



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Energy



# Environmental Economic Accounting

Towards a common national approach



# Context



- ▶ Being led by Department of Environment
- ▶ ABS is partnering on the strategy, data sharing and accounts compilation
- ▶ Number of other experts/agencies involved
- ▶ Landmark step forward for SEEA use in Australia

# Context



- ▶ On 27 April 2018 the Meeting of Commonwealth, state and territory environment ministers endorsed the strategy to deliver a common national approach to environmental-economic accounting in Australia.

# Aims of common approach?



- ▶ Create stronger links for decision makers between social, economic and environmental outcomes
- ▶ Improve consistency in reporting across Australia
- ▶ Inform decision making and environmental management decisions
- ▶ Coordinate effort and ensure the efficient use of resources

# Some drivers for the Commonwealth



### Aichi Targets

1 Understand values	8 Reduce pollution	15 Enhance resilience
2 Mainstream biodiversity	9 Reduce invasive spp.	16 Implement Nagoya Prot.
3 Address incentives	10 Minimize reef loss	17 Revise NBSAPs
4 Sustainable production	11 Protected areas	18 Respect and conserve TK
5 Halve rate of loss	12 Prevent extinctions	19 Improve knowledge
6 Sustainable fisheries	13 Conserve gene pool	20 Mobilize resources
7 Manage within limits	14 Restore ecosystems	

# The process

- ▶ High level inter-jurisdictional steering committee
- ▶ Commonwealth agencies steering committee and other governance (technical/scientific)
- ▶ National workshop to consult a broad range of stakeholders



# Developing the strategy

- ▶ A collaboration between the Commonwealth, state and territory govts, ABS
- ▶ A high level document with action plan attached
- ▶ Further consultation and revision after the first year



# Key elements of national approach

- ▶ Adopting the United Nations System of Environmental Economic Accounts Framework (SEEA)
- ▶ Developing a core set of national accounts (waste, land etc)



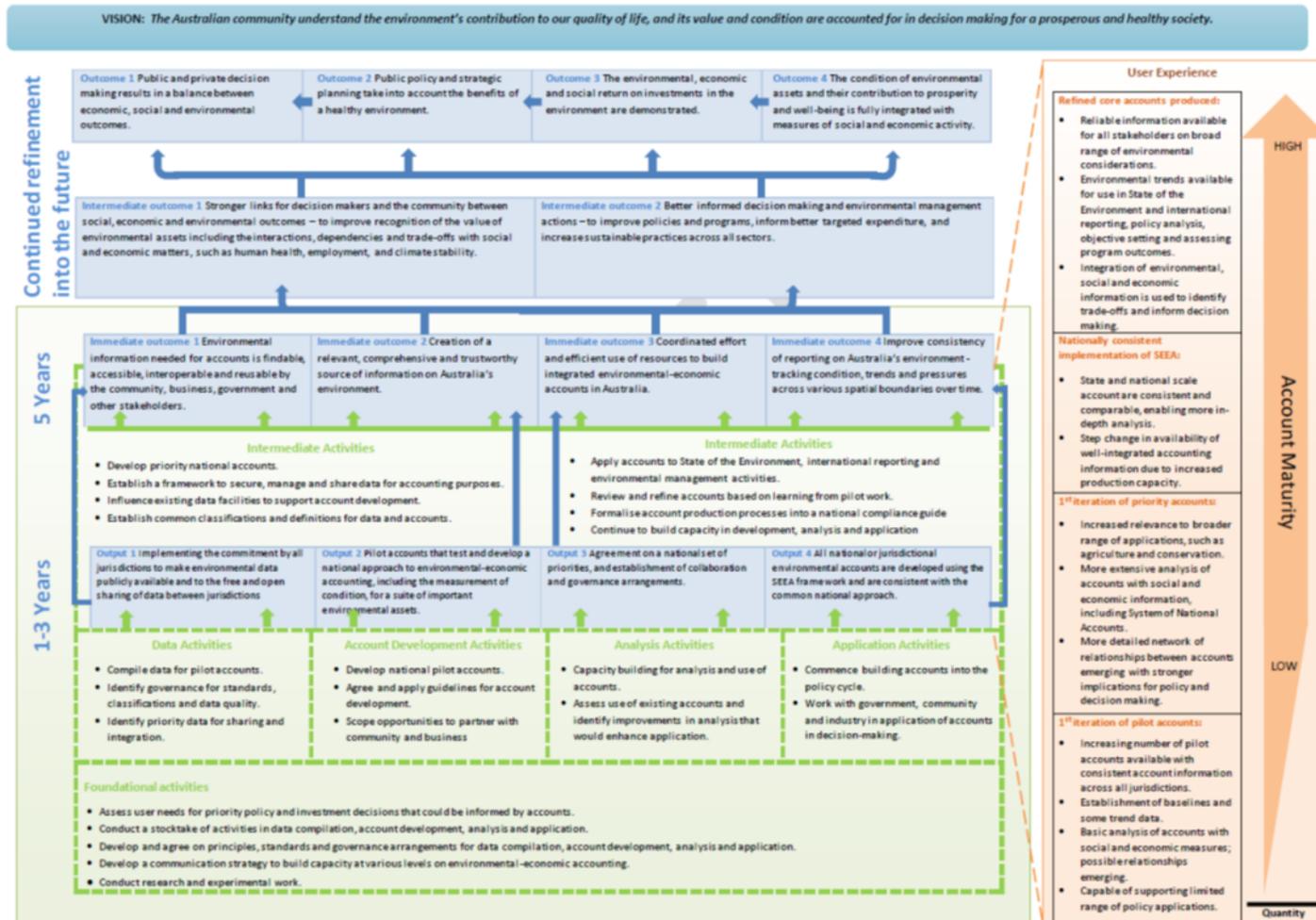
# Key elements continued

- ▶ Agreeing on national standards and methods
- ▶ Ensuring accounts are driven by policy and decision making needs
- ▶ Developing nationally relevant account ready data
- ▶ Collaborating and information sharing (governance structures – e.g. steering, expert and scientific)
- ▶ Building capacity to produce, analyse and apply accounts

- ▶ ABS NSO role - do we need to consider new collaboration models? (e.g. sign-off role, legislation)
- ▶ Data sharing provisions
- ▶ Policy needs versus exploratory accounts
- ▶ Marketing accounts – benefits and national/international examples
- ▶ Federal vs State vs Local govt perspectives (adaptive leadership in a policy environment)
- ▶ Techniques - scientific vs statistical

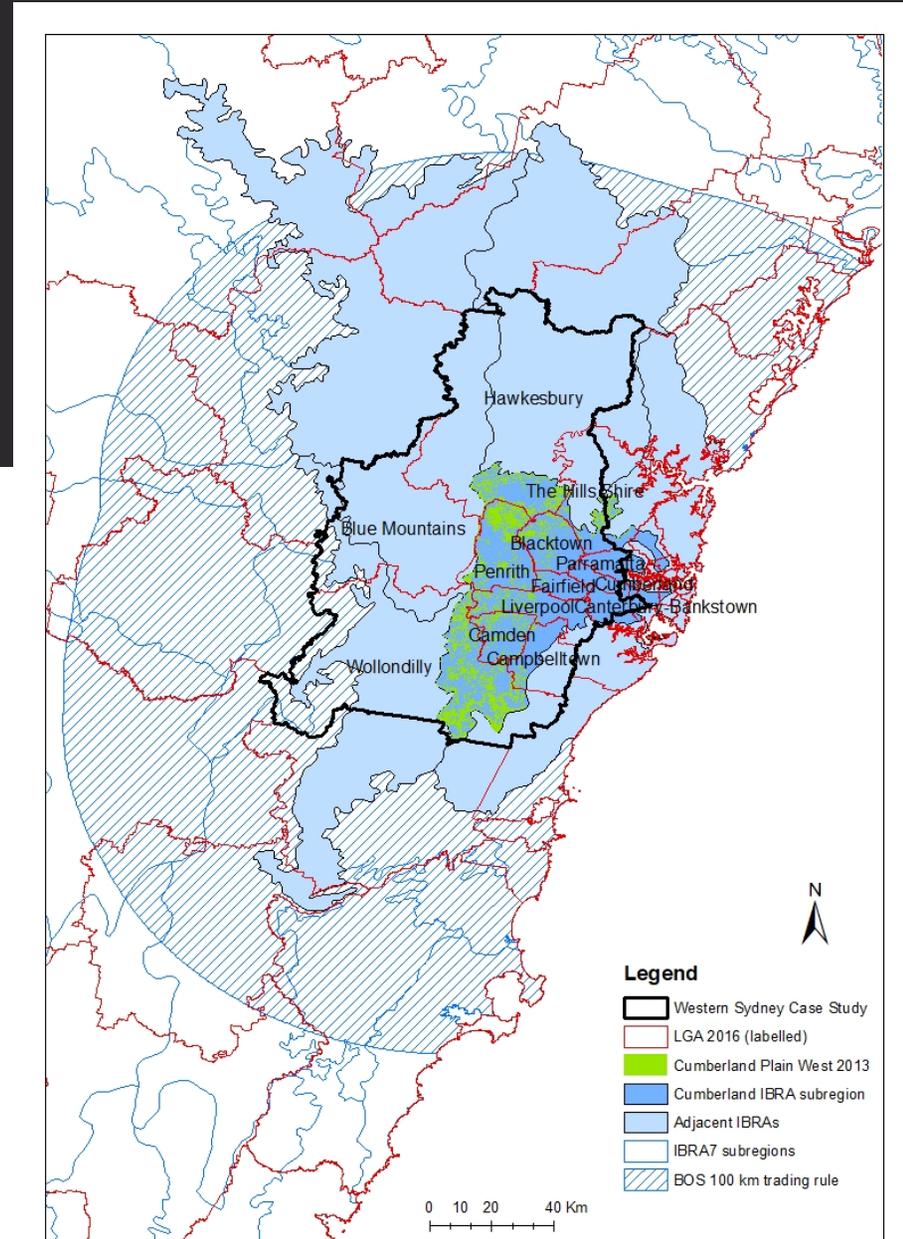
# A roadmap

Figure 1 – Roadmap for a common national approach to environmental-economic accounting



# Western Sydney EEA case study

Lessons learnt in using accounts to inform the Western Sydney Regional Assessment



## and to address core policy questions of...

Policy question	Relevant questions that environmental-economic accounts can answer
<p><b>1. What are the main socio-economic, demographic, institutional &amp; natural resource factors that influence the supply of, &amp; demand for, affordable housing in Western Sydney growth areas over the next 40 years?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will urban development in the Western Sydney region affect the stock of environmental assets (water, ecosystems etc) &amp; flow of ecosystem services? How will the increasing scarcity of natural resources, in turn, affect the housing market?</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. What mix of environmental protection &amp; housing, infrastructure, &amp; employment provision will optimise socio-economic benefits to the community over the next 40 years?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the change in the extent and condition of natural ecosystems in Western Sydney? How might extent &amp; condition change over time under different development &amp; climate scenarios?</li> <li>• What are the social &amp; economic benefits of (a) preserving natural ecosystems &amp; (b) providing housing &amp; related infrastructure?</li> <li>• To what extent can the economic value of these benefits be estimated?</li> <li>• How might these benefits &amp; values change over time under different development scenarios?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. What measures can agencies use to conserve &amp; improve healthy, functioning, enduring natural areas, &amp; biodiversity, while meeting the demand for affordable housing in Western Sydney, into the mid-term future?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How effective are current policy instruments (including biodiversity offsets) for conserving high value biodiversity in the face of pressures for urban development?</li> </ul>

## What accounts are being developed?

- OEH developing 4 types of accounts using SEEA framework for its Western Sydney programs
- Accounts are:
  1. Socio-economic & demographic accounts (physical stock accounts)
  2. Regional economic activity (monetary and physical stock & flow accounts)
  3. Biodiversity offset accounts (physical & monetary stock & flow accounts)

## 4. Experimental ecosystem accounts (extent and condition)

Ecological integrity indicators for:

- ecosystem condition
- ecosystem connectivity &
- ecological carrying capacity indicators

Perhaps also some indicators for pressures on condition e.g.:

- land use management practices
- native vegetation extent
- inappropriate fire regimes
- inappropriate hydrological regimes
- invasive species
- altered climatic regimes variability and extremes etc.

Questions?



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# Update on SEEA Communications



Governmental & Military

## UNCEEA

means

United Nations Committee of  
Experts on  
Environmental-Economic  
Accounting

by [acronymsandslang.com](http://acronymsandslang.com)

- ▶ Thanks to Pete Nelson for slides/background
- ▶ Initiatives tie to UNCEEA Communications Plan
- ▶ Challenge to prioritise or to secure further resources

## Goals for coming year

- ▶ Making the SEEA website more effective
- ▶ Creating a communications “toolkit”
- ▶ Engaging with key policy processes
- ▶ Connecting the SEEA community



## Making the website more effective

- ▶ Making the information architecture more accessible to non-technical audience
- ▶ Increase connectivity across the site (i.e. more signposts to related material)
- ▶ Implementing the SEEA Knowledge Base

# Creating a communication toolkit

- ▶ SEEA FAQ
- ▶ SEEA “Explainers”
- ▶ Slide Deck
- ▶ Brochure(s)



# Engaging with policy processes



- ▶ Developing short briefs showing SEEA relevance to key international policy processes:
- ▶ Super-calendar: Creating communications plans around key international fora (including a Supercalendar)

# Connecting the SEEA community



- ▶ The SEEA newsletter
  - Supplement reports on past activities with more features that look ahead
  - Streamline editorial process
- ▶ Proposed feature: SEEA visualizations

# Questions/Comments?





# Empathy Mapping



## Empathy Mapping Exercise



- In groups of 5, use the empathy mapping template to put yourself in the shoes of a **policy maker** that would be (or is) a strong potential user of a SEEA account (25 mins):
  - First agree on the type of policy maker and a scribe
  - Consider the pressures on this person to deliver on policy requirements
  - What support would they want from SEEA accounts? What would they need to convince others of the worth? What would make their life easier? Who else would be their key stakeholders that could also benefit?
  - Report back one key point in each of the segments/boxes (20 mins)



## Empathy Mapping Exercise continued.



- Pain and Gains flow from the 4 quadrants above
- Depending on perspective: possible pain points :
  - Presents more information than I can digest
  - Doesn't contain information I can easily send to my Minister
- Depending on perspective: possible gain points:
  - This presents me with a common narrative for env. and economic picture
  - Someone else has built this – it hasn't cost me anything
  - International standard – might hold some credence with peers



## Empathy Mapping Exercise continued

- Will collect templates and bring together common themes after workshop
- Remember – this isn't about your pain and gain.... Think outside the box and put yourself in the shoes of this policy maker



## 1-2-4-All Summary Exercise



- Reflecting on this afternoon's range of speakers and discussion:
  1. Using stick-it notes, individually write your top 2 insights on how London Group could use this information to improve policy use or communications around SEEA (2 mins)
  2. Share these insights with your neighbour - pick two of these insights to share at the next stage (4 mins)
  3. Join another pair (4 people) and share your insights - picking two that you want to share with the LG (6 mins)
  4. Report back on top two insights – I will collect these, summarise and distribute to the group (15 mins)

