System of Environmental Economic Accounting

Second Expert Group Meeting and Training Session on SEEA-Related Indicators for the Global Biodiversity Framework

9 to 13 November 2026

Joint Research Centre of the European Commission

Ispra, Italy

Concept note and agenda

United Nations

Funded by the European Union

1 BACKGROUND

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was adopted at the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 15) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022. The GBF sets out an ambitious pathway to reach the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050. It comprises four actionable and measurable goals for 2050 and 23 targets for urgent action by 2030.

The GBF is supported by a monitoring framework, agreed by the CBD Parties in 2022 to measure and monitor their progress towards these goals and targets in a transparent and results-oriented manner. The metadata for the monitoring framework makes reference to the concepts and methods of the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) framework as the basis for calculating several GBF indicators. These include the GBF headline indicators A.2 (Extent of natural ecosystems) and B.1 (Services provided by ecosystems) that are drawn from the Ecosystem Extent and Ecosystem Services Accounts described in the SEEA-EA.

The project "SEEA-related indicators for the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)" was launched in 2024 to the help countries compile these SEEA-related indicators and facilitate their reporting to the GBF. This European Union (EU) funded project is being implemented by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and will be delivered via four outputs: 1) Developing guidelines for compiling the GBF headline indicators A.2 and B.1; 2) Testing the guidelines in three project countries (Indonesia, Uganda, Colombia); 3) Developing global ecosystem services data in the ARIES for SEEA platform; and, 4) Conducting capacity building activities.

In November 2025, a Task Team was convened under the auspices of the Technical Committee on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) to support the preparation of the guidelines for compiling the GBF headline indicators A.2 and B.1. Through discussions with the Task Team a first draft of the guidelines was developed. This draft was discussed at an in-person Expert Group Meeting (EGM) in February 2026. Following this first EGM and subsequent discussions with the participants, a third draft of the guidelines has been developed and has been tested with project countries. These are available from the SEEA-related GBF indicators: Project progress webpage.

This second EGM brings together around 25 experts from the Task Team, previous EGM and key strategic stakeholders in the GBF process and practitioners from the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting community to resolve the remining substantive issues for the compilation guidelines. The objective of the workshop is to review, discuss and develop solutions that address these remaining issues for the guidelines, drawing on the results of project country testing of the guidelines and other countries experiences in compiling these SEEA-Related GBF headline indicators. The expected outcome from the meeting is to resolve these issues and advance to a final draft of the compilation guidelines for compiling GBF headline indicators A.2 and B.1 suitable for global consultation.

2 VENUE AND CONTACT

The Second Expert Group Meeting and Training Session on SEEA-Related Indicators for the Global Biodiversity Framework will be held from the 9-13 November 2026 at the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, Ispra, Italy.

The venue address is: European Commission – Joint Research Centre, Via Enrico Fermi, 2749, 21027 Ispra (VA), Italy.

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3 MEETING ORGANIZATION

The detailed agenda for the meeting is provided in Section 4 of this concept note. The agenda is organized around presentations of countries' experiences in compiling GBF headline indicators A.2 and B.1 and experiences of developing global data and other tools to support compilation of ecosystem accounts and these indicators. These presentations will allow sharing of learning and experiences and to help support the main technical discussions. The main technical discussions to resolve outstanding issues are organized around a series of plenary and parallel sessions. The parallel sessions will focus the discussion on specific issues for A.2 and B.1 separately to make the most effective use of participants' time. Following each parallel session, outcomes of discussions will be shared in plenary. The third draft of the guidelines being tested by the project countries is available from the SEEA-related GBF indicators: Project progress webpage. This will provide the basis for the technical discussions at the EGM.

Either side of the EGM, a 2-Day training session will be delivered to introduce technicians from project and countries and other national representatives to the ARIES for SEEA platform and using its recent tool developments. This training will be delivered on Monday (9 November 2026) and Friday (13 November 2026). Further details and an agenda for this training program are provided in Section 5 of this concept note.

4 SECOND EXPERT GROUP MEETING AGENDA

Day 1: Tuesday, 10 November 2026

Session 1: Plenary		
08:30 to 09:00	Arrival and registration	
09:00 to 09:30	Welcome and introductions	
09:30 to 09:45	Project progress, EGM objectives and ways of working, Global review of how A.2 and B.1 were reported in February 2026.	
09:45 to 10:30	**Overview of the Compilation Guidelines (Advanced Draft) for Indicator A.2**, including: • Issues addressed from second draft to advanced draft • Recap of definitions of natural and anthropogenic ecosystem types • Summary of remaining issues to be addressed over the EGM	
10:30 to 11:00	**Overview of the Compilation Guidelines (Advanced Draft) for Indicator B.1**, including: • Issues addressed from second draft to advanced draft • Summary of remaining issues to be addressed over the EGM	
11:00 to 11:30 – Photo, Tea & coffee break		
Session 2: Plenary		
11:30 to 12:00	**Country experiences: Uganda** Progress on the indicators since February EGM and experiences from reporting on the A.2 and B.1 Indicators in 7th NR, with a deeper dive on testing Step 0 of the Compilation Guidelines for Indicators A.2 and B.1.	
12:00 to 12:30	**Finalizing Step 0 Preparation**: Plenary discussion on institutional arrangements	
12:30 to 14:00 – Lunch		
Session 3: Parallel		
14:00 to 15:30	**Indicator A.2: Step 2 Organizing key data sets** • Issues related to national ecosystem maps, including allowing for unmapped areas • Links between land cover classes and anthropogenic ecosystem types	**Indicator B.1: Step 1 Deciding on measurement scope** • Operationalizing Dimension B for selection of ecosystem services that are consistent with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity
15:30 to 16:00 – Tea & coffee break		
Session 4: Plenary		
16:00 to 16:30	Report back and discussion – 15 mins for each indicator	
16:30 to 17:00	**Country experiences: Colombia** Progress on the indicators since February EGM and experiences from reporting on the A.2 and B.1 Indicators in 7th NR, with a deeper dive on testing Step 1 and 2 of the Compilation Guidelines for Indicator B.1.	
17:00 to 17:30	Wrap up and plans for Day 2	

Day 2: Wednesday, 11 November 2026

Time		
Session 5: Plenary		
09:00 to 11:00	**Use of global datasets and tools as an interim option for A.2 and B.1** • Recap of current content in the Compilation Guidelines, which tools are mentioned and recommendations on evaluating suitability for use (UNSD, 10 mins) • Demonstration of the Global Ecosystems Atlas for compiling A.2 (15 mins) • Demonstration of the WEED toolbox for compiling A.2 (15 mins) • Demonstration of ARIES for SEEA for compiling B.1 (15 mins) • Discussion on implications for the Guidelines (65 mins)	
11:00 to 11.30 – Tea & coffee break		
Session 6: Plenary		
11:30 to 12:00	**Country experiences: Indonesia** Progress on the indicators since February EGM and experiences from reporting on the A.2 and B.1 Indicators in 7th NR, with a deeper dive on testing Step 1 and 2 of the Compilation Guidelines for Indicator A.2.	
12:00 to 12:15	**Country experiences: Netherlands** Participant presentation – progress on the A.2 and B.1 indicators since February EGM and experiences from reporting on the indicators in 7th NR	
12:15 to 12:30	**Country experiences: Ghana** Participant presentation – progress on the A.2 and B.1 indicators since February EGM and experiences from reporting on the indicators in 7th NR	
12:30 to 14:00 – Lunch		
Session 7: Parallel		
14:00 to 15:30	**Indicator A.2: Step 2 Organizing key datasets** • Continued discussion from previous parallel session	**Indicator B.1 Step 3 Compiling Accounts** • Focus on global climate regulation services – potential measurement approaches and implications for compiling Indicator B.1
15:30 to 16:00 – Tea & coffee break		
Session 8: Plenary		
16:00 to 16:30	Report back and discussion in plenary – 15 mins for each indicator	
16:30 to 17:15	**Finalizing Step 3 Compiling the accounts:** Reviewing the basic and interim options for the extent account and ecosystem services accounts	
17:15 to 17:30	Wrap up and plans for Day 3 and Day 2 evening dinner	

Day 3: Thursday, 12 November 2026

Session 9: Plenary		
09:00 to 09:15	Recap on Day 2	
09:15 to 09:30	**Country experiences: Canada** Participant presentation – progress on the A.2 and B.1 Indicators since February EGM and experiences from reporting on the indicators in 7th NR	
09:30 to 09:45	**Country experiences: New Zealand** Participant presentation – progress on the A.2 and B.1 Indicators since February EGM and experiences from reporting on the indicators in 7th NR	
Session 10: Parallel		
09:45 to 10:45	**Indicator A.2** Any final issues for the Compilation Guidelines	**Indicator B.1** Any final issues for the Compilation Guidelines
10:45 to 11:00	Report back and discussion in plenary	
11:00 to 11:30 – Tea & coffee break		
Session 11: Plenary		
11:30 to 12:30	**Step 5 Reporting on the indicator** • Overview of the reporting templates for A.2 and B.1 for 7th National Reports, what worked and what didn't. • Developing a proposed reporting format to support better reporting on Indicators A.2 and B.1 in 8th National Reports (June 2029)	
12:30 to 14:00 – Lunch		
Session 12: Plenary		
14:00 to 15:00	Introduction to the **Ecosystem Services Accounting Compatibility Assessment Tool (ESA-CAT)**	
15:00 to 15:30	Reflections on the meeting and next steps	
15:30 Meeting closes		

5 TRAINING SESSION ON USING ARIES FOR SEEA TO SUPPORT ECOSYSTEM ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING ON GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK HEADLINE INDICATORS A.2 AND B.1

Compiling Ecosystem Accounts requires data on ecosystems and their services that are consistent and comprehensive over space and time. Earth Observation (EO) data is highly suited for these needs, deriving input data for modeling ecosystem extent, condition, land cover, change over time, and downscaling statistical data.

However, identifying, harmonizing and integrating EO data for modeling ecosystem services requires substantial technical expertise and is resource intensive. The capacity required to make use of these large and complex datasets is a significant barrier to their use for ecosystem service modelling. Consequently, many countries do not have established systems for mapping ecosystems and the provision of ecosystem services to inform ecosystem accounting.

To lower these barriers to compiling ecosystem accounts, the Basque Centre for Climate Change (BC3) has developed the ARIES for SEEA tool. The tool is free to access and allows users to produce rapid, standardized ecosystem accounts consistent with the SEEA EA framework. Additional ecosystem service models for global climate regulation, coastal protection, grazed biomass and nature-based tourism have been integrated into the tool under the SEEA-Related Indicators for the GBF project, funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Statistics Division.

This 2-Day training workshop will introduce ARIES for SEEA and provide training on using the tool and its recent tool developments. The overall aim is to provide training on ARIES for SEEA to technical experts from the project countries of SEEA-related Indicators for the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) project and to facilitate their use of the ARIES for SEEA tool in the testing of the compilation of SEEA-related GBF indicators. The objectives are for Participants to:

- Share experiences and learning to date, discuss opportunities to meet remaining data needs for compiling SEEA-related GBF indicators and how ARIES for SEEA can prioritize future development to meet these needs where possible.
- Gain insight into modelling approaches that have been developed to work at the global level via ARIES for SEEA, how they can support their reporting, and key limitations to their use.

- Gain an overview of the ARIES for SEEA explorer, technology and how it can support national level reporting on GBF headline indicators A.2 and B.1.
- Run models for their national jurisdictions in the ARIES for SEEA explorer, understand and explore the spatial data, use the documentation reports, interpret the tables and download all the outputs for reporting.

The training will comprise of a mixture of presentations, group discussions, peer-to-peer learnings (sharing successes and challenges, outstanding questions, data etc.), and hands-on use of the tools with the opportunities to ask the developers. The training will be delivered on Monday (9 November 2026) and Friday (13 November 2026), before and after the main Expert Group Meeting. The agenda for the training is provided below.

For participants interested in learning more about getting started with ARIES there is an e-Learning course available via this link https://learning.integratedmodelling.org/. However, it is not necessary to have completed this in advance of the training session. The training session will assume participants have no prior experience in the ARIES for SEEA.

Day 1: Monday, 9 November 2026 – Project country experiences, getting started with ARIES for SEEA and using ARIES for SEEA for Compiling GBF Headline Indicator A.2

Time	Session
09:00 to 09:15	Registration
09:15 to 09:40	Welcome and introductions
09:40 to 11:00	**Uganda experience testing the Compilation Guidelines:** With a focus on Step 2 (Collecting and Organizing key datasets) and identifying data needs, methodological approaches and validation.
10:20 to 11:00	**Colombia experience testing the Compilation Guidelines:** With a focus on Step 2 (Collecting and Organizing key datasets) and identifying data needs, methodological approaches and validation.
11:00 to 11:30 - Coffee Break	
11:30 to 12:10	**Indonesia experience testing the Compilation Guidelines:** With a focus on Step 2 (Collecting and Organizing key datasets) and identifying data needs, methodological approaches and validation.
12:10 to 12:30	Discussion on meeting data needs, challenges in meeting needs and potential solutions for compiling SEEA-Related indicators and reporting on indicators A.2 and B.1
12:30 to 14:00 – Lunch	
14:00 to 14:30	**ARIES for SEEA:** Introduction to the platform and its functionality
14:30 to 15:00	**ARIES for SEEA:** Getting started with ARIES for SEEA (accessing the platform)
15:00 to 15:30 - Tea & Coffee Break	
15:30 to 17:00	**ARIES for SEEA:** Hands on session using ARIES for SEEA for compiling national and sub-national Ecosystem Extent Accounts and Indicator A.2

Day 2: Friday, 13 November 2026 – Using ARIES for SEEA to Compile GBF Headline Indicator B.1

Time	Session
09:00 to 09:30	Refresher on Day 1
09:30 to 11:00	**Step 1: Selection of Ecosystem Services to include on B.1.** Overview of the 4 new ARIES for SEEA modules and their methods and other existing modules in ARIES for SEEA – An interactive discussion
11:00 to 11:30 - Tea & Coffee Break	
11:30 to 13:00	**Step 2: Collecting and organizing key datasets & Step 3: Compiling the accounts**. ARIES for SEEA: Hands on session using ARIES for SEEA for compiling national and sub-national Ecosystem Services Accounts
12:30 to 14:00 – Lunch	
14:00 to 15:00	**Step 4: Deriving the indicator from the accounts.** Hands on session using ARIES for SEEA ecosystem services accounts for compiling GBF headline indicator B.1.
15:00 to 15:30	**ARIES for SEEA:** Limitations and caveats
15:30 Meeting Closes	