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Title: *Environmental indicators – tools for policy adjustment or useless data collection?*

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Swedish environmental policy is to be guided by 16 major environmental objectives defined by parliament and a greater number of interim objectives. Progress towards objectives is to be assessed through environmental indicators. The indicators for the interim objective covering the Swedish mountain areas have been criticised from both principal and practical several perspectives. A major stakeholder based group modelling study concluded that the objectives were neither adequate or relevant nor reasonable complete to guide operational work towards objective attainment. We have, within a Swedish Environmental Protection Agency funded project, developed a systems approach to identify suitable, causally linked, indicators that fit into an indicator system framework. The proposed approach will to a large extent allow early warning with regard to drivers and pressures affecting environmental outcomes, and proactive policy development as well as improving the ability to communicate with, and mediate between, different stakeholder interests.