



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
STATISTICS DIVISION
UNITED NATIONS



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

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

First Global Consultation on:

Chapter 3: Spatial units for Ecosystem Accounting

Chapter 4: Accounting for Ecosystem Extent

Chapter 5: Accounting for Ecosystem Condition

Comments Form

Deadline for responses: 30 April 2020

Send responses to: seea@un.org

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The comment form has been designed to facilitate the analysis of comments. There are nine 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.

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

Question 1: Do you have any comments on the definition and description of ecosystem assets and ecosystem accounting areas and the associated measurement boundaries and treatments?

- Paragraph 3.12 reads:
“Unconfined aquifers containing groundwater that are directly influenced by the (surrounding) ecosystem by water infiltration or possible contamination, are considered part of that ecosystem asset.”
There is a definition for “unconfined aquifers” missing and an explanation how they can be distinguished from confined aquifers.
- In paragraph 3.23 the abbreviation “CBD” is mentioned for the first time. If not introduced in a previous chapter, it should be explained here.

Question 2. Do you have any comments on the use of the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology as the SEEA Ecosystem Type Reference Classification?

- The biome “extensive land use systems” should be renamed in “land use systems”
The intensity of the land use (whether it is extensively or intensively used) should be rather used to determine the condition of the respective ecosystem.
- Appropriate EFGs for opencast mines and landfills are missing. It should be taken into consideration to include additional EFGs in the biome “Intensive land-use systems” for these areas.
- Criteria for hierarchical Structure
The criteria to distinguish Biomes or Ecosystem Functional Groups from another, or to subdivide them into subtypes, vary and are not consistently applied in a structured or cascaded manner. For example in T1 Forests it is the global climate zones on level 1, on level 2 follow three criteria: topography (lowland, mountain) / climate condition (dry, rain) / plant association (heath). In T2 Shrubland or T3 Savanna it is the growth form or the landscape appearance which are used as criteria, then on level 2 follow hydrological (dry) or climate (cool) criteria. Cool climate can also be dry or wet, but is not contained in list.
- T3.4 Rocky pavements, screes and lava flows
This class is misplaced here under T3, which is addressing some sort of vegetation by its name; T3.4 has typically no vegetation. It might be better placed under T5. If it is aiming at shrublands growing on top of rocky pavement and lava flows instead, the name should be adjusted.
- F2 Lakes and F3 Artificial Fresh Waters are classified as two separate Biomes. It would be better to arranged one being the subtype of the other, for examples F2 “Water bodies”, and in subordered level F2.1 “natural water bodies” and F2.2 “artificial water bodies”. The so far existing level 2 codes can be then moved one level down on level 3.
- General Question: The document also mentions a level 4-6 hierarchy, but those classes are not listed in the chapter. Do they exist/are they planned to be elaborated, or are they left for national, more detailed nomenclatures?

Question 3. Do you have any comments on the recording of changes in ecosystem extent and ecosystem condition, including the recording of ecosystem conversions, as described in chapters 4 and 5?

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

Question 4. Do you have any comments on the three-stage approach to accounting for ecosystem condition, including the aggregation of condition variables and indicators?

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Question 5. Do you have any comments on the description and application of the concept of reference condition and the use of both natural and anthropogenic reference conditions in accounting for ecosystem condition?

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Question 6. Do you have any comments on Ecosystem Condition Typology for organising characteristics, data and indicators about ecosystem condition?

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Question 7. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 3?

- Figure 3.2.: Relationship between spatial units in ecosystem accounting
“EA1 (EA1)” should be “EA1 (ET1)”
- Paragraph 3.30, footnote 2, last sentence should read:
“[...] rivers and streams *are* located in those of stream order 5 or more.”

Question 8. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 4?

In paragraph 4.8 and 4.9, the notation of columns and rows of table 4.1 is swapped.

Question 9. Do you have any other comments on Chapter 5?

In annex 5.2, third paragraph, the first sentence reads: "The SEEA ECT has seven classes as listed in Table 5.1." In table 5.1, only six classes are listed.