

Summary from Statistics Norway (Per Arild Garnåsjordet & Iulie Aslaksen)

Response on research activities in the Research Department of Statistics Norway:

Due to lack of required funding, there is not yet any targeted effort to develop experimental ecosystem accounting in Norway. However, the Research Department of Statistics Norway is involved in several ongoing research projects and research proposals that address different aspects and approaches that might contribute to future development of experimental ecosystem accounting, provided that additional funding will become available.

The ongoing research project “CLIMATE-LAND: Consequences of climate policies for multiple ecosystem services of semi-natural grasslands of the cultural landscape”, funded by the Research Council of Norway, addresses application of the suggested Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA-EEA) to the ecosystems semi-natural cultural landscape and forest. The policy context is that large-scale afforestation is proposed as climate policy instrument. The purpose of the project is to perform an integrated analysis of land use management that supports multiple ecosystem services of semi-natural cultural landscapes and forests, by considering alternative “bundles” of ecosystem services and analysing trade-offs and potential synergies between objectives for climate policy, biodiversity management and other environmental policies. The trade-off between ecosystem services from the semi-natural cultural landscape and forest ecosystems will clearly vary between different geographical areas, and a spatial analysis, as recommended by the SEEA-EEA is needed in order to assess the future potential for provision of ecosystem services.

The Research Department of Statistics Norway cooperates with the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA) on a research proposal “Experimental Urban Ecosystems Accounting - improving the decision-support relevance for municipal planning and policy”, currently under review by the Research Council of Norway. The purpose of the proposed project is to explore the SEEA-EEA as possible tool to assess ecosystem services of urban ecosystems, i.e. ecosystems within urban areas as well as ecosystems directly impacted by urban expansion.

Policy makers and environmental management authorities have expressed interest in both these projects. In CLIMATE-LAND, we have direct contact with the Norwegian Environment Agency for knowledge transfer on afforestation sites and assessment of ecosystem services. For the Urban-EEA proposal we have had contact with municipal authorities for knowledge transfer on development plans and identifying policy relevant environmental issues.