

**Comments on the draft outlines of the report to the next statistical commission**  
**(as of 8 November 2013)**

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**Annotated draft outlines of the report with the various comments or proposals of contributions**11

**Summary**

The draft outline generally looks fine but seems very ambitious. It would be appropriate to underline in some part of the report that without goals being agreed on some of the considerations will remain general in nature.

The report should be clear on terminology. The FOC's mandate refers to broader measures of progress while the draft outline sometimes refers to measurement of sustainable development or to measurement of human well-being.

We should also stress that we would like to see the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda treated in an integrated manner, so that there will be one set of "broader measures of progress"

The report has to underline it is good to be ambitious for the post-2015 agenda, but we have to be realistic. Capacity building has to be developed even on the issue of targeting and monitoring. Therefore assistance is needed. Existing partnerships have to be strengthened.

Australia invites FOC's members to update a map of various progress indicators project around the world. This map could be included in the report or background document.

The various suggestions of the FOC's members and proposals of contributions are integrated in the draft outlines.

## **Argentina** (Ms Ana Maria Edwin)

The draft outline generally looks fine, noting that at this stage it is very short on actual proposals for taking things forward. We think that this report is, mostly, fine. However, we'd like to point out some comments of our own which are similar to comments already stated by other members of the Group.

We support the comments issued by Linda Laura Sabbadini (ISTAT), Peter Harper (ABS Australia) and Marleen De Smedt (Eurostat) related to the need to be clear on each definition to be embraced by the Group. We strongly support the point of view of Olav Ljones (SSB Norway) on the importance of defining with precision the term "progress" within the context of official statistics and, as well, his remarks on the "high ambition" regarding the statistical measurement of static well-being.

We think that it is important that the FOC Group advances on the specific definition of the terms linked with its mission (i.e., "progress", "sustainable development" and "well-being") in such a way as to, subsequently, define which statistical indicators would be most appropriate to reflect their proper measurement.

Also, it is essential to identify existing initiatives (i.e., MDG, SDGs, etc.) which are useful for the development of the activities of the FOC Group, in order to build upon existing experiences in different countries and regions. It should be noted here that the revision of existing initiatives should also analyze the degree of harmonization and potential comparability between statistical indicators issued by the member countries of the FOC Group.

We strongly agree with José Ramón Albert's position (NSCB Philippines) regarding the need of taking into account the structural heterogeneity existing within the statistical framework of the most advanced countries in relation with the one related to the developing countries. This situation will impact on both the speed and concrete possibilities of advancing in topics such as harmonization and comparability of national and/or regional statistical data.

## **Australia** (Peter Harper)

The draft outline generally looks fine, noting that at this stage it is very short on actual proposals for taking things forward (which still need to be developed). We support the comment by Eurostat about the need to be clear on terminology and consequently the scope of the work. In our view the UNSC mandate is broad-ranging and while certain initiatives -- statistical or otherwise -- may have a narrower scope than progress broadly defined, these initiatives need to occur within an over-arching framework.

This will be challenging, particularly given resource constraints, but unless the issue is viewed in a holistic way we run the risk of diffuse efforts that lack clarity and focus.

In terms of the invite to provide contributions, we are happy to contribute a stock-take of "national, regional and international efforts and practices on the measurement of sustainable development and human well-being". Last year, the ABS put together a 'map' of various progress indicator projects around the world and in Australia. I have attached this. (It is 'interactive; by clicking on a project you will be taken to the relevant website.) We certainly cannot claim that it is complete -- in fact on reviewing it the framework of the UNECE/OECD/EUROSTAT Working group on Sustainable Development does not appear to be included -- but it may be helpful in putting the paper together. We would be happy to share further knowledge of what is happening in Australia (starting with our own Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP) project) as well as what we know is happening more broadly. Another area for which contributions have been invited is "prospects for and the way forward towards a technically solid and globally agreed set of measures of progress". Again, we'd be happy to provide some ideas on this, but we note that this it is dependent on the stock-take having been completed to provide a good understanding of the current state of play.

Perhaps the most 'interesting' part of the report will be concrete proposals for measuring and monitoring the goals of the post-2015 development agenda, particularly as the opportunity to influence this work has a relatively short-time frame *"in order to ensure that a robust statistical measurement approach is incorporated from the outset"*. We note that the starting point for this will be the FOC comments on the HLP report supplemented by UNSD information from additional report. While there does not appear to be an explicit invitation for FoC member contributions for Part IV, we would be happy to review the initial material prepared when it is available and offer our ideas as to how provide some ideas about what might be done if this was considered useful.

#### **Cameroon** (Joseph TEDOU)

Concerning our position, we have no specific comment to do, so we agree with the outline.

As regards the Report, the targets seem to be very ambitious; so, we must take into account the constraints of human and financial resources.

#### **Eurostat** (Marleen De Smedt)

Terminology: the text sometimes refers to measurement of sustainable development, sometimes to sustainable development and human well-being. And the FOC group refers to 'broader measures of progress'. I would suggest that in part III, point A, we make clear that, when we refer to measuring sustainable development, it includes the social, economic and environmental dimension. De fact it then also includes the measurement of human well-being.

We should better stress (maybe in part IV, point B) that we would like to see the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda treated in an integrated manner: so that there will be one set of 'broader measures of progress'.

The work of the ESS on the Sustainable development indicators (which started in the 90ies) and its actions on measuring 'GDP and beyond' through the Sponsorship Group are a practical example on how to set up- with a group of countries – a continuous measurement system. The EU has also gained experience on common target and indicator setting, with translation into national targets (Europe2020). We should refer to that in part III, point B and in part IV, point B.

Maybe we could also refer – in part III, point C - to the work of the OWG and stress that different groups are involved in making proposals for the goals.

In Part IV, point C we should stress the central role of NSOs and the need to capacity building, this is certainly a lesson learned from the MDGs.

Eurostat could help in writing part IV, point B.

### **India** (V.Parameswaran)

The outline of the draft report looks fine. Further, we have a couple of comments to offer which are as under:

It would be desirable to have the title of para III as "Review of status of work in areas related to broader measures of progress and current status on convergence/coherence (instead of the present title "Review of the work done to develop and implement broader measures of progress and to measure sustainable development").

Should the draft report not include the outcome of the special event of the President of the General Assembly on MDGs held on 25th September and also the meeting to be held on 17th December?

### **Italy** (Linda Laura Sabbadini)

In general I think that at the present the FOC activities are deeply influenced by the fact that global goals are not yet agreed. We have different reports (HLEP, SDND...) discussing different goals and targets. Therefore, I think that it is appropriate underline in some part of the document that in this phase we are conditioned by this aspect and it is possible only establish general issues as consequence of the actual process limits.

We agree on the general outline of the report, but we have to define better the concept of sustainable development and well-being, as in the document they are used as synonymous.

For the *Section III B*. National, regional and international efforts and practices on the measurement of sustainable development and human well-being, we could also benefit from the e-frame activities, where there is a work on an inventory of the initiatives around Europe.

For the *section IV A. c)* Required data and indicators for monitoring the proposed goals and target is difficult at this stage without having goals finalised. But it is important to reaffirm how quality of data (comparability, relevance, accuracy...) is crucial for monitoring.

### **The Netherlands** (Annelies van Eekelen)

We don't have any specific comments on the outline, it looks really good. The only remark is that the targets that have to be described in the report are quite ambitious (given the progress that has been made and the budget cuts in the near future). Therefore we support the idea mentioning the work that has already been done in the past years and include existing practices in the measurement of sustainable development (Chapter III of the outline).

### **Norway** (Olav Ljones)

I have attached a copy of the word text with comments in the text.

Allow me to repeat some general comments which may be read as questions to our mandate and the wording in the decisions taken by the UNSC.

The first is about official statistics and the measurement of progress. To some extent our view is that official statistics should measure changes and be reluctant to interpret and decide on what are positive and what is negative. This is for politicians eventually more complex research and science that is the task for pure official statistics. We have to be loyal to decisions by UNSC but have to discuss and explain how we can combine our respect for the principles of official statistics and develop measurement guidelines for progress.

For many or event most variables in official statistics changes cannot linearly be interpreted as progress for all values and in all situation. If the economy is under stress and overheated even growth in GDP may be negative in the short run.

We have to discuss how to combine this modest approach to the message from official statistics about progress – with the task given to us by the UNSC.

In several chapters Progress, Sustainable development and human well being are mixed together.

This may be OK but we have to include in our approach that Progress is difficult, sustainable development was instrumental for the Brundtland commission but difficult to operationalize in an easy manner in official statistics. We have also to include that well being is basically a static description while sustainability is a long term and dynamic concept. Well being in short term may challenge sustainability in the long term with a long term feed back to well being.

IV A c about required data is a very important chapter for us. When it comes to target setting we have to find the relevant limits for our role as official statisticians

## OECD (Martine Durand)

As others, we believe that it provides a good basis for delivering on the FOC group mandate to take stock of existing initiatives. As you are all aware, the OECD has been at the forefront of the efforts to better measure well-being progress and sustainability, and to put in place of monitoring system for developed countries. We will hence be happy to contribute to Section III of the report (B. National, regional and international efforts).

We note that, at this stage, the outline does not provide much indication about the nature of the future programme of work, which is fully understandable given the state of the game. As indicated by many FOC members in their comments on the HLP report, this future work programme should encompass both the development of new concepts and metrics for those areas that are currently underdeveloped in official statistics (e.g. governance, vulnerability), and efforts to establish a monitoring system for the SDGs/post-2015 targets and goals.

- On the latter, the monitoring system will need to distinguish between different layers of indicators, without pretending to aim at a 'one-size-fits-all' system (e.g. a layer for national and sub-national indicators, where issues of international comparability are less pressing; a layer of regional indicators for different world region, where comparability is limited to countries within the region; and finally a layer of global indicators, where full international comparability is instead essential). Different UN regional bodies should play the role of coordinating national initiatives within each region, in the light of data-availability, resources and statistical capacities. The OECD will be happy to cooperate with UNECE in the perspective of establishing a monitoring system for developed countries that could build on the OECD own achievements in this field (e.g. on health, education, income inequality indicators).
- On the former, the statistical development work will need to identify priorities (e.g. statistical standards, measurement guidelines, classifications, population breakdowns, frequencies) in the various statistical areas. The European Statistical System engaged in such an exercise through the Sponsorship Group, with the outcomes of such process informing the ESS programme of work. The OECD has contributed to pushing up the statistical frontier, e.g. through our work to develop guidelines for measuring Subjective Well-Being and household economic resources (wealth), to integrate inequalities in households national accounts, or to guide implementation of the SEEA core tables in OECD countries. The future work programme that the FOC is asked to develop should include clear lines of responsibilities for the different work streams (who does what).

One point that should be discussed in the section on "Possibilities for a data revolution" (Section C.e), is the need for more dialogue and synergies with producers of non-official statistics. While we want to

convey a strong message that NSOs and the official statistical system should be involved from the outset in the preparation of the post-2015 / SDGs processes, we should also recognise the limits of what official statistical can deliver, limits which become more binding the more we strive for a truly global agenda. Such dialogue could include the use of a common set of quality criteria by all producers of statistics (official or otherwise), and steps to increase the quality of these statistics where this is found to be inadequate.

Finally, the point made by others to better distinguish between the various concepts is surely well-taken as, at this stage, the terms 'progress', 'well-being', 'sustainable development' are used more or less interchangeably. Our own point of departure for understanding and putting in practice such terms is much founded on the approach put forward by the SSF Commission. This approach understands 'well-being' at a (static, i.e. 'here and now') set of outcomes for people; 'progress' as the changes in those outcomes over a given period of time; and 'sustainability' as the (dynamic) requirements for progress to be maintained indefinitely over time. With few variations, this is the same framework used by both the ESS Sponsorship Group and by the UNECE/OECD/Eurostat TF on SD indicators. Being faithful to the spirit of sustainable development requires integrating economic, social and environmental aspects in both well-being/progress and in the requirements for sustainability, rather than lumping together the 'here and now' and 'later' dimensions.

Finally, as in the case of others, we are very attached to the idea that the international community should strive towards a single agenda that integrates the post-2015 and Rio+20 (SDGs) strand. At this stage, the outline seem to give more emphasis to the former than the latter (e.g. only the post-2015 agenda is mentioned in the heading of section IV, although the FOC mandate comes from the Rio+20 process). While this reflects the current state of advancement of the two processes, the final report should bring the two streams of work together.

## **Philippines** (Jose Ramon G. Albert)

Allow me to re-echo some key points made by others, especially Eurostat.

Firstly, that the outline seems fine, although it can be improved by sharpening definitions.

And that indeed, it would be important to have the SDGs and the post 2015 agenda truly integrated and identify broad measures of progress.

In the recently held IAEG meeting on the MDGs, I mentioned that I have actually been getting more and more concerned that while it is good to be ambitious for the post 2015 agenda, but we have to be also realistic. The MDGs did not benefit much from inputs from statistical offices of the developing world, and in the end, while progress has been made, this progress has also been very uneven, with the very poor countries making the least progress (and on occasion, even having nothing to report because of poor capacity to generate information). Even the PH itself only has only 30 of the 60 MDG

indicators, and much of the national (and sub-national) targeting merely adopted global targets, without understanding empirical trends, and whether such targets are realistic. Clearly, capacity building has to be developed even on the issue of targeting and monitoring. The regularity by which we should collect information is still not even understood, i.e. if we are to have even regular poverty monitoring --- must it be done every five years, three years, or yearly --- especially if indicators are not changing much. Country specificities (particularly starting conditions) don't quite match with the global targeting.

And while I don't want to be extremely of the development community, but there is a need for improved coordination among the donors. Existing partnerships have to be strengthened. I have noted much of the assistance given by PARIS 21, multilateral institutions, and even bilateral help (ABS has been most helpful to the PH Statistical System). But while these technical and financial assistance have been helpful since national statistical offices need adequate resources, but this should not be to the extent of confusing us on our priorities. I am surprised to note that some countries have not even had any surveys in over a decade (as reported by someone from the Economic Commission for Africa).

I have been hearing the "favorite" terms "data revolution" very often, but recognized that it seems to be a catch all for so many things (on making statistics especially on development more timely, and meaningful to our stakeholders by using new methodologies and technologies). But, we have to define properly what this entails, and perhaps this may mean different things for countries in different stages of statistical development.

Clearly, the effort to expand work on governance and the environment should be lauded, but there must also be real focus, else we may be setting ourselves for failure.

## **Sweden** (Viveka Palm)

The outline looks fine and very ambitious.

We appreciate and support the comments that have come in. In particular the Eurostat comments on the integration of the program and on lifting up the issue on statistical capacity building. Those issues would also be good to lift as key messages for policy makers.

The map on indicator initiatives that was sent from ABS was a good way of showing the activities that are ongoing in a comprehensive manner.



## **UNECE** (Lydia Bratanova)

The outline looks good and ambitious, will require some work to prepare.

Some specific comments:

1. *section III A* - reference is made to the first Joint Report on measuring SD which focuses on conceptual issues. I suggest that reference is also made here or elsewhere in the report to the CES Recommendations for measuring SD which proposes a frameworks and possible indicators (endorsed by the CES in June 2013).
2. *section III B* - some countries' examples could be mentioned. Thus for example Slovenia, Ukraine and Mexico have already used the CES Recommendations to develop/adjust their national frameworks. If necessary we can further consult with these countries for more precise information. Australia, Italy, Russia and Kazakhstan will pilot test in the course of next year the proposed framework with indicators in the CES Recommendations.
3. *section IV. B (c)* refers to capital approach - I suggest reference should be rather made to the framework described in the CES Recommendations which captures both, the current well-being and the well-being of future generations.
4. *section IV. C (a) on the Role of UNSC* - I suggest this section to also talk about role of RCs and their involvement in the process. As you well know all UN papers, statements, etc emphasise the importance that for the SDGs the UNSC and Regional Commissions should be involved in the monitoring as different from the MDGs process.

## **United Kingdom** (Sophie Ebid)

We fully support the comments made by Marleen (Eurostat) and feel that these are the main issues to take on board.

The UK currently publishes a set of Sustainable Development Indicators (see below) so we would be happy for you to feature this initiative – although I will provide final text when needed.

*Input for III. Review of the work done to develop and implement broader measures of progress and to measure sustainable development*

*B. National, regional and international efforts and practises on the measurement of sustainable development and human well-being*

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published the first assessment of a new set of Sustainable Development Indicators (SDIs), meeting Government commitments to transparency and sustainable development.

The new sustainable development indicators (SDIs) provide an overview of national progress towards a more sustainable economy, society and environment, and complement the National Well-being Measures published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Their publication fulfils a commitment in the Government's vision for mainstreaming sustainable development, published in February 2011, to 'measure and report our progress through a new set of sustainable development indicators.'

The new set of SDIs were published in July 2013 and are made up of 12 headline and 23 supplementary indicators, comprising 25 and 41 measures respectively.

Link to SDIs: <http://sd.defra.gov.uk/new-sd-indicators/proposed-indicators/>

Link to Well-being Wheel of Measures: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/interactive/well-being-wheel-of-measures/index.html>

This revised set of indicators replace the previous SDIs which had been maintained by Defra since 2001 and consisted of 68 indicators comprising 126 measures. The reduced size of the set follows the example of other international institutions in identifying a core set of headline indicators to highlight sustainable development priorities for users and government.

## **USA** (William Sonntag)

We echo the sentiments of many of the commenters, suggesting that this is an ambitious reporting outline that attempts to comprehensively cover this area of evolving practice and policy in one document. Given the limitations of resources available to many of your respondents including the US government, you might want to consider compressing the scope. This might take the form of a simple set of short papers on the most salient topics within the current outline agreed to by the FOC members. Examples might be: simple reporting on deliberations of the FOC for the Commission's review in the Spring; review of current state of MDG goals reporting (approximately 60 indicators) and its challenges; a simple literature review for the topic as a resource for policy makers; an update on statistical capacity building efforts including Busan Action Plan, Paris 21 activities etc.

# Report of the Friends of the Chair on broader measures of progress – a program review

(annotated draft outline as of 29 October 2013)

## I. Background

*This section briefly describes the on-going process towards the development of the post-2015 development agenda, examining in particular the involvement of the statistical community in the process. See Annex to annotated draft outline.*

## II. Establishment of the FOC

### A. Mandate and composition of the FOC

*This subsection will explain how the FOC was established, and summarize its mandate and composition. See Annex to annotated draft outline.*

### B. Work by the FOC to date

*This subsection will describe the work of the FOC to date. See Annex to annotated draft outline.*

*Italy: At the present the FOC activities are deeply influenced by the fact that global goals are not yet agreed. We have different reports (HLEP, SDND...) discussing different goals and targets. Therefore, it is appropriate to underline in some part of the document that in this phase we are conditioned by this aspect and it is possible only establish general issues as consequence of the actual process limits.*

## III. Review of the work done to develop and implement broader measures of progress and to measure sustainable development

### A. Sustainable development, human well-being and the mandate to develop broader measures of progress

*Norway: We need to explain how official statistics can include the measurement of progress in our work program since progress may be a very subjective and political concept*

*The Netherlands: the targets that have to be described in the report are quite ambitious (given the progress that has been made and the budget cuts in the near future). Therefore we support the idea mentioning the work that has already been done in the past years and include existing practices in the measurement of sustainable development (Chapter III of the outline).*

*This sub-section will provide the context information and background of the Rio-20 mandate to develop broader measures of progress. It will describe the discussions to*

move away from GDP as the sole measure of progress (Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report and reports by others). It will describe the concept of sustainable development and the conceptual and methodological work done so far to measure sustainable development (e.g. Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat report 'Measuring Sustainable Development').

Eurostat and Australia: Make clear that, when we refer to measuring sustainable development, it includes the social, economic and environmental dimension. De fact it then also includes the measurement of human well-being.

Italy: Define better the concept of sustainable development and well-being, as in the document they are used as synonymous.

Philippines: Improve by sharpening definitions

UNECE: reference is made to the first Joint Report on measuring SD which focuses on conceptual issues. UNECE prefer that reference is made in the report to the CES Recommendations for measuring SD which proposes a frameworks and possible indicators (endorsed by the CES in June 2013).

Norway: Sustainable development is a dynamic and even long term concept while human well-being is different. But lack of sustainability will reduce well being in the long perspective

OECD: The point made by others to better distinguish between the various concepts is surely well-taken as, at this stage, the terms 'progress', 'well-being', 'sustainable development' are used more or less interchangeably. Our own point of departure for understanding and putting in practice such terms is much founded on the approach put forward by the SSF Commission. This approach understands 'well-being' at a (static, i.e. 'here and now') set of outcomes for people; 'progress' as the changes in those outcomes over a given period of time; and 'sustainability' as the (dynamic) requirements for progress to be maintained indefinitely over time. With few variations, this is the same framework used by both the ESS Sponsorship Group and by the UNECE/OECD/Eurostat TF on SD indicators. Being faithful to the spirit of sustainable development requires integrating economic, social and environmental aspects in both well-being/progress and in the requirements for sustainability, rather than lumping together the 'here and now' and 'later' dimensions.

B. National, regional and international efforts and practises on the measurement of sustainable development and human well-being

*Australia (ABS) proposes to contribute but a stock-take of "national, regional and international efforts and practices on the measurement of sustainable development and human well-being".) To implement this stock taking, ABS invites to update a "map"of various progress indicators around the world. This suggestion is supported by Sweden*

*OECD: As you are all aware, the OECD has been at the forefront of the efforts to better measure well-being progress and sustainability, and to put in place of monitoring system for developed countries. We will hence be happy to contribute to Section III of the report (B. National, regional and international efforts).*

*This sub-section will contain the stocktaking and technical review as requested by the Statistical Commission, with the aim of identifying best practices: The FOC was tasked "to build a work programme to develop broader measures of progress based on a stocktaking exercise of current national, regional and international practices in this field, and to conduct a technical review of these existing efforts with a view to identifying good/best practises [...]". According to the SC decision this sub-section might reflect on the "significant work [that] has already been done in past years and is currently being carried out by the Commission (for example, the Millennium Development Goals, the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting) as well as by national, regional and international organizations;" However, it would also include existing practices in the measurement of sustainable development such as, but not limited to, the ones that already exist in Europe.*

*Eurostat: The work of the ESS on the Sustainable development indicators (which started in the 90ies) and its actions on measuring 'GDP and beyond' through the Sponsorship Group are a practical example on how to set up- with a group of countries – a continuous measurement system. We should refer to that in part III, point B*

*Italy: we could also benefit from the e-frame activities, where there is a work on an inventory of the initiatives around Europe*

*UNECE: some countries' examples could be mentioned. Thus for example Slovenia, Ukraine and Mexico have already used the CES Recommendations to develop/adjust their national frameworks. If necessary we can further consult with these countries for more precise information. Australia, Italy, Russia and Kazakhstan will pilot test in the course of next year the proposed framework with indicators in the CES recommendations.*

*United Kingdom: Input for III. Review of the work done to develop and implement broader measures of progress and to measure sustainable development: B. National, regional and*

*international efforts and practises on the measurement of sustainable development and human well-being*

*The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published the first assessment of a new set of Sustainable Development Indicators (SDIs), meeting Government commitments to transparency and sustainable development.*

*The new sustainable development indicators (SDIs) provide an overview of national progress towards a more sustainable economy, society and environment, and complement the National Well-being Measures published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Their publication fulfils a commitment in the Government's vision for mainstreaming sustainable development, published in February 2011, to 'measure and report our progress through a new set of sustainable development indicators.'*

*The new set of SDIs were published in July 2013 and are made up of 12 headline and 23 supplementary indicators, comprising 25 and 41 measures respectively.*

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*Link to Well-being Wheel of Measures: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/interactive/well-being-wheel-of-measures/index.html>*

*This revised set of indicators replace the previous SDIs which had been maintained by Defra since 2001 and consisted of 68 indicators comprising 126 measures. The reduced size of the set follows the example of other international institutions in identifying a core set of headline indicators to highlight sustainable development priorities for users and government.*

- C.      *Prospects for and the way forward towards a technically solid and globally agreed set of measures of progress*

*The Statistical Commission noted that "even if it will take time to develop a set of technically solid and globally agreed measures of progress, there is a need to start the work as soon as possible on defining such a set;" Based on the previous subsection the prospects and the way forward to a technically solid and globally agreed set of measures of progress will be discussed (obviously, the prospects and way forward will be influenced by the post-2015 development agenda).*

*Eurostat: Maybe we could also refer – in part III, point C - to the work of the OWG and stress that different groups are involved in making proposals for the goals.*

*Australia would be happy to provide some ideas, but they note that this it is dependent on the stock-take having been completed to provide a good understanding of the current state of play*

*OECD This future work programme should encompass both the development of new concepts and metrics for those areas that are currently underdeveloped in official statistics (e.g. governance, vulnerability), and efforts to establish a monitoring system for the SDGs/post-2015 targets and goals.*

## IV. Measuring and monitoring the goals of the post-2015 development agenda

*Eurostat could help in writing part IV, point B.*

*Australia would like to contribute to this part of the report or at least review the initial material prepared when it is available and offer their ideas as to how provide some ideas about what might be done if this was considered useful. Concrete proposals for measuring and monitoring the goals of the post-2015 development agenda, particularly as the opportunity to influence this work has a relatively short-time frame "in order to ensure that a robust statistical measurement approach is incorporated from the outset" is the the most 'interesting' part of the report. The starting point for this will be the FOC comments on the HLP report supplemented by UNSD information from additional report.*

A. Review of the existing proposals for a post-2015 development framework and their evaluation (from statistical perspective)

a) Existing proposals for goals and targets and their evaluation

*This part will describe existing policy proposals (HLP Report, SDSN Report, etc) and will provide a first evaluation of their goals and targets from statistical perspective. Not only post-2015 proposals but also proposals for sustainable development goals (SDGs) should be covered as the post-2015 development agenda is supposed to have sustainable development at its core.*

b) Link between broader measures of progress and the post-2015 development agenda

*This part will examine how the work on broader measures of progress and the measurement of sustainable development is linked with the post-2015 development agenda as reflected in the current proposals. Conceptual and measurement aspects will be considered.*

c) Required data and indicators for monitoring the proposed goals and targets – identification of possible new requirements

*Norway: This is important and difficult. We do also need to include the global challenge. One path is to develop relevant national statistics that are international comparable and may be added together. We do also face global challenges (e.g climate) that will be in a need for new and more demanding ways of international cooperation*

*This part will analyse the existing proposals in more detail and will describe the possible new data requirements for monitoring the post-2015 development agenda. The data requirements for monitoring the new goals are expected to increase in scope (due to the inclusion of additional subject such as human*

rights and governance) and detail (disaggregation according to gender, geography, income, disability etc.). This part will consider possible indicators and data sources.

*Italy:* Required data and indicators for monitoring the proposed goals and target is difficult at this stage without having goals finalised. But it is important to reaffirm how quality of data (comparability, relevance, accuracy...) is crucial for monitoring.

*Philippines* it is good to be ambitious for the post 2015 agenda, but we have to be also realistic. Clearly, the effort to expand work on governance and the environment should be lauded, but there must also be real focus, else we may be setting ourselves for failure.

B. Need for an integrated and technically robust measurement approach

- a) Data for decision making - Lessons learned from MDG monitoring and other monitoring and assessment efforts

*This part will describe the link between policy making and statistics. It will draw conclusions from the experiences made in monitoring the MDGs and the experiences made in Europe and other regions with the monitoring of sustainable development indicators.*

*Eurostat:* The EU has also gained experience on common target and indicator setting, with translation into national targets (Europe2020). We should refer to that in part IV, point B. This point of view is supported by Sweden

*Norway:* MDG monitoring may be important but it is not necessarily easy to identify decision making linked to these indicators.

*Philippines:* The MDGs did not benefit much from inputs from statistical offices of the developing world, and in the end, while progress has been made, this progress has also been very uneven, with the very poor countries making the least progress (and on occasion, even having nothing to report because of poor capacity to generate information). Even the Philippines itself only has only 30 of the 60 MDG indicators, and much of the national (and sub-national) targeting merely adopted global targets, without understanding empirical trends, and whether such targets are realistic. Clearly, capacity building has to be developed even on the issue of targeting and monitoring. The regularity by which we should collect information is still not even understood, i.e. if we are to have even regular poverty monitoring --- must it be done every five years, three years, or yearly --- especially if indicators are not changing much.



- b) Target setting and indicator selection – need for the early involvement of statisticians

*Norway: Involvement has to be discussed. We have to respect our role as statisticians and accordingly prepare the menu for the decision makers not guide them in their choice.*

*This part will discuss the lessons learned from the existing MDG monitoring regarding target setting and indicator selection. The importance of an early involvement of statisticians in target setting and indicator selection will be explained.*

*Philippines: Country specificities (particularly starting conditions) don't quite match with the global targeting.*

*Eurostat: Better stress (maybe in part IV, point B) that we would like to see the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda treated in an integrated manner: so that there will be one set of 'broader measures of progress'.*

*Philippines: mention, it would be important to have the SDGs and the post 2015 agenda truly integrated and identify broad measures of progress.*

*OECD: As in the case of others, we are very attached to the idea that the international community should strive towards a single agenda that integrates the post-2015 and Rio+20 (SDGs) strand. At this stage, the outline seem to give more emphasis to the former than the latter (e.g. only the post-2015 agenda is mentioned in the heading of section IV, although the FOC mandate comes from the Rio+20 process). While this reflects the current state of advancement of the two processes, the final report should bring the two streams of work together.*

- c) The need for an integrated approach and the role of statistical measurement frameworks

*This part will explain the need for an integrated measurement approach. This section will describe the available measurement frameworks (capital approach, SEEA, other) and their potential benefits and limitations.*

*UNECE: Concerning capital approach reference should be rather made to the framework described in the CES Recommendations which captures both, the current well-being and the well-being of future generations.*

C Implementing a new monitoring framework

- a) The role of the Statistical Commission in setting up a monitoring system

*This part will describe the role of the Statistical Commission in setting up the new monitoring system. It will provide a first introduction to the numerous issues that have to be resolved when setting up a monitoring system (e.g. baseline data, reporting stream) and provide a first timeline.*

*UNECE: I suggest this section to also talk about role of RCs and their involvement in the process. As you well know all UN papers, statements, etc emphasise the importance that for the SDGs the UNSC and Regional Commissions should be involved in the monitoring as different from the MDGs process.*

*Norway: It may be that the decision has been taken - to establish a new monitoring framework. I see this as delicate and difficult role for UNSD*

- b) The Busan Action Plan for Statistics and a strengthened partnership for statistical development and capacity building

*This part will describe the need for capacity building and possible partnerships for strengthening national, regional and international statistical systems in the context of the Busan Action Plan for Statistics.*

*Philippines: there is a need for improved coordination among the donors. Existing partnerships have to be strengthened. I have noted much of the assistance given by PARIS 21, multilateral institutions, and even bilateral help (ABS has been most helpful to the PH Statistical System). But while these technical and financial assistance have been helpful since national statistical offices need adequate resources, but this should not be to the extent of confusing us on our priorities. I am surprised to note that some countries have not even had any surveys in over a decade (as reported by someone from the Economic Commission for Africa).*

- c) National priorities and mainstreaming of the new requirements

*This part will explain what it means to mainstream existing and new data requirements resulting from the post-2015 development agenda into the national statistical system according to national priorities.*

- d) Development and implementation of new methodologies, data sources and methods of data capture, integration and dissemination

*This part will briefly describe the main areas where new methodologies, data sources and methods of data capture may need to be developed and implemented (e.g. use of big data, geographical information systems).*

- e) Rethinking existing mechanisms - possibilities for a data revolution

*This part will summarize the possible changes in the statistical systems, production processes and approaches that could allow filling all data gaps and satisfying the high data requirements of the post-2015 development agenda monitoring in an effective and efficient way.*

*Eurostat: In Part IV, point C we should stress the central role of NSOs and the need to capacity building, this is certainly a lesson learned from the MDGs.*

*Cameroon: the targets seem to be very ambitious; so, we must take into account the constraints of human and financial resources.*

*Philippines: I have been hearing the “favorite” terms “data revolution” very often, but recognized that it seems to be a catch all for so many things (on making statistics especially on development more timely, and meaningful to our stakeholders by using new methodologies and technologies). But, we have to define properly what this entails, and perhaps this may mean different things for countries in different stages of statistical development.*

*OECD: we need for more dialogue and synergies with producers of non-official statistics. While we want to convey a strong message that NSOs and the official statistical system should be involved from the outset in the preparation of the post-2015 / SDGs processes, we should also recognise the limits of what official statistical can deliver, limits which become more binding the more we strive for a truly global agenda. Such dialogue could include the use of a common set of quality criteria by all producers of statistics (official or otherwise), and steps to increase the quality of these statistics where this is found to be inadequate.*

## V. Main messages and the proposed work program of the FOC

- a) Key messages for policy makers
- b) Proposals for the further involvement in the ongoing debate and processes towards a post-2015 development agenda
- c) Proposals to carry on the work program on further measures of progress

*OECD: This future work programme should encompass both the development of new concepts and metrics for those areas that are currently underdeveloped in official statistics (e.g. governance, vulnerability), and efforts to establish a monitoring system for the SDGs/post-2015 targets and goals.*

*On the latter, the monitoring system will need to distinguish between different layers of indicators, without pretending to aim at a 'one-size-fits-all' system (e.g. a layer for national and sub-national indicators, where issues of international comparability are less pressing; a layer of regional indicators for different world region, where comparability is limited to countries within the region; and finally a layer of global indicators, where full international comparability is instead essential). Different UN regional bodies should play the role of coordinating national initiatives within each region, in the light of data-availability, resources and statistical capacities. The OECD will be happy to cooperate with UNECE in the perspective of establishing a monitoring system for developed countries that could build on the OECD own achievements in this field (e.g. on health, education, income inequality indicators).*

*On the former, the statistical development work will need to identify priorities (e.g. statistical standards, measurement guidelines, classifications, population breakdowns, frequencies) in the various statistical areas. The European Statistical System engaged in such an exercise through the Sponsorship Group, with the outcomes of such process informing the ESS programme of work. The OECD has contributed to pushing up the statistical frontier, e.g. through our work to develop guidelines for measuring Subjective Well-Being and household economic resources (wealth), to integrate inequalities in households national accounts, or to guide implementation of the SEEA core tables in OECD countries. The future work programme that the FOC is asked to develop should include clear lines of responsibilities for the different work streams (who does what).*

## VI. Issues for discussion

23. The Commission is requested to:

- a) Express its views on the review of the work done to develop and implement further measures of progress and to measure sustainable development, and the prospects for a technically solid and globally agreed set of measures of progress.

- b) Express its views regarding the review of the existing proposals for a post-2015 development framework, the need for a technical robust measurement approach and the implementation a new monitoring framework.
- c) Express its views on the key messages for policy makers.
- d) Express its views and endorse the proposed work program of the FOC.

Annex to annotated draft outline:

Preliminary elaboration of Section I and II – as background information

## **I. Background**

### **Process towards the 2015 development agenda**

The *outcome document of the 2010 MDG Summit* requested the Secretary-General to initiate thinking about the global development agenda beyond 2015. The *outcome document of the 2012 Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development* initiated an inclusive process to develop a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs). There is broad agreement that the two processes should be closely linked and should ultimately converge in one global development agenda beyond 2015 with sustainable development at its core.

*Open working group on sustainable development.* A 30-member Open Working Group of the General Assembly has been mandated by the Rio+20 Outcome document to prepare a proposal on SDGs for consideration by the Assembly at its 68th session (Sept. 2013 – Sept. 2014). The Open Working Group was established in January 2013. Rio+20 did not elaborate specific goals but stated that the SDGs should be limited in number, aspirational and easy to communicate. The goals should address in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and be coherent with and integrated into the UN development agenda beyond 2015. The OWG held four thematic sessions from March – June 2013 which discussed specific areas. It will hold another four sessions from November 2013 – February 2014. It will conclude its work by September 2014

*General Assembly process towards the post 2015 development agenda.* A special event of the President of the General Assembly on the MDGs will be convened on 25 September. The event will also serve as an occasion to reflect on the broad contours of the development agenda beyond 2015. In the outcome of the event Member States could issue a call for convening a United Nations summit in 2015 to adopt the new development agenda. A report of the Secretary-General on the modalities, format and organization of such event could be submitted to the GA by March 2014 and could serve as the basis for the Assembly's consultations on a comprehensive resolution on the timing, scope, format, participation and expected outcome of a summit in 2015. The General Assembly could launch the final phase of the intergovernmental consultations on a post-2015 development agenda at its sixty-ninth session (Sept. 2014 – Sept. 2015).

### **Involvement of the statistical community**

The statistical community has been lending its expertise to the discussions on the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda from the outset in many ways.

*Reports on data and monitoring.* The United Nations Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators (IAEG-MDG), consisting of international agencies, regional organizations and national statistical offices, which has been responsible for the global and regional monitoring of progress towards the MDGs issued the report "Lessons Learned from MDG Monitoring" in March 2013. A joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development issued the report "Measuring sustainable development" in June 2013. With contributions of 50 UN entities a report "Statistics and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda" has been issued in July 2013.

*Role of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC).* The UNSC is the apex entity of the global statistical system and the intergovernmental focal point for the elaboration and the review of the indicators used in the United Nations system as indicated by Resolution A/RES/57/270 B of the General Assembly in 2003. The UNSC has been providing guidance and leadership in monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals from the outset. UNSC and its subsidiary bodies will guide and lead the response to the statistical needs arising from the post 2015 development agenda. At its forty-fourth session, in 2013, the Statistical Commission, by its decision 44/114 established the Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress to support this work.

## II. Establishment of the FOC group

### A. Mandate and composition of the FOC

*Mandate and establishment.* At its forty-fourth session, in 2013, the Statistical Commission, by its decision 44/114: Follow-up to the policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission: response to the Rio+20 mandate for broader measures of progress (see E/2013/24, chap. I.C)

(a) In its capacity as the designated “intergovernmental focal point for the elaboration and the review of the indicators used by the United Nations system”<sup>1</sup> and, in response to the specific mandate of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), decided to launch a work programme to develop broader measures of progress;

(b) Recognized the importance of developing adequate measures to support the evolving debate on sustainable development policy at both the national and international levels, and noted in this context that significant work has already been done in past years and is currently being carried out by the Commission (for example, the Millennium Development Goals, the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting) as well as by national, regional and international organizations;

(c) Noted that, even if no single measure captures today’s complex development notion and even if it will take time to develop a set of technically solid and globally agreed measures of progress, there is a need to start the work as soon as possible on defining such a set;

(d) Stressed that “broader measures of progress” have to be part of a larger information infrastructure/architecture in order to support development policy at all levels and need therefore to be linked to evolving sustainable development goals and any framework that will support the post-2015 development agenda;

(e) Insisted that the statistical community needs to be adequately involved in the discussion on new development frameworks, in order to advise early on any formulation of targets and indicators;

(f) Expressed concern that the statistical capacity of many countries, especially, but not exclusively, developing countries, is limited and that significant investments for statistical capacity over the coming years will be necessary so that statistics for sustainable development are themselves sustainable;

(g) Supported the formation of a Friends of the Chair group to build a work programme to develop broader measures of progress based on a stocktaking exercise of current national, regional and international practices in this field, and to conduct a technical review of these existing efforts with a view to identifying good/best practices and to facilitating the sharing of knowledge, especially for the benefit of developing countries; requested the Friends of the Chair group to closely monitor the ongoing debate on development frameworks and to keep the Bureau of the Statistical Commission informed, undertaking an active dialogue with United Nations bodies and the policy sphere in order to ensure that a robust statistical measurement approach is incorporated from the outset in preparations for the post-2015 development agenda; requested the secretariat to assist the Commission in its work by organizing meetings of the Friends of the Chair group and preparing relevant materials, including an inventory of existing practices, and requested the Friends of the Chair group to report on the preliminary results of its work to the Commission at its next session in order to receive guidance for subsequent work.

*Composition.* The following 22 countries are members of the FOC on broader measures of progress: Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Germany, France, Hungary, India, Italy, Jamaica, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Suriname, Sweden, Tanzania, United Kingdom, United States and Uganda. France and India lead the FOC on broader measures of progress as the two co-chairs. The following organizations participate as observers: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris-21, Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) acts as Secretariat of the FOC on broader measures of progress.

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<sup>1</sup> See General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.

B. Work by the FOC to date

The FOC has conducted the following activities:

- The FOC is committed to operating in an open, transparent and inclusive manner and a website has been created to inform about and provide a platform for the ongoing work of the FOC group. It also contains relevant documents and information about the two work areas of the FOC group a) sustainable development & the post-2015 development agenda and b) broader measures of progress (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/broaderprogress/default.htm>).
- The FOC has been reviewing the report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons.<sup>2</sup>
- The FOC contributed and was instrumental to the drafting of statistical notes as annexes to a large set of thematic issues briefs which were provided to the Open Working Group.
- The FOC cooperated in and contributed to the organization and conduct of an informal session of the OWG on Measuring and monitoring on 17. December 2013.
- The FOC provided critical input to the drafting of this report.

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<sup>2</sup> A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development, High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (HLP), May 2013.