



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
STATISTICS DIVISION  
UNITED NATIONS



System of  
Environmental  
Economic  
Accounting

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

### First Global Consultation on:

**Chapter 6: Ecosystem services concepts for accounting**

**Chapter 7: Accounting for ecosystem services in physical terms**

### *Comments Form*

**Deadline for responses: 20 August 2020**

**Send responses to: [seea@un.org](mailto:seea@un.org)**

|                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Name:                   |                     |
| Organization & country: | NSO (IBGE) – Brasil |

The comment form has been designed to facilitate the analysis of comments. There are six 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](mailto: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](mailto:seea@un.org)

## Questions related to Chapter 6

**Question 1: Do you have comments on the concepts and definitions for ecosystem services, benefits and associated components of the ecosystem accounting framework?**

In item 6.30, regarding the specific topic of Ecosystem Services, it is suggested to consider a standard for physical metrics, taking into account the adequacy to the “use” of the service.

**Question 2. Do you have comments on the content and descriptions in the reference list of selected ecosystem services?**

The text emphasizes that the list is not exhaustive. Agree with the risk of omitting some important service, nevertheless, it would be useful to attempt to create an exhaustive list, even if it is open to further refinement. Or at least present in the manual this as a starting point but recognize the usefulness of a comprehensive reference list.

The cultural services could take into account some measurement of the importance of the ecosystem to indigenous peoples and traditional communities. There’s the “Spiritual, symbolic and artistic services”, but they don’t seem to account for the whole complexity of the importance of some ecosystems on the maintenance of the cultural, linguistics, provisioning and way of life of those communities. The service could be something related to “Maintenance of Sociodiversity”.

Regarding Global Climate Regulation Services, suggest for these are not restricted to Carbon retention. For example, in the case of the Amazon, the forest provides other global climatic services such as the maintenance of global biogeochemical equilibrium and of regional humidity by the balance between Evapotranspiration to Rainfall. Further, the Amazon basin holds approximately 15-20% of the world’s freshwater reserves. These services are not entirely contained in the next ecosystem service: Rainfall Pattern regulation at sub-continental scale.

The role of the Amazon in world climate has long been studied by many scientists but mainly by Brazilian climatologist Carlos Nobre starting with the Large Scale Biosphere-Atmosphere Experiment in Amazonia in the early 90’s, which did not necessarily focus on carbon retention but on atmospheric processes. Recently the U.N. has launched an International Panel of Scientists, similar to the IPCC, headed by him and others, to provide ongoing scientific information on the biome, due to its significance for World Climatic processes.

By valuing only carbon, the true functions the forest provides as a regional and global entity, by simply existing, are left unaccounted. This, therefore, would not create the necessary incentive for its conservation. Suggest that the Technical Committee of the SEEA-EEA revision consult with this new Panel.

**Question 3. Do you agree with the proposed treatments for selected ecosystem services described in Section 6.4 for biomass provisioning services, global climate regulation services, cultural services, water supply and abiotic flows?**

Yes

**Question 4. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 6?**

- Table 6.1: In the field 'users' of the table it is present "Individuals and Households", but others are mentioned in the text, as described in "The reduction of damage in buildings also benefits industries, companies and other users". Suggested alignment between text and table information.

- Paragraph 6.36: Second line, "biodiversity itself will be impact" should be "biodiversity itself will impact".

- Table 6.2: Is there any logic behind presentation order? Most representative services? If not, suggest to making it clear or adopting some sorting (e.g. alphabetic).

- Page 13 - Amenity services: The text lists "lower level of air and noise pollution". Wouldn't that be double counting with the respective regulating services?

- Paragraph 6.62, line 5: The text mentions carbon stored in biomass and in soil. What about carbon in water body sediments and in oceans? Is it included? Suggestion to specify or clarify.

**Questions related to Chapter 7**

**Question 5. Do you have comments on the proposed recording approaches for ecosystem services supply and use tables described in section 7.2?**

Some services seem conflicting. There are many examples, especially between provisioning services and regulation: e.g., the provision of a product in one forest, could reduce the potential for regulation services in the same forest. It is not clear how this would be assessed. Would this be accounted for as a decrease in the provision of the latter service?

**Question 6. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 7?**

- 7.52, line 5. "This allocation can in turn would support" - correct would be "This allocation can in turn support".

- 7.61, line 11. "of pollen to enable fruit development and reproduction" "the wording is a bit confusing. Suggest modifying for "of pollen to enable plant sexual reproduction".

- Table 7.6. Suggest to adding a comment to the "Pollination services" line pointing that the dependence on animal pollination varies across crops. Due to this, depending on which crop is being considered the baseline crop production will be different.

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