

Implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting in Latin America and the Caribbean

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Background



ECLAC carried out a survey to find out the situation of environmental and climate change statistics, indicators and environmental accounts in LAC.



There are three previous exercises published in different issues of the ECLAC Series of Statistical and Prospective Studies (2007; 2009; 2017).



The 2023 survey year is designed as an update of previous years, which guarantees the temporal comparability of the information.



In addition, it took advantage of online platforms to facilitate the process of gathering, integrating and analyzing information.

Main results



Offers a broader picture by incorporating specific sections on environmental accounts and climate change.



The environment statistics institutional departments are still not at the same level as those of economic and social statistics.



Allows the identification of key challenges and needs for progress, especially in human resources and financing.



Shows significant progress in the status of Environmental Statistics (ES) in LAC, reflected in greater development and institutionalization.



Reveals an increase in the compilation of environmental accounts, although this development is partial and uneven.



Shows progress in new climate change statistics, though indicators production in the area of adaptation remains a challenge.

Evolution of Environmental Statistics in LAC



1999

- Rio (92): Mandate for the production of environmental information
- No environmental statistical operations had been initiated
- Two countries: compendium of environmental statistics
- One country: national environmental indicators and SD indicators
- One country: pilot program of environmental accounts
- Most countries lacked inter-institutional coordination
- Lack of methodological documents in Spanish and Portuguese
- No regional network of institutions and experts



2009

Progress in:

- Further environmental statistical development
- Progress in inter-institutional coordination (tables or committees)
- Development of regional networks and GTFA CEA + GTIA ILAC + institutionalization of EA units

Challenges:

- Insufficient EA production to meet growing demand
- Heterogeneity in the level of development between countries persists



2017

Progress in:

- 22 countries have a legal framework to produce EA
- 8 average people dedicated to EA (including ONE+MMA)*
- 13 countries have an Inter-Agency Committee
- Inter-institutional coordination improved
- 8 countries with national EA plans
- Creation of the ECLAC EA area
- Regional projects strengthening EA

Challenges:

- Some countries have not yet started working on EA
- Only 33% of NSOs have a specific ES unit
- Insufficient EA production to build indicators



2023

Progress in:

- 22 countries have a legal framework to produce EA
- 22 Dedicated EA Staffed Countries
- 2–6 people dedicated to EA
- 17 countries have an Inter-Agency Committee
- Better inter-agency coordination (14 countries have a legal basis)
- 11 countries with national EA plans
- Creation of the ECLAC EA Unit
- Regional projects continue to strengthen EA

Challenges:

- Some countries still do not work in Environmental Accounts
- Areas that work in ES are not at the same level as economic and social statistics

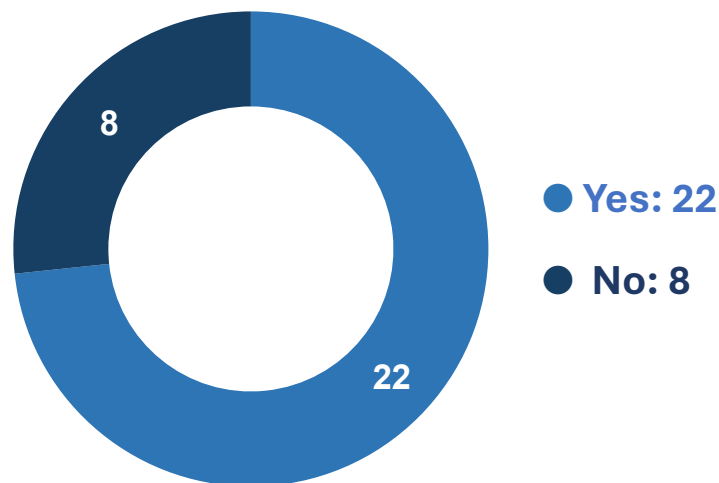
*ONE+MMA = countries' National Statistics Office and Ministry of Environment

Source: Author's elaboration based on ECLAC Series of Statistical and Prospective Studies (2007; 2009; 2017, 2023).

Number of countries with dedicated staff, and with committee



Countries with staff dedicated exclusively to EA work



15 in Latin America



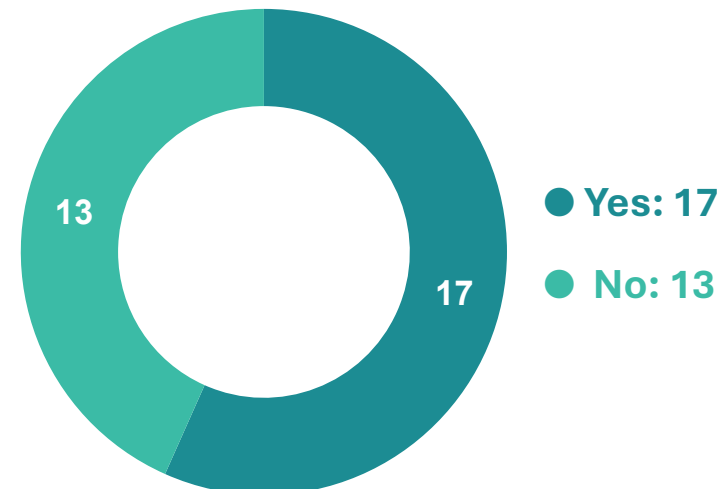
7 in the Caribbean



All Latin American countries have statistical and environmental legislation.



Countries with an inter-agency committee, commission or group



13 in Latin America



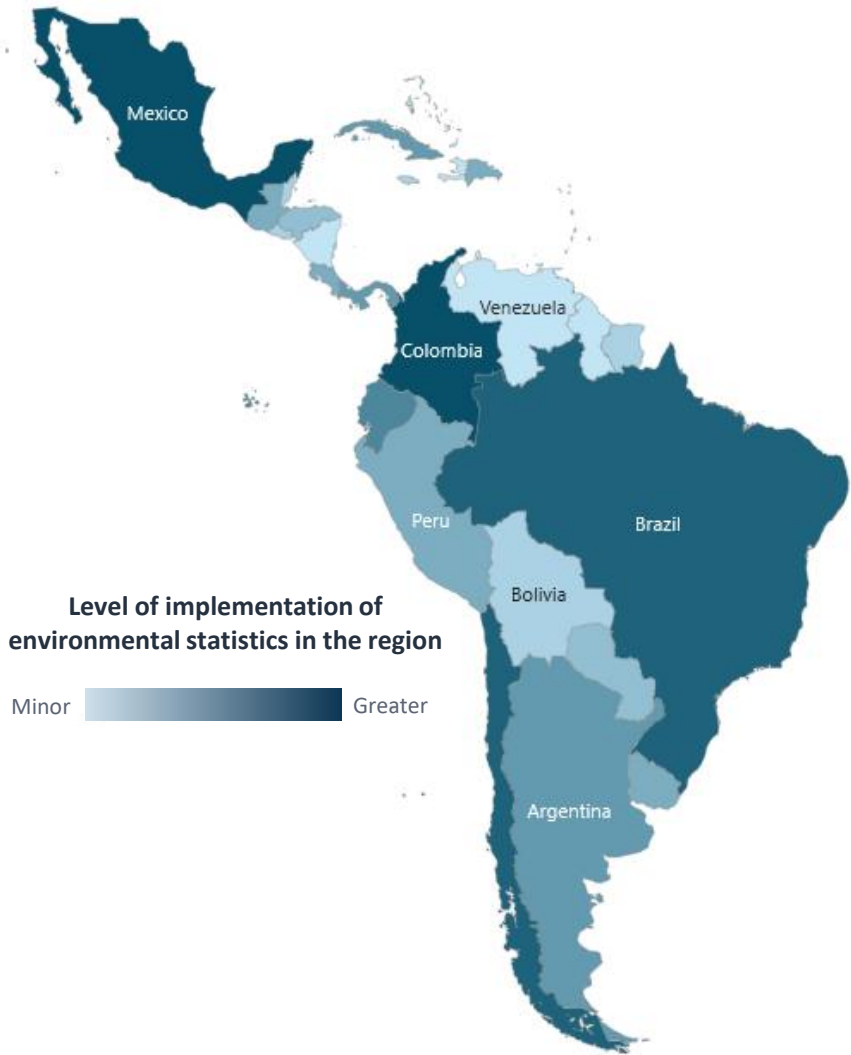
4 in the Caribbean



14 countries have a legal basis for the committee.

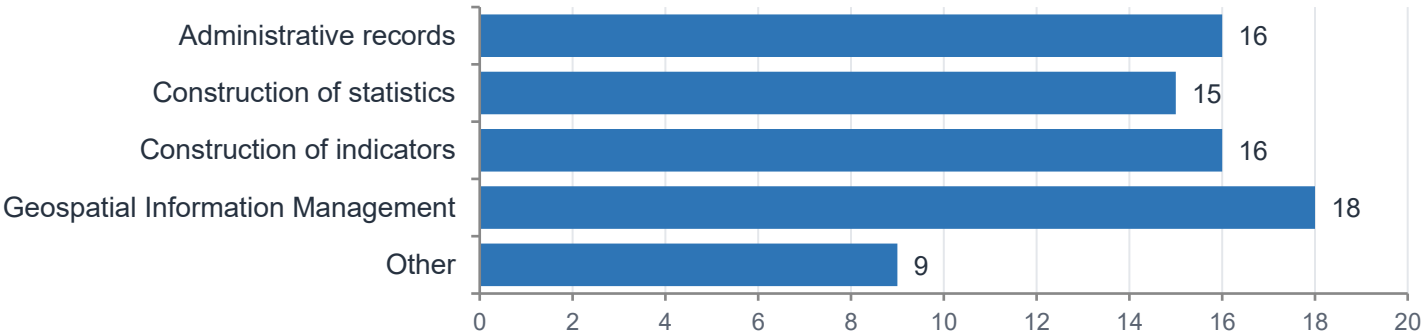
 The existence of dedicated staff and inter-agency committees remains uneven across LAC.

Status of Environmental Statistics

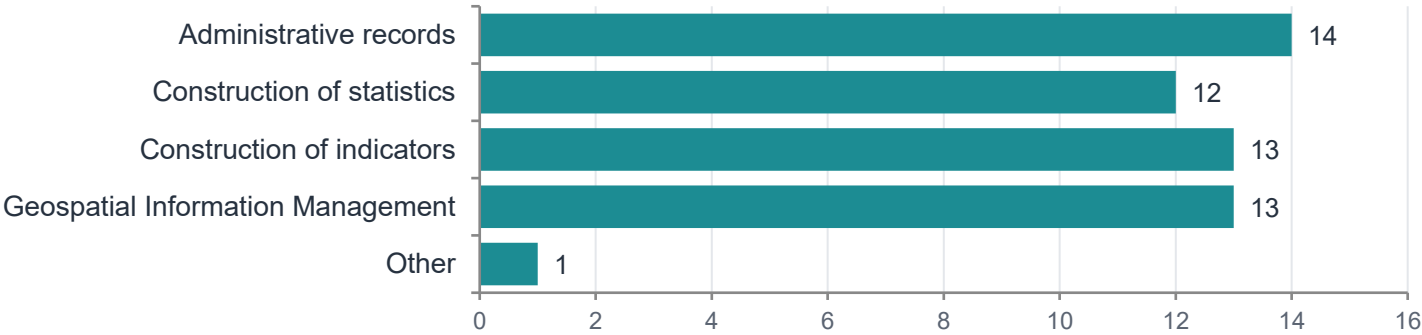


Detection of statistical needs, indicators and environmental accounts

Latin America



The Caribbean



Source: ECLAC, 2023 SEEA survey.

Sub-regional identification of the main challenges to developing ES/EA

Key Insights



Human resources is the main constraint in both sub-regions.



Financial resources are a major challenge, especially in LA.

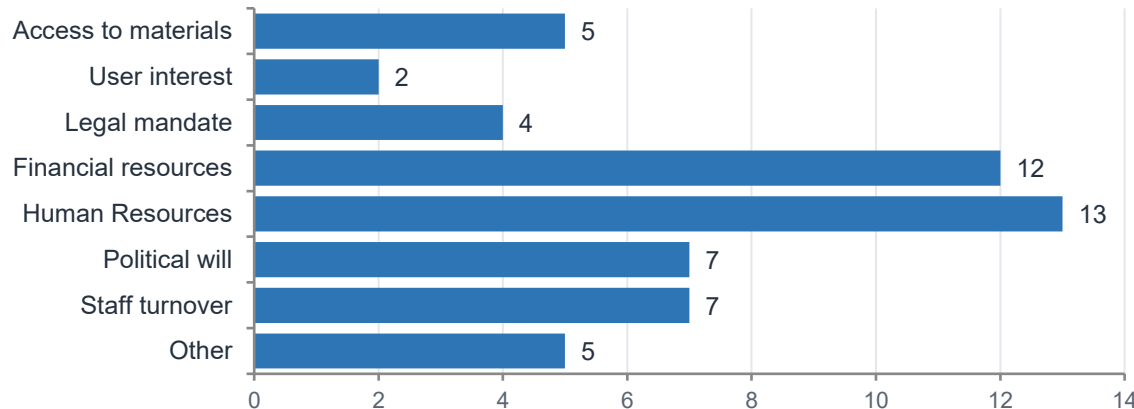


Legal mandate is more frequently cited in the C than in LA



Latin America

18 countries



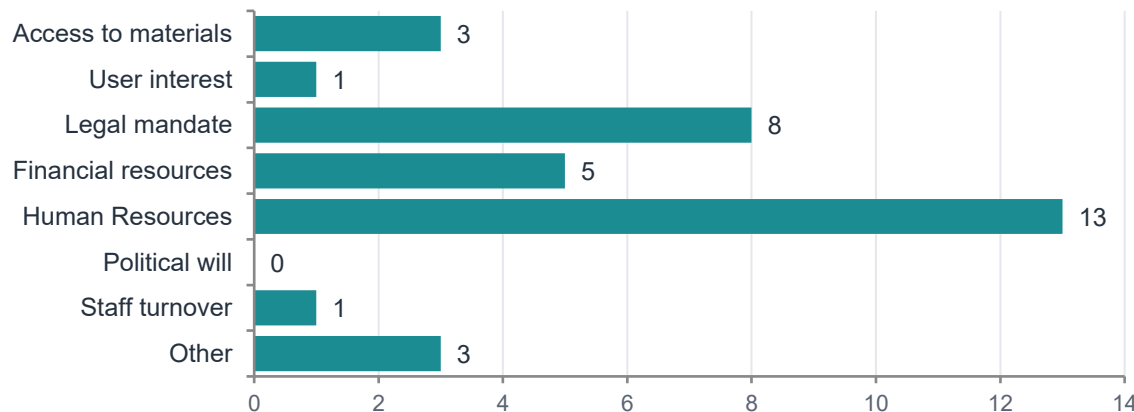
Top challenges

1. Human Resources (13)
2. Financial resources (12)



The Caribbean

12 countries



Top challenges

1. Human Resources (13)
2. Legal mandate (8)

Implementation of the Environmental Accounts in LAC

Key Insights



Water and SEEA accounts are the most widely implemented in the region.

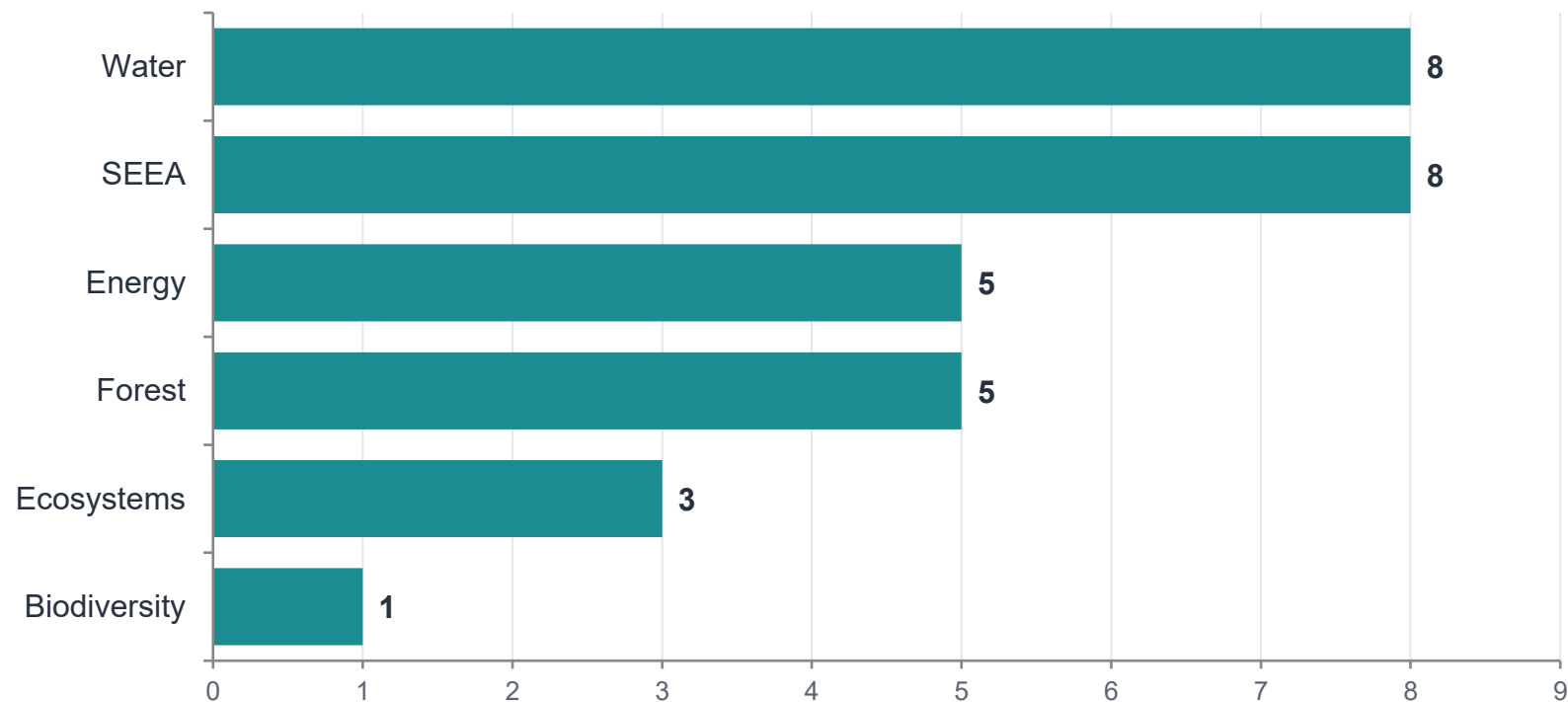


Forest and Energy accounts are in place in 5 countries.



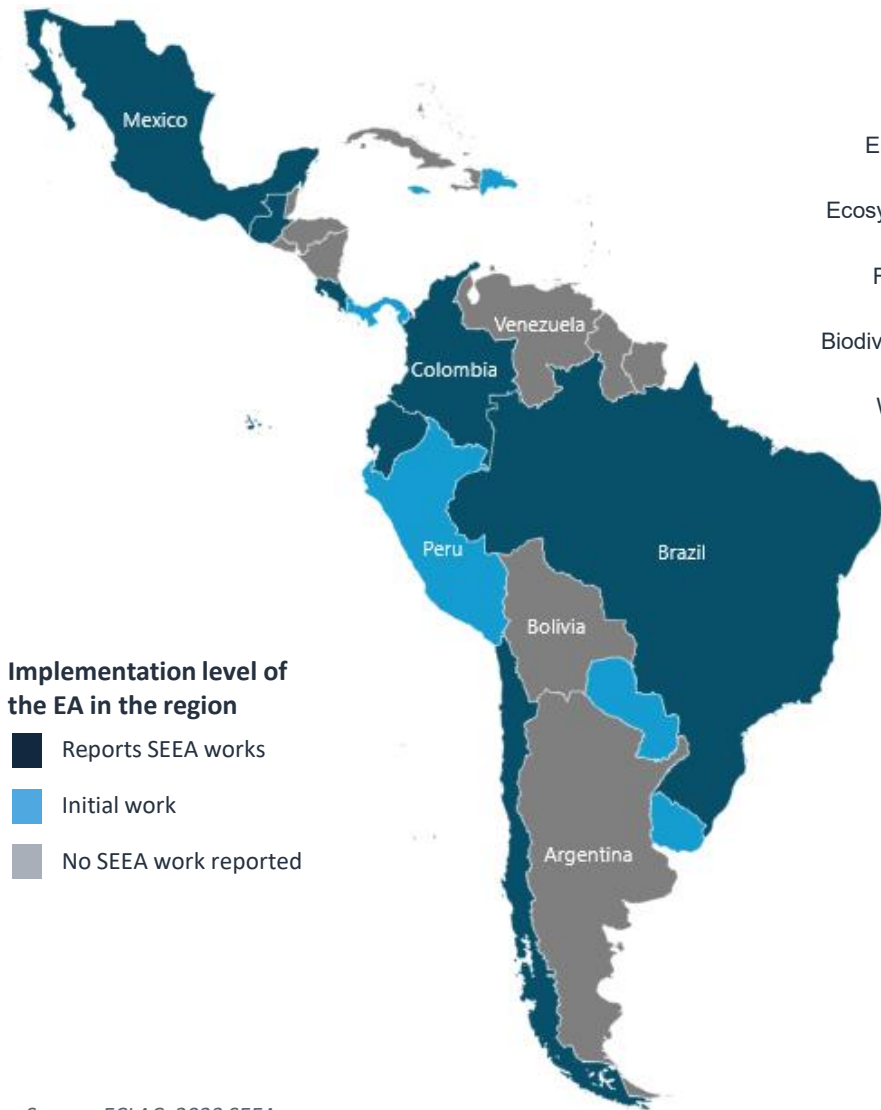
Biodiversity accounts remain the least implemented.

Number of countries implementing each type of environmental account



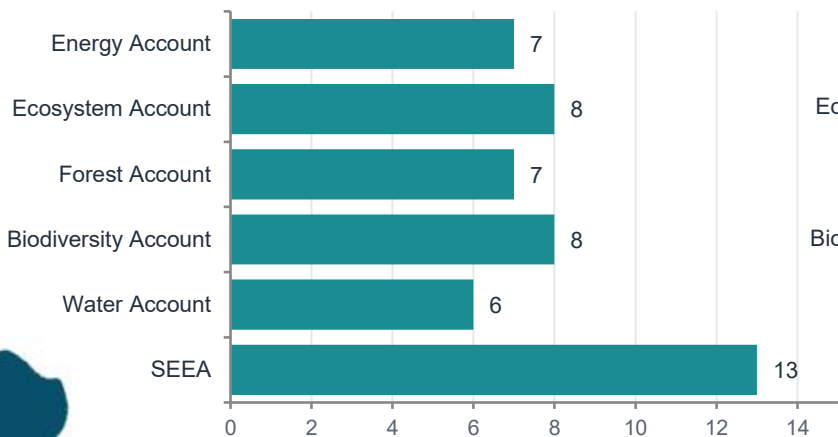
Implementation is concentrated in **natural resource-related accounts**, with water and SEEA leading the way in LAC.

Status of the Environmental Accounts in LAC

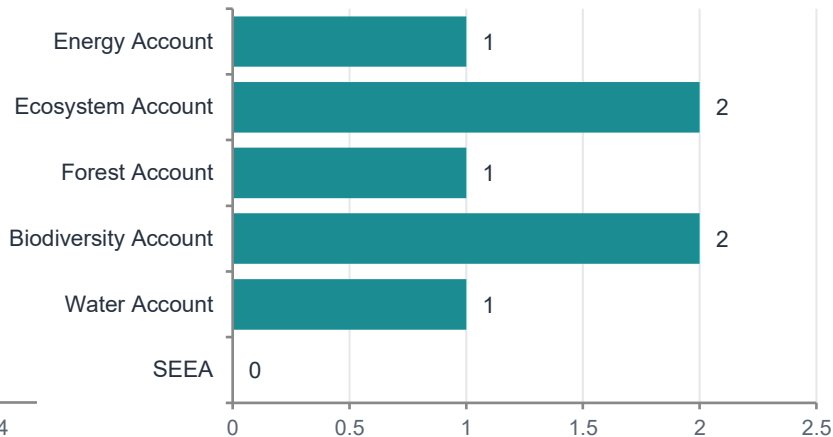


Detection of needs in environmental accounts

Latin America



The Caribbean



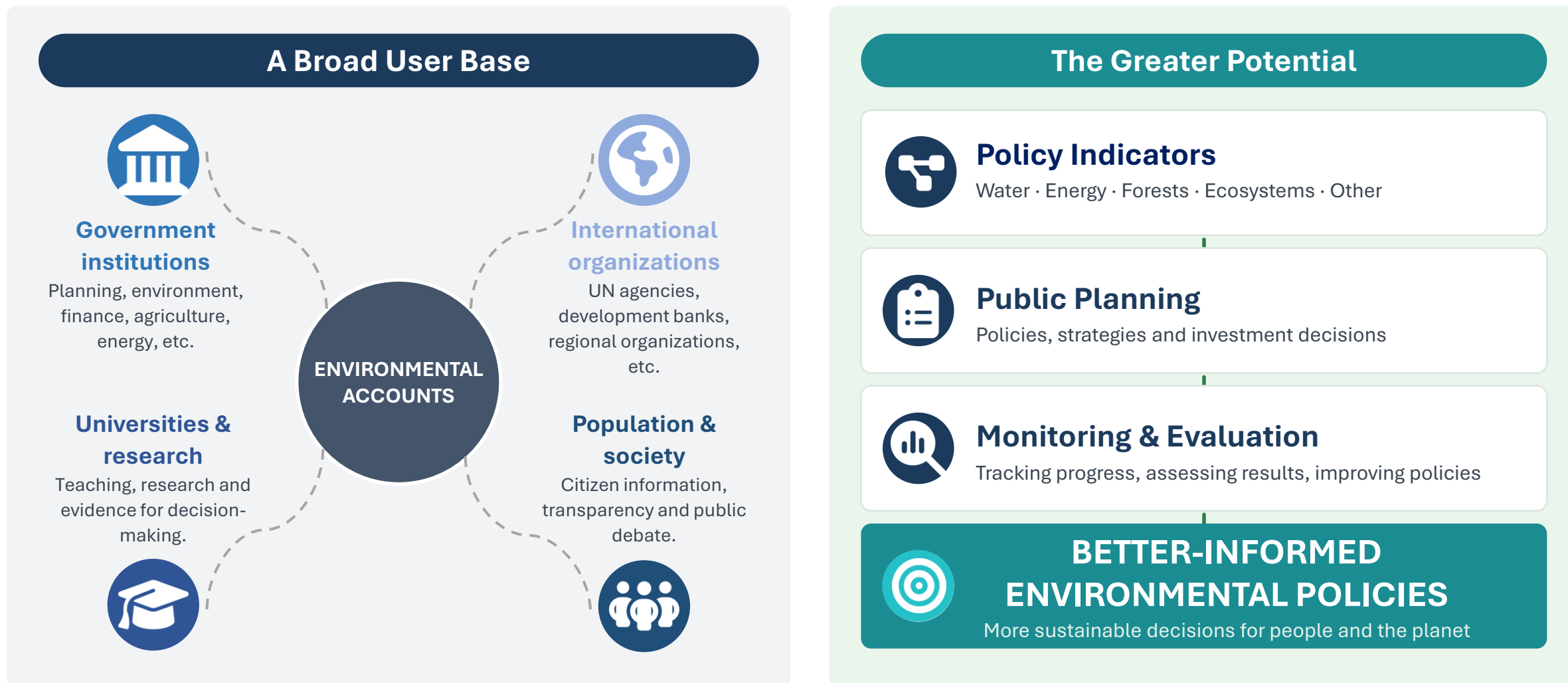
Stable work: more than 5 EA	Stable work: between 1 and 4 EA	Initial work: pilot accounts	Interest in produce EA	Not compile EA
Mexico* Colombia* Brazil* Guatemala*	Chile* Costa Rica* Ecuador Uruguay	Paraguay Peru Panama Jamaica Dominican Republic Saint Lucia Bahamas	Argentina Bolivia Venezuela Dominica	Nicaragua Honduras El Salvador Belize Cuba Saint Vincent & Grenadines Grenada Trinidad and Tobago Suriname

Source: ECLAC, 2023 SEEA survey.

Note: *Countries that have institutionalized the development of environmental accounts or have a staffing and budget program.
Source: ECLAC and WAVES surveys and statistical studies..

The Use of Environmental Accounts in Public Policy

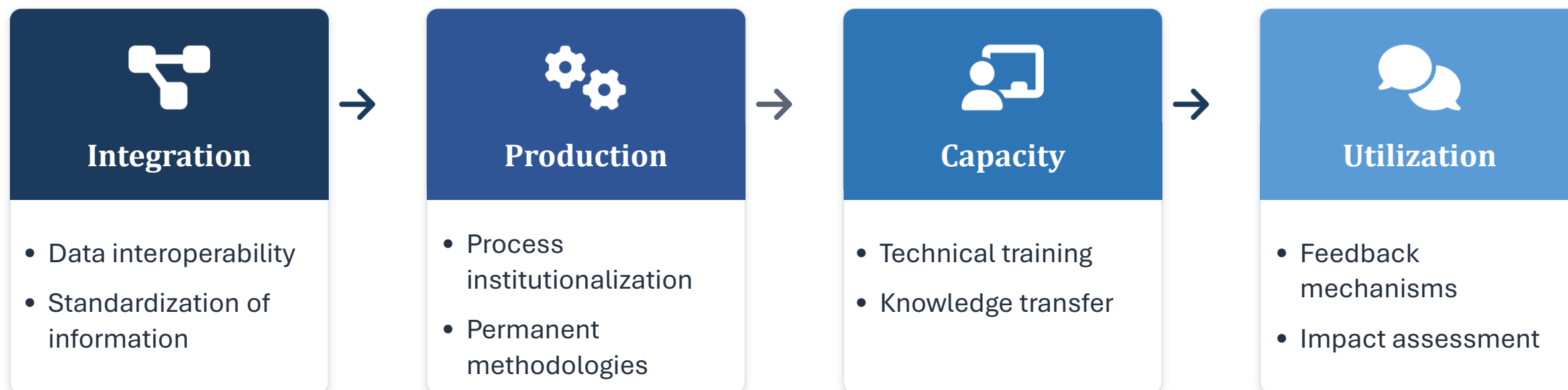
Environmental accounts serve a wide range of users — but their greatest potential lies in policy integration



Technical Training Needs

Institutional transition for process sustainability

Four key areas for institutional continuity



A country may develop a pilot account — a significant advance — without yet having an institutionalized system of statistical production.
The goal is to move from environmental accounting projects to institutionalized, sustainable, decision-oriented statistical systems.

Conclusions (1 of 2)



Heterogeneous progress, persistent challenges

In general terms, the institutional development of environmental and climate change statistics, indicators, and accounts in the region is heterogeneous with progress, but with persistent challenges, as well as technical training needs.



Legal frameworks mostly established in Latin America

Although most countries in Latin America have established and consolidated their legal frameworks in this area, complexities in data generation and financing remain significant obstacles. Caribbean countries reported that the lack of legal frameworks is the second cause of the lack of progress in the subregion, after the lack of personnel.



Coordination mechanisms are improving, but incomplete

A large fraction of Latin American countries have formal coordination mechanisms to produce environmental statistics, but there is still a need to improve this institutional collaboration. In the case of the Caribbean, it remains a challenge for countries, although they report progress.

Conclusions (2 of 2)



Resource and staffing gaps persist

In terms of human and financial resources, although most Latin American countries have staff designated to manage environmental statistics, resource scarcity remains a common problem, along with staff turnover and lack of political will affecting budget designation.



Environmental account production remains limited

The development of environmental and economic accounts also faces obstacles, with half of the countries in Latin America lacking established procedures for its production. Although it remains an issue in future plans, regular publication of environmental accounting is still limited. For the Caribbean, implementation of this framework remains only a forward-looking perspective.



Quality, availability and accessibility need improvement

The region has made progress in the collection and generation of environmental statistics; however, it is necessary to improve their quality, availability and accessibility. Likewise, there are challenges in the use of administrative records for the generation of statistics, environmental indicators and environmental accounts.



Thank you



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