

Natural Capital Accounting

NATIONAL NCA FORUM 2019

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10-11 July 2019

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System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

Natural Capital Accounting

NATIONAL NCA FORUM 2019

South Africa will hold its first National NCA Forum in July 2019, as part of the Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCA&VES) Project. This document provides background as well as key information about the event for those interested in participating.

Natural capital accounting (NCA) is not just a tool for bean counters. NCA is a way of understanding our world, and the choices we make as a society.

NCA links natural capital to a country's system of national accounts. Using best available knowledge and robust, globally endorsed methodologies, it can help public and private sector actors to **understand more** about the interactions between the economy, society and the environment.

NCA can also be applied to monitor progress against achieving the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP) and the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It helps us **know more** by providing consistent, comparable information from one year to another - suitable for trend analysis, forecasting, footprint analysis, and integrated planning and assessment. It provides another source of statistical information that adds to the richness of evidence available to policy and decision-makers.

NCA is a tool to support South Africa moving towards a green economy as a sustainable development path in line with the country's NDP. This is particularly important given the growing recognition of the benefits that ecosystems and ecological infrastructure provide to people, including for food and water security and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Join us as we **learn more** about NCA as a tool to inform debates about trade-offs, highlight synergies between different courses of action, and contribute to effective evidence-based decision making. Be part of the process for determining how we **do more** to help make this a reality.



Background on the NCA&VES Project

Natural capital accounting is a growing field of work globally and in South Africa. NCA includes accounting for environmental assets such as water, minerals and energy, with an international standard, the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), in place for these accounts. A more recent aspect of NCA is ecosystem accounting, which focuses on accounting for ecosystem assets and ecosystem services. International standard for ecosystem accounting are in the process of being developed.

South Africa is one of the leading countries in the growing field of NCA. Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) first developed environmental economic accounts for water in 2000 and has subsequently compiled accounts for energy, minerals, and fisheries. In 2014 South Africa joined Bhutan, Chile, Indonesia, Vietnam, Mauritius and South Mexico, in the **Advancing Natural Capital Accounting (ANCA) project** launched by United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), with funds from the Government of Norway. Stats SA, the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) led the project in South Africa, in close collaboration with relevant national and provincial departments and agencies. The project produced two sets of pilot ecosystem accounts, both available on either the [Stats SA](#) or [SANBI Biodiversity Advisor](#) website.

Building on the ANCA Project, South Africa is now one of five countries (along with Brazil, China, India and Mexico) participating in a further international project on ecosystem accounting. The **Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCA&VES) Project**, which began in 2018 and will be completed in early 2020, is led by the UNSD and UN Environment, with funding from the European Union. Stats SA and SANBI are leading the project nationally, working closely with a range of national and sub-national stakeholders, to further develop ecosystem accounts for South Africa. This project provides the opportunity to engage with stakeholders in developing a national strategy for advancing natural capital accounting and to develop accounts including:

- National land cover change and terrestrial ecosystem accounts,
- Land and ecosystem accounts for selected metropolitan areas,
- Protected areas accounts,
- Marine ecosystem accounts,
- Accounts for selected species of special concern.

The project will explore linkages of these accounts to national economic and demographic data, to show how and where people most depend, and impact, on nature. The project also includes some more experimental accounts in one province, KwaZulu-Natal, which will test the development of selected ecosystem services accounts in physical and monetary terms and explore the use of ecosystem accounting for scenario analysis linked to policy questions.

The NCA&VES Project has also provided the opportunity to convene the first national forum on natural capital accounting.



National NCA Forum vitals

Objectives

The objectives of the National NCA Forum will be to:

1. Explore linkages and alignment of NCA to the National Development Plan, Sustainable Development Goals, National Statistical System, amongst others,
2. Present early highlights from South Africa's work on ecosystem accounting
3. Strengthen a growing network of people involved along the NCA value chain,
4. Promote learning on NCA through dialogue, sharing experiences and case studies,
5. Build support for NCA nationally, including through eliciting input into the development of a strategy for advancing NCA in South Africa.

Participants

The event will gather public and private sector actors involved across the NCA value chain, including policy and decision-makers interested in evidence for policy making and sustainable development.

Participants will include representatives from, but not limited to:

1. The Presidency, the National Planning Commission (NPC), National Treasury, Stats SA, Departments of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), Environmental Affairs (DEA), Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), Water and Sanitation (DWS), Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Science and Technology (DST).
2. Research institutions such as the Water Research Commission (WRC) and CSIR.
3. Civil society and private sector organisations.
4. International bodies such as the EU Delegation to South Africa, UNSD, and UN Environment.

Organisers

The event is being hosted by Stats SA and organised in partnership with SANBI as the co-lead in the NCA&VES Project. It is supported by DEA, UNSD, UN Environment and the European Union.

Date and Venue

Date: 10-11 July 2019

Venue: Main auditorium, Statistics South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

Programme

The programme is currently being developed. It is being designed to meet the forum objectives and to include a high-level opening and panel discussion on the first day, followed by more focused presentations and discussion on examples of natural capital accounts, accounts as a tool in evidence-based decision-making, policy applications, and finally exploring the development of a national strategy for NCA, institutional arrangements and other requirements needed to build support for NCA nationally.

As a high-profile event in a growing field of work of interest nationally and globally, communications and media will be actively planned for and managed.

For further information about this event, please contact Robert Parry (Stats SA Deputy Director: Economic Analysis): RobertP@statssa.gov.za.



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