

9 November 2022

Dear colleague,

Global consultation on the Classification of Environmental Functions

I am pleased to launch the global consultation on the Classification of Environmental Functions (CEF) and associated explanatory notes. CEF was developed by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) as a classification for environmental purposes. This classification is intended to replace the current Classification of Environmental Protection Activities (CEPA), already included in the family of international statistical classifications and presented as one of the classifications in the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting 2012 Central Framework.

The revision process of CEPA started in 2017. The current draft was prepared by Eurostat with the support of the statistical offices of European Union Member States. It was presented in several international fora including the United Nations Committee of Experts of Environmental Economic Accounting and its Technical Committee on the SEEA Central Framework, the London Group on Environmental Accounting and the United Nations Committee of Experts of International Statistical Classifications. This global consultation is being undertaken by the United Nations Statistics Division with the objective of including CEF as a classification in the family of international statistical classifications.

The Classification of Environmental Functions combined the Classification of Environmental Protection Activities and the Classification of Resource Management Activities (CReMA) into a single classification that classifies the environment according to purpose and can be used for the compilation of environmental economic accounts. The European Union Member States and Eurostat have been compiling environmental protection expenditures, environmental taxes and environmental goods and services sector accounts using CEPA and CReMA for more than ten years. The development of CEF has benefitted from the long experience in data collection by countries.

I am pleased to distribute the Classification of Environmental Functions for your review and comments. All comments on the classification should be provided using the accompanying comments form to be sent to seea@un.org by 31 December 2022. The comments received will be made public on the SEEA website. The classification will then be revised on the basis of the comments received, by Eurostat in collaboration with the Technical Committee on the SEEA Central framework, and later submitted for review to the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental Economic Accounting and for approval to the United Nations Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications with the objective of having it adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2023.

Considering the topics covered by the CEF, I would encourage you to consult and coordinate your response with experts from relevant areas such as environmental economic accounts, national accounts, environment statistics and classifications. Please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Alessandra Alfieri, Chief, Environmental-Economic Accounts Section (E-mail: seea@un.org).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your attention to this matter and look forward to your contribution.

Yours sincerely,



Stefan Schweinfest
Director
United Nations Statistics Division/DESA