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Item 3 (h) of the provisional agenda*

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of
the Commission, including the work of the regional
institutions: Statistics**

Report of the Committee on Statistics on its third session

Summary

The Committee on Statistics held its third session in Bangkok from 12 to 14 December 2012.

The Committee focused on achieving the 2020 strategic goals for statistics development in Asia and the Pacific. The Committee reviewed and decided on a number of regional initiatives as well as plans for the regional implementation of global strategies to improve economic statistics, population and social statistics, civil registration and vital statistics, agricultural and rural statistics, environment statistics and modernization of statistical information systems. It also reviewed issues related to the coordination of statistical activities among development partners.

The Committee decided to recommend the following matters for action by the Commission: (a) the use of the core set of population and social statistics as a regional framework for focusing efforts, coordinating training and mobilizing donor support for capacity development; and (b) the holding of a regional meeting of relevant ministers to attain the high-level intergovernmental commitment required to support the successful implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to consider the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

* E/ESCAP/69/L.1.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

A. Matters calling for action

Core set of population and social statistics Recommendation 3/1

The Committee recommends the use of the core set of population and social statistics as a regional framework for focusing efforts, coordinating training and mobilizing donor support for capacity development.

Improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific Recommendation 3/2

In endorsing the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of 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.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission

Monitoring strategy for the work of the Committee Decision 3/1

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.

Implementation Plan for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific Decision 3/2

1. The Committee endorses the implementation plan for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific.

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.

Social statistics Decision 3/3

1. 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.

2. In this regard, the Committee:

(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.

**Improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific
Decision 3/4**

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.¹ The main functions of the office are to coordinate regional support activities and facilitate the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan.

**Modernization of statistical information systems
Decision 3/5**

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 modernization efforts.

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.

**Regional action plan for the global strategy on agricultural and rural statistics
Decision 3/6**

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.

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; the membership is as follows:

¹ The implementation of this decision is subject to availability of extrabudgetary funds.

- (a) National statistical offices: China, Samoa, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam;
- (b) Ministries of agriculture and fisheries: Fiji, India, Japan and the Philippines;
- (c) Training institute: Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute;
- (d) Research institute: Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions;
- (e) Implementing partners: Asian Development Bank, secretariat of ESCAP and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;
- (f) Secretariat of the Pacific Community;
- (g) Donor agency: the United Kingdom Department for International Development.

Environment statistics

Decision 3/7

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.

Coordination of statistical training in Asia and the Pacific

Decision 3/8

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.
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 Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific or one of its elected members. The Committee requests the Bureau to constitute the advisory group.

II. Proceedings

A. Agenda item 2

Strategic direction and functioning of the Committee on Statistics

(a) Proposal of the Bureau for future work

1. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

2. Representatives of the following countries made statements: China; Indonesia; and Russian Federation.

3. The Committee reaffirmed the two overarching, strategic goals of its work: (a) ensuring that all countries in the region, by 2020, have the capability to provide an agreed basic range of population, economic, social and environment statistics; and (b) creating a more adaptive and cost-effective information management environment for national statistical offices through stronger collaboration. It recognized the importance of continuing the ongoing regional initiatives to achieve those goals. In that regard, the Committee expressed profound appreciation to its Bureau and the various steering, working and advisory groups established to implement decisions taken by the Committee at its second session.

(b) Review of the functioning of the Committee

4. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Japan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; and Russian Federation.

5. In reviewing the proposal for more frequent Committee sessions to address rapidly evolving statistics development, the Committee expressed concern over the related financial and human resource implications, and the view was expressed that the current frequency should be maintained. In that regard, it agreed to explore alternative arrangements, such as electronic communication and the use of other regional and international meetings as opportunities to engage Committee members for consultations.

6. The Committee recognized its important role in providing substantive direction to the work of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). The current reporting arrangements, whereby the Governing Council of the Institute reports directly to the Commission, were considered the best modality for both the Committee and the Governing Council. The Committee recommended that the Commission maintain the current reporting arrangements regarding the Governing Council of SIAP.

(c) Monitoring framework for the work of the Committee

7. Representatives of the following countries made statements: India; and New Zealand.

8. The Committee recognized the importance of monitoring to guide the course of its work and strengthen accountability for achieving its goals. The Committee stressed that monitoring should be embedded in individual statistical programmes as well used to assess the achievement of strategic goals of the Committee.

9. The Committee adopted decision 3/1.

**B. Agenda item 3
Regional initiatives**

(a) Economic statistics

10. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

11. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bhutan; China; Japan; India; Indonesia; Maldives; New Zealand; Pakistan; Philippines; Russian Federation; Samoa; and Sri Lanka.
12. A representative of the following observer made a statement: United Nations Industrial Development Organization.
13. The Committee expressed appreciation for the work of the Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics and commended the successful development of the Implementation Plan for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific.
14. The Committee reaffirmed that the Core Set of Economic Statistics was a regional guideline for the development of capacities to produce and disseminate basic economic statistics and that it supported the implementation of the System of National Accounts 2008.
15. The Committee requested the Bureau to reconstitute the Steering Group with suitable terms of reference.
16. The Committee recognized the ongoing efforts in the Pacific subregion in building economic statistics capacity and recommended that the implementation of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy 2011-2020 takes into account the Implementation Plan.
17. The Committee stressed the importance of quality assurance and metadata guidance for successful implementation of the Regional Programme. In that regard and recognizing the broad range of statistics included in the Core Set, the Committee noted the need for sectoral expertise and recommended the establishment of sectoral expert groups, as appropriate. Networks of such experts could also facilitate technical cooperation and knowledge-sharing among countries in the region.
18. The Committee also recognized the potential of information and communications technology (ICT) applications for the improvement of economic statistics. The Committee emphasized the need for the implementation of the Regional Programme to link with other ongoing initiatives, such as in the area of agricultural and financial statistics.
19. The Committee strongly encouraged member States to develop national strategic plans for the improvement of economic statistics as a part of the implementation of the Regional Programme, and in the development of those plans to use the Core Set as a guide, while keeping in mind national needs and priorities. In that regard, the Committee fully acknowledged the specific roles of line ministries, central banks and other agencies in the compilation of economic statistics, and supported the establishment of national coordination mechanisms and focal points, as outlined in the Implementation Plan for the Regional Programme.
20. The Committee urged development partners to coordinate and further align their work with the Regional Programme to support its implementation, including its implied reporting requirements for countries. The Committee noted with appreciation the intention of the Russian Federation to provide funding for improving economic statistics in line with the Implementation Plan, and expressed hope that other member States and donors would follow suit.
21. The Committee adopted decision 3/2.

(b) Social statistics

22. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

23. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bhutan; China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Maldives; New Zealand; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Sri Lanka; and Thailand.

24. Representatives of the following observers made statements: International Labour Organization; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; and Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

25. The Committee congratulated the Technical Advisory Group on Social Statistics for the progress made since its establishment and expressed appreciation for the quality of its reports to the Committee.

26. The Committee agreed to the inclusion of population statistics in the scope of the work of the Technical Advisory Group. It expressed appreciation for the strategic approach taken by the Technical Advisory Group in developing a core set of population and social statistics. It also expressed support for using the core set as a basis for reviewing current national statistical practices and capacities and developing a regional programme to address gaps. In that regard, the Committee requested that the Technical Advisory Group develop a more detailed work plan for 2013-2014.

27. The Committee noted the importance of that core set for guiding the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems.

28. Regarding the core set of population and social statistics, the Committee recognized the role of that core set as a regional guideline for statistical capacity development for national statistical systems.

29. One delegation stressed the importance of clear definitions and standards for the core set of population and social statistics in guiding endeavours for capacity development.

30. While agreeing to the inclusion of the domain on governance in that core set, the Committee recognized the conceptual and methodological challenges related to that domain, and also noted that many national statistical systems in the region did not have the mandate to produce statistics on governance. Therefore, flexibility would be required when considering its roles in guiding statistical capacity development.

31. The Committee recognized the ongoing work by Pacific island developing States, and recommended that the Technical Advisory Group take that into account in its work.

32. In endorsing the proposed core set, the Committee recognized its establishment as an important global milestone in the area of social statistics development.

33. The Committee adopted recommendation 3/1 and decision 3/3.

(c) Civil registration and vital statistics

34. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

35. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bhutan; China; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Malaysia; Maldives; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; and Samoa.

36. The Committee recognized that the identification of a core set of vital statistics to be produced by a functional civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system could encourage improvement and could be used to monitor progress in the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. In that regard, one delegation noted the importance of related quality control measures.

37. The Committee stressed the importance of a regional knowledge platform for sharing lessons learned and experiences to support national efforts to improve civil registration and vital statistics.

38. The Committee recognized the diversity of country systems across the region and urged member States to develop national multisectoral improvement strategies for improving their CRVS system. Noting that, in the absence of a well-functioning CRVS system, many countries relied on alternative sources of data for vital statistics. One delegation suggested the development of guidelines for managing the transition towards functional CRVS systems. Another delegation proposed the categorization of CRVS systems by phase of development and the development of relevant guidelines.

39. Noting the importance of the collective efforts required for improving CRVS systems, the Committee encouraged effective coordination and cooperation among relevant government entities. It urged development partners to effectively coordinate support at the global, regional and national levels.

40. The Committee emphasized the potential of ICT for improving the functioning of CRVS systems and for accelerating progress in improving CRVS systems in the region.

41. The Committee recognized the progress made by many members in improving their CRVS systems, including Pacific island developing countries and territories. In that regard, the Committee agreed to the proposed arrangement for linking the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan to the Regional Strategic Plan.

42. The Committee adopted recommendation 3/2 and decision 3/4.

(d) Modernization of statistical information systems

43. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

44. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bhutan; China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Maldives; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; and Thailand.

45. The Committee recognized the importance and urgency of modernizing national statistical information systems for addressing the evolving field of statistics, and the relevance of statistics across developed and developing countries.

46. The Committee noted that modernization entailed organizational transformation, which could be supported by but not driven by improvement in information technology.

47. The Committee recognized the importance of regional cooperation, including the development of common frameworks and standards, and knowledge-sharing, to accelerate the modernization of statistical information systems.

48. The Committee noted the importance of modernization for reducing costs, improving quality, meeting the needs of users and converting statistics into information. The Committee appreciated the support extended by the Russian Federation through the secretariat in that area of work and welcomed the expressed interest of the Republic of Korea to serve on the high-level strategic body on modernization of statistical information systems.

49. The Committee recommended that the strategic body be linked with the newly named global High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services to avoid duplication and maximize efficiency.

50. The Committee adopted decision 3/5.

C. Agenda item 4 Global initiatives

(a) Agricultural and rural statistics

51. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

52. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bhutan; China; Georgia; India; Japan; Kazakhstan; Malaysia; Myanmar; Nepal; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Samoa; and Timor-Leste.

53. Representatives of the following observers made statements: Asian Development Bank (ADB); and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

54. The Committee expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Steering Group for Agricultural Statistics and commended the successful development of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics by the Steering Group and the implementing partners: ADB; the ESCAP secretariat and the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

55. Bearing in mind the outcome of the consideration by the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, the Committee fully endorsed the structure and content of the Regional Action Plan. The Committee noted with appreciation the development of a dedicated training component, and considered it a model to be followed in the development of other regional statistics development initiatives.

56. Several members committed to support the implementation of the Regional Action Plan by serving on the newly constituted Regional Steering Committee, mobilizing resources or providing technical assistance.

57. The Committee welcomed the Republic of Korea as an observer on the Regional Steering Committee.

58. The Committee welcomed the interest expressed by Georgia to participate in the implementation of the Regional Action Plan.

59. The Committee noted that countries in the region were at different levels of statistical development, and recommended that technical assistance and training be tailored to the varying needs.

60. The Committee recognized the benefit of developing and applying ICT for the production, dissemination and analysis of agricultural statistics.

61. The Committee recommended the establishment of a web-based platform for sharing best practices and information on the progress made in implementation of the Regional Action Plan.

62. The Committee urged the implementing partners and other development partners and donors to coordinate and collaborate effectively in implementing the Regional Action Plan, including at the subregional level.

63. The Committee welcomed an update by FAO on the progress of work at the global level.

64. The Committee adopted decision 3/6.

(b) Environment statistics

65. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

66. Representatives of the following countries made statements: China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan, Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; New Zealand; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; and Samoa.

67. Representatives of the following observers made statements: Department of Economic and Social Affairs; FAO; International Labour Organization (ILO); Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

68. The Committee stressed the need for national statistics systems in the region to improve their capacity to produce and disseminate basic environmental statistics.

69. The Committee decided that future work in the area of environmental statistics would use terminology, frameworks and standards endorsed by the United Nations, particularly by the United Nations Statistical Commission. In that regard, the Committee noted the importance of using terminology consistent with the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

70. The Committee noted that the United Nations Statistical Commission would consider at its forty-fourth session a global strategy for the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), as well as the endorsement of the revised Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES), which would include a core set of environment statistics.

71. The Committee recognized that countries in the region were at different stages of development of environment statistics and would continue to face diverse environmental challenges. One delegate informed the Committee that in small island States reliable environment statistics were critical but had yet to be well developed.

72. While stressing the importance of SEEA implementation, the Committee recognized the challenges faced by countries and the need for flexibility.

73. The Committee noted the pressing need for increased knowledge of the present and emerging international methodologies and agreed standards and guidelines.

74. One delegation noted the need for national statistical offices to take the lead in efforts to improve environment statistics and stressed the importance of including SEEA implementation in national statistics development plans.

75. Some delegations stressed the need for practical technical training in the area of environment statistics and noted that a manual for producers and users of environment statistics specific to the Asian and Pacific region would be useful.

76. The Committee encouraged national statistical offices to engage with groups working in the area of environment statistics, such as the Ulaanbaatar Group on Statistics for Economies Based on Natural Resources.

77. The Committee took note of the update given by ILO on the development of an international definition and associated technical guidelines for measuring green jobs. The Committee also took note of plans to pursue work related to the compilation of environmental-economic accounts and related statistics by FAO and OECD.

78. The Committee adopted decision 3/7.

(c) Monitoring the development agenda beyond 2015

79. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

80. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Indonesia; Japan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Philippines; Republic of Korea; and Russian Federation.

81. Representatives of the following observers made statements: United Nations Statistics Division.

82. The Committee took note of the multiple ongoing processes to consult on the global development agenda beyond 2015, including the development of global sustainable development goals. It recognized the role of the United Nations regional commissions in that process, as outlined in the outcome document of Rio+20.²

83. The Committee emphasized the need for the statistical community to be actively engaged at an early stage of the relevant processes so as to play a role in defining the monitoring framework for the development agenda. In particular, the Committee stressed that national experiences and lessons learned from the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals could be valuable inputs to the global, regional and national consultations on the global development agenda beyond 2015.

84. The Committee welcomed the report by OECD on measuring well-being and fostering the progress of societies. It recognized the important initiatives undertaken by a number of member States to develop measures that complement the gross domestic product. It emphasized the importance of adapting the well-being framework to take into consideration unique regional circumstances.

85. In considering the actions recommended by OECD, the Committee suggested that, as an initial step, an informal group of experts currently actively among countries be formed to share experiences and ideas.

86. The Committee welcomed the information provided by Japan regarding a planned regional consultation meeting on the global development agenda beyond 2015, to be hosted by Indonesia in March 2013 with support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). It noted that the meeting could serve as an opportunity to launch the planned ADB/ESCAP/UNDP Asia-Pacific MDG report 2012/2013.

D. Agenda item 5 **Coordination of statistical capacity-building activities**

(a) Statistical training

87. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

88. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; China; Indonesia; Japan; Maldives; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; and Samoa.

89. The Committee recognized the importance of coordination of statistical training for the effective implementation of its regional statistics development programmes. It expressed appreciation for the effective work of the Working Group on the Regional Coordination of Statistical Training.

² See General Assembly resolution 66/288.

90. Given the specific mandate of the Governing Council of SIAP, the Committee agreed that the advisory body should be independent of the Governing Council, but that the Governing Council should be represented on the advisory body.

91. One delegation stressed the importance of in-country training and on-the-job training through a South-South cooperation arrangement, and suggested that such training could be facilitated by the advisory body.

92. The Committee welcomed the offers of China and the Russian Federation to provide financial and technical support for statistical training in the region.

93. The Committee adopted decision 3/8.

(b) Regional partnership

94. The Committee had before it a document issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

95. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Bhutan; India; Indonesia; Malaysia; New Zealand; and Sri Lanka.

96. The Committee expressed appreciation for the work of the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific. It noted with gratitude the active participation of partners in various regional initiatives of the Committee. In particular, the Committee recognized the contributions of the partners to the efforts of the Working Group on the Regional Coordination of Statistical Training.

97. The Committee encouraged partners to continue to collaborate and to further align their work and available resources with the Committee's regional statistics development programmes, in particular their training components.

**E. Agenda item 6
Items for information**

- (a) International Comparison Program;
- (b) Informal sector and informal employment statistics;
- (c) Gender statistics;
- (d) Disability statistics;
- (e) Tourism statistics;
- (f) Statistics of international trade in services;
- (g) Labour statistics;
- (h) Disaster statistics.

98. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

99. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; India; and Indonesia.

100. The representative of the following observer made a statement: ILO.

101. The Committee welcomed an update provided by ILO on the progress of work at the global level on the revision of standards on labour force and work statistics. The delegation of Australia informed the Committee that it had become actively involved in the ILO revision process on standards for labour force and work statistics. The delegation requested the Committee to provide inputs on the proposed revisions so that the views of Asian and Pacific countries could be conveyed and reflected during the Tripartite Meeting of Experts in Labour Statistics on the Advancement of Employment and Unemployment Statistics, which would be held in January 2013.

102. The Committee was informed that ILO was involved in publishing a manual on surveys of informal employment and the informal sector.

103. One delegation emphasized the importance of enhancing tourism statistics to include better data collection on movements of people from neighbouring countries and the economic impact of those movements.

104. One delegation drew the attention of the Committee to the importance of taking into consideration as part of international trade statistics the illegal movement of goods and services.

F. Agenda item 7
Reports brought to the attention of the Committee

(a) Bureau

105. The Committee had before it a document issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

106. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; India; New Zealand; and Thailand.

107. The Committee expressed appreciation to the Bureau for its excellent work. In that regard, the Committee commended the Bureau members for their service, especially the Chair of the Bureau, Mr. Brian Pink, for his guidance and leadership.

108. The Committee welcomed the establishment, on the initiative of its outgoing Chair, of an informal network of the Chairs of the regional statistical intergovernmental forums, the purpose of the network being to share experiences and exchange views to influence the global statistics development agenda.

(b) Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

109. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

110. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Bhutan; Japan; Maldives; and Samoa.

111. The Committee welcomed the oral and written reports on the seventh and eighth sessions and the 2012 interim session of the Governing Council of SIAP.

112. The Committee reiterated the importance of training for statistics development in the region and welcomed the increased cash contributions by many members as a result of the call issued by the Governing Council in early 2012.

113. In reference to the continuing resource constraints faced by SIAP, the delegation of Japan, as the host country of SIAP, appealed to the members of the Committee to support the Institute through increased cash contributions.

114. Several countries recognized the importance of the courses by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and expressed concern that two such courses would be discontinued based on the result of the recent training needs survey by JICA. The Committee emphasized the necessity of improving communication between JICA country offices and national statistical offices of member States to ensure that the surveys properly reflect the training needs of national statistical systems.

G. Agenda item 8
Consideration of the future focus of the Statistics subprogramme of the ESCAP secretariat

115. The Committee had before it a document issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

116. Representatives of the following countries made statements: New Zealand; and Philippines.

117. In response to a query on the content and format of the shared document, the secretariat clarified that it remained fully committed to service the Committee and its subgroups.

118. One delegation drew the attention of the Committee to the importance of the work on ICT indicators and associated emerging issues, such as trade in ICT services and gender dimensions. That delegation recalled the work of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, and expressed appreciation for the organization of the side event on ICT statistics.

H. Agenda item 9
Consideration of draft resolutions and decisions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session

119. Member States were invited to discuss and review ideas to be considered in draft resolutions on statistics development in the Asia-Pacific region that could be proposed to the Commission for further deliberation and endorsement at its sixty-ninth session.

120. The Committee welcomed the commitment by member States to sponsor and co-sponsor draft resolutions as follows:

(a) In connection with recommendation 3/1, Australia expressed its intention to sponsor a draft resolution. Indonesia and Samoa and offered to co-sponsor the draft resolution;

(b) In connection with recommendation 3/2, the Philippines expressed its intention to sponsor a draft resolution. Australia offered to co-sponsor the draft resolution.

I. Agenda item 10

Other matters

121. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Indonesia; Malaysia; Maldives; and Philippines.

122. Two delegations noted the importance of improving the use of administrative data for statistical purposes across different areas of official statistics and highlighted the related challenges, such as over- or under-estimation.

123. One delegation noted the importance of quality assurance frameworks for national statistical systems.

J. Agenda item 11

Adoption of the report of the Committee

124. The Committee adopted the present report on 14 December 2012.

III. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

125. The Committee on Statistics held its third session in Bangkok from 12 to 14 December 2012. The session was opened by the Minister of Information and Communication Technology of Thailand. During the opening, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP and the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made statements.

B. Attendance

126. The Committee session was attended by representatives of the following member countries of ESCAP: Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; New Zealand; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; United States of America; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam. The session was also attended by representatives of the following associate members: American Samoa; Cook Islands; Hong Kong, China; and Macao, China.

127. The session was also attended by a representative of South Africa.

128. Representatives of the following programmes and funds of the United Nations attended: United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Population Fund; United Nations Human Settlements Programme; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; and United Nations Children's Fund. A representative of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction also attended.

129. A representative of the following secretariat unit attended: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division.

130. Representatives of the following specialized agencies and related organizations attended: International Labour Organization; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Fund for Agricultural Development; and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

131. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Asian Development Bank; Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Secretariat of the Pacific Community; and Statistical, Economic and Social Research Training Centre for Islamic Countries.

132. The following non-governmental organization was represented: DevInfo.

133. The total attendance included 159 persons from ESCAP members and associate members and 36 persons from other organizations.

C. Election of officers

134. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chair:	Ms. Carmelita Erieta (Philippines)
Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Gerelt-Od Ganbaatar (Mongolia) Mr. Ki-Jong Woo (Republic of Korea) Mr. Sefuiva Reupena Muagututi'a (Samoa)
Member:	Ms. Aishath Shahuda (Maldives)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Geoff Bascand (New Zealand)

D. Agenda

135. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening statements;
 - (b) Election of the Bureau;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Strategic direction and functioning of the Committee on Statistics:
 - (a) Proposal of the Bureau for future work;
 - (b) Review of the functioning of the Committee;
 - (c) Monitoring framework for the work of the Committee.
3. Regional initiatives:
 - (a) Economic statistics;
 - (b) Social statistics;
 - (c) Civil registration and vital statistics;
 - (d) Modernization of statistical information systems.

4. Global initiatives:
 - (a) Agricultural and rural statistics;
 - (b) Environment statistics;
 - (c) Monitoring the development agenda beyond 2015.
5. Coordination of statistical capacity-building activities:
 - (a) Statistical training;
 - (b) Regional partnership.
6. Items for information:
 - (a) International Comparison Program;
 - (b) Informal sector and informal employment statistics;
 - (c) Gender statistics;
 - (d) Disability statistics;
 - (e) Tourism statistics;
 - (f) Statistics of international trade in services;
 - (g) Labour statistics;
 - (h) Disaster statistics.
7. Reports brought to the attention of the Committee:
 - (a) Bureau;
 - (b) Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.
8. Consideration of the future focus of the statistics subprogramme of the ESCAP secretariat.
9. Consideration of draft resolutions and decisions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session.
10. Other matters.
11. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

E. Side event

136. A side event on measuring ICT for development was held in the morning of 14 December. The event highlighted the role of ICT as an accelerator of development. In that context, participants noted that ICT statistics were an important part of the evidence base for effective policymaking.

137. Participants at the side event shared experiences and views related to the compilation of ICT statistics.

Annex

List of documents

Symbol	Title	Agenda item
<i>General series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/1	Proposed future work of the Committee on Statistics	2(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/2	Review of the functioning of the Committee on Statistics	2(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/3	A proposed approach to monitoring the work of the Committee on Statistics	2(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/4	Report of the Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/5	The strategic approach and plan of work of the Technical Advisory Group on Social Statistics	3(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/5/Add.1	Core set of population and social statistics for Asia and the Pacific	3(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/6	Civil registration and vital statistics: Make every life count	3(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/6/Add.1	Make every life count: Regional strategic plan for the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific	3(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/7	Regional cooperation on the modernization of official statistics	3(d)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/8	Report of the Steering Group for Agricultural Statistics	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/9	Improvement of environment statistics in the context of sustainable development and green economy policy in Asia and the Pacific	4(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/10	Advancing the global development agenda beyond 2015: Potential contributions by national statistical systems	4(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/11	Work of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on measuring well-being and fostering the progress of societies	4(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/12	Report of the Working Group on the Regional Coordination of Statistical Training	5(a)

Symbol	Title	Agenda item
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/13	Summary of the activities of the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010-2012	5(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/14	Report on the activities of the Bureau since the second session of the Committee	7(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/15	Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its seventh session	7(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/15/Add.1	Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its interim session	7(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/16	Intended outputs of the programme of work for 2012-2013 and proposed strategic framework for 2014-2015 for the Statistics subprogramme	8
<i>Limited series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/L.1/Rev.1	Annotated provisional agenda (revised)	
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/L.2	Draft report	
<i>Information series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/1 (English only)	Information for participants	
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/2 (English only)	List of participants	
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/3/Rev. 1	Tentative programme (revised)	
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/5 (English only)	Documents for the information of the Committee on Statistics on item 2 of the provisional agenda	2
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/6 (English only)	Documents for the information of the Committee on Statistics on item 4 of the provisional agenda	4
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/7 and Add.1 (English only)	Documents for the information of the Committee on Statistics on item 5 of the provisional agenda	5
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/8 (English only)	Documents for the information of the Committee on Statistics on item 6 of the provisional agenda	6
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/8/Add.1 (Russian only)	Document for the information of the Committee on Statistics on item 6 of the provisional agenda	6
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/8/Add.2 (English only)	Documents for the information of the Committee on Statistics on item 6 of the provisional agenda	6

Symbol	Title	Agenda item
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/INF/9 and Add.1 (English only)	Documents for the information of the Committee on Statistics on item 3 of the provisional agenda	3
<i>Conference room papers</i>		
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/CRP.1 (English only)	Implementation Plan for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/CRP.2 (English only)	Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/CRP.3 (English only)	Proposed composition of the Regional Steering Committee	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(3)/CRP.4 (English only)	Intended outputs of the programme of work for 2014-2015 for the Statistics subprogramme	8