



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
STATISTICS DIVISION
UNITED NATIONS



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

System of Environmental-Economic Accounting 2012 – Experimental Ecosystem Accounting Revision

First Global Consultation on:

Chapter 3: Spatial units for Ecosystem Accounting

Chapter 4: Accounting for Ecosystem Extent

Chapter 5: Accounting for Ecosystem Condition

Comments Form

Deadline for responses: 30 April 2020

Send responses to: seea@un.org

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Name: | Louise Willemen |
| Organization & country: | University of Twente, the Netherlands |

The comment form has been designed to facilitate the analysis of comments. There are nine guiding questions in the form, please respond to the questions in the indicated boxes below. To submit responses please save this document and send it as an attachment to the following e-mail address: seea@un.org.

All documents can be also found on the SEEA EEA Revision website at:
<https://seea.un.org/content/seea-experimental-ecosystem-accounting-revision>

In case you have any questions or have issues with accessing the documents, please contact us at seea@un.org

Question 1: Do you have any comments on the definition and description of ecosystem assets and ecosystem accounting areas and the associated measurement boundaries and treatments?

Clear list of definitions

Question 2. Do you have any comments on the use of the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology as the SEEA Ecosystem Type Reference Classification?

In principle ok. I would have expected a short description of the IUCN GET to explain the choice (page 17). Eg is a worldwide classification, balanced level of detail across terrestrial/marine ..etc

From an agricultural perspective (40% of the globe), I miss a differentiation on biome level (eg by climate, as for the natural vegetation types).

Question 3. Do you have any comments on the recording of changes in ecosystem extent and ecosystem condition, including the recording of ecosystem conversions, as described in chapters 4 and 5?

Chapter 4 does not mention the challenges of change detection. A ‘biome map’ is a model outcome, very prone to error. Differences between years (biome maps) can be because of a true change, of “misclassification” (no perfect model, different data sources). Ie we don’t know if we are recording changes based on the method presented here, we are recording differences.

What makes sense: check classification accuracy of the biomes map (if reported), if changes fall with the classification inaccuracies; do use them.

I doubt the use of the 1750-2015 example on page 5, what kind of quantitative statements can be made here? (trend ok, not ha change)

Question 4. Do you have any comments on the three-stage approach to accounting for ecosystem condition, including the aggregation of condition variables and indicators?

NO. Only that an observation that it entails many steps (that all require justified choices)

Question 5. Do you have any comments on the description and application of the concept of reference condition and the use of both natural and anthropogenic reference conditions in accounting for ecosystem condition?

Click here and start typing (The length of your response is not limited by this text box.)

Question 6. Do you have any comments on Ecosystem Condition Typology for organising characteristics, data and indicators about ecosystem condition?

No.

Question 7. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 3?

Page 25: “Quantum GIS” is the old name (till 2013), now “QGIS”

Annex 3.3: I suggest adding a sentence on the top that this is only to provide a general overview of data considerations. The text is way too basic (lacking details/guidance/references) on how to deal with spatial data issues.

Annex 3.3, page 26: When bringing all these diverse data together, not just spatial project/resolution issues pop up, data are typically also gathered for different years, precisions..

Annex 3.3, page 27, on NSDI. I suggest you add here that these need to comply with the international FAIR data principles.

Question 8. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 4?

No

Question 9. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 5?

I missed references to studies on which table 5.1. I noticed later that this is explained in Annex 5.3. I suggest this is added to the table caption.

I find the table useful. I would suggest that EA builders use this list of criteria for reflection upon all data sources they consider to use (eg add annex 3.3)

Happy to see 5.4. Also a good place to put that “difference does not equal change”.