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**Items for discussion and decision: data and indicators for the
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2022/324 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators on the ongoing work for the implementation of the global indicator framework for the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the report, the Expert Group describes the activities undertaken in 2022 pursuant to Statistical Commission decision 53/101, including: (a) a review of methodologies for the indicator framework and tier classification updates; (b) work on compiling capacity-building and training programmes and materials on Goal monitoring on a common platform; (c) revision of the terms of reference of the Expert Group; and (d) work carried out by the working groups on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) and geospatial information and by the task team on sustainable tourism. The Commission will also have before it a background document setting out examples of the implementation of the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap.

The Commission is invited to comment on progress made by the Expert Group and the direction of its future work. Action to be taken by the Commission is set out in paragraph 41 of the report.

* E/CN.3/2023/1.



Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

I. Introduction

1. As mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/1, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators was tasked with the development and implementation of the global indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The global indicator framework developed by the Expert Group was adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 71/313 on the work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda.

2. The present report describes the work carried out by the Expert Group in 2022, on the basis of the work programme agreed upon by the Commission and in accordance with Commission decision 53/101 (see E/CN.3/2022/41). In section II of the report, the Expert Group summarizes the work on the implementation of the global indicator framework. In section III, it provides the guiding principles and timeline for the 2025 comprehensive review of the indicator framework. In section IV, it presents the activities of the work stream on data disaggregation, of the two working groups on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) and geospatial information, respectively, and of the task team on sustainable tourism. In section V, the Expert Group sets out its work programme for 2023. Action to be taken by the Commission is set out in section VI.

II. Implementation of the global indicator framework

3. In 2022, the Expert Group continued to host open meetings that focused on selected topics related to the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. The meetings were held in February and June¹ in a virtual format, each attended by over 215 participants from countries, international and regional organizations, and other stakeholders. Between meetings, the Expert Group continued to interact electronically and held eight virtual member meetings over the course of 2022.

4. The thirteenth meeting of the Expert Group, held from 7 to 9 November in Bangkok, was attended by around 100 participants, including representatives from Member States, international agencies and entities, and other stakeholders. At the meeting, participants reviewed the implementation of the global indicator framework; reviewed and discussed the work of the working groups on SDMX and geospatial information and of the task team on sustainable tourism; updated the tier classification on the basis of the annual review of the availability of data and reviewed data gaps; discussed aspects of metadata review, including a new streamlined process for the updating of metadata with significant changes and activities of the metadata subgroup; discussed initial considerations for the implementation of the 2025 comprehensive review; and agreed on the workplan of the Expert Group for 2023. In addition, participants shared experiences and best practices relating to the monitoring of and reporting on the Goals at the national, regional and global levels, data disaggregation and inclusive data, data innovations and capacity development for the Goals.

5. At the thirteenth meeting, the members of the Expert Group also reviewed and updated their terms of reference (see annex I) so as to introduce participation

¹ See <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/>.

requirements to ensure the consistent involvement of members and full regional representation at all meetings.

6. Cara Williams (Canada, elected February 2021) and Karen Chavez (Colombia, elected June 2021) served as Co-Chairs of the Expert Group in 2022. In December 2022, Ms. Chavez assumed a new role and stepped down as Co-Chair. Ms. Williams will continue to chair the Expert Group and the second Co-Chair will be elected after the member rotation in June 2023.

A. Methodology review of the indicator framework and tier classification updates

7. In accordance with its approved work programme, the Expert Group conducted a review of the availability of data for tier I and II indicators in the global indicator database (as at 19 October 2022) to assess country and population coverage for each region for which those indicators were relevant. The review was presented at the thirteenth meeting. Twelve indicators met the criteria for being reclassified from tier II to tier I: 1.5.2/11.5.2 (a multipurpose indicator), 5.6.2, 8.b.1, 10.2.1, 10.7.2, 11.2.1, 11.5.3, 16.1.1, 16.2.2, 16.5.1, 16.6.1 and 17.7.1. Two indicators had subcomponents upgraded from tier II to tier I: 1.a.2 (education component) and 6.2.1 (part a, proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services).

8. According to the updates to the tier classification following the reviews, of the 231 unique indicators, 148 are tier I indicators, 77 are tier II indicators, and 6 are multi-tier indicators (i.e. different components of the indicator are classified in different tiers). The Secretariat will update the tier classification on an annual basis following the review of the availability of data for tier I and II indicators and post the latest information on the relevant web page.²

9. As at 17 October 2022, the Global SDG Indicators Database included data for 219 of the 231 unique indicators and more than 2.3 million data records. Among the 12 indicators without any data, data for three indicators are expected to be submitted in December 2022. For the majority of the remaining nine indicators with missing data submissions, custodian agencies have indicated a projected date for submission, mostly in 2023, or have provided an updated data plan.

B. Proposed annual refinements

10. In accordance with General Assembly resolution [71/313](#) and the plan and criteria agreed by the Expert Group with respect to possible annual minor refinements ([E/CN.3/2017/2](#), para. 21), the Expert Group reviewed the list of indicator refinements proposed by its members and by custodian agencies and agreed on four refinements (indicators 5.3.2, 10.7.2, 12.7.1 and 15.4.2) (see annex II), to be presented to the Commission for its consideration.

C. Metadata review and subgroup on metadata

11. One of the tasks of the Expert Group is to regularly review methodological developments and issues related to the Sustainable Development Goal indicators and their metadata, including editorial elements, grammar, consistency and coherence. In doing so, the group routinely reviews the metadata of the indicators in the global indicator framework, including when a custodian agency revises the methodology of

² See <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>.

an indicator. At its thirteenth meeting, the Expert Group approved a proposal to adopt and implement a streamlined process for updating metadata, aimed at making the process more predictable, user-friendly, timely and efficient.

12. With the streamlined process, a section will be added to the metadata repository,³ with clear instructions and documentation outlining the process for requests where there are significant updates to the metadata by custodian agencies. The criteria for determining whether updates are significant and therefore will require review and approval by the Expert Group include:

- (a) Changes in concepts and definitions;
- (b) Changes in the method of computation;
- (c) Changes in the name and/or description of the indicator;
- (d) Changes that may impact the definition or meaning of the indicator and comparability of data with previously submitted data (such as different coverage).

For a significant metadata update, custodian agencies are requested to download the current metadata from the metadata repository⁴ and update it in track changes; provide an explanation of the nature and justifications for the changes in the standardized metadata update request form; and as an optional step, provide any additional supporting materials by email to sdgindicators@un.org. The package would then be shared with Expert Group members for their review.

13. In this streamlined process, members would have four to eight weeks to review each request and consult experts from their own country and countries of the subregion they represent. Custodian agencies would then be invited to present to the Expert Group at its monthly meeting, so as to give members the opportunity to offer comments and ask questions. Following the meeting, the Expert Group would have another two weeks to provide additional comments and questions in writing to the custodian agencies. A decision on the request to update the metadata or a request for additional time for review would then be made at the subsequent regular member meeting.

14. In addition to ongoing metadata update reviews, the Expert Group formed a metadata subgroup in 2020 to conduct a thorough and comprehensive review of the metadata, aiming to improve the overall quality of the metadata so as to facilitate data transmission and allow for better implementation of the indicators by countries. The following member countries are part of the subgroup: Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Malaysia and Sweden. There is currently a total of 241 metadata files in the repository (11 indicators include more than one metadata file). The subgroup completed the review of the first batch of 131 metadata files in December 2021. Feedback and comments from the subgroup for those files were sent to the custodian agencies in February 2022. Of the 131 metadata files, 94 were updated by agencies with comments and/or additional edits and subsequently uploaded to the metadata repository.

15. The review of the remaining batch of 110 metadata files should be completed by the end of January 2023. Those 110 files will be sent to the custodian agencies in January 2023, along with the files from the first batch which were not returned by agencies. The metadata files will include feedback and comments in track changes for the custodian agencies' consideration when updating the metadata. The metadata subgroup anticipates that by March 2023, all metadata files in the repository will have

³ See <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>.

⁴ Ibid.

been reviewed by the subgroup, and comments and edits will have been addressed by the agencies in order to facilitate the finalization of the review.

16. In order to facilitate the review of metadata, the subgroup has also provided custodians with detailed review criteria to consider when updating the metadata, including an editorial and grammatical review, a consistency check and a coherence check.⁵

D. Sharing of experiences and good practices on monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals

17. As part of its approved workplan, the Expert Group was tasked with focusing on the implementation of the indicator framework and the sharing of experiences and good practices on monitoring the Goals, including on national platforms, dashboards, Goal portals and other progress assessment tools; communication of data on the Goals; data disaggregation; addressing of data gaps; and the use of non-traditional and innovative data sources for the Goal indicators. In line with the workplan, the Expert Group invited countries, agencies and stakeholders to elaborate on different initiatives for addressing those areas during their open meetings. In addition, the Expert Group conducted a second round of a survey to gather short descriptions from countries and the regional commissions that showcase good practices in those areas. Besides the questions included in the original questionnaire launched in 2021, the second round of the questionnaire included a new section on using non-traditional and innovative data sources.⁶ As at 5 December 2022, 70 countries and four regional commissions had responded to the questionnaire, providing short summaries in which they showcased good practices and provided links to websites and other information, or materials and comments related to particular challenges or suggestions for the Expert Group.

18. With the two rounds of questionnaires sent in 2021 and 2022 a total of 95 countries have provided inputs. In the latest round of responses, 29 countries reported for the first time, whereas 41 countries provided updates. The SDG Good Practices site will be updated regularly and will serve as a living document for countries and regional commissions to use as a point of reference and resource repository.

E. Capacity-building for the Goals: capacity-building knowledge base

19. In its decision 53/101, the Statistical Commission stressed the need for continued technical and financial support for countries to build capacity for monitoring of the Goals, for the production of Goal indicators and for the modernization of statistical systems. In response to that request, a capacity-building knowledge base web page will be developed, with capacity-building activities and resources according to Goal, target and indicator, cross-cutting topic and region (mainly with inputs from the regional commissions and other regional organizations). The Expert Group agreed to use the “UN SDG: Learn”⁷ statistical training page as the knowledge base, which is part of a United Nations initiative that aims to bring relevant and curated learning solutions on sustainable development topics to individuals and organizations. The Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training, with the support of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research

⁵ See https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/meetings/iaeg-sdgs-meeting-13/10b_Work-of-IAEG-SDG-metadata-sub-group.pdf.

⁶ The information and examples have been compiled and are available at the SDG Good Practices wiki site: <https://unstats.un.org/wiki/display/sdgGoodPractices>.

⁷ See <https://www.unsdglearn.org/>.

(UNITAR), has been using the platform to create a statistics training page⁸ for cataloguing available e-learning and microlearning resources for wider use. The statistical page will include e-learning resources, documents and guidelines for monitoring the Goals from custodian agencies, regional commissions and other partners.

20. The secretariat of the Expert Group, the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, plans to follow up with custodian agencies and other partners to have them submit their training and/or e-learning or other relevant resources to the platform, following an established template, starting in December 2022. The Secretariat has identified some required updates to be made to the platform, ranging from minor to major, which will be accommodated in due course. UNITAR has also agreed to work on any updates requiring significant resources and changes to the platform during the next budget cycle, starting in April 2023, while supporting the minor fixes in the interim, within existing resources. The platform currently includes e-learning and microlearning resources and provides an easy-to-use interface for the publishing of content by learning providers, with a streamlined workflow.

III. Guiding principles and timelines for the 2025 comprehensive review

21. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/313, in which it was specified that the global indicator framework was to be reviewed comprehensively by the Commission at its fifty-sixth session, to be held in 2025, the Expert Group discussed the upcoming comprehensive review at its thirteenth meeting. The Expert Group agreed that the guiding principles used in the 2020 comprehensive review (see E/CN.3/2020/2 and para. 22 below) would still apply to the 2025 comprehensive review. It also recommended a timeline for the implementation of the 2025 comprehensive review.

22. The Expert Group agreed that the 2025 comprehensive review provides a good opportunity to improve the indicator framework in support of the global monitoring of the Goals and to provide the necessary guidance to countries, many of which are already well advanced in implementing their national frameworks and reporting platforms. The Expert Group agreed on several guiding principles for the review in order to set the parameters within which the review would take place. The guiding principles include the following:

- (a) The review needs to take into account investments already made at the national and international levels and should not undermine ongoing efforts;
- (b) The revised framework should not impose a significant additional burden in terms of national statistical work;
- (c) There should be space for improvement, while at the same time ensuring that the changes are limited in scope and the size of the framework remains the same;
- (d) The focus of the common work of the Expert Group should remain on the national implementation of the framework for the monitoring of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁸ See <https://www.unsdglearn.org/statistics/>.

23. The Expert Group also agreed to the following recommended timeline for the 2025 comprehensive review:

(a) November 2022: the Expert Group shared the recommended timeline and the guiding principles for the 2025 comprehensive review;

(b) November 2023: the Expert Group will share the specific criteria for the 2025 comprehensive review;

(c) January to June 2024: the Expert Group will prepare a review framework containing possible deletions, replacements, adjustments and additions, based on previous analysis and assessments, with assistance from the Secretariat;

(d) May 2024: All proposals for indicator changes for the 2025 review (replacements, deletions, refinements, adjustments and additional indicators) will be submitted to the Secretariat;

(e) July to August 2024: open consultation will be held on a preliminary list of proposed indicator changes;

(f) September 2024: the Expert Group will review the results of the consultation;

(g) October/November 2024: at the fifteenth meeting of the Expert Group, the Expert Group will review the draft proposal containing indicator changes to be included in the 2025 comprehensive review;

(h) December 2024: the Expert Group will prepare the final proposal for the 2025 review and submit it to the Commission for its consideration at its fifty-sixth session, in March 2025.

24. The Expert Group also discussed the preliminary criteria for replacements, deletions, refinements, adjustments and additions and other considerations, including proxy indicators. It agreed that a proxy indicator could be considered if the current indicator was proven to be very challenging for countries to implement and if the proposed proxy indicator had a sound methodology and good data coverage.

IV. Work stream on data disaggregation, working groups and task team of the Expert Group

25. In 2022, the Expert Group continued its work stream on data disaggregation. Work has also been carried out by the two working groups focusing on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) and geospatial information. The Working Group on Measurement of Development Support was dissolved at the fifty-third session of the Commission.⁹ A task team on sustainable tourism was recently established by the Expert Group. The working groups and task team are composed of members of the Expert Group and other invited representatives, as determined in their respective terms of reference.¹⁰

⁹ The working groups on SDMX and geospatial information were established in 2016, while the Working Group on Measurement of Development Support was established in 2020 and finalized its work in 2022.

¹⁰ The terms of reference, membership and other important information regarding each working group are available at <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/>.

A. Work stream on data disaggregation

26. Under the guidance of the Expert Group and the Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys, the Statistics Division has continued to develop the toolkit on small area estimation for the Goals. The toolkit offers practical guidance and country case studies to help countries to use small area estimation methods to improve data availability for vulnerable population groups. More specific country examples and case studies have been added. As mentioned in section II.D above, the Expert Group has invited countries, regional commissions and international agencies to share their good practices on data disaggregation, which have been included through the SDG Good Practices site. The Expert Group also asked its working group on geospatial information to provide guidance on data disaggregation by geographic location, which is described in detail in section IV.C below.

B. Working Group on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange for Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

27. The Working Group on SDMX for Sustainable Development Goals Indicators consists of representatives of 12 countries and 10 international agencies and is currently chaired by Mexico. Since the official release of the data structure definition for the indicators in 2019, the data structure definition has been regularly updated and kept in sync with the global database, as is also the case with the global Sustainable Development Goals data set published by the Statistics Division in an SDMX application programming interface. Data exchange has been established with six custodian agencies. This mode of reporting has proven to be substantially more efficient than traditional Excel-based data exchange for both the Division and the reporting agencies. In 2022, the Division engaged with the custodian agencies to expand SDMX data exchange, with a view to increasing efficiency and reducing the reporting burden. Capacity-building events are planned for the custodian agencies in early 2023. Data exchange has also continued with countries; about 36 countries have now submitted their Sustainable Development Goals data sets to a dedicated data lab for the Goals, which is the data and metadata exchange component of the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Data Platform, thereby facilitating comparisons between the global and national data sets, with metadata enabling an analysis of differences between the two.

28. Following the release of the official metadata structure definition in early 2022, the Division has published the global Sustainable Development Goals reference metadata set through an SDMX application programming interface. The metadata are now available in a machine-readable format, which has made it possible for the Division to significantly improve the user interface and functionality of the global database and Indicators Data Platform, bringing together data and reference metadata. The availability of the metadata through an application programming interface in a machine-readable format has also facilitated the implementation of a World Bank-led project on the computer-assisted translation of reference metadata for the Goals.

29. The Division has continued to carry out capacity-building activities in SDMX data and metadata exchange for the Goal indicators. Through cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Asian Development Bank, in-person training in SDMX data exchange and dissemination of the indicators has been provided to 18 countries, with about 7 additional countries accessing the training remotely. An e-learning course on SDMX for the indicators, to be launched in December 2022, was developed with funding by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Working Group has maintained

its information site with links to the data and metadata structure definitions, technical documentation, user guidance and learning resources.¹¹

C. Working Group on Geospatial Information

30. The Working Group on Geospatial Information,¹² chaired by Ireland and Colombia, comprises 13 Member States, nine custodian agencies, representatives of three regional commissions and other invited groups and experts. The Working Group convenes regular virtual meetings and annual plenary meetings, formally reporting to the Expert Group. Owing to the complementary and cross-cutting nature of the 2030 Agenda, the Working Group also contributed to a report,¹³ with the Secretariat, to the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, under the Committee's agenda item entitled "Geospatial information for sustainable development". Paloma Merodio (Mexico) recently completed her term as Co-Chair of the Working Group and was succeeded as Co-Chair by Sandra Moreno (Colombia).

31. At its fifty-third session, in its decision 53/101, the Statistical Commission adopted the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap for statistical and geospatial actors working within the global indicator framework. Available in English, French and Spanish, the Roadmap is a strategic information and communications mechanism that helps to "build the bridge" between statistical and geospatial actors working with the global indicator framework. The Roadmap helps to communicate, guide and enhance the awareness of geospatial information, Earth observations and related data sources, products and enabling tools and methods, so as to inform and support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

32. By recognizing and accepting geospatial and location-based information as official data for the Goals and their global indicators, the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap provides simple and actionable guidance for national statistical offices, national geospatial information agencies, custodian agencies and others working within the Sustainable Development Goal ecosystem at the national level. In highlighting available resources, existing global geospatial frameworks and innovative approaches, the Roadmap is supported by a series of key actions, case studies and supporting guidance for each phase, including recommendations on the unique value proposition and opportunity that geospatial information can and does provide. It also identifies what needs to be done, when, why and by whom. Furthermore, it serves to convey how the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, and other frameworks have an important "integrating" role in advancing the 2030 Agenda.

33. In order to help countries with implementing the Roadmap, the Working Group developed a paper providing examples of the implementation of the Roadmap. The paper was welcomed by the Expert Group at its thirteenth meeting and, following further refinement, is provided as a background document to the present report for the Commission's further information. The paper examines how countries can disaggregate Sustainable Development Goal indicators by geographic location alone or in combination with other dimensions (such as sex, age, income, migration and disability status), thus providing countries with the means to more deeply analyse the indicators, ensuring that "nowhere is left behind" in the effort to leave no one behind.

¹¹ See <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/sdmx-working-group/>.

¹² See <https://ggim.un.org/UNGGIM-wg6/>.

¹³ See E/C.20/2022/11/Add.1, available at <https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/12th-Session/documents/>.

34. The Working Group's workplan for 2023 was endorsed by the Expert Group at its thirteenth meeting. The workplan shifts the Working Group towards activities that promote and raise awareness of the transformational opportunity of geospatially enabling the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. The planned activities include supporting the convening of workshops and seminars and expanding on the collation of use cases of how geospatially-enabled indicators for the Goals can be produced, measured, monitored and disseminated through story maps and other interactive tools. In addition, the Working Group welcomes offers to translate the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap, so as to ensure its widest possible dissemination and understanding as to its intended purpose.

D. Working Group on Measurement of Development Support

35. At its fifty-third session, in March 2022, the Commission adopted the proposed new indicator 17.3.1 and requested the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to be the co-custodians of the new indicator and to work closely to avoid duplications, and agreed to dissolve the Working Group as it had completed its mandate. Work is under way for the first global reporting on this indicator, including capacity-building, and OECD and UNCTAD are working closely to coordinate their efforts in accordance with the decision of the Commission.

36. The Commission also agreed to review the issue of measurement of the global and regional efforts in support of the Goals, and some countries expressed interest in contributing to that work. The consultations with concerned countries indicated, however, that national efforts on this issue are not sufficiently advanced to form the basis for further work and a review at the international level at this time. Therefore, countries may wish to bring this issue to the attention of the Commission in the future and with the participation of both developing and developed countries, as requested by the Commission.

E. Task team on sustainable tourism

37. At its fifty-third session, in its decision 53/101, the Statistical Commission asked the Expert Group to work in close coordination with the custodian agency on a proposal for indicators on sustainable tourism to better monitor target 8.9 and report on progress on this to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session.

38. In accordance with that decision, the Expert Group established the task team on sustainable tourism, comprising 13 Member States and 4 international and regional organizations, with the Statistics Division serving as secretariat and providing substantive support to the task team. The primary objectives of the task team are to discuss, build consensus on, and develop a detailed proposal for sustainable tourism indicators to better monitor target 8.9. The proposal is expected to be ready for submission to and consideration by the Expert Group during the 2025 comprehensive review of the global indicator framework. The task team has planned to meet virtually every quarter but may meet more or less frequently as required and agreed by the membership. Between meetings, the task team will collaborate through electronic exchanges and platforms.

39. The task team held its first meeting in September 2022, during which the objectives, activities, membership, working modalities, timeline and workplan were discussed and agreed. At the meeting, members considered a decision framework proposed by the Statistics Division to search, screen and select sustainable tourism indicators. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) also shared its ongoing work

on measuring the sustainability of tourism. Canada was elected as the task team Co-Chair, and members agreed to elect a second Co-Chair at a later date. Additional details on the membership of the team, meetings and working methods, as well as its tentative timeline and workplan, are available on its website.¹⁴ The second meeting of the task team was held in November 2022. The Division briefed members on the process, timeline and tentative criteria for the 2025 comprehensive review that were adopted by the Expert Group at its thirteenth meeting. Members then discussed the definition of “sustainable tourism” and what indicators for target 8.9 should measure. Finally, members agreed on a way forward and requested UNWTO to prepare a list of established sustainable tourism indicators with sound methodology and good coverage by the end of February 2023 for the task team’s review and decision.

V. Work programme of the Expert Group

40. The Expert Group recommends that the following activities be carried out between March 2023 and March 2024:

(a) Focus on the implementation of the indicator framework, including integrating geospatial information and statistics; sharing experiences and best practices on monitoring the Goals, including on national Sustainable Development Goal platforms, dashboards and portals, communication of data for the Goals, data disaggregation and inclusive data, data innovations and national efforts in bridging data gaps for Goal indicators; encouraging data innovations, including the use of non-traditional data sources; and reviewing and making recommendations on capacity-building for the Goals in coordination with the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(b) Regularly review methodological developments and issues related to the indicators and their metadata and improve the overall quality of metadata for the indicators through the work programme of the metadata subgroup;

(c) Continue the work stream on data disaggregation to provide further guidelines and liaise with the other working groups and existing mechanisms for data disaggregation work to fulfil the ambition of the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind;

(d) Continue the work of the working groups on SDMX and geospatial information, and review the workplans of the working groups to ensure that they are in line with the work of the Expert Group;

(e) Continue the work of the task team on sustainable tourism;

(f) Continue with the preparations for the 2025 comprehensive review, including the discussion of criteria and proxy indicators;

(g) Continue dialogues with custodian agencies to enhance the data flow process for global reporting on the Goals;

(h) Hold biannual open meetings, including the fourteenth meeting of the Expert Group in the fourth quarter of 2023, and continue to interact through regular meetings.

¹⁴ See <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/task-team-sustainable-tourism/>.

VI. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission

41. The Commission is invited:

(a) **To take note of the work conducted by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators in response to the decisions of the Commission;**

(b) **To express its views on and adopt the revised terms of reference of the Expert Group (as contained in annex I to the present report);**

(c) **To express its views on and adopt the annual refinements (as contained in annex II to the present report);**

(d) **To take note of the background document on disaggregation by geographic location;**

(e) **To express its views on and adopt the proposed work programme of the Expert Group for 2023.**

Annex I

Revised terms of reference for the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

1. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators will:

(a) Develop and refine an indicator framework for the follow-up and review of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level, taking into account existing efforts by different groups of countries and organizations, including regional and international agencies, regional commissions, academia, civil society and other relevant international organizations, to be adopted by the Statistical Commission;

(b) Provide technical support for the implementation of the approved indicator and monitoring framework over the 15-year period towards 2030; ensure the use of harmonized and agreed indicator definitions; share experiences on monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals; and encourage good practices and innovations, including in the area of national capacity-building;

(c) Regularly review methodological developments and issues related to the indicators and their metadata;

(d) Regularly review capacity-building activities in statistical areas relevant to Sustainable Development Goals monitoring and make recommendations to be considered by the Statistical Commission, the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities;

(e) Review and support work by the Secretariat for the development of a Sustainable Development Goal data-user forum, tools for data analysis and an open dashboard on the state of the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. The Expert Group consists of 27 representatives of national statistical offices and one ex officio member¹ and also includes, as observers, representatives of regional commissions and regional and international agencies, to provide important technical advice and support as needed. Members of the Group will be nominated through existing regional mechanisms² for an initial period of two years, after which some are expected to be rotated as agreed by the respective regional mechanisms, with a view to ensuring equitable regional representation and technical expertise and including members of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The respective regional mechanisms will ensure that a certain number of members will be rotated for continuity of the work of the Group.³ Countries that are not members of the Group may send their representatives to participate in the activities of the Group as observers.

¹ The Chair of the Statistical Commission is an ex officio member of the Expert Group.

² Statistical Commission for Africa, Conference of European Statisticians, Statistical Conference of the Americas, Committee on Statistics of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and Statistical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

³ A total of nine members will be rotated: two members from Eastern, Middle and Southern and Western Africa; one member from Northern Africa and Western Asia; two members from Central, Eastern, Southern, South-Eastern Asia and Oceania; two members from the Caribbean and Central and South America; and two members from Eastern Europe, North America and Northern, Southern and Western Europe.

3. Regular attendance at meetings and contribution to discussion and decision-making is expected of all members. Participation by a member in less than 50 per cent of meetings (through in-person participation or written communication) in a calendar year will indicate that the member is no longer active and the member will be replaced at the end of the calendar year or the next membership rotation (whichever occurs first) through the regional mechanism. Furthermore, members are expected to actively participate and contribute during meetings and through written communication between meetings.

4. The Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat will be the secretariat of the Expert Group. Member States that are part of the Group will elect two Co-Chairs. At the time of membership rotation, one Co-Chair is expected to step down and is invited to serve for an additional term of two years as a member. Preferably, members of the Expert Group should not serve concurrently as members of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The existing global monitoring groups, generally composed of representatives of national statistical systems and experts from international agencies working on specific indicators, will contribute to the work of the Expert Group as deemed appropriate by the Group. In addition, as deemed appropriate, global monitoring groups will be formed bringing together national and international experts that will support the work of the Group on the selection and definition of indicators and data compilation and reporting to monitor progress in new and emerging areas covered by the new Goals and targets.

5. The Expert Group will conduct its work in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, and will invite experts, as appropriate, from civil society, academia and the private sector to contribute their expertise and experiences on indicators and innovative data compilation methods.

6. The Expert Group will meet physically once a year, and otherwise conduct its work electronically. Participation in the physical meetings is self-funded. A limited number of developing countries that are members of the Group may receive funding to support their participation in the meetings, if available.

7. The Expert Group will report annually to the Statistical Commission and seek guidance from it.

Annex II

Annual refinements to be made to the global indicator framework

Goal and current indicator text

Refinement of indicator

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age

5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation, by age

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

10.7.2 Number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people

10.7.2 Proportion of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

12.7.1 Degree of sustainable public procurement policies and action plan implementation

12.7.1 Number of countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies and action plans

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

15.4.2 Mountain Green Cover Index

15.4.2 (a) Mountain Green Cover Index and (b) proportion of degraded mountain land