



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

CES/2003/6
7 April 2003

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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

Fifty-first plenary session
(Geneva, 10-12 June 2003)

**MATTERS THAT THE BUREAU DECIDED SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE
ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE**

(EXCERPTS FROM THE INTEGRATED PRESENTATION)

Introduction

1. The Bureau reviewed the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Work at its February 2003 meeting and endorsed it for review by the Conference. This document brings together into a single document the list of matters that the Bureau decided should be brought to the attention of the Conference at the 2003 plenary session. It is a compilation of the various items that are listed throughout the Integrated Presentation under the headings "Goal" and "Attention of the Conference is drawn to". Only the programme elements which contain information for both headings are included. Material in this document is presented for each field of statistics separately, following the sequence of fields of statistics that are presented in the Integrated Presentation.

2. The Conference is invited to consider the various issues listed in this document that the Bureau decided should be brought to the attention of the Conference at the plenary session. In addition, under this agenda item the Conference is expected to:

- analyse the implications of the matters to which the Bureau called the attention of the Conference on the programme of Work of the Conference;
- identify issues or suggestions that through the Bureau should be referred to the attention of other organisations whose activities are reflected in the Integrated Presentation;
- identify issues on which the Bureau should focus in the next round of review of the Integrated Presentation, with a view to proposing concrete and practical follow-up suggestions.

3. The discussion on any of the issues listed in this document would take place during the review of the Integrated Presentation.

Programme Activity 1: Organisation and Operation of Statistical Services

1.1 PROMOTION AND COORDINATION OF MULTILATERAL STATISTICAL WORK

Goal: That multilateral statistical work is consistent, coherent and harmonious in regard to its use of classifications and definitions, publications, work programmes and collection of data.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The need for further work on strengthening the coordination of statistical data collection among the various international organisations.

1.2 MANAGEMENT AND POLICY ISSUES OF DIRECT CONCERN TO THE PRESIDENTS OF NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICES

Goal: That relationships among the top management level of the national statistical offices as well as contact with the management of international statistical organisations be efficient.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The enlargement of the European Union and the need for the Conference to evaluate its activities and priorities.

1.3 TRANSITION ECONOMIES IN THE ECE REGION

Goal: That Transition Economies have mature, stable and adequate statistical infrastructure suitable for their needs; that they receive advice and assistance from the international statistical community in applying them; and that they adhere to international statistical standards and norms.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The development of official statistics in Southeast Europe is lagging behind the other transition economies because of economic and social difficulties in their progress towards a market economy. This calls for a tailored development of statistics in the region supported by a sustained technical assistance by the international organisations active in the region.
- Further activities to achieve comparability of CIS statistics with the statistical data of the other countries in the region.

Programme activity 2: Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues

2.2 STATISTICAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

Goal: That the benefits of ICT be harnessed to the greatest extent possible in the collection and processing of statistical data, and that the reporting burden placed on countries be minimised.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Possible combined use of business registers data and data collected for fiscal purposes.

2.4 STATISTICAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Goal: The world-wide implementation of single statistical classification standards in each area of statistics.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The effort made by Statistics Canada, the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática of Mexico, the United States Bureau of the Census and Eurostat on the convergence of industrial classifications NAICS/NACE.
- The revision of ISIC.

2.5 STATISTICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Goal: A continuing programme of productive and relevant research and development, whose results are disseminated widely.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The increased and widespread implementation of ICT calls for new data and meta-data modelling.
- Research in the area of data modelling is lacking and should be given high priority.

2.6 GEOGRAPHICAL AND REGIONAL DATA

Goal: That geographical information standards are universally adopted and that geographically based information is disseminated as widely and efficiently as possible.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- There needs to be closer co-operation among National Statistical Offices, national mapping agencies and national administrative systems if the availability and comparability of spatial information is to be improved.

2.7 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Goal: That personnel involved in statistical work should be appropriately trained and that adequate systems exist for the on-going training and development of staff.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Coordination in the field of statistical training should be increased. As training on an international level shall fill gaps within national training schemes and gain synergies, the exchange of information is an important and basic issue.

2.8 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Goal: To identify best measures for sustainable development; develop indicators or framework to evaluate sustainable development.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- More coordination is needed between national agencies in charge of sustainable development and national statistical offices.
- Better coordination is necessary between the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and other international organizations active in this field. OECD-Eurostat-ECE is planning to establish a Steering Committee on Sustainable Development Statistics with the participation of countries and international organizations.
- Necessity for active cooperation of NSOs in developing measures for sustainable development.
- Evaluate the follow-up of the Johannesburg Summit on sustainable development.

Programme Activity 3: Economic Statistics

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

Goal: That there exists the full range of high quality national accounts data produced according to SNA/ESA standards for all CES countries with lengthy time-series.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Future action in joint data collection: Eurostat, in cooperation with the OECD, is preparing a reform of the common questionnaire. The OECD has launched the NAWWE initiative, which objective is to have countries to update the tables of the questionnaire directly on their web-sites. Australia and Canada accepted to participate in the tests. This initiative should avoid any double or triple transmission by countries. International organisations would use directly these tables.

3.2 MONEY AND BANKING, GOVERNMENT FINANCE, AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Goal: That there exists a comprehensive, coherent and balanced system of money, banking government finance and balance of payments statistics capable of supporting government

activities relating to developing and adjusting policy, and deepening the understanding of the determinants of globalisation.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Future action in joint data collection (concerns transition economies): UNCTAD and Eurostat will endeavour to resolve the issue, subject to resource constraints.
- Problems that countries are facing in collection of good quality data on balance of payments.

3.3 INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN GOODS

Goal: To provide or make available consistent and comprehensive traded goods sector statistics that are up-to-date and consistent with international standards and definitions.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The work led by WTO to develop commonly agreed data sets through an interagency cooperation with a view to reducing the response burden on national statistical offices.
- Future action in joint data collection UNSD-OECD: agreement to cover 29 OECD countries by end 2003.
- Future action in joint data platform UNSD-OECD: testing of feasibility of common approach towards IT solution.

3.4 TRANSPORT STATISTICS

Goal: That there exist transport statistics that are consistent with the standards, classifications and needs of mainstream economic statistics and with international standards and definitions.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Very little progress has been made in developing price indices for transport, which remains an area of high demand.

3.6 INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN SERVICES

Goal: That there exist consistent and comprehensive statistics on international trade in services that are consistent with international standards and definitions.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The need for resources to be devoted to technical assistance in development of country reporting of trade in services.

3.7 TOURISM

Goal: That there exists a comprehensive, coherent and balanced system of tourism statistics capable of supporting government activities relating to developing and adjusting policy, and deepening the understanding of the determinants of tourism.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- International cooperation in the field of tourism statistics continues to work well. The next important field to work on is the update of the 1993 UN Recommendations on Tourism Statistics.

3.8 OTHER MARKETED SERVICES, AND NON-MARKETED SERVICES

Goal: To provide or make available service sector statistics that are consistent with international standards and definitions.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The 2007 revision of ISIC and the need for substantially better coverage of the information sector and other service sectors.
- Information Society Statistics, see also PE 3.11 and PE 3.13: The OECD Working Party on Indicators for the Information Society (WPIIS), after having developed an OECD activity-based definition of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, is now extending the ICT sector definition to a commodity-based one.
- The publication of databases on “Indicators of Industry and Services” and “Services Statistics: Value Added and Employment” are suspended (OECD).

3.9 PRICE STATISTICS, INCLUDING PURCHASING POWER PARITIES

Goal: That there exist internationally comparable and reliable measures of price changes, levels and trends of purchasing power parities.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Work on the preparation of new international manuals on price statistics is to be completed in 2003.
- PPP work could benefit significantly from the participation of national accountants.

3.10 AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERY STATISTICS

Goal: To provide or make available internationally comparable and reliable statistics on sustainable agricultural, forestry and fishing activities as well as on rural development that provides national and international policy makers with adequate information.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Existing joint data collection: Eurostat and OECD have implemented a unified and harmonised framework for the Economic Accounts for Agriculture (EAA).
- Future action in joint data collection (agriculture other than economic accounts for agriculture): Eurostat and FAO have agreed to co-operate in the area of agriculture price statistics. Other types of data sets are successively to be identified and included in framework of Common Data Consultation and Utilization.
- Future action in joint data collection (fishery statistics): Following a joint Eurostat/FAO/OECD meeting with national statisticians in February 2000 and discussions on this topic in the OECD Committee for Fisheries proposals are being

formulated to minimise the duplication of demands made on the national services and to improve the exchange of data between the international agencies.

- Future action in joint data collection (agro-environment indicators): See PE 5.1.

3.11 INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS

Goal: To provide or make available industry sector statistics that are consistent with international standards and definitions, and ensure that policy-makers have adequate information in the areas of SME's, productivity, technology and employment at an appropriate disaggregated level.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Future action in joint data collection (structural business statistics): agreement on joint data collection has been reached between OECD and Eurostat.
- Future action in data collection on SME statistics: Data collection will continue to be carried out by OECD.
- Development of recommendations and guidelines for the compilation of output indicators for services. OECD work is carried out under the auspices of the newly created Short Term Economic Statistics Expert Group (STESEG) which will hold its second meeting in June 2003.

3.13 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY STATISTICS

Goal: Establish and maintain international statistical standards in the field of science and technology (S&T) statistics, including definitions and statistical methods. S&T covers research and development (R&D), innovation, patents, -technology balance of payments and human resources in S&T (HRST).

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Finalise improvements of various aspects of the Frascati Manual for R&D surveys and put them into practice.
- Continue to develop and improve surveys of technological innovation and the associated indicators and, where necessary, improve the Oslo Manual.
- Update and expand existing methodologies and surveys in order to provide better indicators of the internationalization of science and technology and its application.
- Improve regional breakdowns within member countries.
- Continue analytical and methodological work on patents and where necessary improve the Patent Manual.

3.14 BUSINESS REGISTERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS IN SUPPORT OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS

Goal: That there exist business registers of sufficiently good quality to support required statistical activity and that the best use is made of administrative records for statistical purposes.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Many countries are still in the implementing phase of the harmonization and development of business registers as a survey frame and source of information.
- A global harmonization of the treatment of enterprise groups is necessary, as the information on enterprise groups is essential for improving statistics on globalisation; in this context, the development of the OECD Manual of Economic Globalisation Indicators is important and an agreement at the UN level should be achieved.

3.99 OTHER WORK IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS

Goal: That there exist consistent and comprehensive statistics on the areas covered in this Programme Element that are consistent with international standards and definitions.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Short-term statistics are ever more demanded for policy makers and analysts having to monitor the short-term economic situation. Therefore, the production of a high level quality service is regarded as a project of the utmost importance in the euro-zone as well as for the European Union as a whole.
- The European Statistical System High Level Group has been created to guarantee the improvement of key EU/EMU short-term economic indicators (define a draft list of Principal European Economic Indicators as well as a plan for improving in particular the timeliness of the indicators) and assure the follow-up of the EMU Action Plan and EU/USA Benchmarking.
- The increasing importance of international accounting rules (reference: Enron and similar cases) and the need to study their likely impact on statistics should urge statisticians to: integrate the existing discussion fora; to endorse standardisation of accounting and support reduction of reporting burden for enterprises; and try to have an influence in the use of accounting concepts to statistical purposes.

Programme Activity 4: Social and Demographic Statistics

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS (INCLUDING PROJECTIONS, MIGRATION, FERTILITY AND FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS)

Goal: That member states be able to produce reliable, internationally comparable and timely demographic statistics and projections according to international standards, thereby facilitating national policy-making and internationally comparative analysis.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- International migration: In the field of international migration statistics there are various problems that need particular attention, including the limitations of traditional statistical methods, the poor comparability of data, and thus the limited applicability of the UN recommendations by Member States.
- The Bureau urges countries to work towards achieving a greater degree of harmonisation in national definitions of immigration and emigration, and encourages them to seriously consider complying more fully with the UN recommendations. This will entail NSIs considering the many basic issues that are involved here, and looking at the policy implications and not just the statistical ones.

- Estimates of international migration flows remain very low in quality, and in order to improve them it is important that NSIs work in close cooperation with the other Government agencies and administrations concerned.
- **Families and households:** It is becoming increasingly difficult to use the existing internationally recommended concepts, definitions and classifications of families and households to statistically account for emerging new types of households and families in countries throughout the region.
- The Bureau commended the proposal that Norway submitted to Eurostat's 2002 and 2003 Meetings of Directors of Social Statistics, calling for ECE and Eurostat to work together in an attempt to study the statistical implications of the many new types of families, households and living arrangements growing in importance in countries in the region. The Bureau welcomed the proposal that ECE and Eurostat collaborate closely with interested NSIs in the region in addressing these problems in the coming few years. The Bureau reaffirmed the importance of advancing work in this area.
- The cooperation among international organisations in data collection should be further improved.

4.2a POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUSES

Goal: That censuses be conducted according to international standards and norms of efficiency and effectiveness while meeting the needs of individual countries

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Several countries were unable to carry out the censuses for financial or technical reasons.
- The planned transition from traditional censuses to register-based censuses that is to take place in some countries in the region can have important consequences (e.g. in areas such as statistics on special groups).

4.4 LABOUR STATISTICS

Goal: That labour statistics be adequate for describing labour market conditions and identifying the underlying causal conditions in order to enable governments to have the information with which to intervene to improve conditions and to harmonise economic and social policies and programmes and conform to international standards and norms.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The need to revise ISCO-88 will be discussed at the 17th International Conference of Labour Statistics end of November 2003. When the need to revise or only to update the ISCO-88 (and its Community version) is confirmed, Eurostat could co-operate with ILO assuming also the availability of necessary resources.
- Work is needed on the harmonization of the measurement of income earnings. A higher degree of harmonisation of the measures of income should be achieved with the Statistics on Income and Living Conditions developed by Eurostat.
- The ILO considers that there is a growing need for NSIs to collect information needed for measuring the quality of work, and to measure progress being made by countries towards decent work.
- At the Lisbon Special European Council (March 2000) the EU set itself as the strategic goal for the next decade to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based

economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs, and greater social cohesion.

- There is a need to reinforce communication and coordination between international and supranational agencies working in the field of labour statistics, particularly with reference to the collection of data from NSIs and the development of international guidelines.
- The Bureau has decided to invite the ILO to participate in one of the Bureau's meetings in the upcoming year, in order to discuss some of the critical issues it identified in its Rapporteur Report and to receive advice from it on how best the Bureau could address some of those issues.

4.5 EDUCATION AND TRAINING STATISTICS

Goal: That education and training statistics be adequate for policy needs and public purposes and conform to international standards and norms.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Work by the CES in this field has been essentially dormant for several years, awaiting UNESCO's Institute for Statistics, the international organization that has primary competence in this work area, to propose work of possible mutual interest to it, the CES and other international organizations.

4.6 CULTURE STATISTICS

Goal: That cultural statistics be adequate for policy needs, and can meet the increasing expectations of both new and traditional communities for official statistics to span all aspects of their way of life.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Work by the CES in this field has been essentially dormant for several years, awaiting UNESCO's Institute for Statistics, the international organization that has primary competence in this work area, to propose work of possible mutual interest to it, the CES and other international organizations.
- Countries are encouraged to start using international classifications already available (NACE, ISCO) in the production of their national statistics on culture. This would be a useful starting point for the design and implementation of the common framework referred to above in the medium-term objectives.
- The OECD has offered to associate itself with the next ECE-Eurostat-Unesco joint work session on cultural statistics, because of its experience in the related field of education statistics, and as a possible means of facilitating more rapid progress occurring in the field of cultural statistics..

4.7a STATISTICS OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND EXPENDITURES, OF THE WELFARE OF THE POPULATION, AND OF POVERTY AND INCOME STATISTICS

Goal: That there exist comprehensive, comparable, reliable and timely statistics describing the distribution of the capacity of individuals, families, and households to acquire goods and services; to identify the sources of inequality in incomes; to understand processes of social exclusion; to assess the need for intervention in the distribution of incomes to target interventions deemed necessary and to monitor the effectiveness of such interventions.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The final report and recommendations of the Canberra Group on Household Income Statistics are available at the following address:
<http://www.lisproject.org/links/canbaccess.htm>
- Major improvements have been made in relation to the definition of income and for monetary income poverty, but there is a need to do more work on non-monetary indicators of social exclusion (including longitudinal indicators). Further work is also needed in the area of the measurement of income earnings, to improve data quality and international comparability.

4.7b SOCIAL SECURITY STATISTICS

Goal: That social security statistics be adequate for policy needs and public purposes and conform to international standards and norms.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The increasing attention and the various activities on the ageing of the population and the costs associated with it.
- In the field of Social Protection, it is particularly important for NSIs to collaborate with and involve in the work the Ministries of Labour, Social Security, etc., in the production of statistical data. Therefore, closer co-operation between the NSIs and the different Ministries involved in collecting administrative data should be encouraged in order to ensure better quality of the data.
- Further work in analysing differences and inconsistencies between the SOCX and ESSPROS databases should be carried out in order to gradually harmonise the questionnaires and, in the longer term, the methodologies.

4.8 CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATISTICS

Goal: That there exist reliable, comprehensive and internationally comparable system of crime and justice statistics capable of supporting social policy development and enhanced public awareness and accountability.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Further work is needed to improve data comparability of crime statistics.
- Attention should also be paid to the differences existing between survey data and administrative data.

4.9 HEALTH STATISTICS

Goal: That there exists a coherent system of health statistics capable of supporting policy analysis and decision-making in the field of health (including long-term nursing care).

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Coordination needs to be improved between the WHO programme on the World Health Survey and the activities related to health surveys carried out by other national and regional organizations. This issue was addressed in considerable detail by the CES Bureau at its February 2003 meeting and by the UN Statistical Commission at its March 2003 session.
- The issue of data confidentiality, which is particularly felt in the area of health statistics.
- While good progress has been made in recent years towards a common framework on health care statistics, as well as progress with survey instruments, the absence of a comprehensive and up-to-date international classification on procedure in health care poses a major challenge for future work on health care statistics.
- Joint data collection: Informal agreements exist between WHO, OECD and Eurostat for improvement of data collection, harmonised data collection and analysis, the use of common instruments, mutual exchange of data of common interest. A close collaboration is also developed with ILO in the field of Occupational Health and Safety statistics.
- Exchange of information: Informal agreements exist between OECD and Eurostat to exchange information and data obtained from MS for the purpose of cross-checking and completing respective own data collections.

4.10 GENDER STATISTICS

Goal: To mainstream gender into the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical data.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Further work is needed to improve the measurement of gender differences in earnings. Eurostat will try to improve this measurement using the best sources (or a combination) available from each country in order to cover the whole labour market.
- To respond to the policy concerns that have been addressed or will be addressed at the 2003 and 2004 Commission on the Status of Women, organizations should work towards developing and/or harmonizing statistical methods and improving statistical data related to the following areas: i) women and men accessibility to media, information and communication technologies, ii) women's human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, iii) the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality, and iv) women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building.

4.11a SOCIAL INDICATORS AND FRAMEWORKS

Goal: That there exists a coherent framework of internationally comparable social indicators in selected fields such as health, education, crime and social safety nets.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The Bureau considered that more work is required to improve international collaboration on social statistics, and it noted that there is a need to establish a new mechanism where the work on social statistics could be coordinated, especially since existing groups like the Siena Group have not been as effective as desired.
- It also concluded that the work of the proposed new group should focus more on specific outputs. The Bureau agreed to come back to this issue at one of its future meetings, based

in part on the outcome of the March 2003 session of the Statistical Commission and the May 2003 Expert Group Meeting on Setting the Scope of Social Statistics that UNSD and the Siena Group are collaborating in organizing in New York in May 2003.

- The Siena Group on Social Statistics held its eighth meeting in London in November 2001. Social capital was the theme of the meeting.

4.11b MULTI-PURPOSE SOCIAL SURVEYS

Goal: That there exists a comprehensive range of reliable, timely and comparable social statistics and indicators for policy formation and implementation purposes, as well as monitoring policy outcomes in areas such as poverty, social exclusion, convergence, cohesion and social reporting.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Eurostat is the only organization doing this kind of Europe-wide multipurpose social surveys.
- Improving the timeliness and comparability of data from multi-purpose social surveys is of prime importance.

4.11c REGISTERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS FOR SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

Goal: That statistical systems make the best use of administrative data.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- In many countries of the region registers and administrative records are increasingly used for census purposes, representing in some cases the main sources of information (see P.E. 4.2a).

Programme Activity 5: Environment Statistics

5.1 SECTORAL CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS, CLASSIFICATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL DATABASES

Goal: Move towards an integrated system of internationally comparable environmental statistics capable of assisting governments in setting and adjusting regulatory, taxation and resource management policies which directly or indirectly affect the environment..

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- The UN Statistical Commission (March 2003) approved the creation of an Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics.
- Need for better coordination of data collection, avoid duplication and focus on priority data sets (“streamlining data collection”).
- Need to fill data gaps for prioritised environment statistics and to improve the data quality.

- The development of indicators to monitor progress towards sustainable development (see also PE 2.8 Sustainable development indicators).

5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING

Goal: That there is an integration path between accounts in physical terms and the corresponding elements on national accounts in money terms.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Close interaction of environmental and economic accounting.
- Publication of the revised SEEA handbook and the need to implement SEEA in as many countries as possible.

Programme Activity 6: Dissemination and Support for Secretariat Activities

6.1 DISSEMINATION OF DATA AND CO-ORDINATION OF INTERNATIONAL DATA COLLECTION

Goal: That co-ordination of international data collection and dissemination is done effectively.

The Bureau agreed that attention of the Conference should be called to the following:

- Differences in pricing policies used by different national and international statistical agencies in the dissemination of statistical information.
- The increasing role of Internet in data collection. These innovations represent an opportunity to reduce the burden on NSOs. Further development of electronic data interchange standards (e.g. the XML-based standard for Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX)) is expected to considerably enhance the use of Internet based data collection. However, in order to take full advantage of this opportunity, a high level of coordination among international organizations on data collection is required.