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Global initiatives

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Part I

Consideration by the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Improvement of Agricultural and Rural Statistics

Note by the secretariat

The present document contains an excerpt from the pre-edited report of the twenty-fourth session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS), as it was adopted on 12 October 2012. The document summarizes the deliberations by APCAS on the implementation of the global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.

As part of its deliberations on the Global Strategy, APCAS considered and endorsed the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.

The Committee is invited to bear in mind the information contained in the present document when considering the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics for endorsement

1. At its twenty-fourth session, the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics adopted the following report of its deliberations on the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Improvement of Agricultural and Rural Statistics:

"IMPLEMENTATION OF GLOBAL STRATEGY TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL STATISTICS IN THE REGION

(Item 6 of the Agenda)

(a) Under this agenda item, four presentations were made. The first presentation, APCAS/12/9 "Progress in the implementation of the Global Action Plan, including mobilization of resources" presented by Mr Naman Keita, outlined the log frame of the Global Action Plan and noted in particular its coordination mechanisms with the Regional Action Plan (RAP).

(b) The second presentation, APCAS/12/10 "Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics 2013-2017 (Draft)" presented by Mr Romeo Recide, elaborated upon the formulation of the Regional Action Plan for Asia-Pacific noting in particular 11 outputs and three components: (1) Technical Assistance, (2) Training, and (3) Research; supported respectively by the implementing partners FAO, UNESCAP, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The three components, introduced as Annexes E "Technical Assistance", F "Training", and G "Research" under Document APCAS/12/10, were presented by APCAS Secretary Mr Jairo Castano and Ms Margarita F. Guerrero of SIAP each noting the log frame (including both outputs and activities), work plan, and budget of the specific components.

(c) The Commission appreciated the efforts of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and members of the Steering Group for Agricultural Statistics (SGAS) to develop the RAP, and also appreciated support extended by the

implementing partners (FAO, ADB, UNESCAP) to the work of the SGAS. Particular appreciation was given by the Commission to the Government of Japan for the support given to the RAP, including the secondment of a junior officer at the Regional Office and its continued support to the SIAP. The Commission appreciated China's offer to support the RAP, noted its interest in membership of the Regional Steering Committee, as well as its proposal to support the implementation through exchange of experiences, and provision of technical assistance.

(d) In reference to the coordinating mechanisms of the Global Action Plan and the RAP, the Commission noted the need to better articulate regional outputs with global outputs with particular attention directed to the gap between the amount allocated to Asia and Pacific Region in the integrated budget of the Global Action Plan (15 million USD) and budget in the regional implementation plan (21 million USD). In this regard, the global office offered suggestions to further close this gap through (1) a mapping of the regional and global outputs and (2) the prioritization and indication of regional budget items to the global office, matching the prioritized amount allotted to the Asia-Pacific region in the indicative budget developed by the Global Office in consultation with donors.

(e) The Commission noted the clarification about the criteria for the selection of the pilot countries in the initial phase of the RAP. The RAP outlined three criteria, namely political will and commitment, importance of agriculture, and need for assistance. The Commission also noted the criteria for the selection of committee members.

(f) The Commission supported the emphasis on a country-driven approach to ensure the sustainability of the results of the RAP, in which it noted the importance of the transfer of knowledge and development tools to enable national staff in carrying out related work over the long term. In general, the Commission supported the continued involvement of national statistical offices and ministries of agriculture, as reflected in the proposed membership of the Regional Steering Committee. In this regard, the Commission noted the importance of the establishment of a national governing structure and recognized that the design of such a structure would be responsibility of each country.

(g) Bearing in mind the clarification sought and suggested amendments, the Commission fully endorsed the RAP."

2. The Committee is invited to take the above into account when considering the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Improvement of Agricultural and Rural Statistics for endorsement.

Part II

Environment statistics[1]

I. Overview

1. Based on the Japanese Statistics Act, the Master Plan Concerning the Development of Official Statistics (hereinafter referred to as the "Master Plan") was approved by all ministers in the Cabinet as a Cabinet Decision in 2009 and it aims to promote comprehensive and systematical measures concerning the development of official statistics.

2. In this Master Plan, it is recognized that global environmental problems are one of the most important issues all across the world and the development of statistics related to the environment has become a pressing issue.

3. Orientation of the approach on how to tackle development of environmental statistics is provided as follows.

II. Orientation of approaches

4. The focus will be on greenhouses gases and the evaluation of waste/by-products, with an emphasis on items from which necessary information can be obtained through using and improving existing statistics for relevant fields.

5. With regard to the issue of greenhouse gases, which is considered as being particularly important, factor analysis and estimation of the amount of carbon dioxide emissions that result from the consumption of fossil energy in economic activities are the most important fields, and statistics that enable an accurate evaluation of the amount of carbon dioxide in the industrial sector, business sector, household sector, and transport sector will be developed.

III. Major achievements in 2011

6. In order to enhance statistical data relating to the emission and absorption of greenhouse gases, and to develop statistics relating the impact caused by climate changes (to humans, agricultural crops, buildings etc.), working groups for review methods in calculating emission volumes (which were established by the Ministry of the Environment), discussed how to enrich statistical data to ensure a more detailed estimation of the emission and absorption of greenhouse gases through cooperation with relevant ministries. They will continuously study the methodology as ever. Additionally, in order to discuss how to develop statistics concerning the impact caused by climate changes (on humans, agricultural products, building etc.), a working group consisting of several experts was established and the basic policy for the development was set up. Beyond 2012, it is planned that the statistics be produced and disseminated through official webpage and through some reports, under cooperation with related ministries in line with this basic policy.

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7. The Ministry of the Environment established a working group in December 2009 to develop statistics for waste/by-products. This group is comprised of involved ministries, learned persons of experience, and industry stakeholders, and they are discussing improvements of the quality and speed of producing those statistics.

8. Based on the Master Plan, the Ministry of the Environment has been working on studying the quality of input-output tables for analysis of the environmental sector (hereinafter, referred to as “IO for Environment”). In 2012, the compilers manual was prepared and it is scheduled to produce preliminary IO for the Environment in 2013 with the full-scale version being launched in 2014.

Part III

Case of developing green growth statistics[1]

I. Overview

1. Statistical support has become essential in the implementation and monitoring of the government's national strategy for low carbon green growth. In connection with "The Five Year Plan on Low Carbon Green Growth", KOSTAT established and implemented "The KOSTAT Green Growth Implementation Plan" for developing green growth statistics.

II. Major Activities

A. Development of green growth indicators

2. In order to monitor green growth policies and the current state of the green economy, KOSTAT developed a green growth indicator framework and produced an analysis report.

B. Development of green life indicators and green life survey

3. Indicators: In order to assess the current state and trends of people's green living status, and to promote a standard green living style, KOSTAT developed a green life indicator framework and produced an analysis report.

4. Survey: In order to collect basic data for green life indicators, KOSTAT introduced a survey on green life that sampled large scale households.

C. Development of Green Industry Statistics

5. In order to establish and monitor policies that "foster a green technology industry", we compiled green industry statistics, which is the core agenda of green growth policies. Using 2010 Economic Census data, KOSTAT a) developed a green industry classification system, b) set up a green industry establishments population, and c) estimated the total sales and the number of employees within the green industry.

III. Outcomes

A. Development of Green Growth Indicators (Completed in Nov. 2011)

6. We developed Green Growth Indicators and the following results were reported at the Ministerial Meeting. (Related Press Release also distributed.)

[1] This document was contributed by Statistics Korea (KOSTAT), the Republic of Korea. It has been reproduced without formal editing. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

Table 1
Green Growth Indicators

3 Strategies	10 Agendas	Core Indicators	Desired Direction	Change since 2005	Results (most recent year)	Unit
Mitigation of climate change & energy independence	Effective mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions	GHG emission per unit of GDP	(−)	↘	0.619 (‘ 09)	Kg CO2/ 1000 won
		GHG emission	(−)	↗	607.6 (‘ 09)	1 million t CO2
		Forest absorption of GHG	(+)	↗	42.9 (‘ 09)	1 million t CO2
	Reduction of use of fossil fuels and enhancement of energy independence	Energy use per unit of GDP	(−)	↘	0.252 (‘ 10)	TOE/1mil KRW
		Self- supply rate of crude oil and gas	(+)	↗	10.8 (‘ 10)	%
		Share of renewable energy of consumption	(+)	↗	2.61 (‘ 10)	%
	Strengthening g capacity to adapt to climate change	Food self- sufficiency rate	(+)	→	54.9 (‘ 10)	%
		Accuracy of rainfall forecast	(+)	↗	75.6 (‘ 10)	%
		Share of disaster prevention budget	(+)	↗	2.40 (‘ 10)	%
Creating new engines for economic growth	Development of green technologies	Share of green R&D of R&D budget	(+)	↗	17.5 (‘ 10)	%
		Total R&D Spending as % of GDP	(+)	↗	3.7 (‘ 10)	%
		Number of green patent application	(+)	↗	9 639 (‘ 10)	c ase
	"Greening" of existing industries and promotion of green industries	Domestic material consumption per unit of GDP	(−)	↘	0.647e (‘ 10)	Kg/ 1000 KRW
		Share of Environmental Industry Sales	(+)	↗	0.96 (‘ 09)	%
		New renewable energy industry	(+)	↗	8 128 (‘ 10)	1 billion KRW
	Advancement of industrial	Service Industry Share of Total Value Added	(+)	→	58.2 (‘ 10)	%

3 Strategies	10 Agendas	Core Indicators	Desired Direction	Change since 2005	Results (most recent year)	Unit
	structure	Knowledge Service Industry Share of Total Value Added	(+)	↗	48.2 (' 10)	%
		ICT Industry Share of Total Value Added	(+)	↗	11.0 (' 10)	%
	Engineering a structural basis for green economy	Government purchased GHG reduction	(+)	↗	2 224 (' 10)	1000t CO2
		ISO14001 certified companies	(+)	↗	6 628 (' 10)	establishment
		Environmental Tax as % of tax revenue	(±)	→	10.8e (' 10)	%
Improvement in quality of life and enhanced international standing	Greening the land, water and building green transportation infrastructure	Urban forest area per one person' s living area	(+)	↗	7.76 (' 09)	㎡/ person
		Public transportation modal split between regions	(+)	↗	40.3 (' 09)	%
		Environmental protection expenditure as % of GDP	(+)	↗	3.06 (' 09)	%
	Bringing green revolution into daily lives	Domestic energy use per capita	(−)	↘	0.443 (' 10)	TOE/ person
		Domestic water use per capita	(−)	↘	332 (' 09)	L/ person/ day
		Living waste per person	(−)	↗	1.04 (' 09)	Kg/person/ day
	Becoming a role- model for international community as a green growth leader	Certified CDM GHG reduction	(+)	↗	17 058 (' 10)	1000t CO2
		Share of green ODA of GNI	(+)	→	0.12 (' 10)	%
		Share of Green ODA of total ODA	(+)	↗	12.4 (' 09)	%

- *Based on 2011 Green Growth Indicators, improvements observed in most areas compared to 5 years ago*
- *Out of 30 indicators, improvements in 24(80%), no change in 4(13%) and worsening in 2(7%) indicators.*

B. Development of Green Life Indicators and Green Life Survey (Completed in September, 2011)

7. KOSTAT conducted a survey involving 19,000 household members aged 20 or older from 9,700 sample households nationwide to collect information on practicing a green life, and also to develop green life indicators based on this data. The following results were released.

Table 2
Green Life Indicators

Ⅰ. Green Family

Domain	Indicator (Status*)		
1. Purchasing Environment Friendly Products	Purchase products certified with environment-friendly seals (eg. marks) (32.2%)		
	Purchase low carbon products (31.1%)		
	Purchase energy-saving products (71.9%)		
	Purchase eco-friendly agricultural products (56.9%)		
	purchase local agricultural products (46.6%)		
	Make food purchases after checking ingredients (56.1%)		
	Purchase products with refills (eg. detergents) (82.3%)		
2. Using Energy Efficiently	Reduce standby power use (70.4%)		
	Wear undergarments(48.2%)		
	Use energy-efficient appliances (eg. refrigerators) (64.0%)		
	Set recommended indoor temperature	Summer (77.9%)	
		Winter (70.0%)	
3. Saving Resources and Expanding Recycling	Make water saving a habit	Use cup for rinsing (79.9%)	
		Use fixed amount of water for washing face (73.6%)	
		Minimize time in shower (79.5%)	
	Recycle waste by source separation * (89.4%)		
	Recycle printer cartridges (57.3%)		
4. Reducing Polluting Material and Waste	Reduce use of synthetic detergents* (68.0%)		
	Reduce food waste* (81.1%)		
	Use reusable grocery bags (59.8%)		

Ⅱ. Green Transportation

Domain	Indicator (Status)		
5. Institutionalizing Economic Use of Motor Vehicles	Participate in 'no car on one weekday program' (17.5%)		
	Write car diary (28.5%)		
	Practice environment-friendly driving habits	Refrain from quick starts (88.0%)	
		Refrain from running engine in standby (88.2%)	
		Check tire pressure (80.0%)	
		Do not carry unnecessary loads in car (81.2%)	
6. Using Environment Friendly Transportation	Use public transportation* (27.0%)		
	Commute by bicycle* (1.5%)		

Ⅲ. Green Community

Domain	Indicator (Status)		
7. Promoting Green Live Movement	Raise awareness on environmental issues	Seriousness of climate change (85.3%)	
		Enviroment damage due to living style (94.0%)	
		Slow dwn economic growth to protect enviroment (85.7%)	
	Understand programs related to green life	Carbon Point Sytem (19.4%)	
		Awareness on Eco Seal (40.4%)	
		Carbon Footprint (28.0%)	
		Energy Efficiency Grade (72.7%)	
	Practice green life at workplace	Use own cup(57.0%)	
		Reduce standby power use (57.9%)	
		Reuse the unused side of printed documents (81.4%)	
		Recycle waste by source separation (82.0%)	
	Willingness to pay environment protection fee* (30.5%)		
	Participate in environment- and nature protection activities*(30.2%)		

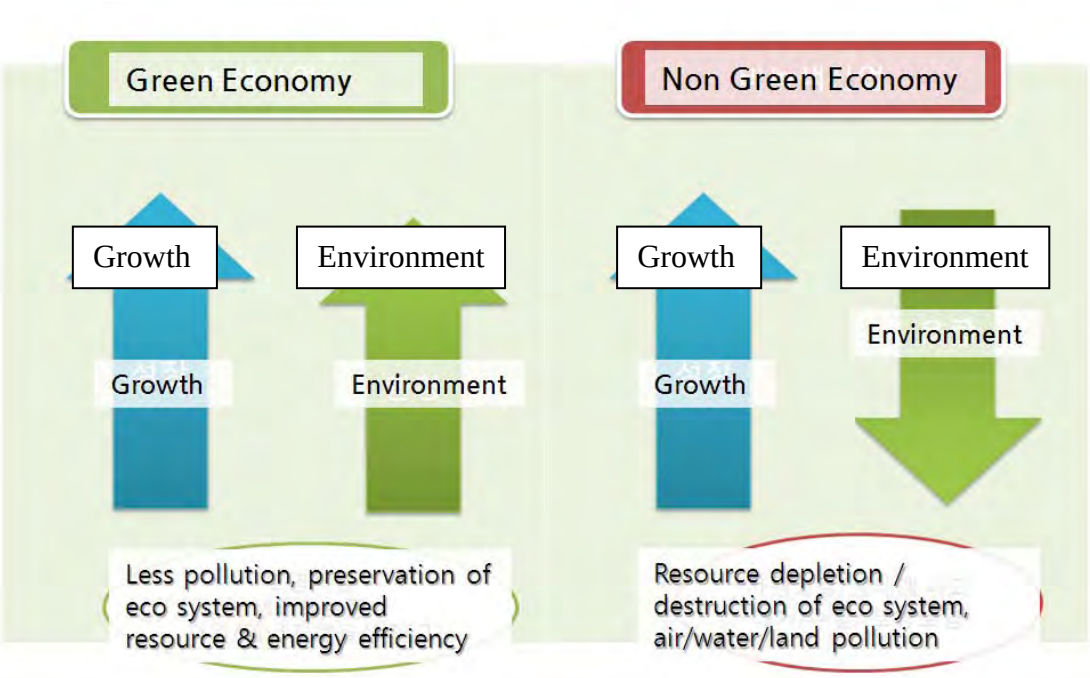
Note) Number of population or % of households implementing or trying to live the green living style corresponding to the indicator
- All data are from 2011, but "*" indicates data from 2010.

C. Development of Green Industry Statistics (to be completed in December, 2012)

8. KOSTAT generated a green industry establishments population based on the 2010 Economic Census (taken on all establishments nationwide in June 2011) and assessed the various types of green products and services. We also developed a green products classification system to define the coverage of green industry statistics and generated coding based on this classification system.

The Concept of Green Industry

Definition of Green Industry: Activities that increase the effectiveness of energy and resources, minimize the emission of GHG and pollution, and that achieve low carbon green growth through products and services that can improve the environment.



In all industries		
① Enhance energy and resource efficiency	(Goods & services) ⇒ (To production)	④ contribute to low carbon green growth
② Reduce GHG and polluting materials		
③ Improve environment		

Table 3
Green Industry Products Classification

Groups	*Description*
1. Green Energy	Goods and services related to energy production that can be used as an alternative to (or reduce) the use of fossil fuels
2. Pollution Reduction	Goods and services that prevent, control, or process environmental damage to air, water and soil
3. Energy Efficiency Improvement	Goods and services that preserve energy by reducing the use of fossil fuels
4. Resource Efficiency Improvement	Goods and services that promote the preservation of the water supply, natural resources, soil, living creatures and the ecosystem

D. KOSTAT is currently working on the estimation of the total sales and the number of employees within the green industry based on data taken from the Economic Census (to be released in September 2012). Also, we are currently working on the "Report on Industry Linkage Analysis for Green Industry," (to be completed in December 2012).

IV. Implications and Future Plans

A. Development of Green Growth Indicators

9. By aligning the indicator framework with the policy framework based on "The Five Year Plan on Green Growth," the indicators have been practically used in evaluating policies. Green growth indicators show that Korea is now shifting toward a green economy in the areas of environment, economy, and systems. KOSTAT plans to prepare and release an Analysis Report on Green Growth Indicators every two years.

B. Development of Green Life Survey and Green Life Indicators

10. As the first ever official statistics on green life, the selection of green life indicator concept frame, and the structural indicators themselves offered certain green life categories and domains. The green life indicator results suggest that the implementation of a green living style in daily life does not meet up with the level of awareness of the importance of living a green life, nor with its related systems. In the future, we will conduct a Green Life Survey and prepare and release an Analysis Report on Green Life Indicators every two years.

C. Development of Green Industry Statistics

11. The actual coverage of a green industry consists of green technology industries (i.e. LED, green cars, secondary batteries, etc.) on top of the traditional environment industries (i.e. pollution reduction, environmental restoration). Since green technology industries may vary depending on the era or the country in which they are established, this technology faces some limitations where official statistics are concerned. For both energy efficiency and resource efficiency improvement, we only covered products

registered in certification systems (i.e. green technology certification, high efficiency certification and environment friendly certification). In the future, KOSTAT plans to add a green-related section in the Economic Census. Also, we will update both the green industry register and the green industry classification system, as well as the share of green sales (status of 'greening' by industry) every five years.

Part IV

Report on the workshop "Strengthening National Capacity to Produce and Use Statistical Information in East and North-East Asia", 20-21 September 2012, Beijing, China

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Workshop *Inclusive and Sustainable Development in East and North-East Asia: Strengthening National Capacity to Produce and Use Statistical Information* was held in Beijing, China on 20/21 September 2012. The Workshop was co-organized by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of China and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Sub-regional Office for East and North-East Asia (SRO-ENEA). The organizers highlighted that this was the first joint activity organized by NBS and UNESCAP SRO-ENEA and expressed the wish to build on its outcome and strengthen the collaboration to mutual benefit.

I. Background

1. The international debate on the elements that contribute to defining and shaping the quality of life of citizens is gaining momentum. In 1972 Bhutan first tried to define the link between happiness, well-being and prosperity, while UNDP has analyzed human development for two decades now. Since then, many such initiatives have been conducted all around the world and at different spatial levels (whole countries, sub-national units, municipalities). Indeed, in a recent resolution, on 28 June 2012, the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus the International Day of Happiness, to be celebrated each year on 20 March.

2. A more holistic approach to development which emphasizes the notion of well-being and sustainability is relevant for all countries around the world. In the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives recognized the need for broader measures of progress to complement GDP in order to better inform policy decisions and instructed the international statistical community to launch a programme of work in this area, building on existing initiatives.

3. *The Future We Want* also indicated the need to develop new sustainable development goals that are action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries. It also referred to the specific contribution of UN regional commissions and their sub-regional offices in supporting developing countries, upon request, to achieve sustainable development and in promoting a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

4. The 4th World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy will be held in Delhi on 16-19 October 2012, jointly organised by the Government of India and the OECD under the theme "Measuring Well-Being for

Development and Policy Making". The Forum was prepared through regional consultations, including the Asia-Pacific Conference on Measuring Well-Being and Fostering the Progress of Societies co-organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Economic and Social Research Institute of Japan (ESRI), the OECD, Statistics Korea (KOSTAT) and UNESCAP in December 2011. In Delhi, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr Noeleen Heyzer will chair a dedicated plenary session on Beyond 2015 – The Future of Development Goals.

5. As one of the most dynamic regions of the world, East and North-East Asia is making an important contribution to this debate. The realities of East and North-East Asia make it necessary to measure the quality of life from an economic, social, cultural and environmental perspective that corresponds to and reflects the voices and aspirations of citizens.

II. Objectives

6. The Workshop was convened against this backdrop to further the discussion on the different aspects that make for a good life today and in the future in East and North-East Asia, to strengthen mutual knowledge on well-being-related issues in the region and globally, to promote cooperation in this area and to explore possible future activities in the region and beyond.

7. The specific objectives of the Workshop were to:

(a) Discuss how economic growth can be socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable. How would one balance economic growth objectives with social values or environmental considerations? Is one growth model appropriate on a global scale, given the integration of financial markets and supply chains on the one hand, and the different stages of development, varied resource endowments and specific socio-economic aspirations of different societies on the other?

(b) Exchange views on ways to measure well-being, quality of life and happiness and their adequate inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals to be formulated as a result of decisions taken at Rio+20. Are new statistical models required? What would be their characteristics?

(c) Compare how different East and North-East Asian countries and communities define the challenge. Which perspectives are held in common across countries, irrespective of different values and interests, and which ones diverge?

(d) Build a platform for sharing experiences and good practices in defining and measuring sustainable development.

(e) Promote communication and cooperation among decision makers in Asia.

III. Synthesis of the discussions

8. From different perspectives, participants underscored that since the early 1980s economic and social disparities have widened around the world. Surveys in most countries, including China and Japan, confirm that public opinion perceives a deterioration of living standards, despite rising income levels and improving material conditions. This finding confirms that opportunities, rather than disposition, determine subjective well-being within national societies.

9. Several explanations were advanced. Economic growth, measured by GDP, corporate profits and equity market indices, has been given priority over social concerns; the state of the environment has worsened and natural disasters are more frequent and costly; social and family ties have loosened, also as a result of demographic transformations such as ageing and urbanization; employment conditions are increasingly precarious and the number of the "working poors" has seemingly exploded. There was broad agreement that, especially in the wake of the global financial crisis that commenced in 2008, a new, "green" or "qualitative", growth model is needed. The Rio+20 discussions and the results contained in the Future We Want on green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication directly respond to such concerns.

10. Participants took note of strategies and initiatives taken by national governments (New Growth Strategy of Japan, Low Carbon Green Growth in Korea, China's Resource Efficient and Environment-Friendly Society) international organizations and various non-government entities. Irrespective of the specificities, all of them serve to depict the overall situation, allow time comparisons and the early identification of vulnerable groups (in particular women, migrants and old-age people) and geographical areas, inform policy decisions and facilitate ex post policy impact analysis. The common challenge is to turn data into action through rigorous data collection, standardization and dissemination.

11. Because of the non-linearity of many phenomena, it is inherently difficult (and possibly futile) to construct a composite indicator of collective well-being and happiness. This holds true a fortiori at the international level where economic, social and institutional conditions differ. Sub-national differences are also huge within East and North-East, as one participant showed in the case of the Russian Federation where some oblasts (provinces) have development indices comparable to Southern Europe, others to sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, the focus on measuring access to public services, while appropriate, may provide a partial picture insofar as their quality does not necessarily match coverage.

12. Despite the importance of context-specificities, all participants agreed on the value of sharing experiences and methodologies. As the OECD consultations ahead of the Delhi Global Forum made clear, well-being and happiness are universally-held aspirations and there is convergence regarding the elements that make for a better life (although with some regional nuances, in particular food security is relevant in the African context).

13. The Workshop noted the significant advances made at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in recognizing the seriousness of the situation. The presence and active participation of an unprecedented number of Leaders representing industrial, emerging and developing economies, as well as the active participation of business, labor and civil

society, provided the political stimulus to the plan of action. Rio + 20 produced an agreement on the contribution of South-South cooperation, science and technology and the green economy to the attainment of sustainable development and set the foundations for appropriate sustainable development goals after 2015, to be used in all countries of the world (unlike the MDGs that are specific to developing countries). In this regard, it was underscored that no consensus exists yet on the theoretical foundations for analyzing the environment as a non-physical assets and pricing its inter-generational use.

14. Proposals to establish a "universal intergovernmental high-level political forum" of the environment and the World Environmental Forum manifest the willingness to engage all stakeholders in debate and advocacy. Sustainable development can be pursued at various levels, with urbanization in emerging economies providing a further spur: the example of Xiamen as a eco-city was noted in this regard. Public-private partnerships can and must play an important role, as shown by the hundreds of voluntary commitments made in Rio.

15. Participants underscored the important role of official statistics in society. The connection between better data, better policies and better lives was highlighted by many participants. While government use is one very important purpose, there was consensus that open access to official statistics provides non-government organizations (NGOs), businesses, media and citizens with a window on the work and performance of government itself. Mongolia was presented as an example in this regard.

16. To this purpose, it was observed that access to microdata is important to ensure the replicability of analytical studies. This is seen as a core need by think-tanks, but also by aid delivery institutions such as development NGOs that must identify needs, devise rights-based empowerment strategies, and assess impact and sustainability of their intervention. The opportunity to disseminate as much information in English, on top of the vernacular language, was also highlighted.

17. It was agreed that statistics is best viewed as a process, where the boundaries between production and use are increasingly blurred. New technologies, including social media, play a growing role, also as a form of generating new data. End-users require more and more data, but this multiplication risks creating a deluge of information and data fatigue. Against this background, it was noted that communication must be seen as an integral part of the work of national statistical offices (NSOs), to be mainstreamed in the whole process from its very conception.

18. To this end, NSOs are championing a significant information management transformation program to prepare the statistical community to meet the growing challenges of providing information, which will be needed by policy-makers, government and businesses in the future. The NBS of China has recognized this from its very foundation: its first press release was published in 1955, has held press conferences since 1983, opened its statistical database to users in 2008, and started using mobile phones to reach the general public in 2011. In addition it organizes an annual Open Day, with the 2012 one being held on 20 September. The experience of Italy with story-telling techniques, including through data visualization, was also presented. New generations also expect new channels, such as the Wiki-apps being used by the OECD for its Better Life Index initiative.

19. Experts considered Open Data an effective engine of economic growth, social well-being, political accountability and public service improvement. National authorities follow different strategies to make it easier to access public data and facilitate data publishers' task of releasing data in standardized, open formats. A common challenge is to engrain a 'presumption to publish' unless specific reasons (such as privacy or national security) can be clearly articulated. It was noted that the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics represent the benchmark for national initiatives.

IV. Conclusions

20. The Workshop made it clear that a lot of innovation and experimentation is taking place around the world, and in East and North-East Asia in particular, that requires open discussions. In order to embrace change and respond to stakeholders' expectations, platforms such as this one are of great value in allowing representatives of governments, academia, civil society, and United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations to come together and exchange information, find gaps and common challenges, enhance cooperation, and renew commitments towards improving the quality, availability and communication of statistics.

21. The Workshop set the basis for designing specific information-sharing and capacity-building in East and North-East Asia, with the participation of all interested parties including the NBS of China, the NBS-UNSD International Statistical Training Center and UNESCAP's Statistics Division in Bangkok, Statistics Institute for Asia and the Pacific in Chiba, Japan and the ENEA Office in Incheon, Republic of Korea.