

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

Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development
Fifth meeting
Lisbon, 5-6 March 2008
Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda

**MAIN POINTS FROM DISCUSSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT THE
CES BUREAU MEETING, 12-13 February 2008**

Prepared by the UNECE secretariat

1. As follow-up to the CES seminar in 2005, the Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development was set up to develop a broad conceptual framework for measuring sustainable development. The Working Group is preparing a report planned to be presented for endorsement to the CES plenary session in June 2008.
2. The Bureau congratulated the Working Group for producing such an impressive report despite the initial difficulties. The report was found to be a useful contribution to the knowledge in this field. However, it was recognised that several aspects of the report require further development. Some of them include eliminating unnecessary repetition, more fully specifying physical indicators that are left general, and strengthening the final chapter comparing existing indicators sets with those derived from the capital framework.
3. The Bureau members' discussion focused on the possible future direction of work and whether the work should continue in some different modality beyond June 2008.
4. It was recognised that an absence of concrete follow-up steps would result in losing the momentum built up during the 5 years since the Bureau first discussed the need for guidance on the measurement of sustainable development. The convergence of views and accumulation of expertise over the last 2 years since the Joint Working Group was created should be built upon to developing practical guidelines.
5. The Bureau approved the draft report for presentation at the Conference in June subject to any changes made by the Working Group at the meeting in Lisbon. The Bureau agreed to hold a major consultation with members of the Conference after the WGSSD meeting in Lisbon. A summary of the comments will be presented for information to the Conference. The final version of the report will be presented at the Conference by Rob Smith.
6. The Bureau expressed gratitude to the Chairman of the Working Group, Rob Smith, and to the Editor, Knut Alfsen. The Bureau asked Rob Smith to prepare a paper on possible follow-

up steps. The proposal should be circulated to the Bureau by the end of March and, if common thinking emerges, an information note to the Conference will be formulated.

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