



## NEWS & NOTES

Environment Statistics

United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)/DESA

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### UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire 2006 on Environment Statistics

The UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire 2006 on Environment Statistics was the fourth round of UNSD's biennial data collection activities including all countries except those who are covered by the OECD/Eurostat Joint Questionnaire on the State of the Environment. The 2006 Questionnaire focused on two important environmental areas, namely the management of water resources and waste. The Questionnaire was sent to the statistical offices and environmental ministries of 163 countries and territories in March 2006.

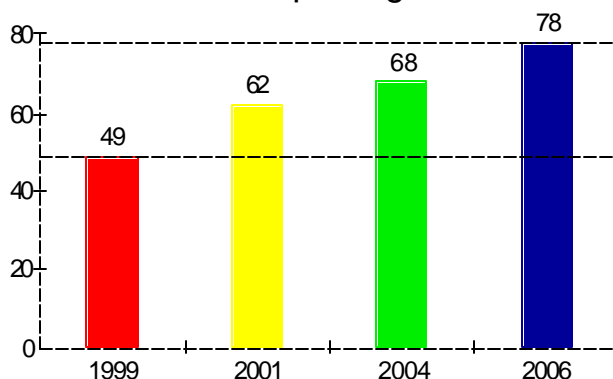
To date, a total of 78 countries or areas have sent responses to the Questionnaire. Response rates vary strongly by region and the best response rates are from Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Europe. Africa, Western Asia, Asia and the Pacific show low response rates. The best reported subject areas are water resources, public water supply, municipal waste and hazardous waste.

While the number of countries responding to the Questionnaire has increased by almost 60 percent since 1999, many countries still have only scattered data and are able to reply only on a limited number of variables. Continuous efforts in training and capacity building are needed to improve the situation in countries.

Following a thorough validation process selected data sets will be published on the Main Indicators pages of the UNSD Environment Statistics website by the end of February 2007. Additional data will later be available on the website in the form of country snapshots.

UNSD thanks all responding countries for their great efforts in completing the questionnaire. All countries are still encouraged to send available or updated data to UNSD as they become available. The next data collection on environment statistics will be in March 2008.

### Number of Responding Countries



### Global Assessment on Environment Statistics and Environmental-Economic Accounting

To assess the state of national implementation of Environment Statistics and Environmental-Economic Accounting Programmes and to identify priorities and future plans in these fields, a global assessment was carried out under the aegis of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) in collaboration with the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics (IWG-ENV). The survey covers general information on the programmes of environment statistics and environmental-economic accounting including their institutional set-up, the different subject areas covered, constraints encountered in the development and implementation of such programmes, and planned future activities. The questionnaire of the Global Assessment is posted on the UNSD website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/ceea/ceeaSurvey.asp>.

The Global Assessment was dispatched on 16 October 2006 to 192 National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and some other relevant national institutions of Member countries. As of 31 December 2006 about half of the countries (of which 50 developing countries) responded to the Assessment. Reminders were sent to all other countries.

The present quick analysis focuses only on environment statistics and is based on the responses (84) received by the end of 2006. 92 percent of the 84 countries that responded to the assessment have environment statistics programmes: all developed countries and transition economies and a large majority of developing countries. The geographical distribution of countries with environment statistics programmes ranges from a maximum of 100 percent of countries in Europe and Northern America to a minimum of 75 percent of countries in Western Asia. Although the environment statistics programmes are generally dispersed across different institutions, there are formal or informal agreements of data sharing in place to ensure cooperation among institutions. The NSO often has a prominent role for the overall coordination, compilation and dissemination of statistics. The areas most commonly covered by the environment statistics programmes include, in order of importance: water, energy, air emissions and forests. The most commonly identified areas for further expansion - in terms of broadening the scope and coverage and/or starting with new compilation - include, in addition to the areas mentioned before, land, biodiversity, waste, and the environmental aspects of agriculture and energy. Basic environment statistics are used for deriving indicators (90%), developing environmental-economic accounts (52%), modelling and economic analysis (49%).

Countries identified the lack of human and financial resources as the most common factors impeding the development of the programme. In compiling environment statistics, about half of the countries use technical assistance and external funding. The external funding is mainly from international organizations. A few programmes are also supported and funded through bilateral cooperation projects. In some countries such programmes have also been supported through funding from national institutions other than the NSO.

Among the 84 countries that replied to the survey, all 50 developing countries had received the UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire 2006 on Environment Statistics. Only 33 of these countries replied to the Questionnaire and sent their data to UNSD.

A detailed analysis of the responses (including those received in January), covering both environment statistics and environmental accounting, will be presented in a room document at the thirty-eighth session of the Statistical Commission in February 2007.

The Global Assessment will continue with a second phase when countries will receive follow-up questions tailored to the subject areas they cover in their programmes.

## RECENT AND ONGOING WORK

### Manual on Water Statistics

The objective of the Manual is to give practical guidance to countries in setting up their water statistics by recommending a core set of variables and indicators and by providing good practices for the collection and compilation of data. The Manual will also to facilitate reporting to the UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire on Environment Statistics. The first complete draft of the Manual will be submitted for peer review in April, and will be presented to an Expert Group, consisting of country and international experts, that will be convened in the third/fourth quarter of 2007 in New York.

### Glossary of Environment Statistics

UNSD is in the process of revising the Glossary of Environment Statistics that was first published in 1997. Given the dynamic nature of environment statistics it was deemed important to update the earlier version of the Glossary and to promote the harmonization of the terms and definitions contained therein at the

international level. First revised chapters were circulated to members of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics (IWG-ENV) for comments and inputs earlier this year. At the sixth meeting of the IWG-ENV (Luxembourg, June 2006) it was decided to aim at an inter-institutional "IWG-ENV" Glossary, which would list and classify harmonized terms and definitions at the general level accompanied by the specificities of the different questionnaires used in data collection. The revised Glossary is expected to be finalized and published on the Web by the end of 2007.

### Country Snapshots

The Environment Statistics Section is developing new and more flexible ways to disseminate the data collected by the UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire and to help users find other data by providing links and references to other organizations, publications and websites. As part of this work, UNSD is developing country snapshots that will highlight country data collected by UNSD through the 2004 and 2006 environment statistics questionnaires and provide a

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summary of available environment statistics as well as a bibliography of other data sources for each country. In addition to country snapshots on the web, theme pages that cover themes such as water, waste, land and air that summarize theme related environment statistics will be developed gradually. These pages will also provide links to other international datasets. Further plans include the development of regional pages that provide a summary of regional environment statistics and will provide links to regional datasets.

### **Environmental and Social Impacts of Tourism**

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) and UNSD organized a joint International Workshop on Tourism Statistics that was held in Madrid from 17 to 20 July 2006. The Workshop was seen as a major event in the context of a worldwide consultation on the revision of *Recommendations on Tourism Statistics* approved by the 27th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1993 and issued jointly by UNSD and WTO in 1994. The revised Recommendations on Tourism Statistics will be submitted to the 39th session of the Statistical Commission in March 2008 for approval.

One of the agenda items at the Workshop focused on “Issues of measurement of environmental and social sustainability of tourism” and the UNSD representative made a statement about the linkages between basic tourism statistics and indicators of social and environmental impacts of tourism. A lot of interest was expressed regarding the measurement of the environmental and social impacts of tourism and it was decided that UNSD would prepare a note that would focus on the conceptual issues as well on indicators that could be proposed that either national statistical offices are already compiling or could compile on an annual basis. The note would be included in the revised Recommendations on Tourism Statistics.

### **Environmental Aspects in Population and Housing Censuses**

Environment statistics is a relatively new and dynamic field of statistics and there are many data gaps, in particular in developing countries. In order to promote data collection at the national level the use of censuses and surveys as data collection instruments for environment statistics has been of increased interest to the Environment Statistics Section of UNSD.

At the Expert Group Meeting on Population and Housing Censuses for the 2010 Census Round organized by UNSD in August 2005, it was recognized that the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses Revision 1* already include a variety of topics that are related to the environment and many countries already collect data on various topics related to this broad topic.

The Environment Statistics Section subsequently reviewed a selected set of population and housing censuses, and household surveys at the national level to assess what environmentally-related and or environmental awareness questions are already included. A document containing expanded questions and/or categories of response on environmental issues based on existing questions in these censuses and surveys was prepared in collaboration with the Demographic Statistics Section of UNSD. It was made available to the Expert Group Meeting on Housing Censuses (New York, 5-8 June 2006) which discussed the revision of the Recommendations on Housing Censuses of the United Nations Recommendations for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses. The topics related to the environment that were discussed: cooking facilities, solid waste disposal, water supply, water and sewerage facilities, and lighting, and for each topic there were suggestions for either (i) expanding the options for existing questions and/or categories or for (ii) additional questions.

The Recommendations on Housing Censuses were revised incorporating several expanded questions and/or categories reflecting more environmentally-related issues and was presented to the Expert Group Meeting on the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses (New York, 10-15 July 2006), where they were adopted as part of the revised Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses.

## **COORDINATION**

### **Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics**

Activities of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics (IWG-ENV) in 2006 focused on harmonization of water statistics (within the newly established Subgroup on Water Statistics, see article below), on the development of an inter-institutional Glossary of Environment Statistics within the framework of the ongoing revision of the UNSD

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Glossary and on the establishment of an agreed set of metadata for the exchange and dissemination of environment statistics. Members of the IWG-ENV (UNSD, UNEP, FAO, OECD, Eurostat, absent: UN-ECE) met in Luxembourg on 14 June 2006 to discuss these issues. Different aspects of harmonization of land use statistics and plans for intensifying joint work in this area were also discussed at the meeting together with possible joint events in 2007 and 2008.

### **IWG-Env Subgroup on Water Statistics**

The IWG-Env Subgroup on Water Statistics (SWS) was established in response to the request by the International Water Statistics Work Session (IWSWS) in Vienna in June 2005. The members of the Subgroup are: UNSD, UN-ECE, UNEP, UNEP/GEMS-Water, FAO, Eurostat, OECD and EEA.

Projects being undertaken by the subgroup in 2006-2007:

1. International water statistics concordances
  - ◆ Task 1.  
Work out a comparison and concordance of water related terms and questionnaires.
  - ◆ Task 2a.  
Discuss and resolve existing conflicts and overlaps in definitions.
  - ◆ Task 3.  
Develop a standard codification for water data.
2. International data collections and data sharing
  - ◆ Task 2b.  
Discuss and resolve existing conflicts and overlaps in data collection.

The reason for developing a concordance of water statistics produced by international organizations is to assist in mapping out what water statistics international organizations already collect. Based on this concordance project 2 will be initiated with an informed discussion of water statistics data collection activities in which the subgroup members will resolve respective roles, responsibilities and future data collection activities.

The Subgroup met in Luxembourg in September 2006 to finalize international water statistics concordances and begin discussions on future data collection activities.

For more information contact UNSD at [envstats@un.org](mailto:envstats@un.org).

## **REGIONAL NEWS**

### **UNSD/ECOWAS Project**

As a follow-up to the UNSD/ECOWAS project “Strengthening Statistical Capacity-building in Support of the Millennium Development Goals in the region of the Economic Community of West African States”, the ECOWAS Secretariat, with the technical assistance of UNSD, developed two draft strategic frameworks for institutionalising and strengthening capacity in energy and environment statistics in ECOWAS Member States. The draft frameworks were presented to an Expert Group Meeting on Energy and Environment Statistics that was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 7 to 9 August 2006.

The Expert Group Meeting was organized by the ECOWAS Secretariat in collaboration with UNSD and was held at the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja, Nigeria. The objective of the Meeting was to review the two draft strategic frameworks for energy and environment statistics. The importance of the development and implementation of these frameworks was underscored as necessary for sensitization on the need for timely, reliable and accurate information in both energy and environment statistics. It was also noted that the frameworks would serve as useful tools to institutionalize these areas of statistics in the national statistical systems in the ECOWAS region.

The experts welcomed the draft frameworks on energy and environment statistics and recommended that the amended frameworks be presented for adoption at the next meeting of the ECOWAS Steering Committee (Addis Ababa, 28 August 2006). The experts also recommended the establishment of a Regional Technical Committee to monitor issues relating to energy and environment statistics, and in this regard they proposed draft terms of reference and membership of the Committee.

UNSD provided two resource persons to the Meeting who made presentations on energy and environment statistics and assisted the ECOWAS Secretariat to finalize the report of the Meeting and the Frameworks on Energy and Environment Statistics.

The ECOWAS Steering Committee, at its meeting in Addis Ababa on 28 August 2006, endorsed the two frameworks on energy and environment statistics and requested that the ECOWAS Secretariat present them for adoption to the ECOWAS Technical Commission on Statistics that met from 13 to 14 November 2006 in

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Abuja, Nigeria. The Technical Commission endorsed the two frameworks and requested the ECOWAS Secretariat to present them to the ECOWAS authorities for adoption.

### **Key environmental indicators for the EECCA countries**

A core set of environmental indicators and *Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA)* and *Guidelines on the Preparation of Indicator-based Assessment Reports on the Environment* have been developed through a series of workshops and adopted at the seventh session of the ECE Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (Geneva, Switzerland, 27-29 November 2006). The selection of the indicators has been based on the priorities of the EECCA countries from the point of view of both national policies and international comparison. During the selection process relevant international indicator sets have been taken into account, such as the UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire on Environment Statistics, the CSD list of Indicators of Sustainable Development, the indicators used in the environmental performance reviews, the EEA core set of indicators as well as the WHO Europe proposals for a set of European environmental health indicators. The final list contains 35 key indicators under the following headings: Air pollution and ozone depletion; climate change; water; biodiversity; land and soil; agriculture; energy; transport and waste. The indicators are classified according to the DPSIR (Driving force – pressure – state – impact – response) framework.

The Working Group will submit the guidelines to the Committee of Environmental Policy for approval and for subsequent transmission to the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in October 2007.

## **RECENT MEETINGS**

### **Workshop on Energy and Environment Statistics in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCC) (Doha, Qatar, 1-3 May 2006)**

The Workshop on Energy and Environment Statistics was organized by the Planning Council of the State of Qatar. Over 60 representatives attended the workshop from Qatar, Oman, UAE and Saudi Arabia. UNSD provided two resource persons who made presentations and moderated the discussion.

The workshop discussed frameworks, concepts and classifications, linkages with other statistics, legal and

institutional frameworks, data sources and data sharing arrangements in the areas of environment and energy statistics. The relevant UNSD questionnaires were presented and discussed, including their links to other international and regional data collection activities and indicator initiatives. Statistics to assess the environmental effects of the oil and gas industry was a special theme of the workshop.

### **OECD Workshop on Material Flow and Resource Productivity Indicators – Interpretation and Use (Rome, Italy, 16–17 May 2006)**

The workshop was part of OECD’s work programme on material flows (MF) and resource productivity (RP). It was hosted by the Italian Ministry of Environment and Territory in co-operation with the Italian Statistical Office. This workshop focused specifically on the interpretation and use of different types of MF and RP indicators in different national and policy contexts and on the development of related guidance. The workshop compiled and reviewed concrete country experiences and empirical case studies of MF and RP indicators and their use in decision making, emphasising on: natural resource and materials management; pollution abatement and control; trade, technology development and economic policies. It helped practitioners and users review how different types of MF and RP indicators can best be interpreted and used in different national and policy contexts. The output of the workshop is to develop a guidance document on how to best interpret and use different types of MF and RP indicators at national and international level.

### **Final Conference of the MEDSTAT- Environment 2 Project (Amman, Jordan, 13-14 June 2006)**

The Conference was organized by Eurostat and Plan Bleu that are responsible for the MEDSTAT-Environment 2 Project. The objective of the Project, part of the Euro-Mediterranean statistical co-operation programme MEDSTAT, has been to strengthen the capacity of the national statistical services of 12 Mediterranean countries in producing and publishing comprehensive, reliable, timely, relevant environment statistics following international standards.

The main objectives of the Conference were, inter alia, to: discuss the results achieved during the second phase of MED-Env which covered the topics of air, biodiversity and sustainable development indicators; and present MEDSTAT II: Global approach and integration of the environment. MEDSTAT II will be cross-sectoral covering the topics of transport, trade, national accounts, tourism, agriculture, social statistics, energy, migration and the environment and will have a component on environmental-economic accounting.

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A UNSD resource person participated in the Conference as one of the speakers in Session 2 on “Environment Priorities and Related Statistical Inputs - a Wider Perspective” and as one of the spokespersons in Session 6 on “MEDSTAT II: Global Approach and Integration of the Environment”.

#### **Directors Meeting on Environment Statistics and Accounts (DIMESA) (Luxembourg, 15-16 June 2006)**

The annual strategic meeting discussed: the draft Communication on the Future of Environment Statistics and Accounts; the concept of Data Centres, their organization and the need for a common dissemination and communication policy; cooperation and coordination with OECD and the United Nations; the role of the European Statistics Code of Practice in environment statistics and accounts; the multi annual work programme from 2008 to 2012; and the work programme and its implementation in 2007.

#### **Expert Group Meeting on Energy and Environment Statistics (Abuja, Nigeria, 7-9 August 2006)**

See **UNSD/ECOWAS Project** above.

#### **OECD Working Group on Environmental Information and Outlooks (Vienna, Austria, 11-13 October 2006)**

Participants of the annual meeting discussed the draft guidance manual on measuring material flows and resource productivity which includes an overall framework for material flow analysis, a system of national material flow accounts, material flow and resource productivity indicators and a glossary of terms used in material flow analysis. Issues related to the improvement of the quality of environment statistics were also discussed in detail in connection with the 2006/2007 data collection, data on environmental protection expenditure and statistics on waste generation, treatment and disposal. Status reports were presented on ongoing work, namely the flagship publication OECD Environmental Outlook (including a discussion of baseline data used in the publication) and work on agri-environmental indicators. Information was given on OECD’s work programme and budget for

2007-2008 in the area of environment and on the work of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics aiming at strengthening harmonization and collaboration among international organizations.

#### **Expert Group Meeting on Indicators of Sustainable Development (New York, 3-4 October 2006)**

The main objective of the meeting was to finalize the revision of the current Indicators of Sustainable Development of the Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD-ISD). The meeting agreed that the revised CSD-ISD will be placed in 14 themes. The revised CSD-ISD consists of 98 indicators, of which 48 are core indicators. For all indicators in the CSD-ISD, revised methodology sheets have either been prepared or are under preparation. The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) will circulate the methodology sheets to EGM participants for review and comments, as well as circulate a draft of the publication containing the CSD-ISD.

#### **Meeting between UNSD and UNEP at UNEP Headquarters (Nairobi, 23 October 2006)**

A staff member from the Environment Statistics Section, UNSD, met with colleagues in UNEP’s Division for Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) to discuss: outcomes of the third Africa Environment Outlook Data Working Group meeting (Cairo, 14-15 October 2006); further collaboration between UNSD and the DEWA Africa Programme with regard to, inter alia, follow-up on the joint UNSD/ECOWAS Workshop on Environment Statistics held in 2005; collaboration on environment statistics and organization of training workshops in Africa.

### **FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

**Meeting of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics**  
(New Delhi, 5-7 February 2007)

**Thirty-eighth session of the Statistical Commission**  
(New York, 27 February – 2 March 2007)

**Expert Group Meeting on the Manual of Water Statistics** (New York, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2007)

**Expert Group Meeting on Environment Statistics**  
(New York, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2007)

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