Indicator Narrative

Indicator Number and Name: 7.b.1: Installed renewable electricity generating capacity in developing countries (in Watts per capita). This is a revised indicator proposed to replace the previously suggested indicator: "Investments in energy efficiency as a proportion of GDP and the amount of foreign direct investment in financial transfer for infrastructure and technology to sustainable development services"

Custodian Agency: International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

Current Tier: III

Proposed Tier: II

1. Background and rationale for indicator re-classification

This indicator has gone through several iterations. It was originally suggested that it could measure energy efficiency (ratio of value added to net domestic energy use) or measure some part of international support (percentage of international cooperation projects being implemented to facilitate access to clean energy). The final suggestion (shown above) was agreed at the Third Meeting of the IAEG-SDGs (March 2016), although it was noted at the time that this could only be a Tier III Indicator, because it's very difficult to collect data about investments in energy efficiency and FDI data can not be disaggregated to a level where it can be linked to "sustainable development services".[1]

The limitations of data availability raised at that time have not changed, so it is suggested here to replace the originally proposed indicator with a new one that reflects a different aspect of the target and can be more easily calculated using existing and readily available data.

The focus of this revised indicator is on renewable electricity generating capacity. This is proposed as a replacement indicator for three reasons:

- Generating capacity is the only component of energy infrastructure that is easily measured.
- Renewable electricity generation meets the target criteria of "modern and sustainable".
- Unlike the original focus on efficiency and investment, this indicator does not overlap with the other existing indicators for Goal 7 (Indicators 7.3.1 and 7.a.1) and can, thus, present additional useful information for the tracking of progress towards this goal.

As explained in the metadata, the emphasis on electricity generation from renewable sources also reflects the high priority given to this by most countries (and especially developing countries) in their efforts towards meeting this goal.

2. Information on how and when the methodology has become an international standard and who is the governing body that approves it

Electricity generating capacity has been measured for decades in most countries and the international standard for measuring this was codified in the International Recommendations for Energy Statistics (IRES), published in 2018 (UN, 2018). The IRES was developed in close cooperation with the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics and the Inter-secretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics (InterEnerStat), which continue to monitor and review international standards in energy statistics. IRENA is a member of both of these groups and complies with the IRES in the collection of its renewable energy data.

3. Development and testing of the methodology (please also include information on how NSSs, and in particular NSOs, are involved in methodology development, data collection and data validation)

Not applicable. This data has already been collected for many years, with input from NSSs and NSOs obtained through their participation in the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics.

4. Result of the pilot studies and list of countries consulted that are regionally representative

Not applicable.

5. Confirmation/explanation if joint submission with other partner/co-custodian agencies

[1] Sustainable Energy for All presentation on SDG indicator 7.b.1, IAEG-SDGs meeting, 31 March 2016.

Not applicable.

6. Conclusion

IRENA collects renewable electricity generating capacity data from all countries and areas in the World, following the internationally agreed standard for measuring this variable as set out in the IRES. The data are available globally for every year since 2000 and the revised indicator presented here captures one of the most important components of the infrastructure required to deliver modern and sustainable energy services.

The IAEG is invited to review the metadata for this indicator and, if acceptable, consider it for reclassification to Tier II.