

Reference frameworks and Environmental Statistics in Mexico

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An historical review

- Development of environmental statistics naturally follows that of the Agencies in charge of environmental issues. In Mexico during the 1970's and 1980's environmental matters were dispersed.
- It was only in 1994 that the *Secretaría del Medio Ambiente, Recursos Naturales y Pesca (SEMARNAP)* (Ministry of the Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries) was created, integrating previously dispersed responsibilities: water, forestry, fisheries, etc. This established the basis for the integration of statistics in all these subjects.

An historical review

- At the beginning of 1990´ s, the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI) started work on environmental statistics:
 - An office with responsibility to compile and integrate environment and natural resources statistics and indicators was established
 - Within the National Accounts Office, development of economic and environmental accounts started.

An historical review

- The UN Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics was adopted for INEGI to organize statistics and indicators, and for economic and environmental accounting what eventually evolved to SEEA.
- In 1995, Mexico being a member of OECD, *SEMARNAP* adopted the Pressure State Response (PSR) Framework to organize and integrate statistical work. Even today the causal scheme, PSR is maintained, not the “issues” dimension of that framework as some of them are not too relevant for the country.

An historical review

- During the second half of the 1990s and the 2000s these two institutions, *SEMARNAP* (now transformed to *SEMARNAT*) and *INEGI*, have continued to produce and integrate the majority of statistics on the environment and natural resources.

An historical review

- *INEGI* has preserved the use of the UN Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics with minor modifications in the media dimension. Although in some instances, for example the causality dimension and work on sustainable development indicators, different frameworks have been adopted: PSR and Indicators of Sustainable Development (ISD).

An historical review

- *SEMARNAT* is responsible for the integration of the *Sistema de Información Ambiental y de Recursos Naturales (SIARN)* (Environment and Natural Resources Information System). The reference framework used for *SIARN* is in the thematic dimension a mixture of OECD's issues, administrative considerations and the Sustainable Development Indicators' Framework.

Present institutional situation in Mexico

- Last year a major legislative effort to better coordinate the statistical and geographical system in Mexico came to an end. In 2006 a Constitutional Reform was approved by Mexico's Congress . In 2008 Congress approved the *Ley del Sistema Nacional de Información Estadística y Geográfica* (National Statistics and Geographic Information System Law) which implements the Constitutional Reform.

Present institutional situation in Mexico

- The Law defines System as the set of public administration entities –of federal, state and municipal levels- which produce National Interest Information.
- The System establishes a Social and Demographic, an Economic and a Geographical and Environment Subsystems.

Present institutional situation in Mexico

- In the case of the Geographical and Environment Subsystem, contact has been established with public administration entities producing statistical information –there are several scores of them- , to know their work and begin coordination. As a result of these activities it was clear that there was a need to have a model to guide the production of environmental statistics.

Our need for reference frameworks

- The model should consider as a first element a conceptual framework. With it several other tasks could be tackled: to evaluate current statistical production and use and, based on that, formulate a strategic development plan to fill in gaps and improve statistical work; determine what should be considered National Interest Information; devise the best form to organize the Subsystem units, etc.
- The conceptual framework is, then, the basic building block of our model to develop environmental statistics.

Characteristics and considerations of the framework

- The framework should provide an articulated structure of the following elements:
 - A substantive environmental dimension: Themes, sub themes, variables and parameters to be estimated.
 - A causality dimension: UN, OECD, EEA or SD alternatives are candidates.
 - Incorporate the ecosystem dimension.

It should also provide recommendations about time and space detail level, and a clear relationship with the environmental components of the SEEA and the Sustainable Development Indicators Framework.

Characteristics and considerations of the framework

- To incorporate the ecosystem dimension into the revised UN-FDES is without doubt the principal task forward. The systemic approach to environmental issues integrates in space the interaction of biotic and abiotic elements and renders a better understanding of the phenomena.



Thanks for your attention

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