

Environmental Statistics

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Environmental Data

Purpose

Produce objective, reliable and comparable environmental statistics at international level to support the work of the Environmental Policy Committee and, in particular, OECD work on environmental indicators, environmental performance reviews, environmental outlooks and environmentally sustainable development. Collect the best available environmental data in OECD member and partner countries and promote international harmonisation of these data (core set of environmental data).

Contribute to the biennial publication of the OECD Compendium of environmental data and to the update of the OECD System of Information on Resources and the Environment (SIREN) database.

Objectives and outputs

Provide a strong factual knowledge and quantitative basis for the OECD's analytical work on environment and sustainable development (e.g. outlook and strategy, sustainable development, environmental performance reviews, indicators). Strengthen the capacity of member and selected non-member countries in the field of information management concerning the environment and sustainable development.

Contribute to the international harmonisation of environmental data, definitions and concepts, and the cost-effectiveness of related international work.

The biennial process of data collection and treatment will produce an updated "Compendium of OECD Environmental Data".

Review of the OECD questionnaire on the state of the environment (joint work with Eurostat for European Union, EFTA and EU accession countries; co-operation with UNSD for non-member countries): review of definitions and classifications, consistency with European and other international developments; use of new international data sources; prioritisation of data requests; review of collection frequency and identification of core reference variables for simplified annual updates; review of proposal to include selected variables needed to calculate "environmental indicators for agriculture" in the questionnaire on the state of the environment.

Databases

SIREN (System of Information on Resources and the Environment)

Main Developments for 2005

General aspects:

Implementation of the Collaborative Plan of Action on Environmental Data Quality, linked to the "OECD Quality Frameworks". Improved data quality in selected areas (continued work). Revision of questionnaire sections for air, wild life and biodiversity, marine environment (ongoing).

Greater use of other international data sources that became recently available, in particular at European level, focusing on "data efficiency", "coherence among countries" and "interpretation". Improved international co-operation on water statistics (as part of the work of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics).

Preparation of a methodological and statistical guidance document on material flow accounts and related indicators (as part of the implementation of the OECD Council recommendation on material flows and resource productivity adopted in April 2004).

Data collection:

Ongoing revision of the questionnaire sections (joint work with Eurostat).

Data management:

Project to facilitate the transfer of selected environmental reference series to the new OECD statistical information system OECD.Stat.

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Environmental Indicators

Purpose

Develop core sets of reliable, measurable and policy-relevant environmental indicators to contribute to: measuring environmental performance with respect to environmental quality, environmental goals and international agreements; integrating environmental concerns in economic and sectoral policies; monitoring progress towards environmentally sustainable development, including decoupling of environmental pressure from economic growth.

Objectives and outputs

Provide sound, measurable and policy-relevant tools for OECD's work on environment and sustainable development (e.g. outlook and strategy, environmental performance reviews, sustainable development, economic analysis) and support related member and selected non-member countries' efforts: indicators to support policy and performance efforts; indicators to support communication efforts.

Further development of sectoral indicators, i.e. agri-environmental indicators (see related activity description) and refinement of indicators to measure decoupling of environmental pressure from economic growth (link to sustainable development; link to material flow analysis and related indicators). Continued use of environmental indicators in the second cycle of country environmental performance reviews, with a focus on environmental decoupling indicators.

Databases

Environmental indicators

Main Developments for 2005

General aspects:

Updated OECD core and key environmental indicators (CEI, KEI); update of major environmental decoupling indicators; proposed set of material flow indicators for OECD use and provision of related guidance to countries.

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Environmentally Related Taxes

Purpose

To provide harmonised information on environmentally related taxes, in support of the OECD work on the use of economic instruments, draw policy conclusions and develop practical guidelines for their implementation.

Objectives and outputs

The OECD/EEA database on environmentally related taxes provides many details concerning environmentally related taxes, fees and charges levied in OECD member countries. The primary focus of the database is on pollution-oriented levies and tax-bases, but levies related to resource management have also been included. The tax-bases covered include energy products, transport equipment and transport services, as well as measured or estimated emissions to air and water, ozone depleting substances, certain non-point sources of water pollution, waste management and noise, in addition to the management of water, land, soil, forests, biodiversity, wildlife and fish stocks.

Through co-operation with the European Environment Agency, the coverage of the database has been broadened to include a number of OECD non-member countries affiliated to EEA.

Non-member countries involved in the activity:

Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Yugoslavia

Databases

Environmentally related taxes

Main Developments for 2005

General aspects:

A complementary database on the use of other economic instruments (tradable permits, deposit-refund systems and environmentally motivated subsidies) and voluntary approaches used for environmental policy was prepared in co-operation with the European Environment Agency. The two databases have now been merged into one, and a new homepage will be created, with queries that cover all instrument categories and a web-based updating routine.