

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

28 January 2025 Teleconference

Meeting minutes

- **Present:** André Loranger (Chair); Augustine Akuoko-Asibey and Matthew Prescott (Statistics Canada); Jonathon Khoo and Jacqui Vitas (Australian Bureau of Statistics); Sven Kaumanns (Federal Statistical Office of Germany and London Group on Environmental Accounting); Sandhya Singh (MOSPI India); Sjoerd Schenau (Statistics Netherlands); Mandy Driver (South Africa); Sonia Carrera, Ian Townsend and Jonny mudge (UK ONS); Isabelle Remond-Tiedrez (Eurostat); Catherine Van Rompaey (World Bank); Alessandra Alfieri (IMF); Bram Edens and Roberto Astolfi (OECD); Sokol Vako (UN-SIAP); Ilaria Di Matteo, Marko Javorsek and Elsa Begne De Larrea (UNSD)
- **Regrets:** Kenya National Bureau of Statistics; INEGI Mexico; Statistics New Zealand; Philippine Statistics Authority; FAO

## 1. PREPARATION FOR THE UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION

- UNSD provided an overview of the four background documents that will be submitted to the UN Statistical Commission. The documents reflect the discussion on the list of issues, SEEA CF update process and the new Mandate and Governance as discussed by the UNCEEA and its relevant Working groups. The background documents will be submitted to the UNSC by 5 February. They will also be circulated to the UNCEEA
- The Bureau generally supported the documents, and was asked to provide comments, if any, by Monday 3 February.

Actions:

- UNSD will circulate the background documents to the UNCEEA.
- The Bureau and UNCEEA members are requested to provide comments by Monday, 3 February.
- UNSD informed the Bureau that a request for an in-person Side Event at the UN Statistical Commission on the update of the SEEA CF was submitted. However, the Side Events at the UNSC are still under consideration and are expected to be finalized in the next couple of weeks.

Actions:

- UNSD will advance with the formulation of a concept note and potential list of speakers to circulate to the Bureau, should the side event be confirmed

- A meeting of the UNCEEA Bureau will be organized during the UN Statistical Commission (date to be confirmed). A draft agenda for the meeting was discussed and included the following topics:
  - Discussion on the UNCEEA report at the UNSC
  - Positioning the UNCEEA in ongoing global initiatives
  - Update on the status of global SEEA implementation
  - New mandate of the UNCEEA (e.g. establishment of a Co-Chair and a Steering group)
  - Expectations from the UN Statistical Commission
- The Bureau noted the importance of the discussion on the positioning of the UNCEEA in ongoing global initiatives and recommended advance preparation for this agenda item so that the heads of delegations can be briefed on the discussion.

Actions:

- UNSD will circulate the date and time of the Bureau meeting as soon as it is confirmed

## **2. UPDATE OF THE SEEA CF**

- The Chair of the SEEA CF Technical Committee provided an update on the work of the technical Committee on the update of the SEEA CF. He informed the Bureau of the co-chairs of the four Task teams were identified as well as the editor for the update of the SEEA CF, Mr. Carl Obst. The membership of the Task teams is currently being established. It was recommended to keep a manageable size of the Task teams to ensure effective discussion, and at the same time, establish a mechanism for engaging the broader community during the update process. Member of the Bureau stressed the importance of ensuring a transparent and inclusive process.
- The Bureau welcomed the progress of work of the SEEA CF Technical committee.

## **3. UNCEEA MEETING IN 2025**

- It was proposed that the next meeting of the UNCEEA takes place virtually from 24-26 June 2025. Unfortunately, a physical meeting of the UNCEEA cannot be organized this year due to the very limited financial resources available in UNSD this year.

Actions:

- Bureau members were requested to let the Secretariat know if there are any conflicting events during the week of 23 June as soon as possible, preferably by 3 February, so that the dates can be announced to the UNCEEA

#### 4. TOUR DE TABLE OF AREA LEADS AND LONDON GROUP

- Area A Lead noted that the group is currently drafting a communication strategy to support the SEEA CF update and engage the broader community of experts.
- Area B1 Lead informed the Bureau that in addition to the work on the update of the SEEA CF, the group also actively engaged in the review of the “Measuring natural resources in the national accounts: a compilation guide” that OECD has prepared to support the implementation of the 2025 SNA.
- Area B2 Lead informed the Bureau that the main focus of the group this year will be on the work related to the EU project for the SEEA-related indicators of the Global Biodiversity Framework, namely on the development of guidance document for GBF headline indicators A.2 Extent of natural ecosystem and B.1 Benefits of Ecosystem Services as well tools for their compilation.
- Area C Lead noted that the group has been working on updating its terms of reference. During the discussion on the terms of reference, the group identified some areas where close coordination with other working group was particularly important such as with Area C on how to support countries to increase capacity to compile the accounts (and thus report to the global data collections), and Area B estimation methods for global databases. Area C is also working on advancing on the PEFA, AEA and MFA data collection and the feasibility study on land and water accounts.
- Area D Lead informed the Bureau that new members have been included in the Group, such as development banks, and are actively participating in the meetings. The Group oversaw the preparation and finalization of the 2024 Global Assessment and is currently also working on its terms of reference. This year, the group is planning some activities for the network of focal points including the organization of webinars to inform (and engage) the focal points on the update of the SEEA CF.
- The London Group Chair informed the Bureau that the next London Group meeting will take place in Tallin, Estonia from 22-25 September 2025 and will be hosted by Statistics Estonia.