



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
STATISTICS DIVISION
UNITED NATIONS



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) – Progress of implementation

Prepared by UNSD as background document to the 16th meeting of the UNCEEA
Area B2 Technical Committee on Ecosystem Accounting

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The objective of this background document is to provide an update on the progress of implementation of the NCAVES project. The project was extended for an additional 12 months to December 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Overall solid progress has been made with project implementation. It is a period of harvesting, with releases of a large number of reports, and focus on dissemination events. There have been a few set-backs during the past months, some of them covid related but also the translation of country reports is taking more time than anticipated.

The project team has been pushing to finish all country reports and activities by June 2021, but for some workstreams final events will take place in September-December period.

The below gives a brief overview of some of the main development by workstream.

Brazil:

- Various high-profile releases (with extensive news coverage) took place:
 - Ecosystem extent accounts for biomes – 24 September
 - Threatened species accounts – 5 November
 - Condition (of water) accounts, and Non-timber forest resources – 15 April
 - Valuation of water provisioning service and - 28 April (see:
- A SEEA page has been created on IBGE site that contains all publications and news articles on the published water accounts and ecosystem accounts: [Environmental-Economic Accounting | IBGE](#)
- Extent and biodiversity accounts has been translated in English and will be released shortly.
- Final project report is ready (in Portuguese) and currently is being translated.
- A technical webinar is planned for 22 June (hosted by the National School of Statistical Sciences – ENCE) to present the accounts to various stakeholders
- The pilot in Matopiba which is applying the SWAT model to assess the impacts of agricultural expansion on a range of ecosystem services, after experiencing various technical difficulties, is now generating results. The report is planned to be released during the National Forum (date tbd).

China:

- All individual reports, namely the report of the pilot in the two provinces – Guanxi and Guizhou, the scenario analysis and the policy assessment, have been successfully completed.
- The final project reports will be released during the closing workshop on 2nd June. The workshop will take place in Chinese and English with simultaneous interpretation.

India:

- Successful High-level NCAVES National Forum during 14,21, 28 January
 - The Forum was attended by three Indian ministers, EU Ambassador, UN Chief Economist, Executive Director of UNEP (by video message), the Executive Secretary

of CBD, the World Bank Global Director for the Environment, Natural Resources and the Blue Economy and the Director of UN Statistics Division;

- Around 1000 participants
- Multiple press releases (e.g. [Press Release Jan28.pdf \(mospi.nic.in\)](#)) and news stories (e.g. [New statistical framework helps India consider nature's contributions | United Nations.](#))
- The Forum released the final project report as well as the EVL Valuation Tool
- The Indian National Statistical Office established a dedicated NCAVES website: <https://www.mospi.gov.in/natural-capital-accounting-and-valuation-of-ecosystem-services-ncaves->
- Pilot in Karnataka state:
 - A session was organized during IISc Lakeside Conference (Dec 2020) – a technical conference on measuring ecosystems services – to present on ecosystem accounting¹
 - Due to Covid there were some delays on the delivery of the outputs, however drafts of 4 reports (Extent; Condition, Ecosystem Services; Scenario Analysis) are available and are currently under review by the project team and Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change.
 - Karnataka reports will be released during the “Biodiversity means Climate” seminar organized by EUDEL, postponed to a new date
- NCA Strategy has been developed and discussed by the Interinstitutional Management group and it is expected to be released by NSO India on 29 June, National Statistics Day.

Mexico:

- A lot of effort has gone into the final project report. Hereto an editorial group consisting of INEGI (the national statistics office), SEMARNAT and the consultants has been discussing on a weekly basis between December and April. The report is currently being copy-edited and translated. It will be published by INEGI.
- A consultant is supporting SEMARNAT with the stakeholder consultations for selecting of the policy scenario's that will be assessed with the InterAmerican Development Bank's modelling platform (IEEM) as well as in the development of a roadmap towards mainstreaming NCA.
- The data for the national forum is under discussion with INEGI, considering that the Chief Statistician will complete his mandate at the end of June.

South Africa

- Statistics South Africa launched a new series of reports, called the Natural Capital Series.
 1. Land and Terrestrial Ecosystem Accounts, 1990-2014 (released Dec 2020) www.statssa.gov.za/publications/D04011/D040111990to2014.pdf
 2. Accounts for Protected Areas, 1990-2014 (expected June 2021)
 3. Accounts for Species: Cycads, 1970-2010 (expected October 2021)
 4. Accounts for Species: Rhinos, 1970-2017 (expected October 2021)
 5. Land Accounts for Metropolitan Municipalities, 1990-2014 (expected in 2022)
- The final results of the KwaZulu Natal pilot on the valuation of ecosystem services were released in March. <https://seea.un.org/content/towards-method-accounting-ecosystem-services-and-asset-value-pilot-accounts-kwazulu-natal>

¹ <https://www.iisc.ac.in/events/lake-2020-conference-on-ecosystem-structure-function-goods-and-services/>

- The results of the scenario analysis are being finalized and planned to be disseminated in the context of the launch of the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (17 June – world day to combat desertification)
- Statistics South Africa (SSA) and South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) are co-leading the development of a national strategy for advancing NCA in South Africa. Several meetings of the NCA Strategic Advisory Group have taken place. The strategy has been finalized and will be published by Statistics South Africa.
- The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) is developing a Cabinet Brief on NCA.
- The public webinar that is currently being planned by the DFFE might be used to highlight the achievements of the project.

Guidelines/ methodological work (see main note)

Indicators:

- This workstream has concluded. All results and reports are available at the UNSD website: <https://seea.un.org/content/indicators-and-natural-capital-accounting>
- The results have also been disseminated through the SEEA News and Notes and the BIP newsletter (<https://seea.un.org/news/unsd-releases-final-results-ncaves-indicators-workstream>)

Communications and outreach

- Leading up to the adoption of the SEEA a number of communication results were achieved:
 - Short video and twitter campaign
 - Press conference of the UN Chief Economist on the SEEA EA
 - Interview with the UN Chief Economist
 - Press releases by the UN, EU and Eurostat
 - Tweet by the UN Secretary General and Executive Director of UNEP, Executive Secretary of CBD, etc.
- The knowledge base is regularly being updated: <https://seea.un.org/content/knowledge-base>
- The latest (13th) version of the SEEA News and Notes was released in March, subscriptions have grown to around 2000 members. <https://mailchi.mp/7bb14a106705/seea-news-and-notes-issue13-5675025>
- A webinar to launch the ARIES for SEEA Explorer was organized on 29 April
- UNEP has organized a Townhall on adoption of NCA/SEEA in April
- A communication consultant is supporting the release (copy-editing + design) of final project reports as well as policy briefs and other coms products (website; video).
- Post 2020 CBD process: We are participating in various events and activities leading up to the COP.
 - A series of regional webinar bringing together the statistical community, the CBD focal points and the science community in countries will be organized
 - If possible, a side-event will be organized during the Open-Ended Working Group scheduled in August
 - Side-event is planned for the (postponed) IUCN World Congress in September
 - Side-event planned for CoP 15 to disseminate project results (likely virtual).

- Various comms products have been developed around the NCAVES India Forum, the SEEA EA adoption, ARIES for SEEA launch:
 - A brochure on ecosystem accounting (aimed at a broad audience)
 - Videos on SEEA EA
 - Interview with Chief Economist of UN
 - Web-articles (see for links to the above, the ecosystem accounting landing page: <https://seea.un.org/content/ecosystem-accounting-news>)

Training:

- In collaboration with a large number of organisations, an African Community of Practice has been established in late 2019, that has been very active over the past year featuring also webinars organized by NCAVES team (on South Africa's land and ecosystem accounts and on policy scenario analysis)
- As part of the SEEA EA implementation strategy, the e-learnings are being updated and expanded. As part of NCAVES, e-learnings on valuation and scenario analysis are being developed. The materials are ready and are now being turned into e-learnings by 2 consultants.

Business accounting:

- An exploratory workshop to discuss the strategic direction and the work programme for the group on business accounting is being organized for 20 May.
- Two pilots with two businesses, Ambuja Cement in India and Lafarge Holcim in Spain have been completed. The results have been presented during UNECE-OECD webinar and the recent exploratory workshop.