



Recommendation of the Council on Environmental Indicators and Information

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Date(s)

Adopted on 31/01/1991

Background Information

The Recommendation on Environmental Indicators and Information was adopted by the OECD Council on 31 January 1991 on the proposal of the Environment Committee (now called Environment Policy Committee). The Recommendation advises Adherents to intensify their efforts to improve statistics, indicators and information on the environment by linking environmental and economic information and develop indicators and accounting to measure environmental performance.

THE COUNCIL,

HAVING REGARD to Article 5 b) of the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

HAVING REGARD to the Recommendation of the Council of 8 May 1979 on Reporting on the State of the Environment;

HAVING REGARD to the Declaration on 'Environment: Resource for the Future' adopted by the governments of OECD Member countries and of Yugoslavia on 20 June 1985, which states that Member countries will "further develop, exchange and publish internationally comparable data on environmental conditions and promote more accurate projections in order to improve the basis for environmental management and provide better and more timely information to the public";

HAVING REGARD to the OECD Council Ministerial Communiqué of 31 May 1990; which states that "Ministers welcome the progress made by the Organisation in the analysis of environmental issues, and call for a further broadening and deepening of its work in this area. This includes in particular: developing environmental indicators, ...";

HAVING TAKEN NOTE of OECD work on environmental statistics, environmental indicators and the conclusions of the 1991 OECD Report on the State of the Environment, calling for a second generation of environmental information;

CONSIDERING the need for environmental information to support the implementation, development and harmonization of environmental policies;

CONSIDERING the need to integrate more fully environment and economic decision-making;

CONSIDERING the need to promote sustainable development at national and international level, within OECD Member countries and beyond, in developing countries, countries of central and eastern Europe and rapidly industrializing economies;

CONSIDERING the need for improved environmental information as well as diffusion of that information to the public;

On the proposal of the Environment Committee:

I. RECOMMENDS that Member countries, taking into account the objectives defined in the preamble of this document:

1. Intensify their efforts by various means, including through strengthening institutions and financial arrangements, to improve statistics, indicators and information on the environment and in particular:

- Link environmental and economic information through work on pollution abatement and control expenditures, benefits of environmental policies, environmental damage costs, flows and stocks of natural resources and macro-economic aspects of environmental policies;
- Develop environmental indicators and related environmental accounting to measure environmental performance and better integrate environmental and economic decision-making;
- Better communicate environmental information to decision-makers and the public, through periodic reports on the state of the environment, environmental forecasting and other means;
- Improve the quality and comparability of existing statistics, including official statistics; develop new statistics to fill gaps in information concerning environmental pressures and conditions; and develop cost-effective methods and techniques of environmental monitoring and data collection;

2. Reinforce their co-operation within OECD with a view to improving environmental indicators and environmental information.

II. INSTRUCTS the Environment Committee:

1. To support and facilitate Member countries' efforts in this field through exchange of information on innovative experiences concerning data collection methods, environmental statistics, indicators and information communication;

2. To ensure through appropriate co-ordination the development of objective, reliable and comparable environmental statistics and information at international level;

3. To further develop core sets of reliable, readable, measurable and policy-relevant environmental indicators in order to contribute to:

- Better measuring environmental performance, with respect to environmental quality, environmental goals and international agreements, such as those concerning the reduction of pollutants emissions;
- Better integrating environmental concerns in sectoral policies such as agriculture, forestry, industry, aid, energy, transport, trade and urban policies;
- Better integrating environment and macro-economic decision-making; this will require developing and linking environmental accounts and economic accounts;

4. To encourage the use of these environmental indicators in appropriate OECD reviews, such as:

- State of the environment reports and outlooks;
- Economic or sectoral OECD country surveys;

5. To carry out these tasks, in co-operation with the IEA, the NEA and other appropriate OECD bodies, taking into full account the OECD experience with economic surveys and energy reviews as well as the work of other international organisations, concerning particularly environmental statistics and environmental information;

6. To report to the Council on the measures taken pursuant to this Recommendation by Member countries within three years following the adoption of this Recommendation.

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