



UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
STATISTICS DIVISION

Expert Group on Energy Statistics
Second meeting
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Opening statement

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Dear Colleagues,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the second Expert Group Meeting on Energy Statistics. I thank you for coming to this meeting and contributing to the review and finalization of the *International Recommendations for Energy Statistics* (IRES).

Energy is fundamental for social and economic development and with the increased concerns about climate change and interrelated discussions about energy use, energy efficiency, alternative energy sources and a low-carbon economy, it is imperative to provide good, reliable, comparable and timely information on energy in support for sound decision making. IRES is an important step in the response from the statistical community to the need for such information.

IRES is the result of a fruitful cooperation and collaboration between countries, international and regional organizations. In particular, the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics and the Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics (InterEnerStat) were key fora where the substantive discussions took place for the preparation of IRES and I would like to express my gratitude for the hard work carried out by these two groups and the leadership provided by the chairs of the two groups: Statistics Norway and IEA.

As you are aware, the process for the preparation of IRES started in 2005 with the programme review of energy statistics by the UN Statistical Commission based on the report submitted by Statistics Norway. As a result of this programme review, the 1st Expert Group Meeting was organized by UNSD in May 2005 to lay down a concrete process to overcome problems identified in the programme review. The terms of

reference of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics and InterEnerStat were developed during this meeting and later on approved by the Commission.

The goals were very ambitious: while the Commission supported the review of the UN manuals on energy statistics based on all relevant methodological work in energy statistics, it also emphasized the urgent need for harmonization of energy definitions and compilation methodologies and for the development of international standards in energy statistics.

In 2007, UNSD decided to review and consolidate the revised recommendations on energy statistics into a document aligned in structure and format to other international statistical standards adopted by the Commission. This decision, endorsed by the Commission, led to the provisional draft of IRES that you will review at this meeting.

As it is a common practice for documents such as IRES, UNSD put in place a process which included a worldwide consultation with countries and international organizations. Because energy statistics is often not compiled by the National Statistical Offices, UNSD has put a lot of efforts to ensure involvement in the consultation process of other relevant national agencies as well as interested international and regional organizations. Overall there has been overwhelming support for the content and recommendations provided in the provisional draft of IRES.

IRES is a major milestone in energy statistics for a number of reasons.

IRES will provide a list of harmonised definitions to ensure data comparability and streamline data collections.

IRES will provide a standard classification of products and activities relevant for energy statistics. Even though there may be some further issues to smooth out, a general consensus on the main features of the proposed classification seems to emerge and this classification can be developed into the first real standard classification on energy.

IRES will provide a clear reference list of data items for the collection and compilation of energy statistics as well as recommendations on measurement units and default calorific values. It will explain a link between energy statistics, energy balances and the energy accounts of the forthcoming System of Integrated Environmental-Economic Accounts for Energy (SEEA-E).

Finally and maybe more importantly, **IRES will promote an overall integrated approach to energy statistics** in the context of already existing international statistical standards and good compilation practices. This will create a solid basis for the development of efficient data collection systems and increase the use of the statistics that we collect and compile in energy.

Overall, tremendous progress has been made with the development of these recommendations. However, the recommendations can only be considered successful, when they are really adopted by countries and lead to reliable, comprehensive and comparable statistics on energy. The meeting is therefore also expected to discuss the steps necessary to facilitate the adoption of IRES and its use in national and international statistics.

With the finalization of IRES, our collective efforts should concentrate on the preparation of the *Energy Statistics Compilers Manual* (ESCM) which is expected to provide additional guidance on more practical and technical matters to assist countries in the implementation of IRES and SEEA-E and in the establishment and strengthening of their energy statistics programmes.

To ensure the most efficient compilation of energy statistics at the global level UNSD will continue working with IEA and other relevant international organizations towards a joint questionnaire.

Dear Colleagues, I would like to thank you again for your time, support and expertise. I am confident that in the next few days you will carefully review the provisional draft of IRES and provide your advice on how to further improve it for submission to the United Nations Statistical Commission for adoption at its next session in February 2011.

I would like to wish you success in the discussions of the meeting and I look forward to the outcomes of the meeting. I also hope you will be able to find time to enjoy your stay in New York.

Thank you