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ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS



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ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities

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Subject: Environment Statistics

**A. ACTIVITIES OF THE STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT) 1989/90**

A.I. EUROSTAT STATISTICAL PROGRAMME

Environment statistics are a priority part of the Statistical Programme of the European Communities (1989/1992). The year 1989 has been used to set up the detailed programme of work which aims to develop of regular, official Community statistics on the environment based on three principles:

- a) to serve the requirements of the Community's environmental policy and legislation.
- b) to integrate environmental aspects into the official established European economic and social statistical system following the integration of environmental policies into sectorial policies
- c) to integrate the Community statistics into the broader framework of international statistics.

A.II. PRIORITIES IN COMMUNITY STATISTICS

A proposal of a council decision adopting a four year programme will be proposed by the Commission.

The following priority work areas are identified for 1990-1993 in which basic studies will be undertaken:

- economic statistics of current expenditure and investment for environmental protection
- statistics on waste and dangerous products
- statistics on the use and quality of water

- linkage of transport statistics to environment statistics (including transport of dangerous goods and waste)
- linkage of energy statistics to environment statistics (especially CO₂ and other emission calculations)
- integration of environmental aspects in industrial surveys and definition of environment industries, technologies and products
- integration of environmental statistics in agricultural and forestry surveys
- linkage of environment with other statistics through land information (collection of spatially related data)
- the use of remote sensing for environment statistics
- collection of existing data on the state of the environment in collaboration with OECD with the help of a joint questionnaire

A.III. EUROSTAT WORKING PARTY

A working party on environment statistics has been created which meets twice a year. These meetings are attended also by representatives of international organisations (at present, OECD and UN/ECE) and observers from third countries, especially the EFIA countries. Joint meetings with OECD will take place in 1990 in view of the revision of the common questionnaire.

A.IV. EUROSTAT PUBLICATIONS AND DATA - BANKS

Long time series of existing statistics will be published (first edition in 1990) which are drawn from the OECD/EUROSTAT questionnaire, based on in house calculations (30 years CO₂ emissions) or derived from current EUROSTAT statistics and data banks.

The environment statistics are linked to the general data banks of EUROSTAT (CRONOS, REGIO etc.); a special data base will be developed in the place for internal use by the Commission and as a link to the European Environment Agency. A computerized geographical information system allowing presentation and cartographic analysis of statistics is under development.

E. OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

B.I. CORINE - programme

(Council decision 85/338/EEC on the Commission work programme concerning an experimental project for "gathering, COoRdinating and ensuring the consistency of INNformation on the State of the Environment and natural resources in the European Community".

Under this programme a geographically related data base has been built up by the Commission's Directorate General for the Environment (DG XI) linked to a computerized geographic information system oriented to map production which comprises the following areas:

Biotopes, air emissions, land cover, soils, water, coastal erosion, marine environment, climate, topography; also included are socio-economic data taken over mostly from the REGIO data bank of EUROSIAI.

The experimental phase comes to its end at the end of 1990. A final report over the work accomplished and the gained experiences will be published and validated data will be made available. This work will be integrated into the information system to be developed by the European Environment Agency.

B.II. European Environment Agency

The Council regulation on "the establishment of the European Agency and the European Environment Monitoring and Information Network" will be published as soon as the seat of this institution will be decided.

This body will be charged with the preparation and dissemination of reliable and agreed environmental information and with the implementation of the CORINE project. (Summary of the regulation in annexe.) Further tasks will be designed to this body in two years time.

The agency is open to the participation of third countries and collaborate with international organisations.

It will use the existing structures in the Community and collaborate especially with EUROSTAT and the research center of the Community (CCR, Ispra)

EUROSTAT will act as a focal point for the "network" of official statistical services of the Member States for the definition and implementation of the COMMUNITY's programme for the development of official environment statistics. EUROSTAT will contribute to the coordination of the statistical questions which will be treated by the different thematic networks. The statistical network will be a main supplier of statistical information to the Agency but EUROSTAT will also be a client of the agency for the reuse for statistical purposes of monitoring and other scientific data. The data-banks of EUROSTAT, the Agency and the different thematic networks must be interlinked.

C. INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

In the field of environment statistics international collaboration and coordination is especially important. There is a general feeling, that too many meetings, workshops, seminars and congresses are taking place and that there is not sufficient transparency, work sharing and collaboration and that more efforts for coordination must be done. Member States are complaining about a heavy burden of form filling and data collection by repeated uncoordinated reporting demands from international organisations.

EUROSTAT has placed its statistical work in the international framework and is willing to contribute as far as possible to any effort of coordination and rationalisation. EUROSTAT takes part in the following actions:

C.I. COLLABORATION WITH OECD

C.I.1. JOINT OECD/EUROSTAT QUESTIONNAIRE

Data collection is done with a joint questionnaire OECD/EUROSTAT which is also validated and compiled in common. The data of the 1988 questionnaire has been published in the OECD Compendium and a subset of the data will be published by EUROSTAT.

A revision of this questionnaire is planned on the base of the data collection exercise of 1990. At this occasion the implementation of the international classification developed by UN/ECE since the time of the first establishment of these questionnaires should be examined. Ideally the questionnaire should cover also the needs of the UN/ECE and serve for the description of the State of the Environment for all western and eastern industrialized countries . It is felt that developing countries might have other needs and problems and it seems not very rational to cover their needs with the same questionnaire and classifications.

The OECD questionnaire has been limited up to now to physical data. The same sort of collaboration is envisaged between EUROSTAT and OECD for the preparation of a joint questionnaire on economic data to be launched in 1991 (current expenditure and investment for environmental protection)

C.I.2. ENVIRONMENT INDICATORS

EUROSTAT takes also part in the OECD work on the development of environmental "key indicators" and hope to contribute to the development or adaptation of the necessary basic statistics.

C.II COLLABORATION WITH UN/ECE

C.II.1.. DEVELOPMENT OF METHODS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

EUROSTAT has taken actively part in the working groups for the development of concepts, definitions and standard classifications and is very much interested in the exchange of experience on methodological issues in the framework of the yearly work shops organized by ECE/UN.

EUROSTAT has agreed to start its work on the ground of the proposed standard classifications. In the work of EUROSTAT these classifications will be tested to which extent they fit to Community legislation and can be implemented in the practice of the Member States. EUROSTAT will play a coordinating role in the probably lengthy process of mutual adaptation .

EUROSTAT would welcome the participation of ECE/UN in the process of the revision of the OECD/EUROSTAT questionnaire.

C.II.2. COORDINATION OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL DATA BASE MANAGERS

EUROSTAT has participated in the consultation between international organisations on the co-ordination and is interested in the development of this collaboration.

C.III. UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL OFFICE

C.III.1. CONCEPTS AND METHODS OF ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS

EUROSTAT has sent its comments to the draft report on "Statistics of the natural environment" which has followed the "Human settlements statistics". The two technical notes are very comprehensive and the possibilities of implementation will be tested in future work .

C.III.2. ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE ACCOUNTING (WORLD BANK, UNEP, UNSO)


EUROSTAT is very much looking forward for the draft handbook which is currently under preparation and will contribute to the organisation of the discussion with the participation of the European experts on environment statistics and of national accounting. M. Newson followed the earlier meetings on this subject.

C.III.3. VOORBURG- TYPE WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL STATISTICS

See EUROSTAT's response to the proposal (letter from Franchet to Seltzer attached).

Mr. Heath attended the first meeting. (Mission report attached) . Problems of industrialized and developing countries are different. The problems of the industrialized countries are covered by UN/ECE and OECD. More progress in work sharing seems to be necessary.

More useful than the construction of an overall applicable framework will be the cooperation with developing countries on special statistical problems and projects in the framework of the statistical cooperation organised by C 2 (Mr. Scott) and DG VIII. The Commission has issued a paper on the Community policy of cooperation and environment and the office should reflect if environment can be included in its future cooperation programme.

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ANNEX 2

Community Programme to develop Regular Official Statistics on the Environment 1990 - 1993

A. STRUCTURE

1. Physical data

- defining and preparing the collection and transmission of aggregable, comparable data available over time
- studies on the availability and selection of relevant data at international, national, regional and local level
- pilot projects for testing the method of collection and integration in general surveys
- participation in the development of global accounting systems such as natural resource accounts and integration of the physical data collection in this framework
- participation in the development and implementation of new technology (Remote Sensing)

2. Economic data

- defining and preparing the collection and transmission of aggregated comparable data available over time
- studies on the availability and selection of relevant data
- pilot projects for testing the method of collection and integration in general surveys
- defining an accounting concept for the presentation of economic data and their integration in global accounting systems such as satellite environment accounts and links to the system of national accounts (SNA) and to natural resource accounting.

EXTRAIT - PROPOSITION DE DÉCISION

3. Legal framework

- preparation of legal texts defining the content, definitions, classifications and methods of collection of physical and economic data.

4. Support for Member States data collection work

- the Commission will look to the Member States statistical services and specialised research institutes for contributions to special studies, testing and pilot projects. Financial support will be given to the extent resources permit and routine data collection is not involved.

5. Data management and geographical information systems

- EUROSTAT will adapt its informatics infrastructure for the reception, pretreatment, processing and dissemination of the statistical data transmitted and especially its capabilities to handle space related environmental data. Links will be established with the Statistical services of the Member States, the Commission's services and the European Environment Agency.

6. International Coordination

The programme will be developed in the larger context of international environment statistics e.g. United Nations Statistical Office ECE/Conference of European Statisticians, World Bank, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, to avoid duplication and to ensure consistency

B. WORKING AREAS

The working areas are determined by policy needs actually expressed in the fourth environmental action programme (1987 - 1992) and may be adapted in the light of policy changes.

The programme on official environment statistics comprises the following topics:

1. description of the changes in the quality of the environment i.e. soil, water, air and atmosphere: flora and fauna, human health, climate.
2. Description of human activities and their influence on the quality of the environment:

- extraction and consumption of raw materials
- production and consumption of agricultural and industrial products
- energy production and consumption
- construction and settlement
- leisure and tourism
- transport
- population growth and social welfare

linked to

- resources depletion (use of renewable and non renewable resources)
 - changes in land cover and land use
 - pollution by emissions.
3. Description of the response to the environmental damage and dangers assessment of the costs and benefits and follow up of the Communities environmental policy i.e.
- conservation and substitution of natural resources
 - changes in production methods and consumption behaviour
 - direct and indirect (clean technology) prevention and reduction of emissions and pollution)
 - conservation and protection of nature, soil, flora and fauna

Priority areas for 1990 - 1993 are:

- economic statistics of current expenditure and investment for environmental protection
- data collection in collaboration with OECD and ECE/UNO
- statistics of the management of waste and dangerous products
- statistics of the quality and management of water

- linkage of transport statistics to environment statistics (including transport of dangerous goods and waste)
- linkage of energy statistics to environment statistics
- integration of environmental statistics in industrial surveys (definition of environment industries)
- integration of environmental statistics in agricultural and forestry surveys
- linkage of environment with other statistics through land information (collection of space related data)