Minutes of the 27th Meeting of the London Group on Environmental Accounting

Virtual, 27-30 September and 4 October 2021

Papers and presentations can be found here: https://seea.un.org/events/london-group-environmental-accounting-27th-meeting

Day 1: Session 1 – Opening of the meeting

Sven Kaumanns, Chair of the London Group, welcomed participants to the 27th Meeting of the London Group on Environmental Accounting. Sven Kaumanns thanked the London Group Bureau and other colleagues for their support in organizing the virtual meeting.

Welcome and report of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA): Alessandra Alfieri, UN Statistics Division (UNSD)

1. The presentation provided an overview of the work of the Committee over the last year, according to the five workstreams of the Committee: Coordination and communication; methodology- SEEA Central Framework (CF); methodology- SEEA Ecosystem Accounting (EA); global SEEA databases; and capacity building. Participants were also informed of a new workstream on business accounting and the SEEA.

2. While much of the Committee's work over the last year has focused on the revision and finalization of the SEEA EA, global implementation is now the primary focus when it comes to SEEA EA. The work programme also focuses on mainstreaming the SEEA into policy, including biodiversity, with the upcoming monitoring framework to be adopted by COP 15 in April 2022, climate change, circular economy and oceans; advancing the SEEA CF research agenda and contributing to the update of the System of National Accounts (SNA); dissemination of global SEEA databases and tools such as the ARIES for SEEA; administration of the Global Assessment; fostering regional collaboration; and jumpstarting the new workstream on business accounting.

Report of the SEEA CF Technical Committee: Sjoerd Schenau, Statistics Netherlands

3. The Chair of the Technical Committee (TC) provided an update of the TC's progress over the last year. Priorities for the work programme include classifications, contributing to the SNA update and advancing issues on the research agenda. Work on classifications is focusing on the International Standard for Industry Classification (ISIC), Central Product Classification (CPC) and Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) revisions, as well as further developing SEEA classifications such as the Classification of Environmental Activities (CEA) and land use/land cover classifications. In terms of the SNA update, the TC is participating in the Subgroup on Wellbeing and Sustainability, which looks at SEEA-related issues. In terms of the research agenda, the

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current priorities include classifications, links between the SEEA CF and SEEA EA, valuation issues, and input-output and indicators linked to the frameworks.

4. The London Group was also informed that at its last meeting, the UNCEEA agreed that the SEEA CF was broadly up to date, but also stressed the importance of ensuring that the standard remains relevant to policy and consistent with other macroeconomic standards. The Committee suggested that a decision on the revision of the SEEA CF could be made in 2023 on the basis of the status of the SNA update and progress on the research agenda.

Wellbeing and Sustainability in the SNA Update: Catherine Van Rompaey, World Bank; Joe St. Lawrence, Statistics Canada

5. The co-chair of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) Task Team on Wellbeing and Sustainability and the Area Group Lead on Environmental Economic Accounts provided an overview of the SNA revision process. An updated SNA is anticipated to go to the UN Statistical Commission in 2025. The update will not reconsider the basic concepts of the SNA, but instead will introduce new detail, modules and alternative measures. Current activities include the development of guidance notes, country consultation and testing, as well as the development of a draft annotated outline.

6. Environmental-economic accounting is represented in one of the six area groups of the Task Team on Wellbeing and Sustainability. The group is currently working on several guidance notes. As many of the topics being discussed will have implications for the SEEA CF, close collaboration between the SEEA CF TC and the subgroup on environmental economic accounting is key. Participants were informed that a formal collaboration agreement is under development, which ensures mutual participation in the respective technical committees, synchronized consultation and outreach, and mutual endorsement of issues.

7. The London Group welcomed the close collaboration between the UNCEEA and ISWGNA on the SNA update. Participants also raised some possible issues that could be relevant to the SNA update, including the treatment of losses (fish discards, in particular), the production boundary for water, the boundary between produced and non-produced assets and the ownership of natural resources.

Measuring the sustainability of tourism: Clara van der Pol, UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

8. The presentation reviewed the status of the Statistical Framework on Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST). There has been a delay in the finalization of the framework due to COVID-19, but UNWTO is currently re-launching its finalization. The manual will go to the SEEA CF TC and UNCEEA in 2022, with the intention of presenting it to the UN Statistical Commission in 2023. The updated version of the SF-MST will be made available as a background document for the 2022 UN Statistical Commission. UNWTO requested London Group members to reach out if they are interested in participating in the relaunched editorial board and finalization.

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Ocean accounts- State of play: Anthony Dvarskas, UNESCAP

9. The UN Statistical Commission at 52nd session in March 2021 supported the proposal to establish a working group on ocean accounting given the high policy demand and building on existing work that was carried out by the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP). Several pilots are currently underway in Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe and Latin America, and many countries have recently made efforts to highlight the ocean's economic contribution to GDP. In addition, ESCAP is currently in the early stages of exploring the development of dashboards for ocean accounts in Asia and the Pacific. There is the potential for ocean accounts to inform dashboards, though current efforts focus on using raw data to understand changes in extent.

10. The London Group welcomed the work on ocean accounts and country pilots. Several members stressed the need for a separate methodology for oceans, as accounting for oceans and terrestrial ecosystems have fundamental differences both due to differences in the characteristics of the ecosystems themselves and in terms of the services they provide.

Defining the biodiversity economy with a view to developing a biodiversity economy satellite account: progress from South Africa: Mandy Driver, South African National Biodiversity Institute

11. While satellite accounts have been developed for various sectors, such as tourism, satellite accounts for the biodiversity economy are new. In their initiative, South Africa has defined the biodiversity economy as economic activities that contribute directly to conserving and managing biodiversity or that depend directly on biodiversity. To identify the biodiversity economy, ISIC and CPC codes related to biodiversity were identified, along with the estimated proportion of each code dedicated to biodiversity in the national accounts.

12. Participants welcomed the creation of this new account and highlighted the important role of collaboration between the national statistical office and biodiversity sector in its development. It was suggested that the biodiversity economy satellite account could be useful in other countries as well, as countries may be interested specifically in the biodiversity, as opposed to the broader green economy.

Day 2: Session 2 - Implementation issues and case studies on the SEEA EA

Theoretical and practical issues with measurement of capacity, condition and conversion in the SEEA - Ecosystem Accounting: Michael Vardon, Australian National University

13. The presentation discussed the differences in definitions of ecosystem capacity, condition and conversions. It concluded that the capacity cannot be both a characteristic of a physical flow and a characteristic of a monetary asset, that accountants are not well placed to decide what is sustainable in order to measure capacity, that the description of capacity and conversion is management dependent, and that the units of observation and their aggregation affect the recording of condition, conversion and capacity.

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14. Participants agreed that the sustainability levels should not be set by accountants, but rather come from policymakers, and that capacity is a characteristic of the ecosystem asset not the flow. It was also suggested that recording temporary conversions in the extent account - e.g., woodland which is to be replanted - would help throw light on short term changes in services and apparent condition of the ecosystem asset.

Revisiting the Ecosystem Extent Account: Lessons Learned from Germany: Simon Schürz, Federal Statistical Office of Germany
15. The presentation gave a short overview of the main objectives, the structure and the technical challenges in building a nationwide extent account in Germany. General guidelines for each step were presented, including a thorough description of semi-automated data handling and geo-data processing that facilitate the integration of future data, updates and revisions. It concluded with the question whether implementation guide would be needed to shed more light on the issue and suggested the compilation of case studies on extent accounts. Participants agreed that there is a need for more guidance on extent accounts and compile case studies as supporting examples.

Integrated Accounting for Land, Soils and Agriculture in Uganda: Steven King, UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
16. A sequence of integrated set of accounts on the relationship between land use, soil fertility and agricultural production in Uganda was presented. The presentation demonstrated the compilation at subnational scales relevant to the sector and poverty alleviation and highlighted the 8 key indicators calculated to inform sustainable development of the agricultural sector and its impacts on other ecosystems, the services they supply and biodiversity they support.
17. During the discussion participants suggested to classify indicators into condition and pressure indicators and to specify on which ecosystem the condition/pressure applies. Measurement of degradation was pointed out to be a change of soil condition over time, and a conversion matrix was suggested as a useful tool to track the changes form one to another type.

Marine Ecosystem Asset Accounts: Developments from South Africa: Prideel Majiedt, South African National Biodiversity Institute
18. The presentation outlined the development of marine extent account in South Africa, including the mapping practices and the capture of smaller ecosystem types and transitional realms. Many advances have been made in the last decade to develop a comprehensive marine ecosystem map that uses thousands of data points related to oceanographic information, species distribution and ecology, bathymetry, and geological data to define 150 ecosystem types. The presentation also linked the extent accounts to policy interventions currently underway that marine ecosystem accounts can support.
19. The ensuing discussion centred on the question related ecosystem asset fragmentation and identification of small ecosystem assets. Participants pointed out the importance of

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distinguishing between naturally fragmented ecosystem types, and those that have become fragmented as portions have been converted to intensive use. It was suggested that the fragmentation issue also depends also on the management regime, whether the assets are managed as one or as separate fragments.

Country-level ecosystems accounts for estuaries: South Africa's experience with a Transitional Realm: Lara Van Niekerk, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), South Africa

20. The presentation outlined the estuarine ecosystem accounts developed in South Africa, which include extent, condition, ecosystem services, and pressure accounts. The main finding of the estuarine accounts shows a large decline in condition of the national estuarine ecosystems, and that only 23% of remain in a near-natural state, with 63% in a heavily modified state or worse. In addition, the pressure accounts provide a means of contextualizing and tracking the shift in estuarine extent and condition.

21. The discussion focused on the question related to the pressure accounts and their role to contextualize changes in estuary condition. Participants pointed out that pressure accounts, even if not fully included in the SEEA EA, still provide relevant information especially for policymakers. Pressure accounts can be presented as complementary information. The discussion was also related to the sustainability thresholds for some ecosystem services and computing how far are the flows from sustainable flows.

Day 3: Session 3 - Assessing ecosystem service flows

Accounting for indigenous perspectives in SEEA EA in theory and practice: Anna Normyle, Australian National University

22. The presentation discussed how Indigenous cultural knowledge may be better accounted for in SEEA EA, by examining how the cultural assets and cultural ecosystem services related to Indigenous management practices fit (or not) within the existing asset and ecosystem service classifications of SEEA EA and testing the practical application of SEEA EA for the management of land by Indigenous Peoples, using an example from northern Australia and working collaboratively with the Yawuru people. The study concluded that indigenous perspectives are important to be considered in account development at various scales and highlighted three useful aspects of SEEA-EA for supporting the priorities of Yawuru managers: flexibility in the units used for the analysis; (ii) the extended time scale of the accounts; and (iii) ecosystem accounting's emphasis on capturing and reporting consistent data. The study also identified gaps in SEEA EA, where cultural assets and cultural services are either not defined or where the definition is not sufficiently broad to encompass the flows arising from Indigenous cultural knowledge and landscape management practices.

23. The discussion focused on the concept of indigenous people and its characterization in the context of ecosystem accounting. There were different views on whether human defined characteristics (i.e. indigenous) to be considered as part of ecosystem assets and

services flows. On the one hand, it was noted that not only cultural services but also regulating and maintenance services are related to indigenous community. Indigenous values are recognized to be important, and there is evidence that indigenous community do contribute to sustainable management of ecosystem. On the other hand, the concept of indigenous people may vary across different culture, and the underlying nature of services on land restoration are the same for both indigenous and non-indigenous community that make it difficult to be differentiated. The discussion also pointed to the important to have the right biophysical data to account for the value of ecosystem services that are connected spatially to the indigenous community.

An initial set of indicators from ecosystem services accounts; Ecosystem services accounting for ecosystem restoration, management and planning: Alessandra La Notte, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission

24. Two presentations related to the Knowledge Innovation Project on an Integrated system for Natural Capital Accounting (KIP INCA) in Europe were made. The first presentation discussed the results, highlighted that official supply and use tables can provide information on the supply of ecosystem services from ecosystem assets and demand for ecosystem services from economic sectors and directly derive relevant indicators. Accounting table can provide additional value-added information on the sustainability use of ecosystem services. It was concluded that supply and use tables are suitable as a source of indicators for international monitoring framework such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
25. The second presentation discussed the conceptual scheme of KIP INCA in accessing the physical and monetary actual flows of ecosystem services, highlighting the possibility of a mismatch between potential supply and unmet demand of ecosystem services. It was concluded that by assessing the physical and monetary value of such mismatch flows, one would be able to provide valuation information to policy makers and funding agencies to locate the degraded ecosystem for restoration that justify economic investment.
26. The subsequent discussion recognized the importance of indicators from the SEEA EA for monitoring ecosystem restoration, highlighting the feasibility of deriving such information from the accounts. It was suggested that guidelines could be developed for national statistical offices to demonstrate the usefulness of indicators. The issue on spatial attribution, "at risk" concepts and sustainable threshold of ecosystem services were also discussed. The concept of unmet demand embedded in the supply use tables for policy use proposed in the paper was recognized as useful tool, but further work is needed is to need to address the above-mentioned issues.

Estimating potentially environmentally harmful subsidies carbon rates with SEEA data: Ariun Byambakhorloo, Statistics Sweden

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27. The presentation discussed the results of estimating potentially environmentally harmful subsidies and effective carbon rates (ECR) with SEEA data in Sweden. It was concluded that the SEEA provides a good starting point for compilation of indirect transfers. It was highlighted that estimates are dependent on the reference price with the revenue foregone method, and internationally agreed reference price is needed for estimating comparable results. It was noted that effective carbon wage focusing on the actual price is the way forward. By presenting data on carbon pricing in the share of emissions priced within ECR bands, the full picture of how carbon emissions are priced can be communicated in an easily understandable format.

28. The topic was recognized to be important at the policy level. There was a consensus that ECR is the measure that is more suitable for the use of SEEA and for international comparison purpose for fossil fuel subsidies, noting that additional measures are needed to measure non-fossil fuel subsidies. A comprehensive measurement of potentially damaged environmental harmful subsidies covering non-fossil fuel subsidies as well as the harmonization of the scope of subsidies covering both direct and indirect transfers were recommended as next steps forward in advancing this issue.

Day 4: Session 4 - Valuation of ecosystems and their services

Exploring green jobs (UK): Gemma Thompson, Office of National Statistics (ONS) of the UK

29. The UK currently has a Green Jobs Task Force which is part of a plant to reach a net zero goal by 2050. The ONS produces two types of estimates for green jobs calculated using 1) estimates of full-time equivalent employees in the Environmental Goods and Services Sector (EGSS) using the SEEA; and 2) from a business survey, the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy Survey, which was developed in conjunction with policy makers. The presentation raised fundamental questions about measuring green jobs, including whether it was the job of national statistical offices to define green jobs, and if so, how.

30. There were differing views on whether it was the job of national statistical offices to come up with a definition of green jobs. While some argued that it was important to co-design a definition of green jobs with policy makers, others suggested that it was better for national statistical offices to avoid using the term "green jobs" and instead present the specific data. Regardless, participants agreed on the difficulty of assigning a single definition and some participants suggested it might be better to have different metrics to measure green jobs, or the level of "greenness" of jobs. Participants also suggested that a definition of green jobs should include supply chain considerations and a distinction between green jobs and greening sectors/industries, which do not always overlap.

State of play discussion regarding ecosystem valuation: Bert Kroese, Chair of the UNCEEA, Statistics Netherlands

31. The session started with the pre-recorded video of the Chair of the UNCEEA giving an overview of the current state of play on ecosystem valuation in the SEEA community. While there are many critical views on the valuation approach in the SEEA EA, many

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others want to have the valuation as integral part as the SEEA EA framework. After many deliberations it was agreed by the UN Statistical Commission that the valuation chapters would not be part of the statistical standard but be considered as "internationally recognized statistical principles and recommendations", and included as integral part of the SEEA EA. The UNCEEA Chair highlighted that, as other standards, the SEEA EA will need to be maintained and updated to adapt to new policy demands and as methodological issues included in the research agenda are addressed as a result of testing and experimentation. The focus of the UNCEEA work programme will be on implementation while addressing issues on the research agenda accompanying the adoption of the SEEA EA. Finally, Mr. Kroese thanked members of the London Group for their participation in and contributing to the revision process.

Beyond valuation-monetary aggregates for the SEEA EA: Aldo Femia, Italian National Institute of Statistics

32. The presentation provided an alternative view on monetary valuation for the SEEA EA. In particular, the presentation asserted that the SEEA EA approach to valuation is not consistent with some fundamentals of the SNA and does not provide adequate representation of the role of ecosystems. The presentation also noted that this could cause the accounts to send misleading signals for ecosystem/ecological-oriented policies. Instead, it was suggested that to be consistent with the SNA, the concept of exchange value needs to be applied in a more stringent way, by identifying and measuring resource rent within the economic system. While resource rent can be useful from an income distribution point of view, it does not provide an adequate picture of the dependence of the economy on ecosystems and their services. The presentation also argued that other monetary values connected to ecosystem services are conceptually different and cannot be summed to rents but understood and disseminated for what they mean, not as exchange values of ecosystem services. At the same time, it was stressed that the main contribution of the SEEA EA are the physical accounts.

33. It was noted that the valuation issues raised by the paper and presentation were not unique to the SEEA. Instead, these concerns are fundamental and relate to the interpretation of the SNA. While some argued that there was no issue with extending the production boundary to ecosystem services (as in other satellite accounts), others argued the case of ecosystem services was different, given that ecosystems are not economic units and thus do not fit the SNA definition of transaction. It was noted that a group would be formed as part of the SNA update to discuss how to better define exchange values in the context of the SNA and related accounts, including the SEEA. It was suggested that this paper be brought to the attention of the group. In addition, it was noted that the UNCEEA had previously raised the need for a broader discussion on the relationship between the SEEA and SNA, and whether the SEEA should be considered a satellite account or a system in its own right.

Ecosystem and species appreciation-service flow, biodiversity wealth and biodiversity debt: Burkhard Schweppe-Kraft, German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

34. The authors presented a methodology for monetary valuation of ecosystem and species appreciation which could be applicable both within the framework of SEEA EA as well as within the complementary valuation approaches described in Chapter 12 of the SEEA EA. The authors used 'biotope points', which take into account ecosystem characteristics such as naturalness, age, species, etc., as a basis for the physical and monetary assessment of appreciation services. Biotope points are employed in Germany to determine the no-net loss under nature conservation law. By taking biotope points as physical exchange values for ecosystems, the authors derived monetary exchange values to arrive at values for biodiversity wealth and debt (using a cost approach as well as contingent valuation methods). It was stressed that the values derived using this approach were significantly higher than the government's expenditure to maintain the services.

35. It was agreed that chapter 12 of the SEEA EA alludes to the type of valuation undertaken by the authors, but that further research was necessary and that the paper provided a valuable contribution. In addition, it was noted that the use of the biotope point was policy-salient, but also posed some difficulties in terms of isolating the specific service of ecosystem and species appreciation.

Aggregation of the ecosystem service values in urban ecosystem account, application of the principles of gross ecosystem product (GEP): Kaia Oras, Statistics Estonia

36. The presentation introduced the calculation of GEP for urban ecosystems in Estonia. Urban ecosystems were disaggregated into four subtypes, and values for twenty-five ecosystem services were included. Given the different nature of these services, different valuation methods were used and covered both exchange-based and contingent-value based methods. The presentation also highlighted the importance of including both exchange and welfare values, particularly in urban areas, given alternative possible uses of land.

37. Participants discussed both the validity and usefulness of GEP. Some participants argued that values for different ecosystem services (calculated using different methods) should not be summed and could not be interpreted. However, others asserted that summing monetary values for different ecosystem services, while difficult, was conceptually valid particularly if there was a single underlying valuation concept. It was suggested to continue the calculation of GEP in Estonia to see how values changed over time. Participants also suggested to form a small discussion group focusing on GEP with a focus on what other countries are doing in terms of GEP and potential indicators.

Comparison of methods for the valuation of the nature education ecosystem service: Grete Luukas, Statistics Estonia

38. The presentation discussed both exchange and welfare based valuation methods to calculate the monetary value of nature education as an ecosystem service. Nature education as an ecosystem service was disaggregated into three components, namely the

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monetary value of education; the maintenance of nature sites; and travel costs. Three separate expenditure-based methods were summed to calculate the monetary value using exchange value methods while welfare values were calculated using the stated preference method.

39. It was suggested that the expenditure-based methods would yield the same results as if one used the productivity change method. The discussion focused on this aspect, and there were diverging opinions on whether or not the expenditure-based methods would yield the same results as the productivity change method, given the conceptual differences. In addition, participants also brought up some of the difficulties in using the travel cost method.

Day 5: Session 5 - Final day

Progress in the work on the review of the classification of environmental activities and update on the list of environmental economic activities and environmental products: Monika Wozowczyk, Eurostat

40. The presentation provided an update on the review of the integrated classification of environmental activities (CEA), which was first initiated in November 2020. According to the work done thus far, the new classification will have three main levels, with the first level quite compact (seven categories), but further classes having a nearly 1:1 link to the existing Classification of Environmental Protection Activities (CEPA) and Classification of Resource Management Activities (CrEMA). This structure is meant to provide a clearer link to policy relevant areas and address issues with establishing a 1:1 link between CReMA and other standard statistical classifications such as COFOG.

41. It was suggested that the category for air, climate and energy could be further clarified, particularly to specify climate change adaptation and also to separate climate change and air pollution. A few participants suggested that further work was needed for level 4, particularly that ecosystems and biodiversity could be separated out and that certain services (e.g. environmental legal services) were missing. Finally, it was clarified that the CEA includes both primary and secondary environmental activities. To move forward, Eurostat will bring the London Group's feedback back to the members of the task force. It is expected that the finalized classification will be brought to the UN Expert Group on Classifications.

SEEA classification issues for ISIC and CPC: Julian Chow, UN Statistics Division

42. Participants were provided with an overview of the ISIC and CPC revisions, with a focus on issues pertinent to the SEEA. In particular, the UNCEEA has been invited to participate in the two revisions by providing input to existing issues and identifying a list of additional SEEA-relevant issues for consideration. Some SEEA-relevant issues identified for the CPC revision include the reflection of energy products, links to the CEA, treatment of waste, circular economy and addressing products related to thematic approaches (e.g. climate change, biodiversity, etc). SEEA-relevant issues identified for the ISIC revision include those related to biofuel production, electric car production, charging stations and burning waste for gas or electricity. Climate change mitigation

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and management/conservation/restoration of biodiversity were also noted as additional issues.

43. Participants welcomed the community's involvement in the ISIC and CPC revisions. The discussion highlighted additional issues that could be raised, for instance, the recording of the production of hybrid cars, the potential for an "environmental division" at the two-digit level, the use of the term "sustainability" in forest management and how energy production can be split. The UN Statistics Division will raise these issues with the relevant task teams moving forward.

Improving timeliness of statistics on air emissions with a consumption perspective: Nils Brown, Statistics Sweden

44. The presentation provided an overview of Statistics Sweden's review and analysis of data sources and methods to nowcast air emission accounts. The current production of Statistics Sweden has a lag-time of nearly two years, and they are currently exploring the possibility of pursuing a six-month lag-time. Statistics Sweden identified existing data sources that could provide sufficient data for now-casting, as well as a multi-regional input-output (MRIO) analysis that could supply data for imports (EXIOBASE or FIGARO). The London Group was asked to share their experiences in the data and methods covered, as well as the production of statistics on environmental pressures from a consumption perspective.

45. Several London Group members are actively looking at or using MRIO databases. Some participants preferred FIGARO, given its consistency with official statistics. Statistics Netherlands noted that they used a similar approach to the one proposed by Sweden, and while they were using EXIOBASE, they were considering switching to FIGARO. Participants suggested further tests for Statistics Sweden, namely to look at the stability of their methods when structural changes take place and how aggregation could affect outcomes.

Future work of the London Group: Sven Kaumanns, London Group Chair

46. The Chair of the London Group shared some thoughts about future areas of the group's work, given that the current work programme ends in 2021. There are several groups active in environmental accounting, the strength of the London Group is that it includes national statistical offices and has been instrumental in experimenting with emerging issues. It was proposed that the work of the group focus on items not currently covered by other groups, in particular contributing to advancing the issues on the research agenda of the SEEA CF which is being considered for possible update and/or integration between the SEEA CF and SEEA EA; collecting experiences on implementation issues of the SEEA EA and providing concrete recommendations; and providing methodological solutions in between larger revisions. In terms of working methods, the idea of subgroups to advance agenda items in between London Group meetings was mentioned, as was a longer lead time for the preparation of documents.

47. Participants agreed that a more focused and detailed work programme for the group would be beneficial. In addition, it was suggested that the London Group could identify

emerging issues and work to bring proposals to the UNCEEA based on country implementation experiences. This could ensure that the London Group's expertise contributes to global processes in a timely fashion. Other suggestions included: strengthening links to the SNA community and fostering closer collaboration with universities. In addition, questions surrounding membership were raised. The London Group is primarily composed of national statistical offices, though the membership has enlarged somewhat in recent years. This has endowed the London Group with more expertise, though too large of a membership could hinder discussion. The Chair will discuss these issues and proposals with the London Group Bureau and propose a work programme.

The Chair thanked all participants, moderators and authors for their contribution and his colleagues and the Secretariat for their support in running the meeting. It was noted that the next London Group would tentatively be held in Bonn, Germany and hosted by the Federal Statistical Office of Germany.