

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

**Expert Forum for producers and users of climate change-related statistics
2-3 September 2015, Geneva, Switzerland**

CONCEPT NOTE

The Expert Forum for producers and users of climate change-related statistics will be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Room V, on 2-3 September 2015. Simultaneous interpretation in English and Russian will be provided.

Meeting documents will be available at the UNECE website:

www.unece.org/stats/documents/2015.09.climate.html

I. Introduction

The Expert Forum will discuss what are the key data needs related to climate change, and how data producers can best contribute to information needs resulting from the Paris Climate Conference, the Post-2015 Development Agenda with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and indicators, and the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

This work follows up on the *Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics* which more than 60 countries and international organisations endorsed in April 2014 at the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). During that discussion, the Conference noted that Expert Forums would be highly useful for sharing ideas and experience, discussing concepts and measurement issues, and identifying areas for development of practical guidance.

The Expert Forum will be open for all countries and organisations producing or using climate change-related data. The Forum aims to provide a link between various producers and users of climate information. The conclusions of the meeting will provide input into the CES work on developing climate change-related statistics and indicators, and contribute to current international work aiming to inform climate policies.

II. Organising Committee

The Expert Forum will be organised by a UNECE Steering Group on Climate Change-Related Statistics (SGCC), set up in October 2014 to steer CES activities in climate change. The Steering Group includes Norway (Chair), Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Netherlands, Russian Federation and DG Climate Action of the European Commission, European Environment Agency (EEA), Eurostat, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Midsummer Analytics and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

III. Sessions of the Expert Forum

The following sessions will be held during the Expert Forum:

First day – Wednesday, 2 September 2015

1. Session: Setting the scene

Session Chair: Ms Nina Holmengen, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Environment Agency and Chair of the UNECE Steering Group on Climate Change-Related Statistics

This session will set the scene reflecting the data needs arising from the upcoming Paris Climate Conference and from setting up the Post-2015 Development Agenda with SDGs and the related indicators. The opening will introduce the topics of the Expert Forum and new CES work launched at the end of 2014, and introduce the recently released *CES Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics*.

2. Session: Responding to the needs of the new global climate change agreement

Session Chair: UNFCCC

In December 2015, 196 countries will meet at the Paris Climate Summit to agree on a new global climate change agreement. It aims at ambitious action before and after 2020 when the new agreement will come into force. In addition, each country is expected to pledge, in spring 2015, its own “Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)” to strengthening action on climate change. These INDCs may create new information needs which will require input and development work from statistical offices, in addition to the needs already existing under UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, such as the requirements relating to national greenhouse gas inventories.

The session will discuss how official statisticians should contribute to the information needs of the international climate change regime, including the needs arising from the new climate agreement. Countries will be invited to share their views on how they plan to inform these processes, what new data are needed for INDCs and how to improve data and statistics required for inventories and other reporting under the UNFCCC.

3. Session: Road map towards better climate change-related statistics

Session Chair: Mr Rob Smith, Principal of Midsummer Analytics and Vice-Chair of the UNECE Steering Group on Climate Change-Related Statistics

UNECE published the *CES Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics* in December 2014 as the first ever recommendations aimed at improving official statistics to support climate change analysis and reporting on greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol. The recommendations were developed by a Task Force chaired by Canada, and composed of Finland, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Qatar, United Kingdom, European Environment Agency, Eurostat, Directorate-General on Climate Action of the European Commission. Several organisations contributed to the *CES Recommendations* in substance, including FAO, IPCC, UNFCCC and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

This session will share experience and discuss how to implement the *CES Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics*. The session will identify practical priorities and first steps for improving climate change-related statistics.

Second day – Thursday, 3 September 2015

4. Session: Building capacity to provide climate change-related statistics

Session chair: Ms Angela Ferruzza, Chief, Environmental Conditions Division, the National Institute of Statistics of Italy (Istat).

Currently, there are no specific mechanisms for building the capacity of statistical systems to provide climate change-related statistics. The *CES Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics* note that there are gaps in countries' capacity that make it difficult to provide statistics to assess the impacts and costs of climate change and effectiveness of adaptation and mitigation. Moreover, developing countries will be required to provide new data on climate change mitigation and adaptation to UNFCCC, and new countries are developing their greenhouse gas inventory systems.

The session will discuss ways to build countries' capacity to better inform climate policies. Part of the proposed SDG 13 is dedicated to raising countries' capacities: "13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change related planning and management..." This will also require better capacity to produce high-quality, timely and reliable data and statistics for decision making. The session will consider how statistical offices' and inventory agencies' networks could help in sharing of knowledge and good practices to improve the required statistics. It aims to identify first steps, practical priorities and partners, possible sources of funding and mechanisms to support capacity building.

5. Session: Emerging areas – Measuring extreme events

Session Chair: to be decided

This session will launch discussions on measuring extreme events and disasters using official statistics. The *CES Recommendations* note that existing socio-economic data would be valuable for analysing extreme events and disasters if linked to location. These data could help the analysis of damage caused by extreme events, reconstruction activity, and identification of vulnerable population and infrastructure etc. In February 2015, the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians decided to establish a UNECE Task Force on measuring extreme events and disasters.

The session will explore user demand for data for analysing extreme events and disasters, take stock of what statistical offices are doing in the area and discuss possibilities provided by existing statistics and geospatial data. The session will also reflect on the outcomes of the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015, and especially its session on data gaps.

6. Session: Climate change and SDG indicators

Session Chair: Ms Angelica Tudini, Senior Researcher, the National Institute of Statistics of Italy (Istat) and Chair of the UNECE Task Force on a Set of Key Climate Change-Related Statistics.

The United Nations Summit to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda with Sustainable Development Goals and targets will be held on 25-27 September 2015. Work on establishing the measurement framework and indicators is ongoing. In October 2014, a UNECE Task Force started to develop a set of key climate change-related indicators. The set will be built around the scope of climate change-related statistics of the *CES Recommendations* to include: emissions, drivers, impacts, mitigation and adaptation.

The session will discuss priorities for the set of key climate change-related indicators, and review how these indicators relate to the planned SDG indicators and other existing climate change-related indicators. The session will provide an opportunity to discuss the content and the feasibility of producing the set of key climate change-related indicators that is being developed by the UNECE Task Force. The session will also consider who should report on the different indicators, whether the definitions and methodologies are in place and how to prepare for the reporting challenge.

7. Session: The way forward

Session Chair: Ms Nina Holmengen, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Environment Agency and Chair of the UNECE Steering Group on Climate Change-Related Statistics

The session will discuss the conclusions of the Expert Forum highlighting concrete issues to be taken into account in further work and identifying new emerging issues. The session will also discuss next steps in implementing the CES Recommendations.

After the meeting, UNECE will draft a report with key issues raised at the Expert Forum.

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