

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

5 June 2025 – Virtual meeting

- **Present:** André Loranger (Statistics Canada and UNCEEA Chair); Sonia Raizenne (Statistics Canada); Jacqui Vitas (ABS), Jonathon Khoo (ABS and Chair of the UNCEEA Area A); Sven Kaumanns (DESTATIS and Chair of the London Group), Sandhya Singh (MOSPI), Christine Magu (KNBS and Co-chair of UNCEEA Area D), Jesarela Lopez Aguilar and Federico Gonzalez Medrano (INEGI), Sjoerd Schenau (CBS and Chair of UNCEEA Area B1), Rachael Milichich (Stat NZ), Ian Townsend and Jonny Mudge (UK ONS), Arturo de la Fuente (Eurostat), Valerie Bizier (FAO), Bram Edens (OECD), Roberto Astolfi (OECD and Chair of the UNCEEA Area C), Alessandra Alfieri (IMF); Sokol Vako (SIAP and Co-chair of UNCEEA Area D), Ilaria Di Matteo, Marko Javorsek, and Elsa Begne De Larrea (UNSD)

1. ORGANIZATION AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE UNCEEA MEETING

- André Loranger introduced this agenda item which was intended to provide an overview by the area leads on the organization and expectations for the UNCEEA meeting (25 -26 June 2025). The agenda of the UNCEEA meeting is organized around the 5 areas of work of the UNCEEA. Reports of the working groups are being finalized and will be made available prior to the meeting. Below are the updates from area leads.
- Area A: Jonno Khoo mentioned that Area A is working on the communication strategy for the update of the SEEA CF and has identified some key initiatives that are relevant for the SEEA, such as Net Zero Sprint organized by the Network of Economic Statisticians and the Expert Group on Wellbeing Measurement. The UNCEEA will be asked to provide feedback on the communication strategy for the update of the SEEA CF, reflect on the initiatives that were identified, and provide advice on other initiatives that should be considered taking also in consideration resource constraints.
- Area B1: Sjoerd Schenau gave a brief overview on the session on B1 of the UNCEEA meeting which is intended to include an update on the process, a high-level presentation on some of the main issues that were raised during the preparation of the Scoping notes for all the issues in the research agenda, and updates on the revision of COFOG and GFS. More information on the update process was presented to the Bureau under agenda item 2 of this Bureau meeting.
- Area B2: Marko Javorsek, on behalf of Mandy Driver, provided a short overview of the work of Area B2 which includes advancing the methodological work on the SEEA EA and the development of operational guidance, coordination and review of relevant initiatives such as the ESA World Ecosystem Extent Dynamics project, the global ecosystem synthesis map developed by GEO under the Global Ecosystem Atlas project, and the UNSD EU-funded project on SEEA-related indicators for the GBF. Also, Area B2 is actively engaged in the update of the SEEA CF. From the list of issues of the SEEA CF,

nine are particularly relevant to Area B2, and there are plans to coordinate the discussion with Area B1. Some members of Area B2 are participating in various task teams of the SEEA CF update process. For the UNCEEAA meeting, in addition to a presentation on the report of Area B2, it is envisaged to have an update from the CBD secretariat on the GBF. The UNCEEAA will be asked to provide feedback on current and future activities.

- Area C: Roberto Astolfi briefly presented the activities of Area C with focus on the assessment of current and future priority areas for the development of global databases for the SEEA. The UNCEEAA will be asked to provide advice on future direction. A more detailed discussion on this was under agenda item 3 of this Bureau meeting.
- Area D: Sokol Vako and Christine Magu provided an overview of the report of Area D covering activities on the Global Assessment, the coordination of technical capacity activities (e.g. new members joined the group), and activities for the network of SEEA focal points. Area D also discussed the impact of current resource constraints being faced by international organizations and countries and how to leverage existing resources. Suggestions from the Bureau and UNCEEAA were sought.
- André Loranger noted with appreciation that the working groups, within their different mandates, are all contributing to the update of the SEEA CF which is currently the main priority of the UNCEEAA and pointed out that the issue on resource constraints needs to be discussed, possibly also with the Steering Group.
- The Bureau welcomed the update and the proposed organization of the sessions. Suggestions were made to include an update of the DGI and also a discussion on the resources for the SEEA CF update.

Action: UNSD together with relevant Area leads will adjust the agenda of the UNCEEAA meeting

2. UPDATE ON THE SEEA CF UPDATE PROCESS

- Sjoerd Schenau provided an update of the work done so far on the update of the SEEA CF. Task teams have been established, and Scoping notes for all the issues are being finalized for review by the SEEA CF Technical Committee. A timeline for the preparation of the Guidance notes and the global consultation was presented and an in-person SEEA CF TC meeting is planned for November 2025.
- The Bureau welcomed the progress on the update of the SEEA CF and suggested expanding the membership of the Task Teams to ensure a broader geographical representation. It also suggested building some elements of flexibility in the timeline to allow for adjustment if needed.

Actions:

- Bureau members are invited to provide suggestions to UNSD of additional experts for the Task Teams by **Friday, 13 June 2025**.
- UNSD, together with Area B1 lead and the SEEA CF editor, will review proposals and, after discussion with TT co-chairs, will invite new members to join the TTs.

3. DISCUSSION ON PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE SEEA GLOBAL DATABASES

- Roberto Astolfi provided an update of the discussion that has been taking place in Area C on current and future priority areas for the development of the SEEA Global databases. Based on the discussion, Area C proposed to continue (and improve) the current three data collections/global databases (on PEFA, AEA and MFA) and for the other priority areas, two options were identified. One to complete the feasibility study for water accounts and wait for the update of the SEEA CF to be concluded until any other priority accounts are identified. The second option was to initiate the feasibility study for one or more accounts. Feedback from the Bureau was sought with regard to the two options. Based on the feasibility study, it was suggested to remove land accounts from the list of priority accounts.
- The Bureau welcomed the work done by Area C and agreed to put forward the two options to the UNCEEA. It supported the plan to improve the coverage and quality of the current data collection, using for example estimates to fill the gaps. It also suggested to give some initial prioritization of the different accounts that were identified in the global assessment and feedback from the OECD-ECE annual seminar as this would facilitate the discussion at the UNCEEA meeting. Considerations on the feasibility and the policy relevance were considered critical in the prioritization.
- The update of the SEEA CF will also provide input into the identification of priority areas.

Actions:

- The Bureau is invited to send additional comments, if any, to Roberto Astolfi by **Tuesday, 10 June 2025**.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE STEERING GROUP MEETING

- André Loranger reminded the Bureau that in the updated mandate and governance of the UNCEEA it is envisaged to establish a Steering Group composed of the senior management (e.g. director general, chief statistician) of the countries and organizations members of the UNCEEA Bureau. Two meetings will be held annually: one physical meeting on the side of the UNSC in March, and a second virtual meeting in the fall. The virtual meeting this year has been set for **27 October 2025 from 7am-8am (NY time)**. A formal letter will be sent out.

- It is proposed that at the meeting in October two main topics will be discussed:
 - (a) how to best leverage available resources and advance the work programme of the UNCEEA in a more effective and efficient manner, given reduced budget and resources faced by many international organizations and countries; and
 - (b) how to build linkages more effectively and efficiently and how to better connect with policy makers.

Actions:

- The Bureau is invited to provide comments on the points for discussion at the Steering Group meeting to UNSD by **Tuesday, 10 June 2025**.

5. CHAIRING OF THE UNCEEA

- André Loranger informed the Bureau of the intention to appoint two new Co-Chairs at the next UNCEEA meeting. Following the approval of the mandate and the terms of reference (TOR) by the Statistical Commission, a call for interest was made to the UNCEEA, and based on the discussions that have been taking place on the sidelines of the UNCEEA meetings, he proposed the nomination of Ms. Piedad Urdinola Contreras, Director of DANE, Colombia, and Ms. Jacqui Vitas, General Manager of Economy and Environment Division at ABS as new Co-Chairs for the UNCEEA. André noted the great wealth of knowledge and experience and the demonstrated leadership of the two nominees.
- The Bureau welcomed the nomination of Ms. Urdinola and Ms. Vitas and supported their further nomination for election at the UNCEEA Meeting in June 2025.
- The Bureau also expressed its great appreciation for the leadership of the current Chair.

6. UPDATE FROM THE LG

- Sven Kaumanns provided an update on the activities of the London Group, in particular, on the organization of the LG meeting in Tallinn, Estonia on 22-25 September 2025 and the review of its mandate. The plan is to have a first draft of the mandate for discussion by the UNCEEA during its meeting in June and then finalize it at the London Group meeting in September. The London Group is closely coordinating the discussion on the issues for the update of the SEEA CF with the SEEA CF TC.

7. AOB

- Arturo De La Fuente informed the Bureau that Eurostat will start the mandatory data collection on investment in climate change mitigation in addition to the nine SEEA accounts in the EU regulation.

- Alessandra Alfieri informed the Bureau that the DGI Global Conference will take place in South Africa from 17-19 June 2025.
- The Bureau was informed in the chat that the Programme Committee for the next World Data Forum is currently being established. If interested, please check [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/hlg/Call for Applications from data and statistics communities/](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/hlg/Call_for_Applications_from_data_and_statistics_communities/)