

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

6th March 2017, in person meeting as side event to UN Statistical Commission

- **Present:** Bert Kroese (Chair), Andre Loranger (Statistics Canada), Joe de Beer (Statistics South Africa), Mariana Kotzeva (Eurostat), Ivo Havinga and Alessandra Alfieri (United Nations Statistics Division), Barbro Hexeberg and Stig Johansson (World Bank)
- **Regrets:** Lisa Wardlaw-Kelly (Australia Bureau of Statistics), Francisco Guillen (INEGI, Mexico), Romeo Recide (Philippines Statistics Authority), Francesco Tubiello (FAO), Peter van de Ven (OECD)

STATISTICAL COMMISSION REPORT AND OUTCOMES AT THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION

Mr. Havinga provided the Bureau of the UNCEEA with a summary of the UNCEEA's report to the Statistical Commission, which includes as key points: 1) The organization of the UNCEEA's work and development of a new work programme, 2) The role of the SEEA in the SDG indicators, 3) The finalization of the SEEA Energy and SEEA Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, 4) The work programme to update the SEEA EEA by 2020, 5) Ongoing work to link the SEEA with the Tourism Satellite Account, 6) The development of SEEA compliant databases, and 7) Implementation of statistical capacity building.

Members of the Bureau were asked to provide their thoughts on desirable outcomes of the UN Statistical Commission with regards to the report, and any concerns they may have.

1. The Bureau agreed that it would be good if the UN Statistical Commission could provide its general support to the new work programme to 2020 which has been provided as a background document.

2. It was noted that the Regional Commissions have an important role to play in the role out of the SEEA Implementation Strategy, particularly with regards to work stream D on Implementation of Statistical Capacity Building. The Bureau has not formally reached out to the regional commissions to seek their input and support for this work stream, but this is planned once the area lead (i.e. Statistics South Africa) makes further progress in defining the mechanism which will be put in place to support regional coordination. While the Statistical Commission provides an opportunity to build buy-in with the regional commissions, more will be done to reach out to them formally in due course. The Chair will reflect this in his introductory speech to the Commission.

3. It was noted that statements will likely be made at the UN Statistical Commission that basic statistics also need to be strengthened. The Bureau agrees with this, and the chair will reflect this in his introductory speech to the Commission.

UPDATE OF THE SEEA EXPERIMENTAL ECOSYSTEM ACCOUNTING

4. Ms. Kotzeva introduced the work being led by Eurostat to update the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting by 2020, as outlined in the Work Programme area B.2. An estimation of funding needs has been done, and it is expected that \$500,000 will be needed over three years to pay for an editor who will coordinate the drafting process. Eurostat has already allocated € 100,000 in its 2017 budget for this, but the remaining \$400,000 still needs to be raised. A call for contributions letter has been circulated to the Bureau.

5. It was noted that many NSOs are not in a position to directly provide funding to such projects, which poses a problem for a number of Bureau members who would otherwise be interested in contributing. For the past SEEA revision process, a number of countries provided small contributions, and the Bureau agreed to look further into how this can be replicated. In kind contributions are also welcomed.

6. It was agreed that the Bureau will not make a call for funding to the Statistical Commission as the Work Programme and plan for the updating of the manual is not yet mature enough.

ROLE OF THE UNCEEA IN SDG INDICATOR PROCESS

7. It was noted that the first step in improving the UNCEEA's position to influence the SDG indicator process is to develop an overview of the different groups which are working on SEEA relevant SDG indicators and understand what conversations have been / need to be had in order to influence their processes. For countries to be in a position to influence the SDG indicator work of international agencies, a better understanding is needed of who the key players are. In many instances, this may improve the capacity of the SEEA representative at the NSO to influence international agency processes through their own country counterparts. It was also agreed that the UNCEEA's work on developing SEEA compliant databases improves the case for SEEA alignment.

OTHER BUSINESS

8. It was agreed that the next meeting of the UNCEEA will be held on 19-21 June 2017. This has changed from what was agreed in the previous Bureau meeting as no rooms were available for the original dates.