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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Conference of European Statisticians

#### Sixty-eighth plenary session

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Item 10 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations**

**Economic Commission for Europe**

**Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists**

## Implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme 2020

### Addendum

### Report of the Expert Forum for producers and users of climate change-related statistics

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

The document presents the key outcomes of the Expert Forum for producers and users of climate-related statistics held on 3-4 October 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. This report is provided to inform the Conference of European Statisticians of the organization and outcomes of the meeting.

The Expert Forum was organised following a decision of the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2019 (ECE/CES/2019/13).



## I. Attendance

1. The UNECE Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Climate Change-Related Statistics was attended by representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Mexico (connected by phone) Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden (connected by phone), Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Uzbekistan.
2. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the Directorate-General for Climate Action of the European Commission (DG CLIMA), Eurostat, European Environment Agency (EEA), Group on Earth Observation (GEO), International Energy Agency (IEA), Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Environment (UN Environment), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UNECE.
3. Midsummer Analytics and the Sapienza University of Rome (connected by phone) also participated in the Expert Forum.

## II. Organization of the meeting

4. Olivier Thunus (Luxembourg) chaired the Expert Forum.
5. The participants adopted the provisional agenda of the Expert Forum.
6. The following substantive topics were discussed:
  - Measuring climate change adaptation and hazardous events and disasters (Session Chairs: Giovanna Tagliacozzo, Italy, and Rayen Quiroga, ECLAC)
  - Set of climate change-related statistics and indicators (Session Chair: Angelica Tudini, Italy)
  - Role of statistical community in climate action (Session Chairs: Maaïke Bouwmeester, Eurostat, and Vlad Trusca, UNFCCC).
7. All meeting documents and presentations are available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=50812>.

## III. Recommendations and decisions

8. Considering the complexity and challenges of the closely related areas of measuring climate change adaptation and measuring hazardous events and disasters, participants of the Expert Forum recommended the following:
  - (a) Practical guidelines for the implementation of the *CES Recommendations on Measuring Hazardous Events and Disasters* should be drafted by an UNECE Task Force. The guidelines should take into account the different national priorities, institutional settings and already available data;
  - (b) As a first step for better engagement of national statistical offices (NSO) and their national statistical systems (NSS) in measuring hazardous events and disasters, the national focal point for the Sendai Framework of Disaster-risk Reduction needs to be identified and engaged with;

- (c) Communication material (e.g. a leaflet) should be developed to show the strengths of NSOs to potential users of information on hazardous events, disasters and adaptation to climate change;
- (d) A set of core statistics and indicators on hazardous events and disasters could help countries to prioritise their implementation efforts. The set of statistics and indicators should be complementary with the already existing UNECE set of core climate change-related statistics and indicators and should also include a recommended “emergency data kit” with a limited set of statistics needed quickly and in satisfying quality in case of emergency;
- (e) The statistical community should contribute to global efforts for a better operationalisation of Sendai Framework terminology, related classifications and indicator methodologies.
- (f) A forum for regular exchange of experience across different communities (e.g. statisticians, disaster-risk management experts, international organisations, academia, non-governmental organizations etc.) should be established, possibly jointly with ECLAC, ESCAP, other United Nations Regional Commissions, UNSD and UNDRR. This will allow to improve knowledge, share experiences in implementation (best practices, country case studies and pilots) and a regular update on international developments.

9. For finalisation of the *UNECE Set of Core Climate Change-Related Indicators* the Expert Forum invited the Task Force to consider the following:

- (a) To keep in the set the indicator “proportion of population living in dwellings with air conditioners or air conditioning”;
- (b) To add an indicator on “green urban space” and to provide clarification on its relevance for adaptation to climate change;
- (c) To keep in the set an indicator on sustainable forest management and to explore the possibility to select only one of the five components used for the SDG indicator on sustainable forest management; and
- (d) To better describe the underlying concepts, in particular for climate change adaptation, so that statistics can be developed to inform them.

10. Participants of the Expert Forum welcomed the proposed structure of the implementation guidelines for the set of core climate change related indicators and stressed the importance of the sections discussing the selection of relevant indicators and the use of climate change-related indicators. In addition, it was recommended to emphasize the following in the guidelines:

- (a) NSOs should use the *UNECE Set of Core Climate Change-Related Indicators* as a starting point to select the nationally relevant indicators. NSOs can decide on the national climate change-related indicators in an independent way.
- (b) Countries should calculate their national indicators rather than use data from international organizations. It is preferable to invest in capacity building if needed.

11. The Task Force on a set of core climate change-related statistics and indicators invited countries to provide examples of implementation of climate change-related indicators which could be used in the implementation guidelines. Countries should express their interest to the Secretariat within ten days (20 October 2019).

12. The Paris Agreement provides new challenges and new entry points for the statistical community. Its data requirements go beyond GHG inventory compilation. The extent of the role of the statistical community varies between countries (especially in GHG inventory compilation). To better address the data requirements needed for climate action, and in particular of the Paris Agreement, participants of the Expert Forum recommended that NSOs should:

- (a) Focus on the strengths of NSOs and NSSs;

- (b) Publish relevant statistics and indicators, frequently and timely;
- (c) Get the users involved, stay informed and assess arising possibilities and ideas for improving existing indicators and developing new indicators;
- (d) Signal preparedness to discuss data requirements from the Paris Agreement with the national UNFCCC focal point and other relevant contacts;
- (e) Reflect how to collect the required data (e.g. also considering alternative data sources, such as big data);
- (f) Advocate for appropriate resources to be given to NSOs and other relevant agencies, including international organisations.

13. The participants of the Expert Forum also requested the *UNECE Steering Group on Climate Change-related Statistics* to consider the UNECE work on modernisation of statistical legislation to clarify how statistical legislation can give the mandate for the work on climate change-related statistics.

14. Participants agreed that the following thematic areas are of high priority for further work and should be taken into account for the organisation of the next Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Climate Change-Related Statistics:

- a) Climate change adaptation;
- b) Strengthening the role of NSOs in climate action;
- c) Developing capacity for implementation of the set of indicators; and
- d) Measuring impacts of climate change on biodiversity and health.

15. It was decided that the next Expert Forum will take place in autumn 2020. The venue and exact dates are to be determined.

#### **IV. Adoption of the recommendations and decisions**

16. The recommendations and decisions were adopted during the closing session.

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