

UNCEEA , July 5-6, 2007

Statistics Norway

Olav Ljones, June 25, 2007-06-25

Report from the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics

The Oslo Group on Energy Statistics was established by the Statistical Commission in 2005 based on the issues discussed in the Report of the Programme Reviewer (Statistics Norway) on energy statistics (E/CN.3/2005/3). The mandate of the Oslo-group is available in Appendix 1.

The main objective of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics is to build a multipurpose and coherent system for official energy statistics to monitor the yearly supply and use of energy in a country, and to address all user needs.

Activity of the Oslo Group:

First meeting of the Oslo Group: Oslo, February 2006.

The first meeting of the Oslo-group was held in Oslo in February 2006. The main focus for the first meeting was to establish a forum for the countries to discuss methodological issues, to identify user needs, to learn from good practices and to contribute to the methodological developments on energy statistics through harmonization with which the energy statistics produced on international level could also be improved. The need to strengthen official energy statistics was emphasised at the meeting.

Second meeting of the Oslo Group: Delhi, February 2007

The second meeting was held in Delhi, India in February 2007. The main focus for the meeting was the revision of the UN manuals on energy statistics. A draft disposition was discussed, and a list of issues for 2007 was established as a work program related to the revision. The meeting also focused on the scope of official energy statistics, links/bridges to international standard concepts and classifications in economic/environmental statistics, cooperation and relation with other manuals/handbooks working on Energy Statistics, and best practices.

Electronic discussion forum

In order to secure communication between the meetings in the Oslo Group, a discussion forum has been set up. The forum is located at the Oslo Group's website at Statistics Norway, www.ssb.no/ocg. The forum is divided into subgroups according to the disposition for the revised UN manual on energy statistics, and the list of issues for 2007. The first area however, is established as a channel for the secretariat to spread general information about the work of the Group to its members, and is thus not meant for discussion. The other areas are established as discussion groups where the aim is to create a free discussion between the members of the Group on the following topics:

- General information
- The manual – history and framework.

- 0. Background, settings, borderlines and conceptual framework
- 1. Official statistics
- 2. User needs
- 3. Basic energy statistics
- 4. Energy Supply and Use
- 5. Development of a core set of tables
- 6. Definitions and conversion factors
- 7. Best practices

The forum was launched in August 2006 and was reorganized in February 2007. The forum is open for all to read, but only registered members of the Oslo-group have the possibility to make written contributions. By 22 June there is activity in half of the groups, and activity is increasing amongst its 101 registered members. Especially Norway, Austria and Denmark have been active on the discussion forum so far.

A questionnaire on official energy statistics

In the mandate for the Oslo Group, one of the aims is to define the scope of official energy statistics. In order to fulfil this part of the mandate, it is necessary to get an overview of the status for energy statistics around the world related to the UN principles of official statistics. In order to get the information needed, UNSD and Statistics Norway as secretariat of the Oslo Group, agreed to send a questionnaire to the UN countries. UNSD is in charge of distribution and collection of the questionnaire with is due 4 July 2007.

The analysis will be performed by the secretariat of the Oslo Group, and the findings will be presented to the Oslo Group for discussion through meetings and the discussion forum. The results will be important for the fulfilment of the Oslo Group's mandate.

Coordination with UNCEEA

Representatives from the London Group have attended the meetings of the Oslo Group. In Delhi, Julie Hass from Norway and Thomas Olsen from Denmark participated. Most of the communication between the two Groups has gone through these persons. Olav Ljones (chair of Oslo Group) participates in UNCEEA.

Under the Oslo Group a small group is working on part 4 for the manual; "Energy Supply and Use". This Group consists of 5 persons representing Norway, Austria, The Netherlands, Denmark and IMF. The Danish representative is Thomas Olsen, who also is a member of the London Group.

The Oslo Group has been presented to several working groups at their meetings, for instance at the meeting of the UNCEEA and the London group in New York in June 2006, at the meeting of the UNECE/OECD/Eurostat working group on sustainable development in Oslo in November 2006 and at the Eurostat Energy Statistics Committee meeting in June 2007.

At the UNCEEA meeting the Oslo Group also presented the document – "Coordination of official statistics". The document, that is available at the Oslo Group discussion forum, explains how coordination of energy statistics fits into the strategies and working method of National Statistical Offices. It is important that energy data are collected only once and used for different purposes, like the production of basic energy statistics, national accounts, energy balances, energy accounts, emission statistics and accounts. When designing a system for official energy statistics, it is important to have

a full scope, i.e. to build a complete system of statistics on both energy production and use. This means that one should identify a system for supply and use in energy terms (natural unit of measurement and energy content) and value terms providing all the data that is meeting the needs of important users. It is not possible to have tailor made statistics for all purposes. The challenge is to combine users' needs and to optimize a multipurpose system of energy statistics.

Future activity of the Oslo Group

Third meeting of the Oslo group: Vienna, February 2008

The third meeting of the Oslo Group will be held in Vienna, Austria 4-6 February 2008 and will be hosted by Statistics Austria. The third meeting will focus on the further work on revision of the UN manuals on Energy Statistics. A list of issues for 2008 will be set up at the meeting as a work program for 2008.

Annex 1: Mandate of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics

The Oslo Group on Energy Statistics is:

“To address issues related to energy statistics and contribute to improved international standards and improved methods for official energy statistics by pooling expertise in the energy community.

Actions:

- To identify users' needs
- To define scope of official energy statistics
- To identify and collect national and international best practices
- To review and contribute to the updating of UNSD handbooks and manuals on energy statistics
- To identify gaps in coverage (e.g. fuel types, flows) and to develop methodology to cover gaps
- To adopt link or develop bridges to international standard concepts and classifications in economic/environment statistics to facilitate the integration and interface of energy statistics with other statistical systems
- To recommend a core set of tables as minimum requirement at national and international level to satisfy major user needs.”

Appendix 2: Members of the Oslo group

At the first meetings of the Oslo Group, a total of 20 countries and 5 international organisations attended and expressed their interest at participating in the work of the group:

Countries:

Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, USA and Yemen (and more are welcome to join).

Organisations:

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Energy Agency (IEA), EUROSTAT, International Monetary Fund (IMF) statistical departments and the United Nation Statistical Division (UNSD).

Especially Austria, Canada, Denmark, India, Sweden, The Netherlands and Norway have been active in the work of the Oslo Group so far.

Points of contact:

Chair of the Oslo-group:

Mr. Olav Ljones
Deputy Director General
Statistics Norway
PO Box 8131 Dep
N-0033 Oslo
Norway

Leader of the secretariat:

Mr. Atle Tostensen
Senior Adviser
Statistics Norway
PO Box 8131 Dep
N-0033 Oslo
Norway