Interim report of the Task Force on Adjusting the CES Recommendations on measuring sustainable development to SDGs

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The 2013 CES Recommendations on measuring sustainable development

- Strong conceptual and academic foundation
- Brundtland definition for sustainable development
  - Look both at current and future well-being
  - In one country and effects on other countries
- Aimed at policy use/themes
- Communication; headline indicators & underlying drivers
CES Recommendations and SDGs

- When work on CES Recommendations was done there were no SDGs (and/or first sets of SDG indicators)
- Some topics found important in SDGs may not be sufficiently covered by the CES Recommendations
- CES Recommendations and framework for measuring sustainable development are wider than SDGs

- CES Recommendations need to be adapted to the new insights from the SDG process regarding (how we look at and how we can measure) sustainable development
Establishing a Task Force to adjust the CES framework

– CES decided that the framework should be adjusted, Task Force set up in October 2015 by CES Bureau

– Members: the Netherlands (Chair), Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Turkey, United States, Eurostat, OECD and UNECE

– Some members are also on IAEG, HLG and UNECE SG SDGs

– Limited time for work, results to be reported April 2016

– Many thanks for the commitment and all the work done by the various TF members
Mandate and work of the Task Force

First phase:
– Focus on mapping the 17 SDGs and 169 targets with the themes of the CES framework
– Adjust the CES framework where appropriate
– Examine how an adjusted framework can e.g. be useful in:
  • Identifying interlinkages
  • Finding gaps and redundancies
  • Identifying policy themes that may be important in national context but are not covered by SDGs
  • Mapping national sustainable development sets with SDGs
  • Communication
The mapping exercise: Connecting dots while they're moving...

"You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future."

Steve Jobs
1955-2011
The mapping exercise: A practical approach

- Previous work done taken on board
- TF experimented with different approaches
  - Started with one-to-one mapping -> left out crucial links
  - Other extreme: mapping to reflect all aspects covered in a SDG targets -> resulted in too complex (and useless) mapping
  - Final approach used: main focus ("essence of the SDG target") as primary match, but also identify main secondary matches
The mapping exercise: A practical approach

- Means-of-implementation and governance related targets: all linked to SDG 17 (institutions) versus match on subject matter
- Work included mapping SDGs to the CES dimensions (here&now, later, elsewhere) based on an agreed set of criteria
- Earlier discussion on CES conceptual and policy approach continued through the work of the TF
The mapping exercise: Resulting modifications to CES themes

- Theme 2 (Consumption and income) -> Consumption
- Theme 3 (Nutrition) -> Food and nutrition
- Theme 7 (Housing) -> Cities and human settlements
- Theme 9 (Physical safety) -> Safety
- Theme 10 (Land and ecosystems) -> Ecosystems
- Theme 11 (Water) -> Water and sanitation
- Theme 16 (Trust) -> Trust and social relations
- Theme 19 (Knowledge capital) -> Research, development and innovation

- Add one theme to CES framework: Production (due to extra focus in SDGs on production as a driving force for sustainable development)
The mapping exercise: Additional results

- Updated and more detailed description of the (adjusted) CES themes
- Simplified scheme of mapping the 17 SDGs and the 21 themes of the adjusted CES framework
- Detailed annex with mapping of the 169 SDG targets to adjusted CES framework (primary and secondary)

- Mapping with CES dimensions (here&now, later, elsewhere) -> too early to draw final conclusions
Examining possible uses CES framework

Conclusion of first phase: in the context of SDGs, the CES framework could be helpful to:

- Identify relations and interlinkages between different SDG goals and targets
- Navigate in a long list of indicators
- Show links between SDG targets and (national) policy themes
- Link (existing) national datasets with SDGs
- Organising work, identifying sources and gaps in (national) statistics needed for SDGs
- It does not replace any (still to be) agreed reporting mechanisms on global SDG indicators
The net has been partly untangled ...
Conclusions from 1st phase of TF

- Insights from SDGs necessitated updating CES framework
- Mapping SDGs to the CES framework was feasible, some minor adjustments in CES framework were done
- Mapping also shows that
  - topics important in national context may not always be covered by SDGs and future SDG reporting structures,
  - CES framework may help in filling these gaps and linking existing (national) indicator sets to the SDGs.
- Mapping with CES dimensions (here&now, later, elsewhere) -> too early to draw final conclusions
Next steps

– Mandate for the first phase has been completed
– Proposed next step is mapping the global list of SDG indicators with the CES framework

– Issues to be considered in the way forward:
  • Uses of the adjusted CES framework
  • Links with the UNECE Steering Group and draft roadmap
  • Potential role of mapping exercise in the identification of possible regional SDG indicators
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