DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
STATISTICS DIVISION
UNITED NATIONS

System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

Classification of Environmental Functions

Global Consultation

Comments Form

Deadline for responses: 31 December 2022
Send responses to: seea@un.org

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The comment form has been designed to facilitate the analysis of comments. There are three 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 website at: https://seea.un.org/content/global-consultation-classification-environmental-functions

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 proposed structure of the Classification of Environmental Functions?

Division 1 – Air, Climate and Energy:

The groups and classes seem to relate only to Air and Energy.

Climate group/class seem to be not covered under Division 1 at the 2nd and 3rd digit. Should there be a Climate resilience group (2nd digit)?

As an example – climate resilience in cities could have a range of activities contributing. Climate resilience measures such as infrastructure investments to raise sea wall height, stormwater retention, building design/renovations (e.g. floodable first floor). Prevention of climate risks like site landscape design (e.g. setbacks), maintaining, restoring and protecting ecological infrastructure (like naturally functioning wetlands, riparian areas) to help mitigate risks (preventing development in these areas where risk would be higher). Ecosystem-based adaptation to manage climate-intensified disaster risks in vulnerable regions.

Division 2 – Waste water and water resources:

There seems to be overlaps between water in 2.2 and 4.1.

Recommend that the word 'natural' in 2.2 is removed to reduce overlap with 4.1.

(suggest 4.1 is about management of fresh water ecosystems).

Division 4 – Soil, surface and groundwater, biodiversity and forests:

Suggested new Division title – "Protection and management of biodiversity and ecosystems".

4.1.4 - suggested as groundwater management as it relates to more than just salinity.

4.1.4 - could also be a better fit in 2.2.

4.2 - suggest addition to group name to be "Protection of biodiversity and landscapes and seascapes".

4.2.2 – Suggest addition to this class to be "Protection of natural and semi-natural landscapes and seascapes" – covers both land and ocean.

4.3 – Suggestion to not lump all forests together, but to make a distinction between planted forests (exotic species) and natural or semi-natural forests.

Question 2. Do you have any comments on the explanatory notes and on the heading reference?

Explanatory notes inputs would relate as well to the inputs provided in question 1 above. A few additional notes are provided here.

New division proposed: "4. Protection and management of biodiversity and ecosystems"
Suggestions for introduction paragraph under new division title: "Activities, measures and products aimed at protection and management (including remediation) of biodiversity and ecosystems (which include abiotic soil and natural water resources)."
Rationale: ecosystems include forest ecosystems but also other ecosystems in different realms.

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4.2.2. – suggest including examples in the explanatory notes of protection of landscapes and seascapes important to ecological functioning or to deliver ecosystem services (i.e. this is not covered by 4.2.1).

Question 3. Do you have any other comments on the Classification of Environmental Functions?

None

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