



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
STATISTICS DIVISION
UNITED NATIONS



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

System of Environmental-Economic Accounting— Ecosystem Accounting

Global Consultation on the complete document: Comments Form

Deadline for responses: 30 November 2020

Send responses to: seea@un.org

Name:	David MacDonald
Organization & country:	Chair, Expert Group on Resource Management, Geneva

The comments 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: seea@un.org.

All documents can be found on our website at: <https://seea.un.org/content/global-consultation-complete-draft>

In case you have any questions or have issues with accessing the documents, please contact us at seea@un.org

General comments

Question 1: Do you have comments on the overall draft of the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting?

Dear Madam/Sir,

Thank you for providing a thorough and substantial report on SEEA – Ecosystem Accounting for comments. Our comment relates to the need for and use of resource classification in making the report more operational concerning specific quantities.

The UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy includes the Expert Group on Resource Management that maintains the UN Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) recommended for global use by the UN ECOSOC (Decision 233/2004). By reference to SEEA, this SEEA-EAC incorporates an abbreviated version of the earlier 2009 version of UNFC.

UNFC was [updated in 2019](#). Its application was expanded from fossil energy and minerals also to include renewable energy (principally wind, solar, geothermal, bioenergy with hydropower in the making), anthropogenic resources, groundwater and injection projects for underground storage e.g. of CO₂, gas etc.

The objects of classification are projects and assets. By assets, we mean the legal right to projects and to which value is attached. The information that projects carry can then be assigned to project participants, including the Government.

The information displayed has traditionally been physical stocks and flows. Commercial and other applications make use of other metrics carried by projects, e.g. monetary, value, labour, etc.

Flows are measured at defined reference points, where they can be measured or estimated. Flows are of three types:

- Sales.
- Use without monetary transactions.
- Non used, including emissions and residuals.

For anthropogenic and certain forms of renewable energy, there may be reference points of both inflow and outflow.

Stocks are estimated in terms of future flows (products). They are defined in project terms, and where projects are not yet conceived, in terms of sources. Projects are classified by combinations of three sets of categories:

- Environmental – social – economic viability.
- Technical feasibility.
- Degree of confidence in estimates.

The project approach defines the information that impacts decisions in policy formulation, government resource management, industry business process management and capital allocation. Since the information impacts decisions, it is possible to assess its value and thus also the extent to which efforts in obtaining it are justified.

For the part of the ecosystems where SEEA and UNFC overlaps, it is essential that the quality of information is maintained, and that it is coherent in the two systems, i.e. that it is the same in time and space. This demands a close integration of the SEEA-EAC and the UNFC. Moreover, UNFC is being expanded as the United Nations Resource Management System (UNRMS), as a comprehensive tool-kit for the integrated and sustainable management of resources. This approach will allow governments, industry and investors to use SEEA/UNFC information to decide on the right pathways to develop the resources in alignment to the needs of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development.

We note that the UNFC is not yet referenced in the SEEA-EAC. We will be pleased to cooperate in integrating the two systems contingent on the efforts required and funding available.

Comments by sets of chapters

Question 2. Do you have comments on Chapters 1-2 of the draft SEEA Ecosystem Accounting?

Click here and start typing (The length of your response is not limited by this text box.)

Question 3. Do you have comments on Chapters 3-5 of the draft SEEA Ecosystem Accounting?

Click here and start typing (The length of your response is not limited by this text box.)

Question 4. Do you have comments on Chapters 6-7 of the draft SEEA Ecosystem Accounting?

Click here and start typing (The length of your response is not limited by this text box.)

Question 5. Do you have comments on Chapters 8-11 of the draft SEEA Ecosystem Accounting?

Click here and start typing (The length of your response is not limited by this text box.)

Question 6. Do you have comments on Chapters 12-14 of the draft SEEA Ecosystem Accounting?

Click here and start typing (The length of your response is not limited by this text box.)