Testing ecosystem condition accounts

What? We look for interested organisations or countries that can test proposals for ecosystem condition accounts.

Who? Countries or organisations that

- are willing to restructure an existing ecosystem condition account and go over the different steps of the guidance to check whether or not any of these steps has been applied when developing the account.
- are starting the development of a new condition account for a specific or multiple ecosystem types.
- are measuring ecosystem condition (but not necessarily in an accounting context) and would be interested to try out the approach.

Expected outcomes. A set of accounting tables that report the condition of 1 or multiple ecosystems. A proposal for different accounting tables is included. Different tables are proposed depending on the availability of data or the methodology (e.g., only based on indicators, with or without aggregation, presence of a reference condition). Specificities on indicator selection and the main criteria for selecting indicators may come from the testing.

In addition, the testing would assist in building a database of condition indicators that would, in turn, feed into the discussion papers and populate the typology with examples of indicators used by various compilers of the condition account.

Guidance: The SEEA EEA is under revision. The revision process is supported by a set of discussion papers that propose updated methods for accounting for ecosystem extent, condition and services. Following development of new proposals for ecosystem condition accounts a phase of testing is to commence.

Steps and guidance (summary; more details to be provided once the testing phase starts)

Steps	Available guidance	Material to be provided
Step 1. Select an ecosystem accounting area (e.g. country, catchment, sub-national region) Select ecosystem types and spatial units for the condition assessment.	Chapter 3 and 4 of the revised SEEA EEA (upon request) Testers can use their own ecosystem typology or use the typology provided by IUCN. WG1 on spatial units is starting testing and experimentation on linking the classification of national spatial units with the IUCN typology.	IUCN Red List of ecosystems (see discussion paper 1.1)
Step 2. Select ecosystem condition indicators (for each ecosystem type) and/or classify indicators used in an existing condition account into the proposed typology	Paper 2.3 provides criteria to select indicators as well as a typology/classification Classification of indicators by ecosystem types (level 2-biomes or level 3-functional areas of the IUCN Red List of ecosystems classification)	Reference material for ecosystem condition indicators (e.g., 5th MAES report, Paper 2.2 with published condition accounts) Proposed typology of indicators from Paper 2.3
Step 3 (optional). Set a reference condition and reference levels (for individual indicators)	Paper 2.1 (Section 3.2.2; table 1) describes options for reference conditions.	Table 1 of paper 2.1
Step 4 (optional). Aggregation	Paper 2.1 (Section 3.3.3) describes options for aggregating indicators into a single composite indicator	
Step 5. Reporting in an accounting table	Paper 2.1 (Section 3.5) makes proposals for accounting tables	

Evaluation (by the ecosystem condition WG or a student)

Once the account has been developed, we could go over the steps and ask some predefined questions (perhaps with an interview to reduce the work for the testing organisations to a minimum):

- Is the IUCN redlist at biome level sufficient for reporting ecosystem condition? (to be evaluated together with the results of the testing from WG1)
- Specifics on indicator selection may come from the list. Need to check what is the main criterion for selecting indicators (guidance or simply data availability).
- Did the proposed typology prove to be suitable classification for the condition indicators used?
- Did you set a reference condition (yes/no)? What is the rationale for the selection of a reference?
- Do you have reference levels for ecosystem condition variables?
- Is there a need for aggregation or to report a single condition value?