

Meeting of the 2015/2016 Bureau  
Luxembourg, 9-10 February 2016

For discussion and  
recommendations

Item III (a) of the Provisional  
Agenda

**PROGRESS OF WORK OF THE TASK FORCE ON ADJUSTING THE CES  
RECOMMENDATIONS ON MEASURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TO  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**Prepared by the Task Force**

*This document provides a progress report of the Task Force on Adjusting the CES Recommendations on Measuring Sustainable Development to SDGs. The Bureau discussed the work done, and provided advice on the next steps.*

## **I. BACKGROUND**

1. In June 2013, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) endorsed the *CES Recommendations on measuring sustainable development*, which provide countries with a universal measurement framework that was informed by both theoretical concepts and policy needs. At that time, the discussion about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) had just started and the goals and targets were not yet identified. Therefore, **the CES agreed in 2013 that the framework presented in the CES Recommendations would need to be adjusted to the SDGs and targets once these were agreed upon.**

2. At its June 2015 plenary session, the **Conference reaffirmed that the CES Recommendations provided a good basis for an SDG measurement system in UNECE region. The Conference decided to set up a small task force to adjust the CES Recommendations to SDGs.**

3. In October 2015, the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians approved the Terms of Reference of the Task Force on Adjusting the *CES Recommendations on measuring sustainable development* to SDGs (ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/11/Add.1). The Bureau considered important to keep the basic structure of the CES framework intact and to align the Task Force's activities with the work of the Inter-agency Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDG).

4. The members of the Task Force are the Netherlands (chair), Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Turkey, United States, Eurostat and OECD. UNECE acts as the secretariat.

## **II. PROGRESS OF WORK**

### **A. Work plan**

5. The objective of the Task Force is to adjust the CES framework in such a way that it could provide a basis for measuring and monitoring SDGs. The work is planned to be

undertaken in two phases: (1) adjusting the themes and dimensions of the CES framework to the SDGs; (2) considering the suitability of the global indicator list for the UNECE region. (These phases were identified in the terms of reference of the Task Force. The planning of work for the second phase will take into account other relevant developments, such as the work on the CES road map on statistics for SDGs, the outcome of the CES 2016 plenary session, discussions on the follow-up and review process at policy level, etc.).

6. According to the work plan, **during the first phase**, the Task Force would:

(a) Define how the themes and dimensions presented in the CES Recommendations should be adjusted in the light of the SDGs and targets;

(b) Map SDGs and targets with the adjusted CES framework;

(c) Identify possible gaps and redundancies in the CES framework and indicators based on the above mapping. If needed, also consider other themes not currently in the CES framework that could be included to reflect SDGs;

(d) Adjust the CES framework to the SDGs and the related targets, and draft a guidance note on the possible use of the CES framework in the context of SDG monitoring.

7. According to the plan, a draft of the adjusted framework and guidance note should be submitted to the CES Bureau meeting on 9-10 February 2016. The draft should then be updated based on the feedback received from the CES Bureau and submitted to the CES plenary session held on 27-29 April 2016.

## **B. Links with the CES Steering Group on Statistics for SDGs**

8. In October 2015, the Bureau considered the preparation of a road map for the development of official statistics for SDGs, as requested by the Conference in June 2015, and decided to set up a CES Steering Group to provide guidance on this work.

9. The CES Steering Group on Statistics for SDGs has now been constituted and its terms of reference (TOR) are presented to the CES Bureau for approval (ECE/CES/BUR/FEB/5). According to the TOR, the Steering Group will take into account the work of the Task Force on Adjusting CES Recommendations and rely on its support in analysing the need and establishing criteria for selection of regional indicators to monitor SDGs.

10. The Steering Group and the UNECE Secretariat are currently preparing a plan for the discussion on statistics for SDGs at the Conference of European Statisticians' plenary session on 28 April. The report of the Task Force will be one of the documents providing a basis for the discussion.

## **C. Work done until now**

11. The Task Force has held several rounds of consultations via email, two teleconferences and one face-to-face meeting (1 December 2015, at Schiphol airport). A wiki workspace is also being used. The substantive contributions by the Task Force members are well appreciated, taking into account their high workload as many of them are involved in the

consultations on SDG indicators, or are members of the IAEG-SDGs or the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post 2015 monitoring.

12. The Task Force has discussed:

- (i) necessary adjustments to the CES themes;
- (ii) different ways of mapping SDGs and targets to the CES themes;
- (iii) possible uses of the adjusted framework; and
- (iv) concrete examples and testing of the adjusted framework for different uses.

13. The Task Force agreed **to keep the adjustments of the CES framework to the minimum and preserve its basic structure**. This has implied retaining the three basic dimensions of the CES framework (i.e. ‘here and now’, ‘later’ and ‘elsewhere’) and focusing mainly on the CES themes. Major changes to these themes were, in any case, not necessary as all the SDG targets can be mapped to the (adjusted) CES themes.

14. The Task Force agreed that **the CES (adjusted) framework could facilitate the work related to statistics for SDGs and serve as a complementary tool at the regional and national levels**. It is not intended that the CES (adjusted) framework should become a framework for reporting on the global list of SDG indicators.

15. The Task Force also concluded that further **description of the CES themes and dimensions was needed, and proposed to rename some themes to better link to the SDGs**. Annex 2 suggests a draft description of the themes and dimensions in the adjusted framework.

16. The Task Force recommends to rename the following CES themes:

- a) Theme 3: ‘Nutrition’ to become ‘Food and Nutrition’
- b) Theme 7: ‘Housing’ to become ‘Cities and Human Settlements’
- c) Theme 9: ‘Physical safety’ to become ‘Safety’
- d) Theme 11: ‘Water’ to become ‘Water and sanitation’

17. The following open issues of adjusting the CES themes remain to be decided:

- a) The theme 16 (Trust) and its possible renaming;
- b) How to deal with the capital themes 18 (physical capital), 19 (knowledge capital) and 20 (financial capital) and economic production.

18. The Task Force **mapped the SDGs and targets with the CES (adjusted) themes**. This was not an easy exercise as many SDG targets are multidimensional<sup>1</sup>. The simplest approach is to map the SDG targets and CES themes one to one. However, this approach would have left out a lot of information that is necessary for identifying indicators. The other extreme would have been to aim to reflect all possible aspects covered in each target but this would have resulted in a complex picture with too many links.

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<sup>1</sup> For example: Target 3.9 “By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including micro finance”

19. The Task Force **tested different approaches**, and decided to rely on a one-to-one match, adding information about secondary matches when necessary to retain important information. The proposed mapping does not aim to be exhaustive in covering all possible aspects of the targets.

20. Mapping of the means-of-implementation and governance related targets required some discussion. These mostly link to the theme 17 (Institutions) which thus becomes very wide. It was proposed to re-allocate the means-of-implementation targets as much as possible to the subject matter that they refer to but this approach has not yet been implemented.

21. **Results of the preliminary mapping are provided in Annex 3.** The table allows analysing links in both ways: how SDG targets are related to the CES themes, and which CES themes cover the various SDG targets<sup>2</sup>. The table includes the **primary matches** identified by the Task Force members that link the main focus of a target to a CES theme. The primary matches are shown with black crosses. The table also includes **secondary matches** which link the target to additional themes. These are identified by red triangles.

22. **The mapping will still require some refinement** pending on the final agreement on some of the CES themes. Furthermore, possible mistakes in the mapping may come out in the process of testing the adjusted framework for different uses.

23. The Task Force is also exploring the **possible uses of the adjusted CES framework**. Some of the uses considered are helping in communication and facilitating user understanding, identifying possible reporting efficiencies (through links to existing sustainable development related statistics and their reporting mechanisms), identifying inter-linkages between targets and goals, etc. These possible uses will be evaluated by the Task Force.

### III. NEXT STEPS

24. An outline of the report by the Task Force to the CES plenary session is provided in **Annex 1**. The deadline for the report is end March. The report is planned to include:

- a) Mapping of the SDGs to the CES (adjusted) themes and dimensions at the level of goals and targets, with a description of the CES themes and dimensions;
- b) Describing possible uses of the adjusted CES framework. This part will illustrate how the CES framework can be used for different purposes based on selected CES themes or selected goals and targets. This part of the report will not aim to provide an exhaustive analysis of the whole CES framework and all SDG targets.

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<sup>2</sup> For example, the issues related to the CES theme no 5 'Labour' are considered in Goal 8 "Decent work and economic growth" but in addition in targets 2.3 (employment in agriculture), 3.c (employment in health), 4.4 (youth employment), 4.c (employment in education (teachers)), 5.1 (discrimination against women and girls), 5.4 (unpaid care and domestic work), 9.2 (employment in industry), 10.3 (equal opportunities), 10.4 (wage protection and equality), and 10.7 (migration).

And the other way round, e.g. the target 3.9 "By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination." is related to the CES themes 'Health', 'Safety', 'Land and ecosystems', 'Water and sanitation' and 'Air quality'.

25. To progress the work, the Task Force is currently:
- a) Drafting the text of the report to be submitted to the CES plenary session;
  - b) Reviewing the description of themes and discussing some open issues related to them;
  - c) Developing examples of possible uses of the adjusted CES framework.
26. **After completion of the first phase of the work, the Task Force will prepare a work plan and proposal for the second phase** of the work focusing on indicators. The second phase can only be done after the SDG indicators have been approved at the global level. The SDG indicators are planned to be agreed by the UN Statistical Commission at its 47<sup>th</sup> session on 8-11 March 2016. After that, the indicator list will be submitted for approval to ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly. The plan for the second phase will take into account the work on the CES road map on statistics for SDGs and the outcome of the CES 2016 plenary session.
27. Furthermore, the nature of regional reporting and indicators are closely linked with the regional review and follow-up mechanisms at policy level, which are currently under discussion. The Task Force and the CES Steering Group on statistics for SDGs will align their work on possible regional indicators with the decisions at the policy level.

## ANNEX 1

### OUTLINE OF THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE TO THE CES 2016 PLENARY SESSION

by the Task Force on adjusting CES framework to SDGs

This report will be the output of the first phase activities of the Task Force on Adjusting the CES Recommendations on Measuring Sustainable Development to SDGs. It will (a) explain the approach taken by the Task Force and what has been done so far, (b) provide a mapping between SDGs and targets with the CES framework, and propose possible adjustments to the CES framework, and (c) explore how the (adjusted) CES framework could be used in the context of SDGs.

#### Outline

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. Purpose and target audience of the report. Highlight the ways in which the adjusted framework could be helpful in the context of SDGs:
  - i. Identification of inter-linkages, gaps and redundancies between indicators.
  - ii. Possibly reduce SDG reporting burden
  - iii. Ease communication of SDGs with stakeholders
  - iv. Help to identify the need and criteria for possible regional indicators, taking into account the priorities identified at the policy level
- B. Overview of the CES framework (a few paragraphs)
  - i. Background, concepts and definitions, motivations for the selection of themes and dimensions
  - ii. Unique selling points of CES framework, why it could be helpful to use this framework in the context of measuring sustainable development
- C. SDGs: brief overview of the SDGs and targets and the global list of SDG indicators (a few paragraphs)

##### **II. Mapping SDGs and targets to CES themes and dimensions, possible adjustments**

- A. Description of the approach used by the TF and the actions done
- B. Mapping of the goals (box)
- C. Themes: description of themes, mapping and adjustments
- D. Dimensions: here, later, elsewhere (description of the dimensions and explanation of the criteria of allocating targets to specific dimensions)
- E. Additional choices made

### **III. Examining possible uses of the (adjusted) CES framework**

This section will present findings from member countries regarding the application of the mapping exercise. Practical examples would be used to evaluate the possible efficiencies brought by the use of the adjusted framework.

- i. Communication, facilitating user understanding
- ii. Identifying inter-linkages between targets and goals
- iii. Ensuring balance between different dimensions of SDGs (economic, social, environmental)
- iv. Analysis of the SDG targets from the CES time-dimension viewpoint (now vs. later).
- v. Links to statistical standards and frameworks
- vi. Identifying target/indicator redundancies (to help with reducing SDG reporting at regional and national levels)
- vii. Identifying process/reporting efficiencies (through links to existing sustainable development-related statistics and their reporting mechanisms)
- viii. Help in identifying regional and national indicators

### **IV. Annexes to the report**

- A. Description of CES themes and dimensions (Annex 2)
- B. Correspondence table between the SDG targets and CES themes (Annex 3)

## ANNEX 2. DESCRIPTION OF THEMES AND DIMENSIONS

### A. Description of themes [work in progress]

#### Human well-being

1. **Subjective well-being:** relates to each individual's subjective evaluation of their life as a whole.
2. **Consumption and income:** includes microeconomic components related to an individual's or household material living standards, such as consumption, income and savings.
3. **Food and Nutrition:** relates to food, hunger, and nutritional components, such as calorie intake (quantity and quality of diet), food waste and food stock.
4. **Health:** includes all aspects related to people's health status and healthy lifestyles, including mortality, prevalence of different types of transmissible (e.g. HIV, malaria) and chronic diseases (e.g. circulatory, cancers), mental health, health expenditures and care facilities, contraception, immunization, drinking and smoking.
5. **Labour:** includes themes related to the world of work and the promotion of decent work, such as paid employment, un(der)employment, unpaid work, hours worked, and employment status.
6. **Education:** includes aspects related to skill formation at an individual level, such as educational attainment, computer skills, basic competencies and life-long learning.
7. **Cities and human settlements:** includes components related to life in cities and urban settlements, including housing stock and density, provision of certain public good related to housing, housing quality and affordability, decent housing and slums.
8. **Leisure:** includes various types of non-work activities (i.e. excluding both paid work and domestic tasks) pursued during a person's time, measured both in quantitative and in qualitative terms.
9. **Safety:** includes all aspects related to individuals' physical safety, including war, crime, traffic accidents and natural hazards

#### Environmental capital

10. **Land and ecosystems:** such as patterns of land use (and changes thereof), organic farming, protected areas, quality of landscape and soil, (threatened) species, forests, conditions of seas and oceans (e.g. acidification, fish catches, coral areas)
11. **Water and sanitation:** water use (e.g. abstraction, consumption, allocation, intensity, treatment, quality), emissions to water, water stress, availability if sanitation facilities and urban waste water treatment

12. **Air quality:** air pollution due to, for example, particulate matter emissions and concentration, stratospheric ozone depletion, noise
13. **Climate:** state of the climate system, which includes aspects such as CO<sub>2</sub> / GHG emissions and concentrations, temperature changes, and extreme weather events
14. **Energy resources:** includes aspects related to production and consumption of different types of energy resources (e.g. oil, coal and peat), such as energy supply, expenditures, intensity, share of renewable energy, and energy dependency
15. **Mineral resources:** includes aspects related to extraction and consumption of mineral resources other than oil, coal and peat, such as intensity of use, productivity, hazardous waste and recycling.

#### Social capital

16. **Trust:** includes aspects such as trust in other people, relations with (and support from) family and friends, cultural and linguistic heritage
17. **Institutions:** include political institutions, state capacity and governance, as well as those institutions and policies providing oversight of the financial system, promoting sustainable development and environmental protection, international trade, international cooperation, fighting poverty and inequality (leaving no-one behind)

#### Economic capital

18. **Physical capital:** includes tangible assets and information on stocks, investment and depreciation, as well as more specific aspects such as physical- and ICT-infrastructure
19. **Knowledge capital:** includes R&D outputs, computer software, innovation, patents and knowledge networks, captured through information on both stocks and investment activities
20. **Financial capital:** includes items such as net financial assets and liabilities (i.e. debt), deficit/surplus position of different institutional sectors (governments, banks, etc.) as well as the flows bearing on them (e.g. taxes)

**B. Description of dimensions [work in progress]**

1. **Here and now:** concentrate on well-being outcomes that prevail now in a given country or community. Also included here are the policies and actions bearing on these outcomes.
2. **Later:** include capital accumulation, resource use and efficiency, resources and resilience to shocks and future risks at the individual, community, national and global levels. Also included here are the policies and actions bearing on these resources.
3. **Elsewhere:** include those policies and actions with trans-boundary effects, i.e. bearing on the well-being outcomes and resources prevailing in other parts of the world: ODA, international cooperation agreements, international trade, migration, financial relations, capacity building in developing countries, as well as those economic activities (e.g. FDI, activities of multi-national enterprises, market access) that leave 'footprints' on conditions elsewhere (e.g. trans-boundary effects on climate, land, other ecosystem, mineral resources, water, energy, etc.).