

Environmental Health Economics Network

Inaugural Newsletter, October 2013

WELCOME to the first Environmental Health Economics Network (EHEN) newsletter. The purpose of this issue is to introduce the network and invite your active participation through upcoming activities and the web platform. We also encourage you to share this network with your colleagues and peers.

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OUR VISION: The EHEN was established to connect stakeholders in environmental health economics and to provide decision-makers and interested members of the general public and media with evidence regarding the economic implications of health interventions.

ABOUT the EHEN: EHEN seeks to promote and increase the uptake of economic evidence in environmental health decision-making based on the principles of prevention and precaution.

EHEN is hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe, is aimed at stakeholders who are professionally, technically or politically engaged in this field of work. The EHEN includes representation from academia, think tanks, policy-makers, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and international organizations such as the European Environment Agency and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

EHEN was established in recognition of the increasing need to better integrate economic evidence into environmental health decision-making throughout the WHO European Region. The network was launched at the first expert meeting on environmental health economics, held by the WHO European Centre for Environmental Health (ECEH) in Bonn, Germany, in November 2012.

WHY the EHEN?

While decision-makers strive to design both efficient and equitable health policies, *health economic evidence is currently under-used in environmental health decision-making*. Key challenges in generating and acting upon high-quality economic evidence must be addressed, and important gaps relating to methods and interpretation must be filled. Environmental health and economic evidence must be communicated to policy-makers in clearer language, and must be accompanied by training and informational resources.

By sharing information, fostering relationships and promoting collaboration, the EHEN will (1) bring together knowledge producers, communicators and end-users; (2) facilitate the exchange of ideas and sharing of opportunities; (3) identify knowledge gaps and needs, and respond by improving economic tools, promoting their use, and conducting capacity-building activities; and (4) advocate for partners, donors and the public to act on research results.

Timeline: the Environmental Health Economics programme of work and the EHEN

	2012 January	2012 November	2013 May	2013 June	2013 October
EVENTS	Environmental Health Economics programme of work established at ECEH, Bonn.	First Technical Meeting, "Towards a European Strategy on Economics and Environmental Health," Bonn.	Establishment of the EHEN Advisory Group and first EHEN Advisory Group Meeting, Bonn.	EHEN Advisory Group Meeting Follow-up Conference Call.	Environmental Health Economics Symposium (second meeting), Bonn.
OUTPUTS	2013 Workplan established; one-year funding of activities agreed by German Ministry for Environment (BMU).	Launch of EHEN.	Implementation Proposal for the Strategic Framework.	Revised Strategic Framework on Environmental Health Economics.	Publication and distribution of Meeting Reports (2012 and 2013).
	Draft Strategic Framework, "Towards a European Strategy on Economics and Environmental Health."	Revised Strategic Framework on Environmental Health Economics.	Terms of Reference for EHEN and Advisory Group defined; joint network Vision agreed; 2013-2017 Implementation Plan drafted.	Survey of political decision-makers.	

THE EHEN STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK sets out the network's overall approach to increasing and improving the use of economic evidence in environmental health decision-making. It is based on the analysis of available evidence and of the ways in which this evidence is used or not used. The Strategic Framework emphasizes the need for a tailored approach to generating economic evidence, determining the channels through which it is disseminated, and improving how economic tools and methods are used to inform decisions.

THE THREE KEY PILLARS:

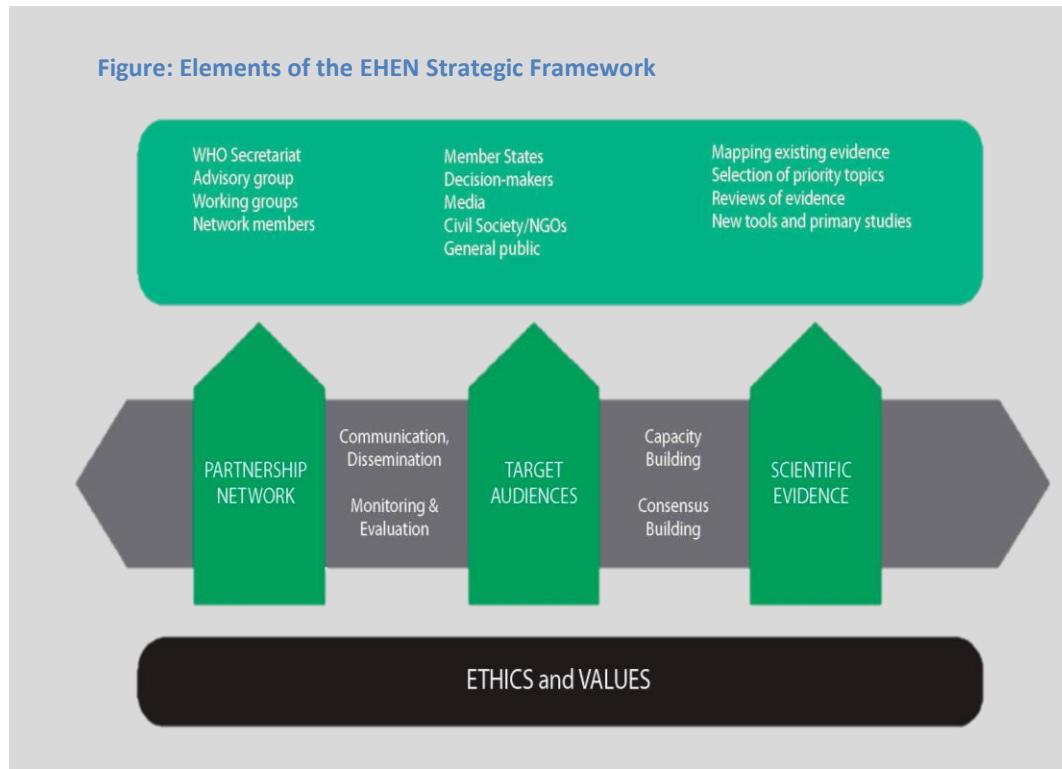
PARTNERSHIP NETWORK.

EHEN will broaden its membership and will establish working groups on priority environmental health themes to oversee and contribute to the implementation of the work plan.

TARGET AUDIENCES. The diverse range of potential users of evidence will be identified and their needs will be assessed comprehensively.

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE.

Existing evidence will be collected, reviewed and collated; gaps will be identified and prioritized; and new evidence will be generated.



EHEN PRODUCTS IN DEVELOPMENT

- **Literature database** – a collection of publications in the area of environmental health economics, encompassing academic research, guidance and key reports. The literature will be categorized by technical and thematic areas for quick and easy access.
- **Expert Roster** – a list of environmental health economics experts and practitioners. This list will facilitate the identification of individuals with specific skills and knowledge for consultancies and other forms of collaboration.
- **Web platform** – a dedicated website that will serve as the primary source of information about the EHEN and its products. A LinkedIn Group has been created for easy discussions and the instant exchange of information.

Your contributions to the literature database and expert/consultant roster are strongly encouraged to increase the added value of EHEN. Please email relevant information and suggestions to georgef@euro.who.int.

MORE INFORMATION on the EHEN and the WHO ECEH Environmental Health Economics Program can be found at the WHO ECEH Environmental Health and Economics website, which will be launched in the near future. The following key documents may be requested via email:

- Meeting report of the first symposium on Economics and Environmental Health, 29–30 November 2012
- Strategic Framework on Environmental Health Economics
- Implementation Proposal of the Strategic Framework on Environmental Health Economics
- Meeting report of EHEN Advisory Group Meeting, 23–24 May 2013

Please send requests for documents to georgef@euro.who.int.