

Roadmap of the Task force on Environmental Sustainability of the Sponsorship on Measuring progress, well-being and sustainable development

1. Objective

The objective of the task force will be to develop a set of possible actions for measuring environmental sustainability. For this purpose the work will follow as source of inspiration the recommendations of the Stiglitz, Sen, Fitoussi Commission as well as the development planned by the European Commission in the Communication GDP and Beyond.

2. Scope

The main areas of work will be:

- *Complementing national accounts with integrated environmental economic accounts*

The European System of Accounts is the main tool behind EU economic statistics as well as many economic indicators (including GDP). In its June 2006 conclusions, the European Council called on the EU and its Member States to extend the national accounts to key aspects of Sustainable Development. As a reaction from the ESS, the SPC adopted in November 2008 the European Strategy for Environmental Accounts (ESEA). Following this strategy, the national accounts will be complemented with **integrated environmental-economic accounting** that provides data that are fully consistent. A first set of modules mature enough to be regulated was already identified (material flow accounts, environmental taxes and air-emission accounts) and the Commission adopted on 9 April 2010 a proposal for a Council and EP Regulation.

Further modules for a second legislative proposal are now being selected amongst a list that has already been pilot tested and the corresponding methodology developed to a certain extent. Their relevance with respect to measuring important aspect of sustainability will be an important criterion. Areas such as Environmental Goods and Services Sector (due to its link to green economy and jobs) and Energy Accounts (as the means for instance to analyse energy productivity, as mentioned below) are suitable candidates for the medium term. Environmental Protection Expenditure Accounts is also worth considering due to its connection with the National Accounts framework.

- *Revising sustainable development scoreboard* with focus on the indicators of environment sustainability.

The EU Sustainable Development Indicators (SDIs) have been developed together with Member States to monitor progress on the multitude of objectives of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) and are reflected in the Commission's biennial Progress Report.

Sustainable development indicators (SDI) do not fully capture recent developments in important areas that are not yet well covered by official statistics, such as environmentally sustainable production and consumption or governance issues. For several reasons, SDIs cannot always be based on the most recent data. Consequently, they may not fully reflect the efforts that businesses, civil society or governments at local or national levels are making to meet these challenges.

A revised **scoreboard** need to be defined based on an enhance set of indicators. It should include firstly those based on the stock or extended wealth approach to sustainability. And secondly, a set of well-chosen *physical* indicators, which would focus on dimensions of environmental sustainability that are either already important or could become so in the future, and that remain difficult to capture in monetary terms. The results of an inventory currently conducted by Eurostat will be valuable for this discussion.

- *Linking NA and energy accounts*

Information on **energy productivities** is a key element in sustainability and climate change issues. Links between energy and national accounts through an energy input-output table and calculation of energy accounts should be established. Methodological discussions on energy accounting, development of manuals, guidelines and standard tables should be addressed. In addition the use of energy statistics to develop early estimates of CO2 emissions will be assessed.

3. Contents of the actions

The scope of topics cover both ESS ongoing activities and additional work. The role of the TF will adapt to the current state of development and liaise with existing structures which are currently working on the corresponding fields. Specifically:

- **Ongoing activities** - This concerns a set of activities which are already included in the European Statistical Programm and are already mentioned in the Commission Communication. Most of these activities are already conducted in the frame of existing ESS Structures such as DIMESA or the Sustainable Development Indicators Working Group. The role of the task force will be to provide input to successfully steer these activities and to better align them with the objective stated in this document.

- **Additional work.** These will be activities not yet undertaken but that the TF will consider important to progress in the measurement of sustainable development and to take into account as far as possible the Stiglitz recommendations. In this case, it is proposed that the task force builds on specific experiences at national level and formulates and analyses the feasibility of their implementation at EU level. In particular, the most important methodological and development issues and the cost on time constraints will be put in evidence.

In all cases it should be taken into account the burden on respondents. It should be also assessed whether there are possibilities for better use of existing data and for disseminating the statistical results in a more efficient way. Concerning the additional analysis of the existing data the role of the research community could also be assessed and ways to better cooperate with them should be explored.

Taking into account the Stiglitz report which is not addressed only to statistical system, but also to other providers of data (in this case EEA, DGENV, the JRC and private produces) it might be appropriate to coordinate actions with these institutions.

4. Road Map

The following steps are planned :

19 May 2010 - Approval by the Sponsorship plenary of the task force, its membership and co-chairs and of its roadmap.

18 June 2010 - All members of the task force will be requested to provide by that date a brief summary of the national experiences in what concerns work on environmental sustainability either for the follow up of the Stiglitz recommendations or for other purposes.

Begining of July - A first physical meeting of the task force will be organised. The purposes of that meeting will be to evaluate the different material received from the task force members, to agree on a work plan, to distribute the tasks amongst the members and to agree on forms of communication between the members.

29-30 September 2010 - At the margins of the ESSC Meeting and DGINS Conference, second meeting of the task force. The purpose will be to follow up progress, to develop a calendar of actions and deliverables, and to eventually fix any other physical meeting needed.

Autom 2010 – meeting with users and other providers

April 2011 - Draft report of the task force including in particular a list of recommended actions with evaluation of their feasibility and their cost.

May 2011 : Written consultation to DIMESA;

June 2011 - Presentation of the report to the DIMESA meeting

July 2011 - Final report to be presented to the plenary of the Sponsorship.

5. Proposed composition of the task force and co-chairs.

Up to the date the TF is composed by the following members:

	Co-Chair	Country	Representatives
TF Environmental sustainability (Co-chair Eurostat DIR E)	SI (Genovefa Ruzic, DDG)	NL	Mr. Peter van de Ven (Director national accounts)
		OECD	Mr Paul Schreyer
		SE	Ms Inger Eklund (Director Regions and environment department)
		CH	No name yet
		FR	Guillaume Mordant, Deputy Head of the Statistical Office of the Ministry of environment
		DE	Mr Michael Kuhn – Environmental-Economic Department
		UNECE	No name yet