



ESA/STAT/AC.272  
UNCEEA/8/13

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
STATISTICS DIVISION  
UNITED NATIONS

---

**International Conference “Global Implementation Programme for the SEEA” and the  
Eighth Meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on  
Environmental-Economic Accounting  
New York, 17-21 June 2013  
United Nations Secretariat Building – Conference Room S-2726 and S-2727**

**Note on the Communication Strategy for the System of  
Environmental-Economic Accounting**

Paper prepared by UNSD

*(for discussion)*

## Note on the Communication Strategy for the System of Environmental- Economic Accounting

### **Introduction**

---

The communication strategy of the SEEA is a key component of the overall implementation strategy for the SEEA CF which was adopted by the UN Statistical Commission at its 44<sup>th</sup> session in March 2013. As part of the implementation of the SEEA, there is an immediate need for the formulation and execution of the communication strategy that will aid in the successful mainstreaming and implementation of the framework.

### **Vision**

---

SEEA is advocated and mainstreamed for monitoring and reporting on international, regional and national policy making for sustainable development through the most efficient, effective and inspiring communication tools and tactics available with the aim to strengthen the scope, detail and quality of the statistics, accounts and indicators by integrating the economic, the environmental, social and human dimensions.

### **Key messages**

---

The following five points summarize key messages that form the basis of the communication strategy for the SEEA.

#### **Integrated nature of sustainable development**

Sustainable development emphasizes a holistic, equitable and far-sighted approach to decision-making at all levels. It rests on integration and a balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental goals and objectives in both public and private decision-making. The multidimensional nature of the sustain development agenda requires an integrated and balanced information system covering economic, environmental, social and human aspects that can monitor and report on the interrelationships between the economy, environment and society through limited, clear, concise and measurable statistics and indicators with possible targets and goals that are forward looking and time bound.

#### **Relevance and utility of SEEA to integrated policy-making and the sustainable development agenda**

Linking environmental and socio-economic data is essential for policymakers. The measurement of sustainability requires integrated information on the economy the environment, social and human aspects. SEEA is a multi-purpose information system

from which various indicators responding to specific demands on the environment and its relationship with the economy can be derived. It provides the measurement framework for linking the environment to economic and human activity. Because of the strength of the underpinning accounting structure, SEEA provide a strong data compilation framework and can serve a variety of monitoring purposes related to integrated policy-making, green economy and other sustainable development initiatives.

### **SEEA Central Framework – An international standard for environmental-economic accounting**

SEEA organizes environmental information in a systems approach of stocks and flows using definitions and classifications consistent with those of the System of National Accounts. The UN Statistical Commission adopted the SEEA Central Framework as an international statistical standard in 2012. The SEEA Central Framework categorizes and analyzes stocks of individual environmental assets, the exchanges of products within the economy and the return of residuals from the economy. This is the first international standard for environmental-economic accounting that directly respond to the demand of integrated policy-making This standard and specific extension pertaining to energy, water, agriculture, land, forest, fishery and material flows can be instrumental in addressing various policy initiatives.

### **SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting – A state-of-the-art synthesis of current knowledge regarding ecosystem accounting**

SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA-EEA) provides a conceptual framework to measure ecosystems in a holistic manner, in particular focusing on ecosystem contributions to economic activities and human well-being as well as tracking the condition of ecosystems, changes in conditions, and the impact of those changes on the provision of services. It is a state-of-the-art synthesis of current knowledge regarding ecosystem accounting that respond to a wide range of emerging demands for integrated information related to analytical and policy frameworks on environmental sustainability, human well being and economic growth and development.

### **Implementing SEEA to strengthen statistical capacity building for integrated policy-making**

Close coordination of global programmes of statistical implementation is critical. In particular, adopting SEEA as the statistical standard for the production of environmental-economic accounts and supporting statistics by international agencies allow, and the scaling up and close coordination of the global programme of statistical

implementation of the SEEA by UN agencies, regional agencies and countries are integral to strengthen the statistical capacity building for integrated policy-making and the sustainable development agenda.

### **Objectives and principles**

---

The communication strategy will serve two major roles in the implementation of the SEEA. First, it will provide a vehicle for raising awareness and gaining support among key groups for the implementation of environmental-economic accounts. Second, it will allow for the communication on scope, detail and compliance of implementation, projects, scientific progress and related events. These two major roles are intertwined and will feed into one another as the implementation of the framework ramps up.

### **Communications tools/instruments/channels/activities**

---

#### **Communications tools/instruments/channels/activities**

- Branding SEEA (e.g. create a logo and slogan, positioning SEEA)
- SEEA annual report and other corporate information materials (tbc)
- SEEA website and online resources
- SEEA briefing note and newsletter
- News release (tbc)
- Social media
- Conference and seminar
- Key science publications (tbc)
- Presentation of project results
- Case studies
- Flagship magazine(tbc)
- Training materials
- Special events and youth events(tbc)
- Audio-visual material
- Goodwill Ambassadors (UNCEEAA chair and members)
- Speeches and presentations

### **Audience**

---

The communication strategy adopted by UNSC identifies a number of objectives and principles, and lists key groups/constituencies along with mechanisms that could be used to reach the key groups/constituencies. In the short term, it is important to reach out to relevant partners at the international and regional level who already are

working or have concrete plans to work on environmental-economic accounts to ensure that a common corporate message is presented. This can be achieved through a number of mechanisms such as conferences/seminars, newsletters and presentations, and can be disseminated in a timely manner through a regularly update website. The sharing of presentations among partners involved in the implementation of the framework in countries serves not only to ensure that a common message is presented but also helps in building the SEEA brand.

Another important tool in the communication strategy is the presentation of project results (national and sub-national examples). Such examples could be communicated through short glossies providing a narrative as to how the SEEA accounts contributed to public policy making and, if possible, the outcome of the implemented policy. Making the link between SEEA accounts and public policy raises the profile of the SEEA and is accessible to multiple key groups including policy makers, statisticians, academics/scientists, business community, civil society and the public at large. The demand for such examples is high and should be a priority with the larger communication strategy.

| <b>Target group</b>                                   | <b>Characteristics</b>   | <b>Communication</b>   | <b>Media</b>  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <i>Government</i>                                     | <i>Responsible for policy, funding</i>   | <i>Input to vision, high-level needs for SEEA, understanding of potential of SEEA</i>                  | <i>Presentation at high level meetings/print</i>                    |
| <i>Leaders NSI's/ national environmental agencies</i> | <i>Responsible for implementation SEEA at national level</i>                                       | <i>Input to vision, understanding of potential of SEEA, full commitment to implementation strategy</i> | <i>Presentation at high level meetings/print /Newsletters</i>       |
| <i>International agencies</i>                         | <i>Responsible for facilitating implementation SEEA at national and regional level and funding</i> | <i>Input to vision, understanding of potential of SEEA, full commitment to implementation</i>          | <i>Presentation at high level meetings/print</i>                    |
| <i>Scientists</i>                                     | <i>Responsible for the further development of SEEA</i>   | <i>Feedback from implementation and input for further development</i>                                  | <i>Conferences/ Newsletters/ Seminars/ workshops/ print/website</i> |
| <i>UNCEEA<sup>1</sup></i>                             | <i>Responsible for coordination of implementation and further development of SEEA</i>              | <i>Feedback from implementation and input for further development</i>                                  | <i>Monitors</i>   |
| <i>NSI-staff</i>                                      | <i>Responsible for the actual implementation and further development of SEEA at national level</i> | <i>Input for knowledge and expertise for actual implementation and further development</i>             | <i>Conferences/workshops/ Print/Newsletters</i>                     |

<sup>1</sup> It assumed that UNCEEA will be the coordinating body of the implementation and further development of SEEA

|                           |  |   |   |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| <i>Journalists</i>        | <i>Instrumental in reaching a large audience</i>             | <i>Input to vision and understanding of potential of SEEA</i>                                 | <i>Brochures/print/website/press kit/<br/>interviews</i>              |
| <i>Business community</i> | <i>Instrumental in achieving Green Growth/Sustainability</i> | <i>Input to vision and understanding of potential of SEEA</i>                                 | <i>Brochures/website</i>  |
| <i>NGO's</i>              | <i>Partners in implementation</i>                            | <i>Input to vision, understanding of potential of SEEA, full commitment to implementation</i> | <i>High level Conferences/<br/>brochures/website/<br/>Newsletters</i> |
| <i>Civil society</i>      | <i>Instrumental in achieving Green Growth/Sustainability</i> | <i>Input to vision of SEEA</i>  | <i>Website</i>  |

## **Resources**

---

The execution of the communication strategy requires dedicated resources of which the engagement of a communications specialist is of primary importance. The specialist would be tasked with managing the SEEA brand and design a strategy regarding how to best reach the key groups/constituencies. The specialist would also contribute to formulating and tailoring the messages for each key group/constituency.

## **Discussion point at the UNCEEA meeting**

---

The Committee is invited to:

- a. Express its views on key message in the communication strategy
- b. Endorse the proposal to set apart dedicated resources and recruit a communication specialist to be tasked with the communication of the SEEA