

## Reader's guide

The indicators in this report build on data provided regularly by member countries' authorities using an OECD questionnaire, and on data available from other OECD and international sources. Some indicators were updated on the basis of international information available in April 2013 and on the basis of comments from national delegates received by February 2013. Nevertheless, due to delays in the production of environmental data in most countries, the most recent data for many of the parameters examined in this report is 2010.

### Comparability and interpretation

Each indicator presented in the report is preceded by a short text that explains in general terms what is measured and why, and by a description of the concept and definitions underlying the indicator. This is followed by a brief description of the main trends that can be observed. A paragraph on comparability highlights those areas where some caution may be needed when comparing indicators across countries or over time. Issues that cut across the subject areas are described below. Two annexes provide additional information and country notes.

The indicators presented here are of varying relevance for different countries and should be interpreted taking account of the context in which they were produced. It should be borne in mind that national averages can mask significant variations *within* countries. In addition, care should be taken when making international comparisons:

- Definitions and measurement methods vary among countries, hence inter-country comparisons may not compare the same things.
- There is a level of uncertainty associated with the data sources and measurement methods on which the indicators rely. Differences between two countries' indicators are thus not always statistically significant; and when countries are clustered around a relatively narrow range of outcomes, it may be misleading to establish an order of ranking.

No single approach has been used for normalising the indicators; different denominators are used in parallel to balance the message conveyed. Many of the indicators shown in this publication are expressed on a per capita and per unit of GDP basis:

- The population estimates used are based on the SNA notion of residency: namely they include persons who are resident in a country for one year or more, regardless of their citizenship. The data generally refer to mid-year estimates, and come from the OECD Annual Labour Force Statistics (ALFS): OECD (2012), "Labour Force Statistics: Summary tables", *OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics* (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00286-en>.

- The GDP figures used are expressed in USD and in 2005 prices and purchasing power parities (PPPs). PPPs are the rates of currency conversion that equalise the purchasing power of different countries by eliminating differences in price levels between countries. When converted by means of PPPs, expenditures on GDP across countries are expressed at the same set of prices, enabling comparisons between countries that reflect only differences in the volume of goods and services purchased.
- The data for OECD countries come from the *OECD Economic Outlook* (OECD, 2012), “OECD Economic Outlook No. 91”, *OECD Economic Outlook: Statistics and Projections* (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00606-en>; and the *OECD National Accounts Statistics* (database). The data for the BRICS come from the World Bank (World Development Indicators; The World Bank; Washington, DC).

## Online data

A database with selected environmental data and indicators is available on line and contains longer time series than the publication: <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx>. The following is a list of the datasets which are available:

- Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00594-en>.
- Emissions of air pollutants: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00598-en>.
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fuel combustion: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/co2-table-2012-1-en>.
- Threatened species: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00605-en>.
- Forest resources: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00600-en>.
- Municipal waste: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00601-en>.
- Freshwater abstractions: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00602-en>.
- Freshwater resources: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00603-en>.
- Wastewater treatment: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00604-en>.

## Website

OECD Environment statistics and indicators: [www.oecd.org/env/indicators](http://www.oecd.org/env/indicators).

## Further reading

Useful references for “further reading” are available at the bottom of most sections.

For all sections, additional information can be found in:

- OECD (2014), *Green Growth Indicators*, OECD Green Growth Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264202030-en>.
- OECD (2013), *OECD Factbook 2013: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2013-en>.
- OECD (2012), *OECD Environmental Outlook to 2050: The Consequences of Inaction*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264122246-en>.
- OECD (2012), “Review of the OECD Environmental Strategy for the First Decade of the 21st Century”, OECD, Paris, [www.oecd.org/env/50032165.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/env/50032165.pdf).

## Acronyms and abbreviations

### Signs

The following signs are used in figures and tables:

..: Not available.

0: Nil or negligible.

.: Decimal point.

x: Not applicable.

### Country aggregates

OECD Europe	This zone includes all European member countries of the OECD, i.e. Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, <sup>1</sup> Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, <sup>1</sup> Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.
OECD	This zone includes all member countries of the OECD, i.e. countries of OECD Europe plus Australia, Canada, Chile, <sup>1</sup> Israel, <sup>1</sup> Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Korea and the United States.
BRIICS	Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, Indonesia, China, South Africa.

Country aggregates may include Secretariat estimates.

1. Chile has been a member of the OECD since 7 May 2010, Slovenia since 21 July 2010, Estonia since 9 December 2010 and Israel since 7 September 2010.

### Country codes

AUS	Australia	FRA	France	NLD	Netherlands
AUT	Austria	GBR	United Kingdom	NZL	New Zealand
BEL	Belgium	GRC	Greece	NOR	Norway
CAN	Canada	HUN	Hungary	POL	Poland
CHE	Switzerland	ISL	Iceland	PRT	Portugal
CHL	Chile	IRL	Ireland	SVK	Slovak Republic
CZE	Czech Republic	ITA	Italy	SVN	Slovenia
DEU	Germany	ISR	Israel	SWE	Sweden
DNK	Denmark	JPN	Japan	TUR	Turkey
ESP	Spain	KOR	Korea	USA	United States
EST	Estonia	LUX	Luxembourg		
FIN	Finland	MEX	Mexico	EU	European Union

## Abbreviations

cap	Capita
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CFCs	Chlorofluorocarbons
CF <sub>4</sub>	Tetrafluorocarbon
C <sub>2</sub> F <sub>6</sub>	Hexafluoroethane
CH <sub>4</sub>	Methane
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon dioxide
CO <sub>2</sub> eq	Carbon dioxide equivalent
DAC	Development Assistance Committee, OECD
DEU	Domestic extraction used
DMC	Domestic material consumption
EEA	European Environment Agency
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN
GBAORD	Government budget appropriations on R&D
GDP	Gross domestic product
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GNI	Gross national income
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IEA	International Energy Agency
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated (fishing)
MFA	Material flow analysis
MFAcc	Material flow accounts
MJ	Megajoule
Mt	Million tonnes
Mtoe	Million tonnes of oil equivalent
MWh	Megawatt-hour
N	Nitrogen
NO <sub>x</sub>	Nitrogen oxides
ODA	Official development assistance
ODS	Ozone-depleting substance
OSPAR	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the East Atlantic
P	Phosphorous
PCT	Patent Cooperation Treaty
PM	Particulate matter
PPP	Purchasing power parities
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
SF <sub>6</sub>	Sulphur hexafluoride
SO <sub>x</sub>	Sulphur oxides
t	Tonnes
TPES	Total primary energy supply
Toe	Tonnes of oil equivalent
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe

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UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSD	UN Statistics Division
USD	US dollar
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre, UNEP
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

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