

MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE UN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING

26 February 2024, in-person and remote connection

Meeting minutes

- **Present:** André Loranger (Chair), Augustine Akuoko-Asibey (Statistics Canada); Juan Pablo Cardosot (DANE, observer); Sven Kaumanns (Federal Statistical Office of Germany and London Group on Environmental Accounting); Eduardo de la Torre (INEGI); Mandy Driver (South Africa); Sjoerd Schenau (Statistics Netherlands); Nikki Shearman, Ian Townsend (UK Office of National Statistics); Arturo de la Fuente, Gallo Gueye (Eurostat); Alessandra Alfieri, Bert Kroese, Jennifer Moyo (IMF); Catherine Van Rompaey (World Bank); Roberto Astolfi, Bram Edens (OECD); Wafa Aboul Hosn (ESCWA); Sokol Vako (ESCAP-SIAP); Ilaria Di Matteo, Elsa Begne De Larea, Jessica Ying Chan, Marko Javorsek (UNSD)

1. UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF GLOBAL SEEA IMPLEMENTATION

- UNSD provided a status update on global SEEA implementation—according to the 2023 Global Assessment and country updates, 90 countries currently implement the SEEA. [Country-by-country detailed results](#) on the specific accounts which countries compile can be found on the [Global Assessment website](#).
- It was suggested that the Global Assessment data could be brought together with information from the G20 Data Gaps Initiative, IMF Switzerland State Economic Cooperation (SECO) project, IMF Resilience and Sustainability Fund, MedStat programmes and other initiatives to better inform capacity building efforts and strategies.
- It was also suggested to look into the OECD's Round Table on Environmental Information to see if synergies could be harnessed in terms of data collection and/or analysis.

2. UPDATE OF THE SEEA CENTRAL FRAMEWORK – PROJECT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND LIST OF ISSUES

- The Chair introduced the project management framework for the update, including the main approach, process, roles and timeline. He also provided an overview of the list of issues, including how the SEEA CF TC has prioritized and grouped the issues.
- Participants agreed on the need to bring in groups outside of the statistical community as well as developing countries from a variety of regions into the update process; this will ensure that the updated SEEA CF speaks to the policy priorities of a broad range of constituencies. For example, disaster risk reduction is a salient policy issue in the Asia

and the Pacific and Western Asia that the updated SEEA CF could take into consideration.

- Participants agreed that the UNCEEA should have a communications strategy on the update. The strategy could communicate the scope of the update and highlight that implementation of the current version of the SEEA Central Framework should continue during the update, and that country implementation of the existing SEEA Central Framework can inform the update.
- For the list of issues and broader coordination of the update, it was recognized that the Committee should coordinate with the updates of GFS, Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual and COFOG, as appropriate, as well as leverage the work of the Task Team to Develop a Framework for Maintaining and Updating International Economic and Environmental Accounting Systems and Manuals. In addition, a joint list of issues could also be developed.
- It was acknowledged that the timetable of the revision is tight, and there is a need to make decisions soon on scope. It was suggested that the SEEA CF TC identify issues on the list which could potentially take longer than three years to resolve and try to decide whether they are practical to tackle under the revision. These issues could potentially be included on a (joint) research agenda.

3. FUNDING OF THE UPDATE OF THE SEEA CENTRAL FRAMEWORK

- The Chair provided an overview of the funding of the update, including the initial funding estimate, the types of resources needed for the update as well as the suggested next steps. It was noted that the estimate will likely undergo changes as we refine the list of issues and have a better understanding of the time and capacity of the SEEA community.
- IMF noted that they tentatively plan to contribute. For climate-related issues, the Data Gaps Initiative 3 will provide in-kind contributions; in addition, IMF will likely prioritize issues that are relevant for monetary finance statistics and GFS.
- Eurostat will look to see if they can contribute funds; at the same time, they will likely need to limit in-kind contributions. This is because the EU is currently updating the legislation on environmental economic accounts to add three new modules, which is putting a strain on resources.
- Mexico indicated their readiness to play a coordinating role in Latin America and the Caribbean, citing their experience with the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting and leadership in the region.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- The Chair invited delegates to come to the SEEA side event, [New Challenges for National Statistical Offices for Environment and Climate Change Statistics: Role of the](#)

[SEEA](#), taking place Tuesday, 27 February in Conference Room A, from 13:15-13:50. The event will be held back-to-back with the UN Tourism side event.

- The next UNCEEA will be held 25-26 June 2024. The modality of the meeting is contingent on adequate availability of resources at UNSD; the Secretariat hopes to have a better idea of this within a month. It is possible that the Committee could arrange a back-to-back event (likely focusing on the update of the SEEA CF), but the benefits of a back-to-back event would apply more to an in-person meeting.
- ESCWA suggested adding in some countries from Western Asia to the UNCEEA, such as Morocco or Saudi Arabia, both of which have experience in the SEEA. The Bureau welcomed this idea and noted that in approaching the countries, it would be good to highlight the ways in which new members can contribute to the Committee (e.g. active participation in annual meetings, participation in working groups etc).