

# **Energy Statistics: Challenges and Ways Forward**

## **Seminar for the delegates of the 40<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission 24 February 2009, United Nations, New York**

Minutes prepared by UNSD

The United Nations Statistics Division and Statistics Norway, as the convener of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics, organized an Energy Statistics Seminar to inform delegates of the 40<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission on the work carried out in energy statistics and, in particular: to discuss the need for international recommendations for energy statistics; present challenges in developing these recommendations; emphasize the importance of making energy statistics an integral part of official statistics; and discuss the way forward in the field. The seminar was attended by about 50 participants.

The presentations given by Mr. Vladimir Markhonko: Chief, Trade Statistics Branch, United Nations Statistics Division and Mr. Olav Ljones, Assistant Director General, Statistics Norway and Chair of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics, are available online at: [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/statcom\\_09/seminars/energy/Energy\\_2009.html](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/statcom_09/seminars/energy/Energy_2009.html)

Participants welcomed the organization of the seminar and supported the preparation of the International Recommendation for Energy Statistics (IRES).

It was noted that in countries the collection and dissemination of energy statistics is often not with the national statistical offices, rather with the line ministries. Thus, the international recommendation should serve as a reference document for the data collection, compilation and dissemination in the national statistical system independently on where the programme is institutionally located.

Participants also welcomed the UNSD's efforts to engage more developing countries in the preparation of the international recommendations through, for example, the International Workshop on Energy Statistics (which was held in Mexico, 2-5 December 2008, to consult with developing countries, on issues they face in the collection, compilation and dissemination of energy statistics) and the worldwide consultation process that has established by UNSD. In addition, countries were encouraged to participate in the substantive discussion, through the electronic discussion forum of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics and the virtual meetings that are planned to be organized in 2009. UNSD, within its resources, will seek ways to either organize additional fora for the review of IRES and/or facilitate the participation of developing countries to the Oslo Group meetings.

Particular support was expressed in the seminar for the identification in IRES of data items for the collection, compilation and dissemination of energy statistics as well as the provision of guidelines on data collection and dissemination.

Participants expressed support of the harmonization of questionnaires on energy statistics. In this respect, it was explained that UNSD and the International Energy Agency (IEA) are

currently exploring possibilities to harmonize their questionnaires in light of the work on IRES and the underlying harmonization of concepts and definitions. This will reduce duplication of work and response burden to countries.

It was considered very important for IRES to provide guidelines for effective coordination of activities in energy statistics. This would benefit those countries where, even though the coordination of statistical activities within countries is generally in place and mandated to the national statistical offices, the coordination does not function effectively because, for example, of lack of resources.