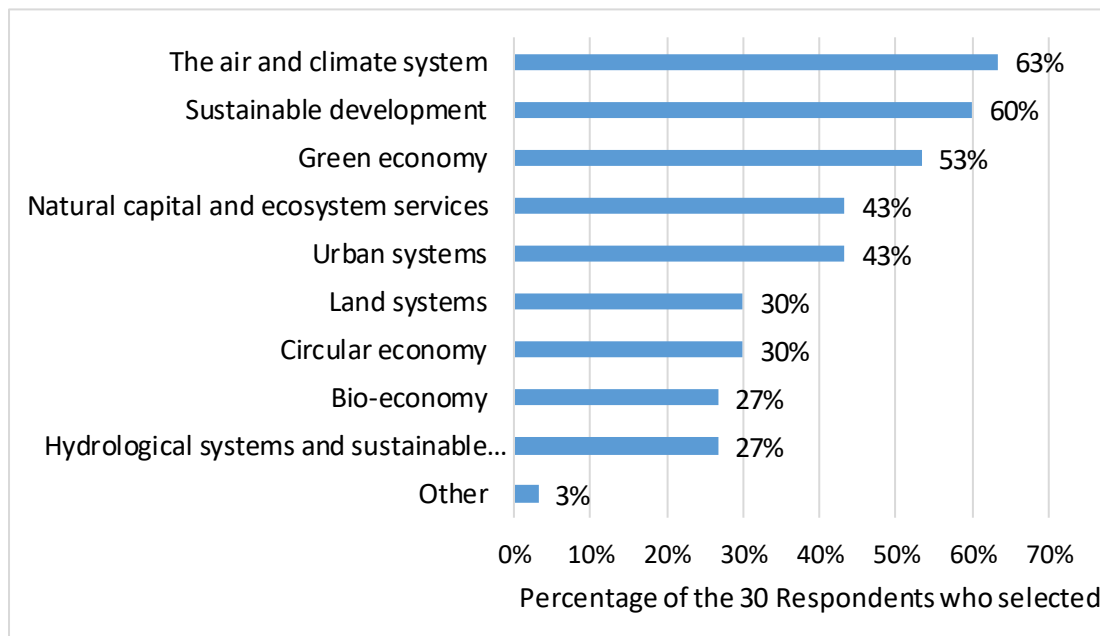
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.1: The EEA gathers and provides information across a range of themes. Please select the themes which are associated with your needs. Systematic Themes. Valid Responses: 30

The most popular needs identified by respondents for systemic perspectives theme were **the air and climate system** (63%) and **Sustainable development** (60%), as shown in Figure 10-13.
Overall, **Health and the Environment** and **Transport** (67%) were the two largest themes identified by respondents, followed by T**he Air and Climate System** (63%), then **Sustainable Development** and **Air Pollution** (60%).

Question 2.2: We are interested why individuals and organisations use EEA products and services. Please select the statements below that best describe your needs

To understand why individuals and organisations use EEA products and services, possible reasons were listed in Table 10-65 for respondents to select.

The vast majority of respondents reported that they used **EEA products and services for work purposes** (93%). Furthermore, 87% reported to have an **Interest in aggregated environmental information across Europe**. 3% (1 respondent) selected **only interested in the environmental information for one particular country**.

Table 10-65: Q2.2 - Why Respondents use EEA Products and Services

Respondents' Needs	**Total**	**%**
I use EEA products and services for work purposes	28	93%
I use EEA products and services for purposes unrelated to my work	3	10%
I have an interest in aggregated environmental information across Europe	26	87%
I have an interest in aggregated environmental information in specific regions of Europe	19	63%
I have an interest in comparing environmental information across countries	21	70%
I am only interested in the environmental information for one particular country	1	3%
The information that I use is only available from the EEA	9	30%
I use information from the EEA in combination with information from other sources	23	77%
The information that I use is available from other sources as well as the EEA, but I prefer to use information provided by the EEA	3	10%
Other, please explain	1	3%

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.2: We are interested why individuals and organisations use EEA products and services. Please select the statements below that best describe your needs Valid Responses: 30

Question 2.3: How interested are you in information provided by the EEA relating to European countries outside of the EU?

When asked to what extent the respondents were interested in information provided by the EEA relating to European countries outside of the EU, the 23 responses given were broadly distributed over the potential answers ranging from '**to a very large extent**' to '**no extent**'. The response '**do not know**' was not selected by any respondents.

Figure 10-14: Q2.3 - Interest in information provided by the EEA relating to European countries outside of the EU (23 responses)
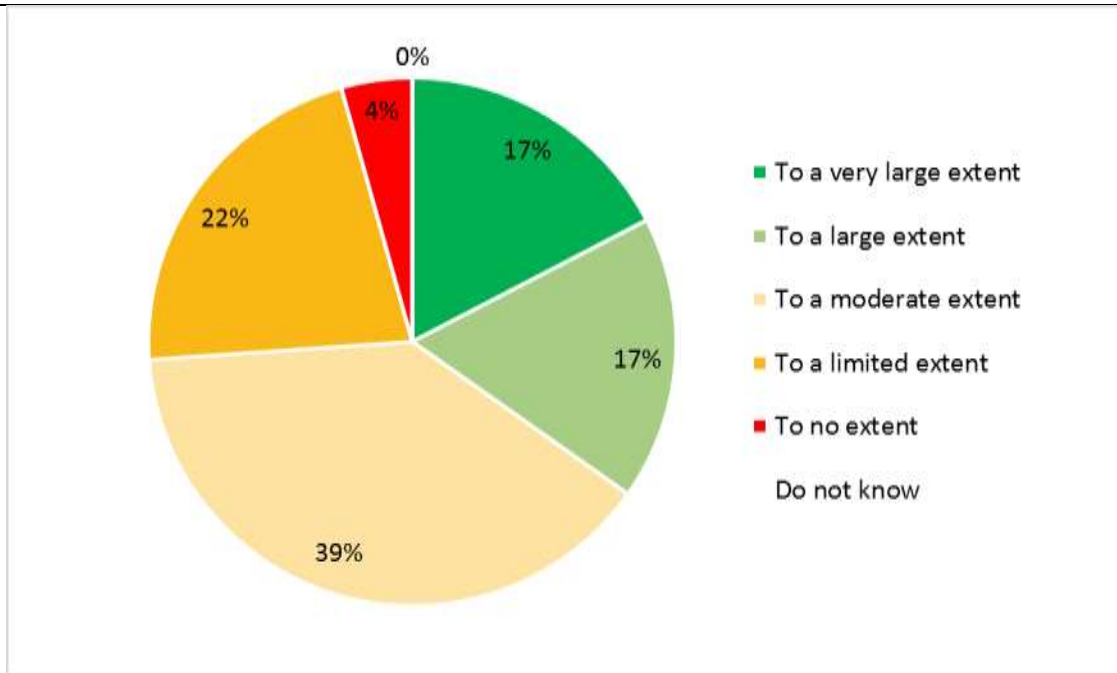
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.3 - Interest in information provided by the EEA relating to European countries outside of the EU? Valid Responses: 23

Figure 10-14 shows that 39% of respondents are **'moderately'** interested in information provided by the EEA relating to European countries outside of the EU and a total of 35% of respondents are interested to a **'large'** or **'very large extent'**. However, 26% of respondents have **'no'**, or a '**limited interest'** in information provided by the EEA relating to European countries outside of the EU.

Question 2.4: The EEA produces a range of publically available products and services, as listed below. Please indicate how often you use them.

There are many products and services provided by the EEA. Question 2.4 outlines the key products and services according to Article 2 of its Founding Regulation. By knowing the types of information frequently used, the information in high demand can be known and potentially prioritised.

One section of the types of sources of information was '**other'**. Participants who selected other identified EUNIS, Air Quality Portal, Noise Observation and Information Service for Europe, EEA highlights and pétition parlement européen.

Signals are snapshots of key environmental issues. Examples of corporate reports includes Annual Work Programmes and Multi-Annual Work Programmes. Communication material refers to presentations, press releases, twitter feeds, and other such materials.

Figure 10-15: Q2.4 - The types of information sources used frequently or very frequently by respondents*
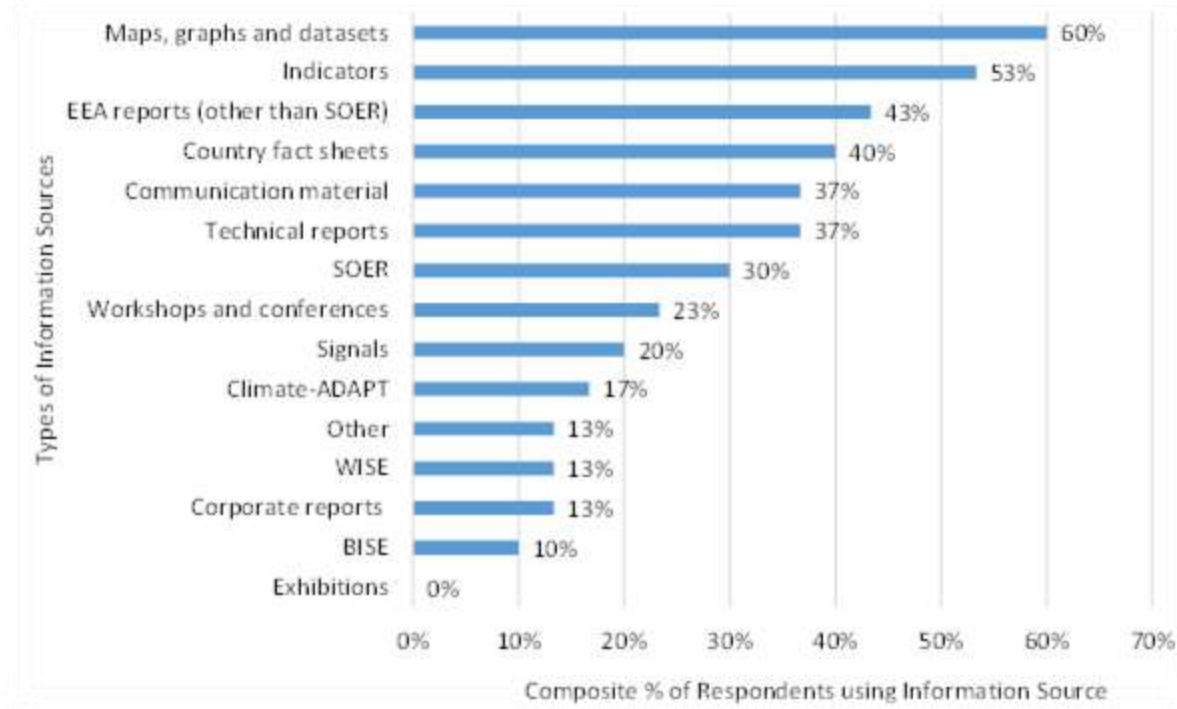
*Notes: *Each source type was a separate section and each had 30 responses. The percentage values represent the total amount of respondents (out of 30) who selected 'very frequently' or 'frequently' options in each section. The other options were 'occasionally', 'rarely', 'never', and 'do not know'. (See Figure 10-16)*

BISE stands for 'Biodiversity Information System for Europe', WISE stands for 'Water Information System for Europe', and SOER stands for 'the State of the Environment Report'.

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.4: The EEA produces a range of publically available products and services, as listed below. Please indicate how often you use them. Answer categories: Frequently or Very Frequently. Valid Responses: 30

The information sources in greatest demand by the respondents were reported to be **Maps, graphs and datasets**, used collectively by 60% (18) of respondents either **'very frequently'** or **'frequently'**. Just over half of the respondents, 53% (16), reported the use of **indicators** '**very frequently'** or **'frequently'**.

Figure 10-16: Q2.4 - Overall Frequency of Use of Information (30 responses)*
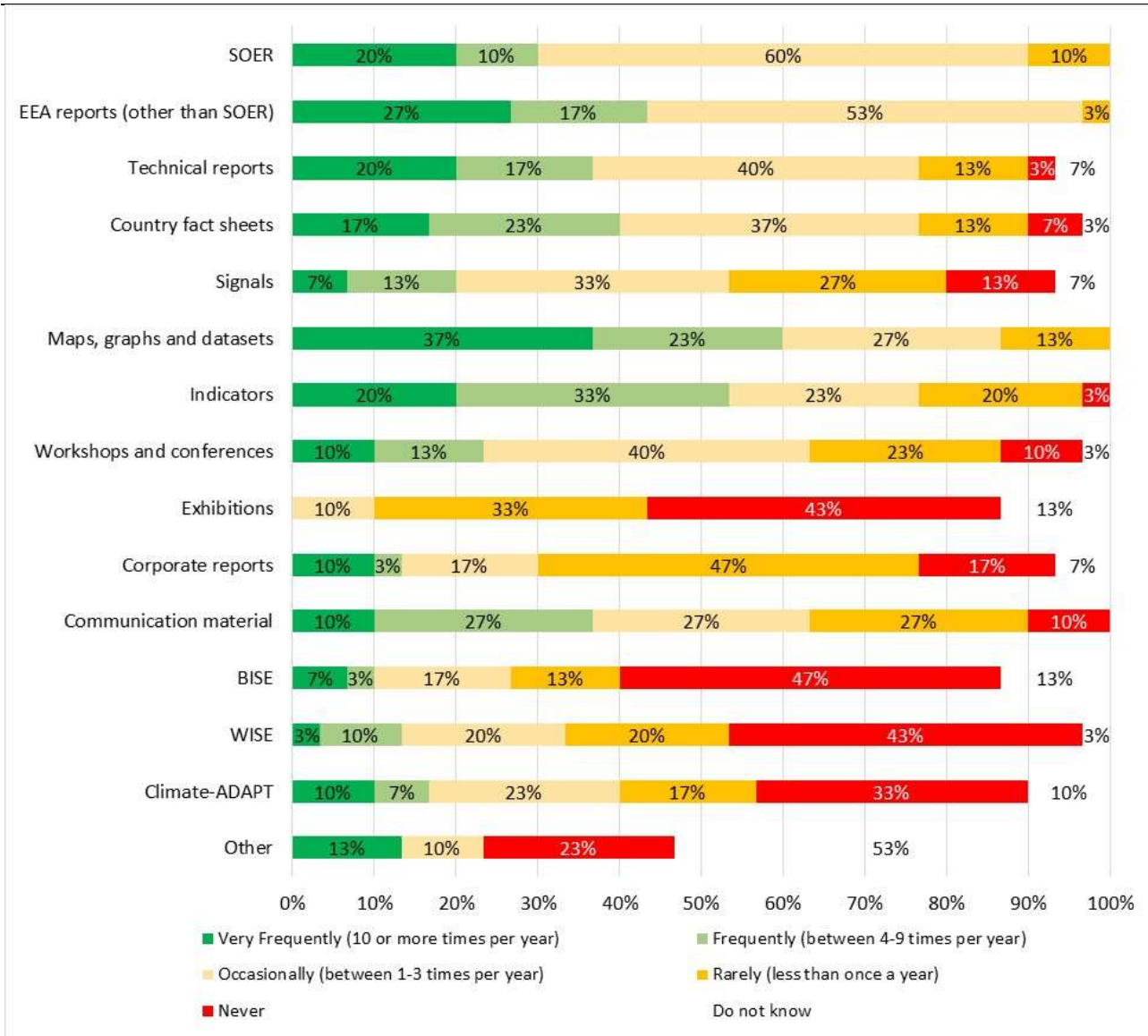
Notes: *The types of information source (e.g. SOER, signals etc.) each received 30 responses each. Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.4: The EEA produces a range of publically available products and services, as listed below. Please indicate how often you use them. Valid Responses: 30

Figure 10-16 shows that 63% of respondents '**rarely**' or '**never**' used **Corporate reports** (e.g. Annual Work Programmes and Multi-Annual Work Programmes). **Exhibitions** were reported to be used even less, with 77% of respondents '**rarely**' or '**never**' using them. Other sources of information to be '**rarely**' or '**never**' used were **BISE** (60%), **WISE** (63%), and **Climate-ADAPT** (50%) though it is noted that this is likely to be strongly linked to the themes selected in Q2.1.

Question 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products?

The respondents were asked their opinions on the various products published by the EEA. The products included:

1. The State of the Environment report (SOER)
2. EEA Reports (other than SOER)
3. Technical reports
4. Country fact sheets
5. Signals
6. Maps, graphs and datasets
7. Indicators
8. Exhibitions
9. Biodiversity Information System for Europe (BISE)
10. Water Information System for Europe (WISE)

11. Climate-ADAPT
12. Other (includes those products identified by respondents EUNIS, Air Quality Portal, Noise Observation and Information Service for Europe, EEA highlights, Pétition Parlement Européen)

For each category listed, respondents were asked whether they agreed with a series of statements regarding the quality and scope of the products. Figure 10-17 shows the respondents who agreed (or disagreed) with each statement for each product.

Figure 10-17: Q2.5 - Respondents' Agreement to Statements Relating to Information Provided by the EEA (11 statements' figures)*
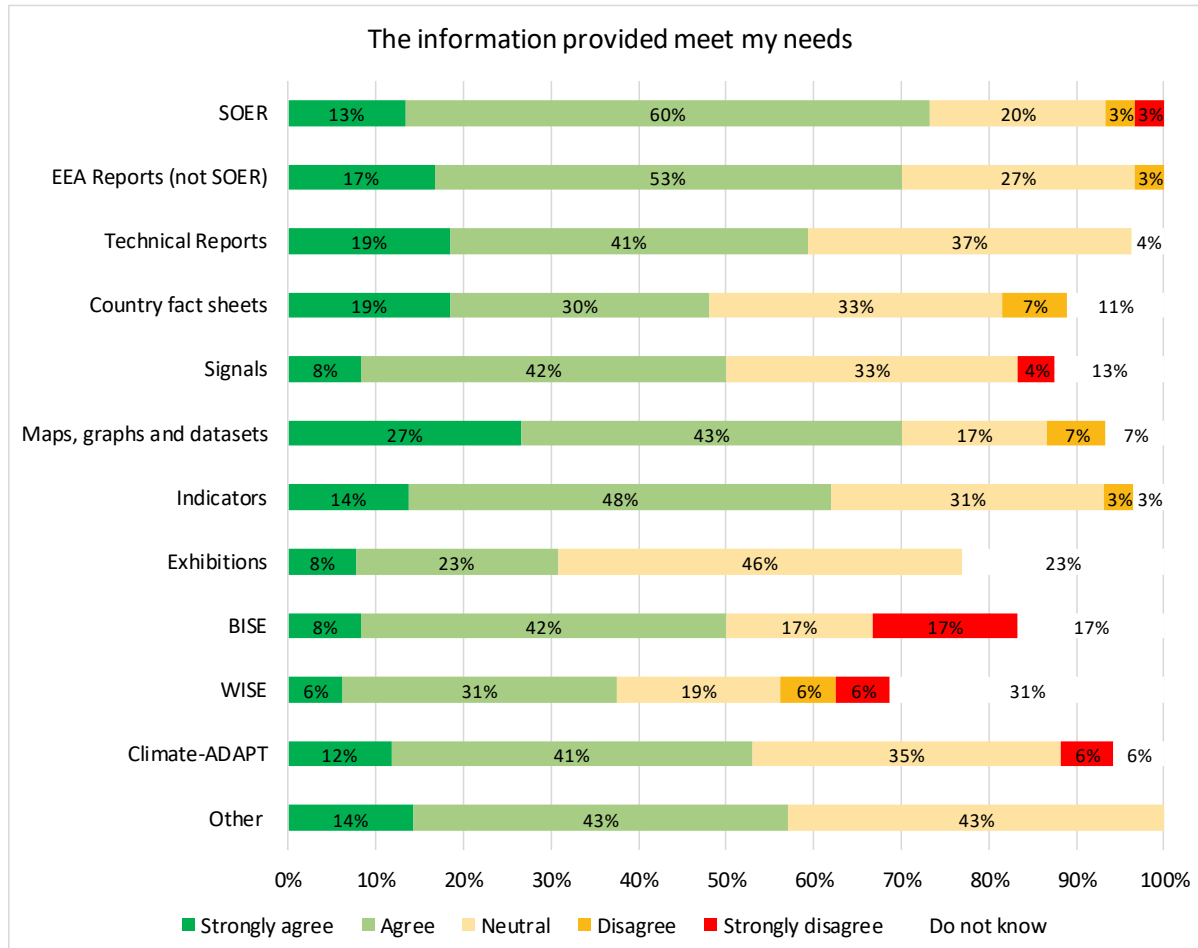
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The Information provided meets my needs.
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information provided is comparable across different countries

Product	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	23%	67%	7%		3%	
EEA Reports (not SOER)	17%	57%	20%	3%	3%	
Technical Reports	11%	56%	22%		7%	4%
Country fact sheets	22%	41%	19%	4%	4%	11%
Signals	8%	50%	21%		4%	17%
Maps, graphs and datasets	27%	43%	13%	3%	3%	10%
Indicators	14%	52%	24%	3%	3%	3%
Exhibitions	8%	23%	38%			31%
BISE	8%	50%	17%		8%	17%
WISE	13%	38%	13%	6%		31%
Climate-ADAPT	12%	47%	35%			6%
Other	14%	43%	43%			

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ☐ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree Do not know

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is comparable across different countries.
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information provided is accurate

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	27%	50%	17%	3%	3%	
EEA Reports (not SOER)	17%	57%	27%			
Technical Reports	15%	56%	26%			4%
Country fact sheets	15%	44%	26%	4%		11%
Signals	21%	42%	25%			13%
Maps, graphs and datasets	27%	50%	17%			7%
Indicators	14%	55%	24%	3%		3%
Exhibitions	8%	23%	38%			31%
BISE	8%	33%	33%			25%
WISE	13%	19%	38%			31%
Climate-ADAPT	6%	53%	35%			6%
Other		57%	29%	14%		

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is accurate
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information provided is easy to access

Product	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	20%	57%	17%	7%		
EEA Reports (not SOER)	20%	57%	13%	7%		3%
Technical Reports	19%	48%	22%	4%		7%
Country fact sheets	15%	56%	11%	4%		15%
Signals	17%	50%	17%			17%
Maps, graphs and datasets	13%	53%	20%	3%	3%	7%
Indicators	10%	55%	21%	7%	3%	3%
Exhibitions	8%	23%	38%	8%		23%
BISE	8%	42%	33%			17%
WISE	13%	44%	6%		6%	31%
Climate-ADAPT	6%	76%	12%			6%
Other	14%	57%	14%	14%		

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree Do not know

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is easy to access
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

It is easy to use the EEA website to access the information that I need

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	17%	57%	13%	10%		3%
EEA Reports (not SOER)	20%	53%	10%	10%	3%	3%
Technical Reports	19%	37%	26%	11%		7%
Country fact sheets	11%	48%	15%	11%		15%
Signals	13%	58%	13%			17%
Maps, graphs and datasets	13%	50%	20%	7%	3%	7%
Indicators	7%	59%	17%	10%	3%	3%
Exhibitions	8%	23%	38%	8%		23%
BISE		58%	25%			17%
WISE	6%	44%	13%		6%	31%
Climate-ADAPT	6%	71%	18%			6%
Other		57%	14%	29%		

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? It is easy to use the EEA website to access the information that I need
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information provided is updated at a suitable frequency

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	10%	47%	30%	13%		
EEA Reports (not SOER)	17%	57%	13%	13%		
Technical Reports	15%	37%	37%	4%		7%
Country fact sheets	22%	30%	19%	15%		15%
Signals	8%	50%	25%	4%		13%
Maps, graphs and datasets	10%	53%	10%	13%		13%
Indicators	7%	52%	14%	17%	3%	7%
Exhibitions	8%	15%	46%	8%		23%
BISE	8%	33%	25%		8%	25%
WISE	6%	31%	25%		6%	31%
Climate-ADAPT	12%	47%	29%	6%		6%
Other		57%	29%		14%	

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information is updated at a suitable frequency
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information provided is impartial

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Do not know |

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is impartial
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information is presented at the right level of detail

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	13%	47%	27%	7%	7%	
EEA Reports (not SOER)	17%	47%	27%	7%	3%	
Technical Reports	11%	52%	30%		4%	4%
Country fact sheets	19%	37%	26%	4%	4%	11%
Signals	8%	42%	29%	4%	4%	13%
Maps, graphs and datasets	20%	37%	27%	7%	3%	7%
Indicators	10%	52%	21%	10%	3%	3%
Exhibitions	8%	8%	46%	8%		31%
BISE	8%	25%	33%		8%	25%
WISE	6%	13%	38%		13%	31%
Climate-ADAPT	12%	29%	41%	6%	6%	6%
Other	14%	71%	14%			

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information is presented at the right level of detail
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information is presented at the appropriate geographic scale

Product	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	27%	40%	27%	3%	3%	
EEA Reports (not SOER)	23%	47%	23%	3%	3%	
Technical Reports	19%	37%	33%		4%	7%
Country fact sheets	22%	33%	26%	4%	4%	11%
Signals	13%	38%	29%	4%	4%	13%
Maps, graphs and datasets	30%	33%	20%	7%	3%	7%
Indicators	17%	45%	21%	10%	3%	3%
Exhibitions	8%	8%	46%	8%		31%
BISE	8%	25%	33%		8%	25%
WISE	6%	19%	31%		13%	31%
Climate-ADAPT	12%	29%	41%	6%	6%	6%
Other	14%	57%	29%			
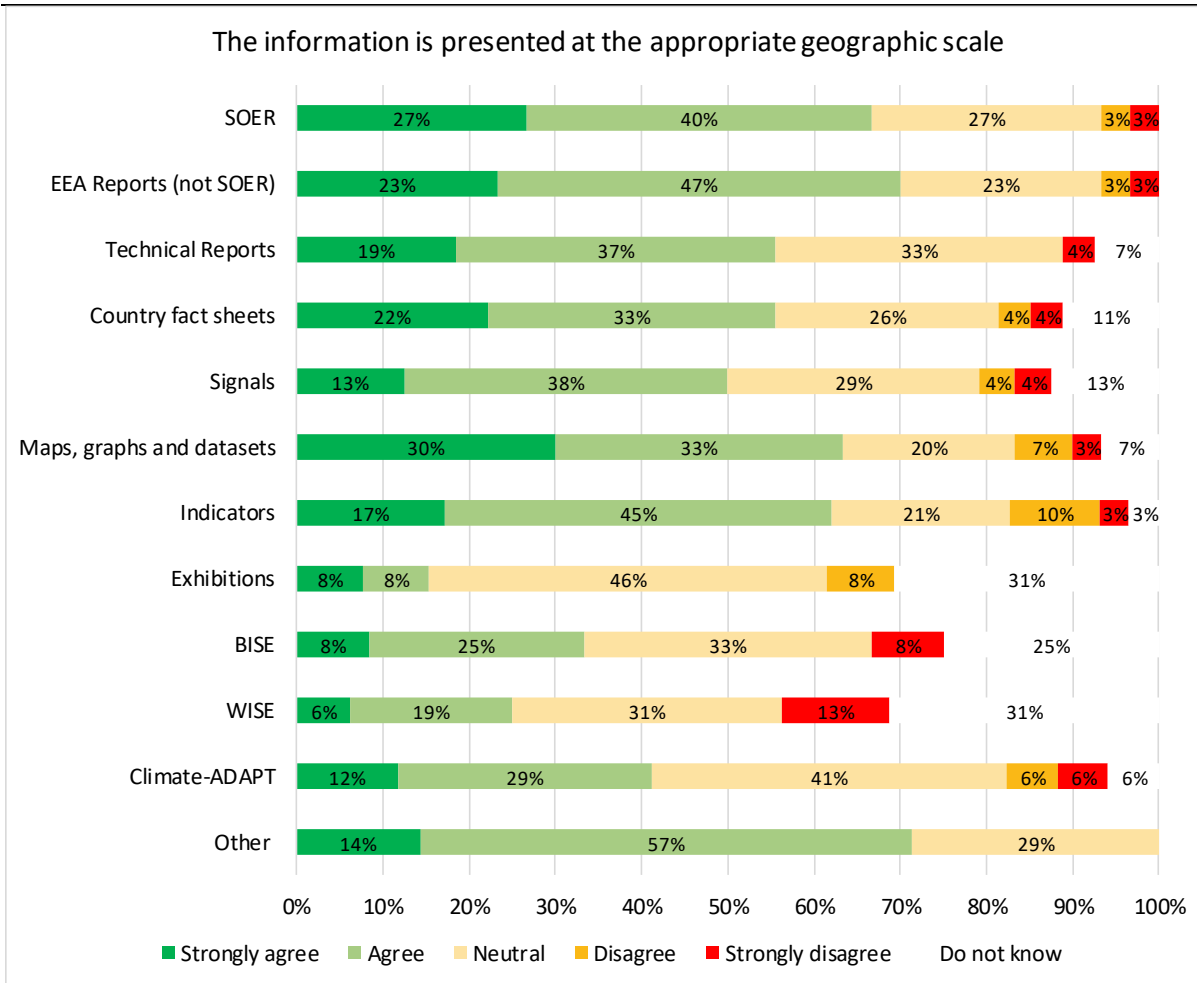
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information is presented at appropriate geographic levels.
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information is provided in a language that I can understand

Product	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	50%	43%		3%		3%
EEA Reports (not SOER)	43%	47%		3%		7%
Technical Reports	33%	48%	11%	4%		4%
Country fact sheets	37%	44%	4%	4%		11%
Signals	33%	42%	13%			13%
Maps, graphs and datasets	37%	47%	10%			7%
Indicators	28%	52%	17%			3%
Exhibitions	8%	38%	23%	8%		23%
BISE	8%	67%	8%			17%
WISE	19%	50%	6%			25%
Climate-ADAPT	29%	59%	6%			6%
Other	14%	57%	29%			

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Do not know
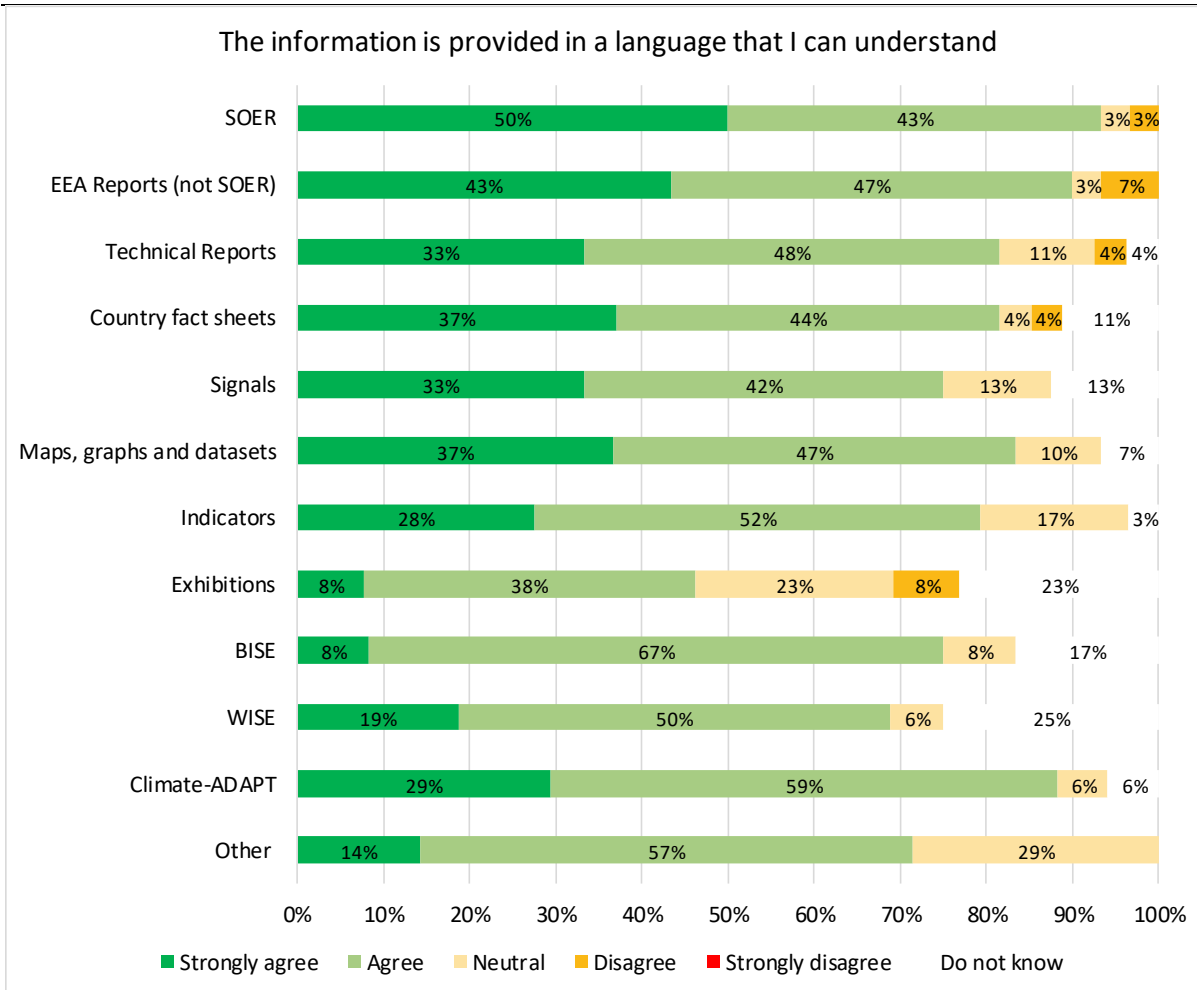
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information provided is available in a language that I can understand Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

The information is provided in a format that is easy to understand

Product	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
SOER	23%	57%	10%	10%		
EEA Reports (not SOER)	27%	57%	7%	10%		
Technical Reports	26%	56%	11%	4%		4%
Country fact sheets	30%	52%	4%	4%		11%
Signals	29%	46%	13%			13%
Maps, graphs and datasets	23%	60%	3%	7%		7%
Indicators	21%	48%	17%	7%		7%
Exhibitions	15%	31%	23%	8%		23%
BISE	8%	67%	8%			17%
WISE	25%	38%	6%	6%		25%
Climate-ADAPT	18%	65%	12%			6%
Other	14%	57%	29%			

■ Strongly agree   ■ Agree   □ Neutral   ■ Disagree   ■ Strongly disagree   Do not know
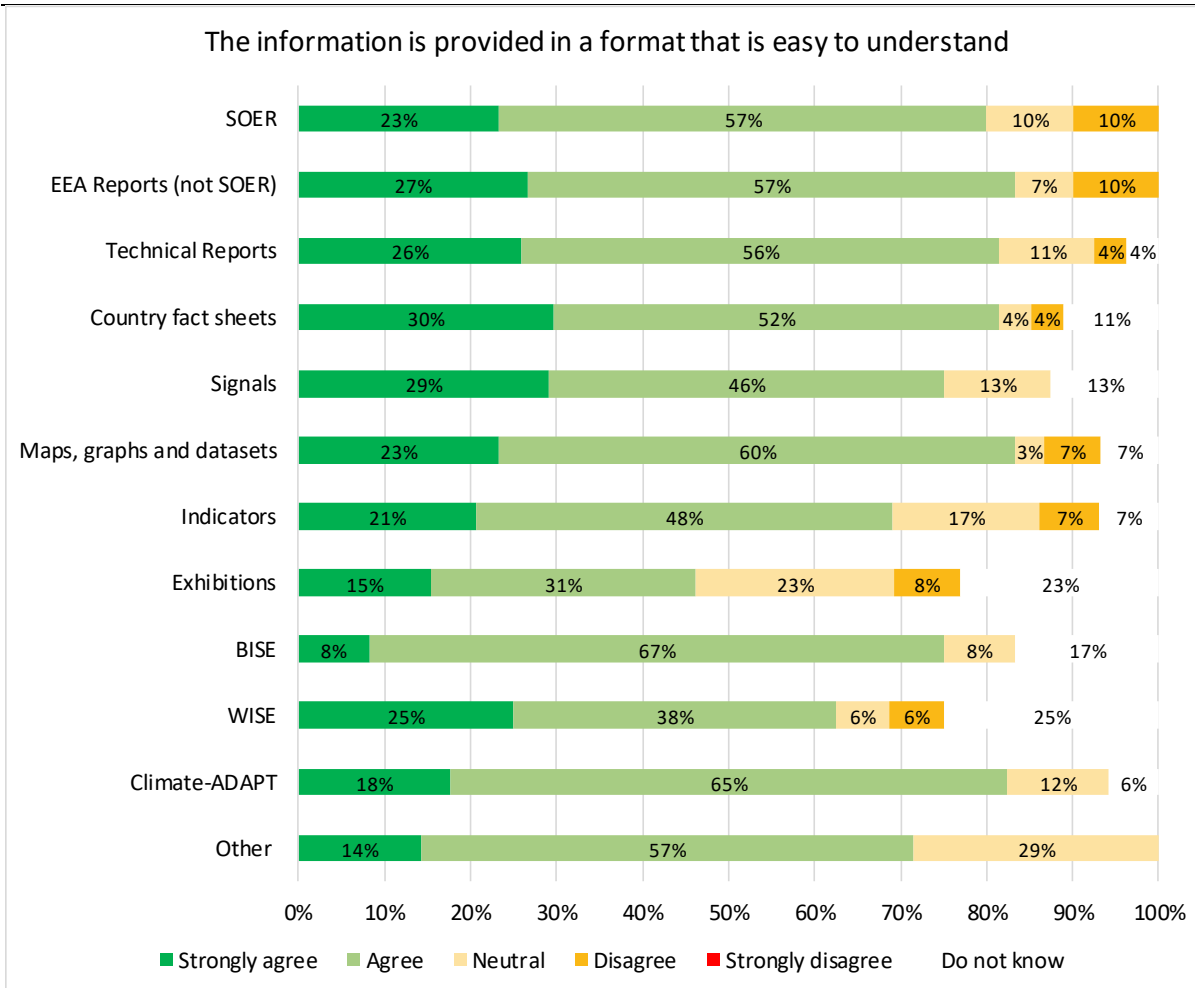
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 2.5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the following products? The information is provided in a format that is easy to understand
Valid Responses: 30 for SOER, EEA reports (other than SOER), Maps, graphs and datasets. 29 for indicators. 27 for Technical Reports and Country Fact Sheets. 24 for Signals. 17 for Climate-Adapt. 16 for WISE. 13 for Exhibitions. 12 for BISE and 7 for Other

Over 70% of participants either '**strongly agreed'** or '**agreed'** that the **SOER**, **EEA Reports (not SOER)** and **Maps, graphs and datasets** provided information for their needs. Less than or equal to 50% of respondents either '**strongly agreed'** or **'agreed'** that this was the case for **Country Fact Sheets, Signals, Exhibitions, BISE** and **WISE.**

90% of respondents either **'strongly agreed'** or '**agreed'** that the information provided in the **SOER** was comparable across different countries. Only 50% either **'strongly agreed'** or **'agreed'** that this was the case for **WISE** and only 31% **'strongly agreed'** or **'agreed'** for **Exhibitions**.

Over three quarters of respondents either **'strongly agreed'** or **'agreed'** that **SOER** and **Maps, graphs and datasets** provided accurate information. Only 31% of respondents thought the same for **WISE** and **Exhibitions**

82% of the respondents either **'strongly agreed**' or **'agreed'** that the **Climate-ADAPT** information was easy to access. Two thirds or more of the respondents also either **'agreed'** or **'strongly agreed'** that this was the case for **SOER, EEA Reports, Technical reports, Country fact sheets, Signals, Maps, graphs and datasets** and **Other.** Only 50% thought the same for **BISE** and 31% thought so for **Exhibitions.**

76% of respondents either **'agreed'** or **'strongly agreed'** that **Climate-ADAPT** information is easy to access from the EEA website, while 73% thought the same could be said for **SOER** and **EEA reports.**

Only 23% of respondents either **'agreed'** or **'strongly agreed'** that the information regarding **Exhibitions** was undated frequently enough. This number increased to 73 % for **EEA reports.**

Other information was either **'agreed'** or **'strongly agreed'** to be impartial by 86% of respondents. 83% thought the same way for **EEA reports** and 77% for **SOER.**

Less than two thirds of the respondents either **'agreed'** or **'strongly agreed'** the level of detail was at the right level in all bar **Other**. This lack of agreement dropped to 15% for **Exhibitions**, 25% for **WISE**, 33% for **BISE** and 41% for **Climate-ADAPT**.

WISE, BISE and **Exhibitions** continue to not hold up well when respondents were asked about appropriate geographical scales. A third or less either '**agreed'** or '**strongly agreed'** with this statement.

Most of the respondents (generally 70% or over) either '**agreed'** or **'strongly agreed'** that the information provided is in a language and format they can easily understand. **Exhibitions** still had the poorest responses compared to other sources of information, but even so almost half of the respondents either **'agreed'** or **'strongly agreed'** with these statements.

Other Comments on the usefulness of the information provided by the EEA

Respondents were also able to provide qualitative remarks on the usefulness of the information provided by the EEA. The following responses were received:

- a better access to data, indicators and maps is lacking, including a structured metadata and a clear indication of date, methodology, etc;
- Many reports have no direct or indirect policy relevance; some are half-way to research, which is not very useful for the mandate and scope of the EEA
- Greater integration of national data and data collection platforms into the site is needed. While information is scientifically sound and accurate, it is of a high-level nature which does not provide a comprehensive guide to development of mitigation or adaptation measures on a national level.
- To my knowledge the EEA information is very valuable in terms of providing the state of the art of environmental information in Europe for all experts in Europe. It is the key value of the EEA that it is a trusted source of information. All efforts should be made to maintain this key value.
- The Copernicus Land Monitoring Services are producing a broad range of highly relevant data and products and the management and dissemination of these should be suitably resources to guarantee the level of exploitation which will benefit both the users and EEA / Copernicus.
- There are a lot of reports that are produced which is great but there is less information about how they join up and are interrelated.
- De aansluiting bij nieuwe onderwerpen blijft op het gebied van data en indicatoren achter. Bijvoorbeeld indicatoren voor duurzame mobiliteit, energietransitie en duurzame voedselvoorziening. Idem voor groene groei.

  Google translate from Dutch:

  The connection with new subjects is lagging behind in the area of data and indicators. For example indicators for sustainable mobility, energy transition and sustainable food supply. The same for green growth.

- le respect des recommandation de l'union européenne doit être mis a jour

  Google translate from French:

  the respect of the recommendations of the european union must be updated

- Please view our short published response online: https://www.transportenvironment.org/publications/public-consultation-european-environment-agency [This responses is shown in Appendix 10.16.5
- some reports can be too long too detailed and difficult to read. The change to briefings is a step in the right direction. Signals is much more readable than other reports.
- EUNIS could be developed further in terms of presentation, promotion and content. There is a need for a central source of information (habitat, basic biological data etc.) for species and for distribution maps. The population of birds could be updated on the basis of the European Red List.
- In Copenhagen at the "CLIMATE PLANET" event the exhibition by EEA had a modell city (made of LEGO), looked great, but guide texts were only in Danish language.

Brief Section Analysis

The respondents have a strong interest in the products and services that the EEA provides. Overall the majority of respondents expressed positive views towards the products and services provided by the EEA and EIONET. Reports (including the SOER and non-SOER) alongside maps, graphs and datasets and indicators were reported upon favourably. Exhibitions and WISE have received less favourable feedback.

Value Added

Question 3.1: Has The EEA/EIONET performed its various functions in a competent manner?

The majority (53% or more) of all respondents reported that the EEA/EIONET was competently performing its duties either to '**a very large extent**' or '**large extent**', as shown in Table 10-66.

Table 10-66: Q3.1 – Competency of the EEA and EIONET in Performing their Various Functions

Composite: Has The EEA/EIONET performed its various functions in a competent manner? (To a very large extent + To a large extent)	No.	%
Publishing a European State of the Environment Report every five years	25	83%
Undertaking thematic assessments of the state of the environment in selected sectors and themes	23	77%
Managing environmental monitoring and reporting data	23	77%
Providing environmental data and information to support policy development at EU and national level	22	73%
Providing analyses of long-term economic, social and environmental mega-trends	20	67%
Setting up criteria and indicators for measuring the state of the environment in different sectors and themes across Europe	19	63%
Supporting European-level knowledge creation and exchange among institutions and organisations dealing with environmental information and knowledge	18	60%
Ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public	16	53%

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 3.1: Has The EEA/EIONET performed its various functions in a competent manner? Valid Responses: 30

Greatest agreement was received for **Publishing a European State of the Environment Report every five years** (83%). The function that respondents reported was being performed with the least competence was **Ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public** (53%).
Question 3.2: Is the EEA/EIONET best placed to perform its various functions?
Over three quarters of all respondents reported that the EEA/EIONET was either to '**a very large extent**' or '**large extent**', best placed to perform all of its duties, as shown in Table 8-5.

Table 10-67: Q3.2 - Is the EEA/EIONET best placed to perform its various functions?

Composite: Is the EEA/EIONET best placed to perform its various functions? (To a very large extent & To a large extent)	No.	%
Setting up criteria and indicators for measuring the state of the environment in different sectors and themes across Europe	26	87%
Managing environmental monitoring and reporting data	26	87%
Publishing a European State of the Environment Report every five years	25	83%
Undertaking thematic assessments of the state of the environment in selected sectors and themes	25	83%
Providing environmental data and information to support policy development at EU and national level	24	80%
Ensuring a broad dissemination of environmental information to the general public	23	77%
Supporting European-level knowledge creation and exchange among institutions and organisations dealing with environmental information and knowledge	23	77%

Providing analyses of long-term economic, social and environmental mega-trends	23	77%

Source: Stakeholder Survey. 3.2: Is the EEA/EIONET best placed to perform its various functions? Valid Responses: 30

Greatest agreement was received for **Setting up criteria and indicators for measuring the state of the environment in different sectors and themes across Europe** and **Managing environmental monitoring and reporting data** (87% for each).

Question 3.3: Below are a list of EEA and EIONET functions. Please indicate whether you consider the resources allocated to performing each function to be adequate, too high, or too low.

This question asked whether the respondent considered the resources allocated to performing each function of EEA and EIONET to be 'adequate', 'too high', 'too low' or 'do not know', as shown in Figure 10-18.

Figure 10-18: Q3.3 – Allocation of Resources
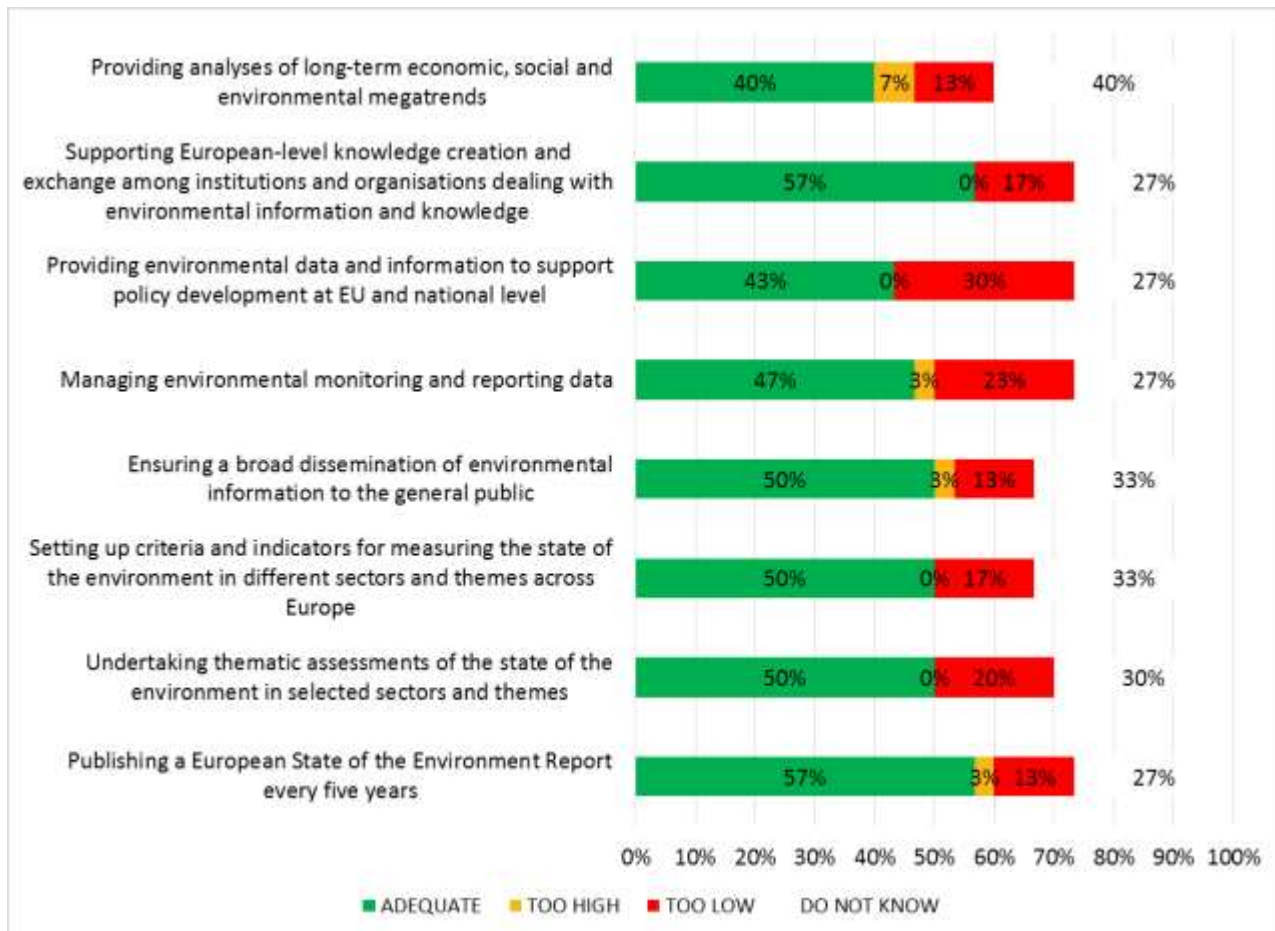
Source: Stakeholder Survey. 3.3: Below are a list of EEA and EIONET functions. Please indicate whether you consider the resources allocated to performing each function to be adequate, too high, or too low. Valid Responses: 30

57% of respondents believed that adequate resources were allocated to **SOER** and **Supporting European-level knowledge creation and exchange among institutions and organisations dealing with environmental information and knowledge.** These each received the greatest level of agreement for this question.

Only 43% of respondents thought that adequate resources were dedicated for **providing environmental data and information to support policy development at EU and national level**. Less than or equal to 7% (2) of respondents believed that 'too high' an amount of resources were allocated to each function.

Around 30% of respondents do not know whether the resource allocation was 'adequate', 'too high', or 'too low'. This is slight higher (40%) for **Providing analyses of long-term economic, social, and environmental mega-atrends.**

Are there any functions that the EEA and EIONET are not currently undertaking that would contribute to the delivery of EU environmental policy?

Respondents were also able to provide qualitative remarks on whether there any functions that the EEA and EIONET are not currently undertaking that would contribute to the delivery of EU environmental policy. The following responses were received:

- More detailed regional analysis; regional or national repositories of climate research available.
- more pro-active work and better balance in support of EU and Member states
- De focus van EEA ligt teveel op data klassieke milieuthema's. Aandacht nodig voor oplossingen
  Translated from Dutch using Google Translate:
  The focus of EEE is too much on data classic environmental themes. Attention needed for solutions
- screening of non governmental organizations with respect to their program, actions, impacts
- LA GENERACIÓN Y DESARROLLO DE UN SISTEMA DE INFORMACIÓN COMÚN SOBRE EL MEDIO AMBIENTE EN EUROPA
  Translated from Spanish using Google Translate:
  THE GENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMON INFORMATION SYSTEM ON THE ENVIRONMENT IN EUROPE.
- participation de pétitionnaire du parlement européen suite a une infraction d'un état membre
  Translated from French using Google Translate:
  participation of petitioner of the european parliament following an infringement of a member state
- Database of reporting obligations should be updated reguraly so that it includes all relevant info.
- Very limited work on Agri-env and soil over the period covered by the evaluation
- Assessing evidence regarding infringements and implementation of EU environmental law.
- Maybe environmental education and awareness raising, but this is continuously discussed...

Are there any other comments that you would like to raise about the relevance or performance of the EEA?

Respondents were also able to provide qualitative remarks on whether there any other comments about the relevance or performance of the EEA. The following responses were received:

- Resources within EEA and EIONET (mainly Topic Centres) are unbalanced: too much on 'research-like' work, too little on structuring activities around the data foundation and policy evaluation
- My main opinion is EU to have stabilized financial and political environment!
- In order to continue maintain the core added value of EEA (trusted source of information based on cooperation with Member states) EEA should further strengthen this link by involving the MS even more already at early stages of the development of EEA products.
- Its ok to say you don't know the answer, based on the evidence you have, rather than try to gap fill risking drawing inaccurate conclusions
- De EEA zou zijn aandacht meer moeten richten op ondersteuning van landen, met name in wisselende groepen van landen mbt regionale issues, met aandacht voor multi-level en multi-actor. Een mogelijk nieuw kennisdomein is steden en ruimtelijke ordening.
  Translated from Dutch using Google Translate:
  The EEA should focus more on supporting countries, particularly in changing groups of countries on regional issues, with attention for multi-level and multi-actor. A possible new knowledge domain is cities and spatial planning.
- NECESIDAD DE CONTAR CON INSTITUCIONES PÚBLICAS PARA LA GENERACIÓN DE DATOS DE ABAJO HACIA ARRIBA, FRENTE A LA ACTUAL DINÁMICA DE PRODUCIR DATOS DE ARRIBA HACIA ABAJO. ES IMPRESCINDIBLE DAR UN PASO HACIA LA VINCULACIÓN CON LA GESTIÓN DE LOS PROBLEMAS AMBIENTALES FRENTE AL ANÁLISIS ESTRATÉGICO ACTUAL
  Translated from Spanish using Google Translate:
  NEED TO HAVE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS FOR THE GENERATION OF DATA BELOW UP TO THE CURRENT DYNAMICS OF PRODUCING DATA ABOVE DOWN. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO TAKE A STEP TO LINKAGE WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS AGAINST CURRENT STRATEGIC ANALYSIS
- oui sur le travail du parlement européen
  Translated from French using Google Translate
  yes on the work of the european parliament
- Resources are reducing in both the countries and at the EEA. There is a real need to focus doing a smaller number of things well than spreading resources too thinly and doing nothing well. Report production is frequently delayed at many internal stages but EIONET review deadlines are often tight.
- The EEA is a highly relevant actor in EU environmental policy. Its role in EU nature policy can be further improved by a mandate to examine evidence from Member States and the Commission regarding infringements and periodically assessing the effectiveness of Natura 2000.
- We like EEA, we co-operate, we respect. Go on EEA!

Brief Section Analysis

There is significant appreciation of the EU value added of all of the functions of the EEA. There is recognition that the resources allocated to the EEA are either adequate or too low.

10.16.4 General Questionnaire

About the Respondents

Question 1.1: In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?

There was an even split of the 21 respondents to the General Questionnaire as to whether they were acting as an individual in a professional capacity, as an individual in a personal capacity or on behalf of an organisation, as shown in Table 10-68.

Table 10-68: Q1.1 - Capacity of Respondents

In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?	*No. of Re-sponses*	*%*
As an individual in a professional capacity	7	33%
As an individual in a personal capacity	7	33%
On behalf of an organisation	7	33%

Source: General Survey. Q1.1: In what capacity are you responding to this consultation? Valid Responses: 21

Question 1.2: What type of organisation or institution do you work for?

The 14 respondents who answered the survey in a professional capacity were asked about the type of organisation or institution for which they worked, as shown in Figure 10-19: Q1.2 - Type of Organisation or Institution.

Figure 10-19: Q1.2 - Type of Organisation or Institution
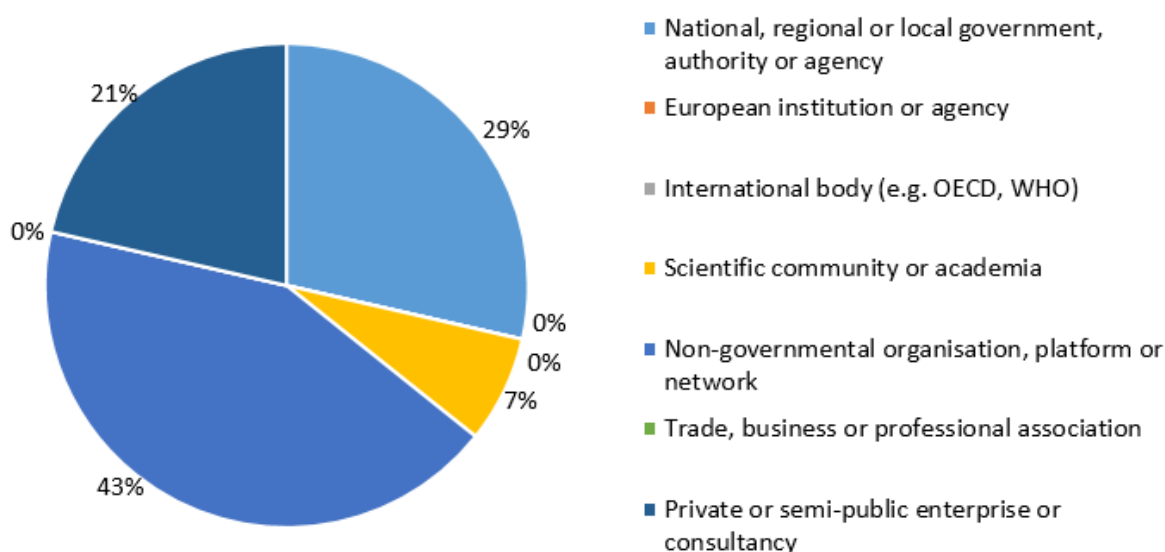
Source: General Survey. Q1.2: What type of organisation or institution do you work for? Valid Responses: 14

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) represented the largest portion (43%) of the respondents, followed by **National, regional or local government authority or agency** (29%) and **Private or semi-public enterprise or consultancy** (21%).

Question 1.3: Is your organisation or institution part of the EEA or EIONET?

Alongside the questions on the type of organisation or institution, respondents who responded as an individual in a professional capacity or on behalf of an organisation or institution where asked whether their organisation or institution is part of the EEA or EIONET, as shown in Figure 10-20.

Figure 10-20: Q1.3 - Part of the EEA or EIONET

Is your organisation or institution part of the EEA or EIONET?	*No. of Re-sponses*	*%*

Yes	2	14%
No	12	86%

Source: General Survey. Q1.3: Is your organisation or institution part of the EEA or EIONET? Valid Responses: 14

Unlike the Stakeholder survey, here, most of the respondents – answering in a professional capacity – belong to organisations or institutions which are not part of the EEA or EIONET.

Question 1.8: In which country are you located?/1.9: In which country is your organisation or institution located?

The split of countries represented by the respondents was broad, with even the most common country, **Germany**, only receiving 4 responses, as shown in Figure 10-21.

Figure 10-21: Q1.8 and 1.9 - Countries in which respondents and their organisations/institutions are located
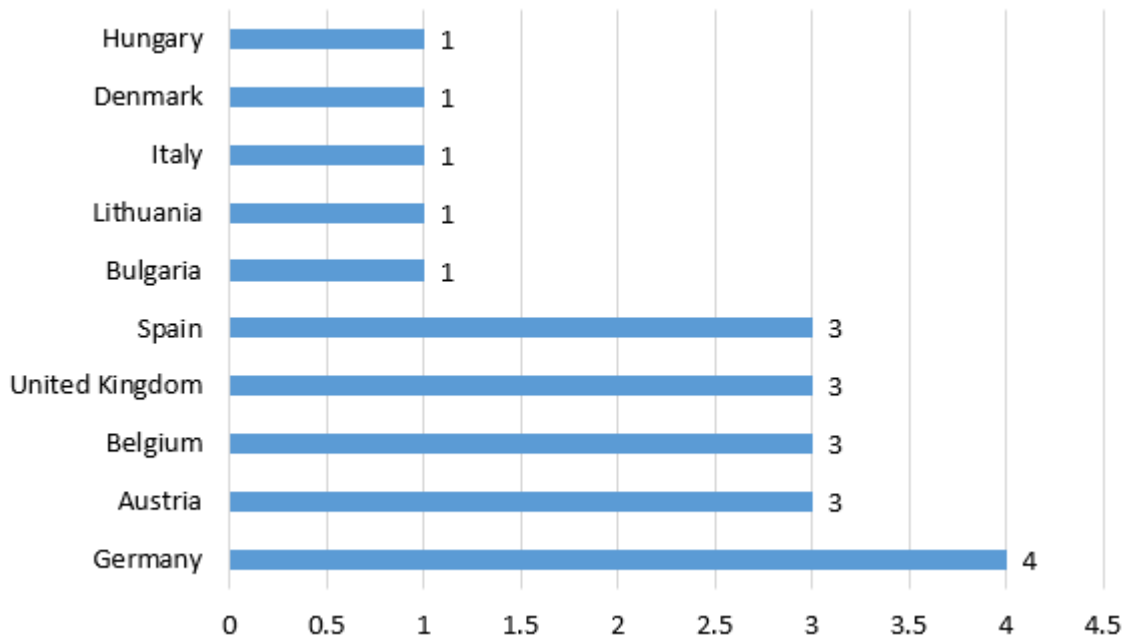
Source: General Survey. Q1.8: In which country are you located? And Q1.9: In which country is your organisation or institution located?? Valid Responses: 21

Question 1.11: Were you aware of the EEA before seeing this consultation?

To understand whether the respondents to the general survey had awareness of the EEA prior to completing the survey a specific question was asked. Table 10-69 shows the majority of respondents (81%) were aware of the EEA before this survey.

Table 10-69: Q1.11 - Awareness of EEA

Were you aware of the EEA before seeing this consulta-tion?	No. of Re-sponses	%
Yes	17	81%
No	4	19%

Source: General Survey. Q1.11: Were you aware of the EEA before seeing this consultation? Valid Responses: 21

Brief Section Analysis

Overall a poor level of response to the survey was received, with only 21 responses being received from individuals and organisations who had a general interest in the EEA. The majority of responses were provided by organisations and institutions not part of the EEA and EIONET. Responses were from a range of countries, with no single country dominating.

Products and Services

Question 2.1: The EEA produces a range of publically available products and services, as listed below. Please indicate which products and services you are aware of and how often you use them.

In Figure 10-22, the level of awareness of the respondents in regards to the products and services offered by the EEA can be seen.

Figure 10-22: Q2.1 - Awareness of Products and Services
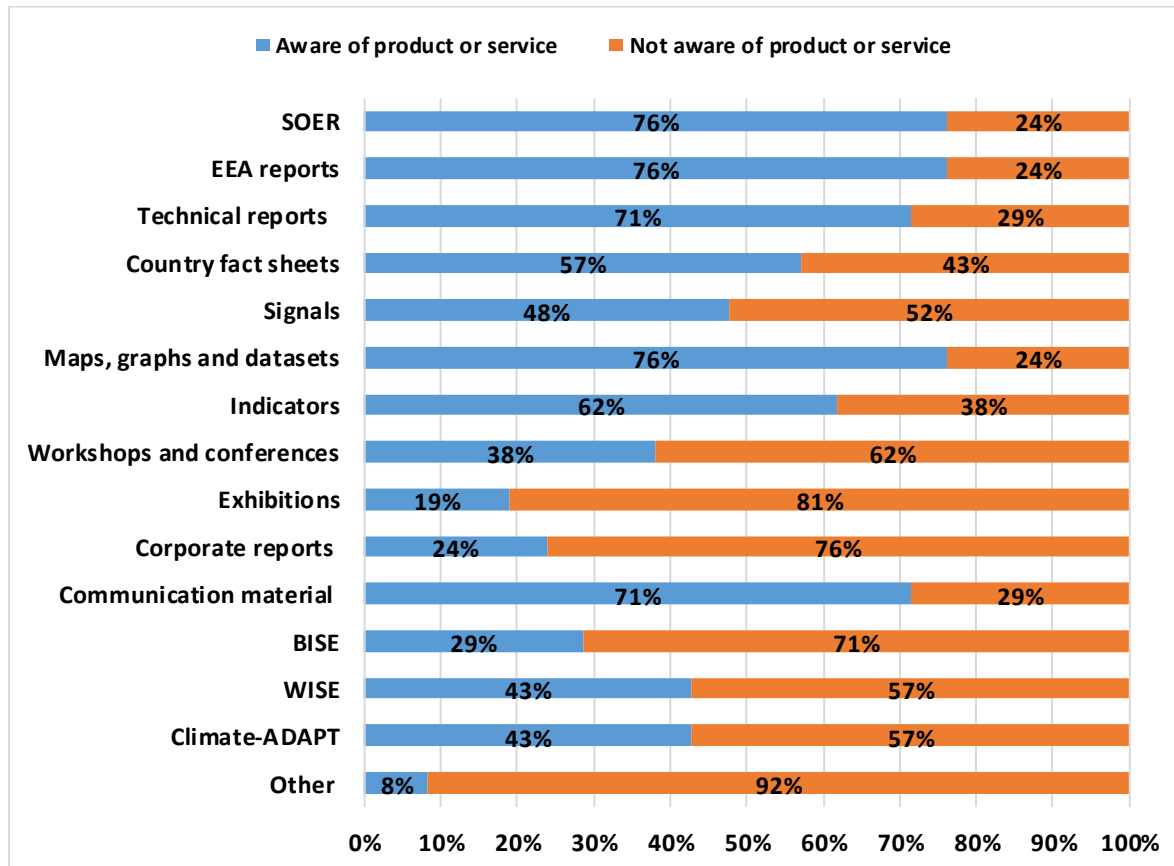
Source: General Survey. Q2.1: The EEA produces a range of publically available products and services, as listed below. Please indicate which products and services you are aware of and how often you use them.? Valid Responses: 21

Products including the **SOER** and **EEA Reports**, and **Maps, graphs and datasets** are well-known with 76% of respondents being aware of these products. **Technical reports** and **Communication materials** were also know by the majority of respondents (71%).

Most of the respondents were unaware of **Biodiversity information system for Europe (BISE), Workshops and conferences, Exhibitions,** and **Other** products and services.

For those products that participants were aware of, they were also asked the frequency of use, as shown in Figure 10-23.

Figure 10-23: Q2.1 - Frequency of Use of Products and Services
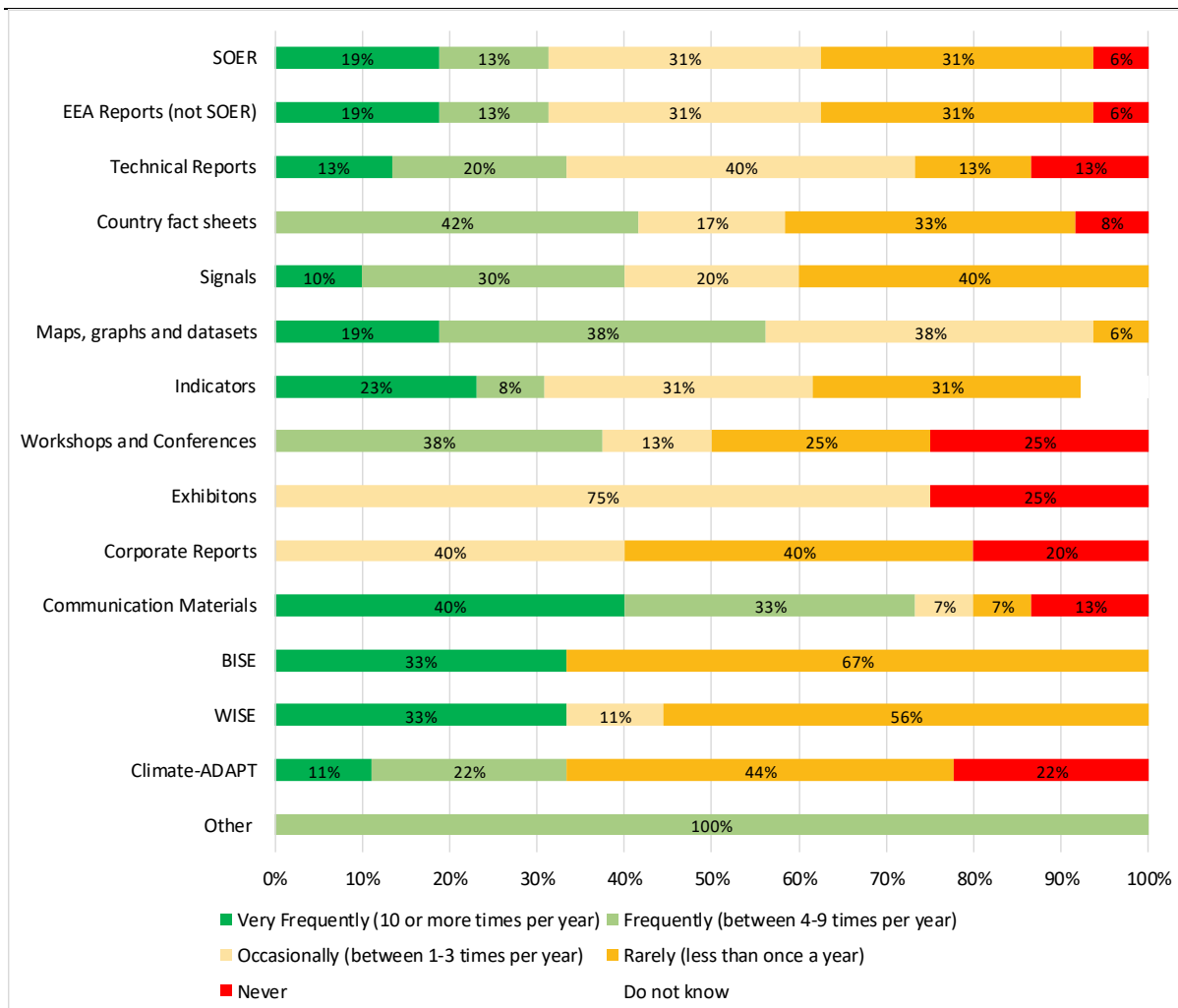
Source: General Survey. Q2.1: The EEA produces a range of publically available products and services, as listed below. Please indicate which products and services you are aware of and how often you use them.? Valid Responses: SOER 16, EEA Reports 16, Technical Reports 15, Country Fact Sheets 12, Signals 10, Maps, Graphs and Data 16, Indicators 13, Workshops and Conferences 8, Exhibitions 4, Corporate Reports 5, Communication Materials 15, BISE 6, WISE 9, Climate- ADAPT9, and Other 1.

Communication materials are used most frequently overall with 73% saying claiming **'frequent'** to **'very frequent'** usage. **Maps, graphs and datasets** is the next most frequently used information source, as 57% responded with **'frequent'** to **'very frequent'** usage. %).

Exhibitions and **Corporate reports** are only used **'occasionally'** (1-3 times per year) or less by the respondents. However overall, **Exhibitions** are utilised more than **Corporate reports** by the respondents.

Exhibitions and **Workshops and conferences** were never used by 25% of the respondents, while 22% never used **Climate-ADAPT** and 20% never used **Corporate reports**.

Question 2.2: We are interested why individuals and organisations use EEA products and services. Please select the statements below that best describe your needs.

The motivations for the respondents to use EEA services and products are as described in Table 10-70.

Table 10-70: Q2.2 - Reasons for Using EEA Products and Services

Why individuals and organisations use EEA products and services	Total	%
The information that I use is available from other sources as well as the EEA, but I prefer to use information provided by the EEA	0	0%
I am only interested in the environmental information for one particular country	2	10%

I use EEA products and services for purposes unrelated to my work	3	14%
The information that I use is only available from the EEA	3	14%
I have an interest in aggregated environmental information in specific regions of Europe	7	33%
I have an interest in comparing environmental information across countries	13	62%
I have an interest in aggregated environmental information across Europe	15	71%
I use information from the EEA in combination with information from other sources	16	76%
I use EEA products and services for work purposes	17	81%

Source: General Survey. Q2.2:We are interested why individuals and organisations use EEA products and services. Please select the statements below that best describe your needs. Valid Responses: 21

A large majority of the respondents (81%) **use the EEA products and services for work purposes**. Most also **used the EEA in combination with information from other sources** (76%) and have an **interest in aggregated environmental information across Europe** (71%).

None of the respondents thought the information provided by the EEA is available elsewhere.

Question 2.3: How does information from the EEA compare to similar information available from other sources.

The quality of EEA information was compared to other similar information provided by other sources, such as national institutions.

It was found that only half or less of the respondents agreed with the statements in Table 10-71. The statements with the highest agreement include EEA information being **easier to access** (50%), **more reliable** (44%) and **lending itself better to cross-country comparisons** (38%).

Table 10-71: Q2.3 - Comparison of EEA information to information provided by other sources

How information from the EEA compare to similar information available from other sources	**Total**	**%**
The information provided by the EEA is more impartial	1	6%
The information provided by the EEA is more accurate	2	13%
The information provided by the EEA is presented at more appropriate geographic scales	2	13%
None of the above	2	13%
The information is provided by the EEA in a format that is easier to understand	3	19%
The information provided by the EEA is updated more frequently	4	25%
The information provided by the EEA is available in a language that I can understand	4	25%
The information by the EEA is presented at a more appropriate level of detail	5	31%

The information provided by the EEA lends itself to better cross-country comparisons	6	38%
The information provided by the EEA is more reliable	7	44%
The information provided by the EEA is easier to access	8	50%

Source: General Survey. Q2.3: How does information from the EEA compare to similar information available from other sources. Valid Responses: 21

Are there any additional products or services that you would like the EEA to provide?

Respondents were also able to provide qualitative remarks on any additional products or services they would like the EEA to provide. The following responses were received:

- Evidence data-base (preferably meta analyses), environment protection legal acts that are not covered by EU legislation from EU counties
- For our purposes (territorial impact assessments) we would appreciate to have European wide comparable data on NUTS 3 level on air quality (PM10, NOx, So2, ...), greenhouse gas emissions, surface water quality in rivers / river basins, emissions in soil / soil quality, land consumption.

  Information systems that provide more real time trend analysis, using advances in ICT and AI, mobile devices of citizen volunteers as data collectors, linking this to ongoing policy discussions. Second essential product are the late lessons from early warnings and evidence they provide to debate

- I think that it is great that the EEA is focussing on food supply chains, since I think that this issue still needs more attention. I think that the impact of food security issues is greatly underestimated and see a key role for the EEA in raising awareness.

Are there any other comments that you would like to raise about the EEA?

Respondents were also able to provide qualitative remarks on any other issues. The following responses were received:

- I believe it is important for the EU to have an independent body on environment matters to ensure politicians have a watchdog and also can take decisions based on facts
- The EEA is an excellent institution. It is a unique source for Europe-wide information and data presented in a consistent format. There is scope for improvement, some of which would require improvement in data collected at member state level that feeds into EEA products.
- Providing a fundamental service to the EU by keeping track of the state the environment, how effective efforts are to protect it, what the science-policy gaps are, where priority actions should be. That said a debate needs to happen on the role EEA could play in closing the EU's enforcement gap
- A more regular update on a number of products would be very helpful.

Brief Section Analysis

The respondents have a varied awareness of the different products and services that the EEA provides, most of which are occasionally or less frequently used. The majority of respondents expressed work purposes being the main reason for use. Overall, the respondents do not think the information provided by the EEA is that much better than other sources.

10.16.5 Qualitative Response from Transport & Environment (T&E)

Taken from:

https://www.transportenvironment.org/sites/te/files/publications/Public%20consultation%20on%20the%20EEA_0.pdf

Public consultation on the European Environment Agency

Response prepared by Transport & Environment (T&E)
EU Transparency Register: 58744833263-19

October 2017

Summary

The following document accompanies T&E's response to the European Commission public consultation to support the evaluation of the European Environment Agency (EEA) and its European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET).

This short response is to be read alongside our response to the multiple choice consultation question.

1. Current reforms

Proposed reforms EEA could easily be undertaken to improve current services, without any changes to the current agency mandate established in 1993.[1]

Data Modeling & Methodology

Many of the databases in the EEA website consist of data compilation submitted by Member States either to Eurostat, the European Commission or directly to the EEA. In some cases, the methodology that Member States follow is not transparent. For example, in the greenhouse gas (GHG) data viewer[2] transport emissions are split between different transport modes. The road transport is split into different categories, such as cars, trucks, motorbikes, etc. However, the methodology used by the the Member States to gather and process this information is not clear. As such the reliability of the data is questionable. The EEA database should include the methodology used for each data point included in the databases.

Another example of faulty reporting and evaluating progress CO_2 emissions from light duty vehicles (passenger cars in particular) has been acknowledged by the EEA. There is an ever growing gap between type approval/laboratory values declared and the real-world CO_2 emissions performance of vehicles in Europe. The modelling and assessment of reductions to date fails to take the gap into account. This results in less accurate, less credible relevant data being reported in its annual reports on the matter.

We recommend a much needed revision and updating of data modeling and methodology. Such a revision should be undertaken in a transparent and close to real-world manner, with, where possible stakeholder consultation and expert input.

European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET)

The way in which EIONET is organised is extremely difficult to use. In short it is not 'user friendly'. It is unclear what information can be found on which database, leading to huge time wasting as one has to hunt around for information in multiple locations. In many cases, a database is simply an Excel spreadsheet submitted

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by a Member State, but the data is not compiled in a single file, in a homogenous way. The Central Data Repository is a good example of data being difficult to find and compare within the same database.

Assessment of EEA communications

The EEA is the most authoritative source of environmental data in Europe. In the past few years, the EEA has strengthened its communications outreach considerably but more impact and reach to EU citizens is desirable. A glance to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) websites and social media channels show that the EEA communications platforms lag behind in terms of reach and impact. We understand that devoting more resources to communicate better the environmental problems and improvements achieved by EU policies will show EU citizens the value of the Union and therefore strengthen the European project.

2. Future reforms

Proposed reforms EEA could undertake to improve current services, which would require a revision of the 1993 mandate.

The EEA is currently only a monitoring rather than a regulating agency. Although the EEA already provides key knowledge on environmental protection for the Commission to draft legislation,[3] it lacks strong recommendation powers such as European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) or European Medicines Agency (EMA). Both agencies are quasi-regulatory, with EASA certifying aircrafts according to their own set of safety rulemaking.

One way recommendation to increase its power, would be to improve its networking capacities with other regulatory agencies. This would make the EEA more independent and help gain a reputation. Ultimately, the EEA could then have increased dialogues with other regulatory agencies around the world, such as the US Environmental Protection Agency. Another idea would be to give it amending and approval powers as regards environmental plans (e.g. Air Quality Plans) developed by member states pursuant to the EU acquis to ensure adequate level of ambition and consistency.

A second way forward to raise its portfolio is to go down the same route as European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), EASA and EMA and make EEA more financially independent. These are partially self-funded, which ultimately provides more autonomy, but also financial capacity for research projects.

Finally, the EEA should expand its work for the European Parliament and Council to increase environmental legislation but providing bi-partisan and technical information into political debates. The input may help to provide more data and facts into politically contentious debates.

Further information

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Endnotes

1. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32009R0401
2. http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/data-viewers/greenhouse-gases-viewer
3. For example: panels of experts producing rigorous data and research, attends and organizes international conferences and has gained an international reputation

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10.17   Appendix J - Review of survey responses to Targeted surveys

10.17.1 Survey of Units in the European Commission

10.17.1.1   About the Survey

The support study for the evaluation of the EEA undertook a survey of Units in DG Environment, DG Clima, JRC, ESTAT, DG RTD, DG MOVE, DG GROW and DG AGRI in the Commission to solicit the views on the functioning of the EEA and also to collect valuable information for the support study. The survey was sent to Heads of Units in all Units within DG Environment and DG Clima as well as selected Units in JRC, ESTAT, DG RTD, DG MOVE, DG GROW and DG AGRI.

10.17.1.2   Survey Responses

The survey was sent to 116 units in the Commission (DG AGRI: 3, DG CLIMA: 11, DG ENER: 4, DG ENV: 22, ESTAT: 5, DG GROW: 9, JRC: 46, DG MARE: 1,DG MOVE: 2, DG NEAR: 1, DG REGIO: 2, DG RTD: 9 and DG SANTE: 1).

In total the survey received a total of 32 responses to the questionnaire. For some units (6 in total) more than one response was received, therefore the overall response rate was 18%.

The first three questions of the survey aimed to build a profile of the respondent – their department, unit and sector within the Commission.

Question 1: What is the name of your DG?

Figure 10-24: Q1 – DG within the Commission
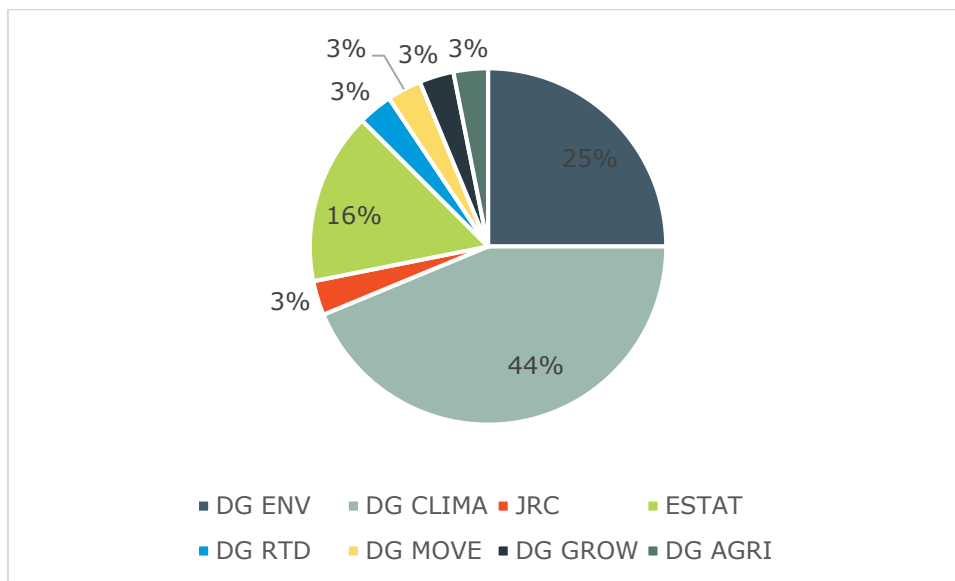
Source: Q1: What is the name of your DG? Valid Responses: 32

As shown in Figure 10-24, 44% (14 responses) of respondents were from **DG CLIMA**, whilst a quarter of respondents (25%, 8 responses) were from **DG ENV.** The remaining 31% were comprised of a mix of departments including **JRC, ESTAT, DG RTD, DG MOVE, DG GROW and DG AGRI.**

Figure 10-25: Q1&2 – Unit and Unit Acronym
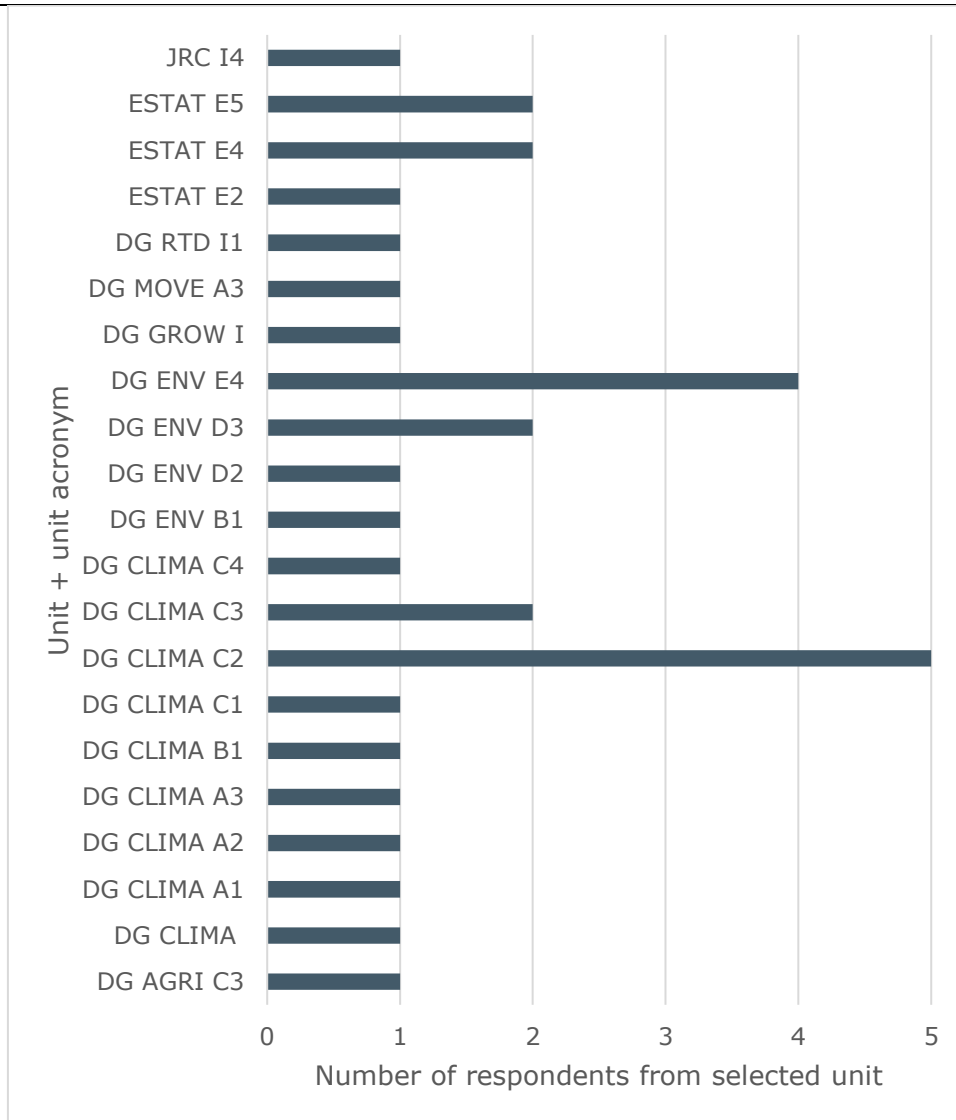
Source: Q1: What is the name of your DG? And Q2: What is the name of your DG? Valid Responses: 32

Within the various department units **DG CLIMA C2** and **DG ENV E4** had the highest number of representatives with 5 and 4 respondents respectively (Figure 10-25).

Figure 10-26: Q3 – Sector within Unit
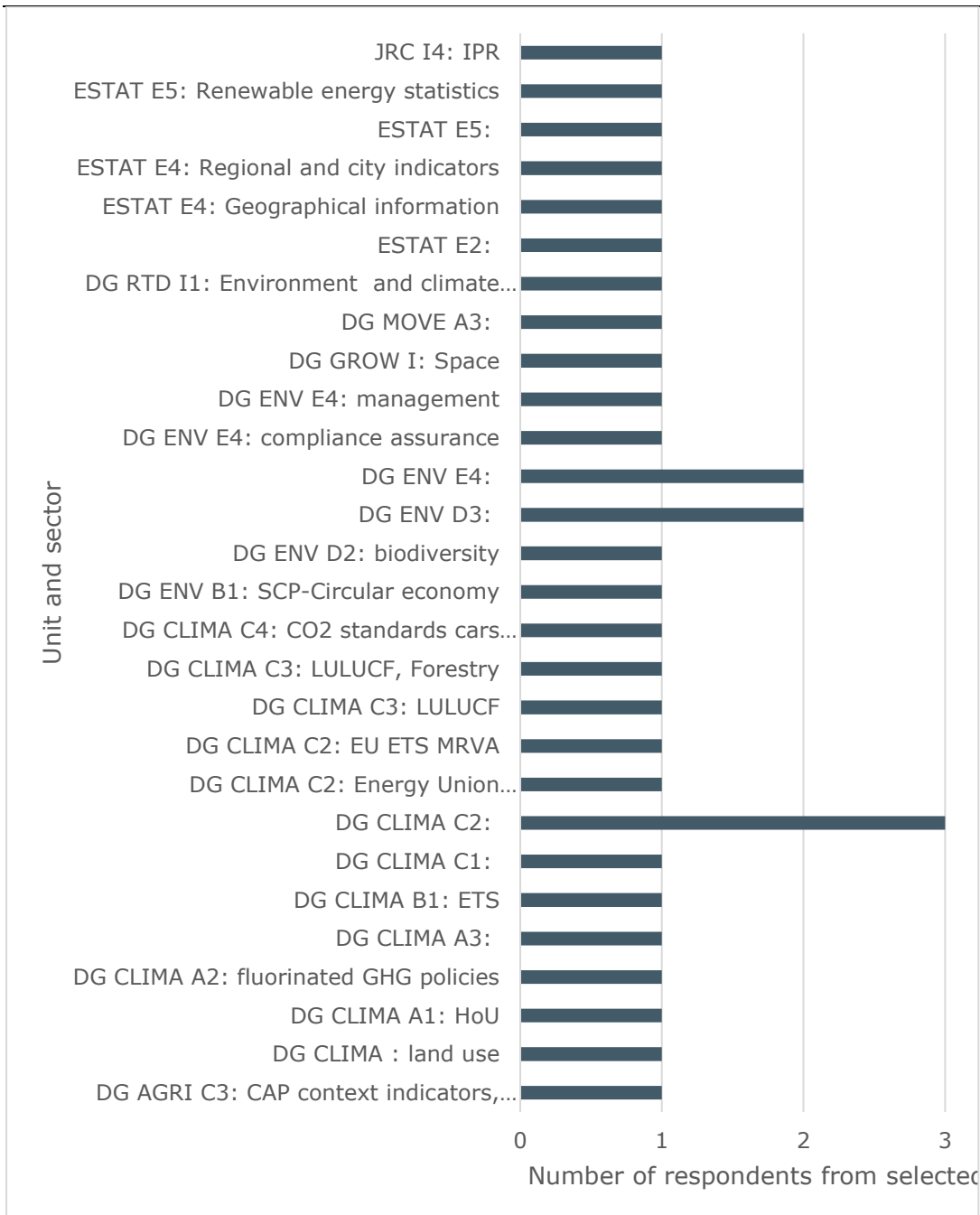
Source: Q3: If relevant, what sector do you work in within your unit? Valid Responses: 32

A further distinction of sector within unit was also asked for where applicable as shown in Figure 10-26.
Brief Section Analysis

Overall the response to the survey was relatively small. For example, there were a number of units within DG Environment that did not provide a response. A stronger response was DG Clima (Unit C2 in particular).

10.17.1.3   Relevant Themes

Question 4: The EEA Multi-annual Work Programme covering the period of 2014-2018 is structured according to a list of themes. Which theme(s) are relevant to your work?

The EEA Multi-annual Work Programme covering the period of 2014-2018 is structured according to t a list of themes. Respondents were asked to pick any and all themes relevant to their work.

Figure 10-27: Q4a – Informing Policy Implementation Themes
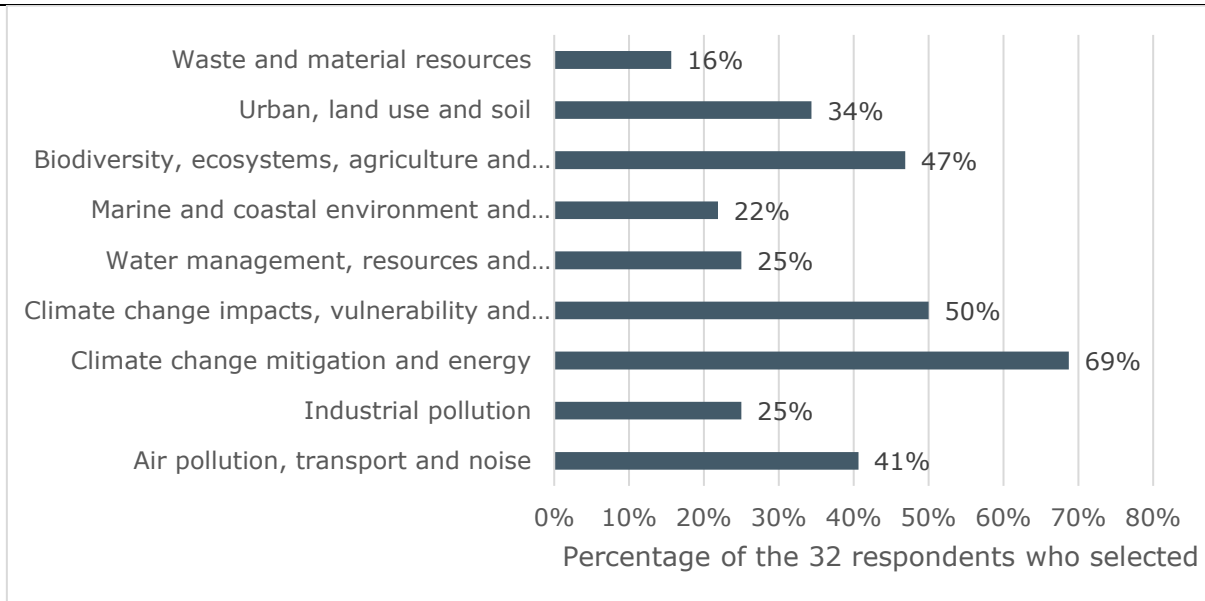
Source: Q4: Which theme(s) are relevant to your work? Valid Responses: 32

Climate change mitigation and energy (69%, 22 responses) received the highest number of responses. Half of respondents selected themes relating to **climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation** (50%, 16 responses). **Waste and material resources** was the least popular theme (16%, 5 responses).

Figure 10-28: Q4b - Assessing Systematic Challenges Themes
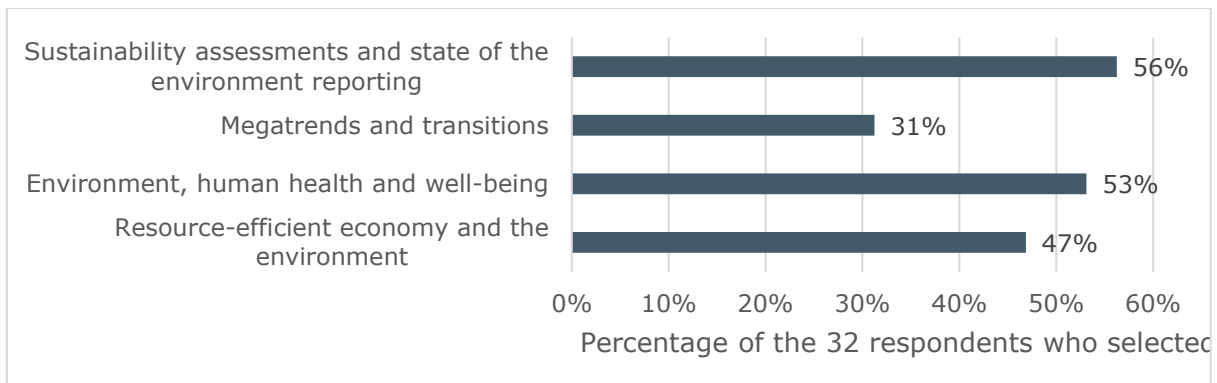
Source: Q4: Which theme(s) are relevant to your work? Valid Responses: 32

When considering the systematic challenges, the majority of respondents (56%, 18 responses) stated that **sustainability assessments and state of the environment reporting** was a theme relevant to their work, with **environment, human health and well-being** (53%, 17 responses), and **resource-efficient economy and the environment** (47%, 15 responses) close behind (Figure 1.5).

Figure 10-29: Q4c – Knowledge Co-creation, Sharing and Use Themes

Source: Q4: Which theme(s) are relevant to your work? Valid Responses: 32

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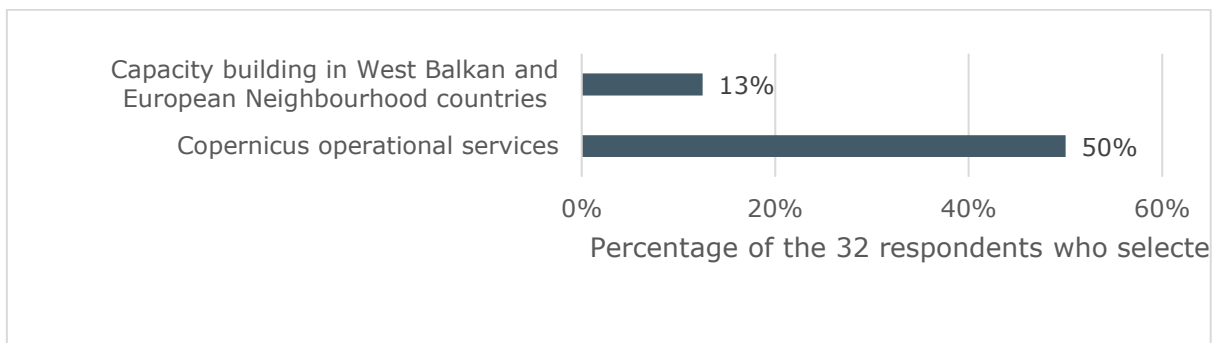
Half of respondents (50%, 16 responses) said that **Copernicus operational services** was a theme relevant to them (Figure 1.6), whilst only 13% said that capacity building in West Balkan and European Neighbourhood countries was relevant.

Overall, **climate change mitigation and energy** (69%) was considered the most relevant theme to the most people, followed by **sustainability assessments and state of the environment reporting** (56%) and **environment, human health and well-being** (53%).

10.17.1.4   Products and Outputs

Respondents were asked to select which EEA products or outputs they used over the period 2012-2016 for the various steps of the policy cycle. They were asked to distinguish between:

   a)   policy development (design, preparation and amendment, including Impact Assessments and evaluations/fitness checks), and
   b)   policy implementation, including monitoring and evaluation.

Question 5a: Have you used any of the following types of EEA products/outputs for policy development in your area between 2012-2016?

Figure 10-30: Q5a – Type of Product or Output used by Respondents in Policy Development
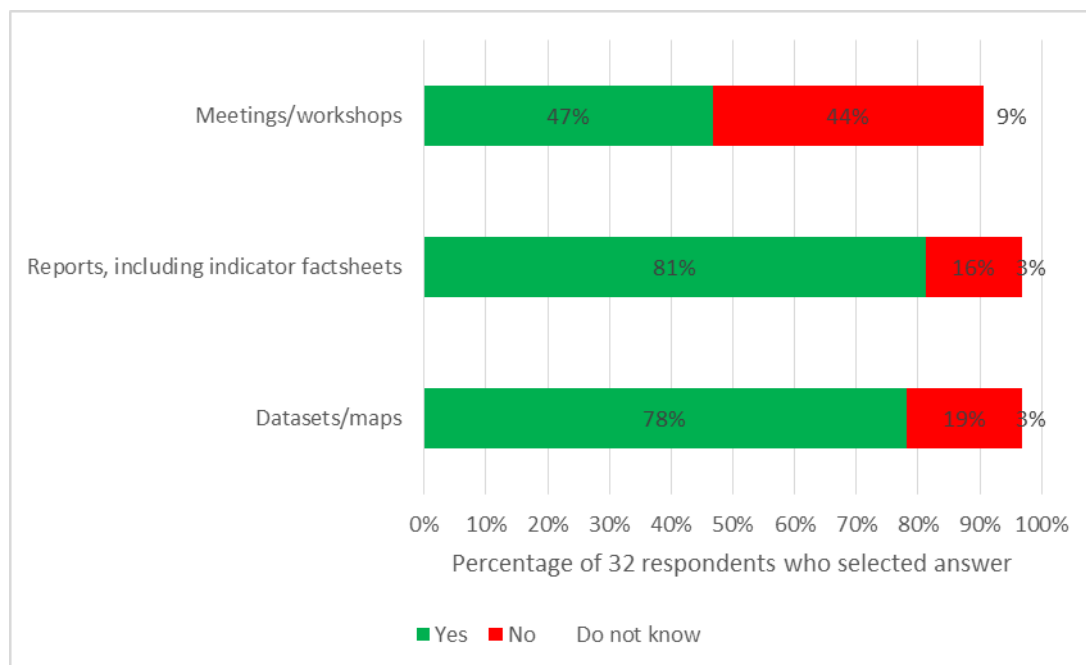
Source: Q5a: Have you used any of the following types of EEA products/outputs for policy development in your area between 2012-2016? Valid Responses: 32

Figure 10-30 shows that **reports, including indicator factsheets** and **datasets/maps** are used by the majority of respondents – 81% and 78% respectively - whilst **meetings/workshops** were reported to be used less frequently (47%).

Respondents were also asked to assess to what extent the products met the criteria of robustness (e.g. resting on sound data and evidence) and impartiality (e.g. unbiased).

Figure 10-31: Q5a – Product Robustness and Impartiality in Policy Development
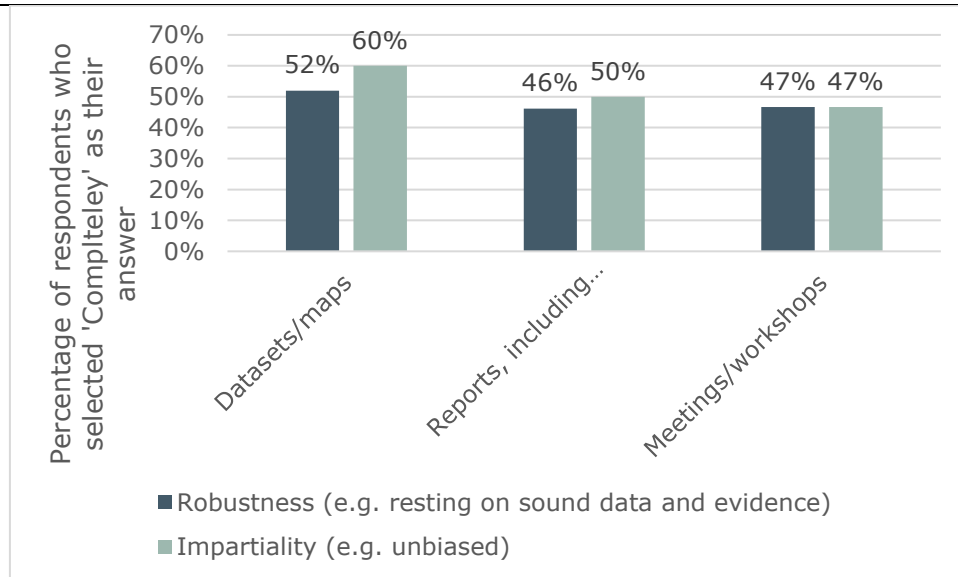
Source: Q5a: To what extent did the datasets and maps meet the following criteria? Robustness (e.g. resting on sound data and evidence) and Impartiality (e.g. unbiased). Valid Responses: Datasets/Maps: 25, Reports, including indicator factsheets: 26 and Meetings/workshops: 15

Figure 10-31 shows that **datasets and maps** were considered to be the most robust (52% answered 'completely') and impartial (60% answered 'completely') of all the products. **Reports, including indicator factsheets**, were considered to be the least robust (46% answered 'completely'), and **meetings/workshops** were considered to be the least impartial (47% answered 'completely'). **Meetings/workshops** received the lowest average score overall (47%).

Respondents were then asked to assess how useful the products were for the process of policy development.

Figure 10-32: Q5a – Product Usefulness for Policy Development
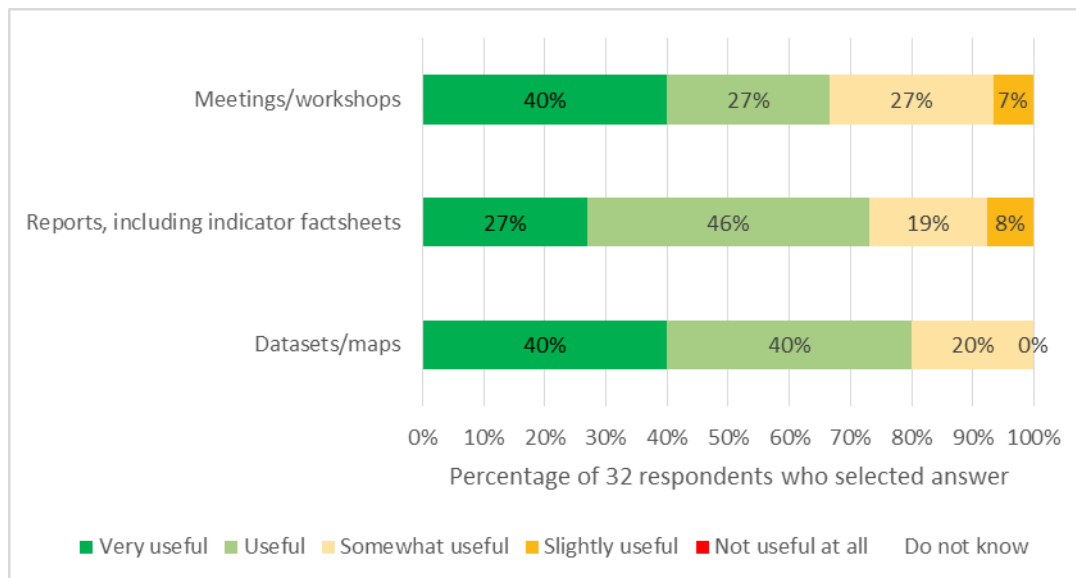
Source: Q5a: How useful were the products for the process of policy development? Valid Responses: Datasets/Maps: 25, Reports, including indicator factsheets: 26 and Meetings/workshops: 15

Datasets/ maps were considered the most useful (80% said they were 'very useful' or 'useful'), correlating with being the most used product by respondents. Again **meetings/workshops** were ranked lowest, with 67% of respondents giving them a 'very useful' or 'useful' rating.

Question 5b: Have you used any of the following types of EEA products/outputs for policy implementation in your area between 2012-2016?

In the second part of the question respondents were asked which EEA products/outputs they had used for policy *implementation* between 2012 and 2016.

Figure 10-33: Q5b – Products Used for Policy Implemention
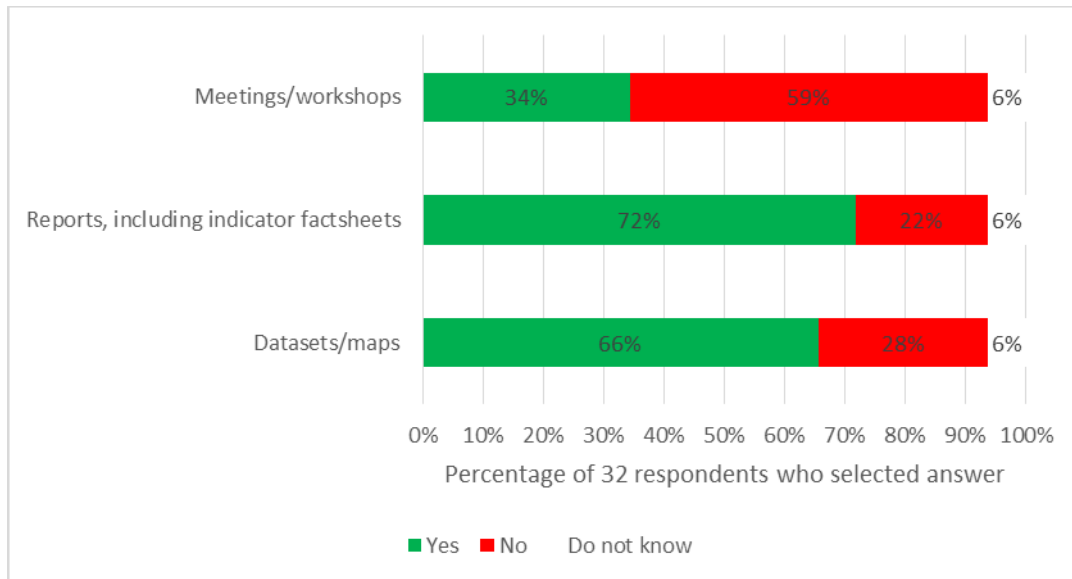
Source: Q5b: Have you used any of the following types of EEA products/outputs for policy implementa-tion in your area between 2012-2016? Valid Responses: 32

In comparison with products used for policy development, **reports, including indicator factsheets**, are also the most commonly used products for policy implementation with 72% of respondents reporting the utilisation of this resource. Again **meetings/workshops** (34%) were reported to be used much less than both reports and **da-tasets/maps** (66%) as shown in Figure 10-33.

Again respondents were asked to evaluate product robustness and impartiality.

Figure 10-34: Q5b – Product Robustness and Impartiality in Policy Implementation
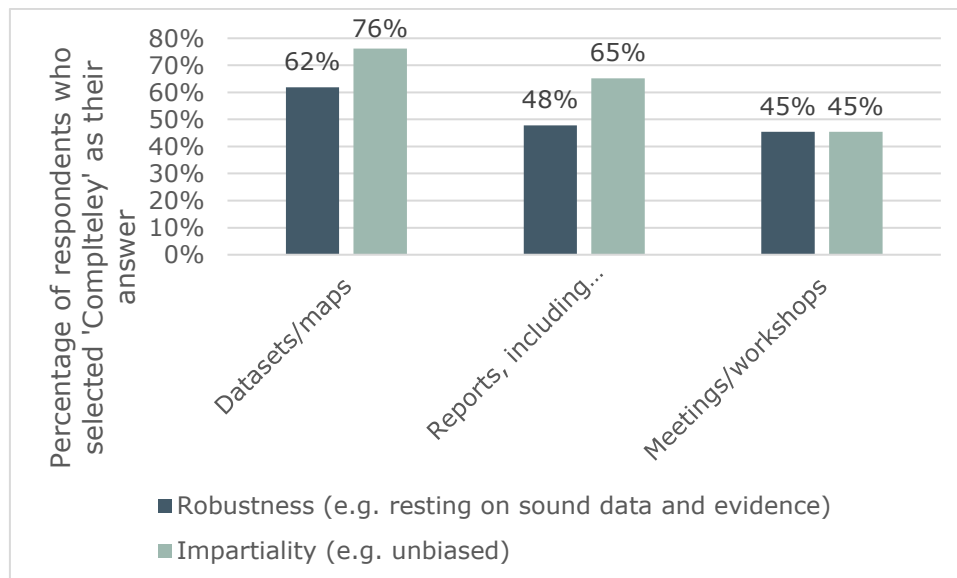
Source: Q5b: To what extent did the datasets and maps meet the following criteria? Robustness (e.g. resting on sound data and evidence) and Impartiality (e.g. unbiased). Valid Responses: Da-tasets/Maps: 21, Reports, including indicator factsheets: 23 and Meetings/workshops: 11

As with policy development, **datasets/maps** were considered the most robust (62% selected 'completely' as their answer) and impartial (76% selected 'completely') products used in policy implementation. 65% of respondents considered **reports** to be completely impartial, compared to only 48% considered them to be completely robust. Once again **meetings/workshops** were considered the least robust and impartial with only 45% respondents choosing 'completely' as their answer, as shown Figure 10-34.

Finally, respondents were asked to evaluate how useful each of the products were for policy implementation.

Figure 10-35: Q5b – Product Usefulness for Policy Implementation
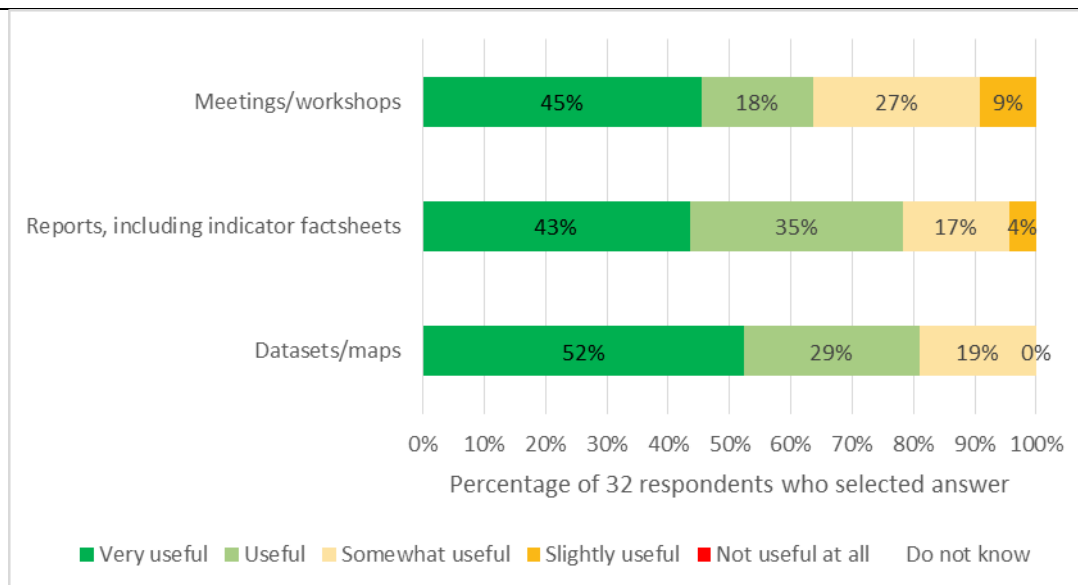
Source: Q5b: How useful were the products for the process of policy implementation? Valid Responses: Datasets/Maps: 21, Reports, including indicator factsheets: 23 and Meetings/workshops: 11

As shown in Figure 10-35, **Datasets/maps** were considered the most useful with 81% of respondents selecting 'very useful' or 'useful'. 78% of respondents selecting 'very useful' or 'useful' for **Reports**. **Meetings/workshops** were considered the least useful with 63% of respondents choosing 'very useful' or 'useful'.

Questions 6a): Among products from the EEA in your area of activity, can you identify products which are not directly relevant to EU policy development/implementation?

Respondents were also asked to identify any products which are not directly relevant to EU policy development/implementation. The following response was received, each bullet point is the response of an individual:

- Communication, environment and behaviour (not in core competence of EEA)
  Soil resource efficiency in urbanised areas - analytical framework and implications for governance (not a policy priority anymore)

  Water-retention potential of Europe's forests (not a policy priority) (respondent from DG ENV, unit E4);

- Climate (but only because there are others that are more relevant/focussed on my policy area) (respondent from DG ENV, unit B1, SCP-Circular economy sector); and
- EIONET meetings (respondent from GD ENV, unit D2, biodiversity sector).

Questions 6b): Among products from the EEA in your area of activity, can you identify products which are redundant with products from EC DGs, other EU agencies or other institutions?

Respondents were also asked to identify any products from the EEA in your area of activity, which are redundant with products from EC DGs, other EU agencies or other institutions. The following products were identified, each bullet point is the response of an individual:

- Seafood in Europe — A food system approach for sustainability (possible overlap with DG MARE)
  Renewable energy in Europe 2016 - Recent growth and knock-on effects (possible overlap with DG ENER) (respondent from DG ENV, unit E4);

- There are some areas where there is some overlap. In most cases cooperation is excellent and ensures that there is full complementarity. Water is an area where some more synergies could be found (respondent from ESTAT, unit E2);
- Imperviousness and European Settlement Map by JRC (respondent from ESTAT, unit E4, Geographical information sector); and
- Report/work on Green Infrastructure (respondent from DG ENV, unit D2, biodiversity sector).

Question 7): Are there any other comments that you would like to raise about the products and outputs of the EEA and EIONET?

Respondents were also invited to provide any other comments on the products and outputs of the EEA and EIONET. The following comments were received, each bullet point is the response of an individual:

- A 'best practice' example: 2017 Climate Change Impacts and Vulnerability report is comprehensive, handy and a credible report digesting many knowledge sources on impacts and adaptation, including from other services (JRC reports) and other organisations (e.g. World Health Organisation). (Respondent from DG CLIMA, unit A3)
- There are some very good products but overall the EEA produces too many reports some of them full of quotes from third sources rather than based on evidence collected by EIONET or EU reporting. Moreover, the mapping products are fragmented and sometimes difficult to find and not integrated. (Respondent from DG ENV, unit E4)
- Unit D3 has a well-functioning structural cooperation with EEA and ETC-BD and is highly dependent on their continuous input. Overall, we are highly satisfied, although we can feel an increasing competition for EEA resources, mainly as result of increasing resource demands from other policy units. (Respondent from DG ENV, unit D3)
- The data handling at EEA is a bit of a mess. Too many different formats, updates not always well organised and timed, data exchange is too costly because of this. (Respondent from ESTAT, unit E2)
- Clearly more awareness about what the EEA/EIONET develops is needed among colleagues in other DGs and at national level in MinofEnv and beyond. (Respondent from DG ENV, unit B1, sector SCP-Circular economy)
- High quality (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit A2, fluorinated GHG policies sector)
- EEA should continue to ensure in times of shrinking resources that sufficient resources are put into directly policy relevant products, in particular in the less visible ones (e.g. datasets) (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C2)
- EEA's work on preparing a tool for tracking climate investments still needs to be proven to be useful to DG CLIMA (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C2, Energy Union Governance sector)
- EIONET representatives seem quite disconnected from policy and responsible ministries in their countries; the added-value of these networks is still to be demonstrated?

  Impartiality is rated low because of the statistical and scientific lack of robustness of data, indicators and assessments. (Respondent from DG ENV, unit D2, biodiversity sector)

Brief Section Analysis

Overall reports are used most in both policy development and implementation. Datasets/maps are considered to be the most robust and impartial in both areas, and are also considered to be the most useful. Meetings/workshops are used the least and considered to be the least robust and impartial, and the least useful product. However no products were rated as 'not useful at all' by any of the respondents.

10.17.1.5   Benefits of the EEA and EIONET

The next section of the survey aimed to assess the benefits created by the EEA and EIONET as perceived by the respondents.

Question 8: In your area, to what extent do you agree with the following benefits from EEA and EIONET activity over the period 2012-2016?

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with various benefits from EEA and EIONET activity from 2012 to 2016, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

Figure 10-36: Q8 - Extent of Agreement with Different Benefits from EEA and EIONET Activity 2012-2016
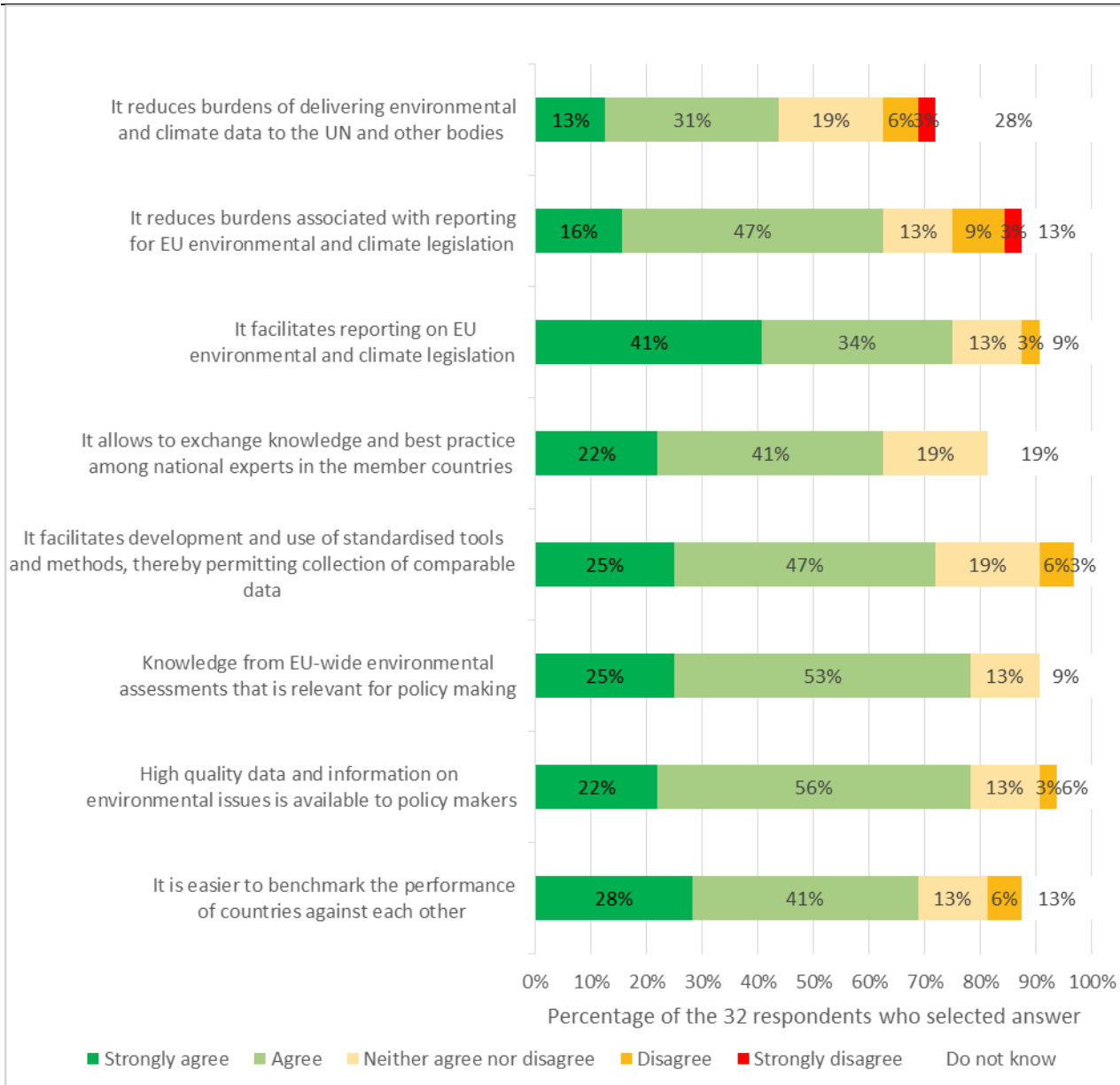
Source: Q8) In your area, to what extent do you agree with the following benefits from EEA and EIONET activity over the period 2012-2016?Valid Responses: 32

Figure 10-36 shows that generally all benefits were agreed with by respondents to the survey. **Provision of knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making** (78% said they 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), and **high quality data and information on environmental issues that is available to policy makers** (78% said they 'strongly agree' or 'agree') were the two most agreed with benefits. The least agreed with benefit were the statements relating to EEA and EIONET activity **reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies** (44% said they 'strongly agree' or 'agree').

In the absence of EEA, to what extent could the national institutions and the European Commission have provided the same benefits?
Respondents were asked to assess to what extent the national institutions and the European Commission could have provided the same benefits in the absence of the EEA. The results are shown in Figure 10-37.

Figure 10-37: Extent to which the Existence of the EEA Provides Benefits Beyond National Institutions and the European Commission

	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To some extent	To a little extent	To no extent	Do not know
Reduced burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies			43%	29%	21%	7%
Reduced burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation	10%	30%	30%	15%		15%
Facilitate reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation	4%	8%	46%	29%	4%	8%
Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	5%	10%	65%	10%	5%	5%
Use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	13%		43%	26%	4%	13%
Provide knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	4%	16%	48%	16%	8%	8%
Provide high quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers	8%	16%	48%	20%		8%
Benchmark the performance of countries against each other	14%	9%	45%	27%		5%

Percentage of the 32 respondents who selected answer

Source: In the absence of EEA, to what extent could the national institutions and the European Commission have provided the same benefits? Valid Responses: 32

Generally respondents did not appear to have strong feelings regarding this question, with 43% - 65% selecting that national institutions and the European Commission could have provided the same benefits as the EEA 'to some extent'. The benefit that the EEA was voted to supply that national institutions and the European Commission could not to either a large or very large extent is **reducing the burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies.**

9) Are there any comments that you would like to raise about the benefits of the EEA?

Respondents were also invited to provide any other comments on the benefits of the EEA. The following remarks were received, each bullet point is the response of an individual:

- The answers are highly dependent on the policy area. Where EEA carries out legislative reporting, they generate high quality outputs and reduce burden. But in many areas, the EEA is not involved in reporting and therefore its products are somewhat disconnected from the policy discussions. (Respondent from DG ENV, unit E4)
- The main benefit is that it is an independent body collecting and presenting data that otherwise would be scattered. From the burden perspective it needs to be assessed if it is cost effective (vs. having the same service being performed by COM services). (Respondent from DG ENV, unit B1, SCP-Circular Economy sector)

- EEA's BDR and CDR were critical/extremely useful for the implementation of the CO_2 standards for cars and vans. (Respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C4, CO_2 standards cars and vans sector)
- Strong on communication products (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit A2, fluorinated GHG policies sector)
- The EEA provides a helpful source of additional technical expertise on certain subjects as well as largely impartial advice.

  Independence from the Commission is sometimes advantageous (i.e. ability to be seen as impartial from Commission vested interests). (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C2, EU ETS MRVA sector)

- Lack of semantic data interoperability and integration between different supported topics/domains hinders burden reduction, data sharing and reuse. (respondent from DG ENV, unit E4)
- The benefits of the EEA largely consist of confirming and communicating the existence of EU-wide environmental problems and managing important EU environmental reporting work-flows. These benefits are quite limited compared to other comparable EU agencies but still important and useful. (respondent from DG ENV, unit E4, compliance assurance sector).
- As there was hardly any legislation on biodiversity to be implemented during the period covered by review, 'legislation' has been understood as 'policy' in the provided answers (respondent from DG ENV, unit D2, biodiversity sector); and
- Very important/essential objective pan-European source/knowledge-base for true state on the environment and climate change (factchecker against 'alternative' facts); driver for the circular economy. (respondent from DG GROW, Copernicus unit, Space sector)

Brief Section Analysis

Overall, respondents agreed that the EEA was providing a wide range of benefits, however the level to which it is providing these benefits could be improved. Respondents did not feel strongly that national institutions and the European Commission would not be able to provide the same benefits as the EEA on their own.

10.17.1.6   Coordination of Work

Question 10a) Do you know the relevant persons from the EEA who work within your areas of work?

This part of the survey aimed to assess the level of coordination that had taken place between the respondent's unit and the EEA and EIONET.

Table 10.72: Q10a – Awareness of Relevant EEA Counterpart

Do you know the relevant persons from the EEA who work within your areas of work?	*No. of Responses*	*%*
Yes	29	91%
No	3	9%

Source: Q10a) Do you know the relevant persons from the EEA who work within your areas of work? Valid Responses: 32

When asked about the awareness of relevant EEA Counterparts, Table 10.72 shows that 29 of the 32 respondents (91%) knew who their relevant EEA counterpart was.

Question 10b) How often has staff from the unit coordinated with their relevant counterparts in the EEA through meetings, conference calls and similar on technical issues?

Respondents where then asked the frequency of coordination between their units and relevant counterparts.

Figure 10.38: Q10b – Frequency of Coordination with EEA Counterpart
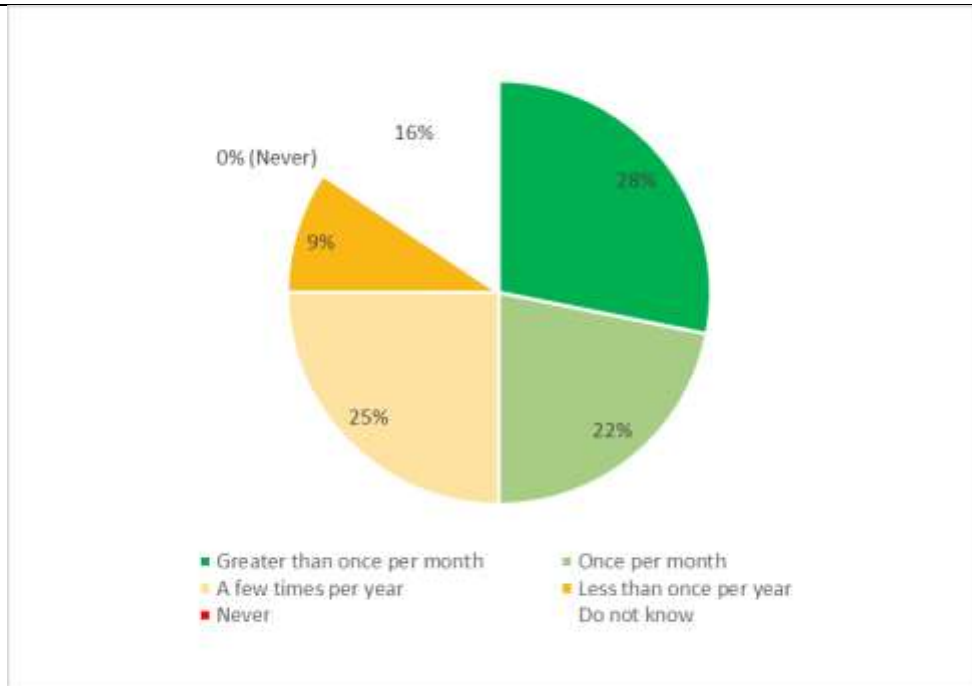
Source: Q10b) How often has staff from the unit coordinated with their relevant counterparts in the EEA through meetings, conference calls and similar on technical issues? Valid Responses: 32

Figure 10.38 shows that 28% (9 responses) of respondents coordinated with their EEA counterpart **more than once per month**, 22% (7 responses) coordinated **once per month**, a quarter of respondents (8 responses) coordinated only **a few times per year**, and the remaining quarter **less than once per yea**r (9%, 3 responses) or did not know (10%, 5 responses).

Respondents were then asked to specify the types of technical issues on which they coordinated with their EEA counterparts between 2012 and 2016.

Figure 10.39: Q10b – Types of Technical Issues Coordinated On
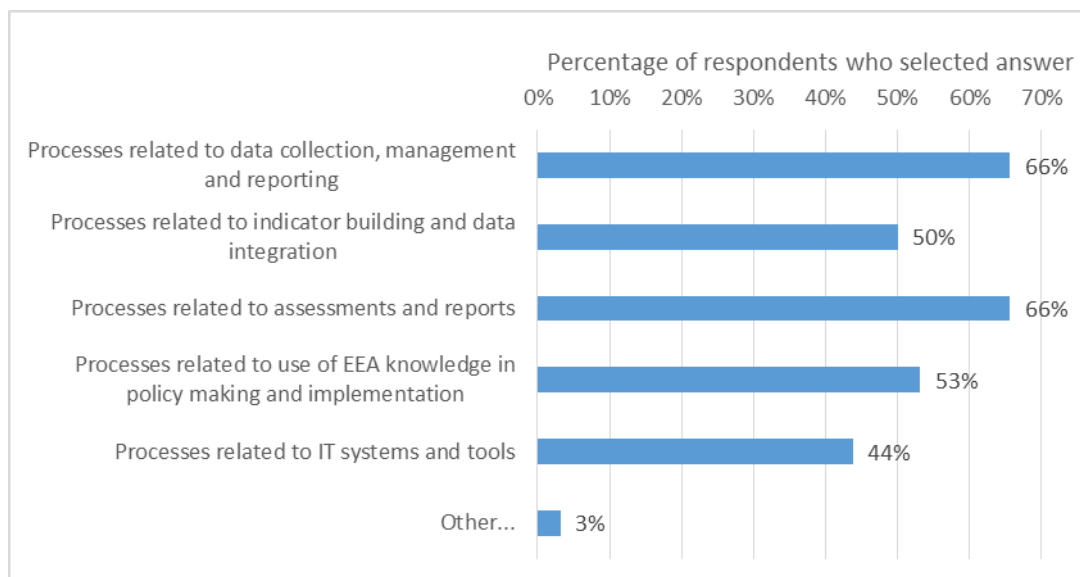
Source: Q10b) Which types of technical issues have you coordinated with the EEA during the 2012-2016 period? Valid Responses: 32

The types of technical issues that the highest percentage of respondents had coordinated with their EEA counterparts on were **processes related to data collection, management and reporting**, and **processes related to assessments and reports** (both 66%, 21 responses) (Figure 10.39). **Processes related to IT systems and tools** were the type of technical issue least coordinated on (44%, 14 responses).

Question 10c) Has there been coordination on work programmes?

Respondents were then asked whether there had been any coordination on work programmes.

Figure 10.40: Q10c - Work Programme Coordination
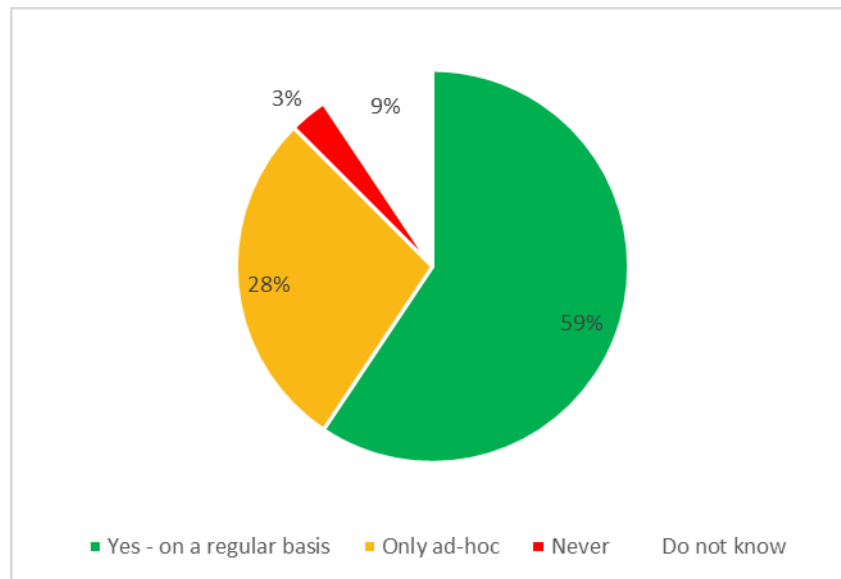
Source: Q10c) Has there been coordination on work programmes? Valid Responses: 32

When asked whether the respondents had coordinated with their EEA counterparts on work programmes 59% (19 responses) said that they had **on a regular basis**, 28% (9 responses) said they had but only on an **ad-hoc** basis as shown in Figure 10.40. Only 3% (1 response) said they **never** had.

Question 10d) Have you been invited by the EEA to take part in any EIONET meetings?

Respondents were asked whether they had been invited to take part in any EIONET meetings as shown in Figure 10.41.

Figure 10.41: Q10d - Invitations to EIONET Meetings
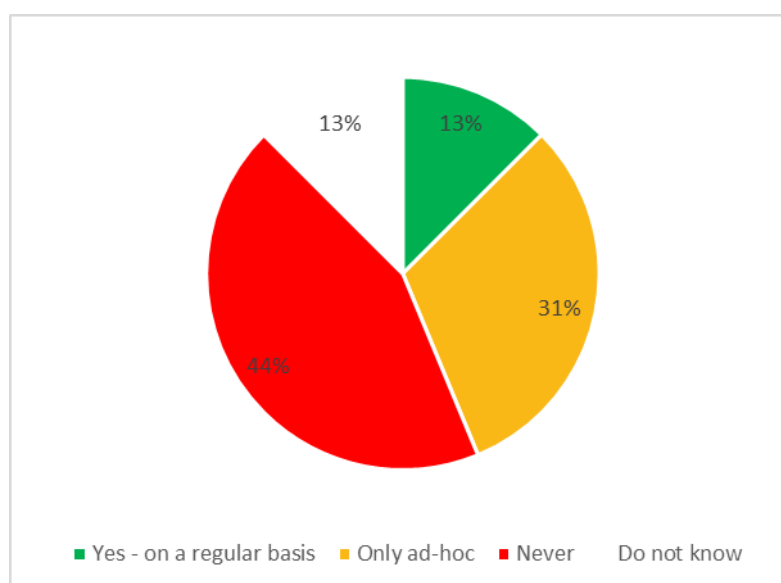
Source: Q10d) Have you been invited by the EEA to take part in any EIONET meetings? Valid Responses: 32

Of the 32 respondents just under half (44%, 14 responses) had **never** been invited by their EEA counterpart to participate in any EIONET meetings, and only 13% (4 responses) were invited **on a regular basis** (Figure 10.41).

A follow-up question on whether respondents participated in these meetings was asked to those that answered either **Yes - on a regular basis** or **Only ad-hoc.**

Table 10.73: Q10d – Participation When in EIONET Meetings

Do you participate in these meetings?	*No. of responses*	*%*
Yes	2	14%
Sometimes	10	71%
No	2	14%
Non-response/n.a	18	-

Source: Q10d) Do you participate in these meetings? Valid Responses: 14

Of the 14 respondents who have attended EIONET meetings, the majority (71%, 10 responses) said they participated **sometimes**, whilst equal numbers said they did and did not participate (14%, 2 responses each) as shown in Table 10.73.

Question 10e) Have you invited representatives of the EEA or EIONET to take part in relevant committees or working groups established by the Commission in your area of work?

Respondents were asked whether they had invited representatives of the EEA or EIONET to take part in relevant committees or working groups established by the Commission in their area of work as shown in Figure 10.42.

Figure 10.42: Q10e – EEA or EIONET Participation in Respondents' Work

Legend: ■ Yes - on a regular basis ■ Only ad-hoc ■ Never □ Do not know
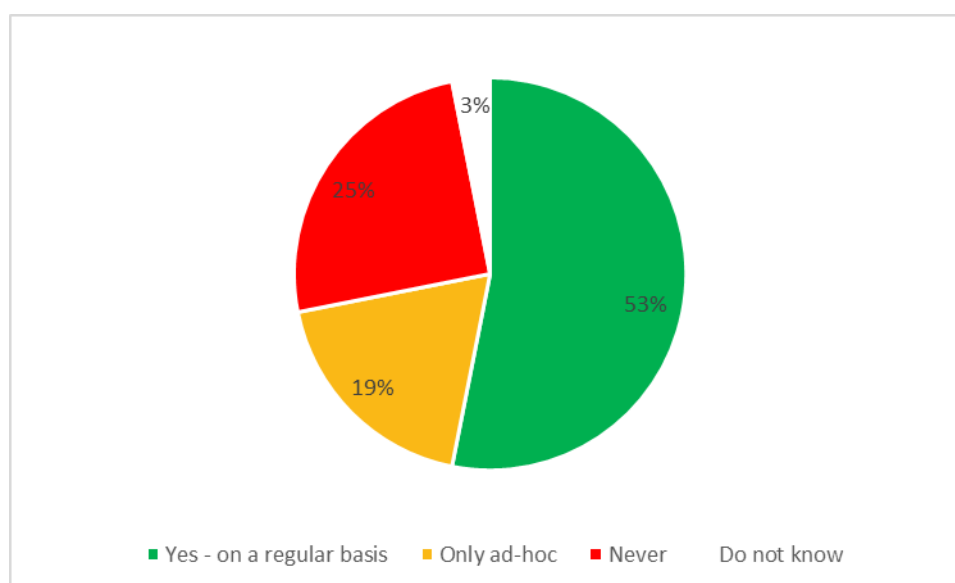
Source: Q10e) Have you invited representatives of the EEA or EIONET to take part in relevant committees or working groups established by the Commission in your area of work? Valid Responses: 32

When asked whether the respondents had invited representatives of the EEA or EIONET to take part in relevant committees or working groups established by the Commission in their area of work, 53% (17 responses) said that they had **on a regular basis**, however a quarter (25%, 8 responses) said that they **never** had (Figure 10.42).

Question 10f) Are you aware that the EEA has an office in Brussels?

Respondents were asked whether they were aware that EEA has an office in Brussels.

Table 10.74: Q10f - EEA Brussels Office

Are you aware that the EEA has an office in Brussels?	No. of responses	%
Yes	15	47%
No	13	41%
Do not know	4	13%

Source: Q10f) Are you aware that the EEA has an office in Brussels? Valid Responses: 32

47% (15 responses) of respondents were aware that the EEA has an office in Brussels as shown in Table 10.74. Of these 15 respondents, 6 were respondents from DG ENV, 5 from DG Clima, 2 from ESTAT, 1 from DG Grow and 1 from DG Agri.

Table 10.75: Q10f – Interaction with EEA Staff in their Office

Have you ever had interaction with the EEA staff in this office?	No. of responses	%
Yes	8	53%
No	7	47%

Source: Q10f) Have you ever had interaction with the EEA staff in this office? Valid Responses: 15

When asked whether they has interacted with EEA staff in the Brussels office, only one more respondent (53%, 8 responses) had interacted with the EEA staff in their office than not (47%, 7 responses) as shown in Table 10.75.

Question 11) Are there any comments you would like to raise about the coordination with the EEA and EIONET?

Respondents were also invited to provide any additional comments in relation to the coordination with the EEA and EIONET. The following comments were received:

- The EIONET groups are often disconnected and independent from the Expert Groups established by DG ENV. Better coordination is needed.
- The EIONET forum is of limited direct relevance for us, as we have a dedicated expert group on reporting under the EU Nature directives, with representatives of MS, EEA, ETC-BD, etc. through which all communications are channelled. I cannot imagine how this could work through EIONET instead.
- More systematic coordination on policy matters with thematic units to share priorities, content, etc. would benefit the overall policy development and implementation
- Coordination with the EEA works extremely well.
- coordination at technical level is very close and un-bureaucratic, excellent working relationship, good coordination including with the Topic Centre, Topic Centre extremely important for the data handling and analysis work!
- to explain Q10d) I was once invited ad hoc to an EIONET meeting, but due to the date a colleague took it
- Concerning land cover for climate, the EEA surely has a huge potential under the scope of upcoming legislation that needs to be leveraged; particularly in helping build capacity, standardise data collection and monitoring, and reducing administrative burden on member states.
- In the context of environmental compliance assurance, the EEA has stressed that it does not see itself as having any role in compliance monitoring. However, it has signalled a mild interest in some aspects of compliance promotion.
- Interactions with ETC/BD have been more regular and constructive than with EEA and EIONET
- EIONET is a very important (user)community and the direct link with the national level;

Brief Section Analysis

Overall the level of coordination of work between the respondents and their EEA counterparts was reported to be good, with 75% coordinating at least a few times per year, and 50% coordinating once per month or more frequently. The types of technical issues on which most respondents coordinated with their counterparts were 'processes related to data collection, management and reporting', and 'processes related to assessments and reports' (both 66%, 21 responses) (Figure 10.39). 88% of respondents coordinated regularly or on an ad-hoc basis with their EEA counterparts on work programmes (Figure 10.40). However, only 44% (14 responses) of respondents had ever been invited to an EIONET meeting (Figure 10.41), and of those 71% (10 responses) said they only participated in the meetings sometimes (Table 10.73). In comparison 72% of respondents had invited representatives

of the EEA or EIONET to take part in relevant committees or working groups established by the Commission in their area of work on a regular or ad-hoc basis (Figure 10.42).

Awareness of the EEA office in Brussels was poor with only 47% (7 responses) of respondents knowing of its existence (Table 10.74). Similarly poor was that just 53% (8 responses) of respondents had interacted with the EEA staff in their office (Table 10.75).

10.17.1.7   Responding to Change

Question 12) To what extent do you agree with the following statements

The respondents were asked to respond to a series of questions designed to make them assess the ability of the EEA to adapt to changes.

Figure 10.43: Q12 – EEA's Ability to Adapt to Change
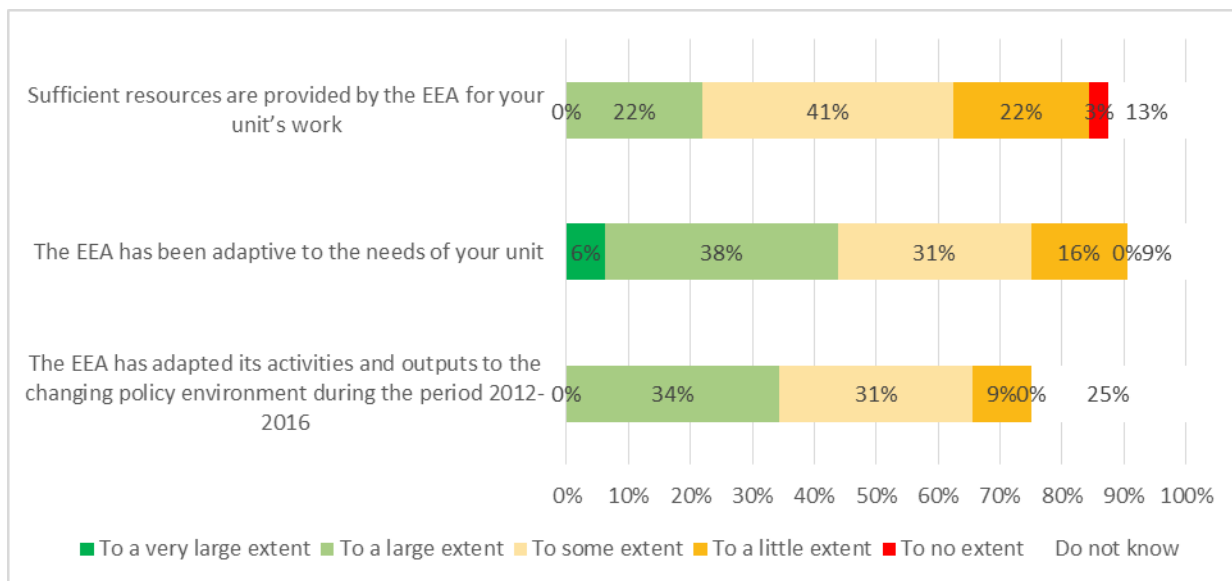
Source: Q12) To what extent do you agree with the following statements: a) the EEA has adapted its activities and outputs to the changing policy environment during the period 2012-2016, b) the EEA has been adaptive to the needs of your unit, c) sufficient resources are provided by the EEA for your unit's work? Valid Responses: 32

63% of respondents felt that the EEA **provided sufficient resources for their unit's work** to some extent (41%) or to a large extent (22%), and 75% of respondents felt that the EEA has been **adaptive to the needs of their unit** to a very large extent (6%), large extent (38%) or some extent (31%) as shown in Figure 10.43.

65% of respondents felt that the EEA had **adapted its activities and outputs to the changing policy environment during the period 2012-2016**; none of the respondents felt that the EEA had not adapted at all.

Question 13) Are there any comments you would like to raise about the EEA and EIONET's capacity to respond to changes and new developments?

Respondents were also invited to provide qualitative remarks on the capacity of the EEA and EIONET to respond to changes and new developments. The following remarks were received, each bullet point is the response of an individual:

- Although focussing on environment, the policy development/implementation radar of the EEA should look beyond and reach out to other DGs/policies (industrial, digital, etc.) to have a complete view, to help raising awareness about interactions/solutions/policy consequences on environment. (respondent from DG ENV, unit B1, SCP-Circular Economy sector)
- EEA has engaged proactively in developing a new monitoring system for HDVs. (Respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C4, CO_2 standards cars and vans sector)
- Budget always a limiting factor; responding to the need of confidentiality in handling commercial data is a new challenge for the EEA (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit A2, fluorinated GHG policies sector)
- Technical analysis support cancelled from 2016 (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C2, EU ETS MRVA sector)

- Will and motivation are there, but not always matched up with corresponding resources. (Respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C2)
- EEA has had sufficient resources until now to support our work. However we fear this may not remain so in the future. This would negatively affect our work. (Respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C2, Energy Union Governance sector)
- There is a clear hesitation with respect to the longer duration (eg 2030) policy framework that climate imposes, since this does not easily match the financial and other mandate timeframe that the EEA has. (respondent from DG CLIMA, unit C3, LULUCF sector)
- The EEA and EIONET are locked into their 1990s architecture, with little or no interest in seeing that change. (respondent from DG ENV, unit E4, compliance assurance sector)
- Lack of resources is the usual mantra used by EEA to refuse being involved in new activities. While this may be true in specific cases, it is more a re-allocation of resources which would be needed. With time, priority has been given by EEA to ad hoc assessments instead of data management. (respondent from DG ENV, unit D2, biodiversity sector)
- We have a delegation agreement with the EEA where the nr of staff is limited (DG BUDG limitations for agencies) for the operational activities to be developed. (respondent from DG GROW, unit I (Copernicus), Space sector)

10.17.1.8   Copernicus Programme

Question 14) The European Commission's Action Plan following the Fitness Check on Reporting calls for greater use of data from the Copernicus Programme.

The European Commission's Action Plan following the Fitness Check on Reporting calls for greater use of data from the Copernicus Programme. The following questions aimed to establish how often the respondents work with Copernicus data, and whether the EEA had provided adequate support for their use of that data.

Figure 10.44: Q14a – Regularity of Use of Copernicus Data
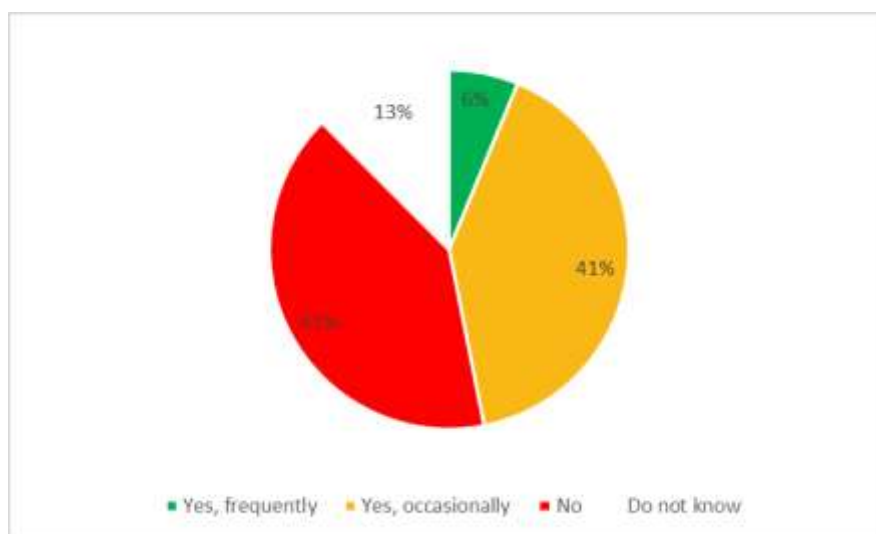
Source: Q14) The European Commission's Action Plan following the Fitness Check on Reporting calls for greater use of data from the Copernicus Programme. a) During the evaluation period (2012-2016), have you worked with Copernicus data in your area of work? Valid Responses: 32

The majority of respondents either **do not** use (41%, 13 responses) Copernicus data, or only use it **occasionally** (41%, 13 responses); only 6% (2 respondents) said they use it **frequently** as shown in Figure 10.44.

Figure 10.45: Q14b – Provision of Support by EEA in Using Copernicus Data
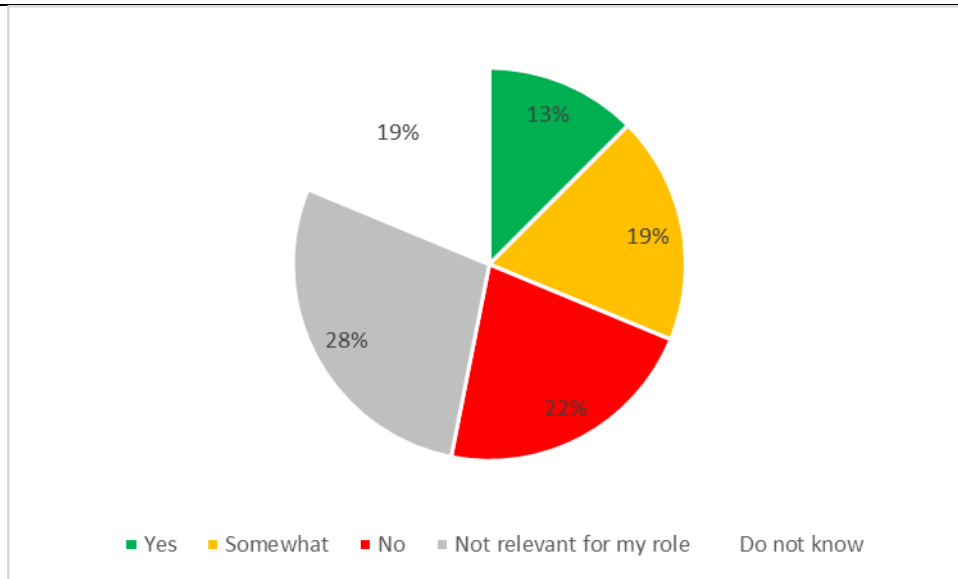
Source: Q14) The European Commission's Action Plan following the Fitness Check on Reporting calls for greater use of data from the Copernicus Programme. b) Has the EEA provided adequate support to assist you in working with Copernicus data? Valid Responses: 32

Figure 10.45 shows that 22% (7 responses) of respondents **do not** think that the EEA provides adequate support to assist them in working with Copernicus data, whilst 32% think that support is **somewhat** adequate (19%, 6 responses) or **totally** adequate (13%, 4 responses). The majority of respondents said either that it was **not relevant** for their role (28%, 9 responses) or that they **did not know** (19%, 6 responses).

10.17.1.9   Inspire Directive

The Inspire Directive aims to make available relevant, harmonised and quality geographic information that supports policies and activities impacting the environment.

Question 15) During the evaluation period, has the EEA provided adequate support to assist NFPs and NRCs in working with harmonised spatial data?

Respondents were asked whether during the evaluation period the EEA provided adequate support to assist National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Reference Centres (NRCs) in working with harmonised spatial data.

Figure 10.46: Q15 – EEA Support Level for NFPs and NRCs Working with Harmonised Spatial Data
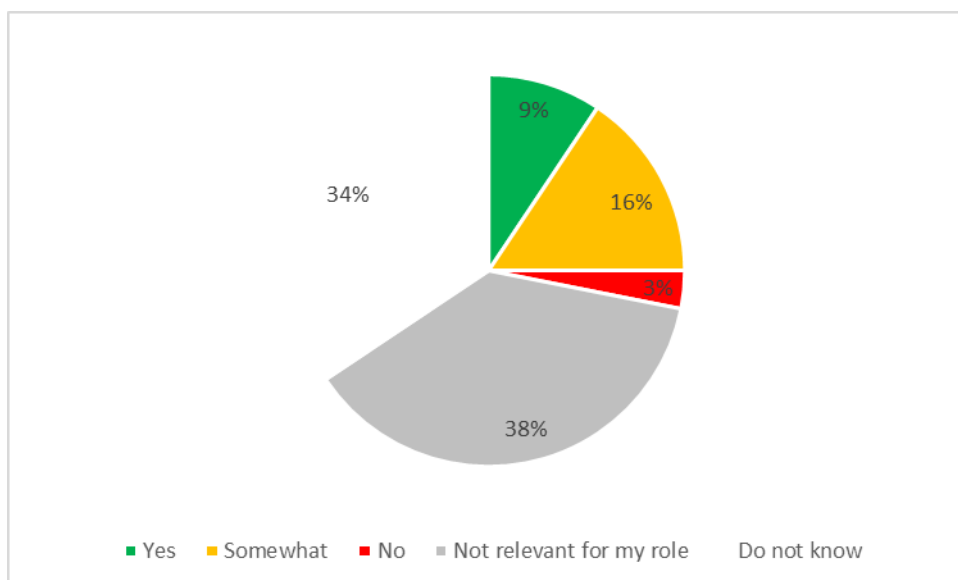
Source: Q15) During the evaluation period, has the EEA provided adequate support to assist NFPs and NRCs in working with harmonised spatial data? Valid Responses: 32

25% respondents felt that level of support was either **totally** (9%, 3 responses) or **somewhat** (16%, 5 responses) adequate; only 3% (1 response) felt that it was **not**. The majority of respondents said either that they **did not know** (34%, 11 responses), or that it was **not relevant** for their role (38%, 12 respondents) as shown in Figure 10.46.

10.17.2 Survey of the Management Board (MB)

10.17.2.1   About the Survey

The support study for the evaluation of the EEA undertook a survey of the Management Board (MB) of the EEA. The main aims of the survey were to gain an understanding across all members (or at least a significant share) of the situation in operational terms with regard to national coordination, frequency of meetings and costs (time spent) associated with MB members performing their role (the interviews have not gone to this level of detail). This is particularly important for the efficiency and cost analysis.

The survey also aimed to gather a semi-quantified overview of the perceptions of MB members in respect to key aspects to be addressed to answer the evaluation questions. In particular relating to extent of objective and task achievement as well as benefits created. These subjects have been addressed in interviews and the survey questions enable to verify whether the benefits identified through interviews are shared across all members and to assess their importance and whether there are additional benefits that should be taken into account. This is particularly important to analyse benefits and effectiveness.

10.17.2.2   Survey Responses

20 responses were received in total, out of a possible total of 70 MB members. Of the 20 respondents, 17 were from Member States and three were representing EU institutions as shown in Table 10.76.

Table 10.76: Q1 – Type of Organisation

What type of organisation do you represent on the Management Board?	No. of responses	%
Member country	17	85%
EU institution	3	15%

Source: What type of organisation do you representative on the Management Board? Valid Responses: 20

Of the 20 respondents, 17 (85%) represented a Member State and 3 (15%) were represented an EU institutions, as shown in Table 10.76. Overall less than one-third of board members took part in the survey.

10.17.2.3   Governance of the Work of the EEA and EIONET

The questions in this section sought to understand the respondents' views on the governance of the EEA and EIONET.

Question 1a) Is the number of MB meetings per year sufficient?

Respondents were asked to assess the functioning of the Management Board through a series of questions.

Table 10.77: Q1a – Frequency of MB Meetings

Is the number of MB meetings per year sufficient?	No. of responses	%
Too many	2	10%
Adequate	18	90%
Too few	0	0%

Source: Question 1a) Is the number of MB meetings per year sufficient? Valid Responses: 20

The majority (90%, 18 responses) of respondents felt that the number of MB meetings per year was adequate as shown in Table 10.77.

Question 1b) Does the EEA supply you with sufficient information for the MB meetings to perform your role as MB member?

Table 10.78: Q1b – Amount of Information Supplied for MB Meetings

Does the EEA supply you with sufficient information for the MB meetings to perform your role as MB member?	No. of responses	%
Too much	4	20%
Adequate	16	80%
Too little	0	0%

Source: Question 1b) Does the EEA supply you with sufficient information for the MB meetings to perform your role as MB member? Valid Responses: 20

The majority (80%, 16 responses) of respondents felt that the amount of information supplied to them about the MB meetings by the EEA was adequate for them to perform their role as an MB member as shown in Table 10.78.

Question 1c) Is the information supplied sufficiently in advance of MB meetings?

Table 10.79: Q1c – Timing of Information Supplied for MB Meetings

Is the information supplied sufficiently in advance of MB meetings?	No. of responses	%
Far too late	0	0%
Slightly late	7	35%
Adequate	13	65%

Source: Question 1c) Is the information supplied sufficiently in advance of MB meetings? Valid Responses: 20

The majority (65%, 13 responses) of respondents felt that the information for MB meetings was supplied adequately far in advance as shown in Table 10.79.

Question 1d) Do you find that the balance of interests in the MB is adequate, considering the policy areas handled by EEA?

Table 10.80: Q1d – Balance of Interests in the MB

Do you find that the balance of interests in the MB is adequate, considering the policy areas handled by EEA?	No. of responses	%
Yes	16	80%
No	2	10%
Do not know	2	10%

Source: Question 1d) Do you find that the balance of interests in the MB is adequate, considering the policy areas handled by EEA? Valid Responses: 20

The majority (80%, 16 responses) of respondents felt that the balance of interests in the MB was adequate considering the policy areas handled by the EEA, as shown in Table 10.80.

Question 1e) To what extent are the roles and division of responsibilities of the Bureau and the MB clear to you?

Figure 10.47: Q1e – Clarity of Roles and Division of Responsibilities
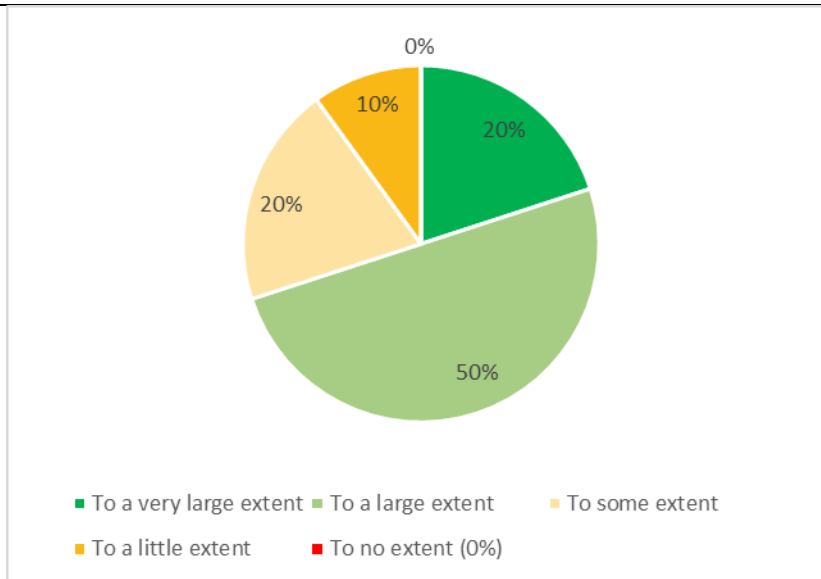
Source: Question 1e) To what extent are the roles and division of responsibilities of the Bureau and the MB clear to you? Valid Responses: 20

As shown in Figure 10.47, 70% (14 responses) of respondents felt that the roles and division of responsibilities of the Bureau and the MB were clear to them to a very large (20%, 4 responses) or large (50%, 10 responses) extent. None of the respondents felt it was not clear at all.

Question 1f) To which extent does the division of responsibility between the Bureau and the MB contribute to the effectiveness of the governance of the EEA?

Figure 10.48: Q1f – Contribution of Responsibility Division to the Effectiveness of Governance of the EEA
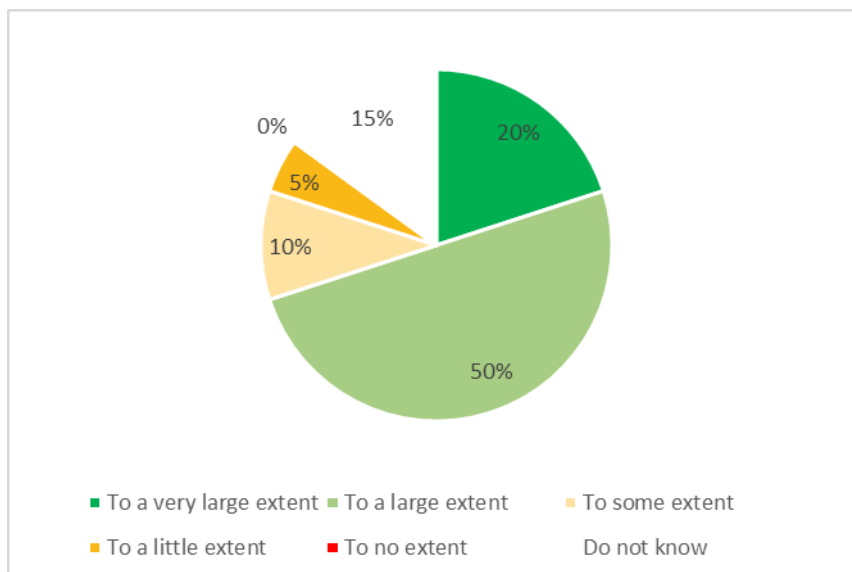
Source: Question 1f) To which extent does the division of responsibility between the Bureau and the MB contribute to the effectiveness of the governance of the EEA? Valid Responses: 20

As shown in Figure 10.48, half (10 responses) of respondents felt that the division of responsibility between the Bureau and the MB contribute to the effectiveness of the governance of the EEA to a large extent, and 20% (4 responses) felt that it contributes to a very large extent. No respondents felt it did not contribute at all.

Question 2a) Is the content of draft EEA annual work programmes sufficient as a basis for the MB members to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA?

This question expanded on the MB and its role in priority setting of the EEA.

Table 10.81: Q2a – Content of Draft EEA Annual Work Programmes

Is the content of draft EEA annual work programmes sufficient as a basis for the MB members to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA?	*No. of responses*	*%*
Too superficial	0	0%
Too detailed	3	15%
Adequate	15	75%
Other	2	10%

Source: Question 2a) Is the content of draft EEA annual work programmes sufficient as a basis for the MB members to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA? Valid Responses: 20

As shown in Table 10.81, 75% (15 responses) of respondents said that the content of draft EEA annual work programmes was adequate as a basis for the MB members to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA.

Question 2b) Is the content of draft EEA multi-annual work programmes sufficient as a basis for the MB members to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA?

Table 10.82: Q2b – Content of Draft EEA Multi-Annual Work Programmes

Is the content of draft EEA multi-annual work programmes sufficient as a basis for the MB members to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA?	*No. of responses*	*%*
Too superficial	0	0%
Too detailed	3	15%
Adequate	16	80%
Other	1	5%

Source: Question 2a) Is the content of draft EEA annual work programmes sufficient as a basis for the MB members to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA? Valid Responses: 20

As shown in Table 10.82Table 10.81, 80% (16 responses) of respondents said that the content of draft EEA multi-annual work programme was adequate.

Question 2c) As an MB member, to which extent do you find that you have the opportunity to exercise real influence on the priorities of the EEA?

Question 2d) To which extent do you find that consultation procedures on Annual Work Programmes work effectively?

Question 2e) Do you consider that time and resources required for participating in the consultation procedures are proportionate to the value your participation provides?

Figure 10.49: Q2c, d & e: Influence on the Priorities of the EEA, Effective Consultation Procedures and associated Time and Resources
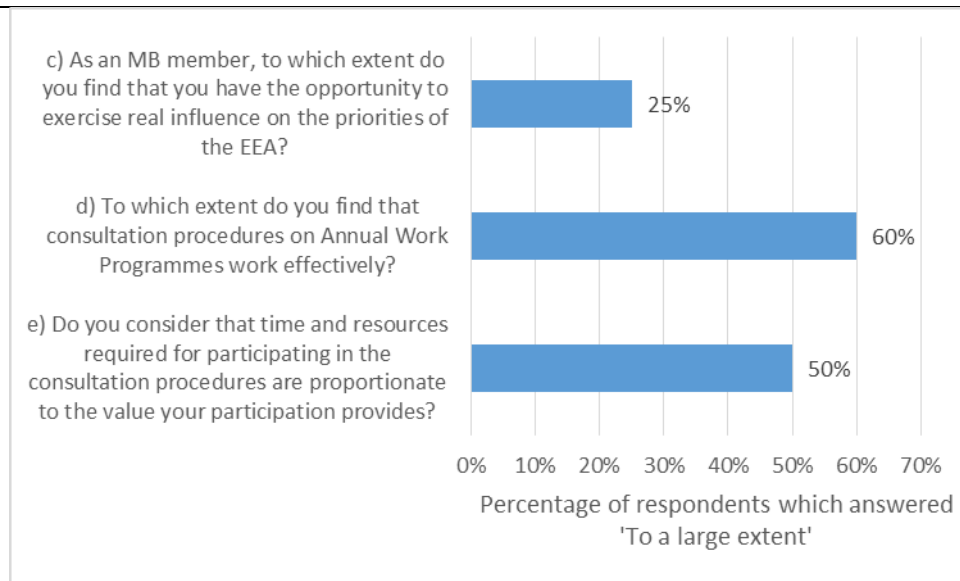
Source: Question 2c) As an MB member, to which extent do you find that you have the opportunity to exercise real influence on the priorities of the EEA? Question 2d) To which extent do you find that consultation procedures on Annual Work Programmes work effectively? Question 2e) Do you consider that time and resources required for participating in the consultation procedures are proportionate to the value your participation provides? Valid Responses: 20

Figure 10.49 shows what proportion of respondents chose 'to a large extent' as their answer for three 'to what extent' questions. Only 25% (5 responses) of respondents felt that as an MB member they had a large extent to exercise real influence on the priorities of the EEA (Figure 10.49); 50% (10 responses) felt they could exercise real influence to some extent.

60% (12 responses) of respondents felt that, to a large extent, the consultation procedures on Annual Work Programmes work effectively.

Half of respondents (10 responses) consider that, to a large extent, the time and resources required for participating in the consultation procedures are proportionate to the value that their participation provides. 40% (8 responses) consider that it is proportionate to some extent.

Question 3a) Are the priorities of the EEA with regard to the distribution of resources and budget between the five elements (M, D, I, A, K) clear to you as an MB member?

The EEA's multi-annual work programme 2014-2018 highlights that its work extends from monitoring through data, information, assessments to knowledge (MDIAK).

Figure 10.50: Q3a – Clarity of Prioritisation of the Five Elements (M, D, I, A, K) by the EEA
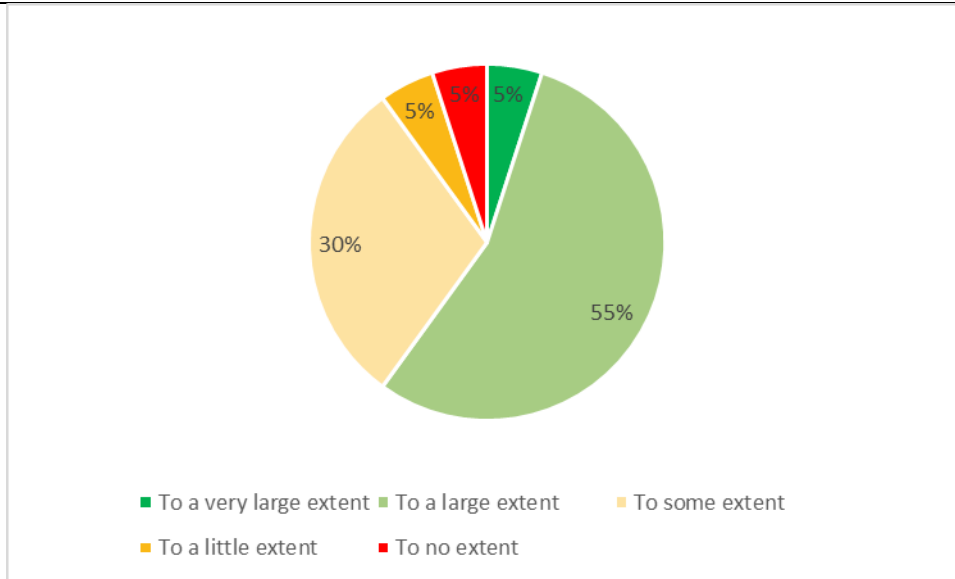
Source: Question 3a) Are the priorities of the EEA with regard to the distribution of resources and budget between the five elements (M, D, I, A, K) clear to you as an MB member? Valid Responses: 20

Figure 10.50 shows that 60% of respondents thought that the priorities of the EEA with regard to the distribution of resources and budget between the five elements (M, D, I, A, K) were clear to them as an MB member to a large (55%, 11 responses) or very large (5%, 1 response) extent. Only one respondent (5%) felt it was not clear at all.

Question 3b): Do you consider that the prioritisation of the EEA between the five elements (M, D, I, A, K) has been appropriate?

Respondents were asked to consider whether they thought that the prioritisation of the EEA between the five elements was appropriate.

Figure 10.51: Q3b – Appropriateness of Prioritisation of the Five Elements (M, D, I, A, K)

Source: Question 3b): Do you consider that the prioritisation of the EEA between the five elements (M, D, I, A, K) has been appropriate? Valid Responses: 20

The majority (80%, 16 responses) of respondents felt that the level of prioritisation given to Monitoring is appropriate. 55% (11 responses) felt that the level of prioritisation given to Data is appropriate, but 35% (7 responses) felt that it should be higher. 65% (13 responses) felt that the level of prioritisation to Indicators is appropriate. 55% (11 responses) felt that the appropriate level of priority was given to Assessments. However only 40% (8

responses) of respondents felt that Knowledge had an appropriate level of prioritisation, and 50% (10 responses) felt it should be given higher priority as shown in Figure 10.51.

Brief Section Analysis

Overall, the majority (65% or above) of MB members agreed that the number of meetings they have, the level of information supplied to them for those meetings, and the time in advance of the meetings that the information is supplied is all adequate (Table 10.77, Table 10.78, Table 10.79). The majority (80%) also agreed that the balance of interests within the MD is adequate (Table 10.80), and that role divisions and responsibilities are clear (70%; Figure 10.47).

In terms of the role of the MB in contributing to EEA priority setting, 80% of respondents felt they were provided with adequate information to be able to assess and provide feedback in this area (Table 10.81). However, only 25% thought that they could exercise real influence in EEA priority setting to a large extent (Figure 10.49). Examination of the five main areas of the EEA's work – Monitoring, Data, Information, Assessments, and Knowledge – showed that 60% (12 responses) of MB members felt the divisions between each area were clear (Figure 10.50), and 55-80% (11-16 responses) agreed with the level of prioritisation given to M, D, I and A (Figure 10.51). However only 40% (8 responses) felt that Knowledge had an appropriate level of prioritisation, and 50% (10 responses) felt it should be given higher priority (Figure 10.51).

10.17.2.4   Coordination of the Work of the EEA and EIONET

The questions in this section sought to understand the level of coordination between the EEA and EIONET.

Question 4a) How often do you meet with the NFP in your country to discuss EEA matters?

Respondents were asked a series of questions designed to establish the level of coordination that takes place in their country with respect to their role as a MB member.

Figure 10.52: Q4a – Regularity of meetings with the NFP in Respondent's Country (Member Country Respondents)
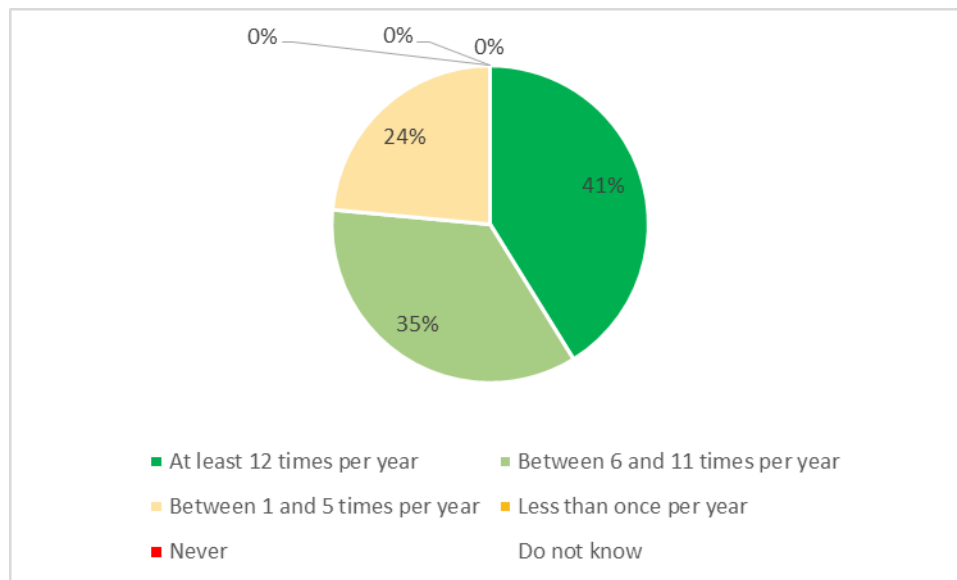
Source: Question 4a) How often do you meet with the NFP in your country to discuss EEA matters? Valid Responses: 17

As shown in Figure 10.52, 41% (7 responses) of respondents met the National Focal Point (NFP) in their country to discuss EEA matters at least 12 times per year. 35% (6 responses) met between 6 and 11 times per year. 4 respondents (24%) reported that they met between 1 and 5 times per year.

Question 4b) Do you conduct pre-meetings with the NFP in your country in advance of MB meetings?

Figure 10.53: Q4b – Frequency of NFP Pre-meetings in Advance of MB Meetings (Member Country Respondents)
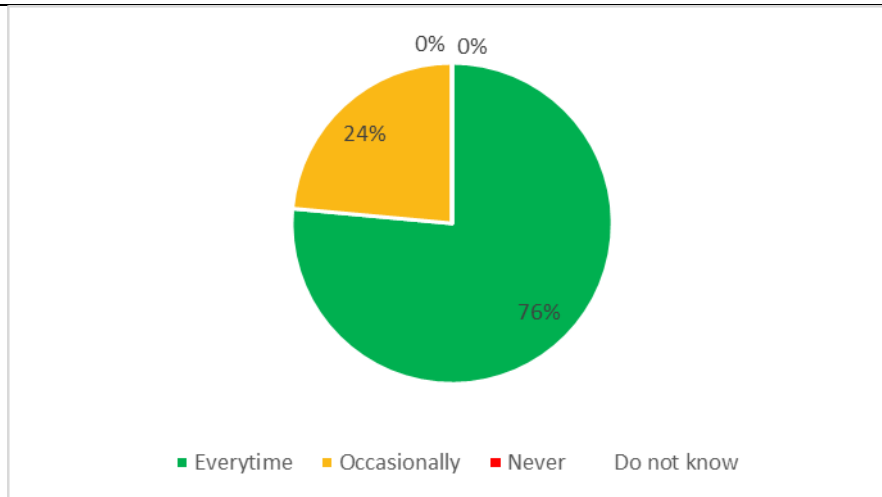
Source: Question 4b) Do you conduct pre-meetings with the NFP in your country in advance of MB meetings? Valid Responses: 17

In advance of MB meetings, 76% (13 responses) of respondents said that they conduct pre-meetings with their NFP every time. The remaining 4 (24%) respondents met occasionally.

Question 4c Do you meet with the relevant authorities in your country that take part in EU level discussions on the budget of the EEA (through COREPER) to discuss EEA budget and country positions on this?

Figure 10.54: Q4c – Frequency of Meetings with Relevant Authorities to Discuss EEA budget (Member Country Respondents)
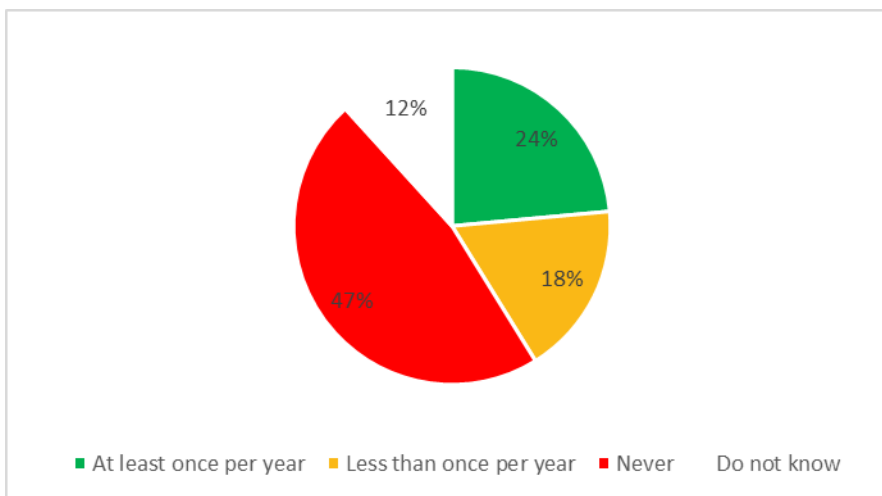
Source: Question 4c) Do you meet with the relevant authorities in your country that take part in EU level discussions on the budget of the EEA (through COREPER) to discuss EEA budget and country positions on this? Valid Responses: 17

As shown in Figure 5-2, 47% (8 responses) of respondents never meet with the relevant authorities in their country that take part in EU level discussions on the budget of the EEA (through COREPER) to discuss EEA budget and country positions on the budget. A quarter of respondents (24%, 4 responses) meet with the relevant authorities at least once per year, and 18% (3 responses) meet less than once per year.

Question 4d) How often do you meet with NRCs in your country?

Figure 10.55: Q4d – Frequency of Meetings with NRCs (Member Country Respondents)
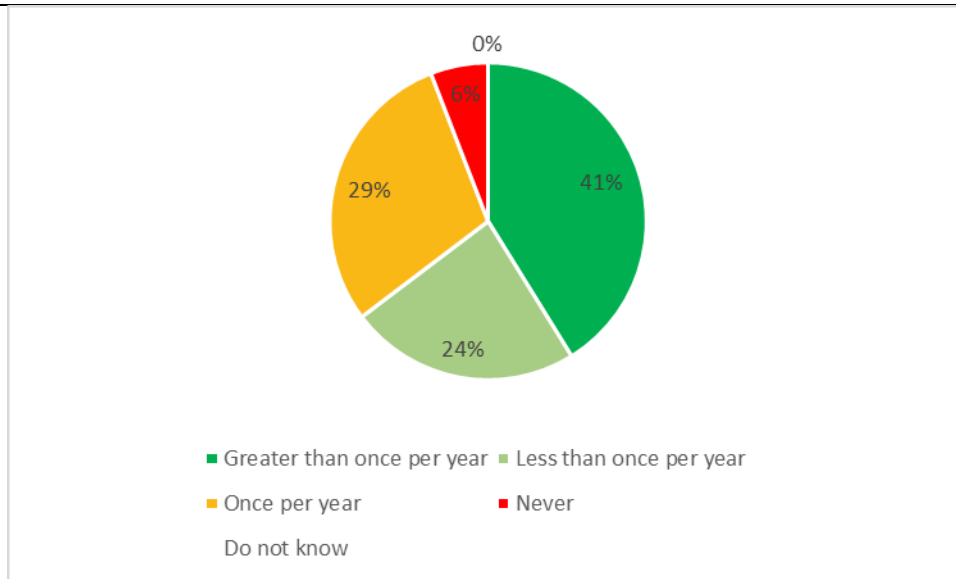
Source: Question 4d) How often do you meet with NRCs in your country? Valid Responses: 17

As shown in Figure 10.55, 41% (7 responses) of respondents met with National Research Centres (NRCs) in their country more often than once per year; 29% (5 responses) met with NRCs once per year; 24% (4 responses) me with NRCs less than once per year. Only 6% (1 response) of respondents never met with NRCs in their country.

Question 4e) How much time do you spend per year on your duties as Management Board member?

Figure 10.56: Q4e – Time Spent on MB Duties
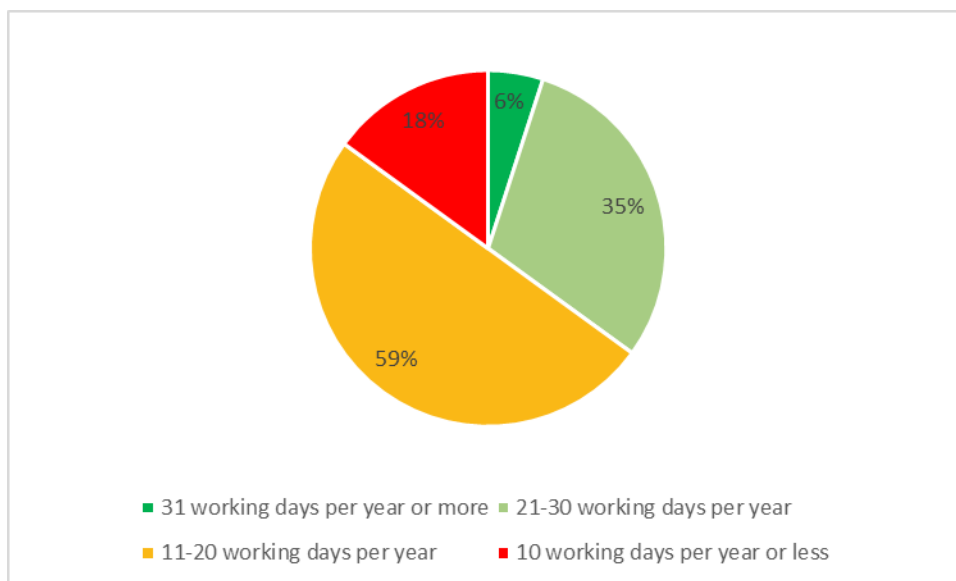
Source: Question 4e) How much time do you spend per year on your duties as Management Board member? Valid Responses: 20

As shown in Figure 10.56, the highest proportion of respondents (50%, 10 responses) dedicate 11-20 working days per year to their duties as a MB member. Only 5% (1 response) dedicate 31 days per year or more.

Question 4f) Do you feel well-informed about EIONET activities in your country?

Question 4g) Do you consider that EIONET activities in your country are effectively coordinated?

Question 4 h) Do you consider that the EEA is effectively coordinating EIONET activities (across countries)?

Question 4 i) Do you find that the EEA, in its work on assessments and knowledge generation, coordinates effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States?

Figure 10.57: Q4f, g, h, i – Coordination of EIONET activities (Member Country Respondents)
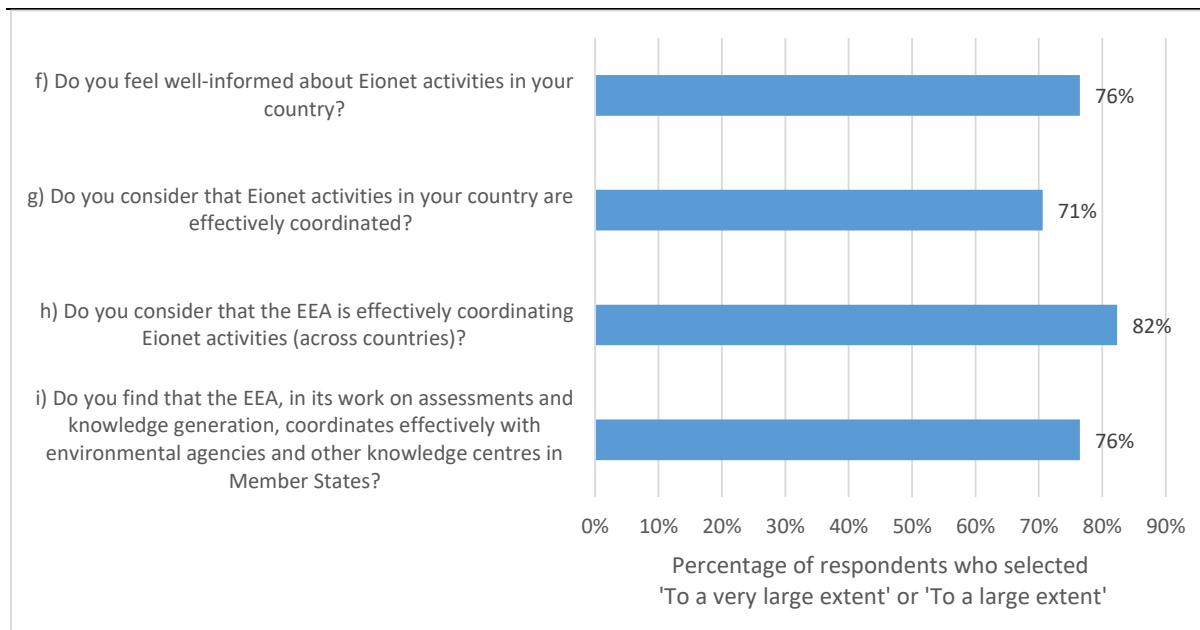
Source: Question 4f) Do you feel well-informed about EIONET activities in your country? Question 4g) Do you consider that EIONET activities in your country are effectively coordinated? Question 4 h) Do you consider that the EEA is effectively coordinating EIONET activities (across countries)? Question 4 i) Do you find that the EEA, in its work on assessments and knowledge generation, coordinates effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States? Valid Responses: 17

As shown in Figure 10.57, the majority of respondents felt well-informed about EIONET activities in their country (76%, 13 responses), and that those activities were effectively coordinated (71%, 12 responses) (Figure 10.57). 82% (14 responses) thought that the EEA is effectively coordinating EIONET activities across countries. 76% (13 responses) also found that the EEA, in its work on assessments and knowledge generation, coordinates effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States

Question 5) Are there any comments you would like to raise about the governance and coordination of the work of the EEA and EIONET?

Respondents were also invited to provide qualitative remarks on the governance and coordination of the work of the EEA and EIONET. The following remarks were provided, each bullet point is the response of an individual:

- Coordination task of EEA should not be decoupled from other similar roles within the Commission, in particular concerning environmental issues (Eurostat, JRC, DG ENV, DG CLIMA ...);
- There is need for more time between the NFP meeting and the MB meeting so that we can effectively build on the NFP discussions in MB discussions and have time for briefing. MB papers need to be better targeted/drafted to enable good discussion, rather than overly long and dense;
- From Swiss point of view, the EEA strategic planning is generally regarded as very good;
- With new data sources and available information out there, EIONET coordination needs to improve to a certain extent;
- We support EEA to increase assessing environmental policies, but without diminishing the quality in the state of the environment reports;
- We value EEAs continuing effort to decrease double reporting to EU institutions and to lessen the reporting burden for the countries; and
- Need to improve shared knowledge of EIONET activities

Brief Section Analysis

Overall, the majority of respondents find the level of coordination between the EEA and EIONET to be good. Figure 10.57 shows that most MB members who responded to the survey think that EIONET activities in their country) and across countries are coordinated effectively by the EEA.
A large majority of respondents meet with the NFP in their country 6 or more times per year (Figure 10.52) and many said they conducted pre-meetings with their NFP in advance of MB meetings every time (Figure 10.53).
An area of weaker coordination was discussion of the EEA budget and country positions on the budget: 47% (8 responses) of respondents never meet with the relevant authorities in their country that take part in EU level discussions on the EEA budget (through COREPER) (Figure 5-2).

Similarly, the frequency of meetings respondents conduct with NRCs in their country was low: only 41% (7 responses) meet more than once per year (Figure 10.55).

10.17.2.5   Tasks and Objectives of the EEA and EIONET

This section looked at the tasks and objectives of the EEA and EIONET as laid out in the founding regulation (Regulation (EC) No 401/2009).

Question 6a) To what extent do you consider that the EEA, through its activities and outputs, has contributed to the development of environment and climate policy in your country/ at the EU level?

This question asked to what extent Member State and EU Institution respondents considered the EEA, through its activities and outputs, has contributed to the development and implementation of environment and climate policy.

Figure 10.58: Q6a – Contribution of the EEA to the Development of Environment and Climate Policy
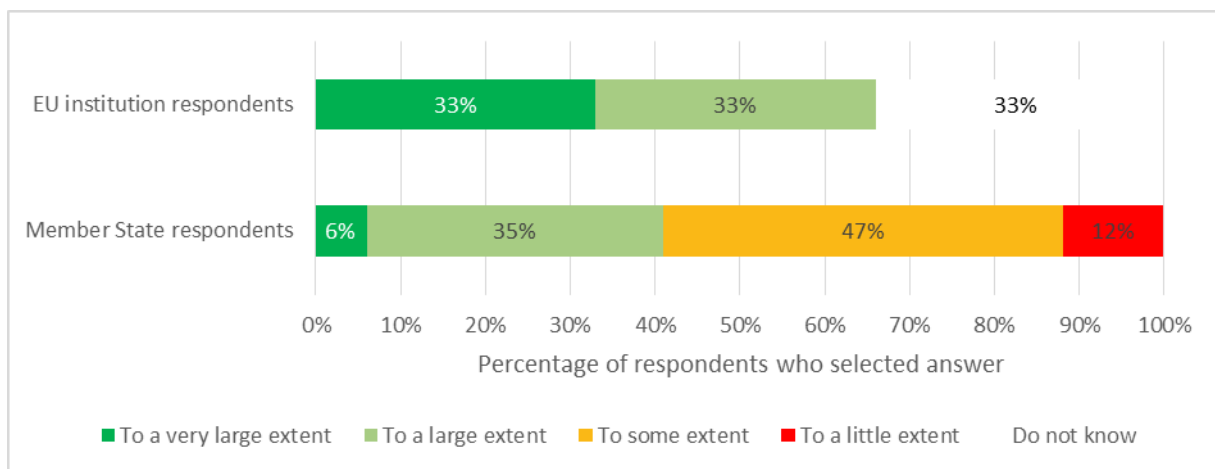
Source: Question 6a) To what extent do you consider that the EEA, through its activities and outputs, has contributed to the development of environment and climate policy in your country/ at the EU level? Valid Responses: Member State Respondents: 17 EU Institution Respondents 3.

Figure 10.58 shows that 66% (2 out of 3 responses) of the EU institution respondents consider that the EEA, through its activities and outputs, has contributed to the development of environment and climate policy at the EU level to a large or very large extent. In comparison only 41% (7 out of 17 responses) of the Member State respondents consider that the EEA has contributed to the development of environment and climate policy in their country to a large or very large extent; 47% (8 responses) consider the EEA to have contributed to some extent.

Question 6b) To what extent do you consider that the EEA, through its activities and outputs, has contributed to the implementation of environment and climate policy in your country/ at the EU level?

Figure 10.59: Q6b – Contribution of the EEA to the Implementation of Environment and Climate Policy
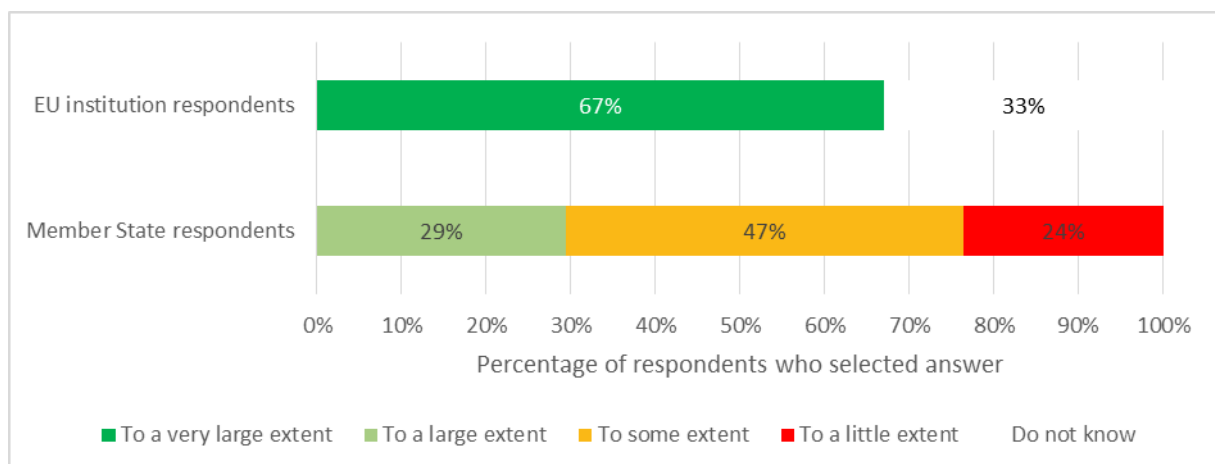
Source: Question 6b) To what extent do you consider that the EEA, through its activities and outputs, has contributed to the implementation of environment and climate policy in your country/ at the EU level? Valid Responses: Member State Respondents: 17 EU Institution Respondents 3.

Figure 10.59 shows that 67% (2 out of 3 responses) of the EU institution respondents consider that the EEA has contributed to the implementation of environment and climate policy at the EU level to a large or very large extent. In comparison only 29% (5 out of 17 responses) of the Member State respondents consider that the EEA has contributed to the implementation of environment and climate policy in their country to a large or very large extent; as with policy development, 47% (8 responses) consider the EEA to have contributed to some extent.

Question 7a) Do you agree that the EEA Communication Framework is relevant and coherent?

The following questions were investigating the communication and dissemination of environmental information, as specified in the Founding Regulation of the EEA, Article 2 (m).

Figure 10.60: Q7a – Relevance and Coherence of the EEA Communication Framework
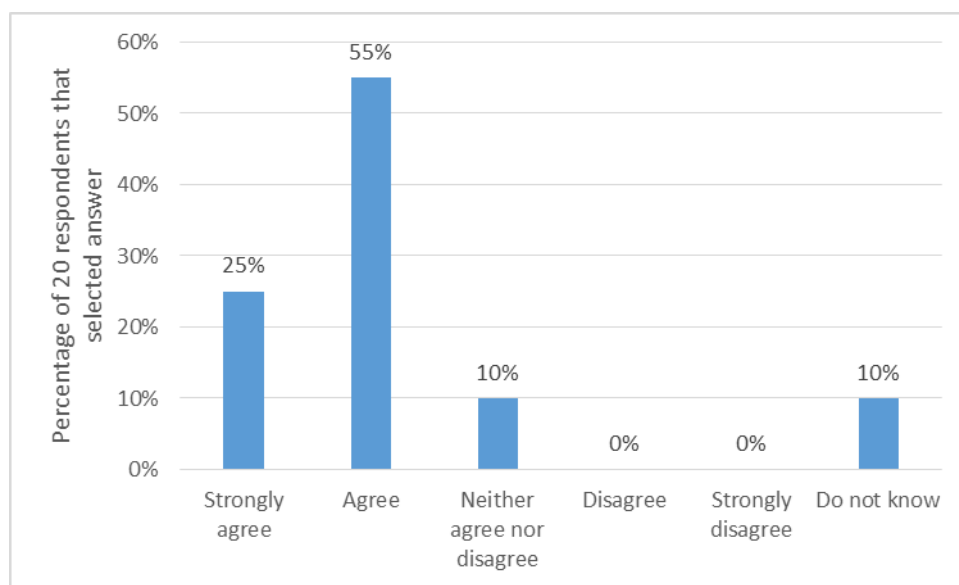
Source: Question 7a) Do you agree that the EEA Communication Framework is relevant and coherent? Valid Responses: 20

The majority of respondents either agreed (55%, 11 responses) or strongly agreed (25%) that the EEA Communication Framework was relevant and coherent; no respondents disagreed as shown in Figure 10.60.

Question 7b) To what extent does EEA/EIONET ensure that environmental information and EEA products reach stakeholders in your country/ at the EU level?

Figure 10.61: Q7b – Stakeholder Receipt of Environmental Information and EEA Products (Member States Respondents)
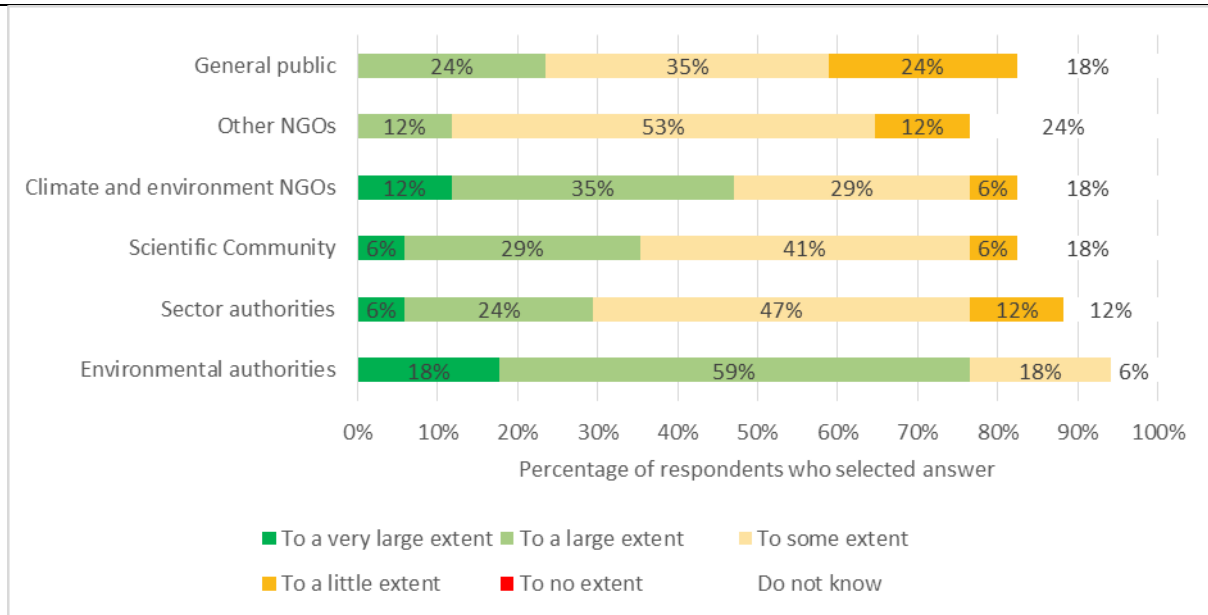
Source: Question 7b) To what extent does EEA/EIONET ensure that environmental information and EEA products reach stakeholders in your country? Valid Responses: 17

Figure 10.61 shows that the highest proportion of Member State respondents selected that the EEA/EIONET ensures that environmental information and EEA products reaches the sector authorities (47%), scientific community (41%), non-climate and environment NGOs (53%) and the general public (35%) in their country to some extent. The two exceptions as stakeholders were climate and environment NGOs and the environmental authorities, where 47% (8 responses) and 77% (13 responses) of Member State respondents selected that the EEA/EIONET ensures that environmental information and EEA products reach these stakeholders in their country to a large or very large extent (Figure 10.61).

Figure 10.62: Q7b – Stakeholder Receipt of Environmental Information and EEA Products (EU Institution Respondents)
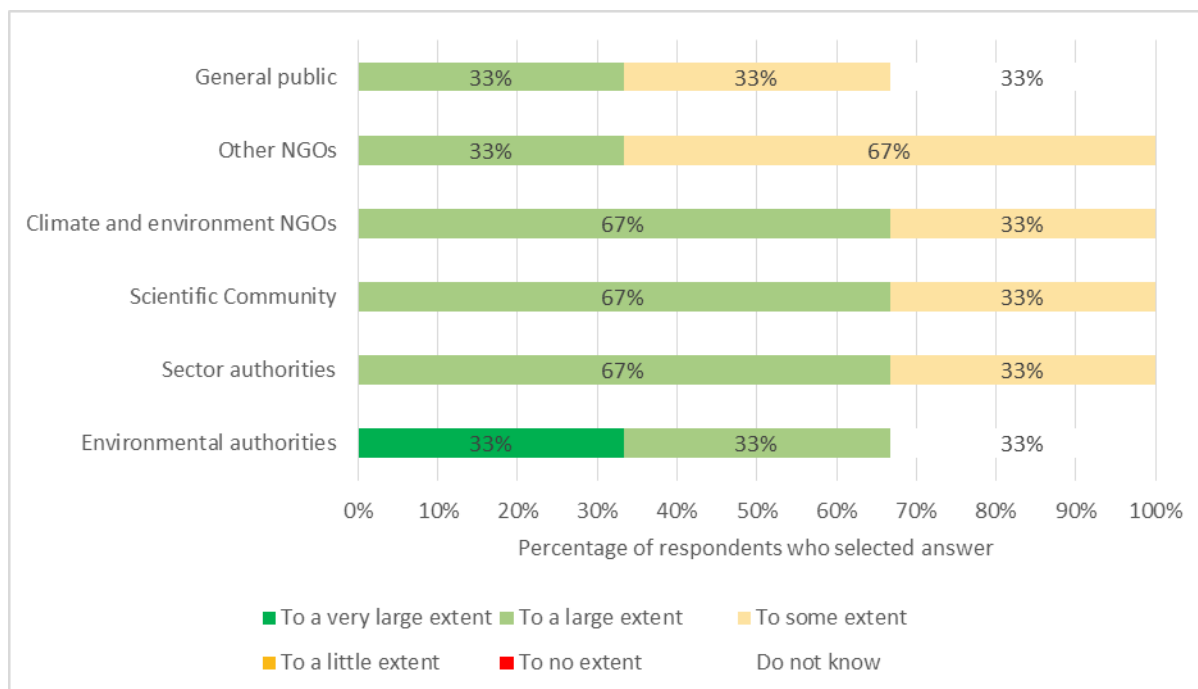
Source: Question 7b) To what extent does EEA/EIONET ensure that environmental information and EEA products reach stakeholders at the EU level? Valid Responses: 3

Figure 10.62 shows that 67% (2 responses) of EU institution respondents selected that the EEA/EIONET ensures that the environmental authorities, sector authorities, scientific community, and climate and environment NGOs receive environmental information and EEA products at the EU level to a large or very large extent. By contrast

only 33% (1 response) of EU institution respondents selected that the EEA/EIONET was ensuring that other NGOs and the general public receive environmental information and EEA products to a large or very large extent.

Question 8 How important is it for development and implementation of policy in your country that EEA performs the following tasks (as per Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation)

Question 8 was designed to investigate how important it is for development and implementation of policy in the respondent's country that the EEA performs various tasks (as per Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation).

Figure 10.63: Q8 – Importance of EEA Performing Tasks for Policy Development and Implementation (Member States Respondents)
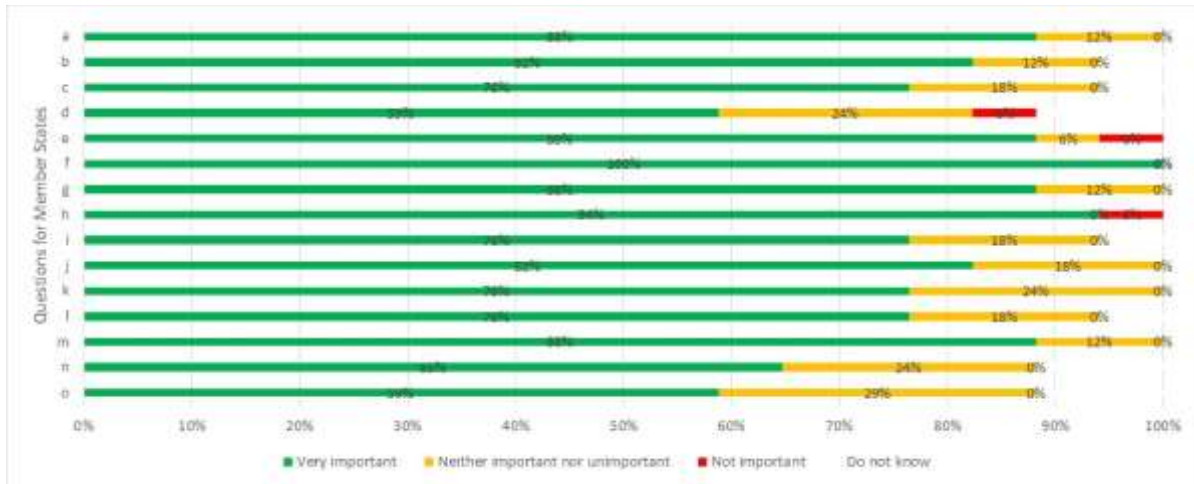
Questions for Member States: How important is it for the development and implementation of policy in your country that the EEA performs the following tasks: a) To establish, in cooperation with the Member States, and coordinate the EIONET; b) To provide objective information necessary for framing and implementing sound and effective environmental policies; c) Monitoring of environmental measures through appropriate support for reporting; d) Advise individual Member States on the development, establishment and expansion of their systems for the monitoring of environmental measures; e) To record, collate and assess data on the state of the environment; f) Help ensure that environmental data at European level are comparable; g) Promote the incorporation of European environmental information into international environment monitoring programmes; h) To publish a report on the state of, trends in and prospects for the environment every five years; i) Stimulate the development and application of environmental forecasting techniques; j) Stimulate the development of methods of assessing the cost of damage to the environment and the costs of environmental preventive, protection and restoration policies; k) Stimulate the exchange of information on the best technologies available for preventing or reducing damage to the environment; l) To cooperate with the bodies and programmes such as the Joint Research Centre, Eurostat, OECD, Council of Europe, International Energy Agency and the United Nations; m) Ensure the broad dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information; n) To support the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies and best practice; o) Assist the Commission in the diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research and in a form which can best assist policy development.

Source: Question 8 How important is it for development and implementation of policy in your country that EEA performs the following tasks (as per Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation). Valid Responses: 17

Figure 10.63 shows that in all cases the majority of Member States respondents felt that it was very important for development and implementation of policy in their country for the EEA to perform the tasks as listed in Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation.

In particular all Member States respondents felt that the EEA was very important in helping to ensure that environmental data at European level are comparable.

Two EEA tasks that a lower percentage of Member States respondents ranked as very important (59% each) were d) advising individual Member States on the development, establishment and expansion of their systems for the

monitoring of environmental measures, and o) assisting the Commission in the diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research and in a form which can best assist policy development as shown in Figure 10.63.

Figure 10.64: Q8 – Importance of EEA Performing Tasks for Policy Development and Implementation (EU Institution Respondents)
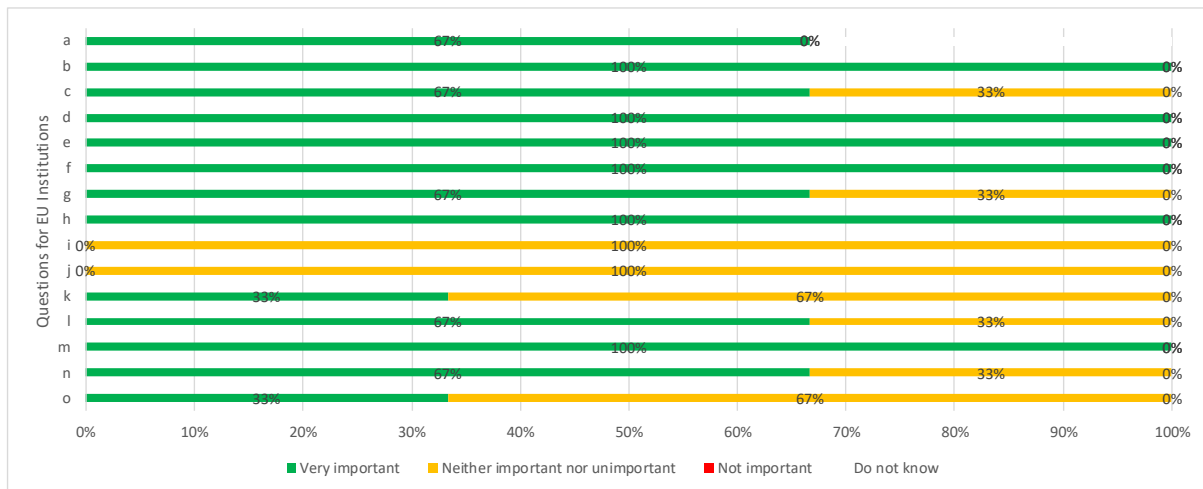
Questions for EU institutions: How important is it for the development and implementation of policy in your country that the EEA performs the following tasks: a) To establish, in cooperation with the Member States, and coordinate the EIONET; b) To provide objective information necessary for framing and implementing sound and effective environmental policies; c) Monitoring of environmental measures through appropriate support for reporting; d) Advise individual Member States on the development, establishment and expansion of their systems for the monitoring of environmental measures; e) To record, collate and assess data on the state of the environment; f) Help ensure that environmental data at European level are comparable; g) Promote the incorporation of European environmental information into international environment monitoring programmes; h) To publish a report on the state of, trends in and prospects for the environment every five years; i) Stimulate the development and application of environmental forecasting techniques; j) Stimulate the development of methods of assessing the cost of damage to the environment and the costs of environmental preventive, protection and restoration policies; k) Stimulate the exchange of information on the best technologies available for preventing or reducing damage to the environment; l) To cooperate with the bodies and programmes such as the Joint Research Centre, Eurostat, OECD, Council of Europe, International Energy Agency and the United Nations; m) Ensure the broad dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information; n) To support the Commission in the process of exchange of information on the development of environmental assessment methodologies and best practice; o) Assist the Commission in the diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research and in a form which can best assist policy development.

Source: Question 8) How important is it for development and implementation of policy in the EU that EEA performs the following tasks (as per Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation). Valid Responses: 3

Figure 10.64 shows that the EU institution respondents' results were more disparate than the Member States respondents. Whilst again the majority of respondents (67 – 100%) agreed that most of the EEA's tasks were very important for policy development and implementation, there were four outliers. 100% of EU institution respondents felt that it was neither important nor unimportant for the EEA to i) stimulate the development and application of environmental forecasting techniques, or j) to stimulate the development of methods of assessing the cost of damage to the environment and the costs of environmental preventive, protection and restoration policies (Figure 10.64).

Similarly the majority (67%) of EU institution respondents felt that it was neither important nor unimportant for the EEA to k) stimulate the exchange of information on the best technologies available for preventing or reducing damage to the environment, or o) to assist the Commission in the diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research and in a form which can best assist policy development (Figure 10.64).

Question 9) Are there any tasks that the EEA and EIONET are not currently undertaking that would contribute significantly to the delivery of national environmental policy?

Respondents from member states were also invited to qualitative remarks on the tasks the EEA and EIONET are not currently undertaking. The following comments were received:

- environmental accounts which are Under Eurostat competence
- favouring shorter reports and new "front ends" for encouraging use of EEA data.
- There is a general recognition that the current EIONET structure and functioning is still accurate.
- Contribute to SDG monitoring

Question 9) Are there any tasks that the EEA and EIONET are not currently undertaking that would contribute significantly to the delivery of EU environment and climate policy?

Respondents from EU Institutions were also invited to qualitative remarks on the tasks the EEA and EIONET are not currently undertaking. The following comments were received:

- Better data exchange; and
- Better integration of sectoral work across environmental topics, e.g. land use and climate mitigation/adaptation

Question 10) Are there any comments that you would like to raise about the tasks and objectives of the EEA?

Respondents were also invited to provide general comments on the tasks and objectives of the EEA. The following comments were provided:

- The EEA is not perceived as a neutral body by many stakeholders. This is a fact and hard to change.
- should keep environmental information at first and not become only an executive body of EC DGs
- Note lack of work on agriculture over this review period.
- More cooperation needed between the EEA and DG RTD, a better use of EU funded projects' results.
- Communicate on the high added value of EEA-EIONET.
- Focus more on assessments & knowledge. Incorporate more energy tasks.
- SOER 2015 was highly usable for nat. env. assessments. Especially synthesis & thematic briefings

Brief Section Analysis

There is a contrast between how the majority of Member State respondents' versus the majority of EU institution respondents' perceive the EEA's contribution to the development and implementation of environment and climate policy. The data from question 6 shows that a higher percentage of EU institution respondents think that the EEA contributes to the development (25% higher; Figure 10.58) and implementation (38% higher; Figure 10.59) of environment and climate policy than Member State respondents.

Reassuringly, 80% (16 responses) of respondents agree or strongly agree that the EEA Communication Framework is relevant and coherent, and no respondents disagree (Figure 10.60).

However, the data from question 7b again shows a contrast between how the majority of Member State respondents versus the majority of EU institution respondents view the extent to which the EEA/EIONET ensures that environmental information and EEA products reach stakeholders in their countries. A higher proportion of EU institution respondents compare to Member State respondents selected that the EEA/EIONET ensures the receipt of these products and information to most stakeholders to a large extent; although the overall trend is a positive one with the majority of both Member State and EU institution respondents agreeing that the EEA/EIONET ensures it at least to some extent (Figure 10.61 and Figure 10.62).

In general, the majority (65% or above; Figure 10.63 and Figure 10.64) of both Member State and EU institution respondents think that it is very important for policy development and implementation that the EEA performs almost all of its tasks as covered in question 8. For Member States the two tasks that had a slightly lower percentage (59%) of respondents that selected 'very important' were to "Advise individual Member States on the development, establishment and expansion of their systems for the monitoring of environmental measures" and "Assist the Commission in the diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research and in a form which can best assist policy development" (Figure 10.63). And for EU institutions the two tasks that 100% of respondents selected it was neither important nor unimportant for the EEA to carry out were to "Stimulate the development and application of environmental forecasting techniques", and to "Stimulate the development of methods of assessing the cost of damage to the environment and the costs of environmental preventive, protection and restoration policies".

10.17.2.6   Perception of the Benefits of the EEA and EIONET

Question 11) Please indicate the extent to which you find that the membership of the EEA and EIONET contributes to the realisation of the following benefits

This section was designed to investigate the benefits created by the EEA and EIONET from the national perspective, as such only Member States MB members answered.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they found that the membership of the EEA and EIONET contributes to the realisation of various benefits.

Figure 10.65: Q11 – Contribution to benefits of EEA and EIONET membership
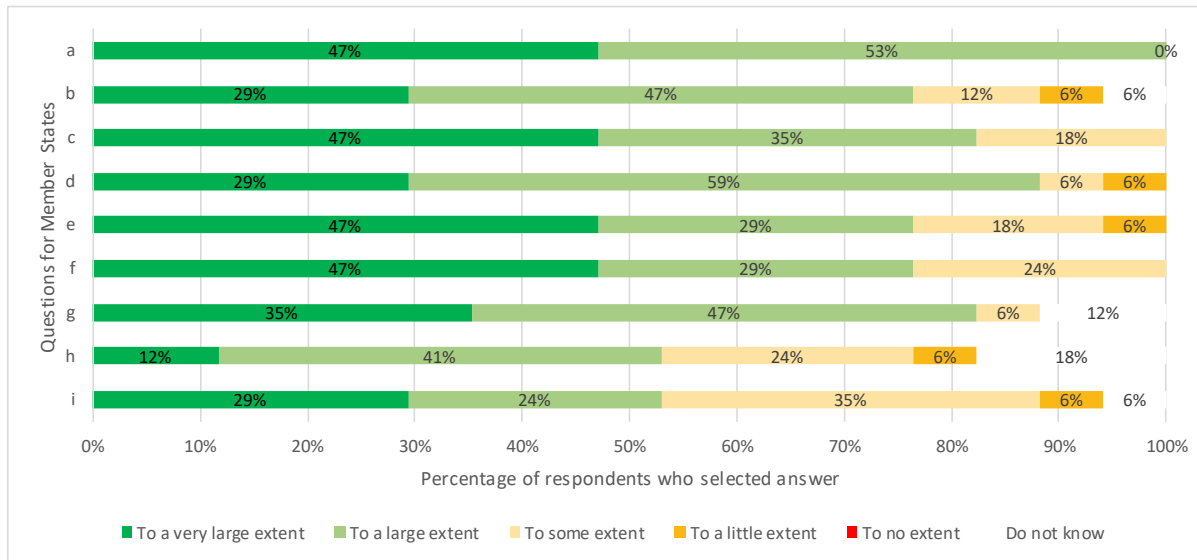
Source: Q11 To what extent does membership of the EEA and EIONET contribute to realisation of the following benefits: a) It is easier to benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries; b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments; c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers; d) It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data; e) It allows to exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries; f) It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting; g) It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation; h) It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation; i) It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies. Valid Responses: 17

Figure 10.65 shows that the majority of Member State respondents feel that membership of the EEA and EIONET contribute to the realisation of all benefits listed to a large or very large extent. In particular 100% of respondents feel that membership of the EEA and EIONET makes it easier to benchmark their country's performance against that of other countries to a very large or large extent.

Two benefits that fewer respondents (53% each) feel that membership of the EEA and EIONET contribute to a very large or large extent to are that h) it reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environment and climate legislation, and i) it reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies.

In the absence of EEA, to what extent could the national institutions provide the same benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries)

Figure 10.66: Q11 – Ability of National Institutions to Provide the Same Benefits in the Absence of the EEA
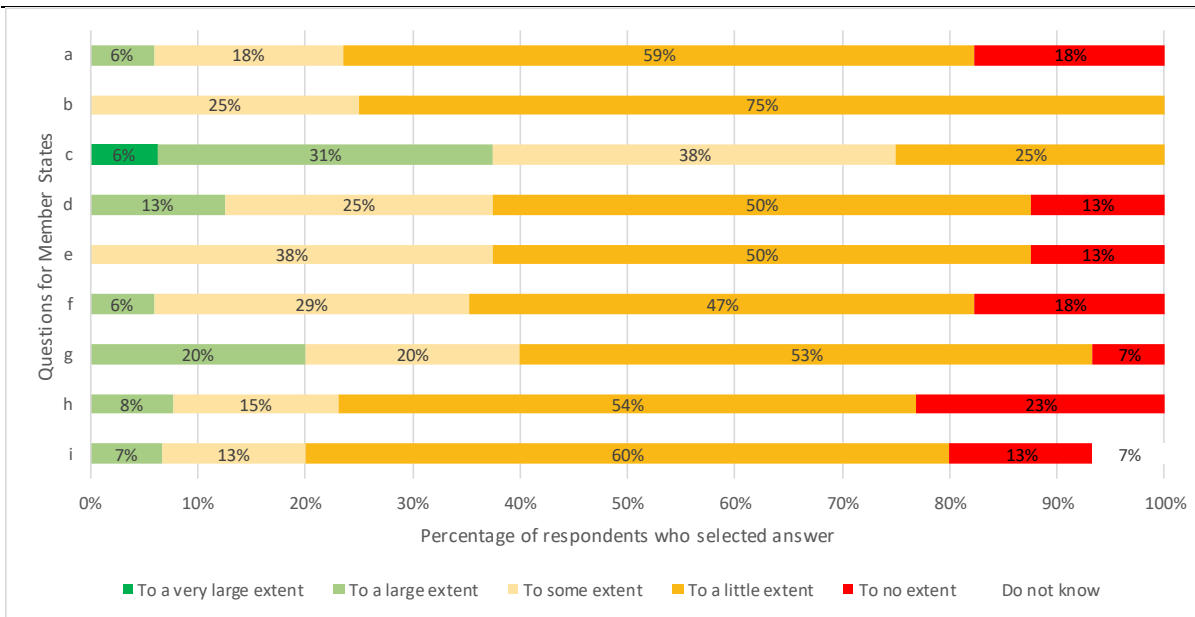
Source: Question 11: *To what extent could national institutions provide the same benefits in the absence of the EEA: a) Benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries; b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments; c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers; d) Development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data; e) Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries; f) Opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting; g) Reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation; h) Reduce burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation; i) Reduce burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies. Valid Responses: a) 17, b) 12 ,c) 16, d) 16, e) 16, f) 17, g) 15, h) 13, i) 15.*

Figure 10.66 shows that the majority (60% or above) of Member State respondents feel that, in the absence of the EEA, national institutions could provide the same benefits (either alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries) to little or no extent, with the exception of c). Only 30% of respondents felt that national institutions could to little or no extent make high quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers, and 35% felt that they could make it available to a very large or large extent in the absence of the EEA.

Question 12: Are there any other benefits of the EEA and EIONET that you consider important?

Respondents were also invited to identify any other benefits of the EEA and EIONET that they considered important. The following comments were received:

- exploring new environmental challenges (early signals) and also new kinds of information;
- Value of international expert networks promoted by EEA is highly recognised;
- In general, benefits of EEA and EIONET exceed costs; and
- improve guidelines for the use of Citizen Science and Big Data.

Brief Section Analysis

Overall the majority (53% or above) of Member State respondents agreed that membership of the EEA and EIONET contributed to the realisation of the benefits as addressed in question 11 to a very large or large extent (Figure 10.65). Furthermore the highest proportion of respondents generally agreed that national institutions could provide the same benefits in the absence of the EEA to only a little extent (Figure 10.66). One clear outlier to this was the ability to provide high quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers, which a higher proportion of respondents felt their national institutions could do to some or a large extent without the EEA (Figure 10.66).

10.17.3 Survey of the National Focal Points (NFPs) and members of the National Reference Centres (NRCs)

10.17.3.1   About the Survey

The support study for the evaluation of the EEA undertook a survey of the members of the National Reference Centres (NRCs) and National Focal Points (NFPs) of the EEA. The main aims of the survey were to:

- gain an understanding across a significant share of NRCs and NFPs of the situation in operational terms with regard to national coordination, frequency of meetings and costs (time spent) associated with NFPs and NRCs performing their roles in EIONET. This is particularly important for the efficiency and cost analysis; and
- gain a semi-quantified overview of the perceptions of NRCs and NFPs in respect to key aspects to be addressed to answer the evaluation questions. In particular relating to extent of objective and task achievement as well as benefits created. In addition, the survey features questions related to the capability of the EIONET in responding to evolving technologies and tasks.

10.17.3.2   Survey Responses

About the Respondents

A total of 200 responses were recorded for this survey out of a total of 1915 potential responses from NRC members. All questions were asked to NRC members (responses from 158 individuals), and all questions except those regarding EIONET Coordination were asked to NFP members (responses from 42 individuals). In Figure 10.67, the distribution of countries represented can be seen. The country with the highest number of responses was Turkey (29 responses), followed by Bulgaria (19), Switzerland (18) and Poland (16). The country with the highest number of respondents relative to the total number of NRC members was Switzerland (67%), followed by Poland (47%), Bulgaria (40%) and Turkey (39%), as shown in Figure 10.68.

Ten countries are represented by only 1 response: Portugal, Lithuania, Latvia, Serbia, Cyprus, Hungary, Malta, Republic of Macedonia, Belgium, and Denmark.

Figure 10.67: Respondents' Locations (200 responses)
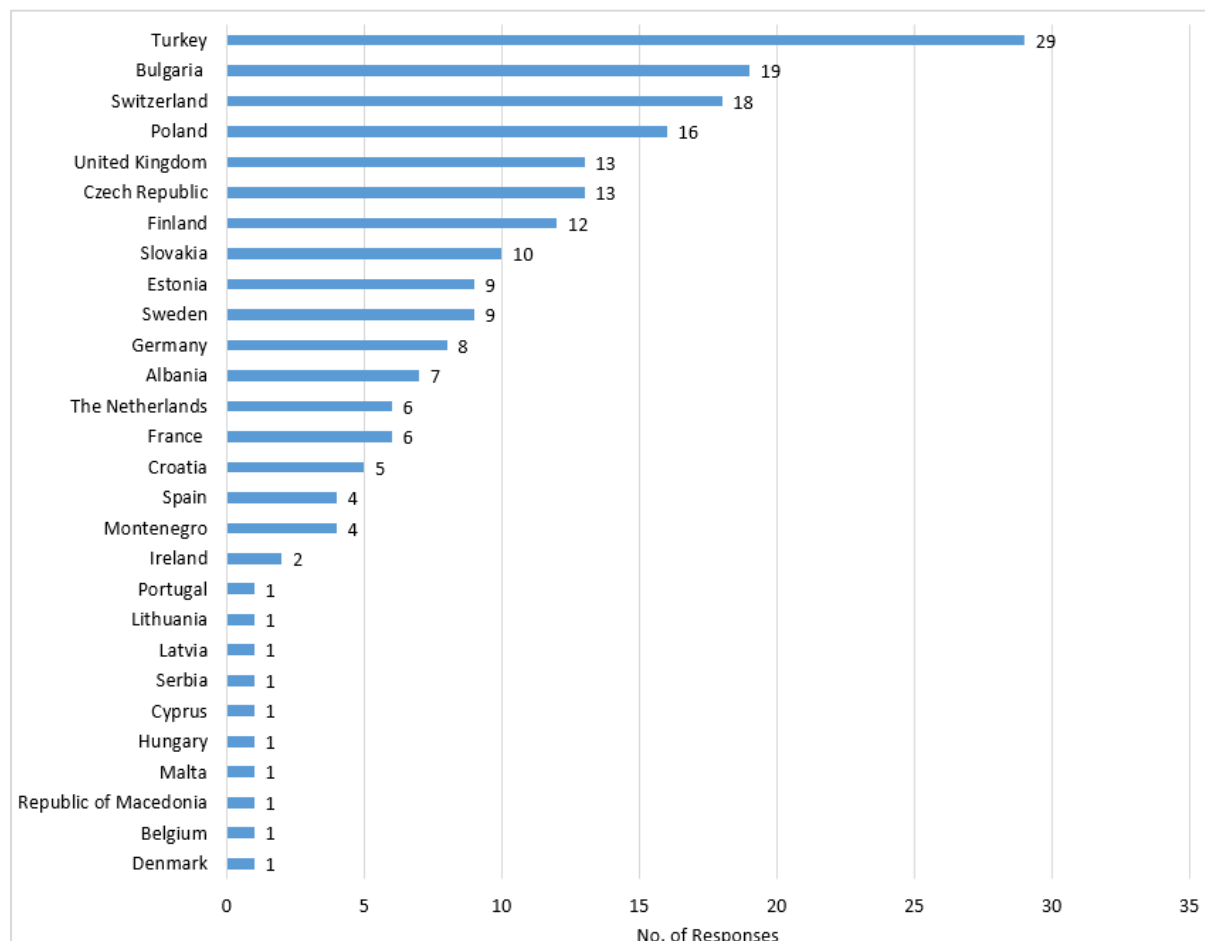
Source: Question: What country are you from? Valid Responses: 200

In total, responses were received from 28 different countries. Six of these 28 countries (Turkey, Switzerland, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, and Republic of Macedonia) are not EU Member States.

Figure 10.68 Percentage Representation of NRC Members from each Country
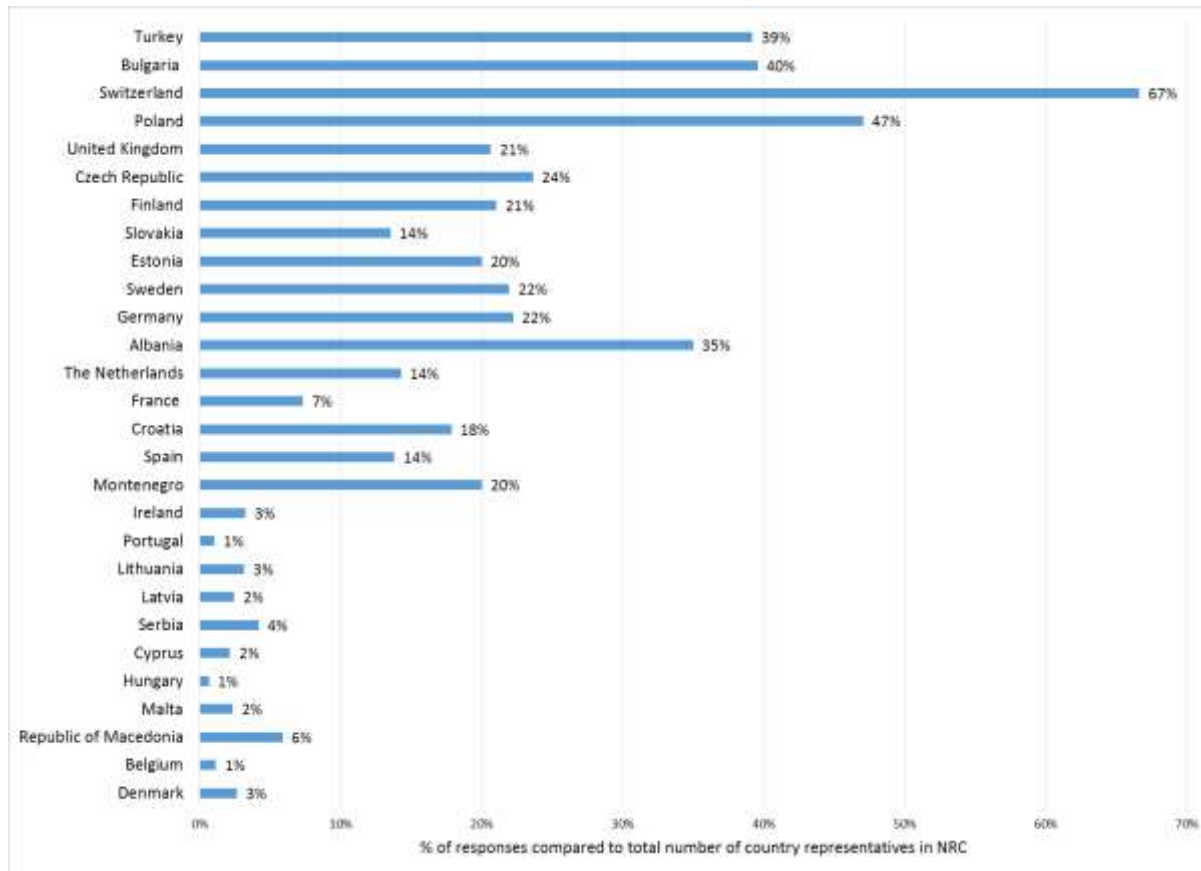
Source: Question: What country are you from? Valid Responses: 200

Figure 10.68 shows that Switzerland had the highest percentage response rate (67%), followed by Poland (47%), Bulgaria (40%) and Turkey (39%). Portugal, Hungary and Belgium all had the lowest percentage of responses at just 1%.

What part of the EIONET group do you belong?

Figure 10.69: Membership of the EIONET group (200 responses)
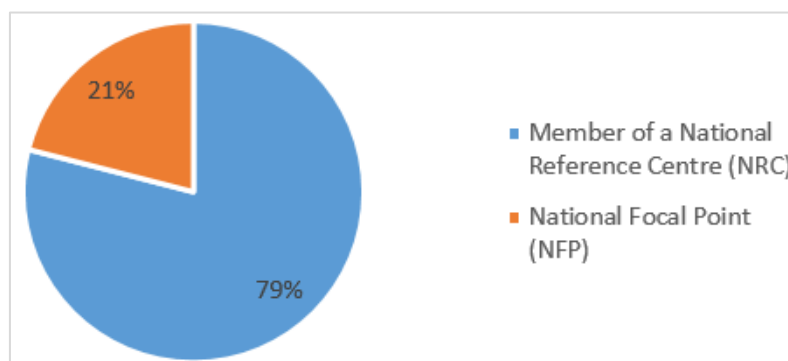
Source: Question: What part of the EIONET group do you belong? Valid Responses: 200

Out of 200 respondents, 158 (79%) are part of a National Reference Centre (NRC) and 42 (21%) are part of a National Focal Point (NFP), as shown in Figure 10.69.

Which part of the NRC are you a member of?

Figure 10.70: Memberships to parts of the NRC
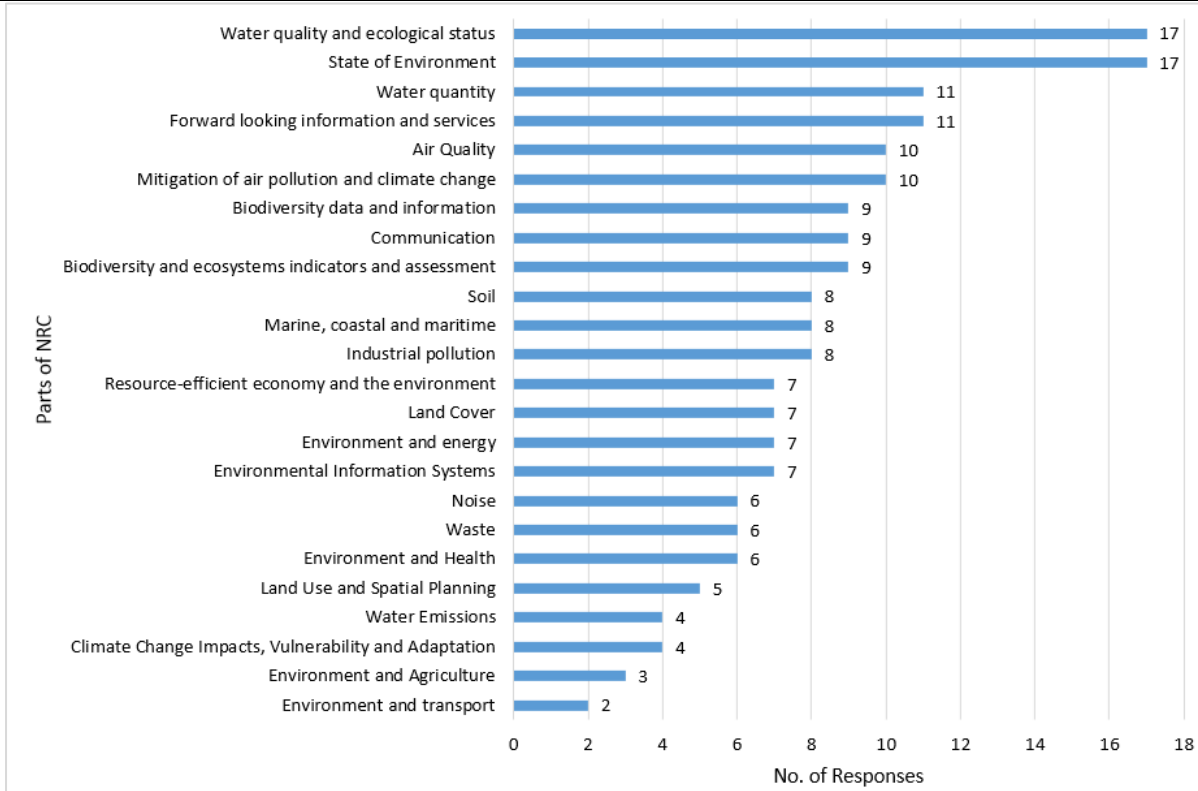
Source: Question: What part of the EIONET group do you belong? Valid Responses: 158 out of 200 re-spondents (NRC members only) were asked to select all that apply (total of 191 responses)

Figure 10.70 shows **Water quality and ecological status** and **State of Environment** to have received the highest level of responses (17 responses), followed by **Water quantity** and **Forward looking information and services** (11). The parts of the NRC represented by the fewest respond-ents are **Environment and transport** (2) and **Environment and Agriculture** (3).

Figure 10.71: Percentage Representation from each part of NRC
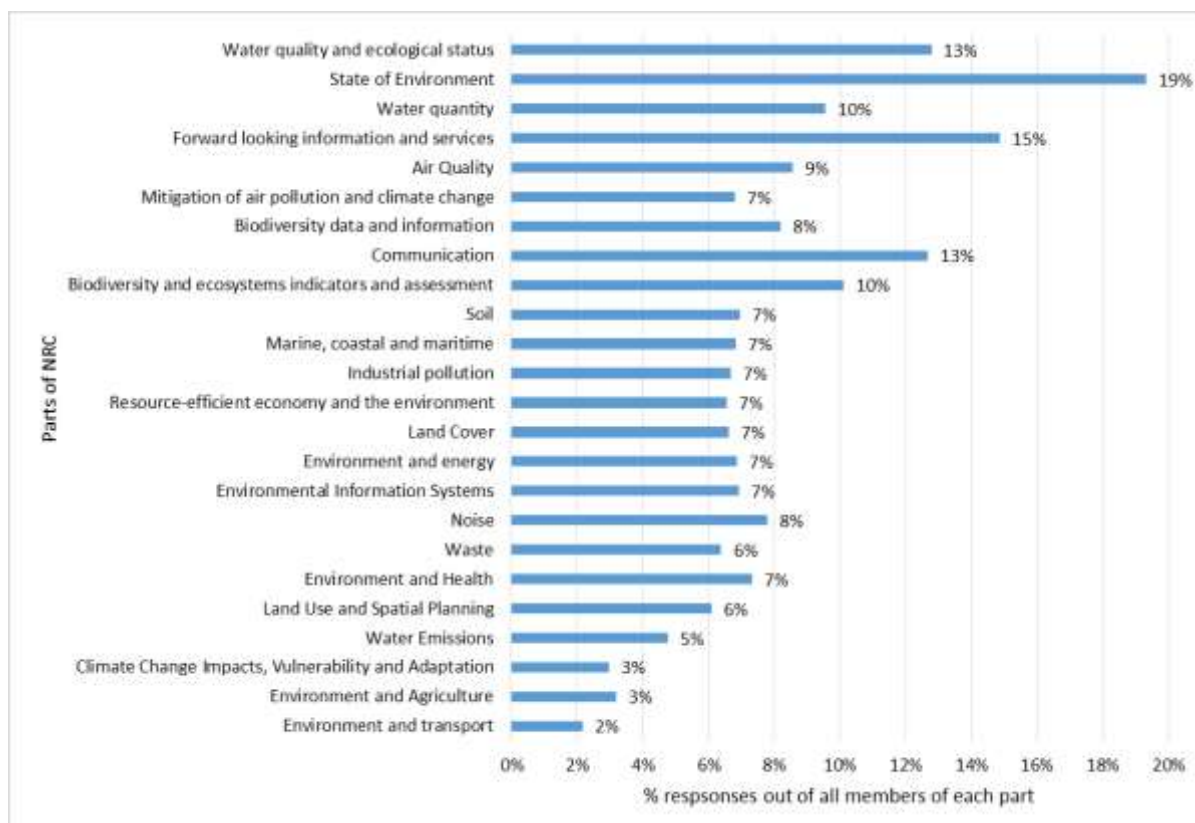
Source: Question: What part of the EIONET group do you belong? Valid Responses: 158 out of 200 respondents (NRC members only) were asked to select all that apply (total of 191 responses)

Figure 10.71 shows that overall there was a low response rate from each NRC group, with the highest percentage of responses coming from **State of Environment** at 19%. The lowest percentage of responses was from **Environment and Transport** at just 2%.

Brief Section Analysis

There is a broad scope of countries represented, 28 in total, but Turkey has noticeably more respondents (29 responses) than the other countries present. Also, it is worth noting that the four countries with the most responses (Turkey, Bulgaria, Switzerland, and Poland) actually represent 41% of all the respondents.

10.17.3.3   Governance of the EEA and EIONET

The available information and structure of EIONET, including ETCs, NRCs and NFPs, was assessed with regards to how appropriate it has been for the network's work during the evaluation period (2012-2016).
Was your role as an EIONET member clear and well-defined during the evaluation period (2012-16)?
Are the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure (EEA, ETCs, NFPs, NRCs, PCPs) clear to you?

Figure 10.72: Clarity of the Different Roles within the EIONET Structure (200 responses)
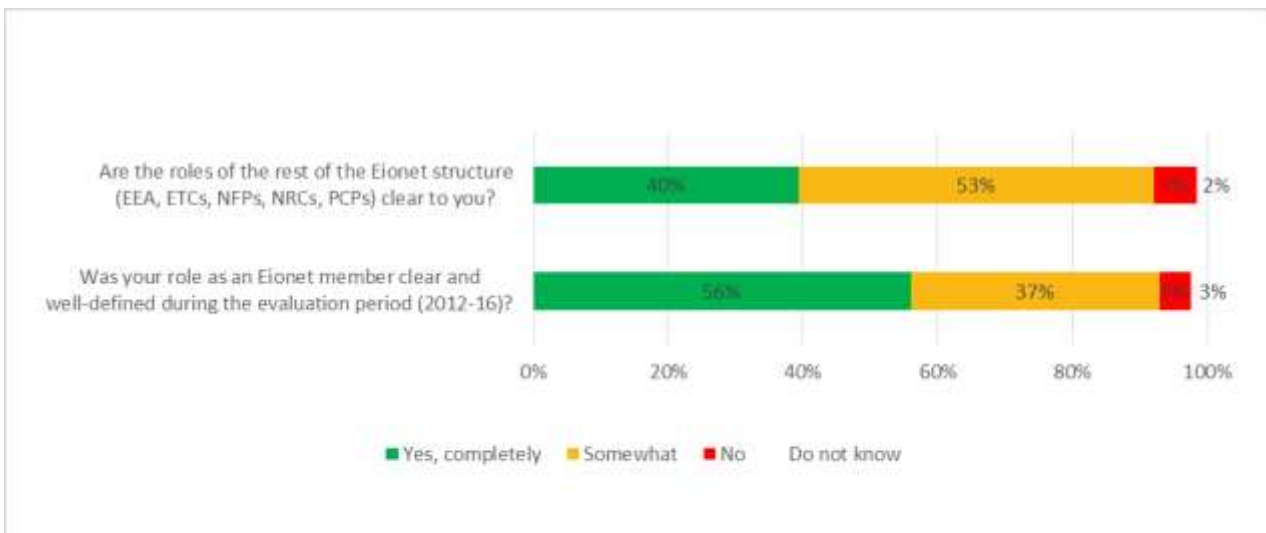
Source: Question: Was your role as an EIONET member clear and well-defined during the evaluation period (2012-16)? And Are the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure (EEA, ETCs, NFPs, NRCs, PCPs) clear to you? Valid Responses: 200

Figure 10.72 shows that very few (less than 10%) of the respondents are unaware or unclear on the structure of the EIONET. The majority of respondents (56%) know their own role clearly but only 40% could say the same about the rest of the EIONET structure.

Figure 10.73: Clarity of the Different Roles within the EIONET Structure to NRC Members (158 responses)
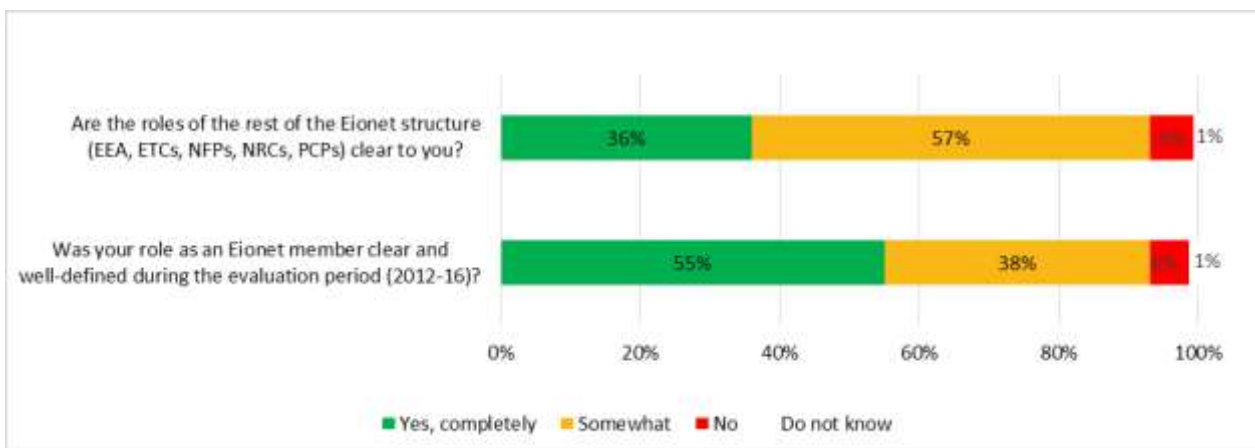
Source: Question: Was your role as an EIONET member clear and well-defined during the evaluation period (2012-16)? And Are the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure (EEA, ETCs, NFPs, NRCs, PCPs) clear to you? Valid Responses: 158

Figure 10.73 shows that only 6% of NRC members were unaware of the EIONET structure or found it unclear. 55% of NRC members felt that their role was clear, but only 36% felt the same about the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure.

Figure 10.74: Clarity of the Different Roles within the EIONET Structure to NFP Members (42 responses)
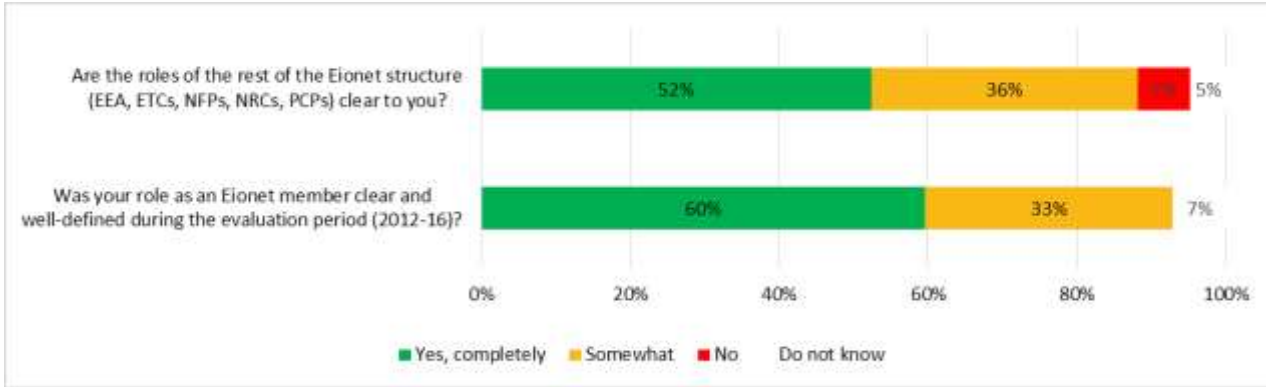
Source: Question: Was your role as an EIONET member clear and well-defined during the evaluation period (2012-16)? And Are the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure (EEA, ETCs, NFPs, NRCs, PCPs) clear to you? Valid Responses: 42

Figure 10.74 shows that less than 10% of NFP members were unaware of the EIONET structure or found it unclear. 60% of NFP members felt that their role was clear, and 52% also felt that the roles of the rest of the EIONET structure were clear to them.

How useful have the following tools and systems been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member?

Figure 10.75: Usefulness of Tools and Systems (200 responses)
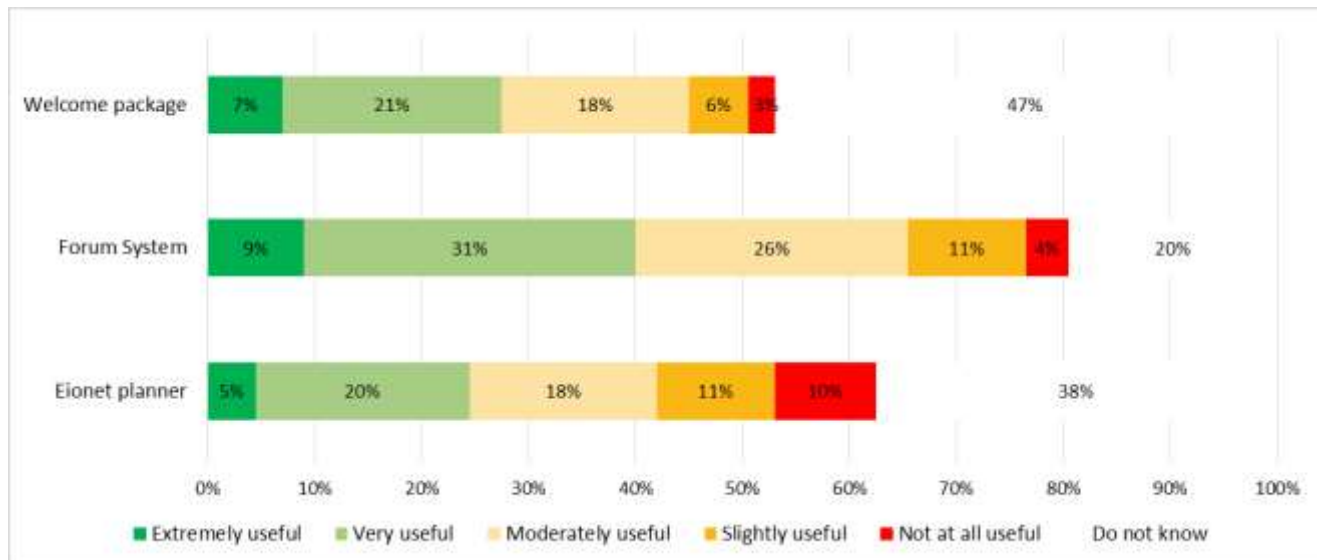
Source: Question: How useful have the following tools and systems been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member? Valid Responses: 200

Almost half of the respondents (47%) did not know if the **Welcome Package** is useful, shown in Figure 10.75. However, 40% of the respondents find the **Forum System** to be 'very' or 'extremely useful' for their work. A quarter of the respondents think the same about the **EIONET planner**, though a larger portion (38%) do not know if the planner is useful or not.

Figure 10.76: Usefulness of Tools and Systems to NRC Members (158 responses)
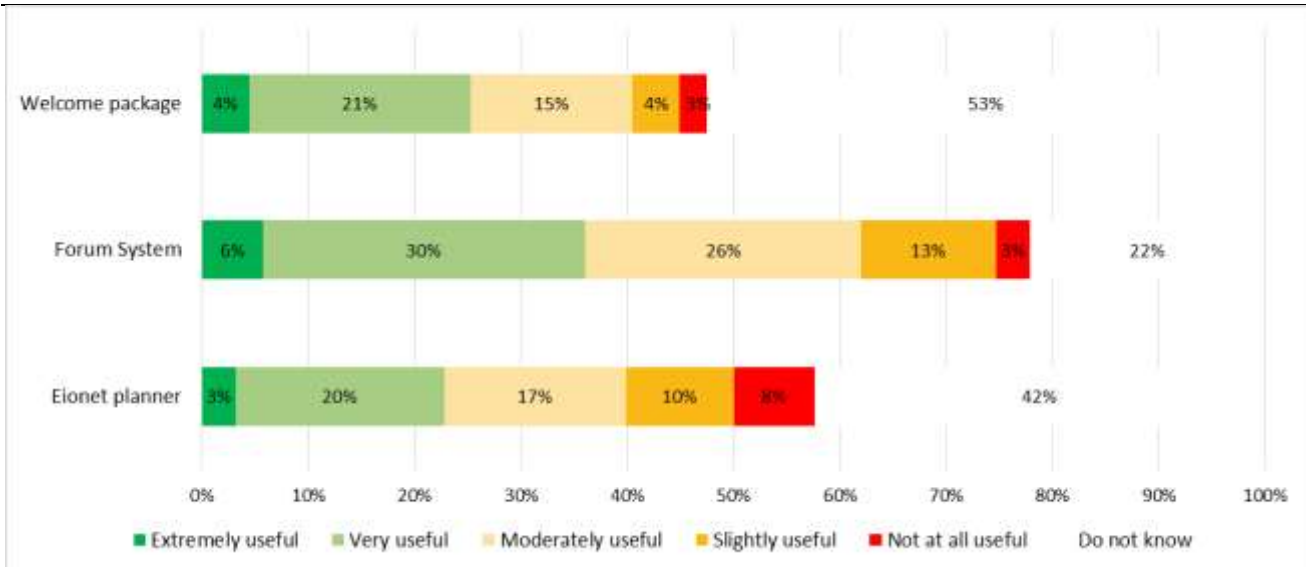
Source: Question: How useful have the following tools and systems been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member? Valid Responses: 158

Figure 10.76 shows that 53% of NRC members did not know if the **Welcome Package** was useful, although 25% found it to be 'very' or 'extremely' useful. 75% of NRC members found the **Forum System** to be useful to some degree. 50% of NRC members found the **EIONET planner** to be useful to some degree, however 42% did not know whether they found it useful.

Figure 10.77: Usefulness of Tools and Systems to NFP Members (42 responses)
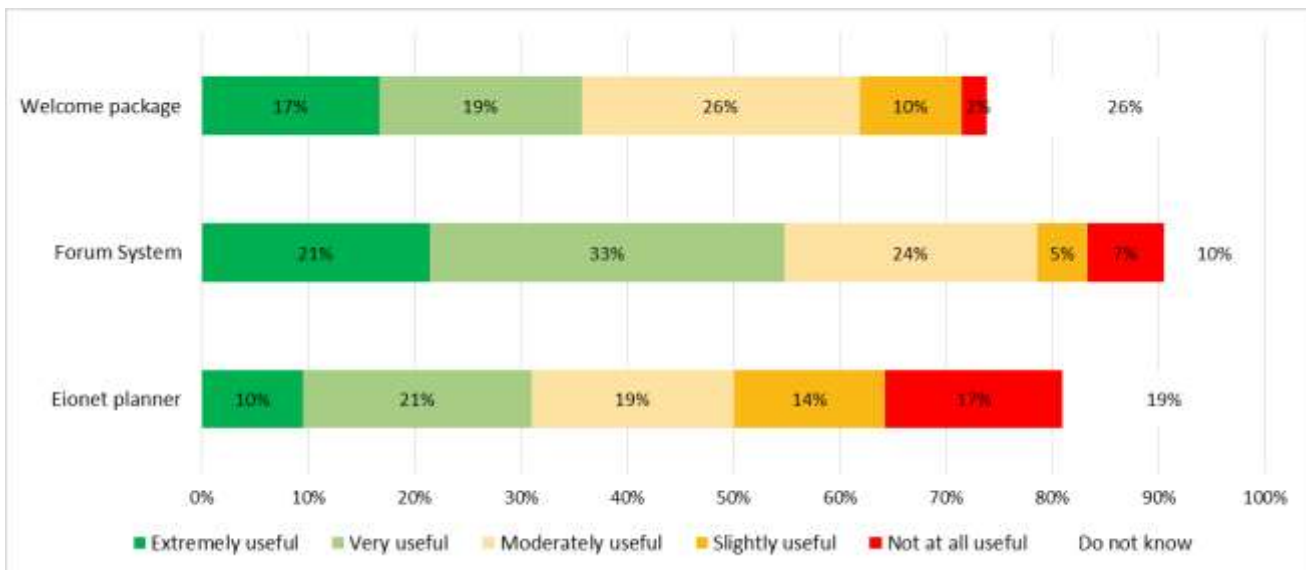
Source: Question: How useful have the following tools and systems been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member? Valid Responses: 42

Figure 10.77 shows that 72% of NFP members found the **Welcome Package** useful to some degree, whilst 83% found the **Forum System** useful to some degree. 64% of NFP members found the **EIONET planner** useful to some degree, however 17% did not find it useful at all.

How useful have the meetings organised by the EEA been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member?

Table 10.83: Usefulness of Meetings (200 responses)

How useful have the meetings organised by the EEA been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member?	Meeting Types	
	NFP	NRC
Extremely useful	26%	21%

Very useful	48%	45%
Moderately useful	12%	19%
Slightly useful	5%	1%
Not at all useful	2%	1%
Do not know	7%	13%
Number of Valid Responses	**42**	**158**

Source: Question: How useful have the meetings organised by the EEA been for facilitating your work as an EIONET member? Valid Responses: 200

The meetings organised by the EEA are considered to be **useful** with over a third of the respondents (for both NRC and NFP members) finding their meetings very or extremely useful. 2% or less found their relevant meetings not at all useful, as seen in Table 10.83.

What could the EEA have done to further facilitate your work as an EIONET member?

Respondents were also invited to provide brief qualitative remarks on what the EEA could have done to further facilitate their work as an EIONET member. The following remarks were received:

- In the early stage (2012/2013) the NFP meetings were often structured in the way that only the highly dedicated NFPs (well-defined roles in their countries, Belgium, Austria, Germany, UK, Luxemburg etc), could successfully follow and participate in discussions. It gradually changed to better from 20
- The phasing-out of the EIONET planner has been the main problem I have encountered with the EEA over the period. With tasks not appearing in a centralised planning any more, I have to capture them myself and I guess most NFPs also do this, resulting in huge duplication of work.
- I did not receive anything like a welcome package. That could have been useful. Also never heard of the EIONET planner. What is that?
- Communication nrc work could be improved with some capacity building opportunities such as thematic workshops. We have this practice during our NRC meetings but time dedicated to it is very limited so more detailed training on... data presentations possibilities would be very good to have.
- my impression is, that EEA uses NRC SoE mainly for confirmation of made decisions; I often missed a earnest interest in exchange
- Please make the activities of an NRC more clear. What is expected of an NRC? But also what is expected of an NFP in relation to an NRC?
- I do believe we have a good working relation and solving the problems in joint effort when needed.
- Better planning of EIONET meetings so there is less presentation and more opportunity for interaction between participants. Planning more in advance would help participants to consult better with colleagues, and to therefore bring appropriate information to the meetings.
- Circulated papers well in advance of meeting to allow internal MS discussions. Provided more time in meetings for discussion rather than "one-way" presentations. Met their own timetables for the establishment of projects (an admin rather than thematic issue).
- Slightly less formal communication would be great.
- Well, maybe distribute the minutes a bit earlier after NRC meetings.
- I am satisfied with their performance in general.
- Perhaps EEA could have instructed the NFPs to gather their national EIONET-team say once a year or so. It would have helped my job at least. Welcome package sounds like a useful thing but I have no idea what it means.
- The EEA really needed to make some effort to activate NRC Agri. No meeting during the current MAWP (last in Sep13 under the old guise as Agri-forests). Even the interest group name has not been updated. No emails directly targeting the group and no actual work directed to the group.
- continue to organize EIONET meetings in order to present results of activities/projects/initiatives from selected countries as well as to inform on newest activities in EC and EEA
- No significant issues.
- Not a com expert so sometimes meeting content is interesting but not as relevant or applicable for me. I think there is more to be done to integrate the NRC com with other network members. There is the potential for them to offer more support to NFPs in my view. The EEA could encourage this.
- Long term planning of NRC meetings
- More could be done to keep the NRC alive between SOERs. Limited interaction since soer15 was published. Recently a couple of webinars but a meeting would have been beneficial (physical meetings 12,13,14 then not in 15 and 16) to miss 1 year is ok but not 2
- The facilitation should mainly come from my own institution: it should define its own roles and those of the participating individuals in the network. EEA and the national focal point can help in this and has already done so by providing briefings on EEA goals and function.

- Sometimes we need more detailed information on how to process and publicize certain data and how to evaluate them in manner of integrated environmental assessment. I hope EEA will find the way to organize some concrete education dedicated for sharing the knowledge on methodologies....
- The EEA work is extremely well organised both from strategical and logistical point of view. The only think that can be revised, by the position of an NRC`s cooperating country, is to have a much more comprehensive approach of the EIONET discussions which reflects also the West Balkan`s needs.
- EEA has helped me as my NRC after my assignment to NRC resource efficiencies and environment, at first helped to log in to have the right to access the EIONET Plateform. Albania as a candidate country for the European Union's has voluntary reporting on EEA's request.
- Recently they started to do webinars and to produce videos how to deliver the data. This is very helpful.
- The navigation of the EIONET website is not very user friendly. Hopefully, the helpdesk is always very helpful.
- I propose that technical workshop is very helpful for reporting, fulfilling tables and other issues on reporting when the tables are new ones for example.
- Reports and communication are very useful. I read all of the reports that are send by EEA. Thank you very much for the reports and documentaries. I am waiting for the reports and documentaries you will send in the future.
- We need more technical training for preparing roles for e-reporting , and other issues.
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET, relations with EC
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 Documents for the meetings early enough before the meeting
  4 Allow to address an issue / comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (always accept e-mails)
- It should better organize its meetings (NRC- LUSP), with invitations in advance, precise goals and better facilitating of meetings.
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET, relations with EC
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 Documents for the meetings early enough before the meeting
  4 Allow to address an issue / comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (always accept e-mails)
- EEA provides a good service to EIONET members. It is difficult to see how much more they could do to provide further assistance. Meeting presentations being provided in advance, rather than post-meetings, would provide members with an opportunity to prepare questions in advance.
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET, relations with EC
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 Documents for the meetings early enough before the meeting
  4 Allow to address an issue and comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (always accept e-mails)
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA, JRC and EIONET
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 All correspondence to all NRCs Soil and NFPs"
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET, relations with EC
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 Documents for the meetings early enough before the meeting
  4 Allow to address an issue and comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (always accept e-mails)"
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET, relations with EC
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 Documents for the meetings early enough before the meeting
  4 Allow to address an issue and comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (always accept e-mails)
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 Documents for the meetings and early enough before the meeting
  4 Allow to address an issue and comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (always accept e-mails)
- Continue in present work.
- The reporting tools should be user friendly. On the other hand, these tools (or the programmes whatever you say) shouldn't be replaced a new one. The current tools can be modified slightly.
- arrange webinars, EIONET-Soil haven't used them
- Provide:
  - more interconnections between EIONET members and share of EEA knowledge,
  - clear vision of development and role of EEA i EIONET,
  - strict EEA work programme for each year, for appropriate prepare of human resources,
  - simple form of communication (without complicated questionnaires).
- I am not sure if I received a ""welcome package"" - info material. Our NFP explained my tasks to me and so I was able to perfectly fulfil all my tasks.

- I have not yet been to a NRC meeting. I am only working as NRC for 1 year now.
- more communication
- Personally I have had problems with the reporting data portal and many times it was necessary an IT support to find the problem or to fix them, I suggest an IT training for some reporting tools or on line support.
- Provide a better and more user friendly platform/forum system.
- Soruların soruların cevaplarını metin olarak değilde video kaydı yapılarak cevaplandırılması daha doğru olabilir. Translated to: It may be more accurate to answer the questions by video recording, not as text.
- newsletter about progress
- More use of task and finish groups made up of NRCs to ensure dialogue and development in between meetings.
- Environment and Health (EH) issues are closely linked to other thematic areas. It would be very helpful if EEA contacts NRCs EH not only for reviewing "pure" EH-reports but also for EEA-reports containing chapters on health impact, e.g. in reports on air quality or climate. Or is this NFP-duty?
- 1. EEA should show a clear vision of tasks and functions of EEA and EIONET.
  2. EEA should prepare a concrete working programme with tasks for each year to facilitate better time and resource planning.
  3. Using easy communication means, i.e. e-mails, would be useful.
- The EEA organised NRC meetings help keep NRCs up to date with developments. However, they would benefit from clearer aims/objectives with papers provided further in advance to ensure the right people are in the room. Also there is a need to consider different ways of hosting meetings, e.g. webinars
- Have a working EIONET planner/calendar with all EIONET events and consultations in one single document/tool.
- regulate the EIONET much more user friendly
- Clear role of the EEA & EIONET, relations with EC, with the rest of national EIONET working for free and with no-EIONET who cannot do CLC only because of not being NRC
- Funding by EEA the work of all NFPs and NRCs, not only the one of a few national NRC LC that contracted for CLC
- Early documents!
- No further wishes. This is a low cost access to a fantastic network of experts, well connected through the EEA staff.
- Good planning and preparation of NFP/EIONET and EIONET workshops should be maintain as it is now and secure resources from EEA side.
- 1 Clear profile and tasks of NRC EIS, clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET, not putting INSPIRE tasks on NRC instead of established process EC-NCPINSPIRE&MIG
  2 Any activities during the year, work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 Docs for meetings (nothing!) and early before
- 1 Clear vision of the role of the EEA and EIONET
  2 Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  3 More EEA communication experiences shared with us
  4 Allow to address an issue and comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (eg always accept e-mails)
- Clear role of the EEA and EIONET
  Work programme for EIONET with tasks
  A meeting in the EEA minimum 1 a year
  Comments possible in the most easy & efficient way for us - accept e-mails, restore access to platforms with archive SOER comments
  EEA sharing how to do integrated assessments, sectoral as
- Clear vision of the role of the EEA & EIONET & vs EC-WGs processes
  Work programme for EIONET with concrete tasks
  Documents for the meetings early enough before
  EEA allowing to address an issue and comment in a way that is the most easy & efficient for us (eg always accept e-mails)
  EP updated
- The program (software) for automatic check of the data (before the experts checking) could be improved.
- Better coordination and continuous Information about projects should be provided.
- As a new member, I am not able to give a relevant evaluation yet.
- One-page overview pages with links to the relevant resources would help EIONET-members that only periodically access the EIONET-resources.
- Nothing comes to mind right now.
- More timely deliver of meeting documents; better co-ordination of report consultations too many together in summer; longer between NFP and MB to allow for briefing; more discussion in WG and breakouts less time listening to plenary talks Forum has potential but needs to standardised across IGs
- Work to more realistic timescales. Not leave everything to the last minute, allowing only a very short (often unrealistic) time frame to respond
- To allow as much time as possible to feed into consultations, ie enough time to gather input from a wide number of specialists in order to get the best results & steer specific topics

- Development of EIONET forum and Reportnet could have been put forward, but this is of course depending on the budget granted by the commission.
- Workshops and study visits can be arranged to share applications and experiences of each country's urban planning system.
- better transparency, open communication, follow code of conduct
- Clarification for question 1: I started as NFP from May 2017, that's why I'm not defining the role for years 2012-16 and still learning the EIONET structure. However, the structure will come more clear with real everyday work.
- Training days for new NFPs could be useful.
- the communication in FLIS was sometimes sort of confusing and not well structured
- It would be more useful to be informed about activities of EIONET in advance in effort to better studying of submitted documents and prepare adequate response in the time.
- I am satisfied
- Maybe a newer and more advanced EIONET forum and raportnet would improve my experience
- EEA work on Communication is very good. We could be even better at co-planning media outreach together as a network to get even higher national outreach.
- -clearer definition of task for EIONET members.
  - always clarify links to the overall ""big picture"" / planning / conceptual framework
  -maybe work more incremental with prototyping (worked very well in NRC EIS, when we tested linked data)
- Better help desk service.
- Noise group work is excellent but the environmental health group must get again more active
- Case studies and practices could be arranged within the agenda of the meetings.
- - provide on a regular basis an overview of upcoming EIONET consultations and meetings
  - finalise the so-called code of conduct (set of soft rules clarifying the way we work together)
  - clarify the roles of NRCs versus EC working groups

Brief Section Analysis

The majority of respondents know, at least to some extent, the scope and definition of the roles within the EIONET. However, 20-47% of respondents do not know the usefulness of the tools and systems, suggesting they may not be aware of the existence of these facilities. Overall, the meetings organised by the EEA are well-received but a wide range of qualitative remarks were made to help improve the service provided by the EEA.

10.17.3.4   EIONET Coordination

This section of the survey was only asked to NRC members and *not* NFP members, as all the questions relate to the NRCs' experience of coordinating with the NFPs and the services they provide.

How satisfied are you with the coordination provided by your NFP?
In Table 10.84, the majority of NRC respondents (82%) are shown to be slightly or very satisfied with the coordination provided by their NFP.

Table 10.84: Satisfaction with NFP Coordination (158 responses)

How satisfied are you with the coordination provided by your NFP?	Total (#)	%
Very Satisfied	92	58%
Slightly satisfied	38	24%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17	11%
Slightly dissatisfied	5	3%
Very dissatisfied	1	1%
Do not know	5	3%

Source: Question: How satisfied are you with the coordination provided by your NFP? Valid Responses: 158 (NRC only)

Out of all of the respondents who are NRC members (158 respondents), 65% meet with the NFP in their country **more than once a year**. Although 4% have **never** met with the NFP in their country (see Table 10.85).

How frequently have you met with the NFP in your country (including audio/video conferences, webinars)?

Table 10.85: Frequency of Meetings with NFP in your Country (158 responses)

How frequently have you met with the NFP in your country (including audio/video conferences, webinars)?	Total (#)	%
More than once per year	102	65%
Once per year	34	22%
Less than once per year	13	8%
Never	7	4%
Do not know	2	1%

Source: Question: How frequently have you met with the NFP in your country (including audio/video conferences, webinars)? Valid Responses: 158 (NRC only)

Aside from meetings (including audio/video conferences and webinars), other means of communication, such as regular emails and shared infrastructure, were assessed in Table 10.86.

Have you communicated with the NFP by other means?

Table 10.86: Means of Communication with the NFP (158 responses)

Have you communicated with the NFP by other means? (Select all that apply)	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Regular emails	62%	85%
Shared infrastructure	18%	25%
Other...	17%	23%
No	3%	4%
Do not know	0%	0%

Source: Question: Have you communicated with the NFP by other means? Select all that apply. Valid Responses: 158 (NRC only)

85% of the NRC respondents said they use **regular emails** to communicate with the NFP (which corresponds to 62% of all the responses given to this question). A quarter of the respondents use **shared infrastructure** as a means of communication with the NFP.

Are there meetings, including audio/video conferences, webinars, which cover the whole national network arranged by the NFP?

Are there meetings, including audio/video conferences, webinars, which cover part of the national network arranged by the NFP?

The NFP can also organise meetings covering the national network. While some of these meetings may cover the whole network, others may only involve certain parts of the national network. Respondents from the NRC were asked about the frequency of these meetings dependent on whether the national network was wholly or partially covered in Table 10.87.

Table 10.87: Frequency of Meetings covering the National Network arranged by the NFP (149 responses)

Are there meetings, including audio/video conferences, webinars, which cover the national network arranged by the NFP?		
Frequency	**Whole Network (%)**	**Part of Network (%)**
Regular meetings	30%	11%

When a specific need appears	42%	66%
Randomly	9%	12%
Never	19%	11%

Source: Question: Are there meetings, including audio/video conferences, webinars, which cover the national network arranged by the NFP? Valid Responses: 149 (NRC only who have communicated with their NFP)

The majority of respondents agree that, whether covering **part of the network** (66%) or the **whole network** (42%), the appearance of a specific need determines when there is a meeting. Though it is thought by 30% of the respondents that **regular meetings** for the whole network do occur, whilst only 11% think this true for meetings covering only part of the network.

Brief Section Analysis

Overall, the responses to NFP coordination is positive. The respondents who are NRC members tend to be satisfied with coordination, with most having frequent meetings and regular correspondence via emails. The majority also agree that meetings regarding the national network (wholly or partially) happen either regularly or when needed; only a third or less think these meetings are random or non-existent.

10.17.3.5   External Coordination

In parallel to the NRCs, Member State representatives participate in committees and working groups related to environment and climate reporting, organised by DG Environment and DG Climate Action of the European Commission. This section looks at the coordination between these bodies in each of the respondents' countries.

Do you know who your country's representatives are to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work?

Table 10.88: Knowledge of Committee/Group Representatives (200 responses)

Do you know who your country's representatives are to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work?	NRC		NFP	
	Total	**%**	**Total**	**%**
Yes	72	46%	20	48%
Yes, I am the representative in these groups	13	8%	2	5%
No	36	23%	9	21%
Not relevant: no committees or working groups are organised by the European Commission in my field	7	4%	3	7%
Not relevant: My country does not participate in such groups	3	2%	2	5%
Do not know	27	17%	6	14%

Source: Question: Do you know who your country's representatives are to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work? Valid Responses: 200

Just under half of both NRC members (46%) and NFP members (48%) **know their country's representatives**, although 6% of NRC members and 12% of NFP members responded that it was not relevant to them, as shown in Table 10.88.

How frequently have you communicated with your country's representatives to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work?

Table 10.89: Frequency of Communication with Representatives

	NRC	NFP

How frequently have you communicated with your country's representatives to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work?	Total	%	Total	%
More than once per year	54	75%	14	70%
Once per year	8	11%	4	20%
Less than once per year	5	7%	2	10%
Never	3	4%	0	0%
Not relevant: no committees or working groups are organised by the European Commission in my field	1	1%	0	0%
Do not know	1	1%	0	0%
Non-response	86	54%	22	52%

Source: Question: How frequently have you communicated with your country's representatives to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work? Valid Responses: 92 (only applicable to those that selected 'Yes' to 'Do you know who your country's representatives are to committees and working groups organised by the European Commission in your field of work?'

The respondents who answered '**yes**' in Table 10.88 (92 responses, 46% of all 200 responses) were asked how frequently they were in contact with these representatives and the results are shown in Table 10.89.

The majority of NRC (75%) and NFP (70%) responses indicate that they communicate with these representatives **more than once a year**, while 11% and 20% respectively say they communicate **annually** with their representatives.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

   a) ***The EEA has sought to develop synergies with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States***
   b) ***In its work on assessments and knowledge generation, the EEA has coordinated effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States***
   c) ***The EEA facilitated effective data gathering***
   d) ***The EEA facilitated integrated assessment***
   e) ***The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures facilitated an efficient work flow for data and reporting to the EEA?***
   f) ***The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures ensured that EEA/EIONET data is objective and reliable***

With regards to external coordination carried out by the EEA, a series of statements were provided and the extent to which respondents agreed was recorded in Figure 10.78.

Figure 10.78: Extent of Agreement with Statements regarding the EEA (200 responses)

Source: To what extent do you agree with the following statements? The statements to which the letters correspond: a) The EEA has sought to develop synergies with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States; b) In its work on assessments and knowledge generation, the EEA has coordinated effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States; c) The EEA facilitated effective data gathering; d) The EEA facilitated integrated assessment; e) The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures facilitated an efficient work flow for data and reporting to the EEA; f) The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures ensured that EEA/EIONET data is objective and reliable. Valid Responses: 200

To a large or very large extent, most respondents agree the EEA has **sought to develop synergy** (53%) and has **coordinated effectively** (52%) with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States.

64% of respondents agree to a large or very large extent that **the EEA facilitates effective data gathering** and 55% agree to the same extent in regards to **the EEA facilitating integrated assessment.**

Less than half (49%) agree (to a large or very large extent) that **quality assurance and quality control processes facilitates an efficient work flow for data and reporting**.

However, more of the respondents (53%) agree to this extent that these **processes ensure that EEA/EIONET data is objective and reliable.**

There is a sizable portion of the respondents who are unaware of their country's representatives for the committees and working groups (17%, Table 10.88), shown previously in this section. This may have led to the sizable proportion of **'do not know'** responses in Figure 10.78, which tend to be close to 17%.

Figure 10.79 and Figure 10.80 show the breakdown of these responses according to NRC or NFP membership respectively.

Figure 10.79: Extent of Agreement with Statements regarding the EEA – NRC Member responses (158 responses)

Source: To what extent do you agree with the following statements? The statements to which the letters correspond: a) The EEA has sought to develop synergies with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States; b) In its work on assessments and knowledge generation, the EEA has coordinated effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States; c) The EEA facilitated effective data gathering; d) The EEA facilitated integrated assessment; e) The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures facilitated an efficient work flow for data and reporting to the EEA; f) The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures ensured that EEA/EIONET data is objective and reliable. Valid Responses: 158

Figure 10.80: Extent of Agreement with Statements regarding the EEA – NFP Member responses (42 responses)

Source: To what extent do you agree with the following statements? The statements to which the letters correspond: a) The EEA has sought to develop synergies with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member States; b) In its work on assessments and knowledge generation, the EEA has coordinated effectively with environmental agencies and other knowledge centres in Member

States; c) The EEA facilitated effective data gathering; d) The EEA facilitated integrated assessment; e) The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures facilitated an efficient work flow for data and reporting to the EEA; f) The quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures ensured that EEA/EIONET data is objective and reliable. Valid Responses: 42

How could the quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures be improved?

Respondents were also invited to provide brief qualitative remarks on how the quality assurance/ quality control processes and procedures could be improved. The following remarks were received:

- The qa/qc processes should be determined and frozen at the beginning of the year, not later on.
- Answers relate to agri and they are not collecting agri data
- Possibility to report partial datasets. Partial data is better than no data
- Deeper control by experts, not only fully automated process
- Deeper control by experts, not only fully automated process
- QA/QC on AQ contain errors & often prevent the uploading. Human checking is still necessary.
- provide test CDR (sandbox) to easily test the files without the NRC account
- by coordination between institution and specialists
- All the correspondence on the QA should be at the 1st place sent to nominated reporters (Extranet)

How much time did you spend performing your duties as NRC/NFP, during the 2012-2016 period on a yearly basis?

The estimated time spent on NRC/NFP duties in Table 10.90 includes time spent on preparation and participation in meetings and webinars organised by the EEA, on meetings and coordination of EIONET activities within the respondents' countries, on environmental data and assessment work related to EEA indicators and reporting systems but excludes time spent on data for reporting on directives. 80% of NRC member respondents spent **40 working days or less per year** on their duties, though 7% (16 responses) **do not know** how much time they spent over the 2012-2016 period. 38% of NFP members spent **61 working days or more per year** on their duties, but 46% spent **40 working days or less per year**, and 12% **do not know**.

Table 10.90: Time Spent performing Duties as NRC/NFP (200 responses)

How much time did you spend performing your duties as NRC/NFP, during the 2012-2016 period on a yearly basis?	NRC		NFP	
	Total	%	Total	%
61 or more working days per year	7	4%	16	38%
41-60 days per year	13	8%	2	5%
21-40 working days per year	40	25%	7	17%
1-20 working days per year	87	55%	12	29%
Do not know	11	7%	5	12%

Source: Question: How much time did you spend performing your duties as NRC/NFP, during the 2012-2016 period on a yearly basis? Valid Responses: 200

Are there any comments you would like to raise about EIONET and external coordination within your country?

Respondents were also invited to provide brief qualitative remarks on EIONET and external coordination within their country. The following remarks were received:

- There have been definitely a lack of synergy between relevant Ministry (Ministries) and the Environment agency in Croatia, but I believe in some other countries too. EIONET is not enough recognized (by Ministries) as a most relevant environmental network in Global terms - which it certainly is.
- EC groups are "black boxes" to us NFPs (the lists are not shared neither by the Commission, nor in a centralised way by my country). The reverse is not true: EIONET is quite transparent to others. It results in an imbalanced distribution of work, EIONET being the usual suspect when new tasks arise.

- Missing answer item in question ""Do you know who your country's representatives..."": ""not always"";
  did check ""no"" instead
- unclear scope of question ""To what extent do you agree with the following statements?"": I only refer to
  my experiences in NRC SoE"
- So far, support and communication has been effective in relation to the external coordination in our country and the support needed for our NRC network.
- NRC Agri has been sleeping and despite encouragement from the UK including the suggestion of a webinar
  with a firm offer of a presentation nothing happened to wake up the network.
- more participation from Eurostat could be ensured in preparation of activities on waste topic
- There is a green spider network but I do not know the UK rep or how active the network is. 1-20 is a typical year but 2015 had a much greater engagement because of publicising SOER2015 and arranging several stakeholder events. The EEA team make a big effort to make the NRC com meeting successful.
- More time needed in 2014 when SOER was being produced because the part C report was difficult for the
  UK due to devolution and the absence of a UK SOER. The average is <20 days per year across the evaluation period. The peaky nature of the work can be an issue if NRC SOE is combined with NFP work
- Why should we exclude time spent on data for reporting on directives ? The EEA and its topic centres are
  key actors for ensuring good quality of reporting analysis at EU level. Nature conservation policies have a
  scientific basis which needs independent scientific expertise.
- Circular resource efficiency and environment it is a little bit difficult to docs in Albania because the nation
  plan and strategies are in processed and the experiences or good examples it is difficult to find.
- The coordination is well organised and efficient.
- For consultation it does not matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - we look at the legal
  competencies and involve respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent
  to one chosen network which indicates who is the one to coordinate country's response.
- For consultation it does not matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - we look at the legal
  competencies and involve respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent
  to one chosen network which indicates who is the one to coordinate country's response.
- For consultation it does not matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - we look at the legal
  competencies and involve respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent
  to one chosen network which indicates who is the one to coordinate country's response.
- For consultation it does not matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - we look at the legal
  competencies and involve respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent
  to one chosen network which indicates who is the one to coordinate country's response.
- We missed more coordination between national official datasets and EU datasets produced or coordinated
  by EEA. Especially it is more remarkable, talking about in-situ data for Copernicus Program (for example
  data themes for DEMs, Hydrography and rest of fundamental geospatial reference information)
- For consultation it does not matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - we look at the legal
  competencies and involve respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent
  to one chosen network which indicates who is the one to coordinate country's response.
- Coordination on reporting should use reporting contact points for AQ legislation.
- Countries want to be involved at earlier stages of EEA assessment work.
- No matter who personally is in ECWGs - we look at legal competencies and involve right institutions, the
  request from the EEA sent to one chosen network is needed to indicate who is the one to coordinate country's response.
- Distinguish between the data collection, scientific, technical, collaborative and solution orientated role of
  the EEA in environmental science and protection and the legal, compliance checking and policy role of the
  European Commission in directives and legislation.
- I have only became an NFP in the end of 2016. Therefore my answers can refer only to this short period.
- "e.g. communicate to NRCs about existing committees and working groups organised by DG Environment
  and DG Climate Action of the European Commission in the field of the relevant NRCs.
- I'm not quite sure if there is such a Group on Environment and Health, but would be interested in knowing
  about.
- The system is currently quite 'clunky' and the web interface needs improvement so that it is easier to find
  the right information. Regular newsletters would also help assist the information flow
- Work with national CLC portal included
- NFP is PCPs for all areas. No matter who personally in other networks like EC WGs - respective institutions
  involved by NFP according to competencies. The key point is to have the EEA request to 1 network which
  indicates who coordinates country's response
- Questions in the table: Our field is still on a conceptual level, so there is no regular data flow yet. For this
  reason not all questions in the table do apply for my case.
- According to the EEA regulation, resources for coordinating the EEA activities at national level (Swiss node
  of EIONET, NFP, NRCs) should be maintained and secured.
- Field of NRC EIS work unknown, INSPIRE and Reportnet stuck to NRC but there are national contacts separately nominated and established processes with the EC to be used, information chaos, duplication of
  work, correspondence sent to NRC and MIG means unclear responsibilities, EEA omits NCP INSPIRE

- For consultation no matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - NFP looks at the legal competencies and involves respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent to one network which indicates who is to coordinate country's response.
- For consultation no matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - NFP looks at the legal competencies and involves respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent to one network which indicates who is to coordinate country's response.
- NFP is PCPs for all areas. No matter who personally is in other networks (like EC WGs) - we look at the legal competencies and involve respective institutions. The key point is to have the request from the EEA sent to one chosen network which indicates who is to coordinate country's response.
- as NRC Health since 2014. No Data or assessment in the domain of health.
- Due to the E-PRTR data-flow-update which is an extraordinary task – it may well be more than 20 days for this year as well as next year
- There is a lack of appreciation with some at the EEA of how difficult it is to co-ordinate things across so many topic areas in a decentralised network the we have in the UK. We need time for a good consultation response. more detailed agendas needed earlier to select the right NRC meeting attendee
- It would be useful to plan work across the year more evenly if possible, to allow more time between actions so that all groups within the MS can be involved, this is difficult if timescales are always very short.
- The names of Member State representatives participating in committees and working groups related to environment and climate reporting, (DG Environment and DG Climate Action) should be publicly available somewhere. There is no quick way to see which kind of WGs there are and who are the participants.
- Clarification for last question: I started as NFP form May 2017. Question is not relevant in my case.
- EIONET is a very important network for CH regarding forward looking activities
- On-line communication and working meetings plan according to working groups could be more effective for a next cooperation.
- Would be interesting to hear how other countries coordinate nationally.
- It is very complicated to estimate time related to duties as NRC as this spent time and gained knowledge is also used in parallel within national level (e.g development EU Registry, LCP/E-PRTR).
- Respect the official data from the State. Sometimes other Spanish regions have been taken into account instead of State.

Brief Section Analysis

The percentage of respondents who are aware of their representatives is potentially not as high as desired. However, for those who are aware, the level of communication tends to be frequent. The responses concerning the statements on external coordination by the EEA are generally positive with around half of the respondents agreeing to a large (or very large) extent with the statements and very few respondents (12% or less) agreeing to only a small or very small extent. The majority of respondents did not spend more than 40 days on their duties.

10.17.3.6   Responding to Change

EEA's multi-annual work programme 2014-2018 highlights that its work extends from monitoring through data, information, assessments to knowledge (MDIAK). EEA has developed the MDIAK reporting chain to help countries determine any information required when reporting to support the policy process.

Have you been called to work more frequently on assessments and knowledge between 2014-2016 than previously?

Table 10.91 shows that while 35% of NRC members have had to work **more** (either **to a large extent** or **some extent**), 40% have **not** had to work more frequently. In contrast, 50% of NFP members have had to work **more** (either **to a large extent** or **some extent**), while 19% have **not** had to work more frequently.

Table 10.91: Change in Frequency of Work on Assessments and Knowledge (200 responses)

Have you been called to work more frequently on assessments and knowledge between 2014-2016 than previously?	NRC		NFP	
	Total	%	Total	%
Yes, to a large extent	8	5%	4	10%
Yes, to some extent	47	30%	17	40%
No	63	40%	8	19%
Not relevant: did not have an EIONET role before 2014	27	17%	11	26%

	13	8%	2	5%
Do not know				

Source: Question: Have you been called to work more frequently on assessments and knowledge between 2014-2016 than previously? Valid Responses: 200

Have you had sufficient human and technical resources to support EEA's work on assessments and knowledge during the evaluation period (2012-16)?

The support received by the respondents from the EEA through sufficient human and technical resources during 2012-2016 is shown in Table 10.92. For both NRC members and NFP members, almost the same number of respondents said '**yes**' (36 responses, and 12 responses respectively) to receiving resource support compared to the number of respondents who said '**no**' (39 responses, and 11 responses respectively). 35% of NRC respondents (56 responses) and 24% of NFP respondents (10 responses) think that they received **some** support, though not enough to consider the level of support sufficient.

Table 10.92: Sufficiency of Human and Technical Resources (200 responses)

Have you had sufficient human and technical resources to support EEA's work on assessments and knowledge during the evaluation period (2012-16)?	**NRC**		**NFP**	
	Total	**%**	**Total**	**%**
Yes	36	23%	12	29%
Somewhat	56	35%	10	24%
No	39	25%	11	26%
Not relevant for my role	15	9%	7	17%
Do not know	12	8%	2	5%

Source: Question: Have you had sufficient human and technical resources to support EEA's work on assessments and knowledge during the evaluation period (2012-16)? Valid Responses: 200

How often have you participated in foresight oriented discussions facilitated by the EEA or EIONET about transitions to a more sustainable society during the evaluation period (2012-16)?

Foresight oriented discussions can be in the form of meetings, webinars, or as part of work assignments and aim to enable forward planning. Out of the 158 NRC member responses concerning foresight oriented discussions outlined in Table 4-29, 53% (83 responses) report having **never** participated in one of these discussions in any form throughout the 2012-16 evaluation period. 39% of NRC members (61 responses) have participated **on a few occasions**, and only 9% (14 responses) **often** take part in the discussions. Out of the NFP members, 50% (21 responses) have taken part in discussions **on a few occasions**, while almost a quarter each have taken part **often** (24%, 10 responses) or **never** (26%, 11 responses).

Table 10.93: Frequency of Participation in Foresight Oriented Discussions (200 responses)

How often have you participated in foresight oriented discussions facilitated by the EEA or EIONET about transitions to a more sustainable society during the evaluation period (2012-16)?	**NRC**		**NFP**	
	Total	**%**	**Total**	**%**
Often	14	9%	10	24%
On a few occasions	61	39%	21	50%
Never	83	53%	11	26%

Source: Question: How often have you participated in foresight oriented discussions facilitated by the EEA or EIONET about transitions to a more sustainable society during the evaluation period (2012-16)? Valid Responses: 200

10.17.3.7   Copernicus Programme

The Copernicus Programme is directed by the European Commission and is the largest single earth observation programme in the world. It uses satellite and in situ (non-space) data to develop European information services. Following the 'Fitness Check on Reporting', the European Commission's Action Plan calls for greater use of the data from the Copernicus Programme.

During the evaluation period (2012-2016), have you worked with Copernicus data in your NFP or NRC role?

This call from the Action Plan is supported by the responses in Table 10.94, as 77% of NRC member respondents and 57% of NFP member respondents did **not** work with Copernicus data within their roles. As little as 3% of NRC members (5 responses) and 2% of NFP members (1 response) worked **frequently** with Copernicus data. Overall only 14% of NRC members and 35% of NFP members used the data for their role.

Table 10.94: Extent of Work with Copernicus data in NFP/NRC Role (200 responses)

During the evaluation period (2012-2016), have you worked with Copernicus data in your NFP or NRC role?	NRC		NFP	
	Total	%	Total	%
Yes, frequently	5	3%	1	2%
Yes, occasionally	17	11%	14	33%
No	120	77%	24	57%
Do not know	13	8%	3	7%
Non-responses	3	2%	0	0%

Source: Question: During the evaluation period (2012-2016), have you worked with Copernicus data in your NFP or NRC role? Valid Responses: 200

Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016

a) Has the EEA provided adequate support to assist NFPs and NRCs in working with Copernicus data?
b) Do you have human and technical resources to work further with Copernicus data?
c) Do you believe that the EIONET network, including NFPs and NRCs, is prepared to work more frequently with Copernicus data in coming years?

The respondents were asked three questions on Copernicus data, shown in Figure 10.81, and the range of their responses were similar. Potentially due to the lack of use, a large portion of the respondents (39-46%) responded '**do not know**' to the questions and on average about a fifth of the respondents (17-24%) said the questions are **not relevant for their role**. Combined, these answers account for over 60% of the responses for all three questions.

Figure 10.81: Questions on Copernicus Data (200 responses)
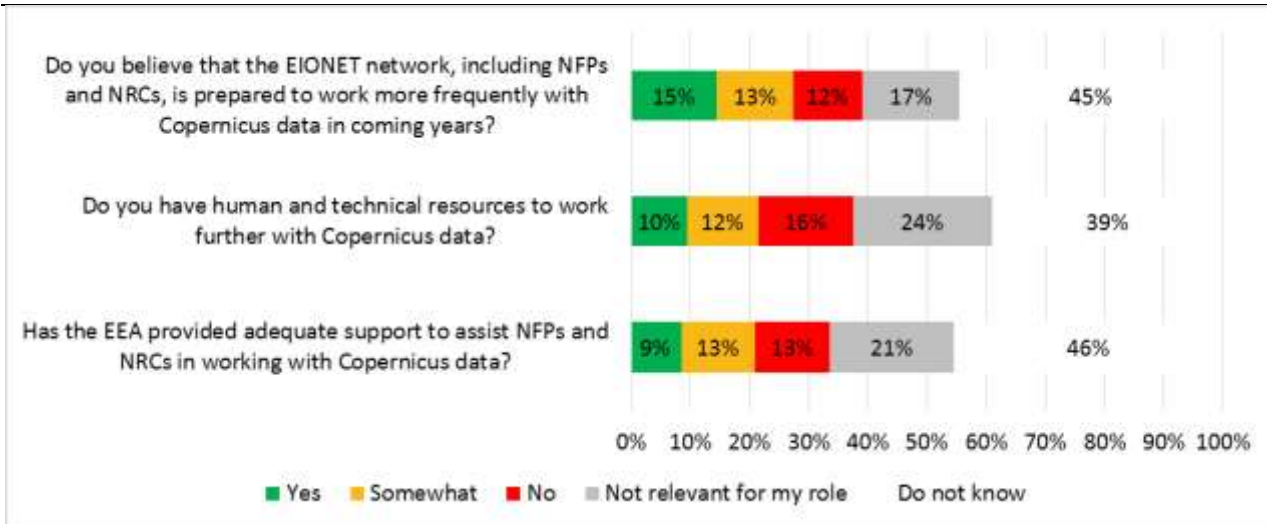
Source: Question: Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016. Valid Responses: 200

Figure 10.82: Questions on Copernicus Data – NRC Member Responses (158 responses)
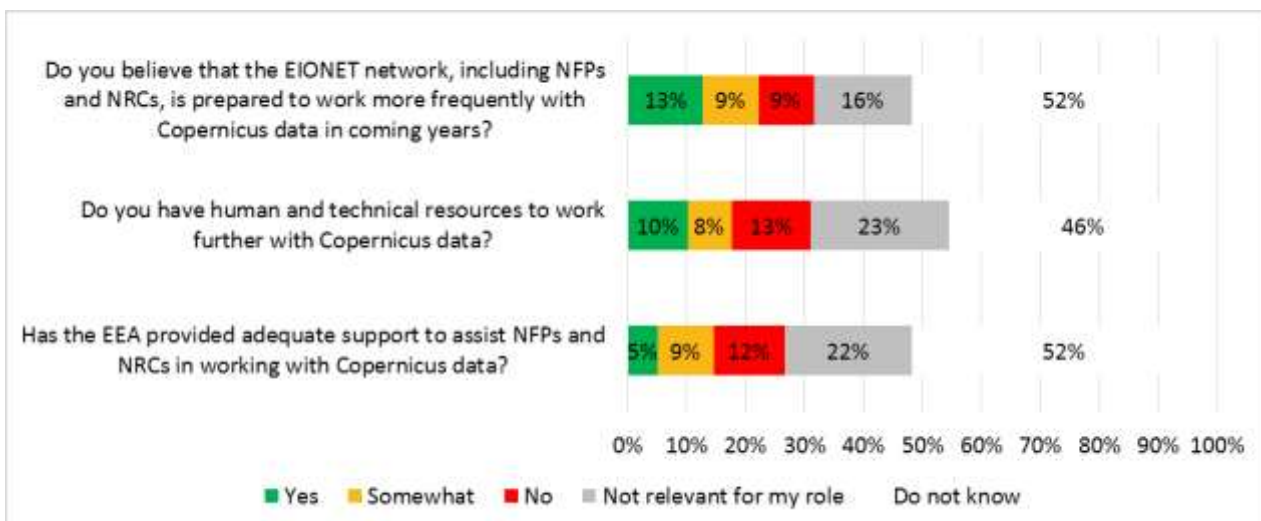
Source: Question: Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016. Valid Responses: 158

Figure 10.82 shows how NRC members responded to the questions on Copernicus data. The majority respondents (at least 68%) said that they **did not know**, or that the question subject was **not relevant for their roles**.

Figure 10.83: Questions on Copernicus Data – NFP Member Responses (42 responses)
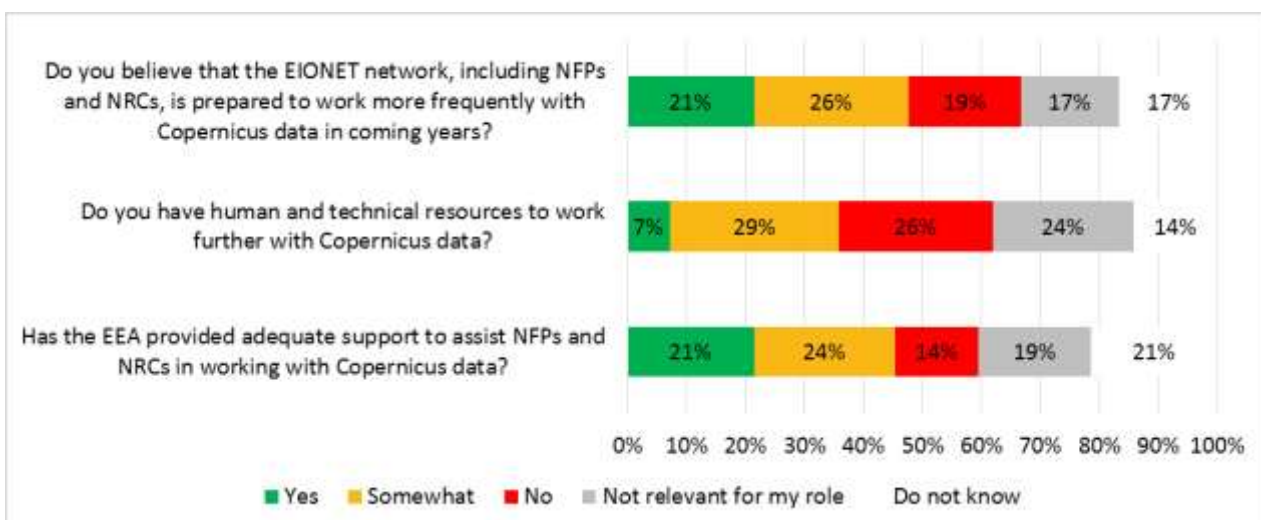
Source: Question: Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016. Valid Responses: 42

Figure 10.83 shows how NFP members responded to the questions on Copernicus data. NFP members had a very even spread across all answers, with approximately 20% of respondents selecting each answer in response to each question.

10.17.3.8 Inspire Directive

The INSPIRE Directive aims to make available relevant, harmonised and quality geographic information that supports policies and activities impacting the environment.

Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016

> a) *Has the EEA provided adequate support to assist NFPs and NRCs in working with harmonised spatial data?*
> b) *Did you have human and technical resources to work with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive's requirements?*
> c) *Do you believe that the EIONET network, including NFPs and NRCs, is prepared to work more frequently in coming years with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive's requirements?*

Figure 10.84: Questions on the INSPIRE Directive (200 responses)
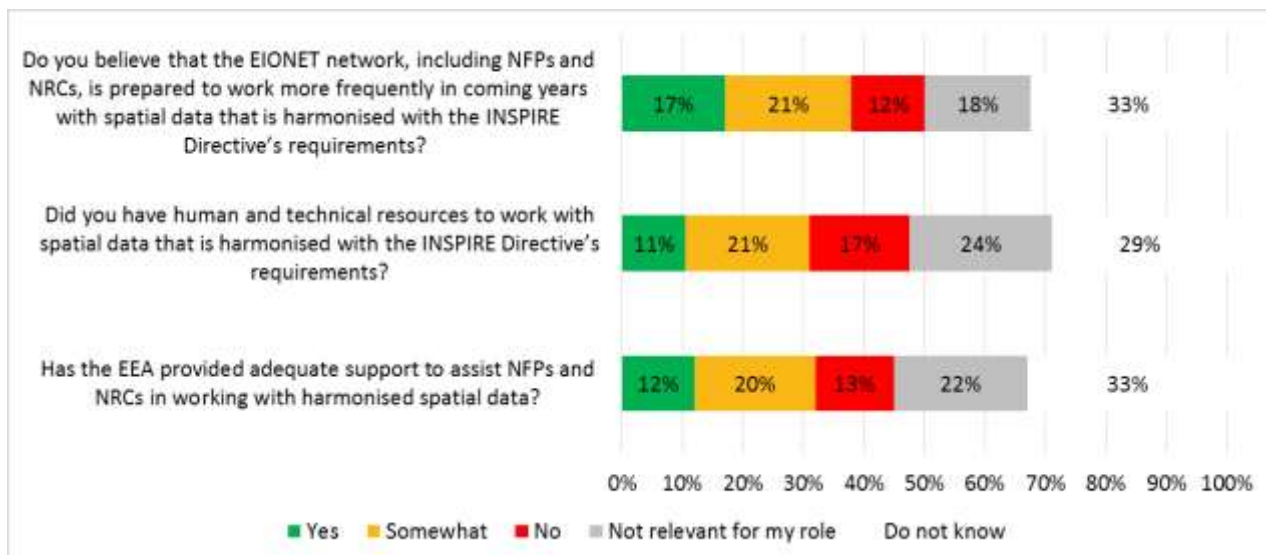
Source: Question: Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016. Valid Responses: 200

Somewhat similarly to the Copernicus Programme, a large portion of the responses (around half) across all three questions are either '**do not know**' (29-33%) or '**not relevant**' (18-24%). (See Figure 10.84 Although 20% of respondents think the EEA has provided some **support to those working with harmonised spatial data**, 12% think the support is adequate but 13% of respondents do not agree the support is sufficient. There is a similar split in responses regarding **human and technical resources**, with 21% claiming to have some resources, 11% saying they did have the resources they required but 17% responding 'no'.

Moving forward, 17% (34 responses) agree that **the EIONET network is prepared for more frequent work with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive requirements**. 21% somewhat believe that to be true, but 12% of respondents do not believe the EIONET network is prepared.

Figure 10.85 shows the responses of NRC members – the spread of responses is very similar to that in Figure 10.84 because the 158 NRC members make up the majority of the 200 responses total.

Figure 10.85: Questions on the INSPIRE Directive – NRC Member Responses (158 responses)
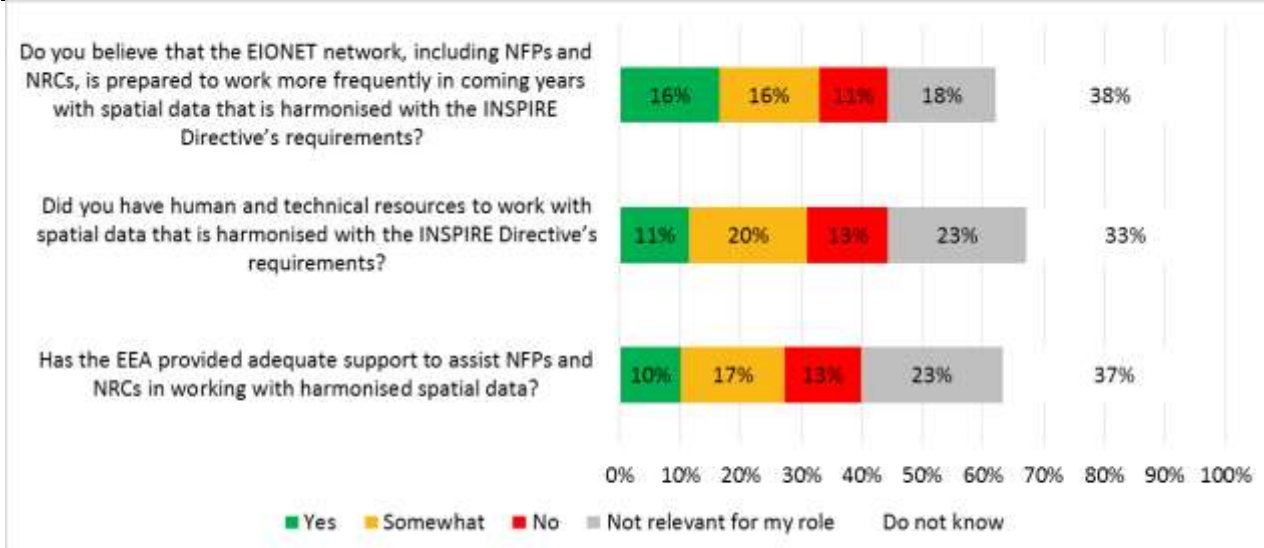
Source: Question: Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016. Valid Responses: 158

Figure 10.86: Questions on the INSPIRE Directive – NFP Member Responses (42 responses)
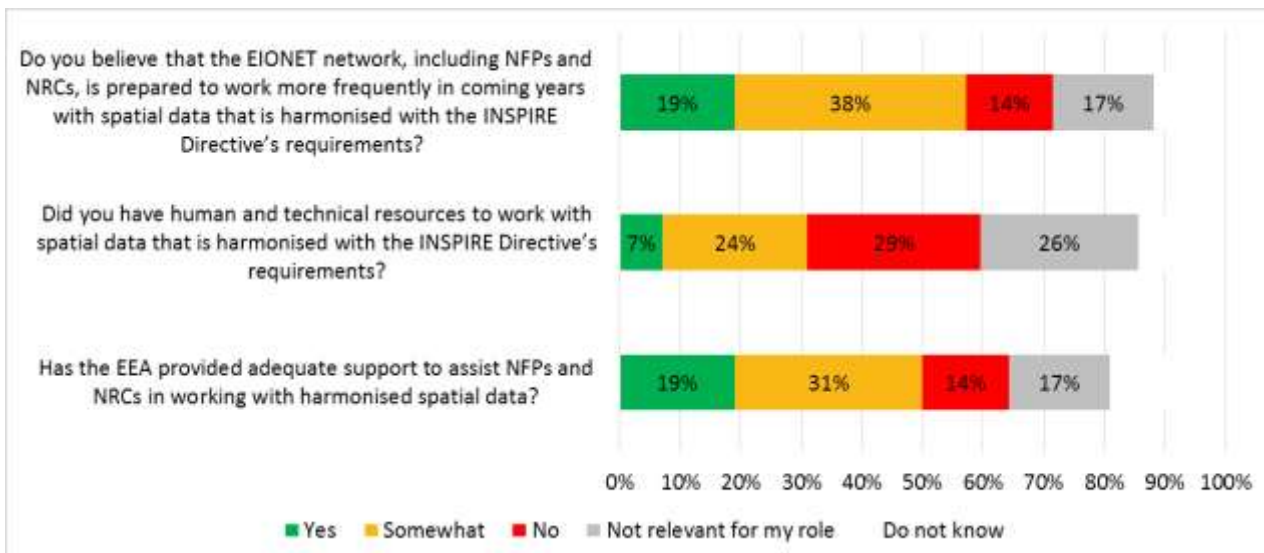
Source: Question: Please provide a response to the following questions for the period 2012-2016. Valid Responses: 42

Figure 10.86 shows the responses from NFP members to the questions on the INSPIRE Directive. 57% of NFP members believe that the EIONET network is at least somewhat **prepared to work more frequently in the coming years with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive's requirements**. 50% felt that the EEA has provided at least somewhat adequate **support to assist NFPs and NRCs in working with harmonised spatial data**. A lower percentage of NFP members (31%) had received at least some **human and technical resources to work with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive's requirements**.

Are there any comments you would like to raise about the EIONET's capacity to respond to changes and new developments?

Respondents were also invited to provide brief qualitative remarks on EIONET's capacity to respond to changes and new developments. The following remarks were received:

- EIONET, no doubt, has relevant capacity to respond to changes and new developments. It is a unique network, and its further development, ways of use, connections and openness to other networks should be explored.
- EIONET has demonstrated good agility over the period to adapt to new developments yet there is now an imbalance between coordination capacities (not enough) and expertise capacities (somewhat too much). Integrated assessments require more cross-cutting/flexible people, which are hard to find.

- Never heard of the Copernicus Programme. Same for Inspire Directive.
- Copernicus and Inspire are only slightly related to NRC SoE work, so I checked "not relevant for my role"; however: more support by EEA in that area would still be useful for SoE work
- -greater use of Copernicus data=EC and member states ministries have to clearly state to the environmental and other organisations that they want them to use the Copernicus data to fulfil their tasks. There should be time and resources allocated to the agencies to try the data and train the experts
- The workload of the Copernicus Land team at EEA is increasing disproportionately to the resources they have available. This has a detrimental impact on the subsequent engagement with NRC etc and the efficiently with which projects can be established with MS. More staff in CPH would help improve this
- EIONET has demonstrated large capacity to change and adapt its work programme. Yet resources remain more scarse in every country and there is large turnover, so this becomes a challenge.
- Regarding the Copernicus programme, I just recently found out about it. We have however, initiated research on how it can be used for environmental health monitoring and hope to see some exiting results.
- There is a severe lack in human and technical resources allocation to this work and a huge amount of expectations to perform with a very limited amount of funding.
- Sometimes it can take the EEA too long to adequately respond to changes. Too often things are tied to the skills available in the Agency and it the right skills are not there getting them in takes too long. Agri is the perfect example of this.
- the Com team are starting to respond to the needs of users with the switch to shorter and online products. I was pleased that they took up my suggestion of following their product review with a survey of users to seek their views on these changes.
- Development of SOER is slow, the Agency clearly have a plan and agenda but we are not always told in enough to be able to influence it. Sometimes things seem quite set in stone when they are "discussed with countries".
- Although development does not necessarily require an increase in human capacity, however, I think that in this particular case it is still necessary. On the other hand, EIONET can not influence on strengthening the capacity/experts on national level, so a model has to be found to overcome that gap.
- We are currently working on implementing INSPIRE on the CDDA data. Support from the EEA is excellent and the transition should occur without difficulties.
- Countries are bound by the environmental directives which determine the monitoring and reporting. Extranet, not EIONET, shows nominated reporters for legal obligations. The EEA should use nominated contacts. All cross-cutting issues require more coordination at national level (resources)
- Countries are bound by the environmental directives which determine the monitoring and reporting. Extranet, not EIONET, shows nominated reporters for legal obligations. The EEA should use nominated contacts. All cross-cutting issues require more resources for coordination at national level.
- Countries are bound by the envi directives which determine the monitoring and reporting. Extranet, not EIONET, shows nominated reporters for legal obligations. The EEA should use nominated contacts and NCP INSPIRE. All cross-cutting issues require more resources at national level we do not have.
- Countries are bound by the envi directives which determine the monitoring and reporting. "No" does not mean that we expect the EEA to support NFPs/NRCs following the EIONET membership principle in selecting people. All cross-cutting issues require more resources at national level we do not have
- Clear definition regarding technical requirements of Copernicus Services in order to be produced with/together Member States.
- "No" does not mean that we expect the EEA to support NFPs / NRCs following the EIONET membership principle in selecting people. MS are bound by envi directives which determine the monitoring and reporting. Cross-cutting issues require more resources at national level to coordinate we do not have
- AQ directives require reporting to EEA servers but INSPIRE data harvesting from countries (duplication of reporting requirements). This refers to nominated reporters (not 100% equal to EIONET). Copernicus is not mandatory, not in directives.
- "No" does not mean that we expect the EEA to support NFPs and NRCs following the EIONET membership principle in selecting people. The themes are to be covered by EC WGs, CUF and INSPIRE NCP.
- The range of other networks is an area to tap into and possibly streamline in some cases to avoid duplications.
- I have only became an NFP in the end of 2016. Therefore my answers can refer only to this short period.
- Maybe this answer doesn't perfectly fit to this question, but I would like to know more about to what extent the findings of the EEA-funded work of the FRESH-consortium will have an impact on EEA's reporting (and data collection) on Environment and Health issues.
- Due to the size and complexity of the EIONET structure, change can be slow, particularly as countries are very diverse in regards to their capacity and knowledge.
- E3I activities show EEA/EIONET is very capable of adapting to change. At NRC Level, other examples show the same, as, for example, FLIS, REEE and COM activities. These examples need to scale up and happen more often.
- More cross-cutting issues would require more resources for NFP. Copernicus data understood as Sentinels data. We work with CLC. C&IN are to be covered by EC WGs, CUF and INSPIRE NCP, EIONET is not contact point to be supported for these processes unless have both roles.
- Some of the questions above do not apply to my field of work.

- General remark: I started my job in 2017 so I wasn't able to respond to all questions. In general I'm very happy with the collaboration with the EEA.
- EIONET would be able to respond to change and new developments, but additional resources should be secured accordingly.
- Cross cutting issues require huge effort for coordination, need funds for MS Reportnet/INSPIRE - huge amount of different themes/issues not to be covered by 1 person. Necessary to have the EEA request to 1 network (NCP INSPIRE or CUF or NFP/NRC) which indicates who coordinates country's response
- More cross-cutting issues would require more NFP resources. "No" does not mean that we expect the EEA to support NFPs and NRCs following the EIONET membership principle in selecting people. The themes are to be covered by EC WGs, CUF and INSPIRE NCPs
- Clear vision of new tasks is needed from EEA. More cross-cutting issues would require more NFP resources. "No" does not mean that we expect the EEA to support NFPs and NRCs following the EIONET membership principle in selecting people. The themes are to be covered by EC WGs, CUF and INSPIRE NCP.
- cross-cutting issues - across themes or requiring to involve >1 institution are put on the NFP - need more $ & human resources. G&I: we don't expect the EEA to support NFPs and NRCs following the EIONET membership principle in selecting people - to be covered by EC WGs, CUF and INSPIRE NCP key
- EIONET is big and complex change takes time. Need to think of the reduced resources in countries cannot just keep expanding into new areas and widening the remit. Focus on a doing a core group of things well not spreading the resource too thinly. Too long for EEA to get new staff no succession plan
- Suggest more effective feedback and communications in the form of brief updates and more succinct newsletters, also making the Website easier to navigate will help people find relevant information.
- There should be better coordination between EU agencies/institutes (EEA, Eurostat, JRC) in relation to Copernicus and Inspire. In that way also EIONETs capacity to respond changes would be better.
- Directive INSPIRE is no-adequate for data reporting of Environment data. Now reporting of wise, of environment and etc. are changed - just to response to the requirements of the useless directive INSPIRE.
- Copernicus programme seems to be taken more seriously during today and onward, Europe is on its way to define environmental assessment in a different datascale (remote sensing).
- I believe that Copernicus and Inspire are major ways to develop and make more effective of collection, management and analysis of environmental data. So this is a way forward and EEA is making the best of it.
- I think it would be very useful to organize specialized training for working with spatial data that is harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive's requirements.

Brief Section Analysis

Overall, the responses in this section were far less positive compared to previous sections. Although the number of responses remained strong, not a single question had a high percentage of positive responses. Generally, the responses were broadly split to give a 'mediocre' average outcome.

In regards to the Copernicus Programme and the INSPIRE Directive, a significant portion of the respondents either did not think it relevant to their work or did not know about the subject matter.

10.17.3.9   Benefits

Part of the evaluation is to gauge the levels of benefits created by the EEA and EIONET on a national perspective.
To what extent has membership of the EEA and EIONET provided the following aspects:

a) *It is easier to benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries*
b) *Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments*
c) *High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers*
d) *It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data*
e) *It allows the exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries*
f) *It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting*
g) *It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation*
h) *It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation*
i) *It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies*

Figure 10.87: Agreement with Statements regarding the Benefits of EEA/EIONET Membership (200 responses)

Source: Question: To what extent has membership of the EEA and EIONET provided the following aspects: Benefit Statements: a) It is easier to benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries; b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments; c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers; d) It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data; e) It allows the exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries; f) It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting; g) It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation; h) It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation; i) It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies. Valid Responses: 200

Most respondents agree to **a large** or **very large extent** that:

- it is easier to benchmark their country's performance against other countries (a, 58%);
- policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments (b, 54%);
- high quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers (c, 61%)
- it facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods (d, 56%)
- it allows the exchange of knowledge and best practice among national experts in member countries (e, 72%)
- it provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting (f, 67%); and
- it facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation (g; 52%).

Compared to the statements mentioned just above, an increased portion of respondents (32%) said they '**do not know**' if membership reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies and a much smaller portion (5%) said they agree to **a very large extent**. Similarly, 27% of respondents **do not know** if membership reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation and only 6% agree to **a very large extent** that this is indeed a benefit, as shown in Figure 10.87.

Figure 10.88: Agreement with Statements regarding the Benefits of EEA/EIONET Membership – NRC Member Responses (158 responses)

Source: Question: To what extent has membership of the EEA and EIONET provided the following aspects: Benefit Statements: a) It is easier to benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries; b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments; c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers; d) It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data; e) It allows the exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries; f) It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting; g) It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation; h) It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation; i) It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies. Valid Responses: 158

Figure 10.88 shows the breakdown of responses provided by NRC members. The pattern of answers is very similar to that shown in Figure 10.87.

Figure 10.89: Agreement with Statements regarding the Benefits of EEA/EIONET Membership – NFP Member Responses (42 responses)

Source: Question: To what extent has membership of the EEA and EIONET provided the following aspects: Benefit Statements: a) It is easier to benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries; b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments; c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers; d) It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data; e) It allows the exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries; f) It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting; g) It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation; h) It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation; i) It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies. Valid Responses: 42

Figure 10.89 shows the answers given by NFP members to statements about the benefits of EEA/EIONET membership. To an even greater extent than the NRC members, the majority (at least 66%) of NFP respondents agree either to a large or very large extent that being a member of the EEA/EIONET provides the following benefits:

- It is easier to benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries;
- Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments;
- High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers;
- It facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data;
- It allows the exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries;
- It provides opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting; and
- It facilitates reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation.

The two benefits that received less positive responses were administrative tasks:

- It reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation;
- It reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies.

Only 36% and 39% of NFP members respectively agreed with these to a large or very large extent.

In the absence of EEA, to what extent do you agree that national institutions could have provided the same benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries)

Figure 10.90: Agreement with Statements regarding the Benefits provided by national institutions in the absence of the EEA/EIONET

Source: Question In the absence of EEA, to what extent do you agree that national institutions could have provided the same benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries). Benefit Statements (no. of responses): a) Benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries (172); b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments (170); c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers (173); d) Development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data (171); e) The exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries (177); f) Opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting (173); g) Reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation (140); h) Reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation (108); i) Reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies (99).

In Figure 8-3, it can be seen that overall there are more respondents who disagree (or strongly disagree) that national institutions can provide the same benefits as the EEA than there are respondents who agree (or strongly agree).

The exception to this is statement c, regarding high quality data and information on environmental issues being available to policy makers, as 38% disagree or strongly disagree with this whereas 39% of respondents agree or strongly agree that national institutions will provide the same level of benefit. This is the highest level of agreement for a benefit by a margin of 15 responses.

Quite a significant portion, varying between a fifth (19%) and a third (33%), of the respondents neither agree nor disagree that national institutions could provide the same amount with any of the benefits.

Figure 10.91: Agreement with Statements regarding the Benefits provided by national institutions in the absence of the EEA/EIONET – NRC Member Responses
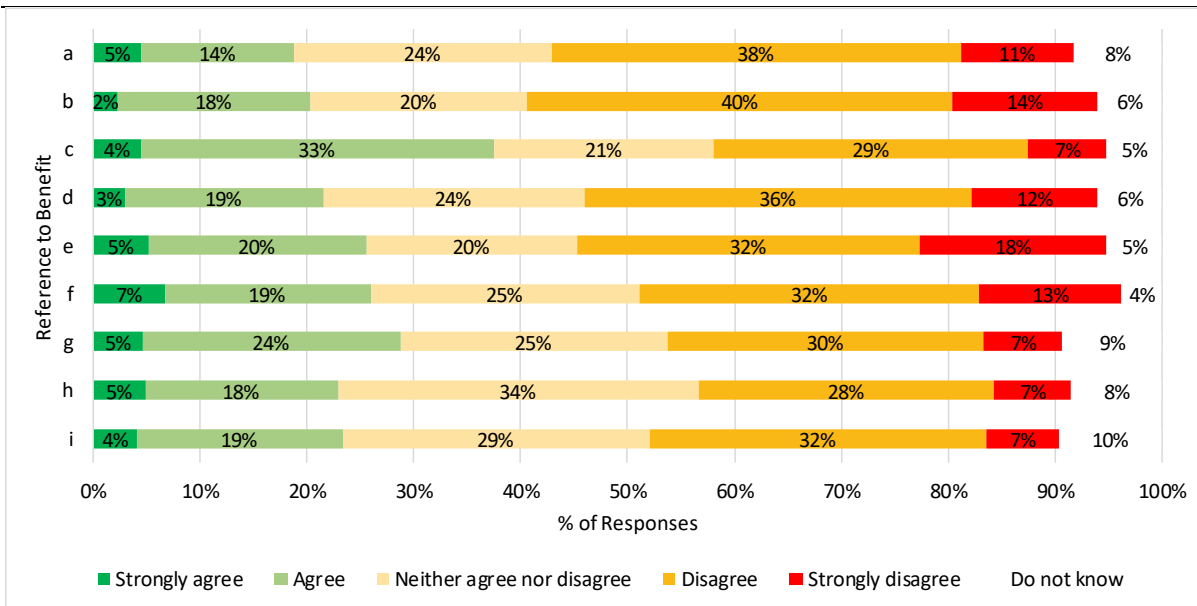
Source: Question In the absence of EEA, to what extent do you agree that national institutions could have provided the same benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries). Benefit Statements (no. of responses): a) Benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries (133); b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments (133); c) High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers (136); d) Development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data (135); e) The exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries (137); f) Opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting (135); g) Reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation (108); h) Reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation (83); i) Reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies (73).

Figure 10.91 shows the breakdown of responses provided by NRC members. The pattern of answers is very similar to that shown in Figure 8-3.

Figure 10.92: Agreement with Statements regarding the Benefits provided by national institutions in the absence of the EEA/EIONET – NFP Member Responses
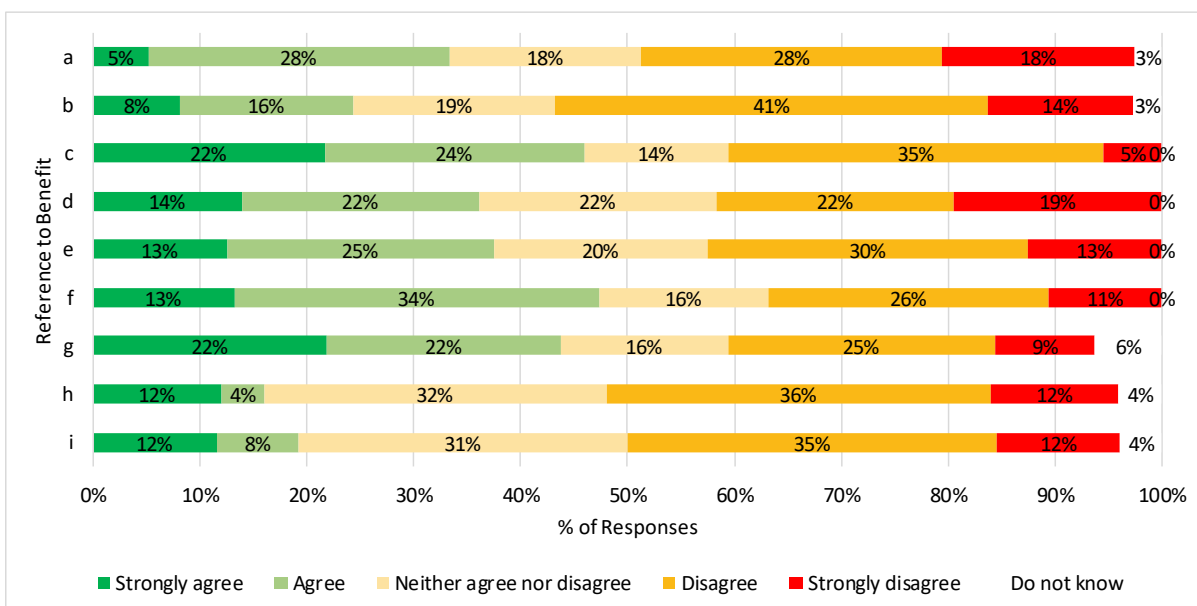
Source: Question In the absence of EEA, to what extent do you agree that national institutions could have provided the same benefits (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries). Benefit Statements (no. of responses): a) Benchmark your country's performance against that of other countries (39); b) Policy makers gain knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments (37); c)

High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers (37); d) Development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data (36); e) The exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries (40); f) Opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting (38); g) Reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation (32); h) Reduces burdens associated with reporting for EU environmental and climate legislation (25); i) Reduces burdens of delivering environmental and climate data to the UN and other bodies (26).

Figure 10.92 shows that NFP members, similarly to NRC members, either feel neutral or negatively towards the benefits that could be provided by national institutions in the absence of the EEA/EIONET – in other words, the EEA/EIONET is providing these benefits to the same level or to a higher level than national institutions. Three benefits that a higher proportion of NFP members felt that their national institutions could provide to a better extent were:

- Opportunity for national experts to learn about new and innovative techniques for environmental monitoring and reporting (47%)
- High quality data and information on environmental issues is available to policy makers (46%)
- Reporting on EU environmental and climate legislation (44%)

Though it should be noted that these are still the minority.

Are there any comments you would like to raise about the benefits of the work of the EEA and EIONET?

Respondents were also invited to provide brief qualitative remarks on the benefits the work of the EEA and EIONET. The following remarks were received:

- I strongly support the existence of EEA. There are many benefits for EEA - member countries that they would not be able to achieve alone. Besides, EEA manages EIONET and to some extent, in practical terms, may be almost considered as synonym for EIONET.
- EEA/EIONET helps making environmental information ""a serious thing"" in our country. Our country and experts have a deficit of internationalisation and EEA/EIONET really helps push them beyond their current limits.
- EEA and EIONET is great opportunity for more overall assessment of the situation in EUROPE however there is the space to improve work in a way that all data that EEA has should be part of interactive system where countries can obtain historical trends and data for analyses of cumulative state.
- Last question ("In the absence of...") quite complex, not sure I understood correctly... I recommend not to take answers to that question too seriously
- The reporting by EEA doesn't get much attention other than the need to explain its even more aggregated approach. This is not a good thing. If we were to use EEA's reporting more often, EEA should provide more insight in the information between raw data and reported data...
- For cooperating countries, there is a large benefit in participating and cooperating under the EEA working programme, as the countries are on the path to EU accession. EEA remains a very positive example for integration of the West Balkan in the MAWP and other relevant activities.
- I am on the health side of the environment and health NRC. The above issues are probably more relevant for the environment side.
- Over this evaluation period no benefits for Agri. But the potential is there if the network was active. There is the potential to synergise work with the Commission and ESTAT and do more in an important sector that accounts for a lot of the EU budget and is trying to become greener.
- AS NRC Com the benefits in relation to data collection are not really so obvious. The obvious benefits come from the end product. One could still benchmark using other international data but it would be more difficult and based on less extensive criteria
- SOER is a lot of work within the countries and the value does not always balance up if the product produced is not one we can sell. A large hard copy report focused specifically at the European trends and prospects is difficult to sell domestically - country comparisons would be easier
- Attention should be given to the sources of the opinion given by experts reflecting either:
  - the experience in one region or country
  - the position of a Member State.
  Both are useful but should not be mixed up.
- I comment here my own responses instead: The many "Do not know" answers reflect my loose connection with the network and superficial knowledge on EEA output. This reflects the need of clarifying my institute's role in the network which I mentioned in one of my responses.
- In my opinion, EEA has very demanding task - to mainstream/direct work from national institutions, to gather the comprehensive knowledge from all the env. topics and to compile national/partial results in order report to EC and also national policy makers.
- Personally I appreciate my obligation as a NRC but usually it is very hard to find data to elaborate and to report to the EIONET. In accordance with EEA I would to thank you the moderators which help us as much as they can.

- EIONET provides a platform to meet other national experts. This helps also for the collaboration among national bodies apart from the EEA.
- The network and experience that I gained through the EEA and EIONET often helped me in my day to day job.
- Specially reports and documents are very useful. I read all of the reports that I receive and send them to the other experts work in other units. Thank you very much. Please send us reports and documents in the future.
- It would be desirable to have EEA products for policy makers on effectiveness of noise plan and programmes, best practices, national solutions in monitoring and assessment. Analysis in noise management is missing. - g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs.
- It would be desirable to have EEA products for policy makers on effectiveness of AQ plans and programmes, best practices, national solutions in monitoring and assessment. Analysis in AQ management is missing. g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs.
- Assessment comparability is not so reliable due to different methodologies of monitoring and assessment approach of conservation status in MS. Analysis of and information on the methods used should be provided by the EEA. g-i not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs.
- In Europe, Eurostat also plays a significant role in the development and use of standardised environmental statistics.
- g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs. EIONET gives benefits however having coordination by non-EIONET JRC generated organisational problems.
- EEA products based on WISE SoE (voluntary reporting) are unique at European level. When reports are consulted we would like to know the assessment methodology and source raw data. g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs. c,d,g,h,i in 2nd table missing?!
- g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs. Unclear 2nd question: No EEA would mean no place to send the data required by EC. EIONET tasks vs AQ reporting unclear. Capacity building, sharing knowledge and EIONET networking is very important.
- g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs, marine dataflows are voluntary (not EU obligation). regional sea convention assures standardised methods and assessments, collecting high quality data, under HELCOM experts have training possibilities
- Methodology standardization. Meetings of the experts from MS and experience exchange. Knowledge improvements
- We recognise the value of EEA and EIONET, while recognising that there is room to develop the current work and the functions of EIONET, especially the benefits of improved integration and interaction across thematic areas in order to address ever more complex systemic environmental issues.
- I hope that the exchange of knowledge among national experts of the EIONET and the discussion about reporting on Environment and Health issues will be more frequent and intense in the coming years. I would like to know more about the ""welcome package"" you've mentioned in the governance-questions
- The EEA could look to adapt their working model so that not only does national information feed into European level assessments but then the European-level assessments can be available for use to inform national priorities. More bespoke outputs, could help, potentially agreed at national level
- EEA/EIONET allow countries to have easy access to different knowledge/knowledge holders, to be able to contact different stakeholders, to create new knowledge and to solve problems in a simpler way.
- g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions are in EC WGs, MS deliver the data as it is required by the Directives, no matter EIONET exists. EAGLE to be declassified & show all concrete results. benefits: developed cooperating network, CLC as a unique flagship valuable product
- Benefits of EEA and EIONET exceed costs. After more than ten years of Swiss participation in the EEA and EIONET, we aligned our environmental reporting activities to the EEA strategy and work programmes. We harmonized our data, indicators and assessments with agreed standards at the EU level.
- g-i are not provided by the membership of EIONET, decisions in EC WGs, MS deliver the data as required by the Directives, no matter EIONET exists, themes for NRC EIS meetings to be discussed with nominated reporters and NCP INSPIRE WhoWillContactWithAllInstitutions incl EIONET if reporting competent
- EEA products give some inspiration for work at country level. It would be useful to learn more about EEA work methods eg how Signals production process looks like. I support NRC COM activities, doesn't have strong basics for its existence but performs splendid. EEA membership doesn't provide g-i
- Lack of clear vision for what purpose NRCSoE established EEA assessments & indicators give inspiration for work at nat. level. It would be useful to learn more on EEA methods of work, incl integrated assessments, sectoral assessments. EIONET membership doesn't give gh - directives & ECWGs decide
- EIONET is a unique network of cooperation, giving a lot of benefits and providing partnership and community between countries, institutions (also at national level) and people. g-i are not provided by the membership of EEA, countries deliver the data as required by Directives and ECWGs decisions
- The biggest benefits are those relating to networking, shared knowledge development and problem solving. Also important are the data sharing possibilities and the shared tools that are available.
- EIONET provides an extremely useful network to share knowledge and experience across member states, to enhance methodologies and approaches, and is very valued.
- High quality data /.../ to policy makers - I strongly agree that the data and info is available, but is it available for policy makers in integrated way that they can make impact on policies based on that information.

- Note: only started as an NRC from 2017, therefor could not answer some questions, marked as do not know.
- It definitively means a big loss if there where no EEA activities any more
- To improve communication between EEA and JRC as well as working groups concerning threats to soil and soil data flow, integrate the soil database in effort to better create the land-soil outputs in EU.
- I'm not sure I've even clicked in the correct starting Point - I'm part of the Group that the Swedish EPA uses for EEA work... But I appreciate the work that the EEA is doing raising the issues of EU working to-wards a better, sustainable Europe.
- It is not really possible to picture situation where EEA and EIONET would not exist. EEA serves its purpose and if EEA would not exist, there would be another similar organization with EIONET like function.
- In my view, the EEA network is a very unique opportunity to exchange. Especially in the fields of SOER and FLIS ideas generated within the network were key to our work on the national level. I don't see any other possible form of organization where this could be done more efficient.

Brief Section Analysis

Overall, the EEA succeeds in providing a range of benefits. In the absence of the EEA, generally respondents either do not think that national institutions (alone or in collaboration with national institutions in other countries) would be able to provide the same benefits to the same extent or do not have an opinion either way.

10.18   Appendix K – Stakeholders Workshop

10.18.1 Introduction

On 5 December 2017, a stakeholder workshop was held in the context of the support study for the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the interim findings of the support study with key stakeholders with a view to validating and deepening the understanding of such findings ahead of the finalisation of the analysis.

The workshop was attended by participants from the member countries of the EEA (including Management Board Members and National Focal Points), the Commission, the European Topic Centres (ETCs), an interest organisation as well as the EEA. In total 60 participants took part in the workshop.

Ahead of the workshop, the participants had received a background document prepared by the support study team.

The workshop was a full day event organised as a mix of plenary sessions and break-out group sessions. To start with, the support study team presented an overview of key interim findings of the support study in the plenary. This was followed by a break-out session in four groups discussing around the key evaluation themes. The results of the group discussions were then presented for commenting to the plenary. This was followed by a second break-out group session, which considered and responded to the observations and view-points raised during the first group session and also considered additional questions and issues that had not been covered under the first group session. This led to a further elaborated overview of observations and view-points, which was presented to the plenary in the final session allowing for final comments and fine-tuning.

This document provides the documentation of the inputs provided from participants during the workshop. Chapters 2-5 below correspond to the four main topics discussed in the four break-out groups. In each chapter, the slides presented during the final plenary session are displayed and each slide is followed by text explaining in greater detail the observations illustrated in the slide. Slides are reproduced exactly as they appeared in the plenary ses-sion (i.e. also including spelling mistakes and sentences that are not finished). The text below the slide is derived from the inputs provided during the group sessions as well as the plenary. When the text refers to messages from the workshop or observations from 'participants' (e.g. participants found that…), this reflects observations that were mentioned and discussed in the break-out groups and summarised in the plenary and not contested by any individual participant on either occasion. Where the discussions in break-out groups or plenary indicated that par-ticipants did not share the same observations or views, this is reflected in the text explaining the differing views or

indicating that views were only shared by 'some participants'. When statements were made by individuals and not discussed broadly in the break-out groups or plenary, the text explicitly refers to this as individual comments.

During the workshop, participants also voiced some concerns over the background paper, the methodology of the study and the form of presentation. The support study team acknowledges these comments and regards them as very useful for the process going forward and the drafting of the draft final report. Chapter 6 reflects the comments as they were raised during the break-out group discussions[740].

The workshop participants were further welcomed to provide their comments in respect to:

Chapters 2-5:

- Any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the observations and messages presented under each slide compared to how they were presented and understood during the workshop. Such comments will be used for fine-tuning the text underneath each slide.

- Any additional comment or input that is relevant to further elaborate on the observations or add additional observations. Such comments will be placed unedited in a separate chapter indicating the person providing the comment.

Chapter 6:

- Any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the comments provided. Such comments will be used for fine-tuning the text in chapter 6.

10.18.2 Effectiveness

The discussion of effectiveness revolved around the guiding questions posed in the background paper, however, only three of the four questions were covered. The three sections below report on the observations of the workshop in respect to:

- Effectiveness of the EEA and Eionet in supporting policy development and policy implementation

- Effectiveness of the EEA and Eionet in delivering objective, reliable and comparable information – focusing in particular on the success factors enabling high performance of the EEA and Eionet.

- Effectiveness of the EEA and Eionet in reaching out to business and research communities and facilitating the uptake of EEA and Eionet outputs.

10.18.2.1   Support to policy development and policy implementation

With the point of departure in the interim findings of the support study presented in the workshop background paper, the workshop sought to receive feedback from the participants and to further deepen the understanding of strengths and weaknesses/challenges in relation to the EEA and Eionet supporting policy development and policy implementation. The slide presented in Figure 10-93 provide the main points raised during the break out-group sessions reflected in the plenary.

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[740] These comments were not in the same way brought forward in the plenary session as the plenary session focused on the main observations in relation to the evaluation themes.

Figure 10-93   Workshop slide on support to policy development and policy implementation (final plenary session)

	Strengths	Weaknesses / areas for improvement – or 'maintenance'
Policy development	Coordination of data & analysis with other info Using the best available data - e.g. carbon lock-in report Gathering/condensing data Flexibility of the EEA in following policy timing requirements (a few hickups should not be overestimated) Systemic /strategic perspective in SOER→identify measures	Concepts and data translation into knowledge is done through the networks – can be continuously improved – nourished and maintain
Policy implementation	Good practice impl. examples Role indispensable – quality checks Potential for more focus on policy analysis	
Both	Reports mentioned … useful National consultation processes on products Need to be specific about benchmark – what is the outreach/target group? National: Role as background docs Having very good data – partially precooked – quick use at national level Constructive dialogue Transboundary issues → beyond ISO as Data: EEA data combined with other sources	Uptake in MS Timelines – but cannot serve all Decision on negative priorities Potential of technology /data mining integration of Copernicus data – future challenge Need to take better on board data from scientific projects – better coordination is needed. Collaboration has been enhanced but needs further strengthening.

Note: Text in black: First break-out group. Text in red: Second break-out group. Text in green: Final plenary.

The **main messages** derived from workshop – based on the key words in the table above are:

- A very strong message addressed by the participants was that the reports produced by the EEA and Eionet during the evaluation period were useful. Various stakeholders have had different needs and not all reports were useful to all. However, participants considered that all EEA reports have contributed to the policy work at EU or national level in one way or the other. Participants therefore found that it is not appropriate in the context of the evaluation study to single out reports as not useful if they were just mentioned by individual persons.

- Participants found that the EEA and Eionet were flexible in adapting to the needs and requests in terms of timing and framing of reports seeking to accommodate to the policy frameworks and developments to which the reports could contribute. It was recalled that when serving a multitude of stakeholders, timing cannot always be fitted to everyone's needs, but it was considered that the EEA and Eionet overall have performed well in this regard. Participants find that 'a few hick-ups' or cases where timing was not perfect were solved and that this is something to be expected as part of normal operations.

- Participants commented that the background paper for the workshop had too much focus on EEA reports and on how they influenced policymaking and implementation. The point was made that it is important also to recognise that the data, processes, services and tools embedded in the work of the EEA and Eionet in themselves also have provided support for policy work both at the EU and national level.

- In respect to supporting national policy development and implementation, the following strengths of the EEA and Eionet were mentioned by the participants:

  - That EEA products were useful for national policy work and used by national authorities as background documents and allowed to see the situation in the country in the light of the European situation and the reports also brought new knowledge that the countries themselves could not produce (or would be more costly and duplicate work between the countries to produce).

  - The EEA reports were used for policy development at the national level. If some internal analysis was needed to support some policy development, and resources were limited, having "precooked" data from EEA was important. However, this would not necessarily appear in any public document, hence the impact would not have been widely publicised. The fact that the source was the EEA would have been promoted, but mainly internally.

- Ex post analysis of policies. Countries took different approaches, which can provide learning. The Eionet had an important role in facilitating exchange of practices. E.g. this sharing of good practices was very important in climate adaptation, a new policy area.

- The reports were circulated and consulted upon in the Eionet as part of their preparation and NRCs took active part in the process through contributing to the reports. This increased the visibility and knowledge of the reports at the national level and thereby also the uptake of the reports in policy work.

• In relation to policy development, participants found that a strength of the EEA and Eionet lied in the ability to have a coordinated action with other institutions thus helping to avoid a situation where duplication of activities occurred. Participants explained that the Commission spent a lot of money (via JRC and contractors such as PBL, IAASA, etc.) on developing models and scenarios. If the EEA with their scarce resources had also started doing this, participants found that a duplication would have occurred. However, participants found that this was not the case – on the contrary, they characterised the situation as 'a healthy symbiosis': The JRC was doing research and developing methodologies, which the Eionet sometimes used.

• A related point was the emphasis that participants put on the strength of the EEA and Eionet in combining EEA/Eionet data with other data sources and analysing and consolidating other data. (one participant emphasised the carbon lock-in report as a good example: It was based on an excellent database which comes from outside, i.e. external data, which the EEA used to analyse the situation. Using the best available data on the market and extracting important information on pressure areas. Similarly, the Electric Vehicles report was emphasised by the participant as a good example of the effectiveness of the EEA and Eionet in gathering available information and condensing it to a report.)

• In addition, participants found that the strength of the EEA should not only be considered in connection with development of specific environmental policies and pieces of legislation, but also in the forward-looking work supporting the strategic policy thinking about how to cope with the environmental and societal challenges seen in the long term. E.g. how to reach overall targets for decarbonisation and decisions on which measures are needed. Here, participants considered that the SOER provided useful perspectives on the strategic level for policy development and implementation.

• In relation to policy implementation, participants expressed that for the implementation of EU legislation, the EEA and Eionet were indispensable in the areas where they assisted in data and reporting on implementation. Through the EEA and Eionet, all the data was double and triple checked and this meant that there was no doubt about the datasets. No Member State stood up and said: wrong data. The Eionet as the biggest scientific network of its kind ensured that the quality assurance was the best possible.

• Participants reflected that the background paper placed emphasis on the Commission as the key institution at EU level and underlined the importance of also considering other EU institutions, notably the European Parliament and the Court of Auditors.

• In respect to challenges and areas for improvement, the following issues were raised by the participants:

- Participants considered that uptake at the national level was sometimes a challenge - not all member countries were engaged to the same level with each report or output. Sometimes it was due to lack of time, resources, and different topics being important in different countries. Participants found any lack of engagement could not be ascribed to the EEA. It is also up to the individual country to take reports into consideration and use them.

- Participants emphasised that during the evaluation period, the data available increased enormously and participants considered that there were many opportunities for data mining of which some had not (yet) been fully utilised. It was emphasised that this required new methods and ICT strategies and participants questioned whether the EEA had been fully equipped to ensure that these opportunities could be exploited.

- Participants emphasised that in the context of increasing demands and data combined with shrinking budgets, the ability of the management of the Agency to set negative priorities was essential. However, participants considered that the evaluation period had shown limited ability of the Management Board to set negative priorities. Rather, there had been a tendency that if anything was suggested to be taken off the table, someone would be dissatisfied and state that it was very important. However, at the same time, participants considered that the current MAWP had involved the setting of some negative priorities, i.e. certain areas of activity were removed compared to the previous MAWP (EEA strategy), for instance Eye-on-Earth. Participants reflected that it was not sufficient to have such considerations in connection with the strategic considerations for the MAWP, and that annual processes were necessary – however, not effectively implemented during the evaluation period.

10.18.2.2   Delivery of objective, reliable and comparable information

With the point of departure in the interim findings of the support study presented in the workshop background paper, the workshop sought to receive feedback from the participants and to further deepen the understanding of the success factors underpinning the ability of the EEA and Eionet in delivering objective, reliable and comparable information.

The workshop organisers had pre-filled a slide with success factors and asked the participants to reflect on these. The slide presented in Figure 10-94 provide the elements prefilled (black) as well as those added during the discussion (red).

Figure 10-94   Workshop slide on success factors in delivering objective, reliable and comparable information

The **main messages** derived from workshop – based on the key words in the table above were:

- Participants found that the listed success factors were all valid

- Participants considered that the strongest factor underlying the ability of the EEA and Eionet to provide objective, reliable and comparable data was the mandate of the Agency and the fact that it was a separate institution, which supported the work of other institutions, while not being too aligned with any one of them.

- Participants emphasised that QA/QC processes within the Eionet were essential and reflected that these could be divided in two main types: QA/QC of data, QA/QC of knowledge creation. QA/QC of data involved the process whereby data to support indicators and/or reporting requirements coming from NRCs would be checked and controlled thus ensuring their reliability. QA/QC of knowledge creation involved the process whereby outputs and reports produced by the EEA or the ETCs would be consulted with the relevant experts in the Eionet for commenting and quality check. This consultation and involvement of the Eionet also meant that the relevant experts felt ownership towards the process and the results – both in terms of data and knowledge products, which was regarded by participants as an important underlying factor. In this regard, participants also

mentioned that these processes also led to building of capacity among the experts, which again was seen as an important underlying factor.

- The participants commented that the role of the Scientific Committee (SC) was over-emphasised in the workshop background paper. Participants underlined that the SC would not review an EEA report sentence by sentence and provide detailed QA. Rather, the SC or selected members sometimes served as advisory board to help steer the process of preparing a certain output and/or provided general comments on specific outputs when requested by the EEA. Further, the SC provided benefits through seminars and more general deliberation on e.g. how to deal with uncertainty when producing knowledge.

- A point was raised that while it was a strength that indicators and data collection methods were commonly agreed and this provides the basis for provision of comparable information, it is also a challenge. There were examples of indicators where stakeholders could not agree and thus data could not be provided. One participant mentioned the water exploitation index as an example of a complex indicator where it was difficult to reach agreement on the definitions.

10.18.2.3   Outreach to business and research communities

With the point of departure in the interim findings of the support study presented in the workshop background paper, the workshop sought to receive feedback from the participants and to further deepen the understanding of EEA's outreach to business and research communities and whether this has supported uptake of EEA and Eionet outputs in these communities.

The slide presented in Figure 10-95 provide the main points raised during the break-out group sessions reflected in the plenary.

Figure 10-95   Workshop slide on outreach to business and research communities (final plenary session)

The main messages from the workshop in this respect were:

- Participants considered that the EEA had adopted a good strategic approach focusing on key events with high attendance from many main stakeholders from the business community, which helped to increase the visibility of the EEA. The World Circular Economy Forum was given as an example of this. It was considered that this approach could have been further expanded and included other key thematic areas than circular economy.

- Participants also emphasised that the SOER launching events in the countries had been successful and had achieved good attendance from key stakeholders in the business communities in the countries.

- In respect to the Scientific Community, participants emphasised that the ETCs and NRCs include representatives of the scientific community and as such this is integrated in the Eionet. Also, participants considered that the fact that the Scientific Committee received interest from the top academics in the field gave evidence to support that the Agency is highly visible in the academic world.

- There was some discussion in the plenary of the point marked in red in the slide. The break-out group had identified that relations with industry were sometimes challenged by the fact that the EEA information and publications did not always present industry in a favourable light. This point was originally placed under the right column on 'areas for improvement', however, the plenary agreed that it was more appropriate to mention it under 'worked well' as this showed that the EEA was implementing the mandate of delivering objective information.

10.18.3 Relevance

The discussion of relevance revolved around the guiding questions posed in the background paper. Four main topics were covered and key points and main messages from each are reported below.

- Appropriateness of objectives of the EEA and Eionet (referring to Article 1 of the Founding Regulation)

- Appropriateness of tasks of the EEA and Eionet (referring to the 15 tasks in Article 2 of the Founding Regulation)

- Appropriateness of priority areas of work of the EEA and Eionet (referring to Article 3, para. 2 of the Founding Regulation)

- Relevance of the EEA and Eionet to EU citizens

10.18.3.1   Appropriateness of the objective of the EEA and Eionet
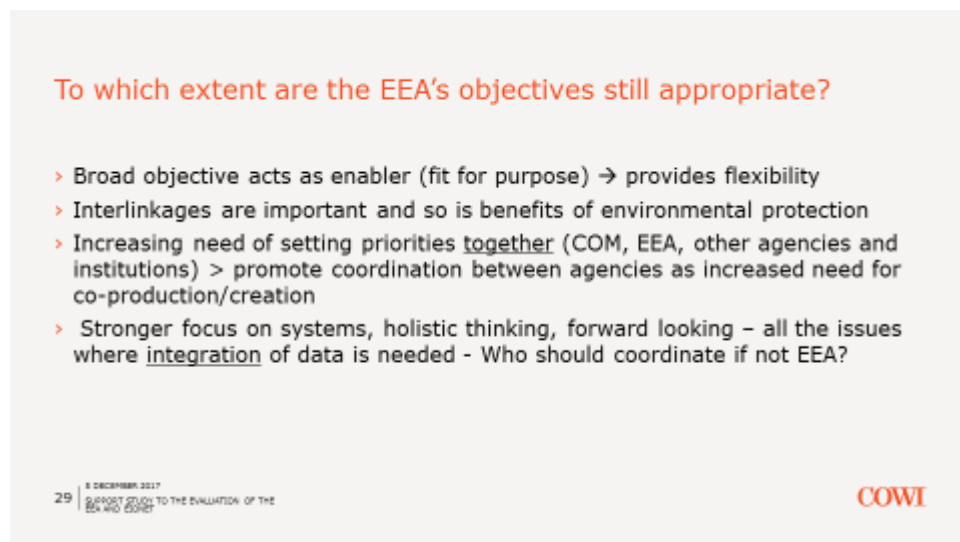
This topic was discussed in the first breakout group (Group B) in the morning session. Breakout Group D (afternoon) took the point of departure in the views from Group B in the morning session, and sought to validate the draft findings from the workshop document and adding further points of view. Figure 10-96 and Figure 10-97 presented below show the slides presented in the two plenary sessions.

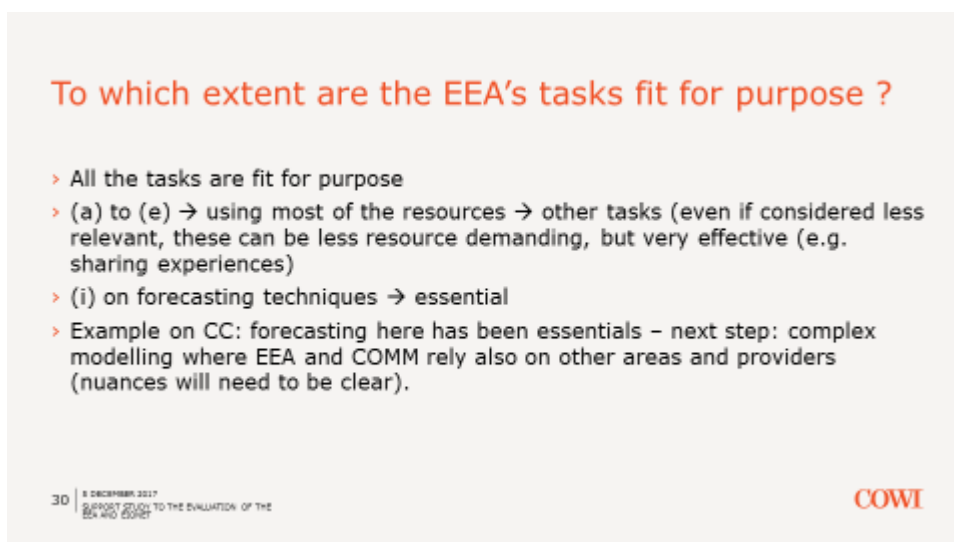*Figure 10-96 First plenary session on Relevance - Objective still appropriate?*

Relevance Q1: Objective still appropriate?

PROS	CONS
Welcomed by the Agency, allowed for adding additional areas, allowed for enlargement of tasks of the Agency - flexibility	Can be constraints on resources
Other pieces of regulations that provide additional tasks (e.g. Copernicus)	Environment world is quite sectorial, maybe 'ecological' a better integrated word
Need to keep specificity and the niche of environment	Climate change is not mentioned
Broad objective is still valid (cross-cutting issues, socio-economic dimensions) → sufficient to cover all areas	Language is a bit outdated
Broad meaning of the objective can allow for policy evaluation	Public is not mentioned in Article 1
Enabling Regulation	

Figure 10-97 Second plenary session on Relevance - Objective still appropriate?

The **key messages** from the workshop – referring to the plenary slides – are:

A clear message that the broad objective of the EEA had been relevant and fit for purpose during the evaluation period. The broad objective acted as an *enabler* and provided the necessary flexibility. References to the Environmental Action Programmes and sustainable development were considered to be appropriate as the key focus, and the objective thus covered all areas including cross-cutting issues and socio-economic dimensions. In particular the cross-cutting themes are expected to increase in importance. Participants found that the objective allowed also for policy evaluation, even though the mandate was not considered very clear in this regard.

Participants pointed, however, also to a decline in the relevance of the EEA objective due to the dynamic policy development towards the end of the evaluation period and into the present and future. Some participants found that the objective did not sufficiently address systemic issues and important interlinkages between areas – as exemplification was mentioned food production, mobility, urban issues, energy. Participants also found that the language used was somewhat 'defensive' and lacked an explicit focus on the benefits of environmental protection. There were questions on whether to keep the wording "Environment" or to use the word "Ecology", which suggests a more systemic approach, addressing functional interactions and processes. An alternative suggestion was to use "Sustainability, e.g. European Sustainability Information and Observation Network". The majority of participants saw, albeit to varying degrees, a need for reflecting recent policy developments in the EEA objective. Some considered that even though the EEA had been successful in addressing pressures on individual sectors and sector specific themes within the evaluation period, a stronger and more explicit focus on cross-cutting themes, systemic issues and holistic approaches was needed, as the EEA has a key role to play on this but is challenged due to resource constraints.

Participants however also recognized more nuanced pro's and con's of the current formulation of the objective:

Participants found that the objective had been relevant and served the purpose in the evaluation period. However, looking to the future, participants considered that a broad objective may imply a risk also a large and growing coverage of items leading to constraints on resources. Participants found that this would lead to a continued need for clear prioritization and delineation of tasks e.g. in the MAWPs and AWPs, given the current limited resource within the EEA.
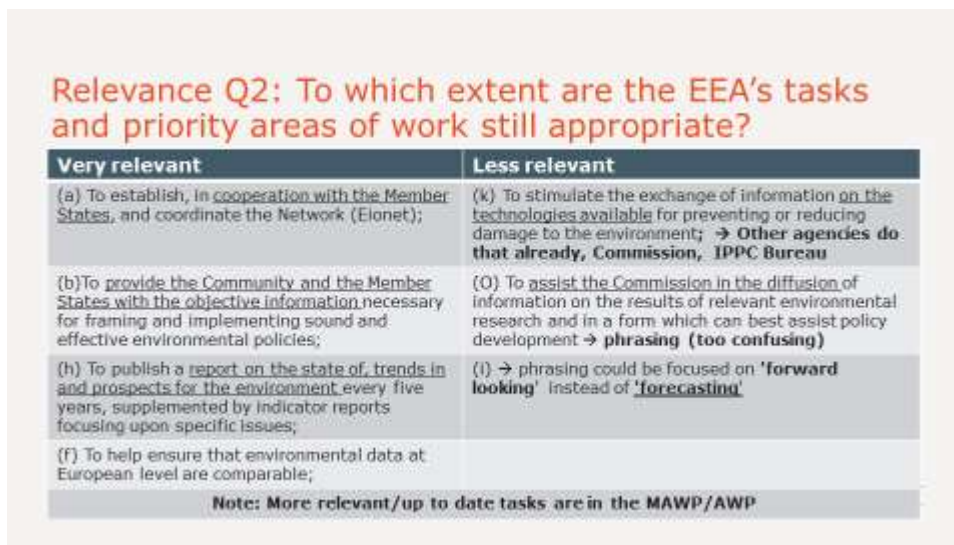
Participants noted that the role of climate change is currently not explicit in the EEA objective. However, participants saw climate change as an integral part of environment and noted that the EEA is already substantially engaged in the area and the role explicitly mentioned in the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation. This role will be reinforced with the adoption of the Energy Union Governance Regulation replacing the MMR. Participants representing the climate area did not view this as an issue of great concern as such.

Participants stated that a broad objective combined with a growing and more complex policy agenda increases the need for setting priorities together (Commission with EEA and Eionet but also with other agencies and institutions). Whereas participants found that the involved institutions had succeeded in this within the evaluation period, participants also pointed to changing needs in the future in the form of increased need for coordination among the key institutions, as the EEAs objective increasingly requires co-production and co-creation of tasks and products.

10.18.3.2   Appropriateness of tasks

This topic was discussed in the first breakout group (Group B) in the morning session. Breakout Group D (afternoon) took the point of departure in the views from Group B in the morning session, and sought to validate these views and added further points of view. Figure 10-98 and Figure 10-99 presented below show the slides presented in the two plenary sessions.

Figure 10-98 First plenary session on Relevance - Tasks of work still appropriate?

Figure 10-99 Second plenary session on Relevance - Tasks of work still appropriate?

In terms of the relevance of the EEA tasks, the key message from the participants was that all tasks were relevant. Participants found that clearly, some tasks were more resource demanding, e.g. ensuring the coordination of the Eionet (a), providing objective information necessary for framing and implementing sound and effective environmental policies (b), to publish the SOER (h), to record, collate and assess data on the state of the environment (e) and to ensure that environmental data on the state of the environment are comparable at the European level

(f). However, participants found that other tasks that were less resource demanding were still important and relevant.

Participants pointed to only very few tasks that may be considered of less relevance. The point made related to the scoping of such tasks and whether they were sufficiently targeted to the role of the EEA considering that other institutions were also pursuing similar tasks. One task discussed was the exchange of information on the technologies available for preventing or reducing damage to the environment (k), as this task was also being pursued by other actors (such as the the European Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Bureau) under the JRC. Other participants stressed that there was an increasing need for exchange of best practices on policy implementation and that the EEA could have provided more added-value in this field.
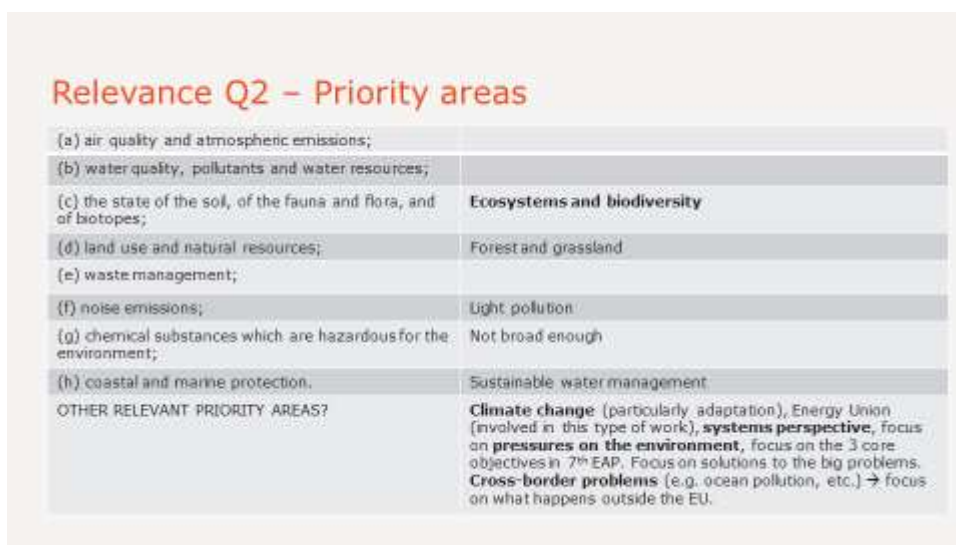
A few tasks were found to have a rather confusing wording which did not enhance clarity on the EEA tasks, and due to this, a relevance assessment was found somewhat difficult by the participants. This included the task to assist the Commission in the diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research in a form which can best assist policy development (o) and the task to stimulate the development and application of environmental forecasting techniques so that adequate preventive measures can be taken in good time (i). Some participants felt that forward-looking techniques was a better term than the current forecasting techniques, as forecasting techniques may seem more narrow. Some participants said this is one of the most – if not the most – relevant tasks of the EEA. One participant also said all of the tasks are still very relevant, and 'less relevant' ones were only chosen as an exercise, to answer the question put forward in the workshop. In the plenary it was agreed that the forecasting task was found to be an essential EEA task. However it was also stressed, based on climate change as an example, that forecasting techniques had been essential whereas now more complex modelling exercises were needed where the EEA, the Commission and member countries would also have to rely on actors other than the EEA.

Participants also stressed the resource constraints on the EEA, stating that it was not possible for the EEA to do its tasks within the prevailing resources.

10.18.3.3 Appropriateness of priority areas
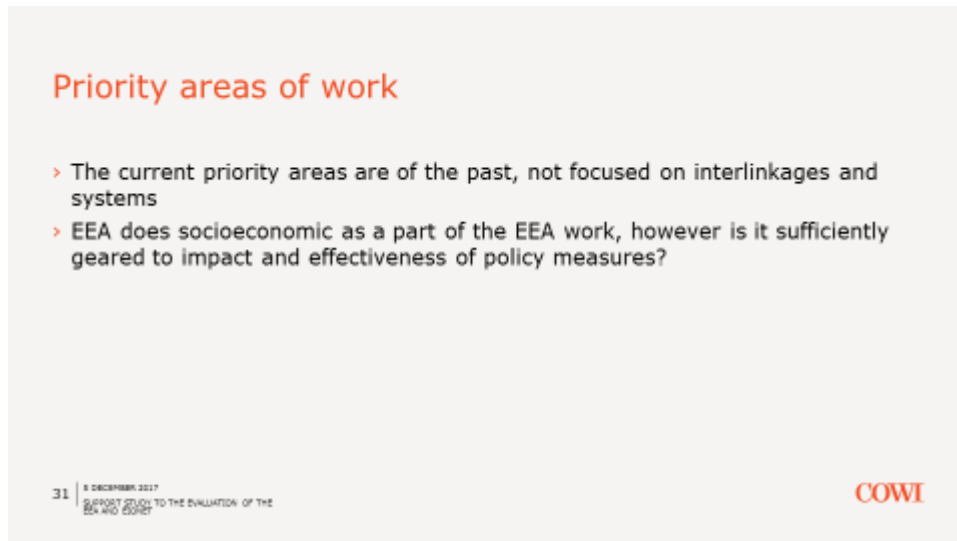
This topic was discussed in the first breakout group (group B) in the morning session. Breakout Group D (afternoon) took the point of departure in the views from Group B in the morning session, and sought to validate the draft findings from the workshop paper and adding further points of view. Figure 10-100 and Figure 10-101 presented below show the slides presented in the two plenary sessions.

Figure 10-100 First plenary session on Relevance - Priority areas still appropriate?

Figure 10-101 Second plenary session on Relevance - Priority areas still appropriate?

The participants found that the EEA priority areas of work had been very relevant, however as with the discussion under 'objective', there was also here among the participants a need for emphasizing the integrated approaches and systemic issues beyond the sector approach.

At the sector level, some participants stressed the need for more emphasis on sustainable water management (instead of "Water quality, pollutants and water resources"), and on ecosystems and biodiversity (instead of "the state of the soil, of the fauna and flora and of biotopes"). Some of the participants also found that the chemicals area should reflect broader health aspects (not just environment). Additional priority areas for explicit mentioning as part of the priority areas of work were climate change including climate change adaptation, light pollution and also cross-border pollution e.g. plastics and other cross-border challenges such as trade in chemicals and forestry products.

An additional discussion took place on whether the EEA's priority areas of work was sufficiently geared towards impacts and effectiveness of EU environmental and climate change policy measures. Some participants stated that the EEA does address socioeconomic aspects as part of the EEA work, whereas others stated that this emphasis could be further strengthened.

10.18.3.4 Relevance of the EEA and Eionet to EU citizens

Figure 10-102 Second plenary session on Relevance - Communication with citizens

As to the communication with EU citizens and the question as to how much should be expected from the EEA and Eionet in terms of communicating with individual citizens, the participants found that the EEA was already providing a lot of communication relevant also for the European citizens. In addition, social media has supported this communication in a much further outreach than e.g. traditional reports from the EEA. The EEA core function was seen by participants to be on ensuring a better channel of information to the Member States and member countries in the form of better data that is put in the right policy context.

10.18.4 Coherence and governance mechanisms

The discussions at the workshop reviewed questions on coherence as well as questions on governance mechanisms concerning efficiency based on the guiding questions in the workshop background paper. The three sections below report on the observations of the workshop in respect to:

- Advantages and disadvantages of the coordination approach and the extent to which more formalisation of coordination would have been beneficial

- The coordination with the European Commission

- Priority setting mechanisms and functioning of the Management Board

10.18.4.1 Role of informal and informal coordination mechanisms

The first topic on Coherence concerned a point made in the workshop background paper that EEA's roles – in particular in terms of supporting EU environmental reporting requirements – are typically based on informal coordination mechanisms without legislative provisions or written agreements. Figure 10-103 shows the key results of the discussions that were reported to the plenary in terms of considering the advantages and disadvantages of the informal approach. Figure 10-104 shows the outcomes of the discussion on whether a more formal approach would be beneficial.

Figure 10-103 Summary of the advantages and disadvantages of the informal approach to coordination

Figure 10-104   Summary of discussion on the need for more formal coordination

Participants raised a number of advantages and disadvantages of the informal approach:

- The points raised on advantages highlighted the flexibility for the Agency, including to react to new requests. Another point was that informal coordination allows EEA to keep its independent role, which was valuable for several reasons, including in terms of relations with its member countries. Moreover, informal coordination was valuable for tasks going beyond the EU's thematic legislation, including work on interlinkages (e.g. on environment and health).

- Regarding disadvantages, the point was made that some initiatives and processes were not well-defined (one issue cited was the NRCs' role in terms of INSPIRE). A further comment (not indicated in the slides) was that, while EIONET represented a unique network, its coordination needed strengthening; moreover, there has been a need to address areas of overlap with working groups and committees organised by the European Commission.
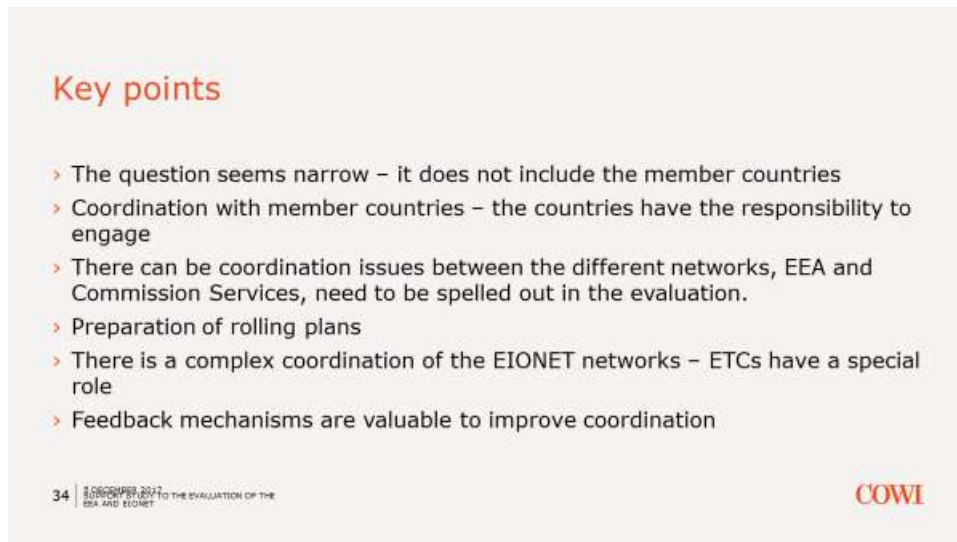
The main message from participants was that formal and informal mechanisms co-existed during the evaluation period and the issue is to find an appropriate balance between the two. Participants reflected and recognised that

formal coordination had taken place through the consultation processes involved in connection with the Multi-annual and annual work programmes, annual budget submissions, etc. The informal approach was found by participants to have been effective in many respects, but a balance towards a more formalized coordination system would have provided a structure and environment for ongoing, informal coordination. A more formal approach would also avoid the potential risk of overextending the Agency's capacities and ensure that resources are better matched to tasks. An individual comment was that coordination within Commission services was needed, and a more formal system could strengthen this. At the same time, it was noted that a reliance on informal coordination alone could lead to a lack of coherence between EEA activities and reports and the European Commission's approaches. It was suggested that the Environmental Knowledge Community (EKC) could provide a structure on which to build stronger coordination. Some participants stated that EKC provided coordination around future/emerging priorities for new areas of work during the evaluation period and suggested that the EKC could supplement that role by taking a stronger arbitration function when there might be disagreements (e.g. between JRC, ESTAT, RTD, EEA etc.) on division of work requested by DG ENV or CLIMA.

10.18.4.2   Coordination with the European Commission

The second topic was the extent of good coordination with the European Commission and the mechanisms for coordination. The main points of the discussion presented in the plenary were the following:
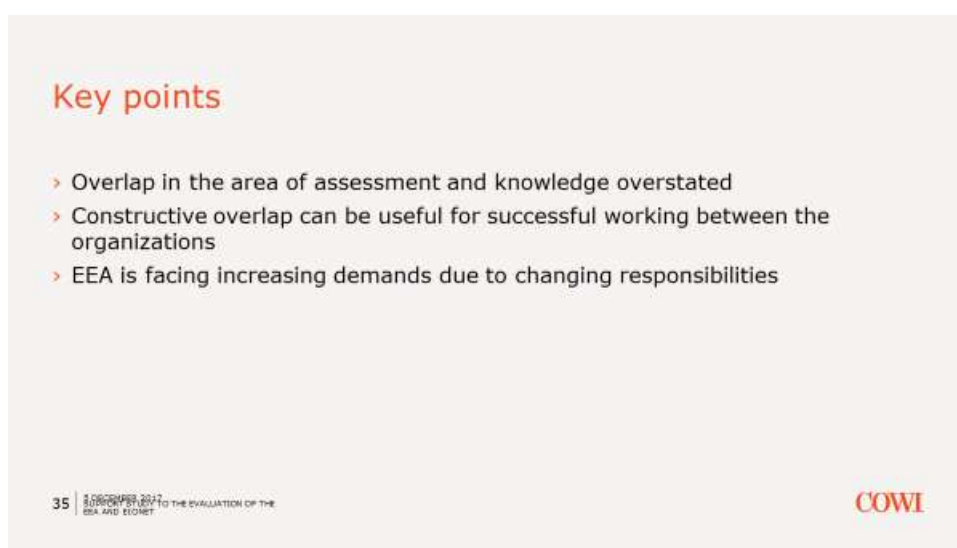
Figure 10-105 Key points concerning coordination between EEA/EIONET and the European Commission

Key points

> The question seems narrow – it does not include the member countries
> Coordination with member countries – the countries have the responsibility to engage
> There can be coordination issues between the different networks, EEA and Commission Services, need to be spelled out in the evaluation.
> Preparation of rolling plans
> There is a complex coordination of the EIONET networks – ETCs have a special role
> Feedback mechanisms are valuable to improve coordination

Key points

> Overlap in the area of assessment and knowledge overstated
> Constructive overlap can be useful for successful working between the organizations
> EEA is facing increasing demands due to changing responsibilities

Participants considered that the topic of coordination between EEA and Commission services was a narrow one for the members of the group who come from Member States. The participants indicated two dimensions of coordination not covered in the initial topic:

- Coordination of the EIONET, a complex network involving two dozen NRC networks across over 30 member countries;

- Overall coordination between EEA and its member countries, beyond coordination within the MB and EIONET to reach a broad range of national institutions.

With regard to EIONET, the participants noted that in terms of coordination between EIONET bodies, on the one hand, and networks organised by the European Commission, on the other, there was room for improvement. The role of the ETCs was mentioned, both in terms of their substantive work as well as their actions to support coordination of EIONET networks and coordination with the European Commission. One participant commented that some ETCs had good coordination with the Commission, others less so.

Participants noted a difference between Commission services. DG ENV and DG CLIMA are largely users of EEA outputs. It was noted that with JRC, Eurostat and DG RTD, which also produce environmental data, relations have been more complex. One participant felt that coordination between EEA and DG CLIMA was quite good. Another comment was that coordination between EEA and Eurostat could have been improved, in areas such as environmental accounting (e.g. water accounting). One comment noted that in the current moment (beyond the evaluation period), one issue is that the role of JRC is changing.

Overall, the approach to coordination has varied significantly from one topic area to another. The preparation of rolling plans, agreed between EEA (and ETCs where relevant) and Commission services, have provided a valuable coordination mechanism. The forum on Integrated Urban Monitoring in Europe, bringing together EEA, ETC/ULS, several DGs as well as academic and Member State institutions, was mentioned as a positive approach for coordination. It was noted that successful coordination depended on two and often more actors – consequently, the actions of all actors need to be considered, not EEA alone.

The discussion also considered the statement in the background document that the division of roles between EEA and Commission services were not always clear in the areas of assessment, knowledge creation and dissemination of research. Several participants did not agree with the statement. On foresight and megatrends, these participants underlined that EEA has cooperated with other organisations in this field, providing added value in identifying emerging issues, including value to member countries that have lacked resources to work in this area: here, the participants found that the EEA has worked well at the interface between science and policy.

An individual comment was made that, the EU budget should not pay for multiple assessments on the same topic; consequently, EEA and Commission services need to avoid overlaps. At the same time, work by actors at national level – for example, institutions in Member States – using different methods could provide constructive overlaps with EU-level work, supporting deeper discussion.
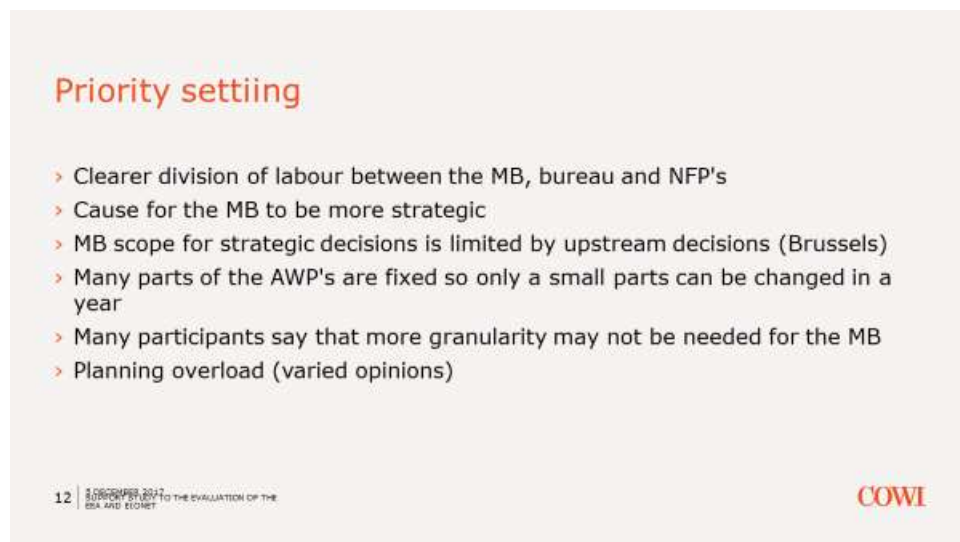
10.18.4.3   Priority setting and functioning of the Management Board

The following dilemma, identified in the workshop background document, was posed for discussion (the first sentence is an excerpt from the workshop discussion paper):

> …the majority of the Management Board members who responded to the survey find the draft AWPs and MAWPs adequate in order to assess and provide feedback on the priorities of the EEA. However, only a quarter of the respondents find that they can influence the priorities to a large extent.

The main points of the discussion were summarised in the following overview slide, presented to the workshop plenary.

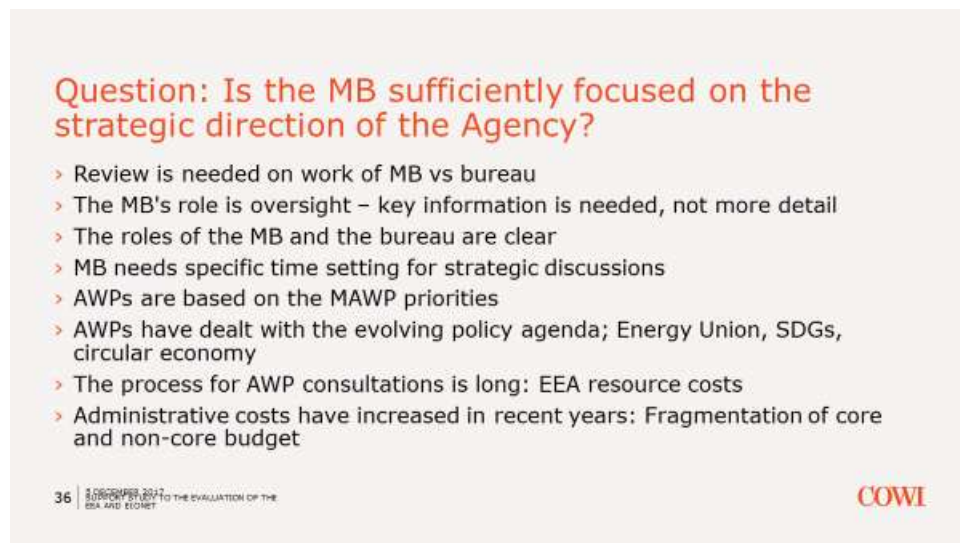*Figure 10-106   Summary of main points from the first breakout session*

In the afternoon, the morning's discussions were reviewed; the discussion then considered whether the Management Board was sufficiently focused on the strategic direction of the Agency. The main points of this discussion are found the slide below, which was presented to the closing plenary session.

Figure 10-107   Summary of main points from the second breakout session

Participants agreed that the presentation of the dilemma in the background paper was correct and that, as also stated in the background paper, the Management Board often discussed details rather than strategic priorities. Participants underlined that the underlying roles of the Management Board and Bureau are and have been clear – the problem has not been one of unclear roles. One participant noted that in recent years, there has been some hesitation to delegate decision-making to the Bureau, with the concern that this would reduce its oversight role. Another raised a concern that delegating from the MB to the Bureau could reduce transparency.

Some participants suggested that there should be a clearer division of work between the Management Board and the Bureau, with the Management focusing more on strategic priorities; many issues could be resolved directly by the Bureau. One participant suggested that the NFP meetings should also have a clear, differentiated role, for example addressing certain operational questions. Another noted that the EPA network provides input to strategic discussions – however, this network should remain an informal forum, not part of EEA's decision-making process.

The discussion also considered another statement in the discussion paper: that the previous evaluation found 80% of EEA's work was recurrent, leaving little room for manoeuvre in the short term. One participant went further, stating that many key decisions take place "upstream": decisions (in Brussels) among the Commission, Council

and Parliament on legislation and policy set priorities for EEA's work. This limits the Management Board's scope for strategic decisions.

Nonetheless, the discussion recognised that the AWPs have reflected the strategic priorities set in the multi-annual work programme (MAWP) – and the AWPs as well as the update of the MAWP have addressed the evolution of the EU's policy agenda (with the Energy Union, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Circular Economy Package among other policy developments since the MAWP was prepared in 2013). At the same time, participants found that neither the Management Board nor the Bureau have been good at addressing negative priorities.

The statement in the discussion paper that information on resource allocation is provided mainly at the level of EEA's four strategic areas, and this does not provide a clear basis for discussing strategic priorities, was also considered. Here, opinions differed. Some comments underlined that greater "granularity" could detract from a strategic perspective. One comment stated that the AWPs at present are adequate for priority-setting discussions. Another participant noted that the AWPs were quite voluminous, as were as other documents provided to the Management Board. There was a risk of "planning overload", though others did not agree with this characterisation. However, one comment called for greater "granularity" to show priorities.

The discussion also considered administrative costs associated with the preparation of the AWPs. Participants noted that the process for consultation on the AWPs was long, and this increased EEA's administrative costs – reducing the number of consultation rounds could be useful. Nonetheless, EEA and EIONET represented a complex system and all its entities should be heard. A participant noted that EEA's separate processes for core and non-core budgeting (non-core budgets include Copernicus and work under the European Neighbourhood Policy) have increased administrative costs, reducing resources available for substantive work.

In the discussion, participants questioned whether the survey result presented provided a solid picture of the Management Board: while the discussion paper cited the answers of one-quarter of respondents, only 17 Management Board members had completed the survey.

10.18.5 EU Added Value

The assessment of EU added value looks for results and impacts created by the EEA and Eionet, which are over and above what could be expected from national actions. In doing so it is necessary to draw upon the key findings from all other evaluation criteria as outlined in the workshop paper.

Two EU added value group sessions were held. Each session was divided in to three parts assessing the following questions:

- For which tasks has the EEA provided greatest EU value added?
- For which tasks has the EEA provided least EU value added?
- What has been the EU value added of including members beyond EU Member States?

10.18.5.1   For which tasks has the EEA provided greatest EU value added?

The first part of the break-out sessions focused on the tasks which the EEA and EIONET had provided the greatest EU value added during the evaluation period.

A list of consolidated list of tasks from Article 2 of the EEA Founding Regulation was presented to the participants as follows:

9   Management of Eionet
10   Support to reporting requirements
11   Collect, record, and manage dataflows for SOER data
12   Manage data and information systems
13   SOER
14   Assessments other than SOER
15   Dissemination of environmental information

16 Forecasting and megatrends

17 Diffusion of information on the results of relevant environmental research

Alongside these tasks, the following benefits were presented based on the research conducted so far and as presented in the workshop background paper.

- Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other
- High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers
- Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making
- Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data
- Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries
- Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation other bodies

Participants were first invited to identify any other benefits. In the first group session the following additional benefits were identified:

- Coordination of activities between members states and preparation for the future;
- Increase in the volume of tasks and activities that otherwise would not be undertaken and provide an efficient uptake of them; and
- Contribution to international commitments on environmental and climate reporting, alongside reporting commitments.

In the plenary session a further benefit was identified relating to the benefits associated with transboundary working.

The slides presented in the final plenary session were as follows:

Figure 10-108   Workshop slide on greatest EU Value Added

Key Benefits	Session 1: Which benefits provided the most significant value added?	Session 2: Which benefits provided the most significant value added?
a) Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other	11 (28%)	8 (31%)
b) High quality data and information on environmental issues available to policy makers	6 (15%)	1 (4%)
c) Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making	7 (18%)	6 (23%)
d) Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data	2 (5%)	7 (27%)
e) Exchange knowledge and best practice among national experts in the member countries	6 (15%)	3 (12%)
f) Facilitates reporting and reduces burden on EU environmental and climate legislation	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
g) Coordination of activities between members states and preparation for the future	5 (13%)	1 (4%)
h) Increase the volume of tasks and activities and provide an efficient uptake of them	1 (3%)	0 (0%)

Overall participants were convinced that national actors and private organisations could not deliver the EEA's tasks as effectively as the EEA and EIONET. Participants highlighted that the EEA and EIONET provided both scale and a degree of independence that could not be achieved otherwise. Participants identified each of the tasks as adding significant benefits. The SOER and the collection, recording, and management of dataflows were the most commonly cited examples of activities that delivered the benefits.

There was agreement amongst participants that many of the key benefits were interconnected. In particular participants highlighted that many of the benefits were closely linked to tasks involved with (high quality) data collection. One participant noted that this was often taken for granted. Participants also noted that consistent EU wide indicators were more credible than nationally derived indicators for comparing performance.

Participants also highlighted that many of the tasks also benefited NGOs and citizens, as well as policy makers.

During each session participants were asked to provide two votes on the benefits which provided the greatest EU added value. As presented in the slide during the plenary session, the three benefits which received the greatest share of the votes were:

- Easier to benchmark the performance of countries against each other;
- Knowledge from EU-wide environmental assessments that is relevant for policy making; and
- Facilitates development and use of standardised tools and methods, thereby permitting collection of comparable data.

It should be noted that all of the benefits were highlighted in discussion in both sessions and the vote focussed on the benefits that offer the greatest EU added value.

10.18.5.2   For which tasks has the EEA provided least EU value added?

Following the discussion of the tasks that provided the greatest EU value added, a discussion was then held on the tasks that provided the least EU value added.

Figure 10-109 Slide on least value added presented to the plenary

Least EU Value Added
» No tasks identified that offer least EU value added
» EEA has been flexible in undertaking tasks deliver EU value added
» Achievement of benefits impacted by two key factors across each of the themes:
    » Coordination
        » Timing of when knowledge becomes available
        » Balance between informal and formal methods
        » Clear responsibilities
    » Resources
        » Resources dedicated to forward looking tasks (e.g. lack of resources for Megatrends)
        » Resources within Member States
        » Governance issues of resources being ring-fenced can impact on EU value added
» Particularly impact on the ability to gather high quality data on environment

Participants universally agreed that each of the tasks undertaken by the EEA and EIONET provided EU value added and that the EEA has been flexible in delivering tasks to ensure that this took place.

The discussion in each of the two sessions focussed primarily on some of the barriers to the delivery of EU value added. These centred around two main themes:

- Coordination; and
- Resources.

Participants discussed a range of issues associated with the coordination of EEAs work. For example, one participant noted that during the evaluation period there could have been more synergies between DG RTD projects' results and the EEA work. Another issue raised included the disconnect between the long duration of the research projects (often three years) and the EEA's annual work programme. Other issues raised by participants included the lack of sharing of best practice in agriculture, although it was noted that from 2017 measures have begun to be put in place to improve the situation. In this regard participants highlighted a delicate balance between the informal and formal mechanisms methods of coordinating work.

A lack of conformity of some data sets relating to the Inspire Directive was also mentioned by participants. The exact data sets were not mentioned by name but it was noted that the EEA had a key role of ensuring that data met required standards.

Furthermore, participants suggested that the role of the EEA and EIONET did not sufficiently encompass the sharing of best practice associated with the implementation of environmental legislation. It was felt that this was an area where there could be significant EU value added.

Participants also raised the lack of resources to the EEA and EIONET focussed on sectoral approaches as a factor that limited the EU value added. Participants noted that the priorities of the EEA were flexible and often very relevant, just that sufficient flexibility in resource was sometimes lacking during the evaluation period. The ring-fencing of some aspects of the budget of the EEA for specific activities was highlighted by a small number of participants as a barrier to enable full effectiveness of prioritising work in areas that could have delivered the greatest EU added value.

Another issue raised associated with resources was the timing of the interaction between the EEA and national bodies. It was noted by participants that the availability of resources within national bodies would vary depending on national priorities. This fluctuation impacted on the ability EEA and EIONET to deliver its work.

Furthermore, participants also raised the following issues that could inhibit EU value added:

- In some cases the EIONET representatives may not have been suitable
- Some IT systems were inefficient and could have been better designed (it was noted that following the evaluation period progress has been made).

10.18.5.3   What has been the EU value added of including members beyond EU Member States?

The final aspect of the EU added value session focussed on the EU value added of including non-EU28 members.

Figure 10-110   Slide presented to the plenary on EU value added of including members beyond EU Member States
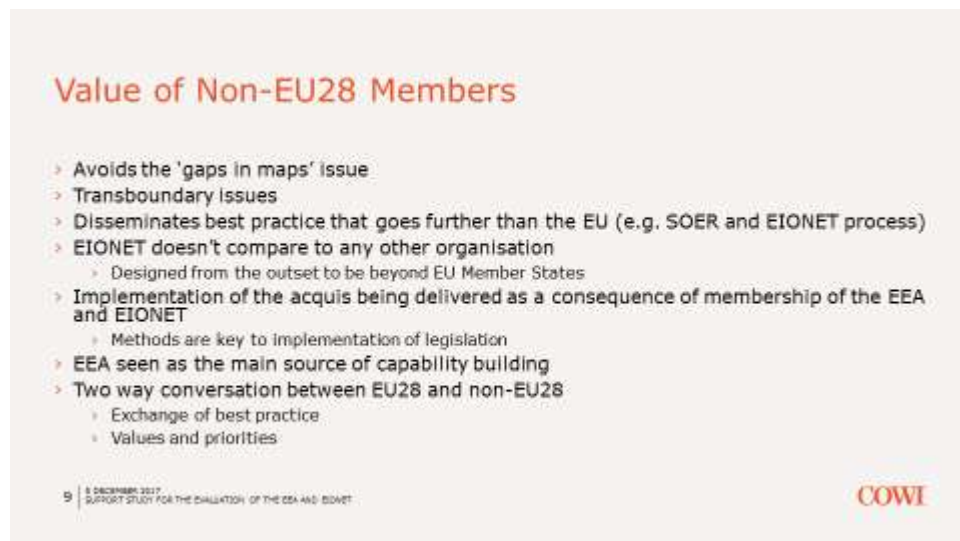
Participants in each group were strongly of the view that were significant benefits that otherwise could not have been achieved. These included the following remarks and discussion points:

- The inclusion of all countries ensures that the 'gaps in the maps' issues are minimised and that a more complete assessment can be undertaken.
- Similarly participants also highlighted the inclusion of non-EU28 members as a method that allowed transboundary impacts to be better understood than otherwise.
- Participants highlighted a benefit of the EIONET and SOER that go beyond the EU. It was noted that representatives from China and USA had sought to learn from the approaches taken by the EEA.
- Furthermore, participants highlighted the point that there isn't a comparable organisation to the EEA and EIONET within the EU. The design of the EIONET was seen as key mechanism to ensure that the EU environmental and climate acquis was transposed effectively in national law, rather than just being copied. In that sense the EEA and EIONET were seen as key mechanisms to build capacity within candidate countries.
- Alongside the capacity building mechanisms a final additional benefit was development was the exchange of values and priorities between the EU28 and non-EU28.

10.18.6 Feed-back on the background document

In addition to the inputs provided on the content of the workshop background document and the interim findings, workshop participants also provided a range of comments related to the methodology and presentation of findings. These comments were made during the break-out group discussions and not in the same way consolidated in the plenary. Nevertheless, they are important to the process and the consultants have taken the comments on board and will use them in context of continuing the work on the analysis and report drafting for the support study.

Overall, many participants expressed that they had expected to see more detail and a clearer reflection of the data collected through desk studies, workshops and interviews. Participants found that the workshop background document put too much emphasis on the data from the surveys. Further, participants were critical towards the guiding questions in the workshop background document, which they considered giving the impression that the workshop was starting from scratch rather than taking the point of departure in data already collected.

The consultants explained that the background document was an interim product entirely meant for the workshop and therefore, it was kept to a more limited number of pages compared to a full report. Also, the workshop was at the interim stage and the Commission's intention was to provide the opportunity for the participants to provide input on the answering of questions rather than commenting on a near-to-final report. The consultants reassured that the final report will provide the detailed elaboration of the data collected.

Workshop participants made a number of more specific comments in relation to the methodology and presentation of data and findings in the workshop background document. These are listed below. The study team noted that the study is framed by the Better Regulation Guidelines, the Evaluation Roadmap and the terms of reference for the study. The comments made will be considered in the on-going dialogue with the Commission services on the fulfilment of these terms in connection with the drafting of the final report of the study.

- More thorough description of the methodology would be useful

- Some participants found that some evaluation questions were not posed in an appropriate manner

- Important to reflect precisely on size of population and response rates when presenting and analysing data from surveys

- Important to consider whether views expressed during interviews are representative in terms of number of interviewees, but also level in hierarchy of interviewees

- Environmental implementation review – discussion whether within or outside of scope of the evaluation in one break-out group. The participants discussed and agreed it is within scope since even though the report is published outside of the period, the preparations take many years and it is a good example of how this information is used. The founding work has been done in the evaluation period.

- Methodology used to assess <u>quality</u> of information from the EEA and Eionet and whether it is objective, reliable and comparable. Some participants questioned why this relies on the assessment of various stakeholders of whether this is the case. Couldn't the support study itself assess this?

- If data from interviews points to lower performance of the EEA and Eionet in relation to clarity on data sources and assumptions for EEA's data and reports, couldn't the support study investigate this further by checking a representative sample of reports?

- Some participants questioned why not all the 15 tasks in the Founding Regulation are analysed under effectiveness, coherence and EU added value?

- There was a comment that it would be interesting to take the 15 tasks – analyse them in terms of their relevance and how things work and if there is anything the EEA should do to improve.

- Some participants from member countries drew caution to the fact that a survey question in the survey for Management Board members on the extent to which the EEA through its activities and outputs had supported national implementation of environment and climate legislation could have been misinterpreted by some respondents (rather understood as a question of how well their respective countries implemented environment and climate legislation)

- A participant reflected during the final plenary that the evaluation's scope is on the past, not the present or the future and that there was some confusion on this during the discussions in the break-out groups.

- Another reflection was that it should be clear in documents from the consultants that they reflect the views of the stakeholders (and not the views of the consultants)

- A participant reflected on the exercise on Relevance made in the workshop that it was mainly focused on the future of the EEA (appropriateness of objectives and task of the EEA and Eionet in the view of the future expectations), whereas the discussion should have been more appropriately directed onto the past EEA's performance in the evaluation period.

10.18.7 Comments and inputs from participants received after the workshop and in response to the draft workshop output document

Comment from Dominique Richard and Andreas Littkopf on behalf of all ETC managers
In addition, on behalf of all ETC managers, we would like to address a message which was difficult to address in plenary during the seminar, but which, we beleive, should be fully considered as part of your final evaluation report: **we stronly feel that the importance of ETCs in EEA/EIONET setting is not properly reflected in the draft report** and suggest that you make broader use of the attached ETC note prepared in 2016 in contribution to the EEA Management Board seminar.

In particular, to support your evaluation as regards to the "Efficiency" criterion, you may wish to consider section 4 of the note which states the following:

- 1. **ETCs were set up** following the EEA member countries wish (still largely shared) to collaborate with the EEA on thematic areas in a proactive way.
- 2. The **financial support by ministries** to the ETC was based on the intention to provide services to the countries (e.g. the original intention of the French Ministry of Environment, when committing to provide financial support to the ETC/BD, was to strengthen the support to a kind of European public service. The ministry saw a need to establish a forum to connect policy with country-based work in the implementation of nature policies. The initial incentives in the UK on the other hand were product focus and bringing in private companies.) This needs discussion at the EEA Management Board Seminar also because the institutional setting has changed over time. Focus in the early years of EIONET was to set up systems, collaboration etc. where countries could learn from one another and create a level playing field by focussing on the quality of systems, quality and completeness of data and reporting, and so on. Now we have achieved a situation where the infrastructural arrangements and information sharing is at a more satisfying level, it makes sense to discuss next steps. That may entail, for instance, harmonisation of monitoring and reporting requirements; develop and apply smart tools for automating parts of the work & QA/QC
- 3. ETC consortia currently work under a multi-annual **Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs)** (currently 5 years), signed between the leading organisation, on behalf of the consortium, and the EEA. The FPAs are implemented through specific agreements, funded from the annual EEA budget with a 10% contribution from the consortium.
- 4. ETCs provide a **unique pool of expertise**, providing expertise on the full range of topics and over a large geographical coverage of Europe as well as contacts through own existing networks across EEA member countries.
- 5. ETCs consist of a combination of **various institutional experiences** from partner organisations: the country perspectives (governmental organizations, link to the Directives implementation at the national level), researchers (innovative and conceptual approaches), and private companies used to work as consultants (flexibility in terms of timing and content);
- 6. ETCs have in their partner institutions a **huge amount of expert capacity** (in terms of expertise, and connections and networking with countries) covering the full MDIAK cycle in support to policy development and implementation.
- 7. The **continuity in middle and long-term** perspective of work is ensured by the ETCs, in contrast to the consultancy work, through roadmaps and rolling work plan between ETCs, EEA and the EC.
- 8. Regardless of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) or the Framework Contracts (FC), ETCs staff is relatively **cheap** compared to consultants' staff thus allowing for much more staff days to perform the work.
- 9. ETCs proved to be **flexible** in terms of activities, resources and consortium composition during the yearly Action Plans implementation and within a multi-annual perspective;
- 10. ETCs allow for **additional flexibility** due to Art. 5 of the EEA Regulation (contracting Eionet experts).

Comment from Mireille Delprat, DG RTD
Additional remark on the background document: page 15, under "Diffusion of the results", "there has been limited input from DG Research…", this goes both ways, as it is sometimes difficult to access the Eionet data *via* the EEA.

Comment from Turkey (Fatma Nur Cebecioğlu)

Membership of European Environment Agency, which is regarded as an important source of information for the public as well as those working in the fields of developing, adopting, implementing and evaluating environmental policies, is an important gain for Turkey.

In this context EEA has significant contributions to Turkey as;

- Standardization of data, tools and methods on national scale; environmental data is stored in different formats in public institutions and organizations and private institutions,

- Preparation of environmental sate reports and reporting through EIONET,

- easy access to all the data by providing an on-line connection with other candidate countries and EU countries through EIONET.

Also, the EEA sets out the structure, functioning, results, future-oriented practices and targets of EU environmental policy. By this means, EEA constitute the roadmap, study carried out in Turkey's harmonization with the EU environmental policy

Comment from DG ENER

In relation to the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR): We made limited use of the work done by EEA which only to a limited extent touches on EE and RES and that we don't have in fact a structured collaboration with EEA but just ad hoc consultations on some of their reports.

10.18.8 Agenda

The agenda is presented below. Note is made that during the workshop, sessions 3B and 4 were merged into one session.

Time	Session	Details
9:30-10:00	Registration and coffee (breakfast snacks served)	
10:00-10:50	Session 1: *Welcome by Birgitte Martens* *Opening remarks:* Laura Burke (Chair of the EEA Management Board), Gilles Gantelet (European Commission) *Presentation of main findings and evidence:* Consultant team *Break-out groups – introduction:* Consultant team	*Format: Plenary* *Chair: Consultants*
11:00-12:15	Session 2A: Group discussions on the evidence and the findings	*Format:* Break-out group discussions; four groups *Facilitators*: Consultants Coffee will be served in the breakout rooms
12:15-13:00	Session 2B: Presentation and feedback on key messages in the plenary (10mins/group)	*Format:* For each group: The facilitator presents (5 mins). Comments from the plenary (5 mins)
13:00-13:45	*Lunch*	
13:45-15:00	Session 3A: Group discussions on the evidence and the findings	*Format:* Break-out group discussions; four groups *Facilitators*: Consultants Coffee will be served in the breakout rooms
15:00-15:45	Session 3B: Presentation and feedback on key messages in the plenary (10mins/group)	*Format:* For each group: The facilitator presents (5 mins). Comments from the plenary (5 mins)
15:45-16:00	*Coffee + cake break*	
16:00-17:00	Session 4: Overview of the most important items raised in the break-out sessions Final critical discussion and consolidation of the workshop conclusions	*Format:* Plenary session *Presentation and moderation*: Consultant

The composition of the breakout groups will be set out by the consultant and participants will receive information about their breakout group when they arrive at the workshop.

The breakout groups will discuss the following four subjects (reference is made to the background document):

- Effectiveness
- Coherence and efficiency of governance mechanisms
- Relevance
- EU added value and benefits

Discussions around each topic will be guided by the questions set out in the background document. Each breakout group will discuss two of the four topics mentioned above – one before lunch and one after lunch. The table below illustrates the organisation.

The discussions in the two sessions will revolve around the same questions, however, the second group will build on – and respond to – the issues and inputs provided by the first group, thus leading to a further qualification of the inputs provided.

Topics	Morning session	Afternoon session
Effectiveness	Group A	Group B
Coherence and efficiency of governance mecha-nisms	Group C	Group A
Relevance	Group B	Group D
EU added value and ben-efits	Group D	Group C

10.18.9 List of participants

First name	Last name	Organisation	Country
Aldona	Margerienė	Environmental Protection Agency	Lithuania
Andreas	Littkopf	ETC/ULS; Environment Agency Austria	Austria/Europe
Anita	Pirc Velkavrh	European Environment Agency	Europe
Anna Katarzyna	Wiech	Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection	Poland
Artur	Runge-Metzger	European Commission, DG CLIMA	Europe
Björn	Risinger	Swedish EPA	Sweden
Chris	Steenmans	European Environment Agency (EEA)	Europe
Christina	Pykonen	German Environment Agency	Germany
Claudia	Fusco	European Commission - DG Environment	Europe

First name	Last name	Organisation	Country
Claus	Kondrup	European Commission, DG Climate Action	Europe
David	Stanners	European Environment Agency	Europe
Dejan	Lekic	Serbian Environmental Protection Agency	Serbia
Doina	Catrinoiu	National Environmental Protection Agency	Romania
Dominique	Richard	European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity	France/Europe
Eric	De Brabanter	MDDI - Département de l'environnement	Luxembourg
Eva	Goossens	EEA Management Board	Europe
Evangelos	Koumentakos	Copa and Cogeca	Europe
Fatma Nur	Cebecioğlu	Ministry of Environment and Urbanization	Turkey
Felice	Cappelluti	Italian Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea	Italy
Francesca	Doria	European Commission - Secretariat General	Europe
Gilles	Gantelet	European Commission	Europe
Hans	Bruyninckx	European Environment Agency	Europe
Herdis	Schopka	Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources	Iceland
Ilkka	Melleri	European Environment Agency	Europe
Jacques	Delsalle	European Commission - DG Environment	Europe
Jetske	Verkerk	Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management	Netherlands
Julia	Werner	German Environment Ministry	Germany
Katarína	Kosková	Slovak Environment Agency	Slovakia
Katja	Rosenbohm	European Environment Agency	Europe
Kerli	Kiili	Ministry of the Environment	Estonia
Laura	Höijer	Ministry of the Environment, Finland	Finland
Laura	Burke	Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland	Ireland
Malgorzata	Bednarek	Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection	Poland
Marc	Chardonnens	Swiss Federal Office for the Environment FOEN	Switzerland
Maria	Peppa	Ministry of Environment and Energy of Greece	Greece
Marina	Marini	European Commission - DG SANTE	Europe
Martin	Fowell	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	United Kingdom
Matej	Ovciarka	Slovak Environment Agency	Slovakia
Michal	Pastvinsky	Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic	Czech Republic
Mireille	Delprat	European Commission	Europe

First name	Last name	Organisation	Country
Nicolas	Perritaz	Swiss Federal Office for the Environment FOEN	Switzerland
Nuno	Lacasta	Portuguese Environment Agency	Portugal
Paul	McAleavey	European Environment Agency	Europe
Peeter	Pärt	European Commission, JRC	Europe
Per	Mickwitz	EEA Scientific Committee / Finnish Environment Institute SYKE	Finland
Peter	Hennicke	Wuppertal Institut	Europe/Germany
Pierre	Prum	Ministère du Développement durable et des Infra-structues - Département de l'Environnement	Luxembourg
Rene	Vukelić	Croatian agency for environment and nature	Croatia
Robert	Bradburne	Defra	United Kingdom
Ronan	Uhel	European Environment Agency	Europe
Sabine	McCallum	Environment Agency Austria	Austria
Sofia	Rodrigues	Portuguese Environment Agency	Portugal
Søren	Nielsen	European Environment Agency	Europe
Terez Krisztina	Szabo	Ministry of Agriculture	Hungary
Thomas	Kochert	Ministry for an Ecological and Solidary Transition	France
Thomas Nicolai	Pedersen	Ministry of Environment and Food	Denmark
Valéry	Morard	Ministry of ecological and solidary transition	France
Vasco	Ferreira	European Commission - DG Energy	Europe
Veronique	Verbeke	Brussels Environment	Belgium
Yrjö	Mäkelä	European Commission, Directorate General for Climate Action	Europe

10.19   Appendix L - UK Eionet workshop notes

UK NFP & NRC Workshop Summary - 17th July 2017

10.19.1   Involvement in the EIONET

Description: Identify the activities that participants have taken part in and the effort involved over the last year
Relevant Questions:

- What resources are used for the UK Eionet? Has it changed over time?
- On which tasks and themes does UK Eionet spend most time and resources?

Format: Calendar placed on the wall. Participants add on their post-it notes underneath the relevant month

Timing: 10 mins

> **Key Findings**
>
> There was reported to be a seasonal workload for many of the participants. Summer months tended to only include consultation activities, whilst busier months occurred in Autumn and Spring.
>
> The level of resource dedicated to EEA activities varied. Resource intensive activities including attending and preparing for meetings, and reviewing reports. Whilst highly variable, these activities could take between 4 and 10 days. Shorter activities included attending workshops and data extraction.

10.19.2   Impact of EEA and EIONET

Description: Identify the main benefits of the EEA and EIONET
Question:

- From a national perspective, what are the main benefits of the EEA and Eionet? (seen from the NRC/institution perspective)

Format: Participants work individually and place post-it notes on the wall. Followed by voting to identify highest ranked benefits
Timing: 15 mins

> **Key Findings**
>
> A range of benefits were identified by participants. These included:
>
> - **Knowledge exchange and sharing of best practice with European colleagues**
>   This includes, for example, the sharing of new and innovative techniques for data collection and analysis, and the exchange of emerging findings.
>
> - **Development and use of standardised tools and methods**
>   This might include, for example, the development of common standards that enables the capture of data in a consistent format
> - **Consistent transboundary assessment**
>   This might include, for example, the ability to analyse environmental themes irrespective of Member State boundaries
>
> - **Understanding of the EU context**
>   This include, for example, an understanding of environmental pressures and issues at the European level
>
> - **Reduced burdens associated with data collection and reporting**
>   This might include, for example, time savings associated with reporting commitments

Benefits were grouped and themed with each member voting on the themes (to highlight the most important benefits). The three most important benefits were networking, tools and methods and knowledge transfer.

10.19.3   Coordination

Description: Does coordination of the EEA and EIONET work effectively? Is there room for improvement?
Relevant Questions:

- To what extent does EEA coordination of the Eionet work effectively? If there is scope of improvement, how could it be achieved?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current structure of Eionet

Format: Group work
Timing: 15 mins (5 min discussion, 10 min feedback)

Key Findings

The discussion was divided in to strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.

Key **strengths** highlighted include:

- Quality of national coordination
- Size and quality of the EEA
- Links between the EEA and other international bodies

Key **weaknesses** highlighted include:

- Lack of flexibility in resources
- Lack of regular updates
- Complexity of the UK EIONET structure
- Lack of flexibility in meetings

Key **areas of improvement** included:

- More frequent meetings and updates
- More flexible use of resources

10.19.4   Data Management

Description: View on data management, information flows and IT
Relevant questions: Split into two categories as follows

Data Flows

- To what extent does data flow management in Eionet work efficiently? If there is scope of improvement, how could it be achieved?
- How do the national institutions / NRCs handle the flows of information and data between national and European levels? Are roles clearly defined? Do the different institutions and individuals involved know who is doing what and where to find information?

Tools and IT

- Do the tools and IT infrastructure made available by the EEA facilitate effective and efficient work processes for the NRCs?
- To what extent are learning and capacity building measures (by EEA, between member countries) being used to increase efficiency of data flows and reporting and other services? For example, involvement of EEA in spreading of good practices in data management to carry out integrated assessments

Format: Group work
Timing: 20 mins (10 min discussion, 10min feedback)

Note – some groups tackled all four questions together, whilst others split them out into the two groups above.

Key Findings

A wide range of issues were raised, although there was no common theme or thread to the issues outlined. Most examples seemed to be very specific to the NRC role.
Issues included:

- WISE not working effectively
- Timing of reporting requirements not aligning with other roles and responsibilities
- Lack of reporting flexibility
- Issues with the EIONET portal

10.20   Appendix M NFP workshop notes

10.20.1 Introduction

This paper summarises the results of a workshop held with the NFP/Eionet in connection with the NFP/Eionet meeting on 31 May-1 June 2017. The purpose of the workshop was to consult with the NFPs and ETC managers to collect inputs for the on-going study to support the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet.

About the evaluation of the EEA and Eionet

The current evaluation covers the period mid-2012 until 2016. As part of the evaluation process, the European Commission has commissioned a consortium led by COWI to carry out a support study. The study involves a large number of interviews, a public consultation, stakeholder surveys, workshops and focus groups with many experts working within and with the EEA. For more information, reference is made to the Evaluation Roadmap, which was also shared with the participants of the workshop in advance: http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2018_env_002_eea_evaluation_en.pdf

10.20.1.1 About the workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to gather the views of the NFPs/Eionet network in particular on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Eionet and the EEA's coordination of Eionet. The workshop was organised in two main sections.

Section 1: In four moderated break-out sessions on 31 May, the participants were split up in groups to discuss a set of key questions, which had been sent to participants approximately two weeks in advance (see Appendix A). All break-out groups discussed the same set of questions. There were 3.5 hours available for discussion in the four groups.

Section 2: A 1 hour plenary session on 1 June, which aimed to present key observations from the groups, but also draw attention to areas that would be worth challenging and discussing in the plenary session in order to qualify the understanding of key issues.

The workshop was attended by the NFPs as well as ETC managers. The attendees and composition of the groups can be seen in Appendix B. It should be noted that the NFPs made it clear during the workshop that they did not have enough time to consult at the national level prior to the workshop. Therefore, the views offered at the workshop were those of the NFP representatives themselves.

10.20.1.2 Purpose and structure of this summary

The objective of the summary is twofold: Firstly, it aims to summarize the key issues discussed in the four break-out sessions and the plenary discussion and to identify the main messages conveyed.

Secondly, and based on the first point, the summary aims to highlight to what degree there is agreement among the participants about statements made and issues discussed – given that four separate discussions have taken place in the break-out groups. The evaluation team has tried to indicate where participants agreed on statements and to what extent they did. The evaluation team acknowledges that there are differences between member countries in how they experience the EEA and Eionet and, consequently, how they view it. **With this being said, we invite the participants to:**

1) fact- check whether the authors have echoed and synthesized the statements correctly and make us aware of any misunderstandings or statements missing from the text.

2) provide any additional comments or supporting material considered relevant for the evaluation support study

The inputs provided under point 1 will be used to revise the text of this note and the revised version will be annexed to the evaluation support study report.

The inputs provided under point 2 will be stored together with other data collected by the support study team. Please make us aware if anything submitted should be regarded as confidential and thus not to be quoted.

NFPs and ETC managers are requested to send inputs to Birgitte Martens (bim@cowi.com) before 10 August 2017. Please also contact Birgitte if there are any questions (phone: +4541762304).

The summary focuses on the key issues discussed and key statements made; not all individual statements are included. This summary is not a word-for-word reproduction of the statements made.

It should be noted that although the evaluation support study has an ex-post perspective, the discussions addressed both ex-post and ex-ante issues; oftentimes, the responses combined a backward-looking element with a forward-looking one.

10.20.2 Summary of the discussions

The summary does not address the guiding questions (ref. Appendix B) one-by-one but organises the statements according to key topics addressed in the discussions across the four groups.

- Benefits and impact
- Costs
- Governance
- Tasks and topics
- Systems and technologies

10.20.2.1   Benefits and impact

All participating NFPs shared the view that it is difficult to express benefits in monetary terms when looking across the Eionet. However, a few national estimates have been made, which can provide some quantification of benefits (in terms of saved costs). The NFP Switzerland referred to national estimates that could potentially be shared with the evaluation team upon request.

In addition to that, the discussion on benefits focused on several issues.

Main benefits

Firstly, all participants agreed that Eionet is beneficial in providing data and information for policy formulation (as outlined in the MAWP 2014-2018 SA1/2). It was widely agreed that it plays a major role in the implementation and monitoring of key EU Directives. Overall, there was broad agreement among the NFP representatives that Eionet provides added value in particular when considering a scenario without the EEA/Eionet. Participants agreed that it would not be possible to arrange for data to be provided to the EU in the same way.

Secondly, there was broad consensus on the statement that there is a major added value when systems for assessing the state of the environment are based on the same methodologies. According to participants, Eionet plays an important role in making sure that both the same methodologies are applied and similar levels of monitoring and data collection are achieved in member countries.

All participants agreed that with Eionet there is much more comparability between countries. This helps all countries get an assessment of the state of the environment in Europe and to compare their own situation with that in other countries. This is perceived as one of the biggest added values beyond the actual data collection efforts. EEA standards are used by the member countries and; hence, the EEA has a very strong effect on the internal environmental data management processes of the member countries. There was a general consensus among the participants that this service is valuable in member countries, especially when national ministries lack the capacity to do so. Several NFPs from smaller member countries as well as those from EU neighboring countries stressed the high value of the EEA in this.

Thirdly, Eionet is seen as instrumental in communicating data and information and knowledge to policymakers and other actors such as the public or civil society. In this context, several participants remarked that information and messages coming from the EEA are viewed as credible and thus having an impact on policy formulation. It was

widely agreed among participants that EEA (and Eionet) reports are read by experts and decision-makers at country level. One participant remarked that those reports which benchmark the member countries (and thus identify countries that are not performing well) often lead to political action at the national level.

In relation to the above points, several NFP participants called attention to the evaluation timeframe of 2013-2016 and the development of benefits/impacts over time. The delegates explained that the Eionet helped standardize the reporting approaches in smaller and newer member countries, but its "impact" in this area has plateaued over the 2013-2016 timeframe. There are diminishing returns in this area.

SOER and new policy challenges

The views on benefits of the SOER 2015 were mixed; different opinions were voiced. One discussion group found that the role of the SOER has changed. Originally, it was the key report containing data on state of the environment. Now, with data being available basically to everyone, the communication aspect becomes more important. An NFP representative added that the SOER reflects the discussion on knowledge creation during the existence of the EEA. Originally, the focus was on developing indicators and gathering environmental data for different topics. This has moved on to more integrated analyses, which is also addressed and reflected in the SOERs over time – and the SOER needs to address this in order to remain relevant.

Several participants added that the work of the EEA and Eionet has helped draw attention to new environmental policy challenges on the national level; including (previously) industrial pollution or climate change. One NFP representative highlighted the role NRCs can play; especially when they engage in processing and assessing data and create knowledge. Eionet publications such as "Sustainability transition: Now for the long term" are seen as creating a positive impact on carrying the topic of systemic challenges forward.

10.20.2.2   Costs

The discussion groups all reflected on the question of the level of costs related to the national activities in Eionet. The input given by the participants shows that it is difficult to establish what the cost levels are for various reasons, including:

- Only few member countries monitor time spent on Eionet activities.

- Time spent on Eionet activities are often integrated with other tasks and it is in many cases not meaningful or possible to separate them. This is in particular the case for the countries, which use the EEA indicators as basis for their own national systems for monitoring of the state of the environment.

Different organizational and staff set-ups in member countries

A key observation from the discussion groups is that the national set-ups differ considerably. In some countries, there is a full-time NFP (or several full-time persons who take care of NFP tasks but also other related tasks). In other countries, this is much more dispersed, e.g. in countries with a federal system, where considerable coordination at the national level is required.

Some NFPs emphasized that in some member countries, there is a centralized agency for collecting the relevant data processed through Eionet, while in other member countries there is a high need for coordination. Representatives of smaller countries added that they (and non-EU countries) face an even more challenging situation, because the NFPs often have other responsibilities and can only allocate a limited amount of time to Eionet activities (an approximate number was given: between 10 and 50 percent of their working time).

The NFPs for Finland and Germany informed that detailed data on costs of Eionet had been compiled and that the evaluation team could follow up on this – however, bearing in mind that these cannot be seen as representative of all countries.

Increase in Eionet tasks

All NFP representatives have experienced that more Eionet tasks have to be carried out with fewer resources at national level (meaning FTEs have been reduced); although the number of staff devoted to Eionet varies from country to country. One NFP representative also emphasized that the number of staff does not automatically respond to the quality level; the quality of staff/input is important. Several NFP representatives shared that less resources (time) is available on the national level for Eionet as part of a larger decision to cut administrative costs in environmental policy areas. This was relevant in particular for the work of NFP representatives. In addition to that, an observation made by several NFPs was that increasingly junior-level staff from national institutions are NFP representatives.

Scope for efficiency measures

Some NFP representatives believed that there is some scope for increasing the efficient use of resources to reduce costs. Reportnet has been identified as one potential driver for efficiency gains; it was remarked that the EEA is currently working on improving Reportnet (see below further discussions under heading "Systems and technologies"). An ETC leader emphasized that effectiveness and efficiency can be strengthened by applying the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles more stringently; in particular no. 2 "collected once and shared with others for many purposes".

In general, all participants see streamlining of reporting obligations and flows as a key topic to be addressed. An ETC leader remarked that streamlining efforts need to be addressed at the national, European and international level. One NFP representative suggested that in general the EEA should have a strong(er) coordinating role in this regard. As regards the international level, an NFP representative from a country outside the EU remarked that streamlining needs to take place between EU and OECD reporting obligations in that the same data is sent to both the EEA and OECD.

Time management for reporting tasks

Another challenge that has arisen according to many participants are reporting "peaks" and how to manage them. According to participants, the need for resource varies over time and is dependent on the types of reporting activities that are required. This finding has been confirmed in a survey carried out by Germany in 2013. Some NFPs said that there should be better coordination of reporting requirements so that the requests do not come at the same time. This could be managed by better coordination of the reporting obligation.

Some NFP representatives remarked that there is added pressure every time a new thematic area or reporting requirement is added, because there are few resources. This was seen as a challenge especially when new IT systems need to be developed or when IT system integration is required across multiple agencies. One NFP representative suggested that each reporting and data management requirement should be assessed in terms of the estimated amount of time the associated tasks will take. Each requirement should have a specific time budget, based on the experiences of other countries. This could be used by member countries as a guidance/reference point.

One way of providing for additional funding for specific projects on member country level is using Article 5 of the EEA Founding Regulation. An example referred to was the FLIS project.[741] However, the use of this Article for such purpose was seen as precarious by one participant since additional funding is only available then for a limited number of NRCs for a specific project, whereas the recurrent work often involving a lot of resources from the NRCs does not receive such funding.

Cost-benefit perspective

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[741] FLIS: Forward-looking information and services.

Given that it is difficult to quantify costs and benefits, all participants agreed that analysis based on a cost-benefit perspective is challenging. There was an agreement among participants that benefits of Eionet exceed costs. One NFP representative described Eionet as "the best system when looking at it from a cost-benefit perspective".

10.20.2.3   Governance

Overall, all NFP representatives emphasized that compared to the previous evaluation, there is now more interaction with the NFPs on the part of the EEA, and that this is highly appreciated. The EEA is seen as an actor open for dialogue. Several governance-related questions were discussed among the participants.

Governance of prioritization and planning/coordination procedures

Firstly, there were in-depth discussions about governance mechanisms for prioritization. There was vast agreement among the participants that more prioritization is needed, in particular in light of declining resources. The Management Board was seen as the main governance body to address this topic. Some of the NFPs representatives felt that there is less opportunity now for NFPs to shape the strategic direction of the EEA. They felt that they have a responsibility to shape policy and strategy through NFP-Management Board member relations, but in some cases they do not have the time or the resources to do so. In this context, it was brought to the attention that only a minority of countries commented on the draft AWP for 2016.

Secondly, strategic and operational planning was discussed. Although the strategic planning of the EEA was generally regarded as excellent, many NFP representatives remarked that planning of Eionet activities based on the AWP could be improved. Some offered the opinion that an "operational add-on" that makes it possible to better understand the practical implications of the AWP is needed early in the year in order to enable the NFPs to plan activities at the national level (whereas now such an overview is only made available in connection with the NFP meeting in March).

Thirdly, the alignment between activities of the EEA and those of the European Commission was discussed. A large number of NFPs emphasized that from an Eionet perspective, there is not always a clear line between the activities of the European Commission and the EEA. NFP representatives remarked that in some cases, it is hard to know who is responsible for the overall data collection and reporting.

Generally, technical working groups of NRCs under EIONET are used to discuss indicators and assessments. Technical working groups of the European Commission are used to address matters related with the implementation of Directives. Several NFP representatives remarked that in some programmes, the different roles are not completely followed through, which leads to confusion. In some cases, this leads to increased coordination needs on the side of NFPs. However, one NFP remarked that for biodiversity the cooperation between the EEA, the European Commission, NRCs and ETCs works well.

In one of the break-out groups, the participants discussed that in some cases, the European Commission will collect data through Eurostat, which has a different reporting format and different data sources as well different contact persons in some of the member countries. Furthermore, NFP representatives outlined that there are mixed reporting obligations for which the task repartition between the European Commission and the EEA is not entirely clear. This has an impact within the internal structures of the countries if there are two different people responsible based on whether a request is through the Commission or through the EEA.

According to an NFP representative, having a coordinated approach is difficult to achieve for NFPs due to the fact that their main coordination takes place with the "Partnership and networks" programme in the EEA and the horizontal unit at DG ENV. This leads them with very little understanding of what is happening with the NRC groups as these are coordinated through the content programmes at the EEA and topical units at DG ENV. A large number of NFPs expressed that they are not satisfied with the current cooperation approach of the DG ENV horizontal unit.

Governance-related responsiveness to changing policy topics and needs

Finally, with regard to the question of governance-related responsiveness to changing policy topics and needs ("agility"), several issues were discussed. Firstly, coordination between the EEA and the European Commission regard to having a common understanding on the needs for adjustments or prioritization was seen as unsatisfying by all participants. Secondly, several NFP representatives remarked that the EEA could be more proactive when it comes to addressing changing priorities. In this context, several NFP representatives brought up examples of how the EEA is able to adjust. One example given was in the field of agriculture where it took three years to hire an expert in that field. On the other hand, sustainable tourism was seen as a field in which the EEA and Eionet were able to respond quickly to a request for indicator development by the European Commission.

Overall, both NFP and ETC representatives acknowledged that it can be challenging for the EEA to adjust quickly with regard to recruiting and human resources management.

10.20.2.4   Tasks and topics

All participants agreed that the EEA, based on recruiting and human resources management (see above), has managed well to respond to new policy needs; this also applies to Eionet.

Task performance

The role of NRCs in providing foresight information was praised as a strong point. This was confirmed by remarks from NFP representatives in that Eionet is generally seen as good in capturing emerging policy needs from a strategic angle.

Capturing new data sources, including exchange with statisticians and data providers outside the network, were seen as activities were improvements could be made.

Challenges ahead

There was broad agreement among the participants that the period after 2017 will be challenging for the EEA and Eionet. According to participants, the focus so far was on improving internal systems and optimizing data collection based on themes (linked to legislation). Now, participants argued that a shift towards systemic analysis and new areas of monitoring is necessary.

One topic discussed intensively was how to address systemic challenges (MAWP 2014-2018 SA2). All participants agreed that tackling systemic environmental and sustainability challenges is a key focus, as outlined in the MAWP 2014-2018. There was broad agreement that a key challenge in doing so is generating data that helps assess systemic challenges, which is currently lacking. One point made was that there is lack of NRCs covering these cross-cutting, systemic topics and that the setting needs to change in order to break-up the "silo thinking". One NFP representative said that an important driver for addressing systemic challenge will political will coming from the European Commission.

Another specific point raised by some participants was that there should stronger emphasis on nexus topics (e.g. food-energy security). An ETC representative emphasized that ETCs are well equipped to address both systemic and nexus topics and provide meaningful support to the EEA/Eionet.

Balancing tasks according to the MDIAK-framework

One main theme at in all four break-out groups was the question of balancing the functions provided according to the MDIAK framework. It was generally agreed that data management as well as knowledge creation are needed. Nevertheless, views from NFP representatives on whether particular emphasis should be put on one or the other were mixed. One NFP mentioned that in light of diminishing resources, data collection was seen as the main priority. Other NFP representatives said that more emphasis shut be put on the knowledge creation part of the MDIAK framework. Another NFP representative suggested that Eionet evolves from data collection to knowledge creation. The reason given was that in the early years of the EEA, not much environmental data was available, and new reporting streams needed to be established. Now that both has been achieved on a large basis, emphasis should be

put on processes and assessing the data, according to the NFP representative. In reaction to that, one NFP representative was doubtful whether the EEA (through Eionet) should go into the direction of making policy recommendations. Despite sharing different views on Eionet-related prioritization, all participants agreed that a stable reporting system is needed, covering the MDIAK framework in a balanced manner.

Suggestions for (new) priorities

While all participants agreed that prioritization is needed in light of diminishing resources, there were only few suggestions for current topics that were regarded as candidates for lower prioritisation. One NFP remarked that the field of sustainable production and consumption will become increasingly important. Another NFP representative said that the main function of the EEA lies with data management, not with policy assessment. One NFP representative remarked that in light of declining resources, the role of the EEAacademy should be analyzed; another NFP representative said the same about the topic "Megatrends".

Capacity-building

Capacity building was discussed in several groups. Generally, all participants agreed that the EEA/Eionet are delivering this service in a good way. A concrete example given was the previous NFP meeting in which Ireland outlined how its environmental agency (in light of Eionet) works and Germany and United Kingdom explained their national networks and data management approach. Other examples mentioned were bilateral exchanges between the EEA and member countries (indicator development in Switzerland) and between member countries (discussions about circular economy and water-food nexus between The Netherlands and Germany). Several NFP representatives remarked that capacity building exercises for the correct application of tools should be supported by guidelines and supporting documents. One NFP representative mentioned the work around the Air Quality Directive as good practice in this regard. Another NFP representative remarked that capacity building could be used more extensively to help overcome barriers faced by smaller member countries. Some countries have robust systems, which could be shared with smaller countries rather than having to build new systems. As suggested by some NFP represented, the EEA (and the European Commission) should be involved in supporting the spread of good practices when new requirements are created. One example of a challenging area is in integrated environmental assessments, which requires new reporting processes. Further suggestions for activities around capacity building were made, including: how to communicate information to different target groups, providing more case studies and generally making more use of information and experiences of "front runner" member countries.

Communication

Communication was another topic discussed. Overall, the participants think that communication is handled well at the EEA. There was broad agreement among the participants that the SOER "communication package", including short briefings in national languages, available for countries was excellent. This kind of communication would be appreciated for other key reports as well. According to participants, this would help the NFPs to raise awareness about other reports and topics as well. One idea discussed was to identify one or two key report per year for which a similar communication effort could be made.

However, on a more general basis, there was agreement that publications are still read by a limited circle of stakeholders and that the outreach of EEA publications and information should be further strengthened. One remark made on the dissemination of publications in the various member countries was that background information is lacking oftentimes. Participants emphasized that it is important that the methodological background of certain reports as well as an executive summary are translated into national languages in easily accessible language for journalists. In addition, according to participants, the EEA does not always keep the publication calendar updated which makes it difficult for the NFPs to arrange for national activities surrounding the publication of specific reports. It was mentioned that sometimes NFPs only become aware of report just as they are published. Furthermore, participants criticized that a lot reports tend to be published just around December; however, this is not best timing in terms of policy take-up as people are away. There was broad agreement among the participants that the EEA website needs an overhaul; an issue the EEA is currently addressing.

In all four break-up groups, the role of social media was discussed. There was consensus that the current social media strategy could be strengthened. Another issue discussed in one group was that EEA information needs to find a better way into mainstream media. Linked to this, one group discussed whether the EEA should apply an NGO-like social media strategy which focuses on creating "buzz" around certain topics on social media channels like YouTube. One NFP remarked that EEA communication needs to be stronger linked with local stories in order to make sure information provided resonates with people. An ETC leader added that the EEA/European Commission "Report on European bathing water quality" can be viewed as a good example.

10.20.2.5   Systems and technologies

Reportnet

There was vast agreement among the participants that Reportnet needs to be revised; several detailed comments were made. NFPs remarked that the inclusion of many new reporting streams led to an overload and capacity issues – and over time, the technology has become outdated as well, which further added to the problem. NFPs are aware that the EEA is currently addressing the overhaul of Reportnet ("Reportnet 2.0"), but underline the risk to the credibility of the EEA and Eionet inherent in the current situation.

Copernicus and map services

One of the topics discussed in all groups was Copernicus. There was general agreement that there is an abundance of unexploited data available; according to NFPs mainly because of the data handling and the lack of a user-friendly website. It was suggested that the EEA needs to revise its collaboration approach with other producers of information who can use the EEA data for other needs; namely the JRC, the WHO, and other agencies working in similar areas.

Map services were discussed by one of the four groups in particular. Several NFP representatives said that EEA appears to be struggling to keep up with some new technological advances. The system for map services was given as an example, as it is based on approaches some NFP representatives thought was outdated. In addition, NFP representatives remarked that it is difficult to access the data behind the maps. It was recommended by participants that the EEA should be more proactive in updating the systems in its map services: easier access to data, possibilities to search, user-friendly formats. Another comment made by NFP representatives was that there is often a lot of data that is unused, and there is no strategy to unlock the data to add value to it. An example given was INSPIRE. According to some NFPs, it does not appear that the EEA is going to use INSPIRE for its map services. New technologies exist for map services, but these have yet to be adopted. The EEA could be more proactive in updating the systems in its map services: easier access to data, possibilities to search, user-friendly formats.

Developing new tools

More generally, there was broad agreement among the participants that member countries should be better included in the design phase of the development of new tools. Some NFP representative clarified that this is not always problematic; however, the implications for the member countries or the administrative burden in places on the countries, which could be more severe for some countries than for others, are not always completely thought through, according to feedback of the participants. This is especially the case with small countries, as some of the reporting requirements place a relatively higher cost on smaller countries.

Big data and open source data

Additional topics discussed were big data as well as open source data.

Big data analysis was seen by all participants as one of the key topics for the EEA/Eionet in the future. Although it was not discussed at the workshop in full depth, the discussions revealed that participants were unsure whether the EEA/Eionet were equipped to address big data. One approach briefly discussed was opening data to others you could assess/process it.

One NFP remarked that the EEA uses an outdated approach to collaboration with third-party users (especially: specialized journalists and outside researchers) who could use the raw data to produce other types of analysis. The NFP representative observed that the EEA has not embraced open source data. For example, much of the re-porting done by EEA is too complex; it would be better to facilitate access to data to enable blogs, the media and researchers to present EEA/Eionet information in a laymen style way.

10.20.3 Comments received

10.20.3.1   Slovak Rep (9 Sept 2017)

thank you very much for sent comprehensine note summary from NFP workshop with clear structure and under-standable content.

As for the SLOVAKIA *National Focal Point* we do not have any comments regarding the document.

10.20.3.2   Poland (9 Aug 2017)

Comments of the National Focal Point in Poland

to the COWI's draft summary of NFP/EIONET workshop for the study to support the evaluation of the EEA and EIONET presented on the 30th of June 2017

Thank you very much for the workshop and for the invitation to provide some comments to the draft presented. We have an impression that only some selected things were covered. Some statements are stuck together but the text is missing the real role of EIONET. What strikes is that the EIONET role is confused with and generally confined to EU reporting which seems to be some kind of misunderstanding. Reporting is a key issue for the countries but dealing by EIONET with environmental information should not be confined to and used interchangeably with technical reporting under EU obligations. Additionally to the comments below we propose you to look into the NFP role description (attached) which should help you to understand the whole context and how broad the role of EIONET is. We would also advise you to look into the minutes of NFPs meetings and some NRC meetings like NRC Transport, NRC Health, NRC Resource efficient economy (& Environment for all) who deal with inter alia broad cross-cutting assessments.

2. Benefits and impact

1) *Participants agreed that it would not be possible to arrange for ~~data~~ <u>knowledge</u> to be provided to the EU in the same way* - **We propose to change data into knowledge**.

2) Please note that providing data in the "reporting" sense is a small part of EIONET (ie driven by EIONET role) work. In fact EU reporting is done no matter whether EIONET exists or not. It is decided by EU directives, Commission decisions etc putting on institutions and people reporting obligations no matter whether they are NFPs or NRCs. As the Commission uses the EEA tools we can say that EU reporting uses some EIONET experience. But <u>without EIONET the data under EU law would be generally provided in the same way</u> as it is decided beyond the EIONET mandate.

The other thing is that EIONET is strongly involved in reporting because many institutions play both roles – are reporters and EIONET members but the reporting processes are led by Commission and their working groups for which countries nominate people <u>beyond EIONET roles</u>.

Material to be analysed: ROD obligations http://rod.eionet.europa.eu / Central Data Repository http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/ - there are only a few dataflows required by the EEA Annual Work Programmes and therefore managed under EIONET mandate, most of dataflows come from the EU law and are reported by people in the Extranet database http://www.eionet.europa.eu/ldap-roles/?role_id=extranet or temporarily nominated (which may be also in EIONET but do not have to; EIONET portal is not equal to EIONET network).

3) **The EEA collects a lot of information from the countries beyond CDR via e-mails, questionnaires, consultation processes, meetings etc.** It should not be unnoticed.

4) The EIONET has a key role in providing knowledge including data but in the broader sense than just reporting. **Please add to the benefits:**

- the role of EIONET in shaping the EEA products including the thematic reports by inter alia:

- strong involvement in the consultation processes by providing opinions to the content (not only checking own data, but proposals what to be taken into account, what to be covered, what is missed, conclusions etc); please note that during the year the NFPs may receive several dozen of draft reports to be consulted by the EEA with the countries;

- providing parts of some of the reports (for example "More from less report" which is done on the basis on country profiles prepared by the countries)

- the role of EIONET in building the community between the countries and between the countries and the EU Agency as well as between different institutions at the country level, sharing experiences, learning from each other – this is something special that makes EIONET a unique partnership network, there is no such other network in the world.

 5) *Thirdly, Eionet is seen as instrumental in communicating data and information and knowledge...* the rest of the paragraph is confined to the reports whereas we propose to indicate also **the EEA solutions that countries can transfer** into the national level. The whole thing is not only about reading the report to know what is the state of environment and benchmark the countries but also to see and learn for example how the EEA makes the assessment, how presents the data, what sees as a priority.

6) The whole chapter seems to be confined to reporting and SOER – the general impression is that the other products are passed over like the EEA portal, thematic reports, indicators, visualisations, meetings (can be seen as product as give concrete outputs).

3. Costs

1) *Only few member countries monitor time spent on Eionet activities* – Have you seen the results of Tapani Saynatkari (former NFP FI) questionnaire filled in by the countries? If it was not secret, it would be good to use the results.

2) *Time spent on Eionet activities are often integrated with other tasks and in many cases not meaningful or possible to separate them. This is in particular the case for ~~the countries, which use the EEA indicators as basis for their own national systems for monitoring of the state of environment.~~* - this part of the sentence does not make any sense, probably some misunderstanding. The EEA indicators use the national data, it is the reverse order. As regards your sentence – this is in particular the case <u>for sending to the EEA the information already generated for national purposes or for reporting to the Commission done via EEA tools by reporters being the members of EIONET.</u>

Different organisational and staff set-ups in member countries

1) *In some countries, there is a full-time NFP...In other countries, this is much more dispersed, e.g. in countries with a federal system where considerable coordination at the national level is required* – this is unclear as it is contradictory - considerable coordination means full-time NFP so this example does not show more disperse case – please decide.

2) It would be worth mentioning that the institutional set-up in the countries (number of organisations and division of tasks between them) impact on the need for coordination at national level.

3) The second paragraph is confined to collecting of data which is some kind of misunderstanding of the EIONET role. Please see the comments to point 2 and look also into the NFP role description document attached and complement with other tasks.

Increase in Eionet tasks

1) Please emphasize that **more and more tasks are put on EIONET.**

2) Please add that **there is an increase in cross-cutting tasks which requires bigger coordination effort from the countries** – it is a key point emphasized by the NFPs, also because coordination work is always put directly on the NFPs shoulders.

3) *meaning FTEs have been reduced* – please explain what FTEs are

Scope for efficiency measures

1) The text is dedicated and confined to Reportnet which is some kind of misunderstanding. See our comments to point 2. The Reportnet is mainly used for Commission by the reporters who may be also in EIONET but do not have to. Nominations for the reporters and for NFPs/NRCs are done separately under different processes.

If NFPs are asked by you about reporting they will tell you that it needs to be improved because the NFPs are involved in it – not because of the NFP role but because of the institutional role at country level regulated by the law.

Of course streamlining the reporting is the key topic for the countries to be addressed. But this is to be done no matter whether EIONET exists or not. It impacts on EIONET as we are involved in both. But if we talk about efficiency measures to be introduced as regards the EIONET network **the EEA management and tools for EIONET cooperation should be mentioned at the first place like:**

- the EIONET Planner to be restored

- the dedicated one NFP/EIONET coordinator post in the EEA to be restored to keep easy and efficient contacts with the NFPs and solve day-to-day cooperation problems

- the more efficient cross-cutting between the programmes planning in the EEA trying to avoid accumulation of tasks for the countries in specific periods

- investing in the NFP – from strongly communicated support at the EEA and MB level, showing the importance of NFPs (to make it obvious at the country level that resources for EIONET are needed) to considering direct financial support of the EEA to keep in the countries full-time NFPs

- using already established structures in the countries for different procedures and processes, avoiding duplication of tasks with other networks and not putting everything on EIONET (like the role of Commission WGs, UNECE contatcs, INSPIRE NCPs).

- using by the EEA the most efficient and easy tools for the countries to collect the information / opinions required under reports and other products consultation / production.

- clear description of the NRCs tasks

- reimbursement of two representatives from the same country for cross-cutting meetings with broad agenda

- full draft agenda of the meeting announced well in advance to let the countries nominate the best experts

- clear full methodology available with results to be consulted

2) **General comment to the Costs chapter**. – the text is focused and confined to the reporting within CDR – **please look into the broad scope of EIONET tasks and add missing information on huge amount of work the EIONET is doing** (including tasks planning, network management, shaping the EEA products, providing information under direct requests and questionnaires, taking part in consultation processes, sharing experiences, disseminating and promoting the EEA products). Please also note that **management of a network including its smooth operation as well as efficient information flow is a key task for the country that costs time and effort.**

3) Article 5 mentioned – the problem of many countries was that public administration could not receive such money from the EEA.

4. Governance

Governance of prioritization...

1) The NFPs would like **the EIONET Planner to be restored**. The NFPs and NRCs need to know what concrete tasks are expected from them during the year which is not given in the AWP.

2) The part on the reporting could be complemented with information mentioned above (see inter alia comments to point 2).

3) ...*with the NRC groups as these are coordinated through the content programmes at the EEA* ~~and topical units at the DG ENV~~. – Probably some kind of misunderstanding, NRC groups are not coordinated by the DG ENV, the network is the EEA and ETCs at the European level and the NFP and NRCs at the national level.

Governance-related responsiveness...

On the other hand, sustainable tourism was seen as a field in which the EEA and EIONET were able to respond quickly to a request for indicator development by the European Commission although the EEA still keeps tourism outside formal EIONET structure (does not want to have the NRC so it is not so obvious to say EIONET responds quickly as EIONET is the EEA, ETCs, NFPs and NRCs)

5. Tasks and topics

Task performance

It seems to be unfair to confine the information here to foresight information and capturing new data sources. These are new additional things. **Please add information on the core basis ie the broad scope of tasks of EIONET.**

Balancing tasks according to the MDIAK-framework

1)...*in light of diminishing resources* / increasing number of tasks – please add it.

2) *Another NFP representative suggested that EIONET evolves from data collection to knowledge creation.*

Please note that it seems that the situation is just the opposite. **The EIONET is the knowledge network which has recently started being seen by some people as only data providers network.** What is more the EIONET roles are also confused with Commission WGs roles. This is confirmed inter alia by your draft report where **you focus on the technical reporting under EU obligations omitting the broad range of EIONET tasks.**

Suggestions for (new) priorities

While all participants agreed that prioritization is needed in light of diminishing resources and increase in tasks – please add it as diminishing resources is only a part of the problem. As mentioned by us above **the number of tasks put on EIONET is increasing as well as more often they are of cross-cutting nature which requires bigger effort from the countries.**

Communication

1) *SOER "communication package"* ~~including short briefings in national languages~~ *was excellent* – probably some misunderstanding, the communication package in English was excellent but in national languages there were only the Synthesis and 2 pages flyer - with very bad translation in many cases requiring a lot of effort from the countries to verify it.

We propose to write *SOER "communication package"* **in English including PowerPoint presentation was excellent.** NFPs mentioned PP presentation during the workshop, it is not the briefing, some countries translated some slides into national languages on their own initiative.

2) *In ~~all four~~* some break-up groups the role of social media was discussed – please verify.

3) The tasks related to the communication role of country EIONET in promoting, at country level, the EEA products and EIONET work was totally omitted. It should be mentioned somewhere.

6. Systems and technologies

1) The whole chapter is wrongly confined to Reportnet (again) and Copernicus.

Please **add the missing information on the EEA and EIONET portals**, **Forum system which is the basic system for cooperation with the EEA** (which is inter alia used to disseminate information, nominate experts, provide comments and inputs). Forum is a great tool but some improvements are advisable. The key point is also to use the right tool to the specific task (sometimes simple old procedure is the best as the new technology may increase the technical work for the countries) The e-mail exchange is the basic tool for cooperation between the EEA and the countnries which is also to be listed under technology (this works perfectly).

2) Missing EIONET planner is to be counted under system.

3) EEA webpages are key for disseminating environmental information.

Developing new tools

...This is especially the case with small countries, as some of the reporting requirements place a relatively higher cost on smaller countires – but the whole paragraph is not only about reporting! **Please do not confine the EEA tools to reporting the data in the CDR. Please reformulate the sentence and refer also to other processes – management of the network, creating accounts of NRCs, nominating the NRCs for the meetings, providing comments to the documents and reports via Forum...** See for example:

Forum system https://forum.eionet.europa.eu/

EIONET Planner http://planner.eionet.europa.eu/

Kind regards,
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10.20.3.3   Portugal (17 August 2017)

Under benefits: Overall, there was broad agreement among the NFP representatives that Eionet provides added value in particular when considering a scenario without the EEA/Eionet. Participants agreed that it would not be possible to arrange for data to be provided to the EU in the same way.

There was broad agreement that a key challenge in doing so is generating data that helps assess systemic challenges, which is currently lacking. One point made was that there is lack of NRCs covering these cross-cutting, systemic topics and that the setting needs to change in order to break-up the "silo thinking"

It was mentioned that sometimes NFPs only become aware of report just as they are published. Furthermore, some participants criticized that a lot reports tend to be published just around December; however, this is not best timing in terms of policy take-up as people are away. There was broad agreement among the participants that the EEA website needs an overhaul; an issue the EEA is currently addressing.

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NFPs are aware that the EEA is currently addressing the overhaul of Reportnet ("Reportnet 2.0"), but some underlined the risk to the credibility of the EEA and Eionet inherent in the current situation.

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Developing new reporting tools

More generally, there was broad agreement among the participants that member countries should be better included in the design phase of the development of new reporting tools.

-

Big data analysis was seen by most participants as one of the key topics for the EEA/Eionet in the future. Although it was not discussed at the workshop in full depth, the discussions revealed that some participants were unsure whether the EEA/Eionet were equipped to address big data. One approach briefly discussed was opening data to others you could assess/process it.

10.20.3.4   Finland (22 Aug 2017)

In the summary report is was mentioned in the page 5 that:
The NFPs for Finland and Germany informed that detailed data on costs of Eionet had been compiled and that the evaluation team could follow up on this – however, bearing in mind that these cannot be seen as representative of all countries.

Now, I'm not sure what is mentioned by this sentence, but in Finland we have not collected detailed information of the costs of Eionet. In general, the amount of work done (part time/full time) by NFPs have been surveyed in the past covering the whole Eionet (NFP survey), but otherwise I do not know if any data have been collected.

10.20.3.5   Sweden

I have read through the draft report and do agree to major part of the summery. My only comment will be about the section Suggestions for (new) priorities on page 10.

This topic is too important to be represented by 4 out of 34 NFPs reflections on what areas to priorities. I would like you to delete the few suggestions and leave only the first sentence.

10.20.3.6   Turkey (20/7)

Turkey's comment on the summary note of the NFP Workshop is given below;

The impact of Eionet to national policy: There is not a direct impact to non-EU countries such as Turkey because of the low visibility of Eionet by policy makers.

Communication: EEA can update the EEA webpages for the member countries in their own languages and update them regularly.

10.20.4 Additional material

10.20.4.1   Guiding questions (used in the break-out groups)

- Is Eionet providing an efficient system for monitoring, information, assessing and generating knowledge on the state of the environment in Europe?
- Have new tasks and responsibilities been assigned to member countries/NFPs since 2013?
- How well are cooperation and synergy mechanisms used to increase efficiency?
- How well does Eionet adapt to new developments?

- Is information provided by the EEA/Eionet goal-driven, objective, reliable, comparable and accessible across the countries concerned?

- How well is Eionet being managed by the EEA?

10.20.4.2   Participants (of the four break-out groups)

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Derek Light, COWI	*Dr. Marion Jay, adelphi*	*Birgitte Martens, COWI*	*Daniel Weiss, adelphi*
Christina Pykonen (DE)	Andina Vllahiu (Kososvo)	Dejan Lekic (RS)	Nicolas Perritaz (CH)
Dimitris Meimaris (GR)	Eric Debrabanter (LU)	Maria Gabriella Simeone (IT)	Barbara Vukadin (SL)
Risto Jordanovski (MK)	Mariann Nemes (HU)	Ninni Bóren (SE)	Lidija Scepanovic (ME)
Jana Basistova (CZ)	Sofia Rodrigues (PT)	Malgorzata Bednarek (PL)	Rafael David (ES)
Johannes Mayer (AT)	Thomas Kochert (FR)	Martin Fowell (UK)	Andrea Muharemovic (BA)
Rene Vukelić (HR)	Katarina Koskova (SK)	Cecilia Stafsing (SE)	Elise Järvenpää (FL)
Astridour Jonsdottir (IC)	Brendan Wall (IE)	Filip Radovic (RS)	Laurens Brandes (NL)
Oriana Hanxhari (AL)	Vytautas Narusevicius (LT)	Jan Voet (BE)	Nada Mlinar (BA)
	Tanya Vladimirova (BU)	Anta Jantone (LV)	Ahmet Göktaş (TR)
Paul Ruyssenaars (ETC/ACM)		Andreas Littkopf (ETC/ULS)	
Silvia Medri (ETC/CCA)	Evelin Dils (ETC/WMGE)	Dominique Richard (ETC/BD)	Anita Künitzer (ETC/ICM)

10.21   *Appendix N - Cost developments by Strategic Area 2013-16*

The EEA activity based accounting system is based on three levels, where the two top-levels correspond to SA1, SA2, SA3 and SA4 in the MAWP 2014-2018. The second level refers to level 2 in the MAWP (e.g. SA1.1). The third level is a 'project code' – each level two (e.g. SA1.1.) is typically divided into 3-5 project codes. The system records staff time and expenses to these project codes.

The table shows the distribution of expenses and time according to the more detailed level (level 2) of the MAWP. This is based on cost and staff data supplied by the EEA. It must be underlined that this information should be treated with caution as the system has been under implementation during the period 2014-2016 and data is not to be regarded as completely accurate, but it does give an overall picture of how resources have been used in the key areas of the MAWP. From interviews with the EEA, it emerges that the EEA has focused on raising awareness among staff about cost drivers, the importance of booking time and expenses to projects, and how decisions impact costs. The staff have gotten better at booking resources to project codes and this means that the data quality is better for 2016 than for 2014. It should be noted that data for the year 2013 is based on an exercise by the EEA to transfer data from the previous activity based accounting system (which was not organised according to the new MAWP) to the new one started in 2014.

Two values for change in resources are shown in the table below. The change between 2013 and 2014 reflects the change in focus when the MAWP 2014-2018 period started. A separate number shows the change between 2014 and 2016, where the project codes and the strategic Programme have been the same. While the overall expenses increased slightly in the period under assessment, the increase has been highest in percentage terms for the first two SAs, with only a slight drop from 2013 and 2014. However, staff bookings to project codes under SA2 have decreased substantially since 2014, and were redirected to SA1.

	Expenses, Thousand Euros						Time booked, full time equivalents (FTEs)					
	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2013-14	% Change 2014-16	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change 2013-14	%Change 2014-16
SA1.1. Air pollution, transport and noise	1,298	1,180	1,324	1,297	-9%	10%	10	9	10	11	-10%	18%
SA1.2. Industrial pollution	-	365	364	357		-2%	-	4	4	4		9%
SA1.3. Climate change mitigation and energy	816	758	791	799	-7%	5%	8	7	9	9	-11%	29%
SA1.4. Climate change impacts, vulnerability a	550	686	779	867	25%	27%	5	7	8	7	36%	9%
SA1.5. Water management, resources and ec	1,259	897	967	877	-29%	-2%	10	6	6	6	-43%	8%
SA1.6. Marine and coastal environment and	756	827	816	802	9%	-3%	4	5	5	5	40%	-4%
SA1.7. Biodiversity and ecosystems, agricultur	1,183	1,747	1,728	1,634	48%	-6%	7	6	7	6	-14%	-1%
SA1.8. Urban, land use and soil	750	1,018	1,011	1,140	36%	12%	5	8	10	10	66%	20%
SA1.9. Waste and material resources	358	368	553	512	3%	39%	1	2	4	2	37%	16%
SA2.1. Resource-efficient economy and the e	535	438	430	611	-18%	39%	3	5	3	4	73%	-26%
SA2.2. Environment, human health and well-b	44	152	85	104	246%	-31%	1	1	1	2	120%	9%
SA2.3. Megatrends and transitions	261	119	171	248	-54%	109%	4	2	4	3	-43%	51%
SA2.4. Sustainability assessments and state of	212	324	553	167	53%	-49%	6	11	9	5	100%	-53%
SA3.1. Networking and partnerships	290	245	191	251	-15%	2%	11	10	10	11	-12%	8%
SA3.2. Technical systems development	-	1,537	1,222	1,872		22%	-	6	5	6		-1%
SA3.3. Monitoring, data and information man	2,226	934	1,038	511	-58%	-45%	35	11	9	9	-68%	-17%
SA3.4. Communication, outreach and user an	1,194	755	527	462	-37%	-39%	28	16	15	15	-45%	-7%
SA3.5. Quality management and operational s	967	1,157	1,482	1,286	20%	11%	15	14	15	14	-10%	4%
SA3.6. Copernicus operational services	-	7	4	0		-95%	-	8	8	5		-32%
SA3.7. Capacity building in West Balkan and E	-	5	1	2		-65%	-	7	5	6		-10%
SA4.1. Governance and management	1,415	1,168	1,019	961	-17%	-18%	45	42	38	38	-7%	-9%
SA4.2. Administration	384	288	354	469	-25%	63%	22	23	24	26	5%	14%

Notes: The staff time booked values are rounded, and % change is calculated on non-rounded values.

Blanks in the "Change 2013-14" columns are for the areas without matching project numbers in 2013 (new areas defined in the MAWP).

Source: Based on information received from EEA.

The table shows that the most important topical areas in terms of expenses and staff are: Biodiversity, air pollution, urban, as well as climate areas (mostly in terms of staff). Among cross-cutting issues, the priorities have been placed on technical systems development (3.2) and quality management and operational services (3.5). In addition to that, it can be observed that the EEA management areas require a lot of staff to support the rest of the work.

Changes in the period are highlighted in the last columns of both expenses and staff tables. The highest positive resource changes have occurred in the areas of Climate change adaptation (1.4), Waste (1.9) as well as urban, land use and soil (1.8). In these areas the increases in resources are observed both between 2013 and 2014 and in the period 2014-16.

10.22   Appendix O - overview of reporting obligations supported by the EEA

The table below presents a list of reporting obligations supported by the EEA. The point of departure is the list of 76 reporting obligations identified in the support study for the fitness check of environmental monitoring and reporting. As the fitness check did not include climate related obligations, obligations related to international conventions and mechanisms as well as obligations related to the EEA WP, these obligations were added based on information provided by the EEA.

The column on role of the EEA provides summary information available from the legislation, fitness check, case studies and from the EEA (entered summary information for the climate legislation).

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
Reporting related to EU legislation on environment			
Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe	No	RO 1.1: Information on Ambient Air Quality	Reporting partner/service provider Production of air quality report Information is reported by MS via EEA's ReportNet The EEA provided a transition tool to get data from national databases into necessary format during the transition phase to data harvesting
		RO 1.2: Air quality plans in agglomerations exceeding limit or target values	Reporting partner/service provider Information is reported by MS via EEA's ReportNet/EEA's Central Data Repository
Directive 2004/107/EC of 15 December 2004 relating to arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air (Including Implementing Decision 2011/850/EU)	No	RO 2.1: Information on Ambient Air Quality (i.e. on As, Cd, Hg, Ni, B(a)P)	Reporting partner/service provider Production of air quality report
Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise	No	RO 3.1: Information on competent authorities (DF2)	Reporting partner/service provider
		RO 3.2: Information on limit values (DF3)	Reporting partner/service provider
		RO 3.3: List of major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations (DF1_5)	Reporting partner/service provider
		RO 3.4: Noise reduction measures already in place (DF6_9)	Reporting partner/service provider
		RO 3.5: Strategic noise maps (DF 4_8)	Reporting partner/service provider EEA undertakes basic quality checking e.g. sense check of data (e.g. that reported in the correct units)
		RO 3.6 Summary of action plans (DF7_10)	Reporting partner/service provider[743]

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[742] Note that the numbers of the environmental reporting obligations refer to the numbers indicated in the fitness check.

[743] "Reporting partner/service provider" actually reported as "EEA/EC". In any case, if this RO implies costs for EEA, they're covered under RO 3.5 above

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (including Directive 2008/105/EC as amended by 2013/39/EU - surface water EQS and Directive 2006/118/EC - groundwater)	Article 16 (5) In preparing its proposal, the Commission shall take account of recommendations from the Scientific Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment, Member States, the European Parliament, the European Environment Agency, Community research programmes, international organisations to which the Community is a party, European business organisations including those representing small and medium-sized enterprises, European environmental organisations, and of other relevant information which comes to its attention. Article 18 (2, b) The report shall include the following: a review of the status of surface	RO 4.1: River Basin Districts and Competent Authorities	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*')
		RO 4.2: Characterisation of River Basin Districts	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*')
		RO 4.3: Monitoring Programmes	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*')
		RO 4.4: Programmes of Measures	Reporting partner/service provider
		RO 4.5: River Basin Management Plans	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*')

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
	water and groundwater in the Community undertaken in coordination with the European Environment Agency		
Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy (consolidated version)	No	RO 5.1: MS to report to EC on the result of monitoring of substances included in the Watch List	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*')
		RO 5.2: MS to communicate inventories of emissions, discharges and losses	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*') Reporting done via WFD related obligations
Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment and management of flood risks	No	RO 6.1: Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk	Reporting partner/service provider[744] Information from the reporting is depicted on EEA's digital maps Reporting done via WFD related obligations
		RO 6.2: Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Maps	Reporting partner/service provider Reporting done via WFD related obligations
		RO 6.3: Flood Risk Management Plans	Reporting partner/service provider Reporting done via WFD related obligations
		RO 6.4: Units of Management and Competent Authorities	Reporting partner/service provider
Marine Strategy Framework Directive	Article 19(3) No later than six months after the data and information resulting from the initial assessment made pursuant to Article 8 and from the monitoring programmes established	RO 7.1: Information on the subdivision of marine regions and subregions	Reporting partner/service provider[745] European Environment Agency (EEA) led a process to define boundaries for each of the MSFD marine regions and subregions
		RO 7.2: Information on the competent authorities	Reporting partner/service provider Reporting done via Maritime Spatial Planning Directive related obligations
		RO 7.3: Preparation of initial assessment, determination of good environmental status,	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*') Both MS format reports and completed reporting sheets are to be submitted via the European Environment Agency's ReportNet system for inclusion in WISE- Marine.

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[744] Reported info is also depicted on EEA's digital maps

[745] GIS shapefiles for MS jurisdictional boundaries were obtained from EEA.

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
	pursuant to Article 11 have become available, such information and data shall also be made available to the European Environment Agency, for the performance of its tasks. Article 20(3b) The reports provided for in paragraph 1 shall include the Following: a review of the status of the marine environment in the Community, undertaken in coordination with the European Environment Agency and the relevant regional marine and fisheries organisations and conventions	setting of environmental targets and associated indicators	
		RO 7.4: Monitoring programmes	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*')
		RO 7.5: Programmes of measures	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*') Reporting done via WFD related obligations
		RO 7.6: Interim Report on programmes of measures	Reporting partner/service provider[746] (marked w '*') Review of the status of the marine environment in the Community, undertaken in coordination with the European Environment Agency and the relevant regional marine and fisheries organisations and conventions
Council Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption	No	RO 8.1: Report on quality of water for human consumption	Providing the reporting platform (Reportnet); Data handling (up to 2015).
Directive 2006/7/EC concerning the management of bathing water quality	No	RO 9.1: Monitoring and classification of bathing waters	Reporting partner/service provider[747] data Tables made available by the EEA on EIONET Providing the reporting platform (Reportnet) Data handling Indicators and map viewer Annual report

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[746] Amongst others, the Commission reports shall include a review of the status of the marine environment in the Community, undertaken in coordination with (amongst others) the EEA.
[747] A series of data tables are made available by the EEA on EIONET

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
		RO 9.2: Identification of bathing areas	Reporting partner/service provider[748] (marked w '*') Providing the reporting platform (Reportnet) Data handling Indicators and map viewer Annual report
		RO 9.3: Written observations on Commission report	Reporting partner/service provider Providing the reporting platform (Reportnet) Data handling Indicators and map viewer Annual report
Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora [The Habitats Directive]	No	RO 10.1: Implementation report	Reporting partner/service provider Production of state of nature report Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
		RO 10.2: National Report on Derogations	Reporting partner/service provider Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
		RO 10.3: Information on compensation measures	Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
		RO 10.4: Information on Natura 2000 sites	Reporting partner/service provider Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
Directive 2009/147/EC (Codified version) replacing Directive 79/409/EEC) on the conservation of wild birds [The Birds Directive]	No	RO 11.1: Implementation report	Reporting partner/service provider Production of state of nature report Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
		RO 11.2: National Report on Derogations	Reporting partner/service provider Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or

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[748] A data table is made available by the EEA on EIONET

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
			other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
		RO 11.3: Information on compensation measures	Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
		RO 11.4: Information on Natura2000 sites	Reporting partner/service provider Providing the reporting platform; Handling data reported by MS or other entities; Regular reports directly related to legislative requirements (state of the Nature report).
Regulation (EC) No 166/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the establishment of a European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register.	Article 7(3) The Commission, assisted by the European Environment Agency, shall incorporate the information reported by the Member States into the European PRTR within the following time-limits: (a) for the first reporting year, within 21 months after the end of the reporting year; (b) for all reporting years thereafter, within 16 months after the end of the reporting year. Article 8(1) The Commission, assisted by	RO 13.1: Report covering data reported by industrial facilities covering 65 economic activities within 9 industrial sectors	Reporting partner/service provider EC and EEA collate MS' data + provide QA/QC tools and feedback[749]. Quality assurance and control of information on E-PRTR website, hosted by EEA
		RO 13.2 Single report based on the information from the last 3 reporting years	Reporting partner/service provider

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[749] Note that "The COM published the information provided by Member States after quality assurance and control on the E-PRTR website which is hosted by the European Environment Agency."

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
	the European Environment Agency, shall include in the European PRTR information on releases from diffuse sources where such information exists and has already been reported by the Member States. Article 10(1) The Commission, assisted by the European Environment Agency, shall make the European PRTR publicly accessible by dissemination free of charge on the Internet in accordance with the timeframe set out in Article 7(3).		
Industrial Emissions Directive (IED)	No	RO 14.1: Reporting obligations on IED-installations (including data on competent authorities, permit information (e.g. derogations), and baseline reports)	Reporting partner/service provider
		RO 14.9: Summary of inventories of combustion plant emissions and energy input	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 14.10: Data on fuel used by combustions benefitting from the derogation	Reporting partner/service provider

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
		(article 31) for indigenous solid fuel	Fitness check: None[750]
		RO 14.11: Data on operating hours of combustion plant operating less than 1 500 hours per year	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 2001/81/EC of 23 October 2001 on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants	Article 7(3) The Commission, assisted by the European Environment Agency, shall, in cooperation with the Member States and on the basis of the information provided by them, establish inventories and projections of the pollutants referred to in Article 4. The inventories and projections shall be made publicly available. Article 8(1) Member States shall each year, by 31 December at the latest, report their national emission inventories and their emission projections for 2010 established in accordance with Article 7 to the Commission and	RO 16.1: National emission inventories and emission projections	Reporting partner/service provider Publication of emissions inventories and projections The EEA produces a short annual briefing based on MS' submitted data Every four years a more substantive report will be produced by the EEA

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[750] However, under 'Current or recent trends affecting RO' it is noted that "The EC and EEA are currently integrating the LCP inventory reporting into the E-PRTR reporting. …"

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
	the European Environment Agency. They shall report their final emission inventories for the previous year but one and their provisional emission inventories for the previous year. Emission projections shall include information to enable a quantitative understanding of the key socioeconomic assumptions used in their preparation.		
Council Directive 91/271/EEC concerning urban waste-water treatment	No	RO 17.1: Information on monitoring results	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*') Reportnet; Data handling; Indicators and map viewer
		RO 17.2: Situation report on the disposal of urban waste water and sludge in MS' areas	Reporting partner/service provider Reportnet; Data handling; Indicators and map viewer
		RO 17.3: National implementation programmes	Reporting partner/service provider (marked w '*') Reportnet; Data handling; Indicators and map viewer
Council Directive 91/676/EEC concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural source	No	RO 18.1: Monitoring and Implementation report	Reporting partner/service provider Providing the reporting platform (Reportnet); Indicators and map viewers.
Council Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste	No	RO 20.1: Report on implementation of Directive, in particular on National Strategies required by Art 5	None - data just stored in ROD

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from extractive industries and amending Directive 2004/35/EC	No	RO 21.1[751]: MS implementation reports, including information on accidents or near-accidents	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 21.2: MS to transmit to Commission information on events notified by the operators of extractive waste facilities	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 94/63/EC of 20 December 1994 on the control of volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions resulting from the storage of petrol and its distribution from terminals to service stations	No	RO 22.1: Report on implementation	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 86/278/EEC on the protection of the soil, when sewage sludge is used in agriculture.	No	RO 26.1: Report on the use of sludge in agriculture: the quantities used, the criteria followed and any difficulties encountered	Reporting partner/service provider
EU waste legislation 2008/98/EC	Article 30(2) The European Environment Agency is invited to include in its annual report a review of progress in the completion and implementation of waste prevention programmes.	RO 27.1: MS implementation reports, including information on waste oil management, reuse & recycling targets, progress on implementation of waste management & prevention programmes and changes to programmes, info on extended producer responsibility measures	Reporting partner/service provider (Eurostat data centre on waste collect supporting data; EEA, with the support of NRCs and ETC/WMGE is involved in the review of member countries' waste prevention programmes). [752].
		RO 27.2: MS to report on targets in the Directive	None (Eurostat data centre on waste collect supporting data; EEA, with the support of NRCs and ETC/WMGE is involved in the review of member countries' waste prevention programmes).

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[751] Note: [Erroneously?] called "20.1" in FactSheets.

[752] The EEA conducted a a survey "across different MS aims to compare the costs of policy implementation with the cost on monitoring and reporting."

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 - Shipments of waste	No	RO 29.2: MS additional report to Commission on waste shipments	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 29.3: MS to inform Commission of deviations from the export prohibition provision of Art 36	Not specified
Directive 2006/66/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council - batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators	No	RO 30.1: MS implementation reports.	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 31.2[753]: MS reports on compliance with batteries collection targets	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 30.3: MS reports on compliance with batteries recycling targets	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste	No	RO 31.1 MS implementation reports	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 31.2 Waste packaging yearly statistics report	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 31.3: Waste packaging hazardous contents report and other voluntary data on packaging and packaging waste	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 2000/53/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2000 on end-of life vehicles	No	RO 33.~~2~~1[754]: MS implementation reports	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 33.2: ELV reuse/recycling/ recovery targets compliance report	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 2012/19/EU by 14/2/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)	No	RO 34.1: MS implementation reports	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 2004/42/CE of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 on the limitation of emissions of volatile organic compounds due to the use of organic solvents in	No	RO 37.1: MS required to report to the Commission periodically on (i) their	Reporting partner/service provider

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[753] Note: [Erroneously?] called "31.2" in FactSheets – should be "30.2".

[754] Note: [Erroneously?] called "32.1" in FactSheets.

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
certain paints and varnishes and vehicle refinishing products and amending Directive 1999/13/EC		monitoring of compliance and (ii) quantities of products licensed under a derogation.	
Regulation (EC) No 850/2004 of 29 April 2004 on persistent organic pollutants.	No	RO 38.4: Data on volumes produced / placed on the market	None - data just stored in ROD
Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) (Including Commission Decision of 5 June 2009 implementing Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards monitoring and reporting)	Article 19(1)

The Commission shall be responsible for coordinating Inspire at Community level and shall be assisted for that purpose by relevant organisations and, in particular, by the European Environment Agency. | RO 45.1: Country report on implementation and use of infrastructures for spatial information | Regulatory monitoring work related to INSPIRE |
		RO 45.2: Monitoring of implementation and use of infrastructures for spatial information	EEA + JRC are reporting partner/service provider; EEA carries out reporting on behalf of COM
Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 – Protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein; and: Commission Regulation (EC) No 939/97 – Detailed rules concerning the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein	No	RO 47.1 Annual reports	None - data just stored in ROD
		RO 47.2: Biennial reports	None - data just stored in ROD
Council Directive 87/217/EEC of 19 March 1987 on the prevention and reduction of environmental pollution by asbestos	No	RO 56.1: MS to notify the Commission the procedures and methods for measuring asbestos emissions and releases from industrial discharge ducts and facilities manufacturing asbestos cement and paper and board.	Reporting partner/service provider
		RO 56.2: MS to report to Commission on application of the Directive	Reporting partner/service provider

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network	Yes (Founding Regulation)	RO 57.1: Member States shall keep the Agency informed of the main component elements of their national environment information networks	Reporting partner/service provider
Reporting related to EU legislation on climate and energy			
Directive 2001/80/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2001 on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from large combustion plants	No	*Summary of emission inventory for large combustion plants (LCP), Art 4.(4) and 15.(3) plants*	Reporting partner/service provider

Delivery process is managed by EEA |
Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC	No	*Application of the Emissions Trading Directive 2003/87/EC (Article 21)*	Providing a reporting platform (Reportnet); data handling; Preparation of regular reports directly related to legislative requirements.
Directive 98/70/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 1998 relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels as amended by Directive 2009/30/EC	No	*Fuel Quality Directive*	Reporting partner/service provider
Regulation (EC) No 1005/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 on substances that deplete the ozone layer	No	*Ozone depleting substances (ODS) reporting by undertakings (Article 27)*	Reporting partner/service provider
Regulation (EC) No 443/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars as part of the Community's integrated approach to reduce CO2 emissions from light-duty vehicles	No	*Monitoring and reporting of average CO2 emissions (passenger cars)*	Reporting partner/service provider
Regulation (EU) No 510/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011 setting emission performance standards for new light commercial vehicles as part of the Union's integrated approach to reduce CO2 emissions from light-duty vehicles.	*No*	*Monitoring and reporting of average CO2 emissions (light commercial vehicles)*	Reporting partner/service provider
Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on fluorinated greenhouse gases and repealing Regulation (EC) No 842/2006	*No*	*Fluorinated gases (F-Gases) reporting by undertakings (Regulation 2014)*	Providing reporting platform (provision of the F-Gas Business Data Repository – BDR); data handling; Quality Assurance; Preparation of annual F-gas reports.

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
			Responsibility for collecting, archiving, quality checking and aggregating information from individual company reports
Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions and for reporting other information at national and Union level relevant to climate change and repealing Decision No 280/2004/EC	*Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 Article 24* *(see column on EEA role)*	*Approximated greenhouse gas inventories* *Biennial reports and national communications* *Concluded transfers under the Effort Sharing Decision* *Financial and technology support provided to developing countries* *Greenhouse gas inventories* *Low-carbon development strategies* *LULUCF* *National adaptation actions* *National policies and measures (climate change mitigation)* *Projections (greenhouse gas emissions and Y removals)* *Use of auctioning revenue and project credits*	Reporting partner/service provider The European Environment Agency shall assist the Commission in its work to comply with Articles 6 to 9, 12 to 19, 21 and 22 in accordance with its annual work programme Data collection and reporting; quality assurance and control procedures; preparation of data estimates; reviews; information dissemination; maintaining database COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 749/2014 Article 3(1): Member States shall report information referred to in Article 7(1) to (5) of Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 with a copy to the European Environment Agency Article 5: Member States shall use the ReportNet tools of the European Environment Agency Article 27(1): European Environment Agency shall be supported by a technical experts review team Article 27(2): The European Environment Agency shall act as Secretariat for the reviews. Article 27(3): Commission and the European Environment Agency shall select a sufficient number of review experts and covering the appropriate inventory sectors Article 27(6): Commission and the European Environment Agency shall strive to ensure that the review of greenhouse gas inventories

Directive	Legal reference to EEA role	Reporting obligation[742]	EEA role
			is performed consistently across all Member States concerned and in an objective manner
Reporting related to international conventions			
Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution		*LRTAP Convention - Gridded emissions data*	Reporting partner/service provider Compilation of data for EU official submission to UNECE
		LRTAP Convention - Informative Inventory Report	Reporting partner/service provider Compilation of data for EU official submission to UNECE
		LRTAP Convention - Large point source (LPS)	Reporting partner/service provider Compilation of data for EU official submission to UNECE
		LRTAP Convention - National emission inventories	Reporting partner/service provider Compilation of data for EU official submission to UNECE
		LRTAP Convention - Projected emissions	Reporting partner/service provider Compilation of data for EU official submission to UNECE
Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats		*Emerald Network*	
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change		*Greenhouse gas inventories (UNFCCC)*	Reporting partner – compilation of EU official submission to UNFCCC
Reporting related to EEA work programme (WISE a.o)			
EEA Annual Work Programme		*Biological data in transitional and coastal waters (WISE-2)*	
		WISE - Spatial Data (WISE-5)	
		WISE SoE - Emissions (WISE-1)	
		WISE SoE - Transitional, coastal and marine waters (WISE-TCM)	
		WISE SoE - Water Quality (WISE-4)	
		WISE SoE - Water Quantity (WISE-3)	
EEA Annual Work Programme		*Nationally designated areas (CDDA)*	
EEA Annual Work Programme		*European Red list of Birds*	

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