

# United Nations Statistical Commission

## Fifty-second session

1–3 and 5 March 2021

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda

## Items for discussion and decision: data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

### Document E/CN.3/2021/2 – Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

#### **Statement provided by:**

Bureau of the UN ESCAP Committee on Statistics

#### **Statement:**

*UN ESCAP is a regional intergovernmental platform with 53 Member States and 9 associate members, or over 30% of countries worldwide. In 2020, 60% of the estimated 7.8b people globally were in the Asia-Pacific region. The region is also home to 97 of the 100 most air-polluted cities and 5 of the 10 countries most vulnerable to climate change.*

The Bureau of the Asia-Pacific Committee on Statistics **WELCOMES** the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators and **THANKS** them for a productive year.

We **NOTE** there are still 31 agreed indicators for which there is no data as we enter the sixth of a 15-year development agenda. In Asia and the Pacific, data availability is improving yet there are still less than 50% of the agreed indicators for which there is sufficient data to measure progress. In this light, we **ENCOURAGE** regular reviews of the framework and its applicability to countries, both developing and developed.

We **CALL UPON** the IAEG to ensure the indicator framework and its supporting materials, including metadata, are attuned to the needs of countries as it is countries who have primary responsibility for compiling data for the indicators. We also **CALL UPON** the IAEG to continue to develop indicators such as for SDG Target 11.c and to review indicators such as 17.18.1.

We **APPRECIATE** the attempt made by IAEG to look at the Global Indicator Framework in light of the COVID-19 pandemic so as to examine areas that have been highly impacted. The IAEG may consider discussing the interlinkages between Goals such as Life on Land (Goal 15) and COVID-19.

We **THANK** the Working Group on Geospatial Information for its accomplishments so far and **NOTE**, according to research undertaken by members of the *Global Working Group on Big Data Task Team on Big Data for the SDGs*, that no country is using non-traditional data sources for compiling the SDGs<sup>1</sup>. We therefore **ENCOURAGE** the Working Group to further strengthen interlinkages and work with other relevant groups of the Commission, particularly the *Global Working Group on Big Data Task Team on Big Data for the SDGs* and *Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information*. These groups provide a supporting ecosystem for the IAEG and provide valuable contributions which the IAEG should leverage such research mentioned earlier on [country experiences with using big data sources for compiling the SDG indicators](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/SD_Working_Paper_no12_Jan2021_Big_data_for_SDG_indicators.pdf)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/SD\\_Working\\_Paper\\_no12\\_Jan2021\\_Big\\_data\\_for\\_SDG\\_indicators.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/SD_Working_Paper_no12_Jan2021_Big_data_for_SDG_indicators.pdf)

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We also **REITERATE** the importance of the IAEG and its Working Groups strengthening interlinkages with the *High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda* and **CALL UPON** both groups (and wider Commission) to support country efforts to address data gaps in the SDG indicator framework and in particular, support country efforts to compile the SDG indicators using administrative and big data sources including geospatial data sources and data for multi-nationals.

We **THANK** the IAEG for increasing the transparency and openness of its deliberations by conducting two of its 12 meetings in 2020 as open meetings, **WELCOME** the increased number of open meetings and **ENCOURAGE** the IAEG to make all meetings open given the importance of its deliberations to the commitments Governments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that data for the SDG indicators would be compiled from national statistical systems.

Submitted on:

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