



UNSD SEEA-EEA revision: Spatial units

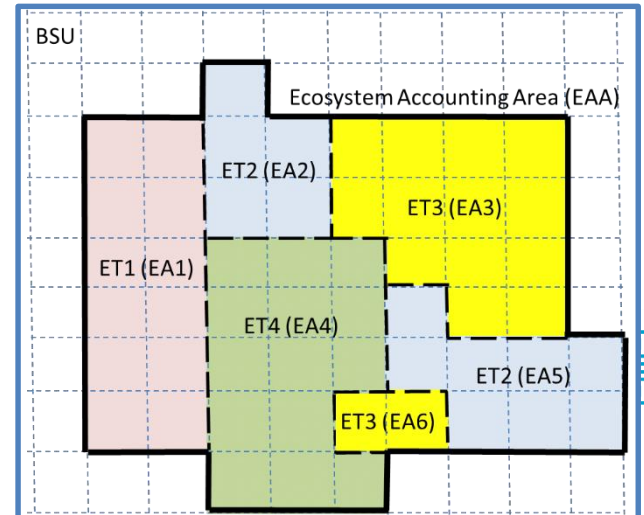
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Sjoerd Schenau

26-6-2019

Introduction

- **Spatial units** are key to ecosystem accounting
- General approach for delineation of ecosystem assets well established
- Several key research issues remaining



Key revision issues

- 1) Development of a **reference classification** that better represents the concept and coverage of ecosystems
- 2) Delineation of **urban areas** and treatment of their ecosystem assets
- 3) Treatment of the **atmosphere and marine areas**



1 An ecosystem type classification for SEEA EEA

- A classification describing the ecosystem types and a map are **essential components** of ecosystem accounting
- **SEEA EEA (2014)**: recommended the use of an interim, land-cover classification as a starting point for an ecosystem classification
- **Key revision issue** for SEEA EEA is to develop a proposal for a classification that better represents the concept and coverage of ecosystems

Goal:

1. Provide options for the construction of a reference classification of ecosystem types.
2. Provide guidance for further disaggregation for ecosystem accounting at a national or sub national scale.



1 Options for a (high level) reference classification scheme for ecosystem types

1. **IUCN Red List of Ecosystems**
2. **USGS/Esri GDBBS**
3. **A two-tier approach building upon and linking IUCN RLE and USGS/Esri GDBBS**
4. Existing habitat classifications (e.g. IUCN, EUNIS)
5. Existing land cover classifications (e.g., FAO; Corine)

Of these, the first three are the recommended options due to their conceptual relevance and depth and their coverage of all relevant environmental domains.



2. Delineation of urban areas and treatment of their ecosystem assets: Why?



1. Ecosystems and their services in urban areas may be the most used and valued
2. Ecosystem in urban areas may be different than their “natural” and semi-natural” counterparts
3. Ecosystems in urban areas may deliver a different basket of ecosystem services
4. Ecosystem assets may potentially require a different accounting approach

2. Delineation of urban areas and treatment of their ecosystem assets



1. The urban ecosystem accounting area

1. What size urban area should be included in ecosystem accounts for urban areas?
2. How to delineate the urban ecosystem accounting area?
3. How much urban periphery should be included?

2. Classification of urban ecosystem assets and types

1. What urban ecosystem asset categories are relevant for a hierarchical urban/built-up ecosystem type classification?
2. What are the physical and other characteristics of an urban green/blue area that differentiate it from non-urban ecosystem types?
3. To what extent do these characteristics reflect the urban ecosystem extent and condition?

3. The question of scale

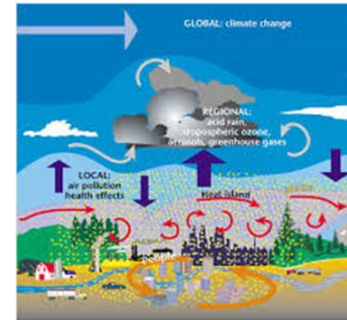


3a Treatment of the atmosphere

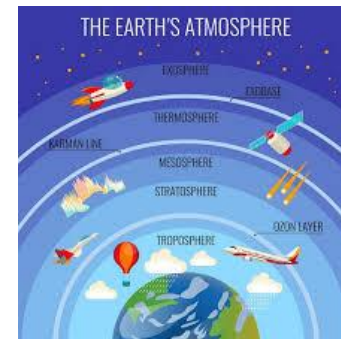
Currently, it is not yet clear how the atmosphere should be treated in an ecosystem accounting context.

Two options are proposed:

1. The atmosphere as a part of ecosystem assets



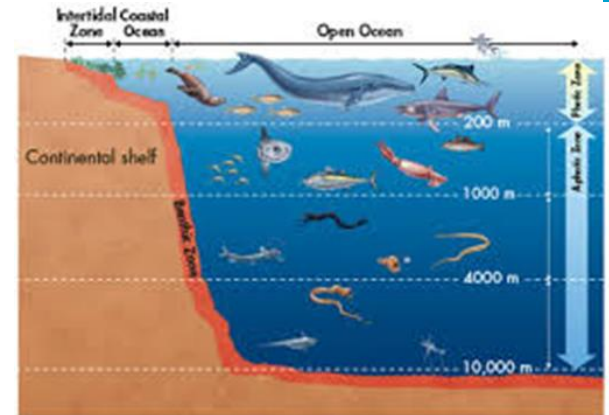
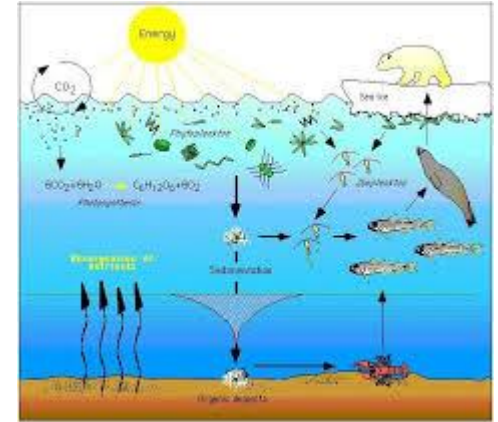
2. The atmosphere as a separate unit



3b Treatment of marine areas

Option 1: each area of the seas/oceans belongs to one single ecosystem asset

Option 2: The water column and underlying sediments may belong to different ecosystem assets



Process and next steps

- **April:** three Discussion papers ready
- **May 2019:** Expert review
- **June 2019:** Discussions at the Forum of Experts and Technical Expert Meeting
 - Revising discussion papers
 - Testing of the options
 - Addressing remaining research issues
 - Final recommendations for SEEA EEA revision

Spatial units at the Forum

Session 3a: Spatial units (*meeting room: Nassau*)

Chair: Sjoerd Schenau (Statistics Netherlands)

Presentations:

- Emily Nickolson (Deakin University): Presentation of option 1
- Roger Sayre (U.S. Geological Survey): Presentation of option 2
- Patrick Bogaart (Statistics Netherlands): Presentation of option 3


Session 5a: Urban areas (*meeting room: Nassau*)

Chair: François Souldard (Statistics Canada)

Session 5b: Marine areas (*meeting room: Maple*)

Chair: Michael Bordt (ESCAP/Government of Canada)



A close-up photograph of a branch with white cherry blossoms and green buds against a dark background. The text "Thank for your attention!" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Thank for your
attention!