

Revision of the UN FDES

United Nations Statistics
Division

Outline

- History - Need for a framework
- The UN FDES 1984
- EGM on the Framework for Environment Statistics - Conclusions
 - Statistical Commission 41st session
 - Progress since SC 41
 - Coordination with UNCEEA

Need for a framework

- Oslo Conference on Climate Change and Official Statistics
- Seoul Conference on Climate Change, Development and Official Statistics
- Programme Review on Climate Change and Official Statistics
- 40th session of the Statistical Commission
- Canadian paper on FDES

Need for a framework (cont.)

The countries had stressed the importance of an overarching framework that:

- clearly marks out the scope and contents of environment statistics
- is integrative in nature, comprehensive and flexible enough to accommodate the information needs of new and emerging environmental and policy issues such as climate change.
- allows for the identification of data needs, data sources and gaps
- allows for the allocation of roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the production of environmental data including the assurance of data quality.

The UN FDES 1984

- The UN FDES is a broad framework that relates the components of the environment to information categories
- The components of the environment define the scope of environment statistics.
- The information categories reflect the fact that environmental changes are the result of human activities and natural events.

The UN FDES

The basic components of the environment are:

- (i) flora;
- (ii) fauna;
- (iii) atmosphere;
- (iv) water (freshwater and marine water);
- (v) land and soil (surface and subsurface);
- (vi) human settlements.

The basic components are those of the *ecosystems*.

The UN FDES

The information categories represent:

- (i) the social and economic activities, and natural events that exert pressures on the environment;
- (ii) the environmental impacts of these activities or events;
- (iii) the socio-economic responses to environmental impacts; and
- (iv) inventories, stocks and background conditions.

The information categories reflect:

- (a) stocks and flows,
- (b) drivers, pressures, impacts, state and responses.

The UN FDES

The contents of the framework are the statistical topics.

- These are determined as the statistically quantifiable aspects of general environmental concerns (*link to environmental policy*).
- The statistical topics are listed in the framework tables.
- The framework's generality and flexibility allows for additional topics as well as for additional details (aggregation or disaggregation) within the topics.

The UN FDES

Main properties of the UN FDES:

- Flexibility
- Consistency
- Comprehensiveness

EGM on the Framework for Environment Statistics - Conclusions

The EGM was convened by UNSD November 2009. It:

- discussed the role of a framework in the development of environment statistics;
- assessed the lessons learned when applying different frameworks;
- reviewed new approaches, including the ecosystem approach;
- reviewed the UN FDES in the light of new approaches and policy issues.

EGM Conclusions (cont)

The EGM concluded that a conceptual framework for environment statistics is needed that is:

- Comprehensive, integrative and overarching; encompasses all aspects of the environment
- Based on improved scientific knowledge and new requirements
- Relevant for both developed and developing countries
- Focuses on basic environment statistics that can serve multiple purposes
- Includes clear links to economic and social statistics
- Explains linkages between basic environment statistics, indicators, measurement, aggregation and analytical frameworks
- Marks out the role of different data producers
- Interface between producers and users
- The ecosystem approach should be considered as a possible conceptual foundation
- **The revised Framework should be kept short (with a maximum length of 50 pages), concise and simple to understand and apply**
- **The Framework should build on, complement and support (and supported by) ongoing work on international standards, recommendations and best practices**

The EGM agreed that due to its comprehensiveness and flexible structure the UN FDES is a good starting point to develop the framework.

EGM conclusions (cont)

The Expert Group Meeting recommended that, as a response to the request by many developing countries, UNSD should also establish, based on the framework,

**a core (minimum) set of
environment statistics**

to provide guidance to countries that have very limited resources and are at the early stages of developing environment statistics.

EGM Conclusions (cont)

- UNSD to lead the process and convene EG
- Revision should be completed in two years and the Framework presented to SC in 2012.

Statistical Commission 41st session

- The conclusions of the EGM, including guiding principles, proposed contents and modalities of the process, were presented to the SC 41st session
- Strong support from the Commission (42 interventions, all supportive)
- The SC endorsed the programme with, among others, the following comments:

Statistical Commission 41st session (cont)

- The FDES revision process should engage all stakeholders including the scientific community
- Complementarity with the SEEA has to be ensured and efforts related to the revision of the SEEA should not be diluted
- Caution should be used when considering the ecosystem approach as the conceptual foundation
- The IWG-ENV should support UNSD and the EG that should be convened to implement the revision
- A more realistic timetable should be developed.

Progress since SC 41

- Expert Group is being set up (end of June) – 22 confirmed, 13 pending
 - Proper representation of regions, developed and developing countries, NSOs and EAs, IOs, science, users
 - Chair: Munir Sheikh, Chief Statistician of Canada
 - IWG-ENV

Progress since SC 41 (cont)

- Draft Terms of Reference under discussion
- Draft Work Programme under discussion
- Work on draft annotated outline is in progress
- Work on draft issue list is in progress
- Sent out to EG for comments end of June early July
- Meeting New York, 4-6 November 2010 (tentative)

Coordination with UNCEEA

- UNSD ensures coordination
- UNCEEA represented in EG
- EG members/countries overlap with UNCEEA/LG
- Progress reports to inform UNCEEA at its meetings

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes.htm>

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/concepts.htm>

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc10/2010-9-Framework-EnvStats-E.pdf>

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc10/BG-EGM-EnvStats.pdf>