

Millennium Development Goals monitoring  
Subgroup on Environment  
Minutes, 27-28 September 2004 (final version)

The meeting of the subgroup was held at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy as a preparation for the 6<sup>th</sup> inter-agency meeting in Geneva 29 September – 1 October.

Participants:

Susan Braatz	FAO
Stuart Chape	UNEP-WCMC
Linda Ghanimé	UNDP
Peter Holmgren	FAO (chair)
Robert Johnston	UNSD
Giovanni Ruta	World Bank
Robert Smith	Statistics Canada
Mia Söderlund	UNFF secretariat

## 1. Background and updates

Minutes from the previous meeting of the subgroup on 1 April 2004 were reviewed. It was concluded that commitments to share information had been fulfilled, but that the commitments to (a) develop a proposal for a meta-storyline, and (b) drafting a discussion paper for an “integrated environmental system” had not been met.

Recent developments in the MDG process were reviewed by Robert Johnston. Of particular interest to the group was the shorter time frame for the reports scheduled from the MDG monitoring effort, and the fact that additional indicators would not be considered until after the high-level meeting tentatively scheduled for September 2005. (However, complementary statistics and material can be used in the development of storylines)

Based on the new inputs, the following timeline for MDG monitoring outputs was established:

late January 2005	Submissions of final indicator statistics, final draft storylines for each indicator, and final draft of meta-storylines, to the 7 <sup>th</sup> inter-agency meeting.
March 2005	SG report to GA finalized
April 2005	Release of MDG indicator statistics and storylines on web
May 2005	Release of “glossy report” on MDG monitoring of progress
September 2005	High-level meeting on MDG, Peace & Security, and UN reform.

## 2. Development of meta-storyline for the environment

The outline and messages for a meta-story on the environment were discussed in detail. The following principles were agreed:

- the meta-story should be more than a summary of the individual indicator stories. Instead it should present an overview of environmental issues and trends, including links to the indicators;
- the meta-story should link environmental sustainability to the other MDGs, and express that a sustainable environment is required to fulfil the other goals;
- the meta-story should use a generic structure to describe the (natural) environment and associated trends. This structure should relate to concepts used intergovernmental processes, in particular the Rio conventions, the Millennium Declaration, and the WSSD targets;
- tentatively, this generic structure includes the following elements:
  - Biological diversity
  - Atmosphere
  - Land productivity
  - Aquatic productivity
  - Water

Further it was assumed that the meta-story should be about two pages long, and that the contents would be useful for (a) the SG report for March 2005, and (b) the planned “glossy” report on MDG indicators and monitoring in May 2005.

It was agreed that Linda Ghanimé and Peter Holmgren would work on a first draft which would then be circulated to members of the subgroup for further inputs.

[NOTE! This matter was further discussed in the subsequent inter-agency meeting in Geneva and more firm guidelines as to the scope and coverage of the meta-stories are expected]

Action: Ghanimé and Holmgren

### **3. Review of existing indicators and storylines**

#### Forest

- No new data expected for this indicator before Jan 2005. The next global report is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2005.
- The storyline will be expanded and include data that enrich the trend analysis, in particular global planted forests and mangroves statistics will be used.
- Further information on national forest programmes and countries effort to implement global commitments on forests will be considered for the storyline as this directly pertains to target 9.
- The group expressed interest to include partial data from the next global forest assessment report, should such data be available by January 2005.

#### Protected areas

- New data can be spooled out by January 2005. No new trends or conclusions are expected.
- The group recommended an expanded analysis in the storyline, eg by including a subdivision of data on ecological zone or type.
- It was noted that the indicator is the only one that can address the target expression of including principles of sustainable development in national policies – as the establishment of protected areas express exactly this.

#### Energy use

- Energy use data will not be renewed before January 2005.
- Due to the abstract nature of this variable, it was discussed whether the storyline should include a subdivision into renewable / non-renewable energy sources.
- It was discussed that developments in identifying energy indicators for the follow-up to commitments and targets stemming from the World Summit on Sustainable Development might be useful for the storyline on this topic and also in discussions on additional indicators next year.

#### Atmospheric emissions

- No major new datasets are expected before January 2005.
- A long discussion was held on the principle of aggregating CO2 statistics from different sources. The conclusion from the group was to base the indicator data on data reported by countries to UNFCCC, and to add data into this table for missing countries drawing from IEA statistics – even if this means that the definition of emissions will vary slightly between countries.
- For the storyline, it was suggested that information on other greenhouse gases should be included, and that the substitution of CFC by greenhouse gases should be highlighted.

#### Use of solid fuels

Limited discussion as WHO was not present. The option to use per capita use of solid fuels as a complement to the indicator was suggested.

### **3. Discussion on additional indicators**

Given the new instructions from UNSD, new indicators were not discussed in detail. Instead, proposals to incorporate complementary datasets in the storylines were made (see above)

However, concern was expressed that the marine environment lacks an indicator.

#### **4. Workplan**

Each agency present in the meeting to work on indicator datasets and indicator storylines for delivery to UNSD by January 2005. Some indicators will require inter-agency collaboration.

Ghanimé and Holmgren to work on a first draft of the meta-storyline.

Holmgren to report on subgroup progress to the upcoming inter-agency meeting.

A meeting of the subgroup was envisioned before the 7<sup>th</sup> inter-agency meeting in January was envisioned. Possibly also a telephone meeting on storylines in November/December.

[NOTE! The proceedings of the subsequent Geneva meeting gave more input to work planning. Meetings of the subgroup will be planned to fit with the schedule of editorial advisory group meetings for the “glossy report”.