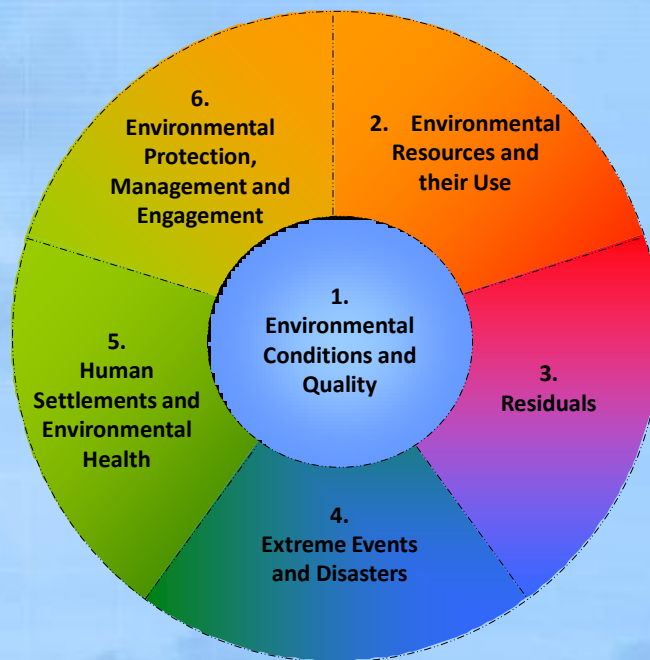




The Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool (ESSAT)



Workshop on Environment Statistics in support of the implementation of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) (Lomé, Togo, 19-23 October 2015)

Environment Statistics Section, United Nations Statistics Division





Background of the ESSAT

In 2013, the 44th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission approved the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) and the work programme for its implementation. This included the development of the Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool (ESSAT) for countries to use in assessing and diagnosing the state of environment statistics in the application of the FDES.

UNSD, in collaboration with the Expert Group on Environment Statistics, has since developed the ESSAT in support of the FDES 2013.





Purpose of the ESSAT

The purpose of the ESSAT is to assist countries in:

- developing their environment statistics programmes;
- collecting their own data on the environment; and
- assessing the state of environment statistics and the needs for their development at the national level while being consistent with the scope of the FDES 2013.





Use of the ESSAT

The ESSAT should be used as a guide to a multi-stakeholder consultation and discussion process. The completion of the ESSAT, while usually led by the National Statistical Office or the Ministry of Environment, should be carried out as a joint effort by all main relevant stakeholders that play an active role in the production, dissemination and use of environment statistics.

It is therefore recommended that a country establishes or convenes a committee, inter-institutional working group or task force to bring together all the stakeholders to discuss and agree on a common set of responses representing the situation in the country, and that this process is carried out collaboratively in a clear and transparent manner.





Use of the ESSAT (cont.)

Information systematized by using the ESSAT can be used to elaborate a plan for the development of environment statistics based on the needs, capacities and resources of each country.

A plan which utilises the FDES 2013 can be constructed in a sequential, modular and incremental fashion and implemented over time with the participation of different agencies and partners for the statistics as identified by this tool.

This collaboration is key not only to the well-informed assessment of the current state of environment statistics but also to the realistic identification of national priorities and the main elements of a common national environment statistics development strategy.





Structure of the ESSAT

Introduction – defines background, use and structure of the ESSAT as well as key concepts. It summarizes the two parts.

Part I: Institutional Dimension of Environment Statistics – focuses on the overall institutional and organizational structure of national statistics, and on specific information regarding environment statistics in terms of policy frameworks, mandates, institutional setup, organization, collaboration, resources, international cooperation and uses.

Part II: Statistics Level Assessment – is based on the Basic Set of Environment Statistics. It follows the hierarchical structure of the FDES (in descending order: component, sub-component, statistical topic, statistic) and serves as a tool to assess the national relevance, importance, availability and sources of the individual statistics contained in the Basic Set. It also helps to identify relevant quantitative and qualitative data gaps, and to develop a plan for filling them in with a view to strengthen environment statistics according to national priorities, needs and available resources.





Structure of ESSAT Part I: Institutional Dimension of Environment Statistics

Part I contains much information which may be of interest from a managerial or policy perspective. It is divided into the following sections:

- A. Identification of institutions
- B. Existing national policies relevant to the environment
- C. Mandate and organization of national statistics
- D. Mandate and organization of environment statistics
- E. Production of environment statistics
- F. Uses of environment statistics
- G. Inter-institution collaboration for the production of environment statistics
- H. Existing and required resources for environment statistics
- I. International and regional network
- J. Technical assistance and training
- K. The way forward in environment statistics





Section B – Existing national policies relevant to the environment

Questions aimed at understanding existing national policies and priorities relevant to the environment.

Questions include:

Are there specific environmentally-relevant policies or strategies in place, such as on environmental protection/sustainability, sustainable development (national sustainable development strategy), green economy/green growth, climate change etc.?

Rank the most important national environmental issues. (H = High importance; M = Moderate importance; L = Lesser importance; NR = Not relevant; NAp = Not applicable)





Section C – Mandate and organization of national statistics

Questions aimed at determining the mandate for statistics (if in existence) in a country, and determining the parties responsible and involved in delivering on this mandate.

Section C is not directly relevant to environment statistics, but rather to statistics in general.

Questions include:

- Is there a Statistical Act or Law in place?
- Is there a national statistical system in place?
- Which institution is responsible for the coordination of the national statistical system?
- Is there a national statistical plan/programme/strategy in place (e.g., National Strategy for the Development of Statistics)?





Section D – Mandate and organization of environment statistics

Questions in this section focus only on environment statistics.

Questions include:

- Is there an institution with a legal mandate to produce environment statistics?
- Is there a national environment statistical system in place?
- Is there a department, division or unit responsible for environment statistics in the National Statistical Office?
- Are there other national institutions (e.g., Meteorological Office, Ministry of Water) that have an environment statistics department, division or unit, or that have a responsibility to collect environmental information?





Section E – Production of environment statistics

Questions include:

- Is the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) being implemented at the national level?
- Is the FDES 2013 being used or planned to be used for strengthening statistical capacity to monitor the SDGs?
- What are the regular methods of disseminating environment statistics?
- List the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to which environment statistics are reported by the country.





Section F – Uses of environment statistics

Questions include:

- Are environment statistics used to design and assess national policies?
- Are environment statistics used to build environmental and sustainable development indicators?
- Were environment statistics used to compile indicators of the Millennium Development Goals, (Goal 7)?





Section G – Inter-institutional collaboration for the production of environment statistics

Questions include:

- Is there a committee, inter-institutional working group or task force in place to coordinate the production of environment statistics?
- Are there technical committees, inter-institutional groups or task forces focusing on specific themes/topics of environment statistics?
- Is there is a forum where producers and users of environment statistics meet and discuss issues and priorities for the country?
- What are the main barriers to collaboration among institutions for the production of environment statistics?





Section H – Existing and required resources for environment statistics

Questions include:

- H2. Are the executed resources steady, increasing or decreasing over time?

	National Statistical Office	Ministry of Environment or equivalent	Other (specify) (e.g., Ministry of Fisheries/ Agriculture/ Forestry)
Increasing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decreasing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steady	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





Section I – International and regional network

Questions include:

• I1. Does the National Statistical Office participate in the following?

- Expert Group on Environment Statistics (UNSD)
 - Regional environment statistics expert group, committee or forum *(specify)*
-

Other *(specify name)*

I2. Does the Ministry of the Environment or equivalent participate in the following?:

- Expert Group on Environment Statistics (UNSD)
 - Regional environment statistics expert group, committee or forum *(specify)*
-

Other *(specify name)*





Section J – Technical assistance and training

Questions include:

- Has the country requested technical assistance (e.g., short-term assistance, project proposals) or capacity building in the field of environment statistics from organizations (e.g., United Nations Statistics Division, UN Regional Commissions, UNDP, UNEP, World Bank, regional development banks, regional institutions, international development agencies) or countries that support the development of national statistics?

J2. What kind of assistance has the country received from organizations or countries in terms of technical assistance and capacity building in the field of environment statistics?

-

Type of assistance received	When or duration (dd/mm/yyyy to dd/mm/yyyy or ongoing)	From whom	Main focus, objectives and results





Section K – The way forward in environment statistics

Questions include:

- K1. In which areas are there plans to strengthen and develop environment statistics programmes, units and/or activities in the country?

Legal framework <i>(describe)</i>	
Institutional set up <i>(describe)</i>	
Budgetary resources <i>(describe)</i>	
Human resources <i>(describe)</i>	
Technical assistance and training <i>(describe)</i>	
Advocacy <i>(describe)</i>	
Other <i>(describe)</i>	

- What are the main vehicles through which the country requires technical assistance and capacity building to develop environment statistics?
- What are the most important areas where the country needs technical assistance and capacity building to develop environment statistics? [e.g., water, energy, disasters, natural resources, emissions and concentration of pollutants, environmental surveys, geographic information systems] Specify:





Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool (ESSAT) Part II

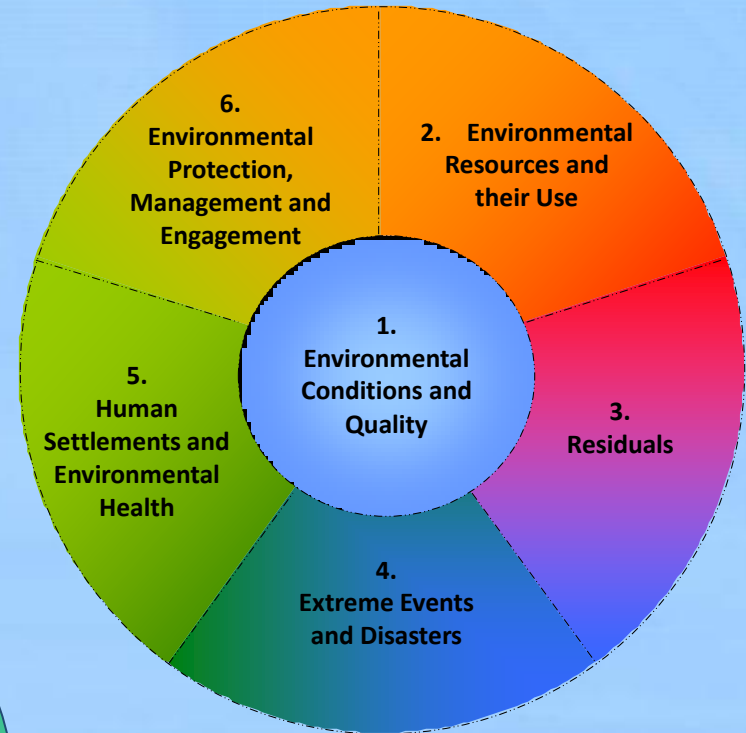
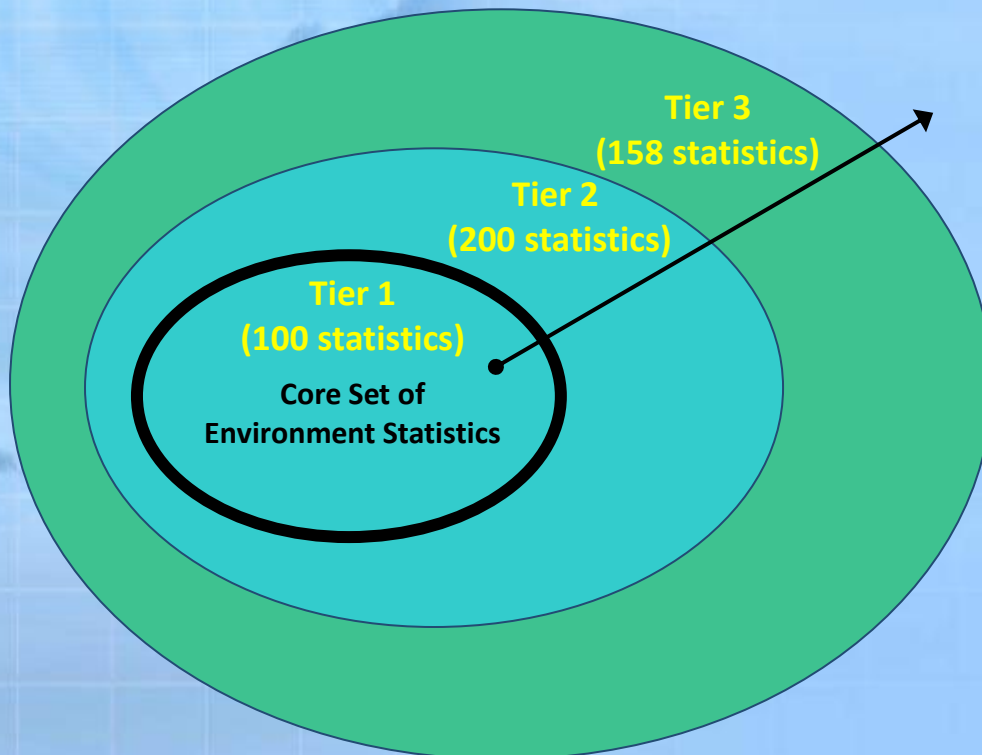
The Self-Assessment Tool Part II consists of a set of questions comparing the statistics in the Basic Set of Environment Statistics in terms of, inter alia, their national relevance, importance, availability and sources.





Links among FDES, Basic Set and ESSAT

FDES consists of:
6 components
21 sub-components
60 topics
458 Basic Set statistics





Objectives and Use of ESSAT Part II

- To improve the capacity of countries to assess where they stand with respect to the development of environment statistics.
- A means for countries to assess their current position and set a basis from which they may construct and/or strengthen their environment statistics programmes within the national statistical systems.





Objectives and Use of ESSAT Part II (cont.)

Specific objectives of ESSAT Part II include:

- Identifying and prioritizing those statistics that are of policy relevance to the country;
- Assessing data availability;
- Identifying sources of data and institutional partners; and
- Identifying data gaps.





Self-Assessment Tool Part II: individual statistic level

Relevance of Statistic at the National Level (High /Medium /Low/Not Relevant/Not Applicable)
Priority for National Data Collection (High /Medium /Low/Not a Priority)
Availability of Statistic at the National Level (Identical/Similar/Not Available)

- Relevance refers to importance for national environmental concerns or policy considerations (High, Medium, Low, Not Relevant, Not Applicable)
- Priority for national data collection (High, Medium, Low, Not a Priority)
- Availability
 - Identical (I): available according to the concepts, definitions, classifications and methodology recommended in the FDES 2013.
 - Similar (S): available but not according to the concepts, definitions, classifications and methodology recommended in the FDES 2013.
 - Not Available (NAv): the statistic is not available nationally.





Self-Assessment Tool Part II: individual statistic level

Primary Institution(s) Responsible for Collecting Statistic Check all that apply		
NSO	Ministry of Environment or equivalent institution	Other (specify):

- Primary institution: Name of the institution responsible for collecting, processing and storing the data from the reporting units (e.g., meteorological institution for weather data).





Self-Assessment Tool Part II: individual statistic level

Type of Data Source

- Statistical surveys (SS) – e.g., censuses or sample surveys of population, housing, agriculture, enterprises, households, employment, and different aspects of environment management;
- Administrative records (AR) of government and non-government agencies in charge of natural resources as well as other ministries and authorities
- Remote sensing (RS) – e.g., satellite imaging of land use, water bodies or forest cover;
- Monitoring systems (MS) – e.g., field-monitoring stations for water quality, air pollution or climate;
- Scientific research (SR);
- Special projects (SP) undertaken to fulfil domestic or international demand.





Self-Assessment Tool Part II: individual statistic level

Requirements or User Requests for Collection/ Reporting on this Statistic Check all that apply			
Sub-national	National	Regional	International
Periodicity			
(Annual/Monthly/Daily/Hourly/Other [specify])			
Earliest Year Available			
Latest Year Available			
Format of Statistic			
(Publication/Excel/Database/Website/Individual records)			
Unit of Measurement			

- **Requirements:** By level (sub-national, national, regional (e.g., European Union, Caribbean Community), international);
- **Periodicity:** e.g., annual (A), monthly (M), daily (D), hourly (H), other (specify);
- **Earliest/latest year available**
- **Format of statistic:** e.g., in publication or report (P), Excel files (E), database (D), website (W), individual records not readily useable (I);
- **Unit of measurement:** e.g., m³, tonne, mm.





Self-Assessment Tool Part II: individual statistic level

Resource constraints	Main Reasons why Statistic is not Available Check all that apply
Methodological/Technical difficulty in data collection	
Insufficient quality	
Inaccessibility	
Lack of institutional set-up /coordination	
Other (specify):	

- **Resource constraints:** Both financial and staff resource constraints within the environment statistics units and/or in partner agencies involved in the production of each statistic.
- **Methodological/technical difficulty in data collection:** Methodological example: lack of methodologies including concepts, methods or classifications. Technical example: technical problems interpreting remote sensing.
- **Insufficient quality:** Data may not meet accepted statistical standards. This may relate to insufficient or non-existent metadata, or lack of accuracy, timeliness or coherence.





Self-Assessment Tool Part II: individual statistic level

Resource constraints	Main Reasons why Statistic is not Available Check all that apply
Methodological/Technical difficulty in data collection	
Insufficient quality	
Inaccessibility	
Lack of institutional set-up /coordination	
Other (specify):	

- **Inaccessibility:** Unable to obtain data easily from responsible agency or primary source; data not available in an appropriate format.
- **Lack of institutional set-up / coordination:** Institutional or policy barriers could present difficulty in accessing and utilizing primary data sets. Collaboration among necessary institutions may not be sufficient to grant adequate sharing of data or environment statistics.
- **Other.**

