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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Statistics

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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Strategic direction of the Committee on Statistics

**Strengthening data and statistics for the development
agenda beyond 2015 in Asia and the Pacific****

Note by the Bureau

Summary

The present conference room paper contains a number of proposals made by the Bureau concerning the future strategic direction of the Committee.

The paper takes into account work undertaken since the formulation in 2010 of the Committee's two strategic goals, as well as current debates on the international development agenda beyond 2015, including on regional mechanisms for monitoring and accountability.

The proposals address the following broader issues pertaining to the role and function of the Committee: (a) the continued relevance of the strategic goals and existing regional programmes; (b) opportunities for leveraging the data revolution for accelerated statistics development; (c) approaches to monitoring statistics development; and (d) opportunities for strengthening the Committee.

The Committee is invited to review the 19 proposals contained in the paper and consider each for endorsement.

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* E/ESCAP/CST(4)/L.1.

** The present conference room paper is being issued without formal editing.

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I. Introduction

1. The Committee at its second session in December 2010 set two overarching, strategic goals for statistics development in Asia and the Pacific, namely, (a) ensuring that all countries in the region by 2020 have the capability to provide an agreed basic range of population, economic, social and environmental statistics, and (b) creating a more adaptive and cost-effective information management environment for national statistical offices through stronger collaboration.¹ The Committee has since launched a number of regional initiatives to pursue the two strategic goals and has established steering and advisory groups to lead the initiatives (a list of groups that have been established by the Committee is provided in Annex I).

2. An important development since the establishment of the two strategic goals is the ongoing dialogues on the international development agenda that will succeed the Millennium Development Goals. Based on the current status of those dialogues, the development agenda beyond 2015 will require a much broader range of statistics and data to inform the design and implementation of policies and programmes and strengthen related monitoring and accountability for a multitude of stakeholders. Indeed, a “data revolution” has been called for in recognition of the need to transform the ways in which data are produced, accessed and used, and find ways of harnessing “big data” and other types of information to meet the expected ambition level of the emerging development agenda beyond 2015.

3. What implications will or should the emerging sustainable development agenda beyond 2015 have for statistics development in Asia and the Pacific? To what extent are the two strategic goals that the Committee established in 2010 congruent with the current developments? What adjustments, if any, should be made to the strategic goals or their implementation in order for statistics development in the region to respond to a very ambitious development agenda beyond 2015? What can be done to take advantage of the data revolution? To address these questions, the secretariat convened the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on 9-10 December 2014 entitled “Data and Statistics for the post-2015 development agenda: Implications for regional collaboration on statistics in Asia and the Pacific.” The meeting concluded with a number of key recommendations on enhancing regional collaboration in Asia and the Pacific on statistics development in support of monitoring and accountability for the post-2015 development agenda.² In addition, regional dialogues on the development agenda beyond 2015, including the inaugural session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in May 2014 as well as a consultation on the monitoring and accountability for development results in August 2014, highlighted the important role of relevant, timely and reliable statistics, disaggregated by all relevant population groups, for effective implementation of the new development agenda. In particular, the meetings

¹ ESCAP, (2010) “Proposed strategic directions of the Committee on Statistics” E/ESCAP/CST(2)/2.

² The meeting report is contained in E/ESCAP/CST(4)/INF/4.

emphasized the importance of strengthening existing regional mechanisms such as the Committee on Statistics.³

4. The following sections contain a series of proposals by the Bureau on the strategic position and focus of future work of the Committee, drawing on the recommendations of the EGM in December 2014 and the relevant outcomes of the above-mentioned preliminary deliberations on regional monitoring and accountability for the development agenda beyond 2015. The proposals are made to address the following broader issues:

- The continued relevance of the strategic goals and the coordination of regional programmes beyond 2015
- Leveraging the data revolution for increased support to national statistical systems
- Monitoring statistics development as a means of implementation for the development agenda beyond 2015
- Strengthening the Committee on Statistics

II. The continued relevance of the strategic goals and the coordination of regional programmes post-2015

5. *EGM recommendation A: Statistics development in Asia and the Pacific should continue to be determined by the Committee's two overarching strategic goals. However, the implementation of these goals through the sector-specific regional programmes should be better integrated and coordinated to ensure there is no duplication of effort and to build synergies when addressing common institutional and infrastructural components. In addition, the substantive scopes of the sector-specific regional programmes should be reviewed against the requirements of the post-2015 development agenda.*

6. The Bureau agrees with recommendation A that the Committee's two strategic goals remain relevant. Capacity constraints related to producing a basic range of statistics which underlie development issues, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), abound in the region. Further, the development agenda beyond 2015 requires national statistical systems to produce more disaggregated data and take advantage of new data sources; both accentuating the importance of modernization of statistical production and dissemination.

7. While the strategic goals are broad enough to address key statistics development issues, there is a need to review and analyze the substantive scope of the regional programmes to ensure that their implementation results in stronger institutions. This is fundamental to ensuring that regional technical cooperation leads to sustainable improvements at the national level on issues that cut across domains of statistics, such as advocacy, coordination and statistical infrastructure.

³ See "Chair's summary of the inaugural meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development", available from: www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/ESCAP/FSD/2; "Chair's summary of the Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on Accountability for the Post-2015 Development Agenda", available from: www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Chair%27s%20summary_RCA_INAL%20_1.pdf.

8. The existing and emerging domain-specific initiatives on economic, agricultural and rural, and population and social statistics have identified improvements in the above-mentioned cross-cutting issues as a means to reaching their respective goals. It is on issues related to those aspects where regional cooperation can be most effective in terms of adding value to national efforts, and where domain-specificity is a distinct advantage for targeted advocacy, coordination of relevant agencies and technical assistance. However, improvements related to advocacy, coordination and statistical infrastructure are often better tackled with an integrated approach to statistics production and dissemination at the institutional level rather than by separate subject-matter departments. Therefore, one way of accelerating related efforts is to strengthen the links among the domain-specific regional programmes and the two groups with broader substantive mandates, namely the Strategic Advisory Board for the Modernization of Statistical Production and Services in Asia and the Pacific and the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific.

9. **Proposal 1: The Committee should maintain the existing regional programmes and groups functioning under its auspices. To enhance the overall impact of the work of the Committee towards stronger statistical systems, each regional programme should be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate on aspects that relate to (i) cross-cutting and institutional issues and (ii) statistical capabilities required for the development agenda beyond 2015.**

10. It is of paramount importance that the review of the regional initiatives outlines how to implement any proposed adjustments with a clear division of labour among the Committee and its various subsidiary groups and their members, including government officials, staff of international organizations and the secretariat. The Bureau recommends that it be entrusted with approving an approach for the review of the regional initiatives on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat. The approved approach shall then be implemented by each subsidiary group with support from the secretariat within 2015.

11. Pending the review of the regional programmes, the Bureau recommends that the more advanced regional initiatives, such as that on economic statistics, civil registration and vital statistics, as well as agricultural and rural statistics, take the lead in addressing cross-cutting issues in coordination with other programmes.

12. **Proposal 2: As a step towards enhancing coordination across the regional programmes and to facilitate substantive feedback between the Bureau and the groups, each Bureau member should be assigned one or two groups, to the extent possible matching her or his expertise and interests.**

13. This engagement would entail regular contact between a Bureau member and the Chair or Co-chairs of the group(s) assigned to her or him and that the Bureau member follows the activities of the group(s) continuously. By doing this, the Bureau members are expected to align the work of the various subsidiary groups more closely with the overall strategic direction of the Committee by bringing the perspectives of the groups they follow to the Bureau's discussions and decision making process. As the work of the Strategic Body for the Modernization of Statistical Production and Services in Asia and the Pacific (SAB-AP) relates to all other groups that are working under the auspices of the Committee, a Bureau member should be a full

member of the SAB-AP. The Bureau recommends that it be entrusted with reviewing its terms of reference accordingly.

14. ***EGM Recommendation F:*** *Statistical training should effectively address the growing and diverse needs for skills and competencies in NSSs in both its content and methods of delivery in a cost-effective manner, as an integral part of broader human resource development plans of NSSs that also address such issues as staff compensation and turnover.*

15. Statistical training should be linked to strengthening of institutions which are the goals of regional initiatives as well. The Bureau recognizes the work of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, as indicated in E/ESCAP/CST(4)/12.

16. **Proposal 3:** **The Bureau requests that the Network review tools and processes of assessing training needs to allow capturing of cross-cutting and institutional training needs. The design and implementation of training should be closely linked to the regional programmes.**

III. Leveraging the data revolution for increasing support for national statistical systems

A. The role of the SAB-AP

17. ***EGM Recommendation B:*** *The statistical community should take advantage of the data revolution and the increased attention to statistics by policymakers that has been generated by the post-2015 consultations to leverage support for the establishment and maintenance of well-resourced and well-functioning national statistical systems across the region. The data revolution can particularly accelerate efforts in modernizing statistical production and services, always taking the national strategies for the development of statistics or equivalent plans as the anchor, through exploring the use of new data sources to complement official statistics; increasing the use of administrative data and; promoting open access to data. Regional partners should identify and realize opportunities to develop generic solutions and tools to common problems in order to exploit economies of scale and they should take an active role in brokering private-public partnerships.*

18. The Bureau agrees that ensuring strong linkages between the post-2015 development agenda, the data revolution it calls for and the regional initiatives is an ideal way of mobilizing resources and stepping up advocacy efforts. The Bureau considers SAB-AP's strategy for 2014-2016 sufficiently addresses the substantive aspects of Recommendation B (see E/ESCAP/CST(4)/8), and that SAB-AP has a key role to play in offering generic solutions for modernization of statistical systems and increasing efficiency gains. Moreover, SAB-AP is the best placed among all the subsidiary groups, given its substantive focus and the level of representation, to take the lead in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the Committee's strategic goals with reference to the data revolution. As part of such efforts, SAB-AP may also advise on possible ways for brokering public-private partnerships in order to facilitate the use of alternative technologies and/or sources of data for development for groups of countries.

19. **Proposal 4:** SAB-AP should play a strategic role in advocacy efforts for transformation of statistical systems, including the modernization of data production and dissemination, and link those efforts to activities being implemented within other regional programmes.

B. Investment in statistics

20. *EGM Recommendation E: Guidelines should be developed for establishing the resource requirements of national statistics systems. A regional evidence base on the resources required to meet the data needs for monitoring SDGs and other national policy priorities should be developed and regional perspectives on adequate investment in statistics development should be brought to the Third International Conference on Financing for Development to take place in Addis Ababa on 13-16 July 2015.*

21. The post-2015 development agenda has raised the profile of financing sustainable development and financing of national statistical systems is an integral part of it. Currently, none of the individual regional programmes has a full-fledged resource mobilization strategy; nevertheless, fundraising efforts at the regional level are bearing fruit, in particular for agricultural and economic statistics. In order to ensure the sustainability of funding for statistical activities, it is essential to have domestic resources dedicated to national statistical systems.

22. **Proposal 5:** The secretariat should share experiences in fundraising for regional statistics development and build on these experiences to prepare guidelines for member States to raise resources, including domestic resources, for statistics in consultation with the Chairs of the groups under the auspices of the Committee. As a first step, a paper on perspectives on financing statistics development in Asia and the Pacific in the post-2015 era should be prepared as an input to the regional and global consultations on financing for development.

C. Collaboration and coordination

23. *EGM Recommendation G: The Partnership for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific should be enhanced to improve coordination and build further synergies in delivering support to countries.*

24. The secretariat and development partners, since the third session of the Committee on Statistics, has made significant progress in building and strengthening partnerships especially in the areas of civil registration and vital statistics systems, economic statistics, agricultural and rural statistics as well as training. However, in order to achieve the strategic goals of the Committee, a more concerted and higher level effort is needed by development partners, including international and subregional organizations and bilateral partners, in aligning their work programmes with the goals and the supporting regional programmes. Such alignment has been successfully carried out for example by the Russian Federation and the UK Department for International Development which have channeled part of their financial support to statistics development towards implementing the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics. Also, resource mobilization efforts of the Asian Development Bank have been closely linked to the regional programmes on civil registration and vital statistics, agricultural and rural statistics and economic statistics.

25. The Bureau recognizes that the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific (the Partnership) took stock of achievements and challenges vis-à-

vis agreed priority areas⁴ at its sixth meeting, which took place in Ankara in September 2013.

26. Proposal 6: The Partnership should step up coordination efforts by making concerted efforts to more directly reflect its strategies and goals in the work programmes of its individual member organizations.

27. The Bureau notes that the Adapted Global Assessment for the National Statistical System of Mongolia conducted in 2014 by the secretariat, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the European Free Trade Agency was planned and timed to feed into the preparation of the new National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) in the country. This has proven to be a successful example of partner collaboration driven by national demands and needs.

28. Proposal 7: The development partners should anchor their statistical capacity support to national statistical plans in pursuit of the strategic goals of the Committee.

29. Proposal 8: The sub-regional organizations with a statistics mandate should align their subregional strategies with the strategic goals of the Committee on Statistics and its regional programmes.

30. Proposal 9: In view of the post-2015 development agenda and for better coordination of statistics development work in the region, international organizations and donors should be invited to join Bureau meetings as observers. The Bureau should be entrusted with reviewing its terms of reference accordingly.

D. National statistical planning

31. *EGM Recommendation C: National statistics development priorities should be articulated within a national strategy for the development of statistics or an equivalent national statistical plan, underpinned by the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and encompass all parts of the national statistical system. The NSO should be mandated to and supported by institutional arrangements in leading the coordination of statistical activities. Development partners should raise awareness and help strengthen this role of the NSOs.*

32. Proposal 10: In support of Recommendation C and complementing proposals 6-9 on collaboration and coordination, national statistical offices should take a leading role in coordinating partners' activities for statistics development at the national level in support of national statistical plans. The needs assessments preceding the design of such strategies are essential tools for identifying where capacity building assistance should be channeled in a country.

33. Proposal 11: In implementing substantive activities for statistics development such as assessments, technical improvements and related research, national statistical institutions are encouraged to take the lead, with development partners playing a facilitation role, such as through the provision of funding and expertise as well as advocacy.

⁴ <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/TOR-Partners%20for%20Statistics%20Development%20in%20Asia-Pacific.pdf>.

IV. Monitoring statistics development as a means of implementation for the development agenda beyond 2015

34. *EGM Recommendation D: Regional and global monitoring of the SDGs should take into consideration the limitations in capacity of existing national statistical systems and regional or global partners should develop a common framework for surveying and benchmarking national statistical capacity. NSSs need to be suitably involved in deciding on the indicator framework for the SDGs to ensure its feasibility. A regional user-producer forum on data for SDGs could be established to improve feedback between data producers and users, for example within the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development. The statistical community should promote advocacy and statistical literacy.*

35. The Bureau is entrusted with implementing a monitoring framework to assess progress towards the achievement of the Committee's strategic goals.⁵ At present, this monitoring framework does not exist but certain principles for such a framework were agreed to at the third session of the Committee. According to the approach proposed in the note by the secretariat⁶ and supported by the Committee at its third session, the monitoring framework should: be light and strategic; monitor both activities and results; monitor progress and improvement in specific areas of work; monitor improvement in technical and institutional capacity; allow common yet flexible monitoring; and combine regular light reporting with periodic comprehensive assessments.

36. The above principles point to a monitoring framework that incorporates information on the institutional and organizational situations of statistical systems in the member States and that is linked with the performance indicators of the regional programmes. These are essential attributes for effective assessment of progress towards achieving well-resourced and well-functioning national statistical systems.

37. The secretariat in its report to the forty-fifth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission made the case for positioning statistics development as a goal in the post-2015 development agenda.⁷ In the current proposal for sustainable development goals and target, statistics development is covered in two targets within the goal area, means of implementation, as follows: (i) enhancing capacity building support to developing countries, including for LDCs and SIDS, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts and (ii) developing measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement GDP, and support statistical capacity building in developing countries.⁸

38. The Bureau agrees to Recommendation D and is of the view that a monitoring framework for the work of the Committee should simultaneously respond to the requirements set by targets of the sustainable development agenda beyond 2015 that relates to statistics capacity development.

⁵ E/ESCAP/CST(3)/17.

⁶ E/ESCAP/CST(3)/3.

⁷ E/CN.3/2014/15.

⁸ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>.

39. **Proposal 12:** The monitoring of the work of the Committee should capture statistics development in a broad sense and the Committee should position itself as the custodian for monitoring institutional capacity of the national statistical systems in the region.

40. **Proposal 13:** The Chairs and Co-chairs of the Committee's groups should form a task force for the design of the monitoring framework, with support from the secretariat. The design of the monitoring framework should take into consideration the potential response burdens for member States and partners and clearly outlines the resource requirements for the implementation.

41. **Proposal 14:** The secretariat should focus its contributions to the Independent Expert Advisory Group on Sustainable Development Goals on the measurement of progress towards targets on statistics development. The interested member States should be encouraged to take part in this Group in order to reflect perspectives of national statistical systems in the process of deciding on indicators for those targets.

42. The Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development, which held its inaugural session in May 2014, will be part of a regional monitoring and accountability mechanism for the international development agenda beyond 2015. The Forum is an opportunity to strengthen the policy relevance of official statistics for development. The secretariat will be organizing a Session on "Regional mechanisms for monitoring and accountability for implementation of the post-2015 development agenda" in May 2015 with the purpose of outlining concrete steps for designing and implementing a regional monitoring and accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda.

43. **Proposal 15:** The Committee should use the annual Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development as an outlet for its work on monitoring progress towards achieving goals of statistics development. It should further use the Forum as an opportunity to enhance user-producer dialogues and strengthen the responsiveness of national statistical systems to policy needs.

V. Strengthening the Committee on Statistics

44. With its unique experiences in developing approaches to enhancing institutional capabilities of national statistical systems, the Committee has much to contribute in improving statistical policies and practices at the global level. At the same time, the achievement of the Committee's strategic goals can benefit from the region's closer engagement in global statistics development. The Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, has a vital role to play in linking the work undertaken at the regional level with the global developments and showcasing achievements internationally. This can be done through the activities of the Bureau members and the secretariat, for instance, as presentations and interventions in global meetings.

45. **Proposal 16:** The secretariat should prepare an annual calendar of events on statistics development and use it as a planning tool for the Bureau to prioritize strategic involvement in global and subregional intergovernmental work and processes.

46. Proposal 17: Member States of the Committee and international organizations should better connect their experts who participate in global task forces and City Groups with the various groups functioning under the Committee. The secretariat should solicit and update related information with minimum burden on countries.

47. The Bureau is expected to have minimum two face-to-face meetings annually, one in the margins of the United Nations Statistical Commission and the other during the ESCAP Committee on Statistics or in a dedicated meeting.

48. Proposal 18: The secretariat to publish Bureau meeting minutes for transparency and set up a dedicated knowledge sharing platform for the Bureau members to be able to solicit comments and suggestions from the member States on a regular basis. The Bureau should be entrusted with reviewing its terms of reference accordingly.

Frequency of Committee sessions

49. Under the current conference structure of ESCAP, the Committee meets biennially to consider and decide on the priorities of statistics development in the region. The Committee at its third session in 2012 considered the possibility of having annual sessions in response to the rapid developments related to statistics. Out of concern over the financial and human resource implications of more frequent meetings for member States and the secretariat, the Committee at the time expressed the view that the frequency of biennial sessions should be maintained.

50. In the meantime, the United Nations Statistical Commission, the global inter-governmental body on statistics development meets annually. Having annual sessions of the Committee would certainly be conducive to aligning regional efforts with global ones for statistics development. Two regional inter-governmental statistical bodies, namely the Conference of European Statisticians and the Joint Session of the Committee of Directors General of National Statistics Offices and the Statistical Commission for Africa, also meet annually. The annual meetings require resources for servicing on the part of the secretariat. The Economic Commission of Europe, for instance, has a senior staff, with support of a unit, serving as the secretary to the Conference of European Statisticians.

51. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, which is being considered as the regional platform of monitoring and accountability for peer-reviewing, reporting and deliberating on progress in SDG implementation, also has annual sessions. The inconsistency in the frequency of meetings may pose a challenge for the Committee to review progress in statistics development and make decisions in a timely manner to meet the data needs for monitoring and accountability at the regional level in particular, and national and global monitoring in general.

52. Proposal 19: The Commission should as part of its ongoing review of its conference structure consider annual sessions of the Committee on Statistics and ensure that the secretariat is resourced accordingly.

VI. Conclusion

53. In reference to the recommendations emanating from the Expert Group Meeting and based on the above discussion, the Committee is invited to review the nineteen proposals and consider each of them for endorsement.

Annex I

List of subsidiary groups to the ESCAP Committee on Statistics (as of March 2015)

- Bureau of the Committee on Statistics
- Regional Steering Group for Agricultural Statistics (established jointly by Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics)
- Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific
- Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics
- Strategic Advisory Board for the Modernization of Statistical Production and Services in Asia and the Pacific
- Technical Advisory Group on Population and Social Statistics
- Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific
- Partners for Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific (the Partnership)

Annex II

List of decisions and recommendations from earlier sessions of the Committee on Statistics

Topic	Committee on Statistics, session 1 (February 2009)	Committee on Statistics, session 2 (December 2010)	Committee on Statistics, session 3 (December 2012)	ESCAP Commission
Strategic direction and functioning of the Committee	<p>Decision 1/1</p> <p>The Committee decides to establish a bureau to assist the Committee without prejudice to other committees of ESCAP.</p>	<p>Decision 2/1</p> <p>The Committee adopts the principles and procedures concerning the election of the Bureau proposed by the Bureau.</p> <p>Decision 2/9</p> <p>The Committee welcomes the initiative and requests that progress made by the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific towards achieving its strategic objectives be reported to the Committee on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Decision 3/1</p> <p>The Committee supports the proposed approach to monitoring its work and entrusts its Bureau with the task of ensuring full implementation, stressing that the monitoring approach should be applied consistently across the statistics development programmes of the Committee.</p>	<p>Resolution 67/11 (May 2011)</p> <p>Strengthening statistical capacity in Asia and the Pacific</p>
	<p>Recommendation 1/1</p> <p>Noting the importance of tracking statistics development in Asia and the Pacific, the Committee requests that the secretariat prepare a framework for regional assessments on a regular basis, in cooperation with other regional, subregional and national statistical entities, to contribute to statistical information exchange among member States and promote the role of statistics as a key link in economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific.</p>	<p>Recommendation 2/1</p> <p>The Committee expresses its full support for the proposed strategic direction, as described in the note by the Bureau (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/2), including its two overarching, strategic goals of (a) ensuring that all countries in the region by 2020 have the capability to provide an agreed basic range of population, economic, social and environmental statistics, and (b) creating a more adaptive and cost-effective information management environment for national statistical offices through stronger collaboration.</p>		

Topic	Committee on Statistics, session 1 (February 2009)	Committee on Statistics, session 2 (December 2010)	Committee on Statistics, session 3 (December 2012)	ESCAP Commission
Economic Statistics	<p>Decision 1/2</p> <p>The Committee decided:</p> <p>(a) To adopt a coordinating governance structure that would guide the development, implementation and monitoring of an action plan for the development of economic statistics in the Asian and Pacific region, as proposed in E/ESCAP/CST/5, para. 52;</p> <p>(b) To establish a technical advisory group to provide guidance to its Bureau and the ESCAP secretariat on methodological issues related to the development and periodic revision of a regional programme for the development of economic statistics. The technical advisory group would be expected to formulate a minimum core set of economic statistics that each country in the Asian and Pacific region would be in a position to produce, taking into account the varying needs of countries and work on the development of economic statistics undertaken by specialized bodies and related organizations in the region.</p>	<p>Decision 2/5</p> <p>Recognizing the importance of and urgent need for economic statistics, the Committee endorses the core set of economic statistics proposed by the ESCAP Technical Advisory Group on the Development of Economic Statistics,¹ as a guideline for developing the capacity of national statistical systems.</p> <p>Decision 2/6</p> <p>The Committee endorses the proposed regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics,² as a formal strategy for the improvement of economic statistics in the region.</p>	<p>Decision 3/1</p> <p>1. The Committee endorses the implementation plan for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific.</p> <p>2. The Committee decides to invite representatives of other national producers of economic statistics, such as central banks and ministries of finance, to become members of the Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics, but stresses the need for the Steering Group to have an efficient and effective membership size.</p>	<p>Resolution 67/10 (May 2011)</p> <p>A core set of economic statistics to guide the improvement of basic economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific</p>

¹ See E/ESCAP/CST(2)/4.

² E/ESCAP/CST(2)/5.

Topic	Committee on Statistics, session 1 (February 2009)	Committee on Statistics, session 2 (December 2010)	Committee on Statistics, session 3 (December 2012)	ESCAP Commission
		<p>Recommendation 2/2 The Committee recommends the use of the core set of economic statistics³ as a regional framework to focus regional efforts, coordinate training and mobilize donor support for capacity-building.</p> <p>Recommendation 2/3 Recognizing the importance of the statistics produced by the International Comparison Programme and the opportunities presented by the International Comparison Programme to enhance the statistical infrastructure and strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems to produce price statistics and national accounts among others, the Committee encourages member States to participate in the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme.</p>		
Social Statistics			<p>Decision 3/3 The Committee endorses the proposed core set of population and social statistics, as contained in the note by the secretariat (E/ESCAP/CST(3)/5/Add.1) as a regional guideline for national capacity development. (a) Endorses the continuation of the Technical Advisory Group on Social Statistics during 2013-2014; (b) Approves the proposed strategic approach for the work of the Technical Advisory Group.</p>	<p>Resolution 69/16 (April 2013) A core set of population and social statistics to guide national capacity development in Asia and the Pacific</p>

³ See E/ESCAP/CST(2)/4.

Topic	Committee on Statistics, session 1 (February 2009)	Committee on Statistics, session 2 (December 2010)	Committee on Statistics, session 3 (December 2012)	ESCAP Commission
Civil Registration and Vital Statistics		<p>Decision 2/3</p> <p>The Committee welcomes the offer of several delegations to submit a draft resolution on improving civil registration and vital statistics systems for the consideration of the Commission at its sixty-seventh session.</p> <p>Decision 2/4</p> <p>Recognizing the importance of reliable vital statistics for producing timely and accurate population estimates and other demographic and health statistics, including the Millennium Development Goals, which are some of the most basic requirements for evidence-based planning and efficient resource allocation, the Committee supports the development of a regional programme for improving vital statistics in the Asian and Pacific region and recommends that the secretariat, under the guidance of the Bureau, continue to develop the regional programme fully in close collaboration with development partners.</p>	<p>Decision 3/4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee strongly endorses the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. 2. The Committee decides to establish a steering group to guide the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan, and requests the Bureau, in consultation with Committee members, to develop the terms of reference for the steering group. 3. The Committee supports the establishment of a regional support office, which is to report to the steering group. The main functions of the office are to coordinate regional support activities and facilitate the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan. 	<p>Resolution 67/12 (May 2011)</p> <p>Improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific</p> <p>Resolution 69/15 (April 2013)</p> <p>Implementing the outcome of the High-level Meeting on the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific</p>

Topic	Committee on Statistics, session 1 (February 2009)	Committee on Statistics, session 2 (December 2010)	Committee on Statistics, session 3 (December 2012)	ESCAP Commission
	<p>Recommendation 1/3</p> <p>Producing population estimates on an annual basis: the central role of vital statistical systems</p> <p>6. The Committee recommends that the Bureau, supported by the secretariat, explore modalities for organizing an expert group meeting of health authorities, registrars-general and national statisticians in member countries.</p> <p>7. The Committee also recommends that, in the interim, the secretariat assist countries with weak civil registration systems in exploring alternative methods of generating vital statistics.</p>		<p>Recommendation 3/2</p> <p>In endorsing the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of</p> <p>Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, the Committee strongly recommends that a meeting of relevant ministers and development partners be held in order to attain the high-level political commitment required to support the successful implementation of the Plan.</p>	
Agricultural and Rural Statistics		<p>Decision 2/7</p> <p>1. The Committee strongly endorses the proposal of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to develop, over the next six months, a regional implementation plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, and requests the secretariat to coordinate this effort in partnership with FAO and other relevant regional and subregional organizations.</p> <p>2. The Committee agrees that the regional implementation plan to improve agricultural and rural statistics should be integrated into the Regional Programme for the improvement of</p>	<p>Decision 3/6</p> <p>1. Bearing in mind the outcome of the consideration by the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, the Committee fully endorses the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.</p> <p>2. The Committee approves the establishment of the Regional Steering Committee on Agricultural Statistics to guide the implementation of the Regional Action Plan and decides that the membership include two members or associate members from each of the four subregions covered under the Plan, including one representative of a national statistical office and one from a ministry of agriculture and fisheries, one training institute and one research institute.</p>	

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		<p>Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. In this light, the Committee decides to establish a subgroup on agricultural statistics under the Steering Group for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics. The Committee decides that the membership of the subgroup should include representatives of national statistical offices, ministries of agriculture and national agricultural policy and research institutes.</p>		
Training		<p>Decision 2/8</p> <p>The Committee decides to establish a small working group charged with preparing a proposal on the coordination of statistical training in the region to be put before the Committee, through the Bureau, within six months after the Committee session.</p>	<p>Decision 3/8</p> <p>1. The Committee endorses the strategy for improving regional coordination of statistical training as proposed by the Working Group on the Regional Coordination of Statistical Training.</p> <p>2. The Committee endorses the formation of an advisory group for the coordination of statistical training, with the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific serving as the secretariat. Membership of the advisory group should include the Chair of the Governing Council of SIAP or one of its elected members. The Committee requests the Bureau to constitute the advisory group.</p>	

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	<p>Recommendation 1/2</p> <p>Regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development</p> <p>2. The Committee calls for increased financial support for the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), particularly through higher cash contributions.</p> <p>3. The Committee recommends that SIAP increase its training on capacity building, including for research and analysis, and that distance learning be expanded to cover more participants at a lower cost.</p> <p>4. The Committee requests that countries make constructive proposals on the content and duration of SIAP courses.</p> <p>5. The Committee recommends that efforts be made to ensure that questionnaires designed to survey training needs are received by the appropriate respondents, namely the national statistical offices, for timely completion and return.</p>			
Modernization of statistical information systems			<p>Decision 3/5</p> <p>1. The Committee decides to establish a high-level strategic body on modernization of statistical information systems and an expert community to raise awareness and build capacity, particularly related to concepts, methods and standards, to support national</p>	

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			<p>modernization efforts.</p> <p>2. The Committee requests the Bureau to develop the terms of reference for the high-level strategic body and to identify related resource requirements prior to the establishment of the strategic body. The Committee stresses that both developing and developed statistical systems should be represented on the high-level body.</p>	
Environment Statistics			<p>Decision 3/7</p> <p>In noting that the core set contained in the United Nations Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) could be used as a guide for the development of an Asia-Pacific regional strategy for the improvement of environmental statistics, the Committee recommends that the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, explore the development of such a strategy upon the adoption of the revised FDES for the consideration by the Committee at its fourth session. In the interim, the Committee agrees to establish an informal network of experts and an online knowledge centre to foster regional collaboration.</p>	
Disaster-related statistics				<p>Resolution 70/2 (May 2014)</p> <p>Disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific</p>