

System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

Area B2 presentation to the 2024 meeting of the UNCEEA

UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA)
Nineteenth Meeting
Wednesday, 26 June 2024

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Chair of the Technical Committee on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting



United Nations

Overview of activities of the Technical Committee

- Met five times since June 2023
- Developed a programme of work for 2023-2025, with six components:
 1. Development of practical guidance notes for countries for the compilation of SEEA EA
 - 2. Supporting development of headline indicators for the GBF that are based on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting**
 3. Overseeing working groups on forest ecosystems and ocean accounting
 4. Contributing to the broader SEEA and SNA processes
 5. Engaging with relevant initiatives
 6. Promoting the community of practice on ecosystem accounting

Component 1: Development of practical guidance notes

- Methodological guidance is needed to support countries' implementation of SEEA Ecosystem Accounting
- Priorities identified:
 - > Operationalizing the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology, including guidelines for cross-walking with other relevant classifications
 - Being taken forward through the IUCN Commission for Ecosystem Management and GEO Global Ecosystems Atlas, with input from TC
 - > Approaches and methods for compiling ecosystem extent accounts
 - Will form part of guidance on GBF Indicator A.2
 - > Methods for measuring ecosystem services
 - Work underway, will contribute to guidance on GBF Indicator B.1
- In addition: Guidelines on applying the agricultural ecosystem types in the Global Ecosystem Typology – underway in partnership with IUCN

Component 2: Supporting GBF indicator development

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

adopted December 2022 at CBD COP15



FOUR GOALS

Goal A

Protect and Restore

Goal B

Prosper with Nature

Goal C

Share Benefits Equally

Goal D

Invest and Collaborate

23 TARGETS in three themes

Reducing threats to biodiversity
(Targets 1-8)

Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing
(Targets 10-13)

Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming
(Targets 14-23)

19 headline indicators

Each with a metadata sheet that sets out rationale, definitions, methodology

Three of these 19 indicators use SEEA Ecosystem Accounting as their methodological basis and have UNSD as the custodian of the indicator

Countries expected to report on these indicators for the first time in early 2026

Global Biodiversity Framework Goal A: Protect and Restore

Three elements:

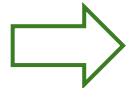
Ecosystems

The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all **ecosystems** are maintained, enhanced, or restored, *substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050*;



Species

Human induced extinction of known threatened **species** is halted, and, by 2050, the extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced tenfold and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels;



Genetic diversity

The **genetic diversity** within populations of wild and domesticated species, is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential.



Headline indicators:

A.1 Red List of Ecosystems

A.2 Extent of natural ecosystems
(based on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting)



A.3 Red List Index for Species

A.4 The proportion of populations within species with an effective population size > 500

Global Biodiversity Framework Goal B: Prosper with Nature

Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, *maintained and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored*, supporting the achievement of sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations by 2050.

Headline indicator

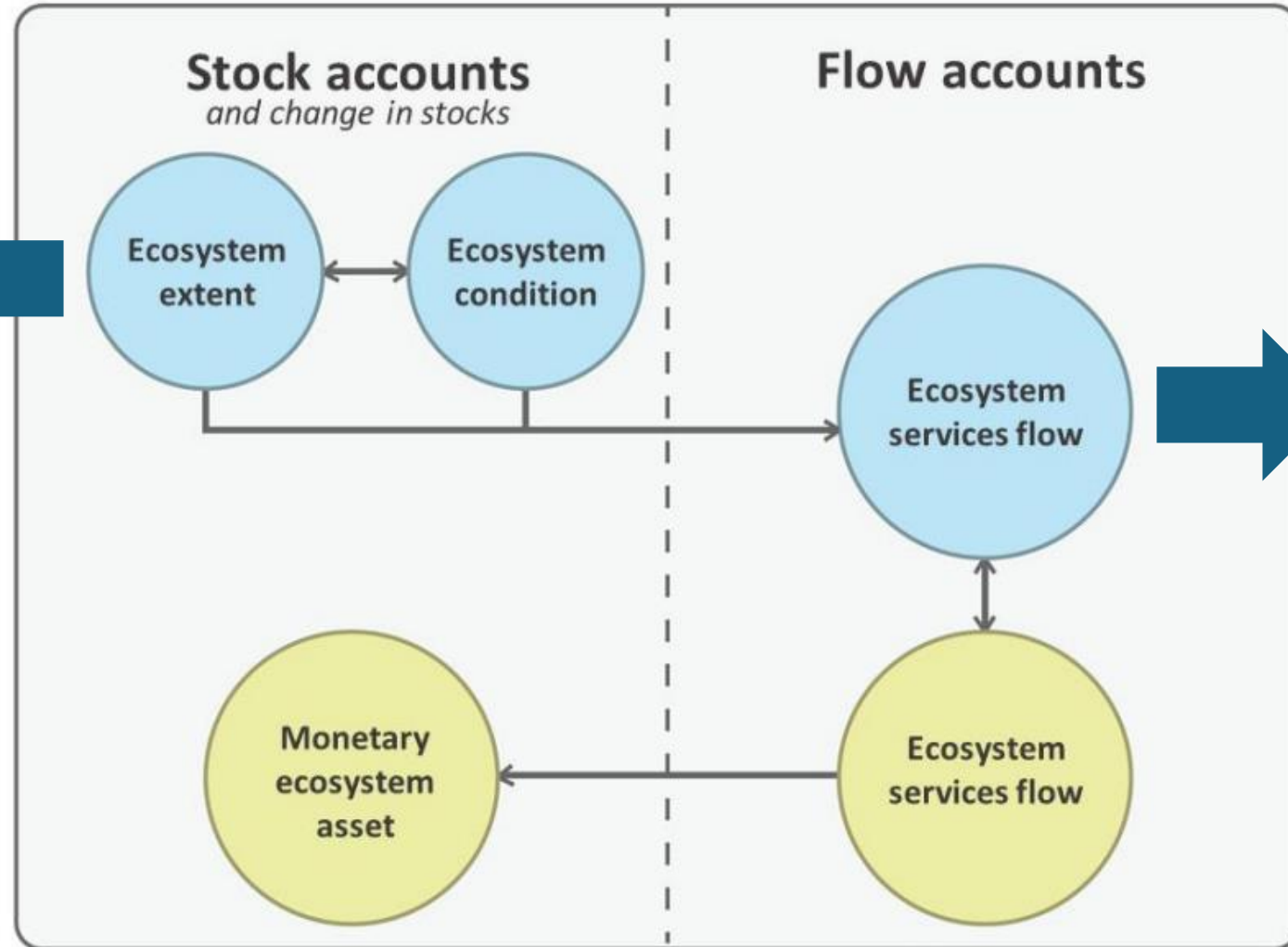
B.1 Services provided by ecosystems

(based on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting)



Linking the core ecosystem accounts to indicators

Ecosystem extent account provides the basis for **Indicator A.2 Extent of natural ecosystems**



Ecosystem services account (physical) provides the basis for **Indicator B.1 Services from ecosystems**

Component 2: Supporting GBF indicator development

- Two Task Teams (on Indicators A.2 and on B.1) established for metadata finalization:
 - > Composed of interested members of the Technical Committee, some members of the AHTEG and other relevant experts in the respective fields
 - > Each TT met several times to discuss issues and finalize the metadata for TC's approval
 - > Small testing group was set up under the TT on Indicator B.1 to test different aggregation methods using time-series data from existing ecosystem services accounts in several countries
 - > Initiated work on a review of available models for ecosystem services
 - > Several issues still to be finalized as part of development of compilation guidelines for the indicators
- Metadata were considered by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) for the GBF monitoring framework in March and discussed at the CBD SBSTTA meeting in May, final approval will take place at the CBD CoP 16 in October/November
- Less progress on the third SEEA EA-based indicator 9.1: Benefits from sustainable use of wild species

Component 2: Supporting GBF indicator development

- The big challenge: Getting from the large amount of information in an accounting table to a single indicator
- For Indicator A.2 Extent of natural ecosystems:
 - > Extent of natural ecosystems as a proportion of total area
- For Indicator B.1 Services provided by ecosystems:
 - > Average of trends in ecosystem service provision

Mock-up of Indicator A.2: Extent of natural ecosystems as a proportion of total area

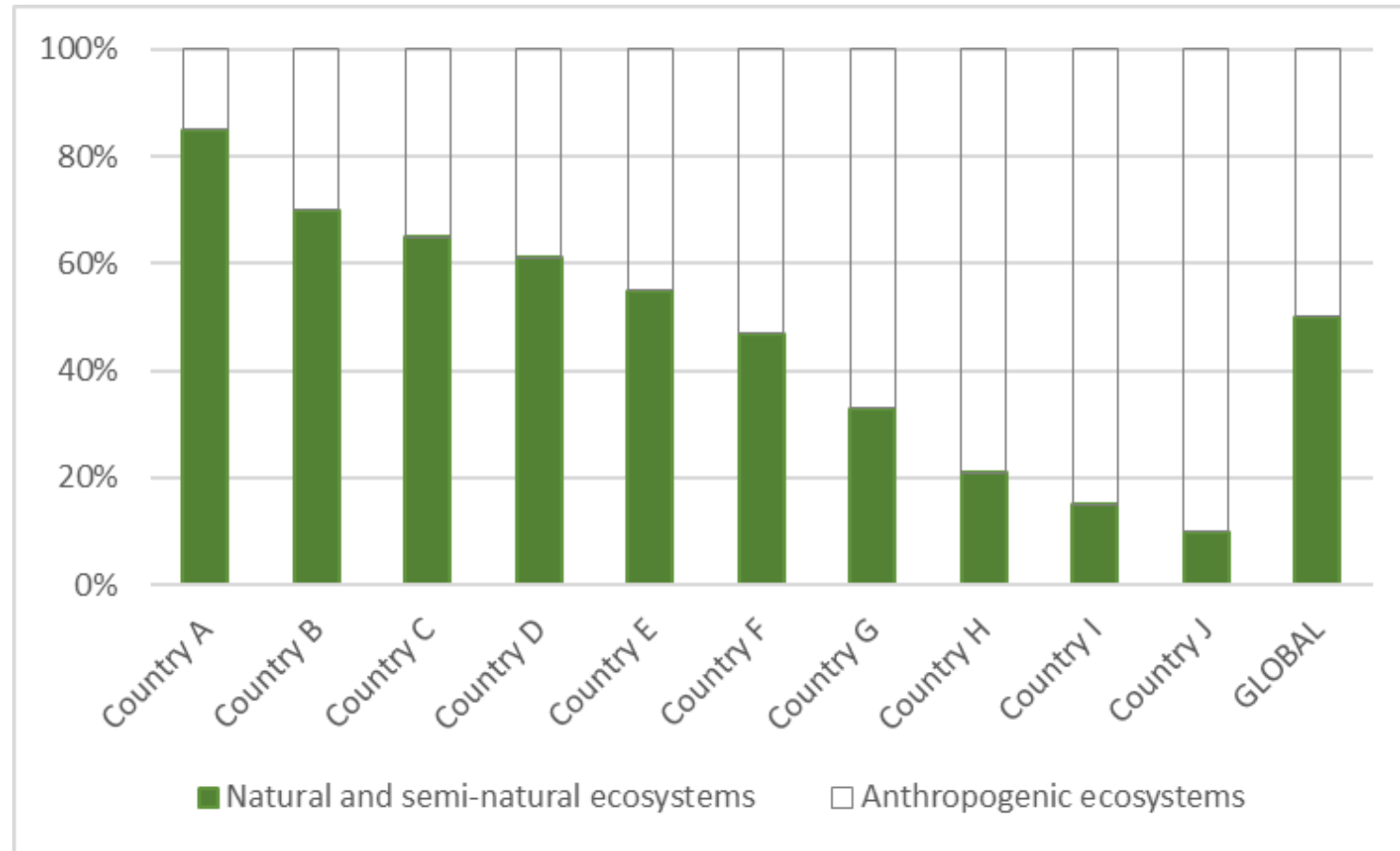
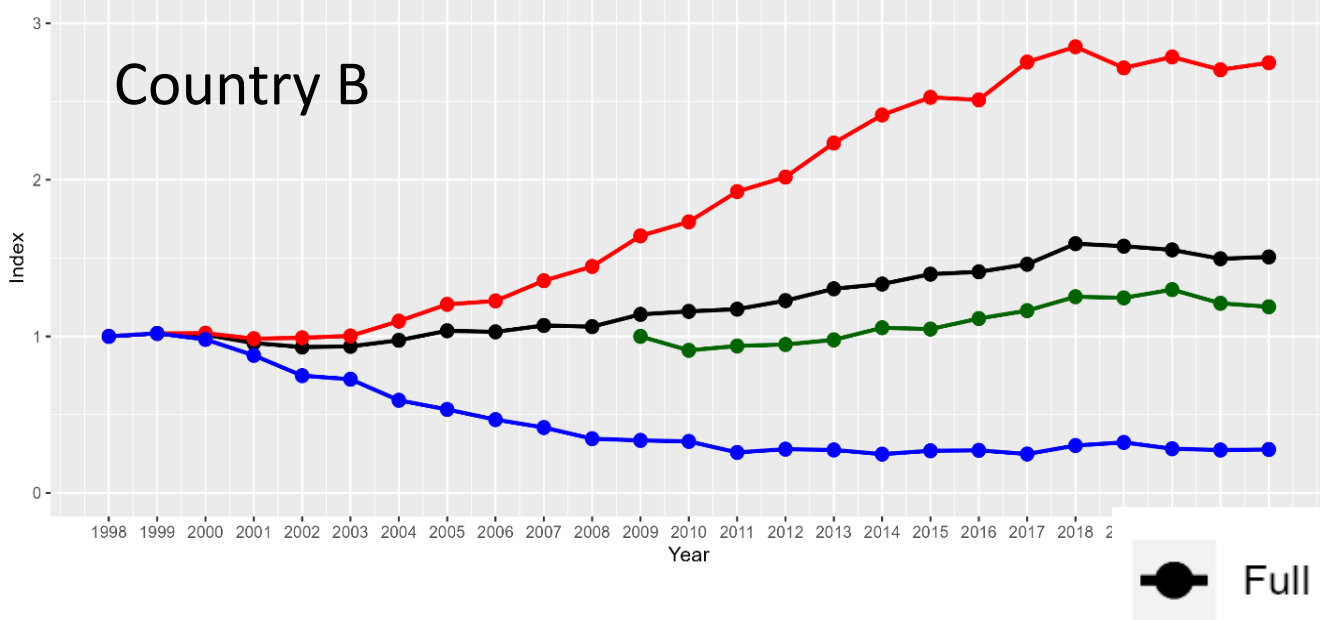
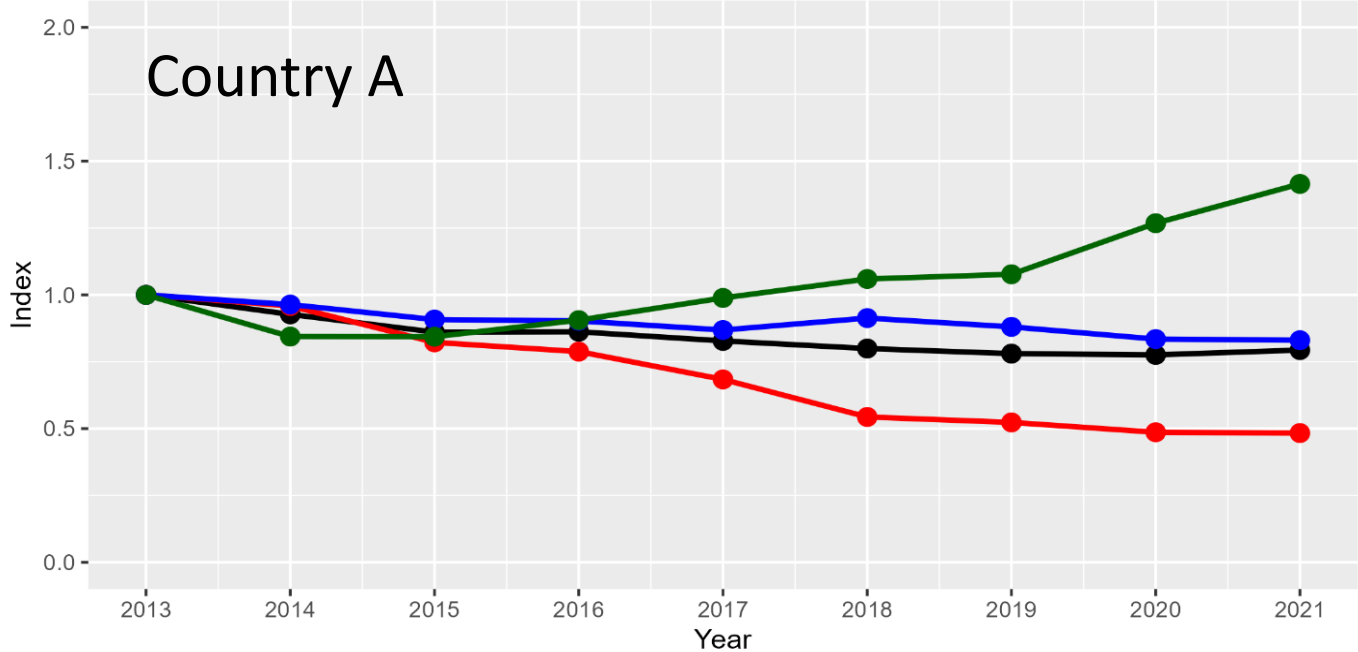


Figure 1. Proportion of natural ecosystems as at [end of accounting period]

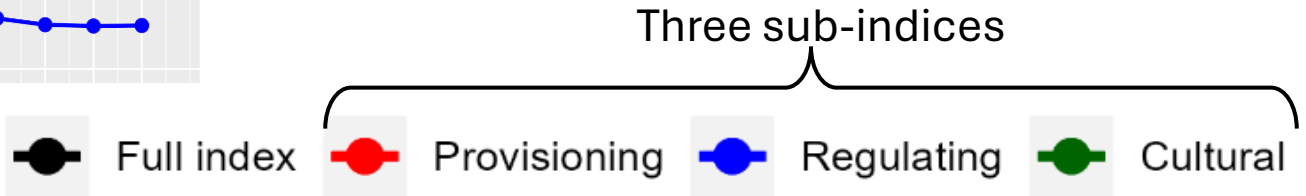
- Easy to understand snapshot of the relative area of natural ecosystems at national and global level
- Can be done for all natural ecosystems combined, OR disaggregated by realm, biome, EFG (or more detail at national level)
- Changes in this proportion show whether ecosystem areas are increasing or not

Indicator B.1 Index of trends in ES provision

Some testing results based on existing national ecosystem services accounts



Shows trend in provision of ecosystem services relative to a base year represented by the value 1



Component 2: Supporting GBF indicator development

- In the coming year:
 - > Development of compilation guidelines for Indicators A.2 and B.1
 - > Support to CBD Secretariat in developing templates for countries to submit data on headline indicators
 - > Further work on methodology for Indicator 9.1
- Envisaged that the task teams on the indicators will continue to support this work
- Possible project to support implementation of the indicators, working with three countries

Component 3: Working groups

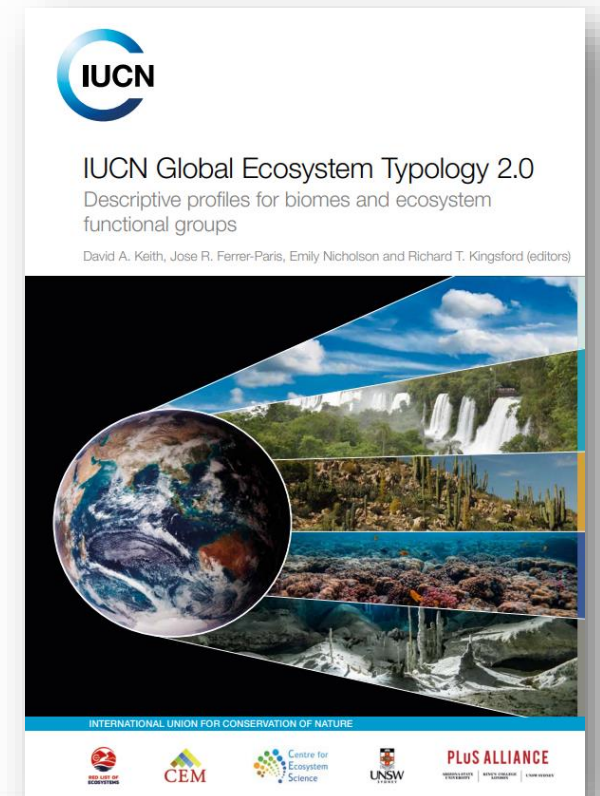
- Working group on forest ecosystems:
 - > Co-chaired by Rey Juan Carlos University, Spain and Griffith University, Australia
 - > 23 members
 - > Discussed topics related to national data on forest ecosystems, integrating ecosystem condition and carbon stock accounts, cross-walks between typologies
 - > Reviewed work programme and reorganized work around specific outputs
- Working group on ocean accounting:
 - > Chaired by Australian Bureau of Statistics
 - > 30 members
 - > Developing 7 background papers on various ocean accounting topics, with support from the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP). First three: Global stocktake on ocean accounts; Data structures; Marine and coastal ecosystem services accounts.

Components 4 to 6

- **Component 4: Contributions to the broader SEEA and SNA processes**
 - > Support SEEA Central Framework update (especially alignment with Ecosystem Accounting)
 - > Participate in relevant task teams for SEEA Central Framework update
 - > Participate in SNA update and update of statistical classifications (mainly COFOG)
- **Component 5: Engagement with related initiatives**
 - > Engage with IUCN, global ecosystem mapping initiatives (e.g. Global Ecosystem Atlas and ESA's PEOPLE-EA project), and private sector initiatives
 - > Meetings as needed and overlapping memberships
- **Component 6: Community of practice on ecosystem accounting**
 - > Aspirational goal to facilitate a closer network of experts
 - > Future ambition to organize a Forum of Experts on Ecosystem Accounting, funding permitting

IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology

- IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology – reference classification for ecosystem types in SEEA Ecosystem Accounting
 - > Recommended in SEEA EA for countries to crosswalk their national classifications of ecosystem types to Level 3 of the GET for global reporting and comparison
 - > Recommended by the AHTEG on the GBF indicators to be used across all the ecosystem-related headline indicators in the GBF
- Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications (CEISC) reviewed the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology and endorsed its inclusion in the family of international classifications
- Statistical Commission in March 2024 endorsed the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology as an international statistical classification
- IUCN is developing guidelines for crosswalks between the GET and other related classifications, including national ecosystem classifications



Membership of the technical committee

- Aiming to strengthen country and regional representation, the following countries were invited to join the Technical Committee:
Brazil, Colombia, Ghana

Questions for the Committee

- The Committee is invited to:
 - > Express its views on the progress of work of the Technical Committee and its working groups and task teams
 - > Advice on the proposed process of development of the GBF indicator metadata and the continuation of work in task teams to support operationalization of the indicators