Environment Statistics Section, Small Group on Climate Change Questions

for Censuses and Surveys

The Environment Statistics Section (ESS) of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), convened its Tenth meeting of the Expert Group on Statistics during the 3, 4, 6 and 10 October 2024 (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/fdes/fdes_eges10.cshtml). During this meeting there was a recommendation to create a small group on climate change questions for censuses and surveys which will assist countries to collect and compile data on the Global Set of Climate Change Statistics and Indicators (Global Set) where relevant. The Global Set, following a global consultation in 2021, was adopted at the fifty-third session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2022 as the framework for climate change statistics and indicators to be used by countries when preparing their own sets of climate change statistics and indicators according to their individual concerns, priorities and resources (decision 53/116, Climate Change Statistics, https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/statcom/session_53/documents/2022-41-FinalReport-E.pdf)

The purpose of the group is multifunctional. In addition to reviewing existing sections and questions from censuses and surveys that are used to collect data for statistics and indicators of the Global Set it will identify new and innovative questions that countries can include in censuses and surveys to collect data for the Global Set at the national level. It will also review and update metadata for the Global Set which require data from censuses and surveys especially those relating to mitigation, adaptation and vulnerability. Eventually, the work of this group will be extended to build a repository of core and non-core questions suitable for censuses and surveys to collect data on climate change issues.

In order to assist countries the ESS with the support of the EGES offers a hub via its website, featuring a compilation of surveys and censuses that can be queried under various themes on the environment and climate. To further support countries in the development/strengthening of Climate Change statistics programmes, the Section has developed supporting tools including the Implementation Guidelines and Climate Change Statistics and Indicators Assessment Tool (CISAT).

With the intention to cross fertilize efforts and leverage expertise, the group recently collaborated with the Inter Secretariat working group on household surveys (ISWHS) group. Initial work among the two groups includes an exchange of the scope, objectives, outputs and links to resources and in this regard a power point presentation was presented by UNSD at the Inaugural Meeting on Revision of the United Nations Handbooks related to Household Surveys in China from 22-24 Jan 2024: https://unstats.un.org/iswghs/EventDetails/inaugural-meeting-handbook-hs-Jan2024 on the work of this small group.

At its 55th session, the Statistical Commission, inter-alia, approved the renaming of the Expert Group on Environment Statistics to the Expert Group on Environment and Climate Change Statistics to cover both topics given their close interrelationship. Further, the Commission encouraged national statistical systems to invest in the development of climate change statistics by enhancing the use of administrative data, designing specialized surveys or other data collection tools, and including climate and environment-related questions in relevant censuses and sample surveys as appropriate. The work of this small group will be presented at the 11th meeting of the Expert Group on Environment and Climate Change Statistics.