

First meeting of the 2009/2010 Bureau
Washington, D.C., 15-16 October 2009

Item 3(i) of the Provisional
Agenda

**UNECE STATISTICAL PROGRAMME 2009:
ACTIVITY 7.3: STATISTICS RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

Note prepared by the UNECE secretariat

I. BACKGROUND

1. At its October 2008 meeting, the Bureau discussed a possible new activity related to statistics on climate change, in particular concerning the emission inventories maintained by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
2. The Bureau asked the secretariat to:
 - explore the degree to which national statistical offices are involved in climate change related work and in compiling the greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories. The results of the survey would allow identifying common concerns and needs to be addressed at the international level.
 - explore the possibilities to contribute to the UNECE climate change activities in areas like transport, energy, forestry and housing possibly with other UNECE Sectoral Committees.

II. THE 63rd SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

3. The 63rd Session of Economic Commission for Europe discussed climate change issues in its panel on “Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation – The Work of ECE: Translating Global Objectives and Commitments into Regional Results”. The Commission stressed the role of statistics in providing a basis for decision-making and action. Official statisticians have a key role in contributing to the production and dissemination of relevant climate change statistics, however, consistent and comparable annual statistics are not yet available for a sufficient number of countries. The urgent need for authoritative, robust, timely and comparable climate change statistics was strongly emphasised.
4. In particular, the Commission recalled that obtaining a comprehensive picture of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and emission trends was a challenging task. Lack of relevant statistical data for input into GHG emissions inventories had been identified as one of the most significant barriers for improving the quality of GHG inventories in the developing countries.

5. The CES plenary session in June 2009 was briefly informed about the outcome of the 2009 Session of the Economic Commission for Europe.

III. 4TH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL-ECONOMIC ACCOUNTING

6. The UNECE secretariat presented a report on the planned activities related to climate change at the 4th meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) in June 2009. The Committee requested the UNECE secretariat to:

- coordinate its work on the survey of national statistical offices on activities related to climate change statistics with the UN Statistical Division (UNSD). The survey should be undertaken as part of Phase 2 of the Global Assessment of Environment Statistics and Environmental-Economic Accounting carried out by the UNCEEA;
- coordinate its activities on climate change with UNSD.

IV. PROGRESS SO FAR AND FUTURE PLANS

7. The secretariat consulted with Eurostat and Statistics Finland on the organization of the survey on climate change activities. Following the advice of Eurostat it was agreed to postpone the survey for after the meeting on climate change in Copenhagen in December 2009 (COP-15).

8. The UNECE Statistical Division initiated a closer cooperation with the UNECE divisions that are actively involved in climate change related issues, namely the Environment and Transport Division, with the goal to explore the possibilities to contribute to the UNECE climate change activities in areas like transport, energy, forestry and housing.

9. The UNECE Statistical Division has done the following:

- Provided input to developing a UNECE strategy on climate change within the framework of cooperation between the UN Regional Commissions.
- Successfully organized a workshop jointly with the UNECE Environment Division and UNSD for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South-East European countries on environmental indicators, including indicators on air quality and climate change.
- Provided statistical input to the joint UN Regional Commissions publication for COP-15.

10. The UNECE Statistical Division will carry out a survey on climate change activities in coordination with Eurostat and UNSD in 2010. The UNECE will also take part in Phase 2 of the Global Assessment project undertaken by the UNCEEA.

11. Furthermore, the UNECE Statistical Division will continue to develop cooperation with the UNECE Environment and Transport divisions on climate change related activities. The outcome of this work will be presented to the Bureau at a future meeting.