United Nations Environment Programme
13 September 2018

The Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
20 September 2018

Agenda item 3:
One Planet-Make It Count!
Bridging the knowledge gap for the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals
Environment Statistics and Accounting 2018 – 2030

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in September 2015 with a view to end poverty, **protect the planet**, and ensure prosperity for all. The natural resource base provides us with many benefits including the provision of food, fibre, fuel, clean water and energy. It also provides services such as protection against natural disasters and carbon sequestration. But there is increasing pressure on these resources, and those who depend most on the natural environment are also the most vulnerable to environmental changes.

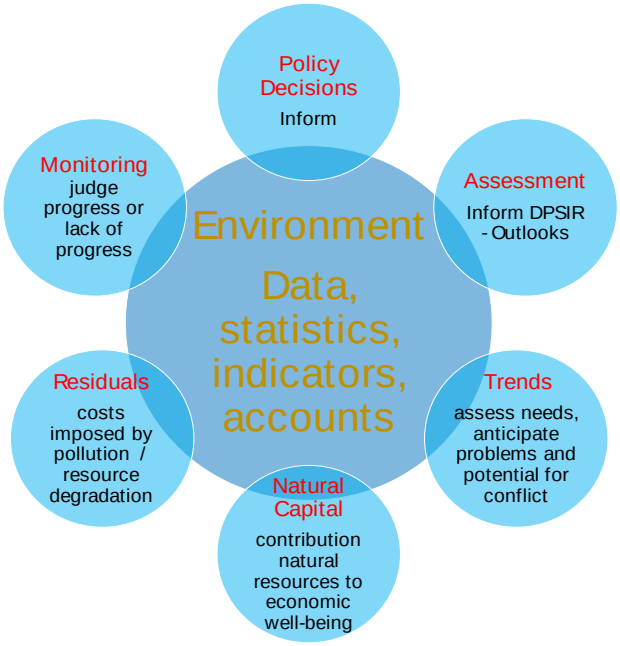
> The goals and targets clearly demonstrate that there is an interdependency between humans and nature that must be addressed to achieve sustainable development

To protect the planet, we need to know our planet: The old rule "*you cannot manage what you cannot measure*" holds true. There are many ways to gain knowledge of the planet: research, assessments, statistics and environment economic accounting are different ways to gain knowledge about the planet.

Why are environment statistics important for well-being?

Governments, Civil Society, international organizations, scientists, the media and others need a statistical basis to judge progress or lack of progress, to assess needs, to anticipate problems and potential for conflict, to design major projects, etc.

The availability of an easily accessible, internationally comparable database has a great added value for societal decision-making. By measuring 'sustainable development'



based on a broad set of indicators, political actors are enabled to identify problems, set priorities, discuss them based on concrete figures, and eventually take informed decisions. Environmental issues play an important role in the overall 'sustainable development' of countries, and therefore we need a decent set of environmental statistics and indicators.

Why are environmental accounts important for the environment?

Using environmental accounts to measure natural capital and residuals (with emissions, waste, etc. being part of residuals) is an important tool for understanding the role played by the natural environment in the economy. Environmental accounts provide data which highlight both the contribution of natural resources to economic well-being and the costs imposed by pollution or resource degradation. Environmental accounting sometimes referred to as "green accounting", "resource accounting" or "integrated economic and environmental accounting".

Statistics and Accounting in UN Environment

Mandate

General Assembly Resolution A/RES/71/313 on Work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states the role of Custodian Agencies as follows:
Paragraph 7. *... international organizations [Custodian Agencies] to provide the methodologies used to harmonize country data for international comparability and produce Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, ...*
Paragraph 11. *11. Urges countries, the United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, ... to intensify their support for strengthening data collection and statistical capacity-building, including capacity-building that strengthens ... estimates through transparent mechanisms; coordination among national statistical offices,*

Relevant UNEA Resolutions are: UNEA Resolution 2/5 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; UNEA Resolution 2/13 Sustainable management of natural capital; Ministerial declaration of the UNEA-3 “Towards a pollution-free planet”

Current Programme

1 **SDG International Follow-up and Review**

UN Environment is the custodian agency for 26 core environment indicators for Goals 6, 8, 14, 14, 15, and 17 in the global framework for the 2030 Agenda and plays a special role in the development of gender and spatial disaggregated information. UN Environment works with national statistical offices and their partners in specialized ministries and with UN agencies and commissions, with a focus on climate, freshwater and marine resources, biodiversity, resource extraction, consumption and production, chemicals waste and pollution.
Budget 2016-2020: 10.8 million = (project funding: 5,100,000 + Staff: 5,630,000) _ estimate plus important co-financing by Partners
Partnerships through SSFA with co-financing: institutional Partnerships including with World Conservation Monitoring Centre (Ocean statistics); Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization with University of Vienna, Nagoya University and Institute of Ecology (material flow accounts); Waste and Resources Action Programme and World Resource Institute and Wageningen; Regional Environmental Centre Bulgaria and (waste); Resources and Waste Advisory Group; International Institute of Sustainable Development Global Subsidies Initiative and OECD (fossil fuels)
Partners: Google Earth, European Space Agency, European Joint Research Centre; NASA, UN Agencies, Eurostat,

Data and Statistics

2 One of the core functions is the quality assurance and validation of data. The Environment Live Global Database contains more than ca1400 indicators and these indicators cover the Social, Economic and Environmental indicators. 387 Indicators are UN Environment Indicators, including the Sustainable Development Indicators where UN Environment is the custodian agency. The remaining indicators are sourced from EM-DAT: The Emergency Events Database; the Global Health Observatory (GHO) database of WHO; World Population Prospects; UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS); Multilateral Environmental Agreements; National Accounts Main Aggregates Database; FAOSTAT Agriculture database; Labour Market (KILM); World Development Indicators (WDI); UN COMTRADE International Trade Statistics Database; and World Urbanization Prospects.

National Capacity on Environment Statistics

3 Regional and headquarter staff are now providing essential statistical training and capacity development in member countries to support the 2030 Agenda and reporting to national and international fora.
Budget 2016-2019: Development Account Projects: 2,600,000 US$
Partners: UN Statistical Division, Statistics Divisions of the Regional Economic Commissions

Programme on Environment Statistics and Accounting 2019 – 2030

Statistical methodologies and Data collection

Priority Areas on Statistics:
RESOURCE EFFICIENCY: Corporate Sustainability Responsibility; Fossil Fuels Subsidies; Sustainable Consumption and Production; Environmentally Sound Technologies; (*SDG Indicators 12.1.1 – 12.6.1 - 12.7.1 – 12.a.1 – 12.c.1 – 17.7.1)*
GEOSPATIAL STATISTICS & LAND ACCOUNTS: Earth Observation, Remote Sensing (*SDG Indicators 6.3.2 – 6.6.1 - 14.1.1)*
OCEAN STATISTICS (*SDG Indicators 14.1.1 – 14.2.1 – 14.5.1)*
EMERGING AREAS: Gender-Environment; Chemicals; Environmental Crime

Priority Areas on Economic Environmental Accounting:
NATURAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS; Public Expenditure Accounts
MATERIAL FLOW ACCOUNTS (*SDG Indicators 8.4.1/12.2.1 – 8.4.2/12.2.2)*
WASTE ACCOUNTS, including Food Waste Accounts (*SDG Indicators 12.3.1– 12.4.2 – 12.5.1)*

Database Information systems:
Statistics website; Environment Live Global Database;
Indicator Synergies between the Sustainable development Goals and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements
SDG Indicator reporting to UN SDG Global Database
Data integration and automation of data exchange

Indicators informing policy - integrated analytics and multidisciplinary indicators

Analytical Indicators: The vast wealth of available indicators in the Environment Live Global Database, combined with Earth Observation data and other big data sources will form a sound basis from which to develop analytical indicators. Geospatial and multidisciplinary indicators provide a mechanism for accounting for area-specific realities, identifying vulnerable populations and monitoring policy interventions. The need for geographically disaggregated information was recognized in paragraph 74 of General Assembly resolution 70/1, 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' and this need is particularly important in terms of monitoring the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Reports: Secretary General SDG Progress Report, SDG Policy Briefs; Report for policy-makers on progress on the environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals, with focus on integrative approach to implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda; Statistical Annex for the Global Environment Outlook.
Policy Coherence (*SDG Indicators 17.14.1 – 6.5.1 – 6.a.1 –12.4.1 – 15.1.2 – 15.4.1 – 15.9.1)*

Capacity development

Implementation of the capacity development will be guided by the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, prepared by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. National statistical systems (NSS) face the urgent need to adapt and develop to meet the widening, increasing and evolving needs of data users, including for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Capacity development will focus on environment statistics, strengthening and expanding the System of Environmental Economic Accounts, and Integrating geospatial data into statistical production programmes.

Implementation Model:

Partnerships at country level: With National Statistical Offices, Environment Ministries, Line Ministries, in coordination with other actors
Regional technical support projects: Provide policy and programmatic support to countries to (1) advocate/dismantle barriers to regular production of environment statistics, (2) support the implementation of national plans to monitor the environmental dimension of the SDGs, MEAs, International Initiatives; and (3) promote South-South cooperation and sharing of best practices
Global policy support and SDGs monitoring: Coordination; link normative & technical work at global level to the regional & national levels

Initial rough estimate of resources (financial and in-kind)

Long Term 2018-2030 (12 Years): 170 m. US$:
Staff: ca. 50 m. US$ (HQ staff: 2.7 million per year; RO Staff: 1.5 million per year)
Activity: ca. 120 m. US$

Or ca 40m. per 4 years of consecutive MTS

Possible ways to raise resources:
Increase in non-core contributions from donors; In-kind contributions from partners; Strategic collaboration with emerging donors; Collaboration with UN agencies, multinational organizations; Cost-sharing agreements with national governments; Contributions from private foundations; Partnerships with the private sector