

PROGRESS IN MONITORING OF ENVIRONMENT-RELATED SDG INDICATORS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA



2025

Publisher:



Republic of Serbia –
Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia,
Milana Rakića 5, Belgrade

Original:

Напредак у праћењу показатеља одрживог развоја у области животне средине у Републици Србији: 2025.

For the Publisher:

Branko Josipović, Acting Director

Manuscript in original language prepared by:

Dušanka Dostanić and Dragana Đoković Papić,
Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

Proofreading and Editing of the original:

Bogdana Milošević

Design:

Belgrade Open School

Print:

Kuća štampe plus d.o.o.
Bačka 15d, 11080 Zemun

Circulation:

100

ISBN:

978-86-6161-291-6

Belgrade, September 2025

The preparation of the publication was supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Serbia (UNRCO).

Contents

Introduction.....4

Progress in Increasing the Number of Sustainable Development Goal Indicators for the Republic of Serbia.....5

Key Messages for Newly Published Sustainable Development Goal Environment-related Indicators..... 14

Future Activities to Increase the Number of Available Indicators and Overcome Limitations Related to Environment-related Indicators 18

Localization of Sustainable Development Goals and Recommendations 19

Summary Table21

Introduction

The second publication dedicated to environment-related indicators within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for monitoring and reporting according to the 2030 Agenda (<https://sdg.indikatori.rs/media/1575/agenda-2030-eng.pdf>) in the Republic of Serbia was also initiated by the Office of the United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS).¹

In the first publication², the main results of the initial phase of research for 93 environment-related SDG indicators, identified by UNEP (UNEP 2019), were presented. Special attention was given to a group of 27 unique environment-related indicators for which data for the Republic of Serbia were available in the UN database at the start of the research in 2019, but were not verified and available in the SORS database.

For the 27 analyzed indicators, institutional responsibility and their status at the end of the project were presented. The published environment-related SDG indicators for the Republic of Serbia were particularly highlighted due to their significance in achieving faster progress towards the goals of the Agenda.

In the second publication, covering the period from January 2022 to August 2025, we present the progress of the Republic of Serbia in monitoring SDG indicators, especially those related to environmental protection.

1 United Nations Environment Programme UNEP (2019). Measuring Progress: Towards Achieving the Environmental Dimension of the SDGs, available at: <https://serbia.un.org/en/187502-progress-monitoring-environment-related-sdg-indicators-republic-serbia-2021>

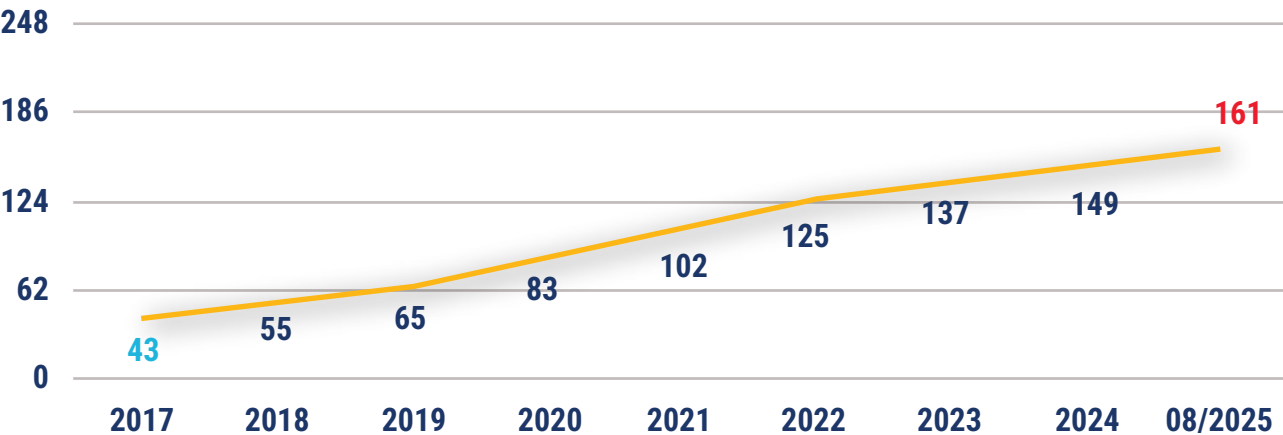
2 Progress in monitoring of environment-related SDG indicators in the Republic of Serbia (2021), available at: <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/measuring-progress-towards-achieving-environmental-dimension-sdgs>

Progress in Increasing the Number of Sustainable Development Goal Indicators for the Republic of Serbia

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a universal strategy of UN member states that includes 17 goals, 169 targets, and a total of 248 indicators related to social, environmental, and economic development in accordance with the principles of sustainability.

Since 2017, when the collection of SDG indicators for the Republic of Serbia began with an initial 43 indicators, a steady increase in the number of available SDG indicators has been recorded in the following years.

Graph 1. Increase in the Number of SDG Indicators for the Republic of Serbia, October 2017 – August 2025.



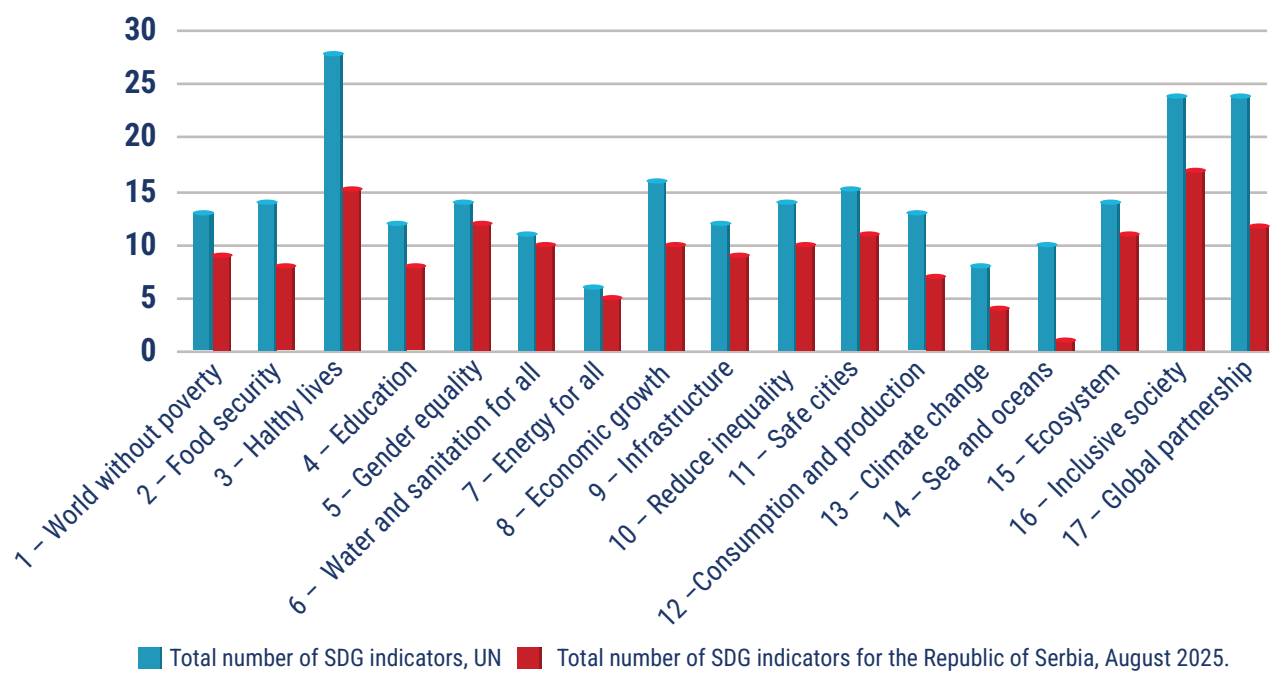
The graph above shows the increase in the total number of indicators for the Republic of Serbia per year, with the status in October for the years from 2017 to 2024, while the status for 2025 refers to the situation in August 2025.

Since the first publication, which focused on environment-related indicators and was published in 2021, a total of 110 SDG indicators for the Republic of Serbia (44.5% of the total 247 indicators) were presented. The total number of SDG indicators has increased to 161 (as of August 2025), making up 65.0% of the total (out of 248 indicators).

According to the updated review identified by UNEP in 2019, the environmental dimension of sustainable development is integrated into 15 SDGs. A total of 93 indicators permeate the SDGs, except for goal 10, which does not contain environment-related indicators.

Of the total number of environment-related SDG indicators, 56 (60%) were available by August 2025, while research on sources is underway for the remaining 37 indicators. Considering that some environment-related indicators from the UNEP list are not relevant for the Republic of Serbia (SDG 14 - Life Below Water), the number of indicators for which source research is needed is less than 37.

Graph 2. Number of SDG Indicators by Goals, UN and Republic of Serbia, August 2025.

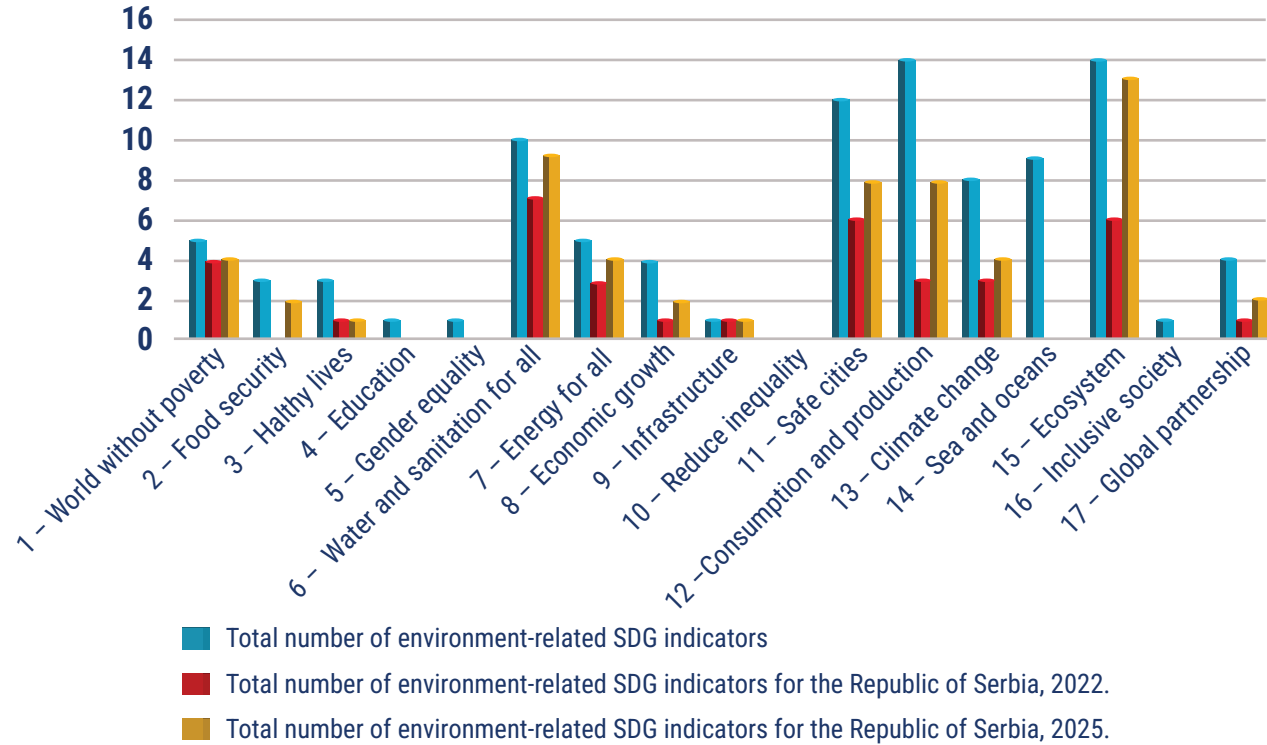


Graph 2 shows the total number of SDG indicators for the UN, as well as the number of SDG indicators provided for the Republic of Serbia.

For the strategically important Goal 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation, 10 out of the total 11 indicators are available for the Republic of Serbia, and the result is even more significant considering that all 10 indicators are environment-related.

Goal 5 also stands out for the increasing availability of indicators for the Republic of Serbia, noting that out of 14 indicators, 12 have been provided, whereas one will be provided in 2027.

Graph 3. Number of environment-related SDG Indicators by Goals, UN and Republic of Serbia, 2022 and August 2025.



Graph 3 shows the distribution of SDG environment-related indicators by goals, as well as the SDG indicators for the Republic of Serbia, comparing the numbers for 2022 and 2025.

Out of the total 93 indicators identified by UNEP, the number of indicators for the Republic of Serbia increased from the initial 34 in 2022 to 57 indicators in 2025.

The significant increase in the number of environment-related indicators was a result of organized thematic workshops and the assistance provided to the SORS by the UN and other international organizations, as well as inter-institutional cooperation in the Republic of Serbia.

Number of available indicators for the Republic of Serbia for Goal 15 - Life on Land, for which a total of 14 indicators were identified, almost doubled: from six indicators in 2022, the number of available indicators increased to 11 in April 2025.

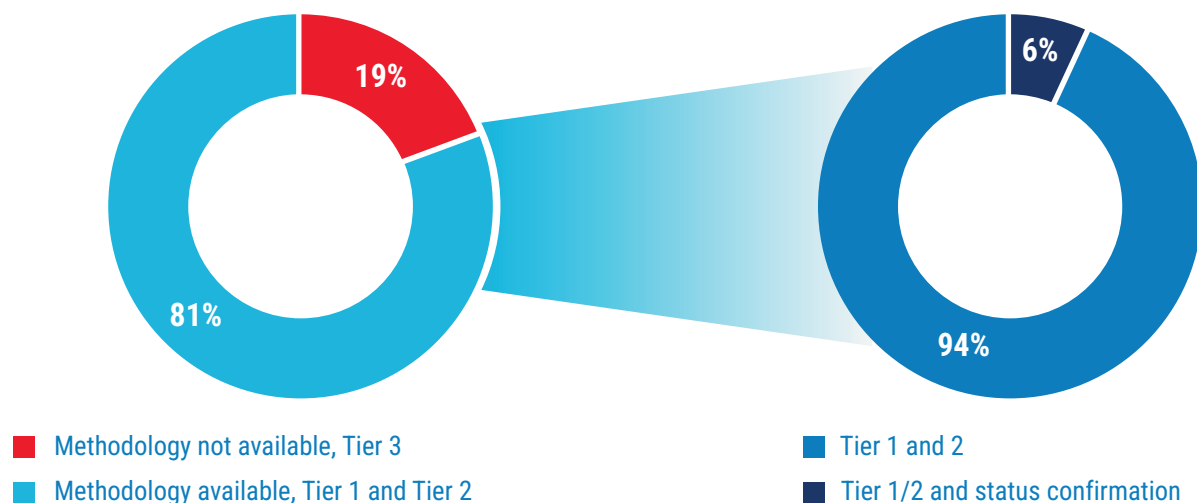
Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) also show an increase in the number of available indicators. The indicators for Goal 8 have increased by one. For Goal 12, the number of indicators has grown from the initial three in 2022 to eight in 2025, while for Goal 11, the number has increased by one from the initial six. It should be noted that the number of available indicators for all three goals is still increasing.

It is also worth mentioning that during 2023, a project dedicated to increasing the visibility of SDG indicators in the field of sustainable urban development in accordance with the 2030 Agenda was implemented. The project was carried out by the UN Habitat and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in cooperation with the Statistical Office³.

Overall, 22 indicators were provided for the Republic of Serbia in a relatively short period, which represents an increase of 64.7%.

³ Progress in Monitoring SDG Indicators in the Field of Sustainable Urban Development in the Republic of Serbia (2023), available at: https://sdg.indikatori.rs/media/0hshp5dv/spec_monitoring_sustainable_urban_development_serbia_2023.pdf

Graph 4 and 5. Availability of Methodology for Environment-related SDG Indicators, 2021 and 2025⁴.



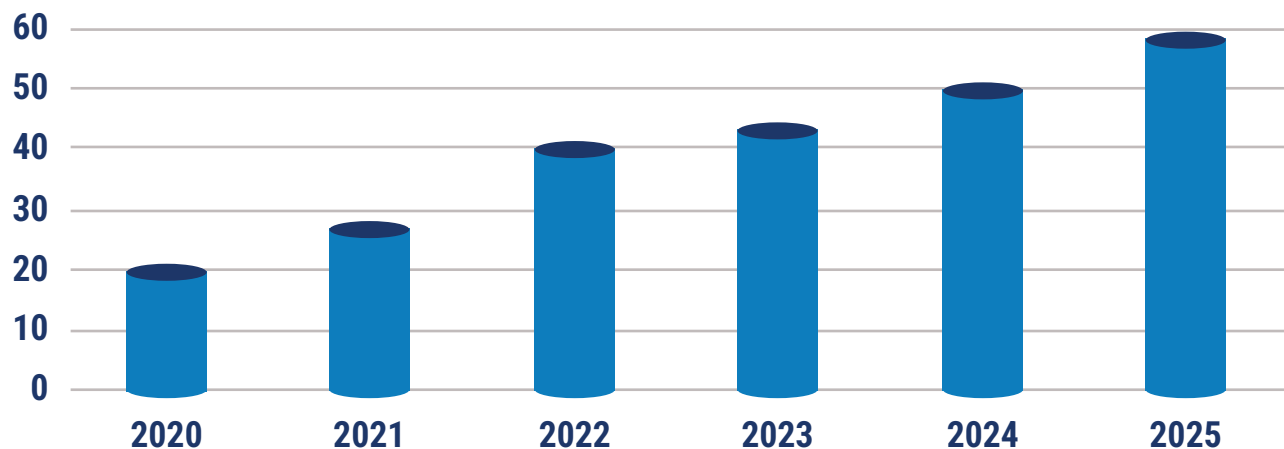
The availability of methodologies for environment-related SDG indicators has improved from 2021 to 2025. By 2021, the methodology for about 19% of the indicators was not available - Tier 3. International institutions actively worked on their improvement from 2021, and Tier 3 was completely replaced by Tier 1 or 2.

At the beginning of 2025, out of a total of 93 environment-related SDG indicators, there was a methodology available for 58 indicators, 30 indicators were Tier 2, while for the remaining five indicators, three indicators were Tier 1 or Tier 2 depending on the available data, while the status of two indicators was awaiting confirmation.

After the analysis for 27 environment-related indicators from the 2030 Agenda, for which data for the Republic of Serbia were available in the UN database during 2021, the monitoring of unpublished indicators continued, as well as the analysis of data reliability in cooperation with relevant experts from international organizations and institutions at the national level.

⁴ According to the UN definition, methodologies for sustainable development indicators are marked as Tier 1 and Tier 2. The concept of the indicators is clear, Tier 1 contains established methodology and available standards. While for Tier 1, countries regularly collect data (for at least 50% of countries in each region for which the indicator is relevant), for Tier 2, data is not regularly collected by countries.

Graph 6. Number of Available Environment-related
SDG Indicators, 2020-2025.



From the initial analysis in 2021 to April 2025, 17 out of 27 environment-related SDG indicators, which are part of seven SDGs, have been published. Four indicators are still in the verification phase, and one indicator has been added to the list for source research. Research on sources continues for the remaining five indicators.

Collaboration with the identified institutions (Table 1) regarding the preparation for publishing five indicators which are currently in the verification phase, as well as for five indicators for which source research continues, is ongoing.

Table 1. List of Indicators in Preparation for Publishing, i.e., in the Verification Phase with the Relevant Institutions, 2025.

SDG 3	3.9.2	Institute of Public Health of Serbia "Dr Milan Jovanović Batut", Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
SDG 3	6.6.1	Environmental Protection Agency
SDG 3	12.4.1	Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia
SDG 3	14.1.1	Environmental Protection Agency
SDG 3	15.5.1	Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia

Table 2.1. List of Newly Published Indicators from the Verification Phase with Relevant Institutions, January 2025

SDG 2	2.5.1	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
	2.5.2	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
SDG 6	6.5.1	Republic Directorate for Water
	6.5.2	Republic Directorate for Water
SDG 12	12.4.2	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Environmental Protection Agency
	12.b.1	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Environmental Protection Agency
SDG 15	15.3.1	UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
SDG 17	15.9.1	UN Database
	17.14.1	UN Database

In addition to the 27 environment-related indicators from the 2030 Agenda for which data for the Republic of Serbia were available in the UN database in 2021, members of the internal group of the Statistical Office continued monitoring the availability of indicators in the UN database and, in cooperation with representatives of institutions, prepared 12 new environment-related indicators that were published on the Statistical Office's portal in the past two years.

Table 2.2. List of Indicators from Source Research Published with Relevant Institutions, January 2025.

SDG 7	7.b.1 (12.a.1)	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
SDG 11	11.4.1	UNESCO - Institute for Statistics
SDG 12	12.1.1 (7.b.1)	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
	12.7.1	Public Procurement Office
SDG 13	13.2.2	Environmental Protection Agency
SDG 15	15.4.1	Environmental Protection Agency
	15.7.1 (15.c.1)	UN Database
	15.b.1 (15.a.1)	OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

Table 3. List of Indicators for Which Source Research Continues in Collaboration with Relevant Institutions, 2025

SDG 3	3.9.1	Institute of Public Health of Serbia "Dr Milan Jovanović Batut", Environmental Protection Agency, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
SDG 12	12.6.1	Business Registers Agency
SDG 15	15.4.2	Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia
	15.8.1	Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia
SDG 17	17.9.1	Ministry of European Integration

Key Messages for Newly Published Environment-related SDG Indicators⁵

2.5.1a The number of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in medium or long-term conservation facilities is increasing.

The number of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in medium or long-term conservation facilities was 5,518 in 2000 and has slightly increased over the observed period, reaching 5,588 in 2022.

2.5.1b The number of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in medium or long-term conservation facilities remains unchanged.

From 2020 to 2023, there were no animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in medium or long-term conservation facilities.

⁵ <https://sdg.indikatori.rs/>

2.5.2 The share of local breeds classified as breeds at risk of extinction is decreasing.

In the periods 2000-2003 and 2012-2020, the share of local breeds classified as breeds at risk of extinction was 100%. The share of local breeds classified as breeds at risk of extinction in 2024 is 82%.

3.9.3 The mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning has been slightly decreasing since 2010.

The mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning has been decreasing from 2021 to 2023. From a value of 0.6 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2010, the mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning fell to 0.3 in 2021 and remained at the same level until 2023.

6.5.1 The percentage of integrated water resources management in the Republic of Serbia has been increasing over the observed period from 2017 to 2023.

The percentage of integrated water resources management was 30% in 2017. The implementation of integrated water resources management continued, reaching 39% in 2023.

6.5.2 The percentage of the transboundary basin area in the country with operational arrangements for water cooperation has been slightly decreasing from 2017 to 2023.

Operational arrangements for cooperation in the transboundary basin area were 90.01% in 2017 and have slightly decreased to 89.6% in 2023.

7.b.1 (12.a.1) The installed capacity for renewable energy production in developing and developed countries (in watts per capita) is increasing.

Since 2013, the Republic of Serbia has recorded a steady increase in installed capacity for renewable energy production per capita. The total installed capacity was 323.87 watts per capita in 2013, with the following shares: hydro energy 99.8%, biogas 0.2%. In 2022, the installed capacity was 423.85 watts per capita, with the following shares: biogas 1.3%, wind 14.1%, biomass 0.1%, hydro energy 83.7%, solar energy 0.8%.

8.4.1 (12.2.1) The material footprint increased in 2023 compared to 2022.

The material footprint of the Republic of Serbia amounted to 142,943,748 tons in 2023, showing an increase compared to 2022, when it was 132,509,212 tons.

11.4.1 Total per capita expenditure on the preservation, protection, and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by type of funding (private or public), type of heritage (cultural monuments or natural assets), and level of management.

For the Republic of Serbia, total per capita expenditure on the preservation, protection, and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage in 2021 amounted to 34.6392, expressed in constant 2017 USD and measured by purchasing power parity.

12.4.2 (a) The quantity of hazardous waste generated per capita increased from 2010 to 2022, while the proportion of treated waste in total treatment remained approximately the same.

In 2010, the hazardous waste generated was 1,542 kg per capita, and by 2022, the quantity increased to 4,493 kg per capita. The cause of the sharp increase in hazardous waste production is the intensification of copper mining, which led to the creation of a large amount of mineral hazardous waste.

The dominant type of hazardous waste treatment is disposal, with a share of over 99% in the total treated quantities.

12.7.1 Number of countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies and action plans.

Since 2022, the Republic of Serbia has joined the countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies and action plans.

12.b.1 Implementation of standard accounting tools to monitor the economic and environmental aspects of tourism sustainability

The Republic of Serbia has implemented two accounting tools (greenhouse gas emissions account and energy flow account) out of four tools used to monitor the environmental aspects of sustainable tourism.

13.2.2 Total greenhouse gas emissions on an annual basis with a variable trend.

Total greenhouse gas emissions amounted to 62.6 million tons of CO₂ equivalent in 2022, approximately the same as the greenhouse gas emissions in 2001 (62.7 million tons of CO₂ equivalent). The energy sector has the largest share in total greenhouse gas emissions in the Republic of Serbia, and increased activities for the production of electricity from renewable sources instead of fossil fuels will contribute to their further reduction.

15.3.1 The share of degraded land in total land area is increasing.

The share of degraded land in the total land area of the Republic of Serbia was 1.89% in 2015 and increased to 4.18% by 2019, according to data from the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD).

15.4.1 The share of important mountain biodiversity sites covered by protected areas is steadily increasing.

The share of important mountain biodiversity sites covered by protected areas was 23.4% in 2000, while in 2024 this share stands at 57%.

15.7.1 (15.c.1) The share of wild species traded that originate from poaching or illegal trade is slightly increasing.

The share of wild animal species and their products traded that originate from poaching or illegal trade has slightly increased from 1.44% to 2.05% between 2017 and 2019.

The share of wild plant species and their products traded that originate from poaching or illegal trade was 0.5% in 2017, and after a drop in 2017 (0.07%), it slightly increased again to 0.53% in 2019.

15.9.1 (a) The number of countries that have set national targets in line with or similar to the Aichi Target 2 for biodiversity from the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the progress reported towards these targets; and (b) the integration of biodiversity into national accounting and reporting systems, defined as the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting.

The Republic of Serbia has set national biodiversity targets in its national strategy and integrated biodiversity into national accounting and reporting systems.

15.a.1 (15.b.1) (a) Official development assistance for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and (b) revenue generated and financing mobilized from economic instruments relevant to biodiversity with a variable trend.

Total official development assistance for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems fluctuated from 0.4 million constant US dollars in 2002 and 0.2 million in 2015 to as much as 150 million constant US dollars in 2023.

17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services with a variable trend.

The percentage of debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services ranged from 3.3% in 2008 to 12.4% in 2013, and was 6% in 2024.

Future Activities to Increase the Number of Available Indicators and Overcome Limitations Related to Environment-related Indicators

A large number of institutions in the Republic of Serbia have been actively working and cooperating with the Statistical Office for many years on the calculation and acquisition of environment-related SDG indicators, as well as on their preparation for publishing. The Statistical Office has a clear procedure for preparing sustainable development indicators for publishing. After requesting data in the specified formats, the Statistical Office collects, controls, and conducts additional consultations (if necessary) with relevant experts from institutions, and then publishes the indicator data on the Statistical Office's SDG portal.

In the past two years, the Statistical Office has continued to strengthen its capacity and work according to established guidelines. Eight indicators out of 12 that were in the verification phase and one indicator that was in the source research phase have been published. Additionally, continuous cooperation of the members of the Statistical Office's internal SDG group with the international institutions, source research, and established institutional cooperation have contributed to the publishing of 13 new indicators. The number of published environment-related SDG indicators increased by 64.7 % in 2025 compared to January 2022, showing significant progress towards achieving the goals and that established institutional cooperation is functioning well. The acquisition and preparation for the publishing of indicators that are in the verification phase and in the source research status are planned in the upcoming period.

Capacity building for the production of statistics that correspond to environment-related SDG indicators continues, with special attention to providing data for missing indicators that are under the jurisdiction of two or more institutions. The Statistical Office has the role of coordinator in the process of monitoring SDG indicators and continues to cooperate with all relevant statistics producers and international organizations to ensure the availability of environment-related SDG indicators and to monitor progress towards achieving the agreed goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Localization of Sustainable Development Goals and Recommendations

Localization of Sustainable Development Goals

Although the SDGs are essentially global goals, their achievement largely depends on how the methodology for their implementation is applied at the local and regional levels, especially in providing basic services to citizens.

The successful implementation of the SDG localization process, including environment-related indicators at the local level, is hindered by the lack of an adequate strategic and institutional framework in the context of the 2030 Agenda at the national level. Specifically, there have been delays in adopting development planning documents (National Development Plan, Investment Plan, and Spatial Plan) that were supposed to enable the nationalization of the 2030 Agenda. This delay also postpones the next step in localization, which involves integrating the SDGs into medium-term plans and public policy documents (strategies, programs, policy concepts, and action plans) following the already localized SDGs in development planning documents.

The first Inter-Ministerial Working Group, which coordinated the activities of all ministries, directed and monitored the implementation of the Agenda, ceased operations in 2020. Within the Government formed in May 2024, the responsibility for overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was assigned to a new Inter-Ministerial Working Group, established by the Government's Decision on December 20, 2024. The Minister of Science, Technological Development, and Innovation was appointed as the chair, while the State Secretary from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed as the deputy chair. The Inter-Ministerial Working Group initiated the process of nationalizing the SDGs – aligning the implementation of the SDGs with the economic, social, and other development conditions of the Republic of Serbia, as well as with European Union standards, in close coordination with the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. With the formation of the new Government in April 2025, it is unclear whether the group will continue its work.

Several research reports and analyses on the achievement of sustainable development goals in Serbia have been published so far. However, most of them did not focus on the localization of sustainable development goals. A positive step in reporting from the local level is the preparation of the first Voluntary Local Review (VLR) for the City of Niš, as a pilot project and an example for other local governments. In this process, the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) plays an important role in coordinating the activities of local governments aimed in this direction. Along with SCTM, other civil society organizations have also been involved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through various initiatives at the national and local levels.

Recommendations

- Conduct empirical research on the current state of SDG localization. Continue working towards raising awareness of the importance of SDGs and advocating for their achievement at the local level.
- Provide support to local government units for preparation of local development plans in accordance with existing guidelines and models.
- Encourage local government units to prepare Voluntary Local Reviews on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.
- Establish a platform that will contain all the necessary information for local government units about the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, consolidated materials and resources that can support them in SDG localization, as well as an overview of national and international best practice examples.

OVERVIEW TABLE															
SDG indicator															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	12	13	14	15	17	Total
1.4.2	2.4.1	3.9.1	4.7.1	5.a.1	6.1.1	7.1.2	8.4.1	9.4.1	11.2.1	12.1.1	13.1.1	14.1.1	15.1.1	17.6.1	
1.5.1	2.5.1	3.9.2			6.3.1	7.2.1	8.4.2		11.3.1	12.2.1	13.2.2	14.2.1	15.1.2	17.7.1	
1.5.2	2.5.2	3.9.3			6.3.2	7.3.1	8.9.2		11.3.2	12.2.2	13.1.3	14.3.1	15.2.1	17.9.1	
1.5.3					6.4.1	7.a.1			11.4.1	12.3.1	13.2.1	14.4.1	15.3.1	17.14.1	
1.5.4					6.4.2	7.b.1			11.5.1	12.4.1	13.3.1	14.5.1	15.4.1		
					6.5.1				11.5.2	12.4.2	13.3.2	14.6.1	15.4.2		
					6.5.2				11.6.1	12.5.1	13.a.1	14.7.1	15.5.1		
					6.6.1				11.6.2	12.6.1	13.b.1	14.a.1	15.6.1		
					6.a.1				11.7.1	12.7.1		14.c.1	15.7.1		
					6.b.1				11.b.1	12.8.1		14.b.1	15.8.1		
									11.b.2	12.a.1			15.9.1		
									11.c.1	12.b.1			15.a.1		
										12.c.1			15.b.1		
													15.c.1		
5	3	3	1	1	10	5	3	1	12	13	8	10	14	4	93
4	2	1	0	0	9	4	2	1	7	8	4	1	11	2	56

Legend:

UNEP indicators

UNEP indicators for the Republic of Serbia for which source research is underway

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

502.131.1(497.11)

DOSTANIĆ, Dušanka, 1966-

Progress in monitoring of environment-related SDG indicators in the Republic of Serbia : 2025 / [manuscript prepared by Dušanka Dostanić and Dragana Đoković Papić]. - Belgrade : Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2025 (Zemun : Kuća štampe). - 21 str. : graf. prikazi, tabele ; 21 x 21 cm

Prevod dela: Напредак у праћењу индикатора одрживог развоја у области животне средине у Републици Србији. - Podaci o autorkama preuzeti iz kolofo-na. - Tiraž 100.

ISBN 978-86-6161-291-6

1. Đoković Papić, Dragana, 1964- [autor]

а) Животна средина -- Одрживи развој -- Србија

COBISS.SR-ID 176226313

