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Linking Agricultural Statistics to Environmental Statistics

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Independent External Evaluations of FAO

- FAO has recently gone through 2 Independent External Evaluations that have a bearing on FAO statistical programme:
 - IEE (2007): “the time has come for a total re-examination of the statistical needs for the 21st century and how they can be met.”
 - IE of FAO’s role and work in statistics (2008): comprehensive set of recommendations to help FAO to regain its role as global leader in the development of international statistical standards in food and agricultural statistics.
 - It included an effort to seek input on emerging data needs from major users and partners. The following table provides a summary of the data needs resulting from input from data users and stakeholders.



Emerging Data Needs identified in the IEE

- **Agro-Environmental**
- **Energy/ Bio-fuels**
- **Climate Change**
- Household Consumption & Food Security
- **Land/soil (including cartography)**
- Prices
- Rural (sub-national) Data
- Trade
- **Water**



Agriculture & Environment: a unique relationship

- The output of the production process in agriculture is **renewable**, unlike all other activities
- While agricultural production is renewable, the **production process can affect the future climate, the environment, and its future sustainability.**
- The climate and the **environment** in which agriculture takes place have a **great impact on the availability of inputs, technology used, and resulting outputs from the production process.**



Agriculture's effect on the environment

NEGATIVE

- largest user of water (70% worldwide; 90% in developing countries)
- cause of agro chemical pollution
- cause of soil degradation (intensity of cultivation of marginal and erodible land)
- large contributor to greenhouse gas emissions (esp. through deforestation, rice production, the raising of livestock, etc.)
- exploiting natural resources & reducing biodiversity (e.g. fisheries)
- spread of animal diseases
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- **This impact is much higher in developing countries where agriculture is still the major component of employment and GDP**



Agriculture's effect on the environment

POSITIVE

- carbon sequestration
- managing watersheds
- preserving biodiversity
- providing feed stock for bio fuel production
- amenity function
- ...



Effect of global warming on Agriculture

- **Climate change** will increase the incidence of **poverty, hunger and malnutrition**. It will worsen the living conditions of farmers, fishers and forest-dependent people who are already vulnerable and food insecure.
- Risk of increased **crop failure** due to droughts,
- **New pests and diseases** that flourish only at specific temperatures and humidity
- **Loss of livestock**, and **reduced availability of marine, aquaculture and forest products**.
- More frequent and more intense **extreme weather events** will have adverse impacts on **food availability and accessibility**, as well as on **livelihood assets** and opportunities.
- Poor people will be at risk of food insecurity due to loss of assets and lack of adequate insurance coverage.



Data requirements

- **Broaden the scope** to include forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, and statistics related to land, water, and the environment.
- All **variables are closely interrelated**
- New requests coming at same time
- Much **data not available**
- When data available, **not of good quality**: in particular, inconsistent, not comprehensive, not well integrated with the rest of the statistical system
- The FAO Statistical System has moved well beyond the original mandate (collecting information on agro-environmental degradation, climate change, biological diversity, etc) but in an “ad hoc”, uncoordinated way



FAO response

- Development of a “Global Strategy to improve agricultural and rural statistics”
 - need of a new comprehensive analytical and policy framework for integrating agricultural and rural development with sustainable use of natural resources
- Coordination of FAO Statistical System
 - Established a Statistics Programme Steering Committee (SPSC) , to provide strategic and policy direction for the FAO’s work in statistics
 - Established a Statistics Coordination Committee (SCC), to ensure coordination on technical and operational issues (e.g., selection of indicators, coordination of data collections, questionnaire development, harmonization of standards and methodology)

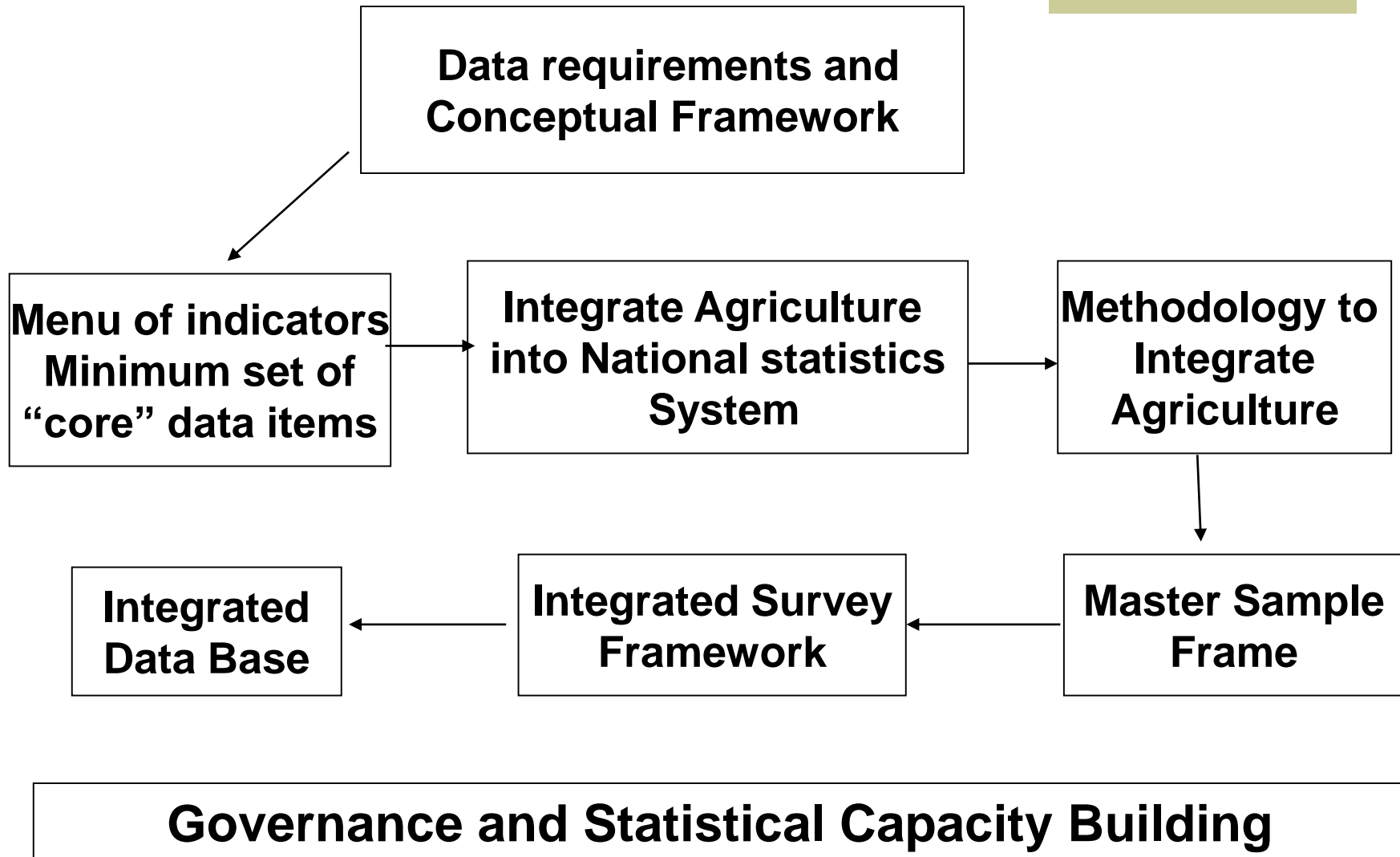


What is the Global Strategy?

- An initiative of the 40th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission
- Partnership between International Agencies, developed and developing countries
- 2 intergovernmental process for its adoption:
 - UNSC and National Statistical Offices
 - FAO Governing Bodies and Ministries of Agriculture
- Long-term plan to respond to the statistical needs of the 21st century (a living document)
- Feasible and sustainable for developing countries
- Basis for a renewed initiative of capacity building in agricultural statistics: mobilization of resources



Elements of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural Statistics





Decisions of the 40th UN Statistical Commission

- A **global strategy is needed** to meet the increasing demand for information at both the international and country levels;
- Agricultural and rural statistics are essential for policymaking and **Agricultural Ministries have an important role to play in the compilation of agricultural statistics**;
- FAO taking the lead in the development of the global strategy, to ensure the **involvement of the Ministries of Agriculture through FAO governing bodies**;
- A **Friends of the Chair group (FoC)** is established to steer the process, with FAO and the United Nations Statistics Division serving as secretariat;
- Friends of the Chair group to report back on the progress made to the **UNSC at its 41st session**.



Actions taken by FAO

- Facilitating the creation of the Friends of the Chair group of the UN Statistical Commission
- Organizing a series of meetings in which the new global strategy on Agricultural Statistics will be reviewed
- Working with partners to prepare the background document



Members of the FoC Group of the UNSC

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- Brazil (chair)
 - Australia
 - China
 - Cuba
 - Ethiopia
 - Italy
 - Morocco
 - Philippines
 - Russian Federation
 - Trinidad and Tobago
 - Uganda
 - USA
 - FAO (secretariat)
 - UNSD (secretariat)
 - EUROSTAT (observer)
 - World Bank (observer)



Meetings to discuss the strategy

- Seminar with FAO Permanent Representatives, Rome, 22 June 2009
- Satellite Meeting of the ISI, Maputo (MOZAMBIQUE), 13-14 August 2009:
- Seminar at the 57th Session of the ISI, Durban (South Africa), 17 August, on “Economic Accounts and Economic-Environmental Accounts for Food and Agriculture: Design and Practice”
- PARIS21 Consortium Meeting, Dakar (SENEGAL), 16-18 November 2009
- The FAO Conference, Rome, November 2009
- UN Statistical Commission, February 2010, for final endorsement



Preparation of the background document

- Earlier drafts were discussed at a meeting in Washington DC, October 2008, and at the 40th Session of the UNSC, February 2009.
- FAO Statistics Division coordinating input from all FAO Departments with substantial statistical work (Fishery, Forestry, Natural Resources)
- FAO SD working closely with other international development partners (World Bank, African Development Bank, EUROSTAT, PARIS21, UN Statistics Division, US Dept of Agriculture)
- Collaboration with UNCEEA to develop the conceptual framework (**System of Environmental Economic Accounts for Agriculture and Rural Development**)



FAO participation in the SEEA revision

- Greater and more coordinated involvement of FAO in the SEEA revision.
 - Classification of land
 - Classification of forests
 - Carbon sequestration by forest
- SEEA - Forest
- System of Environmental Economic Accounts for Agriculture and Rural Development