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# envstats News and Notes

Environment Statistics Section
United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)/DESA

FOCUS:

## The Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

IN THIS ISSUE



In July 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the 27 members of a High-level Panel of Eminent Persons (HLPEP) to advise on the global development framework beyond 2015, the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The report of the HLPEP, entitled *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development* was submitted to the Secretary General at the end of May 2013. It will be a key input into the report of the Secretary-General to Member States in September 2013. The Secretary-General report will provide the broad contours of the post-2015 development agenda for the consideration of Member States. Member States have also agreed at Rio to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals that are coherent with and are integrated into the development agenda beyond 2015. Ultimately these processes will lead to the definition of a single and comprehensive post-2015 agenda with sustainable development as its core, agreed upon by Member States (see page 4 for more on the ongoing processes).

The HLPEP report builds on the MDG experience, the outcome of Rio+20 and other emerging thinking and recommends the post-2015 development agenda be a single universal agenda applying to North and South alike.

The report proposes five big, transformational shifts namely: ending extreme poverty, integrating sustainable development and its three dimensions at the core of post-2015; transforming economies for jobs and inclusive growth; peace and accountability; and forging a new spirit of partnership, based on equity, cooperation, and mutual accountability.

It proposes a vision of development and recommendations on an agenda for achieving this vision. As part of this effort, the report provides a number of "illustrative goals" to inform the process on possible options for moving forward. The goals framework is not a prescriptive blueprint, but rather, is meant to illustrate how priorities can be translated into compelling and measurable targets. It is ultimately up to the Member States to set the development agenda, including any development goals.

The report stresses that it is proposing a universal agenda; yet achieving the agenda is very much a prerogative of each individual country. Good governance is a key recommendation and the report calls for honest and responsive state institutions to deliver health, education, water and other basic needs. The report focuses very strongly on governments being accountable to their people, and importantly, it calls for partnerships to help implement and monitor commitments.

The Panel, saying that data has enormous power if it is open and accessible, calls for a "data revolution" for sustainable development, with a new international initiative to improve the quality of statistics and information available to citizens. We should actively take advantage of new technology, crowd sourcing, and improved connectivity to empower people with information on the progress towards the targets.

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What are the key messages of the report?

- **Universality:** The post-2015 development agenda is a universal one that applies to developed and developing countries alike, and to all stakeholders, including local governments, business, and civil society. It requires profound transformations in the ways economies work and societies are organized both in the North and the South of the world.
- **Sustainable development:** Sustainable development, with its interlinked economic, social and environmental dimensions, is firmly at the centre of the post-2015 development agenda, requiring a rapid shift to sustainable patterns of consumption and production. Poverty eradication, inclusive growth targeting inequalities, as well as preserving and managing the natural resource base, are the overarching objectives of sustainable development.
- **Human rights:** The fulfilment of human rights and upholding the dignity of all persons are the foundation of the post-2015 development agenda, a universal agenda that applies to all stakeholders.
- **Peace and development:** Freedom from fear, conflict and violence is the most fundamental human right, and the essential foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies.
- **Good governance, institutions, rule of law:** These are core elements of a prosperous society. People the world over expect their governments to be honest, accountable, and responsive to their needs. Responsive and legitimate institutions should encourage the rule of law, property rights, freedom of speech and the media, open political choice, access to justice, and accountable government and public institutions.
- **Inclusive growth and employment creation:** Diversified economies, with equal opportunities for all, can unleash the dynamism that creates jobs and livelihoods, especially for young people and women. This is a challenge for every country on earth: to ensure job opportunities while moving to the sustainable patterns of work and living that will be necessary in a world of limited natural resources.
- **Global partnership:** A new spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual accountability must underpin the post-2015 agenda. A new partnership should be built on our shared humanity, and based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. The international community must work in new ways. Each priority area identified in the post-2015 agenda should be supported by dynamic partnerships among all stakeholders.
- **Addressing inequality:** We must ensure that every person, regardless of circumstance, can live in dignity and freedom, with their basic human rights guaranteed. Every person on the planet should have the chance to enjoy the benefits of a globalized world. While every country is wrestling with how to address income inequality, national policy, not global goal-setting, must provide the answer. Truly inclusive, broad-based growth, which benefits the very poorest, is essential to end extreme poverty. To achieve this, targets must not be considered to be met until they are met in all income quintiles, all genders, all ages, all locations, and all social groups.
- **Climate change:** We must act now to slow the alarming pace of climate change and environmental degradation, which pose unprecedented threats to humanity. The Panel underlines the importance of holding the increase in global average temperatures below 2 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrial levels, in line with international agreements. Action on clean renewable energy and other sustainability measures are critical to limiting future warming and building resiliency, adaptation and mitigation to respond to the changes warming will bring.
- **Cities:** The post-2015 agenda must be relevant for urban dwellers. Cities are where the battle for sustainable development will be won or lost. At the same time, it is critical to pay attention to rural areas, where 3 billion near-poor still will be living in 2030. The most pressing issue is not urban versus rural, but how to foster a local, geographic approach to the post-2015 agenda. This can be done by disaggregating data by place, and giving local authorities a bigger role in setting priorities, executing plans, monitoring results and engaging with local firms and communities.
- **Youth:** Today's adolescents and youth are one-quarter of the world's population. They are shaping social and economic development, challenging social norms and values, and building the foundation of the world's future. Young people must be subjects, not objects, of the post-2015 development agenda. They need access to the right kind of health and education to improve their job prospects and life skills, but they must also be active participants in decision-making, and be treated as a vital asset for society.

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The Report of the Panel is informed by the views and voices of people around the world. The deliberations of the Panel were enriched by national and global thematic consultations under the aegis of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), regional consultations undertaken by the Regional Commissions, consultations with businesses around the world under the guidance of the UN Global Compact, and the views of the scientific and academic community as conveyed through the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

**The HLPEP report and environment statistics**

The report calls for a "data revolution" for sustainable development. This should take the form of an international initiative to improve the quality of statistics and information available to citizens. This is indeed a revolutionary approach, going beyond the traditional calls for statistics and information for evidence-based policy making at national or sub-national level and putting emphasis on statistics and information for use by the average citizen. Recognizing that no one source can satisfy the breadth and depth of information that is needed, the report is recommending the establishment of a Global Partnership on Development Data consisting of a variety of stakeholders "to fill critical gaps, expand data accessibility and galvanize international efforts to ensure a baseline for post-2015 targets is in place by January 2016".

***System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)***

The report makes specific recommendations for monitoring development strategies. It encourages governments to "adopt the UN's System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), along with the World Bank's Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) to monitor national development strategies and results in a universally consistent way".

The goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda are expected to be limited in number, but should have the attributes of being SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound). Here, the criterion, "measurable" means that the goals that are identified should be subject to monitoring and the indicators, metrics and data that are used to assess those goals should be credible and internationally comparable. Furthermore, the report specifies that where the data for indicators are not yet available, there should be investments in data gathering and when indicators are not yet agreed or are unclear, the models and methods should be refined. It also takes the extraordinary step of detailing the way that statistics should be disaggregated, mentioning its belief that for cross-cutting issues, "many targets should be monitored using data broken down by income quintiles and other groups".

It also foresees the use of new technologies and improved connectivity as key. The report lauds the strength of the MDGs in monitoring through the use of robust statistical indicators and urges for more and better such data that are disseminated and reported in a timelier manner.

***Climate change***

Similarly to the way that it is treated in the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES), climate change is presented in the report as a cross-cutting issue. It also goes on to encourage the incorporation of social and environmental metrics into accounting practices, recognizing that these are "deservedly part of a universal framework". It lists more sustainable transport infrastructure; improved energy efficiency and use of renewable energy; the spread of more sustainable agricultural practices; tackling deforestation and increasing reforestation in the context of improving peoples' livelihoods and food security, taking into account the value of natural resources and biodiversity, as important climate change considerations. These are all environmental topics whose elements are addressed through the statistics listed under the "Climate process drivers", "Climate Change Evidence", "Impacts and Vulnerability", "Mitigation and Adaptation" that are spelled out in describing climate change in the FDES.

***Basic environment statistics***

In setting out minimum standards for every citizen worldwide, the report cites some criteria of direct environmental relevance, including access to drinking water and sanitation as well as cost-effective clean and sustainable energy. These are topics for which relevant statistics have been identified as worthy of data collection within the Basic Set of Environment Statistics of the FDES.

***City data***

With regard to cities, the report cites some areas where data need to be disaggregated and/or collected at the local level. These include slum up-grading and solid waste management. Recommendations regarding the collection of basic environment statistics for these areas have been addressed in the Component on Human Settlements and Environmental Health in the FDES. Resource use has also been mentioned within this context and in this case the FDES makes recommendations for basic statistics under the component Environmental Resources and their Use.

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*Environmental information and awareness*

The Report repeatedly emphasized the need to "ensure access of citizens to public information that can be used as the basis of national strategies and plans". The FDES is particularly well poised to assist in satisfying that need through its statistical topics of Environmental information, Environmental education, Environmental perception and awareness, and Environmental engagement as it sets out basic statistics and related information that can be used for assessment and monitoring of the degree of environmental information and awareness.

*Goals and targets*

In its Annexes, the Report sets out a collection of illustrative goals and targets for the global/universal as well as national levels, indicating which are candidates for global minimum standards, including: 'zero goals'; indicators to be disaggregated; and those targets that require further technical work to find appropriate indicators.

## The Global Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): an Overview of the Ongoing Processes

**Background**

The outcome document of the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals at its sixty-fifth session (2010 MDG Summit) requested the UN Secretary-General to initiate thinking on the global development agenda beyond 2015. The outcome document of the 2012 Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, *The Future We Want*, initiated an inclusive process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There is broad agreement that the two processes should be closely linked and should ultimately converge in one global development agenda beyond 2015 with sustainable development at its core.

The process of arriving at this new framework is Member State-led with broad participation from external stakeholders such as civil society organizations, the private sector and businesses, academia and scientists. The United Nations has played a facilitating role in this global conversation and has the responsibility of supporting Member States by providing evidence-based inputs, analytical thinking and field experience.

In the following, we summarize the most important UN work streams that contribute to the thinking on the post-2015 global development agenda.

**High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (HLPEP)**

In July 2012 the UN Secretary-General launched his High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to advise on the global development framework beyond 2015, the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Co-chaired by the Presidents of Indonesia and Liberia and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the 27-member Panel assembled leading representatives from civil society, private sector, academia and local and national governments.

The work of the Panel reflects new development challenges while also drawing on experience gained in implementing the MDGs, both in terms of results achieved and areas for improvement.

The Panel submitted its report containing its vision and recommendations on a global development agenda beyond 2015 to the Secretary-General in May 2013 (see article on page 1 of this newsletter). With this, the Panel fulfilled its mandate.

The Panel's work had been closely coordinated with that of the intergovernmental working group (Open Working Group) tasked to design SDGs as agreed at the Rio+20 Conference.

**Open Working Group (OWG)**

A 30-member Open Working Group (OWG) of the General Assembly is mandated by the Rio+20 Outcome document to prepare a proposal on SDGs for consideration by the General Assembly at its 68th session in September 2014.

The OWG was established in January 2013 by decision of the General Assembly. The Member States decided to use an innovative, constituency-based system of representation that is new to limited membership bodies of the General Assembly. This means that each seat in the OWG is shared by 1-4 Member States. These country teams decide themselves how they will be represented in the OWG meetings.

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The OWG on SDGs convened it first session on 14 and 15 March. The Group elected two co-chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Kenya and Hungary to the United Nations. The Group also adopted its methods of work. The two-day meeting was used mainly for general statements, as well as an interactive panel discussion in the afternoon session of the first day. Overall, poverty eradication emerged as the broad, framing issue of concern. There was near universal agreement that there should be one set of goals in the post-2015 framework, with sustainability at their core.

The OWG intends to engage in an information-gathering phase until early 2014. During this time the OWG will not be in drafting mode. After this phase, it is anticipated that the group will use the period from about April to August 2014 for drafting its report, to be presented to the 68th General Assembly in September 2014.

The second session of the OWG was held from 17 to 19 April and focused on: (i) the conceptualization of the SDGs and the SDG process; and (ii) poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The third session of the OWG was held from 22 to 24 May and focused on: (i) food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, desertification, land degradation and drought; and (ii) water and sanitation.

The fourth session took place from 17 to 19 June with a focus on: (i) employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth, education and culture; and (ii) health and population dynamics.

The timetable for further sessions of the OWG:

| | |
|---|---|
| 25-27 November 2013, New York | Sustained and inclusive economic growth, macroeconomic policy questions (including international trade, international financial system & external debt sustainability), infrastructure development and industrialization (1.5 days)<br>Energy (1.5 days) |
| 9-13 December 2013, New York | Means of implementation (science and technology, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building); Global partnership for achieving sustainable development (2 days)<br>Needs of countries in special situations, African countries, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS as well as the specific challenges facing the middle-income countries (2 days)<br>Human rights, the right to development, global governance (1 day) |
| 6-10 January 2014, New York | Sustainable cities and human settlements, sustainable transport (2 days)<br>Sustainable consumption and production (including chemicals and waste) (1.5 days)<br>Climate change and disaster risk reduction (1.5 days) |
| 3-7 February 2014, New York | Oceans and seas, forests, biodiversity (2 days)<br>Promoting equality, including social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment (1.5 days)<br>Conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and the promotion of durable peace, rule of law and governance (1.5 days) |

More information about the OWG is available at: http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549

**UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda (UNTT)**

Established by the UN Secretary-General in January 2012, the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda assembles more than 60 UN agencies and international organizations. Co-chaired by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme the Task Team coordinates the preparations and supports the process by providing analytical thinking and substantial inputs.

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The Task Team published its first report titled *Realizing the Future We Want for All* in June 2012. It outlines a vision for the post-2015 development agenda and suggests the four key dimensions of: inclusive social development; inclusive economic development; environmental sustainability; and peace and security. Members of the Task Team also prepared a set of 18 think pieces that explore how different themes could potentially be reflected in a new framework

The Three working groups on:

(i) renewed global partnership on development;
(ii) **monitoring and indicators**; and
(iii) financing for sustainable development

were established to further analytical thinking on the post-2015 agenda.

The Task Team published a second report on *A Renewed Global Partnership for Development* in March 2013. The report provides recommendations on key dimensions and a potential format for a global partnership in the post-2015 era. It advises that the partnership should include universal commitments calling for actions from all countries, according to their national capabilities. It should build on existing commitments such as those reflected in the MDGs, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, but must also be broadened and strengthened to address the large array of global challenges we face today.

The **working group on monitoring and indicators** published its report, *Statistics and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda*, at the end of May 2013, focusing on: (i) lessons learned from the MDG framework; (ii) monitoring of emerging issues in the post-2015 agenda; (iii) cross-cutting issues; and (iv) global and national capacities and options for data collection and indicators for the post-2015 agenda.

Moreover, the Technical Support Team (TST) to provide inputs to the HLPEP and to the OWG of the General Assembly on the SDGs has been established under the umbrella of the Task Team to ensure early convergence of the post-2015 and SDGs processes. The TST has provided issue briefs for the HLPEP meetings and OWG sessions.

**National, global and thematic consultations**

In order to facilitate an inclusive global conversation, the United Nations Development Group has initiated consultations at the national and global level as well as a set of eleven thematic consultations (http://www.worldwewant2015.org/sitemap).

National consultations on a post-2015 development agenda are under way in more than 70 countries. A set of eleven multi-stakeholder thematic consultations have been convened on the following themes:

- education;
- inequalities;
- health;
- governance;
- conflict and fragility;
- growth and employment;
- environmental sustainability;
- hunger, nutrition and food security;
- population dynamics;
- energy; and
- water.

Each thematic consultation is led by two or more UN agencies who work closely together with representatives from civil society, the private sector and academia as well as with co-hosting governments. The consultations aim to explore the role such themes could play in a new framework, different ways in which they can be best addressed, and the interlinkages between them.

A report with the preliminary findings from the national and thematic consultations was launched in March 2013 (http://www.worldwewant2015.org/the-global-conversation-begins).

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**Regional consultations**

The United Nations Regional Economic Commissions are engaged in regional consultations which will culminate in a report on regional perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda.

**Sustainable Development Solutions Network**

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), led by Jeffrey Sachs, is a global, independent network of research centres, universities and technical institutions that works with stakeholders including business, civil society, UN agencies and other international organizations. The network established 10 global expert groups to support global problem solving in 10 critical areas of sustainable development. SDSN has also provided technical support to the High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. A report for the Secretary General, *An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development*, was published in July 2013.

**UN Global Compact**

The UN Global Compact has been actively involved in ensuring that the views and contributions of businesses and the private sector feed into the post-2015 process.

**Coordination**

In order to ensure coherence across the different work streams an informal senior coordination group of four Assistant Secretaries-Generals (ASGs) has been put in place, which comprise the ASG for Economic Development at DESA, the ASG for Development Policy at UNDP, the ASG for Policy and Programme at UN Women, and the Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning. A One Secretariat was established to facilitate the coordination and coherence across work streams, while each of the work streams remains substantively independent.

# UNSD NEWS:

## Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress

The Friends of the Chair Group (FOC) on broader measures of progress was established by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its forty-fourth session (26 February to 1 March 2013) as a response to the request of the Rio+20 conference to launch a programme of work on broader measures of progress to complement GDP in order to better inform policy decisions.

The Commission requested the FOC, among other things, to "build a work programme to develop broader measures of progress". The Commission also tasked the FOC group to "closely monitor the ongoing debate on development frameworks and to keep the Bureau of the Statistical Commission informed, undertaking an active dialogue with United Nations bodies and the policy sphere in order to ensure that a robust statistical measurement approach is incorporated from the outset in preparations for the post-2015 development agenda."

The following 22 countries are members of the FOC on broader measures of progress: Argentina Australia, Bahamas, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Germany, France, Hungary, India, Italy, Jamaica, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Suriname, Sweden, Tanzania, United Kingdom, United States and Uganda. France and India lead the FOC on broader measures of progress as the two co-chairs.

The following organizations participate as observers: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris-21, Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) acts as Secretariat of the FOC on broader measures of progress.

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/broaderprogress/default.htm

# UNSD NEWS:

## Special session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals: Monitoring and Measurement

The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals will hold a special session on monitoring and measurement issues on 17 December 2013 in New York. UNSD and the Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress will actively participate in the organization of the session and will ensure the engagement of the international statistical community in the dialogue.

## The United Nations Statistical Commission endorses the revised Framework for strengthening environment statistics in countries

A significant outcome was achieved at the 44th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (the Commission) in February-March 2013 when the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) was endorsed as the framework for strengthening environment statistics programmes in United Nations member States, and was recognized as a useful tool in the context of sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda. The timeliness of the FDES 2013, which includes a Core Set of Environment Statistics, was also commended by the Commission. It is especially important given the need for high quality environment statistics for analysis and informed policymaking and decision-making necessary for supporting sustainable development. The Commission was also introduced to an Action Plan for putting the FDES to work. It endorsed this Action Plan and its recommendation for the establishment of an Expert Group on Environment Statistics to assist with this task. UNSD was very pleased to see several countries express interest in participating in the Expert Group, and the Commission requested that the terms of reference of the Expert Group be developed, as well as a timetable and reporting mechanism.

The Commission was notified of the two consultation processes that contributed to the finalization of the FDES 2013, the Pilot Test of the Core Set of Environment Statistics and the Global Consultation on the FDES in 2012 and UNSD expressed its gratitude to countries that participated in them. The Commission recognized the significant contribution of the current Expert Group in the revision of the FDES, as well as that of participating countries and organizations in the revision and consultation processes.

The Commission stressed the need of countries at the early stages of the development of their environment statistics programmes for increased technical assistance and capacity-building, and called on international organizations for support in this regard. The Commission also stressed the importance of strong coordination between the implementation of the FDES 2013 and that of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Central Framework.

In light of the Commission's emphasis on the need to support the FDES 2013 with detailed methodological guidance and training material, UNSD is currently developing an implementation plan for the delivery of technical training as well as preparing an outline for a planned methodological manual on the Core Set of Environment Statistics. Where possible, coordination between UNSD's programmes and ongoing methodological work in related fields of statistics is taking place and existing resources are being built upon. A good example of this is the forthcoming training workshop on energy and environment statistics organized by UNSD jointly with the Arab Institute for Research and Training in Statistics (AIRTS) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), scheduled to take place from 8 to 12 September 2013 in Amman, Jordan. Further regional workshops and the provision of technical assistance at the national level are also being formulated for the near future.

## Lunchtime Seminar on the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) at the 44th session of the Statistical Commission, New York, 25 February 2013

A Lunchtime Seminar on the FDES 2013 was held on 25 February 2013. It was attended by some fifty participants from national statistical offices, international agencies and missions to the United Nations. The seminar was chaired by Ms. Reena Shah of UNSD. Ms. Iva Ritschelova, President of the Czech Statistical Office and Chairperson of the Expert Group on the Revision of the FDES, made opening remarks regarding the origins of the exercise of revising the FDES. She noted the need for quality environment statistics at the national level and stressed their importance for evidence-based policy making and for monitoring economic well-being.

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Ms. Eszter Horvath of UNSD made the main presentation on the FDES 2013. This presentation addressed the role of environment statistics in general and the rationale for the FDES 2013 and described the process leading up to the final draft of the FDES 2013. In the presentation, Ms. Horvath also set out the multi-level structure of the FDES 2013 and its six components, touching on its scope, objective and expected users. Additionally, she described the potential usefulness of the FDES 2013 when applied to cross-cutting issues such as "Agriculture and the Environment". Critically, the presentation briefly described the Basic and the Core Sets of Environment Statistics, which demonstrate the extent and usefulness of its statistical structure. Finally, Ms. Horvath made a detailed presentation of a plan for putting the FDES 2013 into practice. She explained that the specifics of this plan were presented in one of the background documents of the 44th Statistical Commission, "Putting the FDES to Work: A Blueprint for Action".

Presentations were also made: by Mr. Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor Al-Thani, President of the Qatar Statistics Authority, regarding testing the FDES 2013 in the development of Qatar's environment statistics programme; by Ms. Rayén Quiroga of UNSD on behalf of INEGI Mexico and the Ministry of Environment of Mexico, highlighting Mexico's collaboration and involvement in the Expert Group and in the Pilot Testing of the Basic Set of Environment Statistics; and by Ms. Kristina Taboulchanas of ECLAC, recognizing the involvement of ECLAC countries in the Pilot testing and expressing interest in continued participation in putting the FDES 2013 into action.

The ensuing discussions demonstrated positive interest in and support for the FDES 2013, as a very useful document for countries and organizations in various aspects of their work in environment statistics.

## UNSD Environment Statistics – Plans for Data Collection in 2013

The UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire 2013 on Environment Statistics will be in its seventh round of UNSD's biennial environment statistics data collection mandated by the Statistical Commission. It will be sent to more than 170 countries and territories, excluding OECD and European Union members (for which comparable data are collected as part of the OECD/Eurostat Joint Questionnaire on the State of the Environment). Substantive in-depth teleconferences and email dialogues were held among OECD, Eurostat, the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, and UNECE to discuss concepts and definitions related to hazardous waste. In addition, discussions were also held with FAO Aquastat to improve the harmonization of the concepts and definitions related to water resources, abstraction and use, as well as to enhance data quality. UNSD is in the process of modifying these revisions to the Questionnaire and expects to send it to both National Statistical Offices and Ministries of Environment before the end of the year. In this regard, an announcement letter will first be sent to the heads of the respondent organizations which are encouraged to nominate a single national focal point to receive the 2013 Questionnaire. Following from the prior three rounds, the 2013 Questionnaire will consist of two sections: waste and water. Each section of the Questionnaire will include a list of relevant definitions and comprehensive guidance to assist respondents with filling the tables.

If you have any questions or comments, please send them to: envstats@un.org.

## Country Snapshots and Indicators

The Country Snapshots, which include many of the indicators from the UNSD Environmental Indicators list, in addition to other economic and demographic background information, have also been updated. These Snapshots provide data about the environment and other related statistics at a point in time that will allow comparison between countries. Data come from a variety of sources. This includes UNSD, as well as several other international organizations. The themes covered by the Snapshots are Air and climate; Biodiversity; Economy; Energy; Land and agriculture; Population; Waste; and Water and sanitation. The latest Country Snapshots can be found at:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/ENVIRONMENT/Questionnaires/country_snapshots.htm

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS:

## The new FAOSTAT Agri-environmental indicators database

**(Contributed by Robert Mayo, FAO)**

A new Agri-environmental indicators database has just been released by FAO in FAOSTAT FAOSTAT.fao.org. This database has been developed to help meet the statistical information needs that have arisen due to the many environmental challenges facing

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agriculture. In recent decades, the agriculture sector has adopted new production methods and intensified production to meet higher food demands due to continued world population growth. As the population continues to grow, which is estimated to be over 9 billion by 2050, there is an increasing strain on agriculture to meet the food security needs of many countries. The long term environmental sustainability of high production is one major question facing agriculture.

The monitoring of the impacts of agriculture on the environment is needed by countries to develop appropriate policy responses. The development and on-going support of an agri-environmental statistics system at country level is imperative to monitor the changing interactions of agriculture and the environment and ultimately to ensure sustainable agricultural production. Currently, many developing countries do not have an agri-environmental statistics system that can provide the necessary statistics and related indicators for monitoring of critical issues. The development of the FAOSTAT agri-environmental indicators database will provide users with the opportunity to undertake data analysis and identify trends for specific countries and regions. Indicators are provided for all countries, depending upon data availability.

The database is based primarily on data available in FAO (FAOSTAT, FAO Forest Resources Assessment; AQUASTAT). The indicators have been produced in-line with the agri-environmental indicators methodology and frameworks developed by OECD and EUROSTAT.

The topics covered by the Agri-environmental indicators database are:

- Air & Climate Change;
- Energy (use in agriculture and bio-energy production);
- Fertilizers consumption;
- Land (area, use-change, irrigation, conservation, cropping patterns, organic, protection)
- Livestock density;
- Pesticide use;
- Soil (erosion, degradation and carbon);
- Water use.

A few examples of indicators included in the database are:

- Nitrogen nutrient use on arable and permanent crop area (N tonnes/1000 ha);
- Arable land area as a % of agricultural area;
- Pigs as a % of total livestock.

During 2013, FAO will be reviewing the agri-environmental indicators with the aim of improving them in order to fully reflect the needs of developing countries in particular. It is a concern that the agri-environmental indicator needs of developing countries are not adequately reflected in the current suite of indicators. The FAO Statistics Division will coordinate the review of databases at FAO and undertake an assessment of country statistical needs for their potential contribution in the development of an improved suite of agri-environmental indicators. In addition, FAO will take into account: The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA); the revised Framework for Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013); lessons learned from developing the new FAOSTAT Agri-environmental indicators database as well as inputs from countries to ensure that regional agri-environmental issues are better addressed.

**Queries may be addressed to**: Robert.Mayo@fao.org

## UNEP goes 'live'

**(Contributed by Jaap van Woerden, UNEP)**

With a goal of moving away from static, paper-based reporting on the global environment and towards more dynamic, on-line ways of picturing and tracking environmental state and trends, UNEP has launched an initiative called UNEP*Live*. A proof-of-concept of the UNEP*Live* platform was presented at the first United Nations Environment Assembly (formerly the Governing Council) of UNEP in February 2013 in Nairobi, and is accessible at http://www.uneplive.org. In essence, UNEP*Live* is to be a web-based platform for promoting access to and the use of environmental information to keep the state of the environment under review. Its purpose is to support improvements in assessment products and processes by providing services that better manage environmental data and information, increase their re-use, reduce duplicate effort, streamline stakeholder participation, and increase the potential

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pool of participants. It is to help make environmental assessment processes more efficient, their products of greater relevance in policy fora, and to enable flexible, customized delivery of assessment products to member States and major stakeholders. It will accomplish this, notably by:

(a) facilitating a continuous global assessment process, evolving the current Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process from a recurrent 5 year endeavour to a more easily updatable approach;


(b) utilizing, sharing and providing access to the best available data and information;

(c) improving the quality and timeliness of data through exposure and transparency, thereby increasing its policy relevance;

(d) contributing, as appropriate, to the reporting obligations of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and potentially to the future Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under discussion;

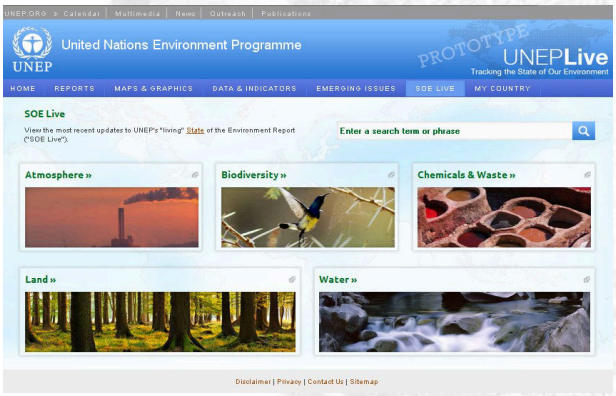
(e) providing a collaborative platform to facilitate the social process that brings together experts during assessment activities at national, regional and global levels;

(f) providing technology support to enable and facilitate national level State of the Environment (SOE) reporting;

(g) making assessment outcomes more accessible, more current and more dynamic, and improving the communication of assessment findings; and

(h) providing opportunities to compare and learn, helping countries build capacities to develop their own assessments.

UNEP*Live* draws heavily on statistical and other data as available from primary sources among UN agencies and elsewhere. Baseline data are derived from the regular UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire on Environment Statistics and complementary sources from the United Nations Secretariat and other key partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Eurostat and many others. On-line access to the databases of these agencies is strongly promoted in order to avoid duplication of work and ensure that the data are always up-to-date. New or additional data requirements are coordinated through various interagency mechanisms such as the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics (IWG-ENV) with the objective of improving the availability and relevance of environmental data and indicators. UNEP*Live* will feature a global 'core set' of environmental indicators for picturing and tracking the state and trends in the global environment, compatible with the Core Set of Environment Statistics included in the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) which was endorsed by the 44th session of the Statistical Commission in 2013.




In a second phase (2014-2017) UNEP*Live* will address complementary aspects of improving access to and use of environmental information. This will be carried out through capacity development at national and regional levels for the purpose of environmental assessment and reporting as well as for building more effective bridges amongst global environment information networks in domains such as biodiversity, water security and climate change. The ultimate goal is that institutions and civil society will have access to environmental data and information products, and impact assessment processes. This will enhance the capacities of member States to carry out their own assessment and reporting processes enabling improved outcomes such as:

• Governments' delivery of up-to-date reporting on the state of the environment reporting using common approaches consisting of publications, statistical data and geospatial data;

• A customized "wiki" style collaborative platform for shared development and communication of environmental assessments of states and trends; and

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- An on-line gateway to country level environmental information that is consolidated from a wide range of participating partners/ countries, for download and analysis.

# REGIONAL NEWS:

## Launch of Regional Public Goods Project: "Development and Strengthening of Official Environmental Statistics through the Creation of a Regional Framework in Latin America and the Caribbean"

**(Contributed by Kristina Taboulchanas, UN-ECLAC)**

The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Working Group on Environmental Statistics of the Statistical Conference of the Americas is launching a Regional Public Goods project to support the development and strengthening of Environmental Statistics in the region. The project is funded by the Inter-American Development Bank and executed by Mexico's National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI). Participating countries include the Bahamas, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Suriname and Venezuela. The first workshop to launch the project took place on 27-28 June 2013 in Panama City, Panama. ECLAC is the Technical Secretariat for the Regional Working Group and parties among the regional agencies supporting the implementation of the project along with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

## Regional Strategy for the Implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts

**(Contributed by Kristina Taboulchanas, UN-ECLAC)**

ECLAC is elaborating a strategy for the implementation of the System of Environmental and Economic Accounts (SEEA) in Latin America. The Global SEEA Strategy developed by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting is being used as one of the main inputs. Given the region's specific developmental challenges and institutional particularities, a regionally tailored strategy is needed. As part of this work ECLAC is carrying out a study to look at present and past experiences of environmental accounting to better understand what factors have facilitated the adoption of the accounts and what have been the main challenges, and also what strategies countries have used to overcome them.

For more information on the above mentioned activities please contact Kristina Taboulchanas at ECLAC (Kristina.taboulchanas@cepal.org) or 56-2-2210-2335.

# UNECE NEWS

**(Contributed by Vania Etropolska)**

## Conference of European Statisticians Endorses Recommendations to Assist Countries in Measuring Sustainable Development

On 12 June 2013 the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), held under the auspices of UNECE in Geneva, endorsed a set of recommendations for a framework to measure sustainable development and its associated sets of indicators. The recommendations, including a "Framework and suggested indicators to measure sustainable development" have been developed by a Task Force set up jointly by UNECE, the Statistical Office of the European Commission (Eurostat) and the OECD. They take into account various initiatives undertaken by the United Nations, Eurostat and the OECD, as well as by individual countries, and they provide analyses of current measurement frameworks.

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The framework is a key step towards harmonizing the various approaches and indicators already used by countries and international organizations to measure sustainable development. It is expected to contribute to the United Nations processes for setting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and defining a post-2015 development agenda.

**Conceptual background**

The proposed framework builds on the definition of sustainable development in the Brundtland Report (1987), prepared by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development: "Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." It argues that sustainable development is about distributional justice, in both time and space, including distribution of well-being between the present and future generations and differences in well-being among countries.

**Analytical framework**

The framework distinguishes among three conceptual dimensions of human well-being:

- **human well-being of the present generation in one particular country ('here and now')**. While there is no universal consensus on all of its dimensions, human well-being should be defined according to what people themselves regard as most important in their lives. These dimensions can be measured through a mix of subjective and objective measures presented in the framework.
- **well-being of future generations ('later')**. The well-being of future generations is dependent on the resources the current generation leaves behind. Assets that should be preserved for future generations fall under four main types of capital: economic, natural, human and social capital. These capitals can be measured in both physical and monetary terms. Measures of the current levels of capital and their changes over time show how the choices of the present generation might impact on future generations.
- **well-being of people living in other countries ('elsewhere').** The 'elsewhere' dimension captures the ways in which countries affect the human well-being of the rest of the world, for example, through international trade, financial transfers, environmental impact, migration, etc.

**Specific themes of sustainable development** that should be measured are also identified. Twenty themes are distinguished covering the three (environmental, social and economic) aspects of sustainable development. These are: subjective well-being, consumption and income, nutrition, health, housing, education, leisure, physical safety, trust, institutions, energy resources, non-energy resources, land and ecosystems, water, air quality, climate, labour, physical capital, knowledge capital, and financial capital. Population has been added as a context indicator.

**Indicators**

A procedure to derive indicator sets is closely linked to the measurement framework. The proposed three indicator sets include:

- **A large set of 60 indicators -** to provide information about the dimensions of well-being in the 'here and now', 'later' and 'elsewhere'. Several of the indicators relate to distributional issues. The conceptual approach shows to what extent the choices made today may lead to problems 'elsewhere' or 'later'; this approach is rooted in economic theory and is more amenable to economic **modelling**.

- **A large set of 90 indicators** - selected on a **thematic basis** which incorporates the 60 indicators and in addition indicators that highlight areas where policy action may be taken to reverse negative (or sustain positive) trends. For instance, under the theme 'Education', the policy-relevant indicator includes 'the percentage of early school leavers'.

- **A small set of 24 indicators -** to ease communication with policymakers and the general public and ensure a common basis for international comparison. The data needed to produce the indicators in this set are already available.

The selection of themes and indicators is based on an analysis of the sustainable development themes and indicators currently used in several national and international datasets.

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The framework does not propose a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather presents a flexible tool that can respond to a variety of needs. Once the SDGs have been established, the suggested indicators could be aligned with their goals. In addition, although the proposed sustainability themes are universal, there is room for selecting country-specific indicators.

**Way forward**

The Recommendations identify a number of measurement issues that will need to be addressed in the future. In particular, more work needs to be done on measuring the international aspects of sustainable development (i.e., the impact of countries on each other) and constructing better indicators in the areas of human, social, economic and natural capital (including better measures of their distribution). Additionally, data on time use can be used to measure those non-market activities which are relevant to sustainable development.

In the post Rio+20 policy context, the Recommendations are expected to inform the selection of SDGs and to lead to greater harmonization of national and international sets of sustainable development indicators. The work of the Task Force also links to on-going policy initiatives on the post-2015 development agenda.

The document is available at:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/2013/SD_framework_and_indicators_final.pdf

## UNECE Activities on Production of Environmental Data and Indicators to Further Strengthen Environmental Reporting

Close attention to environmental issues has increased the demand for high quality statistics to strengthen environmental monitoring in the UNECE region. The UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy and the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) launched a Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators (Joint Task Force) in 2009. Its main task is to review the *UNECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia* (Guidelines), with a view to improving environmental data production and promoting comparability of environmental statistics in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe. The work brings together environmental experts and statisticians, a cooperation that is crucial to ensuring improved methodologies and better time series data. The work is carried out with strong support from the European Environment Agency (EEA) and in close cooperation with other international organizations such as the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Energy Agency (IEA), Eurostat, etc.

The Joint Task Force discussed, in depth, 35 of the 36 indicators recommended by the Guidelines. In 2013, it will continue with reviewing the last indicator from the Guidelines, "Waste reuse and recycling", and six additional water-related indicators "Total water use", "Public water supply", "Connection of population to public water supply", "Population connected to wastewater treatment", "Wastewater treatment facilities" and "Concentration of pollutants in seawater and sediments". The Guidelines are currently being updated to take account of the amendments made by the Joint Task Force and will include proposed additional indicators. The updated Guidelines are expected to be finalized by the end of 2013.

The UNECE is currently implementing a United Nations Development Account project on environmental sustainability in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. South-Eastern European countries are also participating. Under the project several workshops took place jointly with other international organizations, among which were Eurostat, EEA, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The topics covered waste statistics (11-13 April 2012, Geneva); measuring sustainable development and the implications of the Rio+20 Conference (29 October 2012, Geneva); agri-environmental statistics (13-15 May 2013, Montenegro) and follow-up to Rio+20: measuring sustainable development and implementing the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Heads of Statistical Offices (12-13 June 2013, Geneva). A follow-up workshop on waste statistics is planned to take place on 4 November 2013 back-to-back with the 7th meeting of the Joint Task Force.

## UNECE Task Force on Climate Change Related Statistics

The Rio+20 Summit emphasized that climate change represents an immediate and urgent global priority. As a response to the increasing need for new information for climate change analysis, the CES Bureau established a Task Force on Climate Change

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Related Statistics in 2011. The aim of the Task Force is to identify practical steps to develop climate change related statistics to meet user needs and enhance the support to greenhouse gas inventory compilers.

A survey of national statistical offices was carried out in 2011 to take stock of the current state of work on climate change related statistics in the national statistical offices and to identify issues of common concern for further work at international level. The results showed that many statistical offices are involved in the work on greenhouse gas emission inventories, and several offices produce other statistics related to climate change. The survey was undertaken with support by the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting and UNSD. The results provided useful input for analysing the role of national statistical offices in climate change related statistics.

The Task Force organized an expert meeting on Climate Change Related Statistics for Producers and Users on 19-20 November 2012 in Geneva to explore the user demand and take stock of what statistical offices are doing in climate change related statistics. The meeting brought together over 50 producers and users of climate change related statistics, such as greenhouse gas inventory compilers, environment agencies and ministries as well as statistical offices and international organizations. The discussions at the meeting provided a valuable input to the report to be prepared by the Task Force.

The Task Force has prepared interim recommendations on key directions in climate change related statistics for the future that were presented at the CES plenary session in June 2013.

A second expert meeting to discuss the preliminary recommendations is planned for the last quarter of 2013. The final report of the Task Force is expected to be submitted to the CES for approval in April 2014.

More information about the UNECE workshops and meetings is available at: www.unece.org/statshome/meetings-and-events.html

## UN-ESCWA

**(Contributed by Therese El Gemayel, Project Coordinator, Energy Statistics and Balances, Environment and Energy Statistics Team, Statistics Division, UN -ESCWA)**

In efforts to raise environmental awareness and emphasize the importance of generating environment statistics, ESCWA has participated in the national workshop on Shared Environmental Information System Implementation that was held in Beirut, Lebanon on 11 April 2013. The national workshop was organized by an environmental consulting firm jointly with Plan Bleu and the Lebanese Ministry of Environment. ESCWA's environment team in the Statistics Division was invited to share their knowledge and expertise related to the availability and quality of the environment data produced and in resolving problems encountered in this area. ESCWA stressed the importance of developing reliable environment statistics on the national level and having a Lebanese database that can be shared between institutions to ensure a complete and sustainable inter-institutional system for sharing environment data.

Furthermore, ESCWA has received a request from Yemen to provide technical assistance in the preparation of their national medical hazardous waste survey that will be taking place in the year 2013. ESCWA has collaborated with the Central Statistical Organization of Yemen to provide the necessary assistance. Since providing that technical assistance, ESCWA continues to collaborate with Yemeni counterparts to provide further assistance when needed, as this activity is being implemented for the first time in Yemen.

In addition, ESCWA is in the finalization phase of the 4th issue of the Compendium of Environment Statistics in the Arab Region 2012-2013 that includes environment data mainly from national sources. All countries included in the publication had a pivotal role in reviewing and editing their national data before finalizing the publication. This activity gave countries incentives to develop more advanced and detailed environment statistics. The publication will be available on ESCWA's Website in September 2013. Previous issues of the compendium can be found on:

http://www.escwa.un.org/esiap/

REGIONAL NEWS:

## UN-ECA

### Workshop on Sustainable Development Indicators: Conceptual Framework, Data Collection and Analysis

**(Contributed by the African Centre for Statistics, UNECA)**

A workshop on "Sustainable Development Indicators: Conceptual Framework, Data Collection and Analysis" was held by ECA in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 11 to 13 December 2012. It was convened to support the effort to build up the statistical capacity of ECA member States in collecting data for assessing, monitoring, and designing polices for sustainable development.

The workshop brought together about 40 experts from national statistical offices and institutions in charge of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development from 14 countries, namely Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mauritius, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia and Uganda, that were selected to pilot national -level data collection for sustainable development. Furthermore, representatives from the African Union Commission (AUC), FAO and UNEP took part in the workshop.

The workshop reviewed the proposed set of sustainable development indicators for Africa against data availability at the country level; introduced and discussed internationally recommended statistical concepts, definitions, classifications, and methodologies in the revised Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics, the Core Set of Environment Statistics, and the Central Framework of the System of Environmental and Economic Accounting, and related international statistical standards; and exchanged and shared country experiences and good practices in data collection and compilation.

A questionnaire was designed and circulated in the 14 pilot countries in late 2012 for collecting data for the ECA policy research and discussion publication, the fifth issue of the *Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA-V)*. In addressing the thematic topic of the fifth issue of SDRA, "Achieving sustainable development in Africa through inclusive green growth", the questionnaire covered many themes including agricultural statistics, demographic statistics, energy statistics, environment statistics, foreign trade statistics, monetary and financial statistics, national accounts, and social statistics.

One of the challenges encountered in statistics was that, among the 13 countries that responded to the questionnaire, most of the fields were not adequately filled. Besides, not a single country provided data on crude oil rents, fossil fuel resources, land area affected by desertification, patents in environmentally-related technologies, people living on degraded land, private expenditure per pupil, reserves of non-metallic and metallic minerals, and wetland areas. Many of these were in the area of environmental statistics and accounts; reflecting the fact that there were many technical and data gaps in this area and that more technical support and assistance work are needed.

## CARICOM's Third Regional Environment Statistics Report

**(Contributed by Philomen Harrison, CARICOM Secretariat)**

The Caribbean Community Secretariat continues to work on the production of its third regional Environment Statistics Report-2009, which is scheduled to be released shortly. The publication follows a series of capacity-building activities that have been undertaken in the region, with the support of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), to strengthen capacity in the production of environment statistics. Workshops were held in successive years from 2009-2011, the objectives of which included, training personnel from member countries on the concepts, definitions and methods on the core set of indicators that are to be produced and disseminated in the publication. These workshops were supported in 2009 by the World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB) and in 2010 and 2011 by the European Union (EU) under the Tenth European Development Fund (EDF).

The approach to training also emphasized the important element of inter-agency collaboration at the national level since some of these indicators are produced by agencies external to the National Statistical Offices (NSOs). Engagement of NSOs with the producing agencies is a critical element in an implementation strategy that was formulated by countries during the training workshop of 2011. Another aspect of the capacity-building during these training workshops was the identification of best practices in the computation of the indicators. The Caribbean Hub sub-component of the European Commission has also provided support in the area of Biodiversity in three countries, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Jamaica, in an effort to concentrate on this specific area to build capacity in filling the data gaps. The EU under the Tenth EDF has also provided support which would entail in-country support and regional training in this area of statistics.

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There are still many significant challenges in the compilation of environment statistics despite the efforts of the CARICOM Secretariat, the UNSD and countries. Some challenges are linked to the frequency of production of some indicators such as information on the housing stock, populations and households which for many countries are collected every ten years in the Population and Housing Census. This factor is one of the determinants in the delay in producing the forthcoming regional publication since efforts are being made to obtain updated information on some of these variables from the 2010 Census Round. However, there are a few countries that continue to improve or maintain the frequency in which they are producing publications. These include Suriname, Dominica, Belize and Jamaica. In recent years Bermuda has been able to produce two publications, in 2009 and 2011. Overall, data gaps seemed to have lessened among the indicators in the area of Tourism through collaboration with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation. The Secretariat receives data from other regional organizations but invariably there are often differences when the same data are submitted directly by countries. This is an issue that is required to be addressed in the future.

# EUROSTAT NEWS

**(Contributed by Christian Heidorn and Juergen Foerster)**

## Eurostat-Directors' Meeting on environmental Statistics and Accounts (DIMESA 2013)

DIMESA 2013 took place in Luxembourg on 25-26 April and a workshop on SEEA implementation was held the day before. The workshop showed the urgent need to consolidate the present modules (air emissions accounts, environmental taxes, economy-wide material flow accounts) and the three future modules (environmental protection expenditure, environmental goods and services, energy accounts) under the European Environmental Accounts Regulation. Participants agreed that communication to users about the usefulness of the accounts is key; and countries beginning to work in a new domain can benefit from the more advanced countries. DIMESA 2013 had a full agenda: members showed high interest for Eurostat's work on Resource Efficiency Indicators and the up-coming online scoreboard. European Commission Services working on Climate and Environment policies, the European Environment Agency, as well as the OECD presented their priorities as producers and users of environment statistics.

UNSD presented the FDES 2013 (see also Envstats issue 32) and the way forward after its adoption by the Statistical Commission in February 2013. DIMESA members appreciated the availability of the FDES 2013 and its 'Core Set of Environment Statistics' and as an important assessment tool and reference even for countries with advanced environment statistics.

## Eurostat – Consolidated waste statistics and indicators and a new Manual now online


The revised website of Eurostat's Environmental Data Centre on Waste presents not only waste data produced under European statistical law, but also all waste-related data reported under waste legislation or voluntary data collections. The site provides easy access to reporting tools and guidance, as well as to Eurostat's dissemination tables, graphs and maps.

A calendar of upcoming events and more information on the ENPI-SEIS Project is available at http://enpi-seis.ew.eea.europa.eu

The Eurostat waste team is also happy to share the 2013 edition of the Manual on waste statistics with the international statistical community. Although tailored for reporting under the European Waste Statistics Regulation, its detailed specification of concepts, definitions of waste generated and classifications of treatment operations may assist countries when developing their waste statistics. The manual is available in English, German and French.

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## Eurostat – Resources efficiency: A new statistical challenge

'A resource-efficient Europe' is an important policy initiative in the European Union's ten-year growth strategy (Europe 2020). High level expert groups, such as the European Resource Efficiency Platform (EREP), have reviewed the list of indicators proposed for the upcoming Resource Efficiency Scoreboard to be developed and disseminated by Eurostat: a draft set of 28 indicators to monitor progress towards an increase in resource efficiency of the EU economy. Close coordination with the 'Green Growth Knowledge Platform' of OECD, UNEP, the Worldbank and others will be essential. Eurostat plans to launch the Resource Efficiency Scoreboard in mid-2013.

## Eurostat – Water statistics and accounting

Following a recommendation by the Directors' meeting (DIMESA) in late 2012, Eurostat strives to combine the overlapping data needs of water statistics and water accounting in one single reporting request to European countries. A 'Joint Task Force for Water Statistics and Accounts' was installed, which at its first meeting in March 2013 subdivided the work into three modules: physical water flows, water infrastructure, and water assets/resources. The work follows as closely as possible the recommendations from SEEA-Water and IRWS, while mapping the content of the OECD/Eurostat Joint Questionnaire on Inland Waters. It is expected that the Task Force can finalize its work in 2013 so that results can be discussed with member states in early 2014 and implemented subsequently.

## Eurostat – Regional environment statistics

Eurostat's second ever systematic collection of regional environmental statistics by means of the 'Regional Environmental Questionnaire' (REQ) 2012 was a follow-up of the pilot exercise in 2010 and generated increased overall response rates, with all but three EU member states participating on a voluntary basis. The data collection covers selected topics from the domains of water, municipal solid waste, transport, energy consumption, land use and environmental expenditure. The requested aggregation level is NUTS2 (regions of ca. 1-3 million inhabitants). For water, in parallel to NUTS2, the aggregation to hydrologically defined 'River Basin Districts' (including sub-units) according to the EU Water Framework Directive is also used. After completion of thorough validation, all resulting statistics will be available for download from the Eurostat website as from mid-2013.

## The European Environment Agency's work in the field of environmental indicators and the United Nations Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013)

(Contributed by Roberta Pignatelli, EEA)

Providing, harmonising and sharing environmental information in Europe and beyond is a fundamental task of the European Environment Agency (EEA). Data are provided to users with appropriate context by indicators, which are a bridge between data and assessments; in the conceptual representation of environmental information given by the Monitoring-Data-Information-Assessment-Knowledge (MDIAK) 'reporting chain', the EEA indicators actually play a central role by covering the three central concepts (D, I and A). This is reflected in their logical structure, which includes a standard part related to metadata ("specification"), which is like "the recipe", and a more narrative part ("assessment"), which is produced whenever new data becomes available from the source data sets. A significant part of the EEA's activities consists in producing, using and disseminating environmental indicators.

The EEA has designed indicators to support all phases of environmental policy making, i.e., the design of policy frameworks, the target setting, the policy monitoring and evaluations, and the communication to policy-makers and the public. Depending on which environmental challenge they address and which stage of the policy cycle they aim to inform, they can be classified as descriptive, performance, efficiency, policy effectiveness or total welfare indicators. They can also be classified according to the Driving force-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR) analytical framework, which is also considered in FDES 2013.

The EEA started developing indicators in the late nineties, based on fact sheets following international standards at that time (OECD, United Nations); it currently maintains 144 indicators across 12 environmental themes. By drawing indicators from the different themes, a Core Set of Indicators (CSIs) was established in 2004, with the multiple purposes of prioritizing improvements in the quality and coverage of data flows, streamlining contributions to other international indicator initiatives, as well as providing a

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manageable and stable basis for indicator-based assessments of progress against environmental policy priorities. Many of the CSIs are used in other international indicator processes being implemented elsewhere, notably at the European Commission, OECD, WHO and UNECE and the set is often taken as a model for indicator sets at country level. Compatibility of the FDES with the EEA core indicators is considered a great advantage and facilitates the use of the FDES in EEA's indicator work.

Through the Indicator Management System (IMS), tracking the relationships between indicators and other areas of the web content management system, traceability and transparency are ensured and automated exchange with partners is allowed.

The global international standards for official statistics, provided in the "Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics" of the United Nations and implemented at the EU level through the European Statistics Code of Practice, are not binding for the EEA indicators, since the Agency is not part of the European Statistical System (ESS). The Code, however, signals the ambition to move towards Europe-wide standards and its standards are meant to be a source of inspiration for all institutions and bodies producing official statistics, whether or not they belong to the ESS.

The Euro-SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), drawn from the Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) initiative launched by seven international bodies including the United Nations and used by Eurostat to disseminate reference metadata at European level, is currently also being applied to EEA indicators, within the project, "Streamlining of European environmental indicators", led by Eurostat. The use of a common reference structure helps to identify what among the different concepts of indicators can be shared and what instead remains peculiar to each organisation's approach. In this context transparency is much more important than the attempt to homogenize the different approaches. A common reference structure also facilitates the indicator work by countries which have to produce indicators in different contexts using different formats and procedures. This aspect should be kept in mind when developing detailed methodological guidance for the FDES Core Set of Environment Statistics.

To play their role of concentrating complex issues into meaningful and relevant information for policymakers and citizens, indicators needs to be high quality, i.e. comparable, reliable, timely and accessible. Building on a pilot exercise in 2011, the Agency started implementing quality evaluation in the IMS, in order to make it as automatic and objective as possible. This is being done consistently with the work under the Streamlining project mentioned above, where quality issues are also addressed. The current EEA system for evaluating indicator quality is based on three criteria: regularity of updating (derived by combining update trend and update commitment), stability (derived by combining indicator ownership and input data) and scope (reflecting the adequacy of the geographic coverage). On the basis of these criteria, specific scores are assigned to each indicator, resulting in a classification of the indicators according to their level of quality.

Different types of indicators are required by the new emerging policy demands, such as sustainability, effectiveness, credibility and globalisation, as well as new or extended data sets and different approaches. On the one hand, the demand for additional indicators can be met by making new uses of existing data flows and reference data sets for indicator development, thus minimizing the requirement to collect new data to underpin them. On the other hand, improving data flows so that they provide a stronger foundation for indicators requires action in a number of areas, including geo-referencing of data to enable analysis based on ecological units and improving the timeliness of data. Improved accessibility and sharing of data sets will also improve the timeliness and relevance of indicators.

The EEA, together with Eionet and EU partners, is engaged in a range of approaches and systems, ranging from the SENSE project (Shared European and National State of the Environment) to online-sharing of European and national indicators and assessments and their underpinning data between EEA and Eionet, or the INSPIRE process leading to a better availability of geospatial reference data, or the GMES integrated monitoring services, which will strengthen capacities for handling near real -time (NRT) data flows. In addition, being consistent and in synergy with the FDES would be highly desirable, first of all because the framework helps establish networks of producers of environmental information and structures the dialogue between the producers and users of environment statistics. It would also facilitate the connections among the different indicator-related activities, such as indicator management and development and environmental accounting.

### The European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument – Shared Environment Information System (ENPI-SEIS) Project: Towards a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) in the European Neighbourhood

(Contributed by Cecile Roddier-Quefelec )

The Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) is an EU initiative to modernise and simplify the collection, exchange and use of the data and information required for the design and implementation of environmental policy. The ENPI-SEIS project was launched back in 2009 to help protect the environment in the European Neighbourhood region by improving capacities of the relevant authorities in the ENP East countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and Russian

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Federation and in the ENP South countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia) in the domain of monitoring, data management, assessment and indicator-based reporting on the environment.

As the implementation continues and following the annual ENPI-SEIS Steering Committee meeting, which was held on 21-22 November 2012 in Copenhagen, the focus laid mainly on strengthening the established networks in the ENPI area, responding to countries' immediate needs in the priority areas by holding relevant regional/sub-regional seminars and national workshops and agreeing on development of a regional core set of indicators for both regions while setting-up a regular reporting mechanism.

**ENPI-South: Towards a regular review mechanism of the Euro-Mediterranean Horizon 2020 (H2020) initiative – preparation of the first assessment report of H2020.**

The "Horizon 2020 Initiative" aims to de-pollute the Mediterranean by the year 2020 by tackling the sources of pollution that account for around 80 per cent of the overall pollution of the Mediterranean Sea: municipal waste, urban waste water and industrial pollution. Horizon 2020 was endorsed during the Environment Ministerial Conference held in Cairo in November 2006 and is now one of the key initiatives endorsed by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) at its launch in Paris in 2008. A 2007-2013 Road-Map was adopted by ministers in Cairo. As part of a long term process towards the development of a reporting mechanism for measuring progress under the H2020 initiative, the first quarter of 2013 focused on the development of the H2020 indicators and the preparation of the first assessment report of H2020 progress as called for by the road-map of the Cairo declaration.

To support this process, a selection of 6 key indicators has been made by the ENPI-SEIS Working Group on Indicators and detailed indicator factsheets have been developed (http://enpi-seis.ew.eea.europa.eu/project-activities/data-and-indicators/working-group-environmental-indicators-south/factsheet-consultation). These indicators, currently being populated by the partner countries, are supporting the production of the regional indicator based analysis of the H2020 priority areas. National workshops organised by the ENPI-SEIS National Focal Points took place in each ENP-South Partner Country over the period March-May 2013 (http://enpi-seis.ew.eea.europa.eu/project-activities/data-and-indicators/egypt-indicators-national-workshop). The workshops were intended to support the development of these indicators and their corresponding data flows, as well as strengthen coordination among the different data providers and thematic experts. A specific country level assistance on indicator development is ensured by UNEP-MAP (Plan Bleu/MEDPOL) within the framework of a contribution agreement with the European Environmental Agency (EEA) to support SEIS implementation in the Mediterranean region.

As validated by the H2020 Review, Monitoring and Research sub-group the first H2020 Regional Report is to be delivered to the H2020 Steering Group by the end of 2013. It will consist of three main parts: (i) a synthesis, summarising the H2020 priority areas, state of the environment, cross-cutting issues, reflections on policy implications and overarching conclusions; (ii) an Indicator-based thematic assessment using the selected H2020 indicators; and (iii) a country level assessment compiled on the basis of the information provided by the ENP South countries, which will cover the H2020 priority areas as well as specific country situations. EEA is undertaking this first reporting exercise jointly with UNEP/MAP and in close coordination with the two other H2020 components and the UfM secretariat, thus ensuring a proper streamlining of the efforts while assessing progress of the H2020 initiative.

**ENPI East**

For the ENPI East, an agreement was reached during the Steering Committee Meeting in November 2012 to work towards implementing data flows for a selected set of indicators from the UNECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. At the same time, the countries requested that more guideline documentation be made available in Russian and expressed a need for bilateral discussions on the basis of country reports which had been provided earlier. These bilateral discussions took place during a meeting devoted to the implementation of the data flows at the EEA. It was held in, Copenhagen, 9-10 April 2013 and afforded countries the possibility to reiterate their priorities. As a result of these discussions, most countries have agreed to host national workshops, planned to take place between October 2013 and March 2014.

**Upcoming events:**

2-3 September 2013 – IT Working Group meeting for ENP South, Copenhagen

17-18 September 2013 – ENPI-SEIS Steering Committee Meeting, EEA, Copenhagen

5-7 November 2014 – UNECE/EEA Joint Task Force meeting

October 2013 – March 2014 - ENPI- East National workshops

More information on ENPI-SEIS Project is available at http://enpi-seis.ew.eea.europa.eu

# COUNTRY NEWS

## Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP) and the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES)

(Contributed by Mark Lound, Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP) is designed to help Australians address the question, 'Is life in Australia getting better?'. MAP provides a digestible selection of statistical evidence in answer to this question. Australians can use this evidence to form their own view of how the country is progressing.

The range of statistical measures that MAP presents demonstrates change. They are grouped under three broad headings: the society, the economy and the environment.

Within these broad domains, several dimensions are addressed, such as biodiversity in the environmental domain. Within most of these dimensions, a headline indicator which directly addresses the notion of progress is used to tell a story about the extent of progress within that dimension which is then supported by contextual measures to provide evidence for the progress indicators.

The United Nations Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) has been used as one of the sources for the development of components of the environmental dimension. The Tier 1 - Core Set of Environment Statistics was used to highlight possible sets of key indicators, particularly around Environmental Conditions and Quality, and Emissions, Residuals and Waste.

The MAP is currently undertaking a consultation process, with the populated indicators scheduled for release in November 2013. With the FDES being endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in early 2013, it is hoped that the availability of data for the core indicators will be strengthened to potentially fill data gaps in future versions of MAP.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Workshop on Environment and Energy Statistics which is being organized by UNSD jointly with the Arab Institute for Research and Training in Statistics (AIRTS) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) scheduled to take place from 8 to 12 September 2013 in Amman, Jordan.

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