



**UNITED NATIONS**

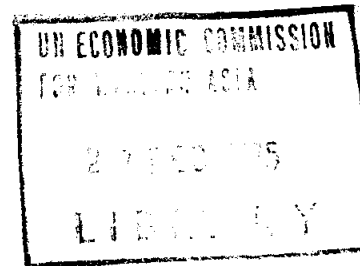
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**REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COOPERATION  
IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS**

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## REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS

### 1. Background

The United Nations Statistical Commission, at its 23rd session in 1985, strongly recommended that the United Nations Statistical Office increase collaboration with the regional commissions and countries in order to foster the establishment of national programmes for environment statistics.

There is a large unmet need for technical advisory services to countries concerning the development and use of environment statistics. The need for advice and assistance in developing this relatively new field of applied statistics has been repeatedly stressed in regional workshops, expert group meetings and pilot projects undertaken by the Statistical Office.

Statisticians trained in environment statistics are not necessarily situated in central statistical offices of countries. International guidelines are not fully developed. National experience is generally limited. Yet, the demand for a full review of the environmental situation is increasing at the national, regional and international levels. Requests for statistical data by environmental secretariats and ministries cannot be met readily by national statistical offices, because the location and availability of data is not always known to both statistical offices and data users. Reviews of existing data and programmes to fill the most urgent data gaps are urgently needed at the national level.

### 2. Activities of the United Nations Statistical Office

The United Nations Statistical Office is now considering ways in which it can further address national interest in the design, collection and compilation of environment statistics. In preparation for increased efforts to work with regions and countries on this issue, the United Nations Statistical Office has been focusing on the development of methodology. A major result of these efforts is the publication of A Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES), available in all official languages of the United Nations. FDES is designed to assist countries in the development, co-ordination and organization of environment statistics. FDES has been based upon a survey of national and international approaches to the organization of environment statistics, on experience gained through a number of country pilot projects and on regional workshops organized in collaboration with the regional commissions. The major findings of this activities have been published in the Survey of Environment Statistics: Frameworks, Approaches and Statistical Publications

The Statistical Office is currently preparing a technique manual of environment statistics which will be available in draft form in 1986. The Manual will apply FDES for the systematic development of concepts, definitions and classifications of statistical variables in the field of environment. Together with FDES, it will be the methodological basis for country activities.

The Statistical Office plans to increase collaboration with the regional commissions and countries in an effort to foster the establishment of country programmes for environment statistics. The 1985 Statistical Commission stressed the need for establishing environment statistics programmes, especially in developing countries, and requested that the United Nations Statistical Office provide substantive support for technical co-operation projects. Such support could be implemented by means of regional or country missions on an ad hoc basis through the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Inter-regional Advisory Services. Ad hoc missions to interested countries could be designed to (a) assist in reviewing the status, availability and potential uses of statistics related to the environment; (b) prepare recommendations to increase the effective use of existing statistics; (c) advise on new data collection if needed; (d) advise on potential projects and possible sources of funding for further statistical work in this area.

Requests for further information and ad hoc technical assistance missions should be addressed to:

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