



National Reporting to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development: The Process

National Information Analysis Unit

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Introduction

The following presentation succinctly explains how National Reporting has taken place since the adoption of Agenda 21, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992.

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) met at its organizational session, for the first time in 1993 and, by 1994, the first CSD Decision on National Reporting was adopted.

The following illustrates the main features of the national reporting process from its beginnings to the present.

National Reporting Process: 1994-1996

National Information Analysis Unit

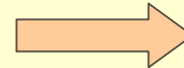
1. Guidelines developed; No distinct structure yet defined.
2. Need for integration of Cross-sectoral issues into Sectoral themes.
3. Learning process in drafting guidelines.
4. Technological constraints.
5. Preparations of 1997 Country Profiles Series started.

Country Level

1. Institutions & legislations being set up & revised.
2. National Councils on SD (NCSD) and Natl.focal points also being set up to coordinate Agenda 21 requirements.
3. Learning process in preparing national reports.
4. Technological constraints.
5. 1995, General Assembly Res.50/113, Preparation of Country Profiles.

1997: Earth Summit+5

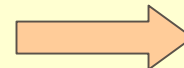
1997 Country Profiles Series



107 Country Profiles are published

Launching of the Unit's National Information Website

www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natinfo



Click the map for country information, or choose a country from the list below



National Reporting Process: 1998-2002

National Information Analysis Unit

1. Guidelines' structure becomes more defined.
2. Integration of Cross-sectoral Issues into Sectoral themes.
3. Learning process results:
 - Increased use of national information in preparing CSD reports.

Country Level

1. Institutions & legislation to a large extent, are in place.
2. NCSDs and Natl. Focal Points to coordinate Agenda 21 requirements.
3. Learning process results:
 - Experience improves quality of National Reports
 - UN Guidelines are more widely used by Member States.
 - Countries request CSD Secretariat to make more use of Nat'l Reports.

1998-2002 (Continued)

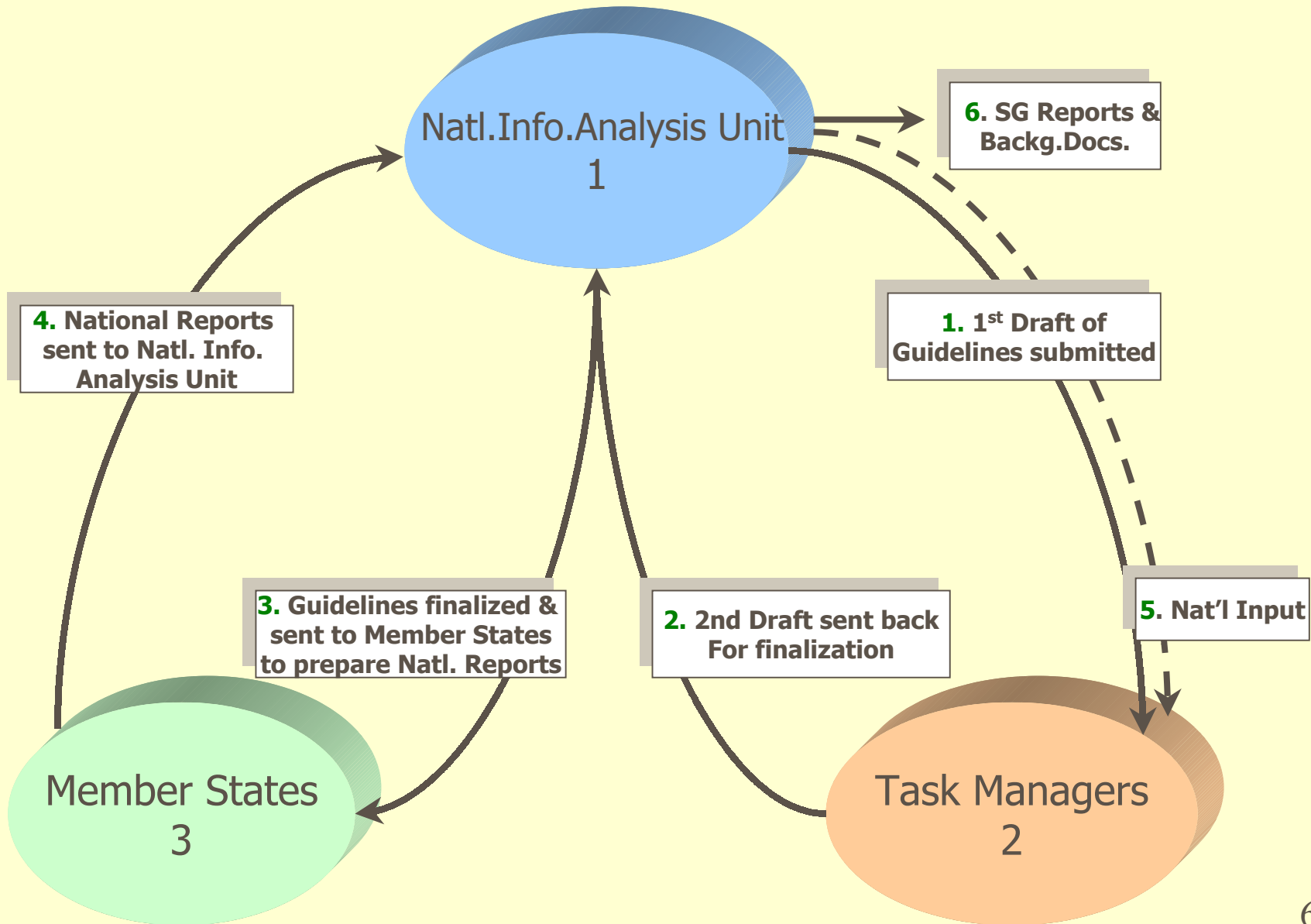
National Information Analysis Unit

4. Technological capabilities enhanced.
5. Preparation of 2002 Country Profiles Series started.
6. National Implementation of Agenda 21: A Summary; and Report on the National Focal Points Meeting, March and August 2002.
7. Development of the National Information Database on Sustainable Development.
8. Web-enabling of the Database.

Country Level

4. Technological capabilities enhanced.
5. 1999, CSD-7 decision 7/4: requests preparation of Country Profiles.
6. 2001, CSD-10 decision 2001/PC/1: requests Trends report on overall implementation of Agenda 21.
7. National reporting preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development started.

Guidelines: The Process



Guidelines: Structure

Website/Database Format

Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies

Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations

Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans

Decision-Making: Major Group Involvement

Programmes and Projects

Status

Challenges

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising

Information (incl. indicators)

Research and Technologies

Financing

Cooperation

2002 Country Profile Format

Decision-Making

Programmes and Projects

Status

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising

Information (incl. indicators)

Research and Technologies

Financing

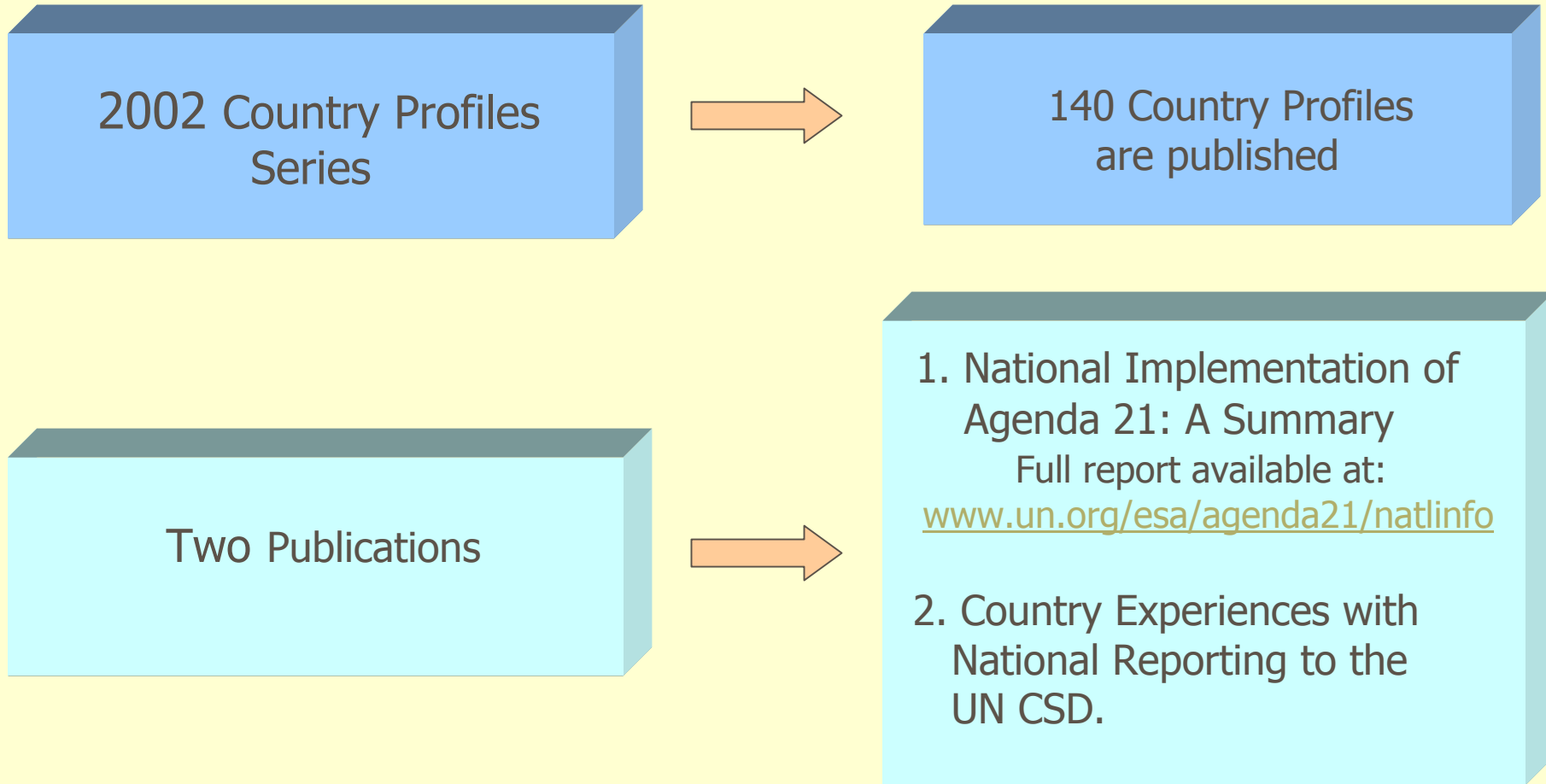
Cooperation

List of CSD Reports on National Information

- 2002** - 2002 Country Profile Series
 - National Implementation of Agenda 21: A Summary (Full report available at the Unit's webpage)
 - Country Experiences with National Reporting to the UN CSD
- 2001** - Report of the Secretary-General on Sustainable Production, Distribution and Use of Energy: Trends in National Implementation (E/CN.17/2002/12)
 - Report of the Secretary-General on National Reporting to the CSD (E/CN.17/2001/14)
 - Assessment of Progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the National Level: Table of Key Coordination of Mechanisms and Actions (Backg.Doc.#17)
 - List of Official National Sustainable Development Contacts (Backg.Doc.#16)
- 2000** - Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development: Trends in National Implementation - National Reporting to the CSD (E/CN.17/2000/16)
 - Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Agenda 21 at the National Level: Table of Key Coordination of Mechanisms and Actions (Backg.Doc.#12)
 - List of Official National Sustainable Development Contacts (Backg.Doc.#13)
- 1999** - Addendum to the SG Report on Oceans and Seas: Trends in National Implementation (E/CN.17/1994/4/Add.1)
 - Report of the Secretary-General on National Reporting to the CSD (E/CN.17/1999/10)
 - Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Agenda 21 at the National Level: Table of Key Coordination of Mechanisms and Actions (Backg.Doc.#12)
 - List of Official National Sustainable Development Contacts (Backg.Doc.#13)
- 1998** - Report of the Secretary-General on National Reporting to the CSD (E/CN.17/1998/8)
 - Modalities for the Exchange of National Experiences at the Regional Level (E/CN.17/1998/9)
 - Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Agenda 21 at the National Level: Summary Tables and Graphs (Backg.Doc.#23)
 - Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Agenda 21 at the National Level: Table of Key Coordination Mechanism and Actions (Backg.Doc.#24)
 - Directory of Official National Sustainable Development Contacts (Backg.Doc.#25)
 - List of World Wide Websites identified by Governments (Backg.Doc.#26)
- 1997** - 1997 Country Profiles Series
 - Report of the Secretary-General on Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Agenda 21 at the National Level (E/CN.17/1997/5)
- 1996** - Report of the Secretary-General on National Information (E/CN.17/1996/19)
- 1995** - Report of the Secretary-General on National Information (E/CN.17/1995/24)
- 1994** - Report of the Secretary-General on National Information (E/CN.17/1994/9)

2002: World Summit on Sustainable Development

publication of the
CD-ROM "Country Profiles: National Implementation of Agenda 21"



Future Activities

The UN Database on Sustainable Development, currently under construction, will contain the following key features:

- **Structure:** **Continuity** of Website & Country Profile Format.
- **Integration:** **Consistency** of integrating cross-sectoral issues into sectoral themes.
- **Data Accessibility:** **Completeness** of information.
- **Technology:** Simple technology used for fast downloading of information.
- **Query Function:** capacity to pull out specific information as requested by user.
- **Reporting Status:** Able to generate national information status reports.
- **Multiple Selection:** Ability to select individual or multiple countries against one issue and sub-issue.
- **Selection of Countries by Language:** Ability to retrieve information by selecting language category (English/French/Spanish).
- **Web Submissions:** Ability to send inputs via web.
- **Downloading:** Ability to print specific requests.

Mutual Benefits of the Database

National Information Analysis Unit

1. Better focus in the preparation of the guidelines; Avoid repeated requests of information already available.
2. Facilitate retrieval of Natl. Reports; Facilitate preparation of the Reports by the Unit and others, as required.
3. Facilitate management of National Reports.

Country Level

1. Enhance monitoring of information; facilitate coordination and preparation of National Reports.
2. National Focal Points able to send National Reports directly via web; Facilitate submissions of issues as changes in the national level occur; Close monitoring is essential.
3. First-time-reporting countries able to build information resource base systematically & quickly.

Conclusion

The development of the database constitutes one of the future activities that will be put into place by the National Information Analysis Unit.

The Unit is the only worldwide repository of national information on sustainable development. In the years to come, the use of information by all will be further maximized for research, report writing and exchange of information.

This will ensure not only the continuity, consistency and completeness of the national reporting process but more importantly, the availability of information on progress being made towards sustainable development.

For information regarding the Unit's activities, please visit our website at:

<http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natinfo>