

Item 5. Follow-up to 9th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference and preparation of mid-term review of Conference's main outcomes

Informal inter-agency coordination group on environmental assessments for Ukraine

Committee on Environmental Policy

Twenty-eighth session

1–3 November 2022

Palais des Nations, Geneva





9th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Oct. 2022)

Ministers invited the ECE secretariat, in cooperation with UNEP, OECD and others,

- to prioritize assessing the most urgent environmental needs in Ukraine based upon the methodology of the ECE Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Programme and on the results of ongoing and planned impacts assessments
- to make recommendations to advance a sustainable recovery of the country
 - in line with the Lugano Declaration and its seven principles adopted at the Ukraine Recovery Conference of 4–5 July 2022



70th session of Economic Commission for Europe (April 2023)

- Requested the ECE secretariat and relevant subsidiary bodies to continue and intensify efforts towards the implementation of its projects on the reconstruction of Ukraine
- Requested the ECE secretariat to continue to assist Ukraine and neighbouring member States in recovering and rebuilding from the economic, environmental, infrastructure, energy and social effects of Russia's aggression to the extent possible within available resources and within the context of existing mandates.

Purpose and objectives (1/2)



Before any “EPR-like” process is launched, and given the ongoing war

ECE, UNEP and OECD established an informal inter-agency group on environmental assessments for Ukraine, whose aim is

- to support the application of robust environmental assessments
- to enhance coherence between the assessments, with a focus on the substantive results and methodological approaches applied in carrying them out
- to advise on how to use them to inform the post-war green reconstruction and recovery of Ukraine





Purpose and objectives (2/2)



UNEP

Specific objectives include

- Exchange information on ongoing and planned environmental impact assessments
- Enhance coherence between assessment processes and methodologies, in support of their robustness and adequacy
- Explore means and technologies for strengthening environmental assessment
- Support the identification of priorities for remediation or reconstruction
- Identify possible methodologies and processes for defining remediation measures
- Promote principles for green recovery through advocacy and advisory support

The objectives may also evolve as the situation, and the group's understanding of the situation, develops over time.



Membership

ECE, UNEP, OECD, UNIDO, UNDP, World Bank, OSCE, Ramsar Convention Secretariat and UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Ukraine

Limited to international organizations

Others invited as observers of or participants in the group's meetings and activities.

Limited financial support received by some members.



Seminar on Assessments of the Environmental Damage Resulting from the Russian Invasion of Ukraine, 16 February 2023

- Provided a platform for different actors to **share** insights on findings and approaches taken so far by them to track environmental damage.
- Participants focused on the substantive results of their assessments and the methodological approaches applied in carrying them out.
- Discussions underscored that strengthening **coordination** and fostering **coherence** between assessment approaches will be crucial to obtain a meaningful **overall picture** of environmental impacts.
- 120 participants (representatives of Government and Parliament of Ukraine, government officials from other ECE member States, UN entities, international organizations including OECD, OSCE and IUCN, multilateral development banks including World Bank and Council of Europe Development Bank, and international and Ukrainian NGOs)



Seminar on Assessments of the Environmental Damage Resulting from the Russian Invasion of Ukraine: The Use of Earth Observations and Remote Sensing, 24 May 2023

- Focused on remote sensing using satellite imagery and their analysis, other Earth observations methods as well as the links between remote and ground-based analysis
- **Experts** from various organizations presented methods already applied in Ukraine and those that could be used, focusing on their potential and limitations.
- Ongoing initiatives and opportunities for **collaboration** were also considered
- 98 participants



Other activities

- Members of the group have provided or facilitated the provision of **expert comments and reviews** on, for example, the draft air pollution methodology developed by the Scientific and Expert Council of the State Environmental Inspectorate of Ukraine
- Seminar to present the UNEP-led rapid environmental assessment of the breach of the **Kakhovka Dam**, planned for the last quarter of 2023
- Seminar on use of Earth observations and remote sensing for assessing **damage to ecosystems**, planned for end of year



UNECE

Mapping exercise

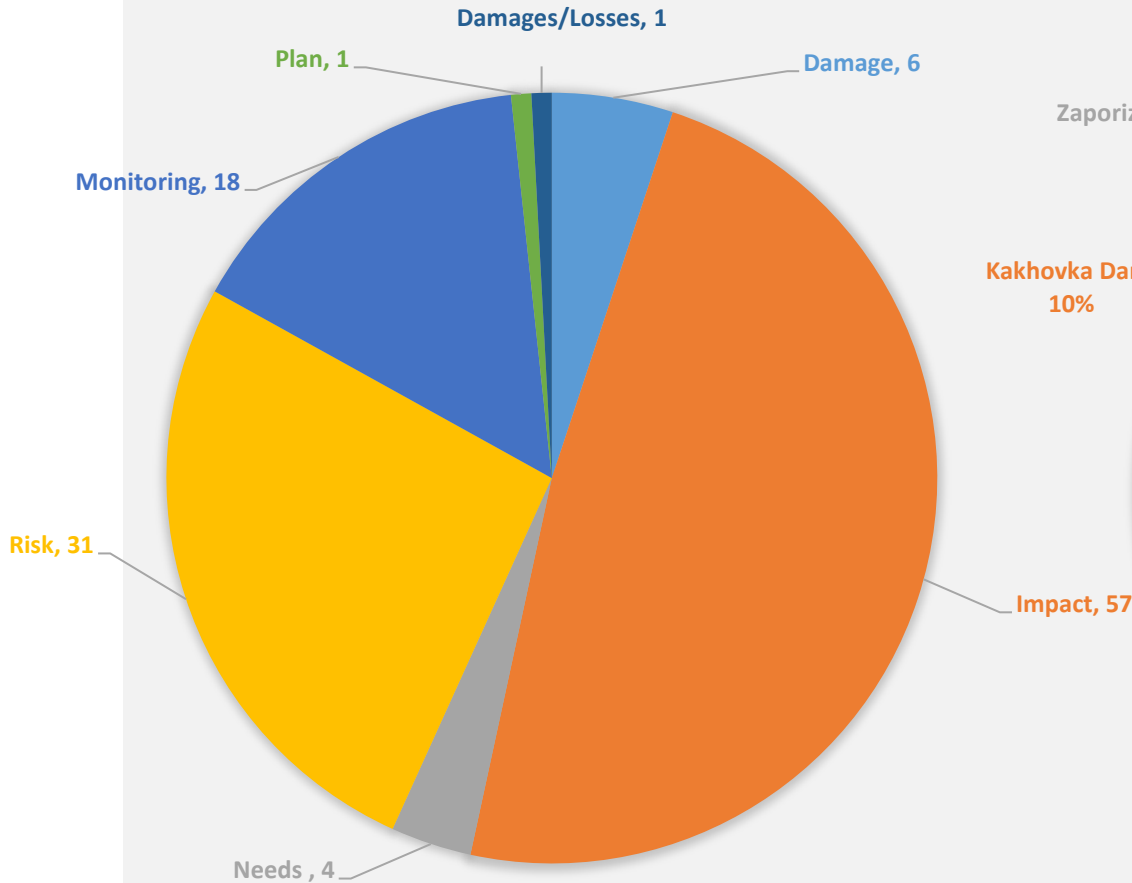
- **Comprehensive overview of assessments** of environmental damage in Ukraine and preliminary identification of critical areas for remediation
- UNEP hired a consultant in June 2023, with funding provided by Switzerland
 - preliminary mapping of the assessments of environmental damage undertaken or underway
 - preliminary identification of gaps and overlaps in the assessments and identification of areas where further assessments may be required
 - identification of planned environmental recovery and remediation processes and plans, with view to identify possible follow-up support by the group
 - production of a report
- Consultant presented interim results to group on 18 October 2023.
Final results due at end of 2023



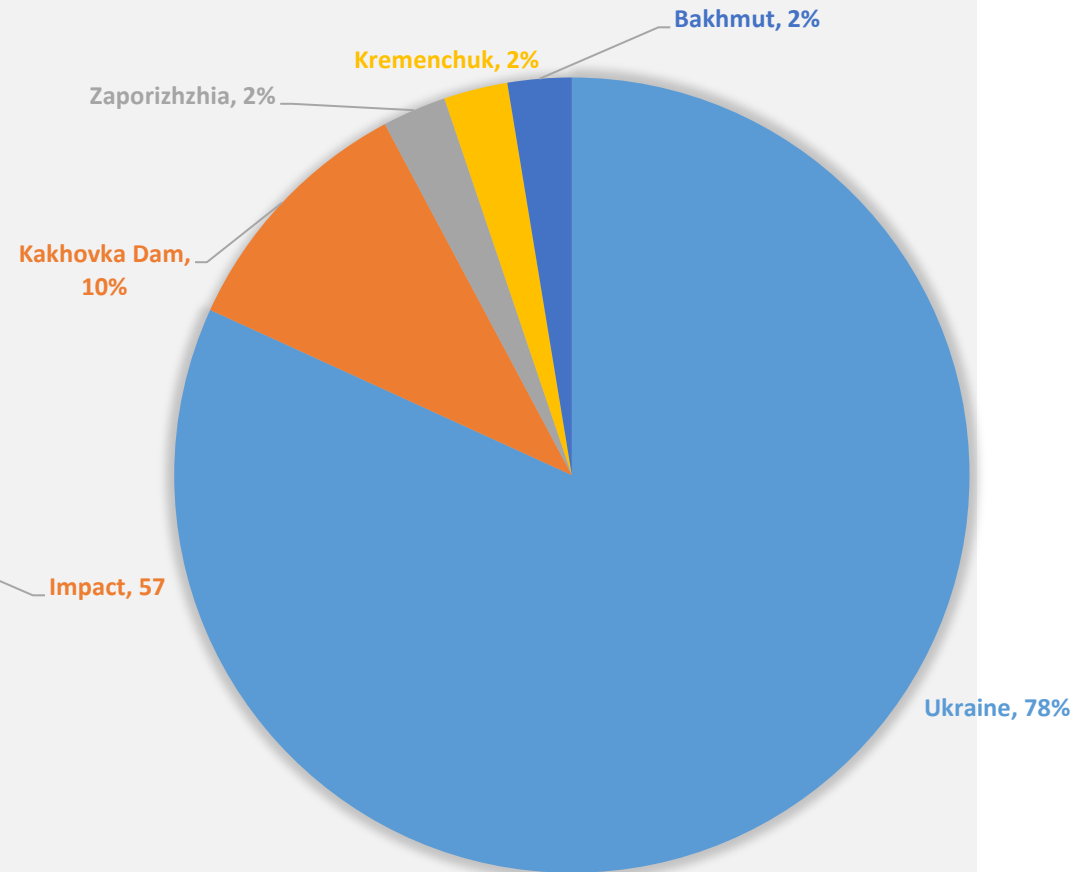
Mapping exercise



TYPES/METHODOLOGIES (#/81)



LOCATIONS (%)

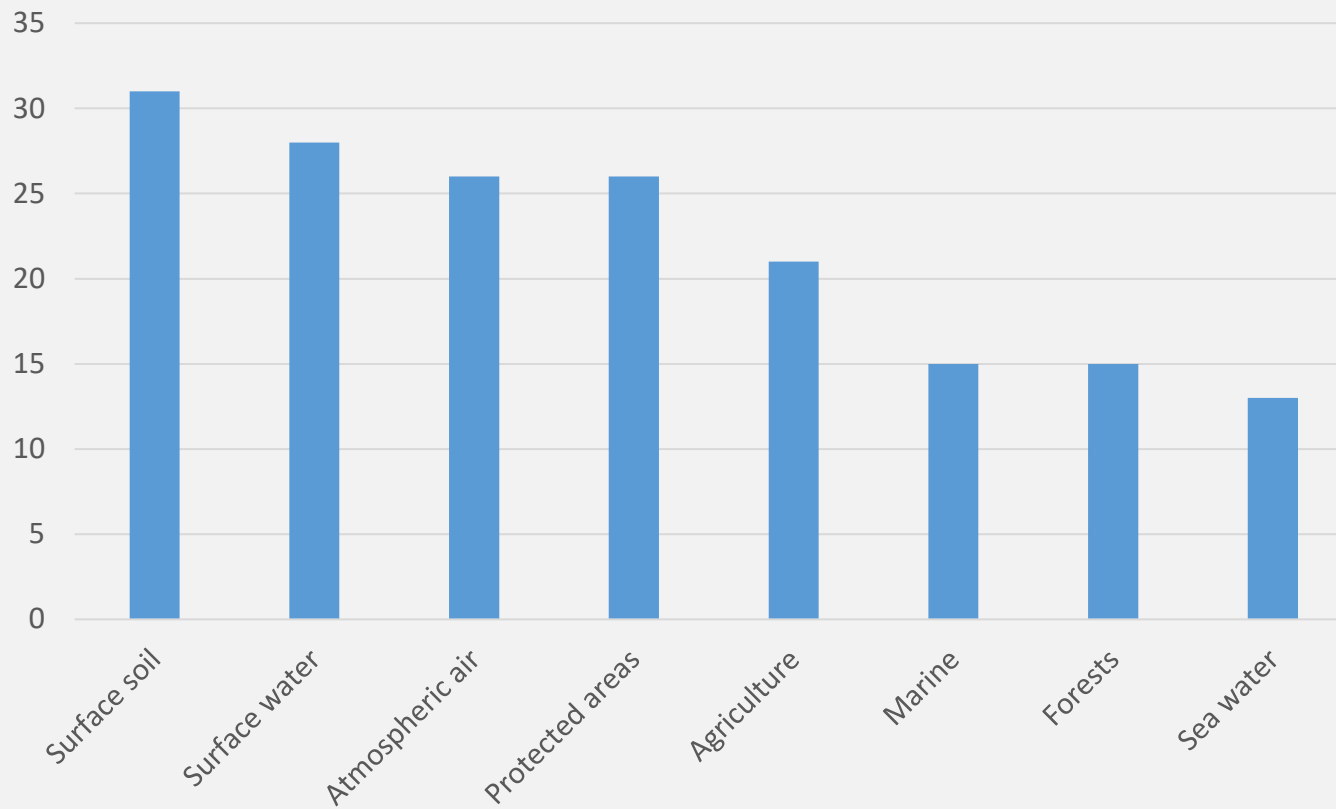




Mapping exercise



Key elements

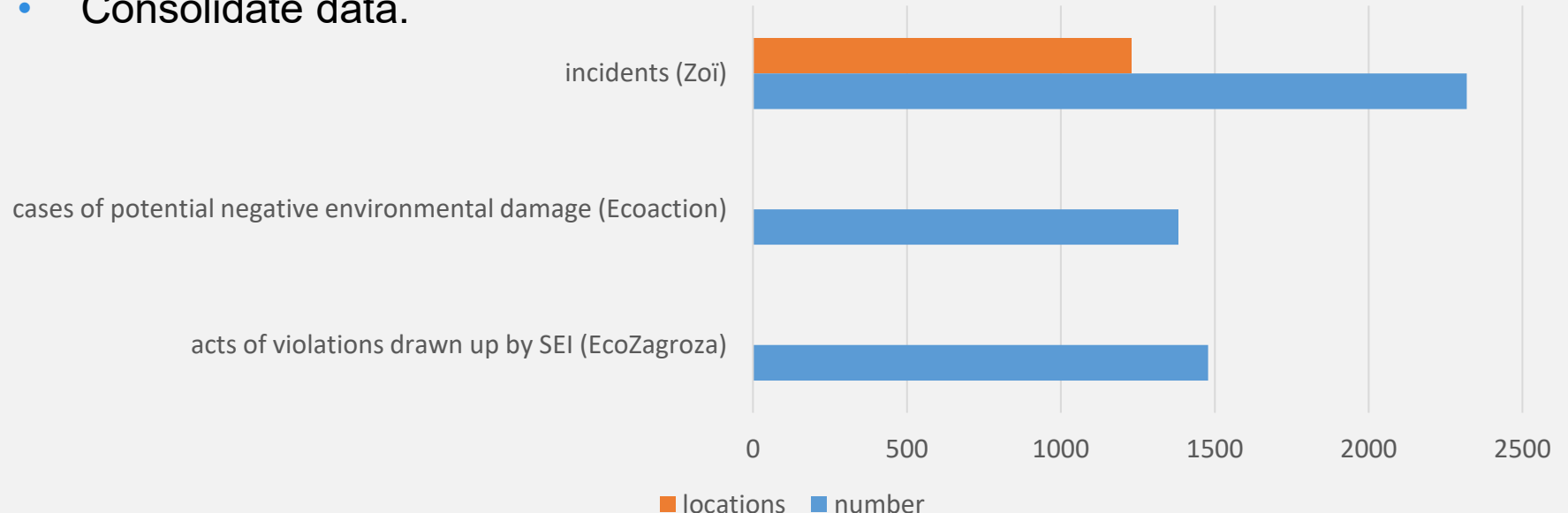




Mapping exercise



- Little primary data; reliance on secondary data
- No or delayed access to sites
- Verify methodologies and laboratory capacities
- Ensure legal basis for analyses
- Consolidate data.





Next ?



Possible next steps on green recovery and reconstruction

- Group began discussing possible activities for promotion of principles for a green recovery and reconstruction
 - including the organization of a seminar on this topic
- Group is exploring whether it might promote or support a possible intergovernmental platform for policy dialogue on green recovery of Ukraine
 - an initiative aimed at ensuring participatory, scientifically sound, economically feasible and effective planning for green recovery of Ukraine
- Group also wants to make sure that the environment is prominent in the next Ukraine Recovery Conferences, in Berlin (2024) and Rome (2025)