

Report back from Area B2: Technical Committee on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting

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**System of
Environmental-Economic
Accounting**
Ecosystem Accounting



White cover publication, pre-edited text subject to official editing

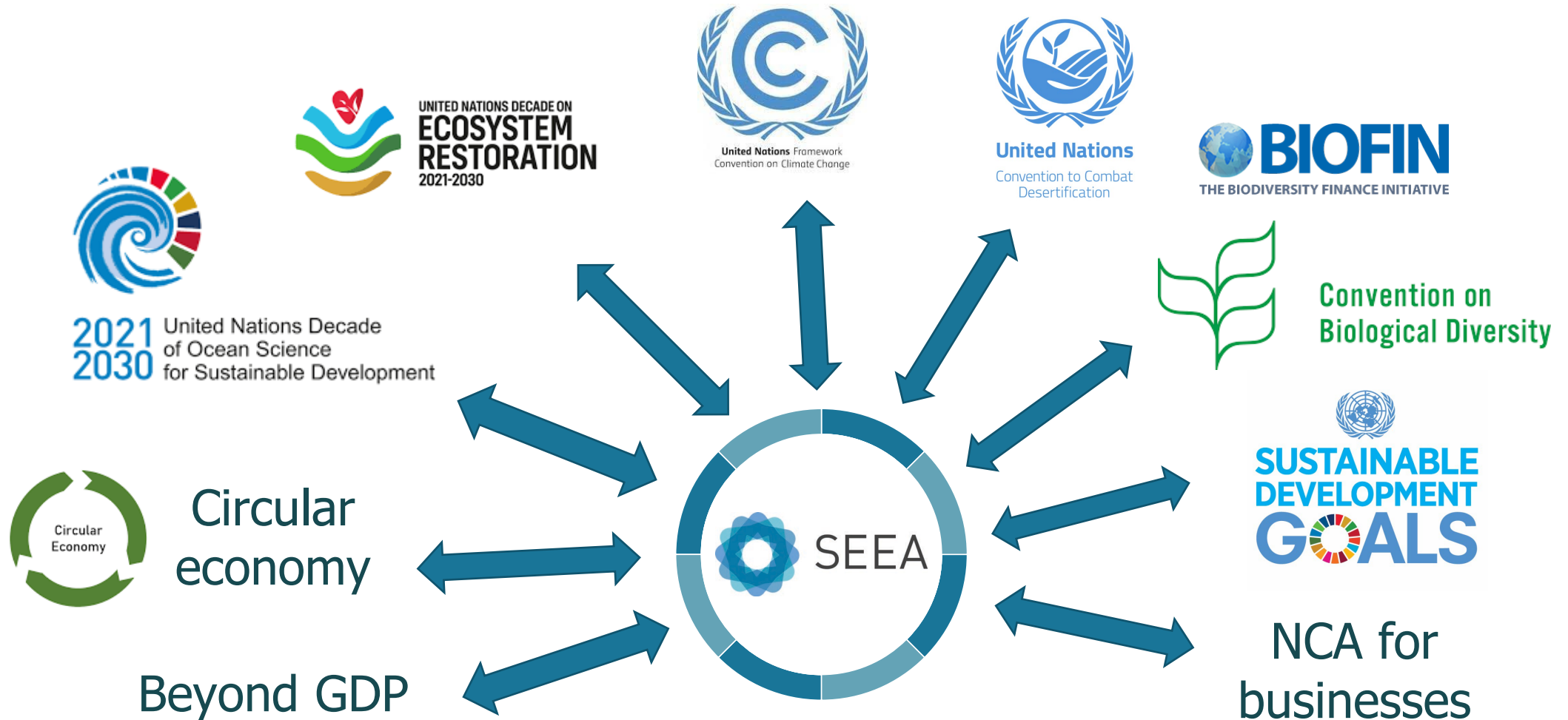
- Following adoption at 52nd session of UNSC in March 2021, SEEA EA **white cover version** published in Sept 2021
- Online **supplements**:
 - SEEAland stylised example of core accounts
 - Ecosystem service logic chains
 - Ecosystem service reference list
- **Final publication** expected by end of 2022

SEEA Ecosystem Accounting at 53rd session of UNSC, March 2022

The Commission

- Adopted the **Implementation Strategy** for SEEA Ecosystem Accounting
- Noted the **high policy demand** for SEEA Ecosystem accounting
- Encouraged **all countries to implement** SEEA Ecosystem Accounting
- Stressed the importance of **adequate funding** to support SEEA implementation in countries
- Requested **translation** of SEEA Ecosystem Accounting into all UN official languages

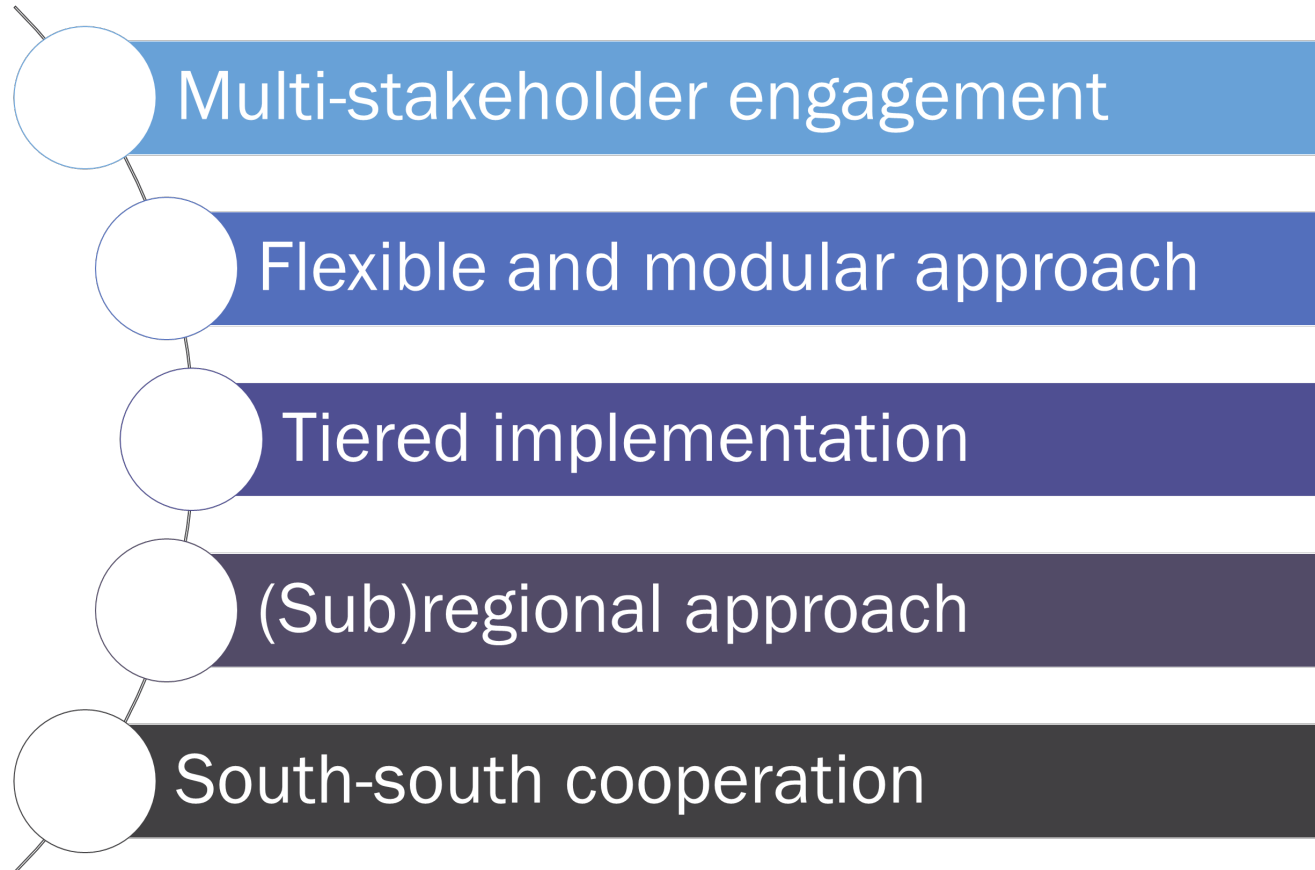
Global policy relevance: the SEEA supports multiple ongoing initiatives



SEEA EA Implementation Strategy

- **Overall objective:** scale up the uptake of the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting
- **Suggested target:** at least 60 countries implement at least one account of SEEA EA by 2025 (from 36 currently)
- **Other objectives** include:
 - Supporting mainstreaming of ecosystems and biodiversity in national policy and decision-making
 - Use of SEEA EA in country-level monitoring and reporting (e.g. for Voluntary National Reports on SDGs, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to climate targets)

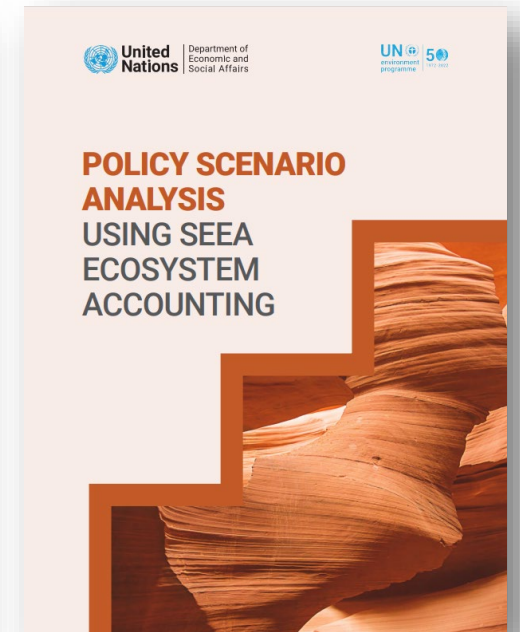
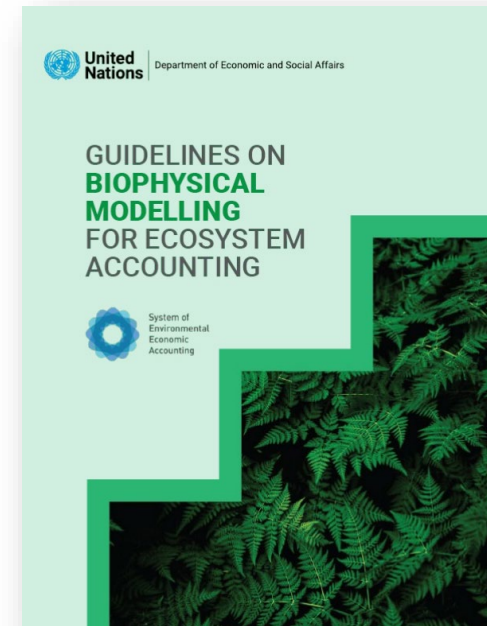
Approach and principles for implementation



- Likely to require **new partnerships** between NSOs and relevant stakeholders at the national level, including environment ministries
- Importance of an **inter-disciplinary** approach – requires patience and time
- **Institutional arrangements** likely to vary depending on country context

Materials to support implementation

- Guidelines on **Biophysical Modelling** for Ecosystem Accounting
- Technical report on **Policy Scenario Analysis** Using SEEA Ecosystem Accounting
- Interim technical report for **monetary valuation** of ecosystem services and assets – available soon



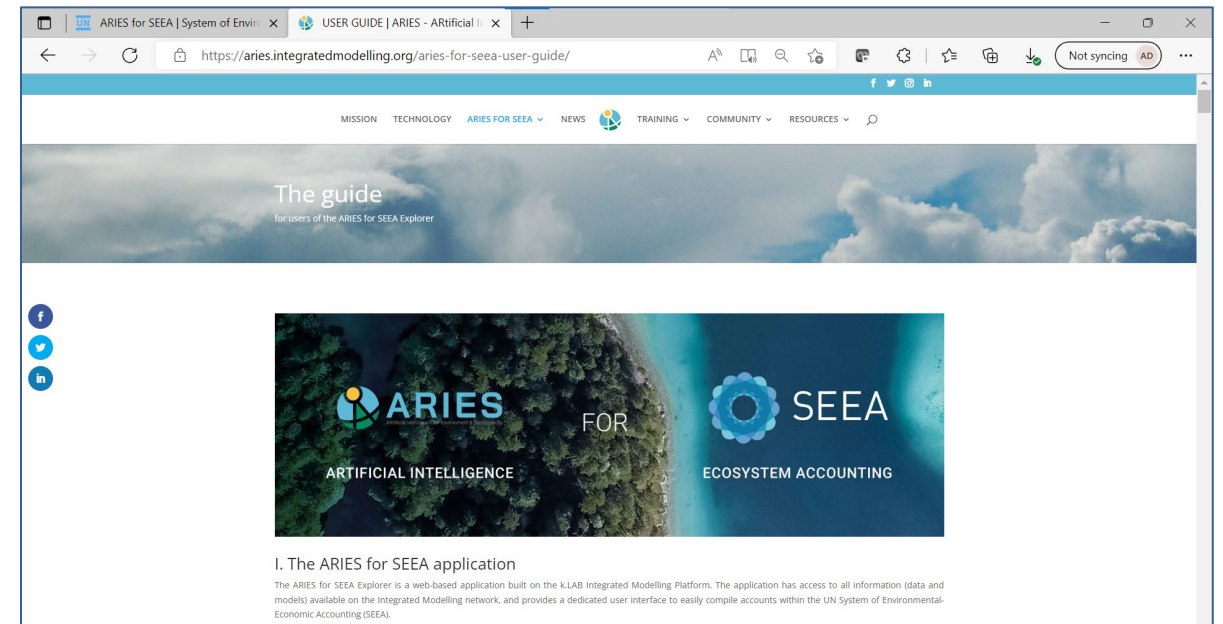
Training materials and courses

- **SEEA EA e-learning course** (UNSD and ESCAP/SIAP)
 - 8 self-paced e-learning modules
 - Freely available on UN Global Platform
- **Global SEEA EA course** led by ESCAP/SIAP and UNSD between April and June 2022
 - ~ 770 participants
 - Weekly live webinars
 - Presentations and recordings available online
- **Regional course for Latin America and the Caribbean** led by ECLAC and UNSD in May 2022
 - ~ 240 participants



ARIES for SEEA

- ARIES is an **open-source modelling platform** – users can draw on existing models and data or add their own
- **ARIES for SEEA application** launched April 2021 – allows users to compile ecosystem accounts
- **Country level testing** underway
 - including Philippines, Senegal, SA
- **Testing through Working Groups**
- Hands-on **training course** for 5 GDSA countries in Kigali, 18-22 July



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

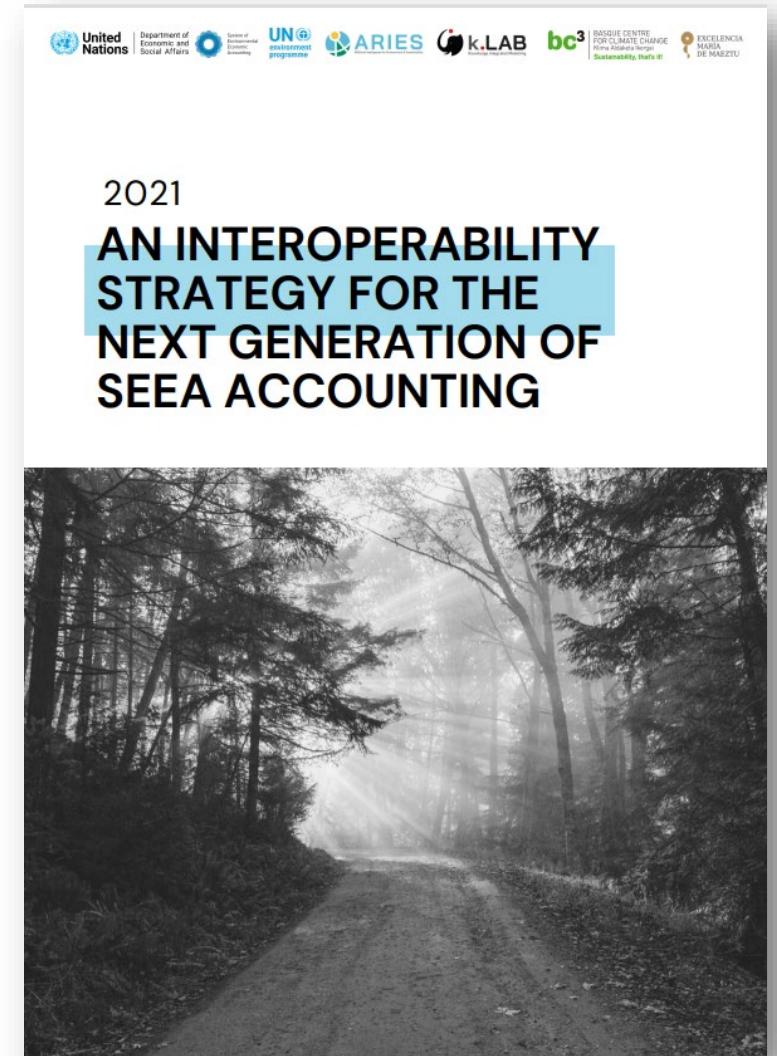


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BASQUE CENTRE
FOR CLIMATE CHANGE
Klima Aldaketa Ikergai
Sustainability, that's it!

Interoperability strategy

- Closely linked to the work of ARIES
- Published in October 2021
- Aim is to make the data and models that underlie SEEA interoperable – able to work together seamlessly
- Data should be FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable
- Reduce duplication of effort in biophysical modelling



Milestone: Completion of 5-year EU-funded NCAVES project

- Large **advances in all five participating countries** in:
 - implementing ecosystem accounts
 - establishing institutional arrangements and national communities of practice
- **Regional training** and workshops held
- Helped establish **Africa NCA Community of Practice**
- Experience and lessons fed directly into **revision of SEEA EEA**
- Important advances in **aligning public and private sector** NCA efforts
- Raised the **visibility** of NCA and ecosystem accounting at a global level



Brazil



China



India



Mexico



South Africa

Upcoming events in 2022

- **High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development** (side event) – July
- Annual **NCA Policy Forum** – November
- **EO4EA** (Earth Observation for Ecosystem Accounting) workshop – November/December
- Annual **Forum of Experts on Ecosystem Accounting** – December
- **Convention on Biological Diversity COP15** (side event) – December

Research agenda for SEEA Ecosystem Accounting

- **Conceptual issues**

- Description and measurement of ecosystem capacity
- Classification of ecosystem services
- Treatment of the atmosphere – important for SEEA CF and SEEA EA
- Alignment with the SNA, including asset boundary issues

- **Methods and implementation**

- Measurement techniques – refining and improving
- Data standards and availability – especially for spatial data
- Applications (including thematic accounts) and indicators

- **Valuation of ecosystem services and ecosystem assets**

- Recognized as a priority research issue
- Being taken up through the SNA update, which includes a focus on valuation principles and methods for non-market transactions and prices

Technical Committee has established two Working Groups

Focusing on two thematic areas:

- **Forest ecosystem accounts** (led by Fernando Santos Martin)
- **Ocean accounting** (led by Jonathon Khoo and Crystal Bradley)
- Supporting implementation and contributing to the research agenda

Forest Working Group

- Working Group has been established in 2021 and has met 5 times. Broad membership across national and international organisations.
- The **main objectives** of the WG are to contribute to the **advancement of the measurement of forest ecosystem accounts**, including identifying best practices, models, data and tools, looking at both biophysical and monetary aspects.
- A **research agenda** has been drafted under 5 tasks:
 - Extent
 - Condition
 - Carbon (biophysical and momentary)
 - Policy & users
- **Next steps** are to develop a more detailed work program under these tasks

Oceans Working Group

- Proposal to **advance a SEEA Oceans manual** was agreed at UNSC 2021
- Working Group has been established in early 2022 and has met 3 times. Broad membership across national and international organisations.
- A **research agenda** has been drafted under 3 themes:
 - Policy
 - Data
 - Ocean economy and classifications
- **Next steps** are to develop a more detailed work program under these themes.

Questions to the Committee

1. Agreement that the programme of work of the Technical Committee should at this stage focus on SEEA EA implementation and address methodological issues as they arise?
 - Exception: valuation issues being taken up as part of SNA update
 - Are there **additional priority areas** that the Technical Committee should consider?
2. What are the **countries' needs** in the implementation of the SEEA EA?
3. How can the Technical Committee **better support** the implementation of the SEEA EA in countries?