

# Revision of the UN FDES

United Nations Statistics  
Division

# Outline

- Need for the revision of the FDES
- What is a framework
- The UN FDES
- Main conclusions of the EGM
  - *Guiding principles for the revision*
  - *Proposed contents of the framework*
  - *Modalities and timetable*
- Core set of environment statistics
- Decisions of the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the Statistical Commission

# Need for the revision of the FDES

- Oslo Conference on Climate Change and Official Statistics
- Seoul Conference on Climate Change, Development and Official Statistics
- Programme Review on Climate Change and Official Statistics
- 40<sup>th</sup> session of the Statistical Commission

# Need for the revision of the FDES (cont.)

The countries had stressed the importance of an overarching framework that:

- clearly marks out the scope and contents of environment statistics
- is integrative in nature, comprehensive and flexible enough to accommodate the information needs of new and emerging environmental and policy issues such as climate change.
- allows for the identification of data needs, data sources and gaps
- allows for the allocation of roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the production of environmental data including the assurance of data quality.

# What is a framework

- A framework is a basic organizing structure to guide environment statistics.
- This is achieved through the identification of the structure, dimensions, categories and components (statistical topics) that constitute the contents of the framework.
- The framework identifies the fields of concern with an illustration of classifications, selected statistics and indicators for application
- *Statistical concepts, definitions and classifications or tabulations are not part of the framework but described in separate recommendations and guidelines.*

# Structure of the UN-FDES 1984

<b>Components of the environment</b>	<b>Information categories</b>			
	<b>Social and economic activities, natural events</b>	<b>Environmental impacts of activities/ events</b>	<b>Responses to environmental impacts</b>	<b>Inventories, stocks and background conditions</b>
<b>1. Flora</b>				
<b>2. Fauna</b>				
<b>3. Atmosphere</b>				
<b>4. Water</b> <b>(a) Freshwater</b> <b>(b) Marine water</b>				
<b>5. Land/soil</b> <b>(a) surface</b> <b>(b) sub-surface</b>				
<b>6. Human settlements</b>				

# The UN FDES 1984

- The UN FDES is a broad framework that relates the components of the environment to information categories
- The components of the environment define the scope of environment statistics.
- The information categories reflect the fact that environmental problems are the result of human activities and natural events.

# The UN FDES 1984

The basic components of the environment are:

- (i) flora;
- (ii) fauna;
- (iii) atmosphere;
- (iv) water (freshwater and marine water);
- (v) land and soil (surface and subsurface); and
- (vi) human settlements.

Note: The basic components are those of the *ecosystems*.

# The UN FDES 1984

The information categories represent:

- (i) the social and economic activities, and natural events that exert impacts on the environment;
- (ii) the environmental impacts of these activities or events;
- (iii) the socio-economic responses to environmental impacts; and
- (iv) inventories, stocks and background conditions.

The information categories reflect:

- (a) stocks and flows,
- (b) drivers, pressures, impacts, state and responses.

# The UN FDES 1984

The contents of the framework are the statistical topics.

- These are determined as the statistically quantifiable aspects of general environmental concerns (*link to environmental policy*).
- The statistical topics are listed in the framework tables.
- The list is not necessarily exhaustive:
  - the framework's generality and flexibility allows for additional topics as well as for additional details (aggregation or disaggregation) within the topics.

# The UN FDES 1984

Main properties of the UN FDES:

- Flexibility
- Consistency
- Comprehensiveness

# EGM on the FDES (November 2009)

## The EGM:

- discussed the role of a framework in the development of environment statistics;
- assessed the lessons learned when applying different frameworks;
- reviewed new approaches, including the ecosystem approach
- reviewed the UN FDES in the light of new approaches and policy issues; and
- discussed the directions to be taken in the revision of the UN FDES and the modalities of the revision process to be submitted to the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission for approval.

# Guiding principles for the revision

- Be comprehensive, integrative and overarching; encompass all aspects of the environment
- Based on improved scientific knowledge and new requirements
- The ecosystem approach should be considered to be the possible conceptual foundation
- Be relevant for both developed and developing countries
- Focus on basic environment statistics that can serve multiple purposes and facilitate better data integration within the environment statistics domain and with economic and social domains
- include clear links to economic and social statistics, other frameworks and analytical models; be flexible in application so as to allow use for different purposes
- Be an interface between producers and users
- Mark out the role of different data producers
- **The revised Framework should be kept short (with a maximum length of 50 pages), concise and simple to understand and apply**

# Proposed contents

- Objective
- Target audience
- Scope and boundaries
- Main concepts and definitions
- Relationship with SEEA
- Links to other frameworks and statistics
- Links to multilateral environmental agreements and global initiatives
- Quality assurance and quality control standards
- Structure, dimensions, categories and components (statistical topics) of the framework
- Spatial and temporal considerations
- Links to statistical tools
- Reference to existing and planned statistical standards and recommendations for detailed methodological and statistical guidance

# Core set of environment statistics

- EGM also recommended that UNSD should develop core set of environment statistics to provide guidance to countries with limited resources and at early stages of environment statistics
- Core set should include limited number of variables accompanied by methodological description and guidance for their compilation
- Core set of environment statistics should be based on *UNSD List of Environmental Indicators* (adopted by Statistical Commission 1995) and on assessment of international data collections, major global/regional indicator initiatives, and consider pertinent data needs created by global environmental conventions and MEAs

# Modalities and timetable

- Two years (SC 2012) for revision of FDES and establishment of core set (methodological and data compilation guidelines after 2012)
- UNSD lead the process with the help of a group of experts

(For details see E/CN.3/2010/9  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/sc2010.htm>)

# Decisions of the 41st session of the UNSC

## The Statistical Commission:

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- Endorsed the programme of work for the revision of the FDES and the development of a core set of environment statistics;...
- Emphasized with regard to the guiding principles for the revision the need to:
  - engage all stakeholders, including the scientific community, in the process
  - ensure complementarity with the SEEA
  - use caution when considering the ecosystem approach or other policy frameworks as the conceptual foundation for the revised FDES
  - provide supporting methodological guidance and best practices within a reasonable time following the revision of the FDES

# Decisions of the 41st session of the UNSC

- Recommended with regard to the proposed contents of the revised FDES that higher visibility be given to the need for institutional coordination and cooperation, and work that has been done at the regional level;
- Asked UNSD to develop a more realistic timetable in consultation with countries and other stakeholders;
- Noted the importance of greater involvement of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics in development of the framework;
- Welcomed the interest and willingness of countries and agencies to contribute to this work and participate in the planned expert group;
- Welcomed the proposal by UNSD to develop a website serving as knowledge base for country practices on environment statistics.

***UNSD is currently working on the detailed Terms of Reference of the expert group and the work programme for the revision process***

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes.htm>

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/concepts.htm>

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc10/2010-9-Framework-EnvStats-E.pdf>

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc10/BG-EGM-EnvStats.pdf>