



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

Name:	Leon C Braat
Organization & country:	Retired from Wageningen University & Research, The Netherlands (in 2015); Active as (Co-)Editor-in-Chief, for Elsevier journal Ecosystem Services (Since 2012)

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?

Clear and transparent text.

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

Good choice.

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?

No comments, but I am not sure where to place the following observation.
In the past few decades, there have been discussions on so-called “minimum area” (or minimum extent), for habitat (or ecosystem) types. This was pertinent in Europe with the development of the Habitat Directive (EU Directive) and in general with cost-effective protection strategies. The discussion is similar to the “reference” condition in calculations of condition indicators.
I did not see it mentioned in Chapter 4, and only the term Habitat Loss was mentioned in Chapter 5, but not in relation to a minimum area idea.

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?

No comments; clear and transparent

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?

See my remark about minimum area under Question 3.

Both approaches (natural and anthropogenic) are necessary in most parts of the world, as humans have altered landscapes for hundreds or even thousands of years. In both cases a detailed description, based on sound science and history, is necessary, and shall still require some form of arbitrary, but transparent choice.

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

No comments

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

No comments.

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

No comments

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

No comments