



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

Virtual Expert Forum on SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting 2020

Session 3: Ecosystem services

24-25 August 2020

online

Draft agenda

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[all EDT (NY) times]

7:00-7:45 Introduction and framing of the discussion

Session structure:

- 7:00-7:15: Rules of engagement and icebreaker – Pritom Phookun, meeting facilitator
- 7:15-7:45: Welcome messages and Q&A chaired by Anton Steurer, Eurostat
 - Stefan Schweinfest, Director of the UN Statistics Division
 - Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

7:45-8:15 Overview of progress on the ecosystem services for the SEEA EEA revision

Session objective: Inform participants of the overall progress on the SEEA EEA revision in the area of ecosystem services, ensure understanding of the basic content of Chapters 6 & 7, and outline the outstanding issues emanating from the global consultation.

Session structure:

- 7:45-8:00: Presentation on the progress in ecosystem services and outstanding methodological issues – Carl Obst, UNSD consultant
- 8:00-8:15: Q&A and general discussion chaired by Anton Steurer, Eurostat

8:15-9:15 Practical examples on measuring ecosystem services in selected countries

Session objective: Inform participants of practical examples from countries that measured ecosystem services as part of their work on ecosystem accounting and give participants the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the approaches used.

Session structure:

- 8:15-8:20: Introduction to the breakout discussions process – Pritom Phookun
- 8:20-9:15: Discussion in five breakout groups. Each group will begin with an introductory presentation, followed by a moderated discussion.

Breakout groups:

#	Case study	Presenter	Moderator/notetaker
1	Germany	Benjamin Burkhard	Julian Chow
2	Indonesia	Etjih Tasriah	Jessica Chan
3	Peru	Miroslav Honzak	Will Speller
4	Rwanda	Evariste Rutebuka	Marko Javorsek
5	USA	Ken Bagstad	Carl Obst

Session objective: To raise awareness of the proposed SEEA ecosystem services reference list to support accounting and recognise the links to existing classifications and typologies.

Session structure:

- 9:15-9:25: Presentation on the reference list of ecosystem services as outlined in Chapter 6 of the revised SEEA EEA – Carl Obst, UNSD consultant
- 9:25-9:35: Initial responses to the reference list from the following discussants: Jan-Erik Petersen, Marc Russell, Patricia Balvanera
- 9:35-9:45: Steve Polasky to synthesize and respond to the discussion
- 9:45-10:00: Q&A to be chaired by Benjamin Burkhard, Leibniz University Hannover

Day 2: Tuesday, 25 August 2020

[all EDT (NY) times]

7:00-7:15 Introduction to the day

Reflections from Day 1 and quick intro on the structure of Day 2 – Pritom Phookun

7:15-8:15 Discussion on solutions for biophysical modelling

Session objective: Inform participants of the methodological guidelines for biophysical modelling and the opportunities and challenges of four solutions commonly used for biophysical modelling of ecosystem services.

Session structure:

- 7:15-7:25: Presentation on the Guidelines for biophysical modelling – Bram Edens, UNSD
- 7:25-7:45: Initial reactions on challenges and opportunities of the following four solutions (5 minutes each):
 - ARIES – Ferdinando Villa, Basque Centre for Climate Change
 - InVEST – Becky Chaplin-Kramer, Stanford University
 - LUCI – Bethanna Jackson, Victoria University of Wellington
 - ESTIMAP – Alessandra La Notte, Joint Research Centre
- 7:45-8:15: Discussion on “How can these solutions more broadly make SEEA EEA accounting better quality, faster, and more accessible globally?” Moderated by Ken Bagstad, U.S. Geological Survey

8:15-9:50 Discussion on outstanding technical issues

Session objective: Discuss and provide suggestions on how to resolve some of the remaining or emerging issues on ecosystem services.

Session structure:

- 8:15-8:25: Introduction to the issues to be discussed in breakouts – Carl Obst, UNSD consultant
- 8:25-9:25: Breakout group discussions
- 9:25-9:50: Debrief moderated by Lars Hein, Wageningen University
 - Each lead presenter gives a 2-minute summary of the issue discussed and if any conclusion was reached during the breakout discussion (verbal only, no slides)
 - Questions and discussion from the audience

Topics for breakout discussions:

1. Climate regulation service

Description: The role of ecosystems in supporting the regulation of global climate, primarily through the sequestration and storage of carbon, is widely accepted. Accounting for this ecosystem service has raised a range of issues. In recent months, an approach based on the concept carbon retention has been developed.

Questions:

- Does the carbon retention approach provide a meaningful pathway for accounting for the global climate regulation service?
- What measurement boundaries should be adopted for ecosystem accounting purposes?

Lead presenter	Chair/moderator	Notetaker
Bram Edens	Jim Tebrake	Will Speller

2. Spatial disaggregation of statistical data for ecosystem accounting

Description: Statistical data may be highly useful for ecosystem accounting, though because it is typically collected and reported by administrative units, it must be spatially disaggregated to provide grid-based results needed for SEEA EEA. Such disaggregation typically requires the use of ancillary data, and various methods exist for doing so. An important step in advancing the SEEA EEA will be for account compilers to know when and where disaggregation may be a more useful approach than, for example, biophysical modelling.

Questions:

- What are some examples (i.e., countries and ecosystem services) of where disaggregation has been useful for SEEA EEA accounting?
- Which statistical data and ancillary data have been most useful to assist in spatial disaggregation for SEEA EEA?
- How can we better guide SEEA EEA developers on how best to use spatial disaggregation, based on past successful examples

Lead presenter	Chair/moderator	Notetaker
Roy Remme	Ken Bagstad	Marko Javorsek

3. Recreation-related services

Description: An important use of ecosystems occurs when people undertake recreation in them. The contexts may vary from a local park to wildlife watching in remote locations. In many cases the activity is supported by businesses providing access, material support (food, equipment, guidance) and transport services. Where payments are made to these businesses by people undertaking recreation the precise set of accounting entries needs

to be determined such that the links between the ecosystem, the people undertaking the recreation and the businesses involved are appropriately recorded.

Questions:

- Is it appropriate for households, as the sector undertaking the recreation, to be considered the sole user of the recreation related ecosystem services?
- If so, how should the connection between ecosystems and local businesses be recorded?

Lead presenter	Chair/moderator	Notetaker
Rocky Harris	Anton Steurer	Alessandra Alfieri

4. Amenity services

Description: There are benefits obtained by people from the biophysical characteristics and qualities of ecosystems reflected in visual aesthetics and lower levels of air and noise pollution and which can be summarised in terms of amenity services. They are generally considered to be supplied in relation to the places in which people reside and hence in the associated property and rental prices.

Questions:

- What methods can be used to measure these services in physical and monetary terms?
- What measurement boundaries or conventions should be established to distinguish these services from related services such as concerning recreation?

Lead presenter	Chair/moderator	Notetaker
David Barton and Kristine Grimsrud	Juha Siikamaki	Jessica Chan

5. Ecosystem service capacity

Description: A key motivation for ecosystem accounting is understanding the connection between ecosystem assets and ecosystem services. Thus, the concept of ecosystem capacity is key. However, the precise definition and framing of this concept in an accounting context is yet to be established although some key features are emerging.

Questions:

- Is the proposed focus on measuring the capacity of individual ecosystem services appropriate? What definition should be adopted?
- How can the link to more systemic concepts related to capacity, such as resilience, be best presented?

Lead presenter	Chair/moderator	Notetaker
Carl Obst	Mandy Driver	Julian Chow

9:50-10:00 Next steps and closing

Summary of next steps and closing of the session – Alessandra Alfieri, UNSD