



United Nations Environment
Programme



Statistics Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations

Global Economy Wide Material Flow Accounting Manual

Global Consultation Comment Form

Deadline for responses: 1 March 2019

Please send responses to: seea@un.org

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To submit responses please save this document and send it as an attachment to the following e-mail address: seea@un.org.

The comment form has been designed to facilitate the analysis of comments. In Part I general comments on the general style, structure, content and coverage of the chapter are sought. In Part II any technical and other comments should be included.

Relevant documents

Relevant documents are available on the SEEA website at:

<https://seea.un.org/content/global-consultation-global-economy-wide-material-flow-accounting-manual>. The documents provided include:

- A cover note on the global consultation
- Draft manual and accompanying questionnaire
- Copy of comment form

1 GENERAL COMMENTS

In this section please provide general comments on the draft. You may like to consider providing comments on the style and tone, the structure and organisation, the content and coverage, and the general accessibility of the material.

We support the idea of publishing a global material flow accounting manual. The manual aims at a different audience than the EW-MFA handbook provided by Eurostat. The audience might not yet be familiar with the compilation of material flow accounts and furthermore the economy might have a very different metabolic profile compared to European countries. Different aspects of resource extraction and data collection might be important. These differences are reflected in the manuscript in several ways. The subject is explained in a clear and accessible language, many examples are provided for illustration, and useful practical advice is given for data collection for the different material groups and DPO items.

We find it a good idea to divide the whole complex of economy wide material flow accounting into several modules. A country can concentrate on the implementation of collecting data for one or two modules and once they are “running”, work on other modules can start, always keeping in mind the whole complex.

We took notice that the compilation of DE and trade of metal ores is slightly different than in the Eurostat questionnaire. The chapter on metal ores is much more detailed than in the Eurostat handbook. It gives useful insights into the mining industry. The questionnaire is more elaborated – which makes sense in a non-European context. In many countries extraction of metal ores plays a much more important role than in most European countries. We will be able to fill in the questionnaire without using the compilation worksheets.

The draft version of the manual is not clear on the residence principle. The manuscript refers to the residence principle in the section on air emissions, but not in other parts. When DPO needs to be adjusted to the residence principle, trade data needs to be adjusted as well; otherwise there are different system boundaries at work. The system boundary between one socio-economic system and another needs to be clearly defined and the implications for data collection explained. In the section on air emissions the manuscript states that “General information on the implications of the residence principle for EW-MFA accounts and required

adjustments can be found in the fundamentals chapter of this guide and the chapter dealing with trade” (page 85). However, the residence principle is not mentioned in the respective chapters. This should be done in the final version of the manuscript.

2 TECHNICAL AND OTHER COMMENTS

In the box below please supply any additional comments including those of a more technical nature. Please reference your responses with the relevant paragraph numbers or section numbers.

- At several parts in the manuscript it says “error! Reference source not found” (e.g. page 33)
- The reference “Krausmann et al. (2017)” is missing in the reference list. Please check the reference list.
- Table 1, page 22: If possible, please add “A.1.1.10.3 energy crops”.
- Table 1, page 22; Table 12, page 51: Please explain why some of the items are red.
- Page 25, first paragraph: Please write the full name when CPC is mentioned the first time.
- Flow charts: the visual quality of the flow charts could be improved. The font is rather small; sometimes parts of the written words are white.
- Page 92, table 30: Waste on controlled landfill should be included in the questionnaire as a memorandum item.
- Page 97: remove or rephrase the last paragraph on this page.
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