Post Rio+20: What data and monitoring needs?

Maria Martinho
UNDESA/Division for Sustainable Development (DSD)
martinho@un.org
Summary

• Rio+20
  – SDGs
  – Measures beyond GDP
  – Other references to data and monitoring

• UN Post-2015 development agenda
  – Environmental and economic aspects

• DSD work

• Future data needs?
The preparatory process has been discussing a possible set of goals to monitor and accelerate sustainable development (SDGs). There is overall agreement on launching a process to define SDGs at Rio+20. Goals are unlikely to be defined at Rio+20, and it is not yet clear whether Rio+20 will indicate or not priority areas to be covered by these goals.
SDGs: possible themes

• UN Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability
  – Produced a report in January 2012 calling for the development of sustainable development goals covering areas such as
    • food security, water, energy, green jobs, decent work and social inclusion, sustainable consumption and production, sustainable cities, climate change, biodiversity and oceans, as well as disaster risk reduction and resilience

• Food, water, energy and shelter
  – Consistent calls for goals on these from some countries during the Rio+20 process
SDGs: possible themes

Current draft of Rio+20 outcome document (still being negotiated)

• Section on SDGs
  – Energy, water, food security, oceans, sustainable consumption and production
  – Cross-cutting issues: equity, social inclusion, decent work, rule of law and good governance, gender equality and women’s empowerment

• Section V.A of the Rio+20 outcome document lists +25 thematic areas – a selection of these could be covered by future SDGs
  – Food security and sustainable agriculture
  – Water
  – Energy
  – Sustainable tourism
  – Sustainable transport
  – Sustainable cities and human settlements
  – Decent/green jobs
  – Oceans and seas
  – Disaster risk reduction
  – Climate change
  – Forests
  – Biodiversity
  – Desertification, land degradation and drought
  – Mountains
  – Chemicals and waste
  – Sustainable Consumption and Production
  – Mining
  – Etc.
• Measures beyond GDP
  – No agreement yet on whether Rio+20 should call for the development of measures beyond GDP
  – The current proposal on the table:
    • As a complement to GDP, to develop science-based and rigorous methods of measuring sustainable development, natural wealth and social well-being; having regard to the UN system of economic and environmental accounts
• References to data & monitoring
  – Calls for
    • Making the information available to policy makers for the achievement of green economy
    • Recognizing that integrated social, economic, and environmental data and information are important to decision-making processes
    • Recognizing the importance of space-technology-based data and reliable geospatial information for sustainable development policy-making
    • Data and monitoring for green jobs, oceans and climate change
    • Recognizing the need to support developing countries in their efforts to collect environmental data
UN Post-2015 Development Agenda

• A UN General Assembly Resolution adopted in September 2010 (resolution A/65/L.1) in the 2010 MDG summit requests the UN Secretary-General to make recommendations in his annual reports for further steps to realize the United Nations Development Agenda beyond 2015
  – Opened the discussion on what will come after the MDGs
  – The UN SG convened a Task Team composed of UN agencies to make recommendations on the UN post-2015 development agenda
  – The report of this Task Team was submitted to the UN SG in early June 2012
    • Sustainability is a core element
    • Social, economic, and environmental dimensions are covered

• Rio+20 has been calling for a merge of the two processes: SDGs and UN post-2015 development agenda, with a view of having one single set of goals by 2015
DSD work

• CSD indicators (2001, 3rd review)
  – Mandated by the Commission on Sustainable Development
  – 50 core indicators and other 46 supplementary indicators
  – Cover 15 themes: Poverty, Governance, Health, Education, Demographics, Natural hazards, Atmosphere, Land, Oceans, seas and coasts, Freshwater, Biodiversity, Economic development, Global economic partnership, Consumption and production patterns
  – A reference for countries to develop their indicators by adopting or adapting as they see fit

• Think piece for the UN Task Team on the post-2015 development agenda
  – Presents a monitoring framework for sustainable development
  – Prepared by DSD, ECE, ESCAP, UNEP and UNFCCC
  – Expected to be released in June 2012
Think piece: monitoring framework for sustainable development

- Aim at universal human development (minimum social threshold) while staying within a safe operating space of the planet (ecological ceiling)

- Balance and integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions to promote synergies and avoid trade-offs favouring one dimension over the others

- Reflect the complexity of sustainable development in its multiple dimensions while keeping a concise, simple, focused monitoring framework
Goals and targets addressing social, economic and environmental dimensions

| Social development measure (e.g. HDI) | Economic development measure (e.g. GDP) | Environmental impact measure (e.g. Ecological Footprint) |

Think piece: monitoring framework for sustainable development
Think piece: monitoring framework for sustainable development

Goals and targets addressing social, economic and environmental dimensions

- Social development measure (e.g. HDI)
- Economic development measure (e.g. GDP)
- Environmental impact measure (e.g. Ecological Footprint)

Monitored by appropriate indicators
Summary measures
Illustrative example: HDI versus Ecological footprint

Countries with low HDI need to move up on social development.

Countries with high environmental impact need to move to sustainable production and consumption.

Earth’s biocapacity (2.1 hectares per person)
Think piece: monitoring framework for sustainable development

Goals and targets addressing social, economic and environmental dimensions

- Social development measure (e.g. HDI)
- Economic development measure (e.g. GDP)
- Environmental impact measure (e.g. Ecological Footprint)

Monitored by appropriate indicators
Indicators

• To monitor priorities areas, possibly
  – Food security and sustainable agriculture
  – Water access; water consumption
  – Shelter, Energy
  – Inequality
  – Sustainable consumption and production
  – Efficient use of resources

• Assessing different dimensions e.g. for energy
  – Energy access (social)
  – Energy efficiency (economic)
  – Clean energy (environmental)

• Harmonized with international standards, SEEA
Conclusion
Possible data needs for after Rio+20

• Indicators on social, economic and environmental dimensions to monitor specific areas
• Summary measures beyond GDP, measuring sustainable development, natural wealth and social well-being

→ How can SEEA contribute?