

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

Report of the Bureau Meeting

Geneva, 18 September 1997

1. The Bureau met on 18 September 1997, immediately after the thirty-first session of the Subcommittee, to initiate action on the tasks assigned to it by the Subcommittee during that session. The Bureau took the following actions:

(a) Coordination issues arising from implementation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Special Data Dissemination Standard, Development of the IMF General Data Dissemination System, and the Common Code of Statistical Practice in the United Nations System

2. The Bureau noted that development of the IMF General Data Dissemination System would be discussed at the Working Group of Statistical Experts of ESCAP in November 1997. The Bureau requested ESCAP to inform the Bureau if any member countries raised any concerns.

(b) Environment statistics

3. The Bureau noted that the Subcommittee considered that there was a special need for coordination in this area and that special attention would be given to it at the next session of the Subcommittee. The Bureau requested UNSD to present proposals to the Bureau at its next meeting on how to prepare this agenda item for the Subcommittee.

(c) The classification of statistics and indicators

4. The Bureau noted that ESCAP, ILO and ISI would further develop their proposals contained in SA/1997/5 for revising the classification for review by the Subcommittee at its next session, taking into account any additional comments that members might provide on the proposals and the use(s) of the classification. The Bureau requested ILO to report to the next meeting of the Bureau.

(d) Using the "inventory of statistical data collection activities" as a tool for coordination of international work on indicators

5. The Bureau noted that the ACC Task Force on an Enabling Environment for Economic and Social Development had requested the preparation of an "Inventory of all Indicators produced in the United Nations system" and that the Subcommittee had expressed some reservations about that "inventory". The Bureau also noted that the Subcommittee had requested the UNSD to investigate how the existing "inventory of statistical data collection activities" could be used to meet the objectives that were intended to be met by the "inventory of all indicators produced in the UN system". The Bureau requested UNSD to report on its investigation to the next meeting of the Bureau.

(e) Reporting on international statistical work programmes to the Statistical Commission

6. The Bureau noted that the Subcommittee had requested UNSD, ILO, IMF and the World Bank to develop a pilot based on the proposal that had been demonstrated at the Subcommittee session. The Bureau requested UNSD to report on progress to the next session of the Bureau.

(f) Review of the experiment on holding occasional part-day sessions on a special topic with an invited guest

7. The Bureau reviewed the experience of the session on "Preparing budget proposals relating to statistical activities in the United Nations system". The Bureau considered it had been a good presentation, that the reaction of members had been positive and the subject had been worthwhile. The Bureau considered that it was important to select topics carefully and that topics should be quite specific to the interests/needs of the Subcommittee.

(g) Responding to requests from the Statistical Commission

8. The Bureau noted the reporting burdens placed on members of the Subcommittee in trying to respond to (increased) requests of the Statistical Commission. The Bureau decided to consider the matter at its next meeting.

(h) The Minimum National Social Data Set and the core set of indicators associated with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework

9. The Bureau considered there was a need for coordination between the two and decided to include the issue in the agenda of the next session of the Subcommittee (probably under "Coordination of the follow-up of the statistical implications of recent major United Nations conferences").

(i) Location and timing of Subcommittee meetings

10. The Bureau noted that the Subcommittee (a) had received an offer from the World Tourism Organization to host the session in 1998 or 1999 in Madrid, (b) had decided to hold its 1998 session in New York, and (c) had requested the Bureau to develop a proposal on the time and venues of future meetings. The Bureau decided to take the matter up at its next meeting.

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