

11 June 2020

# Preparing for new ETCs under the new strategy: Overview of the Review and Designation process.

Paul McAleavey, Head of Programme CAS

# European Topic Centres – Process leading to designation



# ETC Review Committee – Terms of reference

- To assess the current ETC landscape and its adequacy:
  - in terms of policies and priorities
  - in light of the EEA evaluation
  - in the context of the new EEA/Eionet strategy, including emerging needs;
- To bring forward before the June 2020 meeting of the Management Board **an overall approach to ETCs** from 2021 to 2025;
- To bring forward at the October 2020 meeting of the Management Board a report documenting its findings, **recommendations** as well as **outline of tasks and priorities** to be specified in the Terms of Reference for future ETC support.

# Key process steps and milestones (revised timeline)

Milestones	When
Decision on ETC review timetable and mandate and composition of the committee.	December 2019
Review Committee proposal on approach on ETCs	May 2020
MB (discussion) and guidance on selected approach for ETCs	June 2020
Conclusion of the Review Committee work	Summer 2020
Update to the Bureau	October 2020
MB Decision on ETC calls	December 2020
Designation of new ETCs and instruction to conclude agreements	June 2021
ETC Agreements concluded	(Oct –Nov 2021)



# Preparing for new ETCs under the new strategy: Overall approach and key challenges

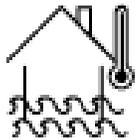
Pierre Prum, alternate MB member from Luxembourg – ETC  
Review Committee Chair

# EEA-Eionet Strategy 2021-2030: Areas of work



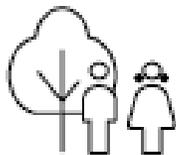
## Biodiversity and ecosystems

Faced with continued biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, what are the most effective policies and measures? We will work to further identify the causes as well as solutions, including nature-based solutions.



## Climate change, mitigation and adaptation

Is Europe becoming more resilient and less vulnerable to climate change? Is it taking sufficient action to achieve climate neutrality by 2050? We will monitor this transition and support the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to a changing climate.



## Human health and the environment

We will assess the impacts on human health caused by environmental pollutants and the Europe's changing climate. This includes improving our understanding of the role that social and demographic factors play in influencing the exposure and vulnerability of European citizens, and the benefits occurring from measures introduced to address pollution.



## Resource use and circular economy

We will improve our understanding of the environment and climate impacts caused by Europe's production and consumption of raw materials, products and services. This includes addressing resource efficiency and waste dimensions, as well as supporting the implementation and monitoring of circular economy actions across Europe, and the sharing of best practices.



## Sustainability trends, prospects and responses

We will assess developments towards sustainability across policy priorities, including drivers of change, systems dynamics, synergies and trade-offs. We will engage stakeholders on future transitions and innovative responses.



# Over-arching statement from the Review Committee

- The Review Committee drew rapid conclusions that the overall structure of ETCs should be aligned with the new EEA Strategy and with environment and climate policies (European Green Deal (EGD), 8<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Programme (EAP), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)).
- There was also a consensus that ETCs should ensure continuity of the activities related to current reporting obligations while organising to respond needs of new policy initiatives.
- For this, a new integrated and systemic approach, multi-disciplinary expertise, more foresight, coordination and interlinkages between the ETCs will be needed.
- This evolution should be reflected in the composition of the ETCs and their partnerships with relevant organisations.

# Questions from EEA to Review Committee

- 1. Does the background document set out the right priorities for the focus of ETC support and the right policy domains?**
- 2. How should the set-up of the ETCs enable and encourage cross-cutting cooperation between all the ETCs, particularly considering the foreseen 6th area of ETC support on data integration?**
- 3. How should the EEA/Eionet ambition to be more responsive to country needs be reflected in the design of new ETCs?**
- 4. What is the role of ETCs in remaining connected and linking to latest developments in science?**

# Overall approach for ETC landscape

EEA strategy work area	ETC topic	Core domains/tasks
<b>Biodiversity and ecosystems</b>	ETC on biodiversity and ecosystems	Biodiversity and Ecosystem-based management for land, marine and freshwater (ecological status), nature's contribution to people, natural capital accounting.
<b>Climate change mitigation and adaptation</b>	ETC(s) on climate change	Climate change, mitigation and adaptation.
<b>Human health and the environment</b>	ETC on health & pollution	Air quality and emissions, chemicals.
<b>Resource use and circular economy</b>	ETC on circular economy	Material flows, waste, sustainable production and consumption and digitization perspectives.
<b>Sustainability, trends prospects and responses</b>	ETC on sustainability and systems analysis	Information across systems and themes in support of SOER and EGD processes; Foresight; Solution oriented knowledge (including sustainable finance and innovation).
<b>transverse</b>	ETC on data integration	Spatio-temporal data integration; facilitating and servicing technical and organizational means (Copernicus / EO as well as land(use); data integration and digitization)

# Open questions across 6 ETC domains identified by the Review Committee

## **ETC on biodiversity and ecosystems:**

The relation to agriculture is not yet clear. The scope could also include food production and soil. Further discussion is also needed on the inclusion of water and marine in the scope.

## **ETC(s) on climate change:**

Members of the Review Committee held opinions both in favour of 1 or 2 ETCs covering climate change. Possibly including energy. Placement of land use and transport unclear.

## **ETC on health & pollution:**

Scope to include air quality, emissions and chemicals. Clarify transport & water quality.

## **ETC on circular economy:**

Shared competency with other ETCs on water quantity; Scope could possibly include built environment.

## **ETC on sustainability and systems analysis:**

Provides Information across systems. Shared competency on systems and transformative aspects with all ETCs.

## **ETC on data integration:**

Further clarification needed on placing wider aspects of land, soil, new technology, data intelligence, and wider impacts of digitization strategy.



# Next steps

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- Set up recommendations
- Outline tasks and priorities
- When?
- By the end of the summer!



11 June 2020

# Preparing for new ETCs under the EEA-Eionet strategy 2021-2030: EEA Response to Review Committee Findings

Hans Bruyninckx – EEA Executive Director

# EEA – Eionet strategy 2030

## EEA-Eionet Strategy 2021-2030

### Data and understanding for a pivotal decade

European policies have identified tackling climate and environment challenges as this generation's defining task. To achieve a sustainable future, policy initiatives, including the European Green Deal and the 8th Environment Action Programme (8th EAP), call for action under the following headings:

- Halt biodiversity loss and restore ecosystems
- Achieve net zero emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and climate resilience
- Achieve a zero-pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment
- Achieve resource efficiency in a circular economy
- Mainstream sustainability in all EU policies

We will play a key role in supporting these actions under the European Green Deal and in the implementation of the 8th EAP.

### How we will work: Strategic Objectives

We set the following strategic objectives to deliver the joint vision for 2030:



#### SO1: Supporting policy implementation and sustainability transitions

Produce evidence-based knowledge to support the implementation of policies and development of new policies to accelerate and scale up the transition to sustainability.



#### SO2: Providing timely input to solutions for sustainability challenges

Deliver targeted inputs to emerging policy and public discussions, by mobilising and communicating knowledge, engaging in ongoing debates on innovative solutions and to increasingly engage on demand.



#### SO3: Building stronger networks and partnerships

Strengthen our network through more active engagement at the country level and work with other leading organisations in order to quickly tap into the knowledge and expertise held in European countries and beyond.



#### SO4: Making full use of the potential of data, technology and digitalisation

Embrace new technologies, digitalisation, big data, artificial intelligence and earth observation to support decision making.



#### SO5: Resourcing our shared ambitions

Develop structures, expertise and capacity across our network to meet diverse and evolving knowledge needs, securing and diversifying the resources needed to achieve our joint vision.

### What we want to achieve

Europe has set ambitious environment and climate goals to support its transition to greater sustainability. These will be achieved through a series of decisions and choices at different levels – European, national and local. Our vision is to enable a sustainable Europe through trusted and actionable knowledge for informed decision-making on priorities and solutions. We will be the leading network for policy-relevant environment and climate knowledge at European Union and country levels. We will ensure continuous monitoring for full implementation of environment and climate policies and supporting Europe's future policy ambitions.



The environmental ambition of a green transformation requires Europe to work with its neighbours and partners. We will mobilise influence, expertise and resources in support of these ambitions in the immediate neighbourhood.

### What we do: Areas of work

To achieve our strategic objectives, we will deliver timely knowledge across five, interlinked, areas of work:



#### Biodiversity and ecosystems

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#### Sustainability trends, prospects and responses

We will assess developments towards sustainability across policy priorities, including drivers of change, systems dynamics, synergies and trade-offs. We will engage stakeholders on future transitions and innovative responses.

These areas impact each other. They share common drivers of change and impacts such as energy, mobility, food and housing. We will deliver these areas of work through effective data and information services, administration and communication.



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# Challenges identified by ETC Review Committee

EEA work area	ETC RC Open questions	EEA response
<b>Biodiversity and ecosystems</b>	The relation to <b>agriculture</b> is not yet clear. Scope could also include <b>food production and soil</b> . Questions about inclusion of water and marine in the scope.	Lead for <b>agriculture</b> and <b>food systems</b> as well as for water and marine should lie with ETC Biodiversity and ecosystems. Capacity and competence on agricultural and food systems as well as marine and freshwater will be required in more than one ETC.
<b>Climate change mitigation and adaptation</b>	Possibly including energy. Questions on inclusion of <b>land use</b> and <b>transport</b> . (Members of the Review Committee held opinions both in favour of <b>1 or 2 ETCs</b> covering climate change),	EEA proposes <b>two ETCs</b> . Lead for <b>energy, transport (&amp; mobility)</b> should lie with ETC Climate change mitigation. This ETC should include mitigation aspects of emissions related to <b>buildings</b> . Second ETC to focus on Climate Change adaptation and LULUCF.
<b>Human health and the environment</b>	Suggest title: <b>ETC on health &amp; pollution</b> . Clarification on <b>transport &amp; water quality</b>	EEA suggests to keep titles aligned with strategy and SPD. Transport and water related expertise needed in this ETC on Human Health and Environment, although not the lead on these.
<b>Resource use and circular economy</b>	Suggest title: <b>ETC focused on circular economy</b> . Shared competency with other ETCs on <b>water quantity</b> ; possibly including <b>built environment</b>	<b>Industry</b> included in scope of this ETC on Resource use and circular economy. ETC includes aspects of <b>built environment</b> relating to resource use.
<b>Sustainability, trends prospects and responses</b>	Suggest title: <b>ETC on sustainability and systems analysis</b> . Shared competency on systems thinking and transformative aspects with all ETCs.	The focus of this ETC is <b>cross-sectoral</b> and <b>cross-system</b> in support of SOER, SDG and Green Deal actions. The scope should include <b>foresight</b> ; <b>solutions</b> oriented knowledge (including <b>sustainable finance</b> and innovation) and <b>urban</b> (built environment). EEA suggests to keep titles aligned with strategy and SPD. EEA will also draw on other sources of knowledge for work in these domains.
<b>Data integration and digitalization</b>	<b>ETC focused on data integration</b> . Further clarification needed on placing wider aspects of <b>land, soil, new technology, data intelligence</b> , and wider environmental impact of <b>digitalisation</b>	ETC on data integration and digitalization should help provide coherent approach across EEA, Eionet and EC on data (flow) management, advancing the use of <b>e-reporting tools</b> for <b>data sharing and data intelligence</b> . ETC should lead on <b>land systems, soil, Inspire and Copernicus</b> .



# ETC Biodiversity and ecosystems

- **Main areas of focus (thematic content areas)**
  - Streamlining of reporting under related EU legislation (nature, water, marine, maritime, air)
  - Biodiversity across terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems
  - Ecosystems resilience and functions, dependencies and connectivity (European 'ecological network', ecosystem natural capital)
- **Lead on European Green Deal related actions**
  - Biodiversity strategy to 2030
  - Farm to Fork (Common Agricultural Policy)
- **Lead on sectors and systems**
  - Farming (land and sea – agriculture, grazing, forestry, fishing)
  - Water and maritime activities
  - Food system

# ETC Climate change mitigation

- **Main areas of focus (thematic content areas)**
  - Mitigation of climate change (decarbonisation, achieving climate neutrality)
  - Protection of the ozone layer
  - Renewable energy, energy efficiency
- **Lead on European Green Deal related actions**
  - Increasing the EU's climate ambition for 2030 and 2050
  - Supplying clean, affordable and secure energy
  - Building and renovating in an energy and resource efficient way
  - Accelerating the shift to sustainable and smart mobility
- **Lead on sectors and systems**
  - Energy
  - Transport and mobility
  - Buildings (emissions)

# ETC Climate change adaptation and LULUCF

- **Main areas of focus (thematic content areas)**
  - Climate change impacts and vulnerability
  - Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction
  - Land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF)
- **Lead on European Green Deal related actions:**
  - Increasing the EU's climate ambition for 2030 and 2050
  - EU strategy on adaptation to climate change
- **Lead on sector and systems**
  - Multiple links to sectors and systems coordinated with other ETCs

# ETC Human health and the environment

- **Main areas of focus (thematic content areas)**
  - Better understanding of health impacts from environment and climate pressures
  - Benefits to well-being delivered by healthy environments
  - Supporting policy implementation: Air quality, Air pollutant emissions, Chemicals, Environmental noise, Industrial releases (E-PRTR, UWWT etc), water quality, soil contamination
  - Exploring links between environment/climate pressures and social inequalities, socio-economic dimensions
- **Lead on European Green Deal related actions**
  - A zero pollution ambition for a toxic free environment
  - Chemicals strategy for sustainability
  - Just transition
- **Lead on sectors and systems**
  - Industry
  - Chemicals system

# ETC Resource use and circular economy

- **Main areas of focus (Thematic content areas):**
  - Monitoring of progress towards a circular economy
  - Understanding the environmental and climate impacts of CEAP key-product value chains
  - Supporting waste policy implementation: waste prevention and early warning mechanism
  - Analysing the environmental and climate aspects of Europe's material and resource flows, resource efficiency, and use of critical raw materials
  - Assessing societal sustainable consumption and production dimensions
- **Lead on European Green Deal related actions**
  - Mobilising industry for a clean and circular economy (Circular Economy Action Plan, 'sustainable products' policy; EU industrial strategy,);
  - Building and renovating in an energy and resource efficient way
- **Sectors / systems in scope:**
  - Consumption and production systems from a resource perspective
  - Built environment and infrastructure from a resource use and efficiency perspective

# ETC Sustainability trends, prospects and responses

- **Sustainability monitoring and assessment**

- Supporting development indicator-based monitoring frameworks that inform on progress across EU policy priorities – acquis, 8<sup>th</sup> EAP, Environmental Implementation Review, EGD, SDGs
- Supporting systems-based integrated assessments for EGD and 8<sup>th</sup> EAP - resource nexus, drivers of change, SDGs synergies/trade-offs - drawing on latest findings from EU research

- **Enablers of sustainability transitions**

- Supporting development of response-oriented knowledge for EGD and 8<sup>th</sup> EAP on enablers of transitions such as sustainable finance, price-mechanisms, trade, and technological and social innovation
- Supporting development of knowledge on governance of transitions focused on EU Treaty principles, sectoral/systems policy integration, policy coherence and urban sustainability

- **Foresight**

- Supporting EEA's contribution to the EU Strategic Foresight initiative in cooperation with NRC FLIS, Environment Knowledge Community and OECD – Foresight for Action
- Facilitating stakeholder interactions on pathways for sustainability transitions for SOER 2025 with NRC FLIS and NRC SoE, in support to EGD and 8<sup>th</sup> EAP and in line with SDGs

# ETC on Data Integration and Digitalisation

- **Monitoring and e-reporting**

- Supporting a coherent approach across EEA, Eionet and EC on data flow management, advancing the use of e-reporting tools for data sharing (incl. training, Inspire implementation)
- Supporting thematic nexus analysis with data by providing a coherent basis for inter-disciplinary co-creation (incl. Biodiversity, Zero pollution, LULUCF, Urban, SDG)

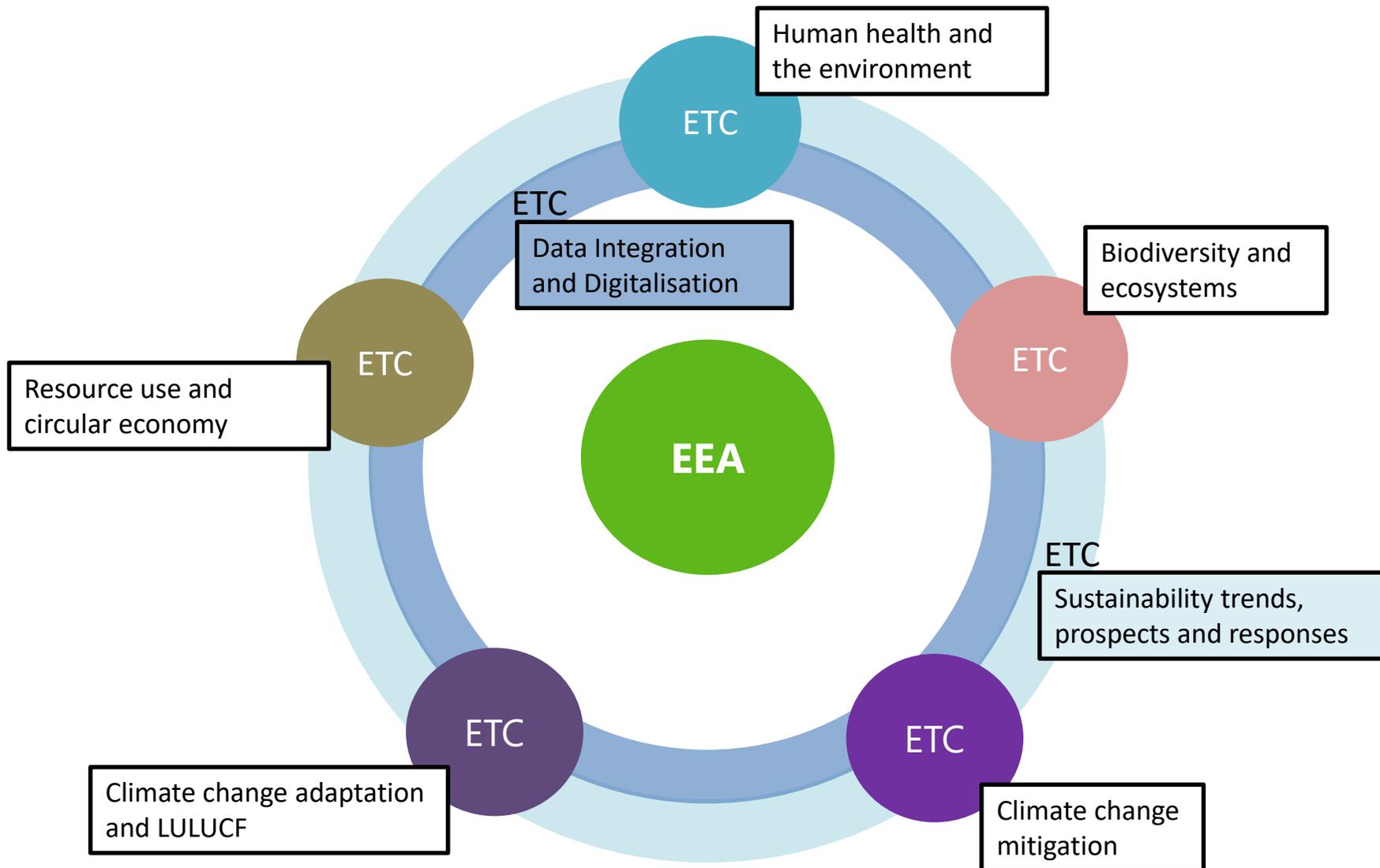
- **Data intelligence:**

- Supporting data integration and analytics of a) sectoral statistics, b) geospatial data, and c) thematic reporting using EEA applied standards, common workspace, data cubes, data mining tools, GIS, artificial intelligence and big data
- Taking a lead on spatio-temporal data integration across different aspects and contributing to Destination Earth and the European Green Data Space

- **Copernicus:**

- Supporting EEA's contribution to the EU Space programme (i.e. in situ and land monitoring)
- Facilitating the user uptake of Copernicus services by EEA and Eionet related to environment and climate change monitoring

# ETC landscape 2022 – 2025



## Explanatory notes:

- Figure shows management landscape of ETCs and central role of EEA. Purpose of diagram is not at this stage to show relationship with countries or overall working of Eionet.
- ETC is a key element of Eionet modernization.

# Governance implications of ETC landscape 2022 – 2025

Strong internal governance at EEA required to ensure:

- Integrated perspectives in work planning
- Systemic approaches
- Management of interlinkages
- Delivery of the SPD to ensure impact

