



Forum of Experts in SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting Session 1: Ecosystem Accounting Units Summary

Advancing the SEEA-EEA Project



Convention on
Biological Diversity





Summary of Discussion

- Agreed:
 - Need for common units
 - Criteria good
 - Need to understand uncertainty (reliability) of spatial data
 - Takes time to integrate new data (e.g., global datasets)
 - Keep data at appropriate scale & overlay for specific analyses
 - Split categories first, lump later
 - Simplify categories for specific analysis



Summary of Discussion

- Other approaches
 - **Land/asset:**
 - Ecosystem Units (EUs) take climate, lithology and landform into account;
 - Land Cover = result of climate, lithology and landform
 - **Carbon:** Distinguish natural from modified ecosystems
 - **Water:** Attention to cross-border flows
 - **Biodiversity:** Include in criteria for spatial units
 - **Condition:** Incorporate seasonality
 - **Services:** Units specific to service providing units



Summary of Discussion

- Disagreed
 - Delineation of spatial units based on Land Cover only
 - Macro scale only or accurate for local assessments
 - Pixels or “agents”
 - Importance of Land Cover as a determinant of Ecosystem Services



Action items to consider (new issues)

- Short-term (Technical Guidance)
 - Test EU delineation using climate, lithology and landform
 - Keep Land Cover separate
 - Where data available, suggest testing EU as subset of LCU
- Medium-term (testing and research)
 - Distinguish natural from modified units
 - Treatment of cross-border water flows
 - Distinguishing “agents” and service providing spatial units
- Unknowns
 - Availability of historical, frequent, global EU data
 - Country-specific EUs