



**United
Nations**



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

Forum of Experts on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting

7 and 8 December 2021

online

Concept Note

Background

1. In March 2021, the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting—Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) was adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), the chapters 1-7 on the framework and physical accounts as an international statistical standard, and chapters 8-11 as internationally recognised principles and recommendations for monetary valuation of ecosystem services and assets. The UN Secretary General in the recently released [UN Common Agenda](#) report urges Member States and others to begin implementation of the SEEA EA. This major milestone was the result of a comprehensive revision process in which many experts, countries and stakeholders participated.
2. The UNSC encouraged countries to implement the SEEA EA and tasked the UNCEEA with developing an implementation strategy. The implementation strategy includes the development of compilation materials, tools that facilitate the compilation of accounts, as well as continued capacity building through E-learning, blended learning and in-country support. As a result, [guidelines on biophysical modelling](#), valuation of ecosystem services and assets, and data tools to support the compilation of ecosystem accounts, namely [ARIES for SEEA explorer](#), have been developed. To support the use of the accounts into policy a [technical report on scenario analysis](#), which provides examples of best practices of using environmental-economic accounting in macro-economic modelling, has been developed.
3. The SEEA EA plays an important role in measuring the environment-economy nexus thereby supporting a wide range of policy demands. These include the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the emerging monitoring framework that will accompany the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the UNCCD initiative on Land Degradation Neutrality, and initiatives under the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration.
4. This sixth Forum is organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Bank, and is an activity under the “Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services” project funded by the European Union. It will aim to bring together scientists, environmental economists, statisticians, national/environmental-economic accountants, geospatial experts from national statistical offices, ministries of finance and planning, ministries of environment and other government agencies, NGOs, academia and the private sector who are practitioners in developing and using environmental-economic accounts.

Objectives

5. The main objectives of the sixth Forum are to:
 - Share experiences and best practices in applying and compiling ecosystem accounts, in particular in the countries that have participated in the Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services project;

- Discuss how to operationalize the SEEA EA implementation strategy and the interoperability of data for compilation of accounts; and
- Discuss opportunities and ways to mainstream the SEEA EA into national and global initiatives.

Proposed agenda and organization

6. Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the sixth Forum will take place entirely in a virtual format. The Forum will thus consist of two 3-hour videoconference sessions on 7 and 8 December between 7:00 and 10:00am New York (EST) time. The Forum will be held in English only.
7. The sixth Forum will cover the following topics:
 - Day 1:
 - Achievements and lessons learnt from the implementation of the SEEA EA in the Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) project countries as well as other countries that have implemented the SEEA EA;
 - Day 2:
 - Putting the SEEA EA implementation strategy into practice;
 - Global datasets and data solutions to support ecosystem accounting and the development of an interoperability strategy for the next generation of SEEA EA accounts; and
 - Opportunities for the SEEA EA in support of global initiatives, such as the monitoring framework accompanying the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as other global and thematic policy initiatives (among others, the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, Oceans, Urban, etc.).