

Terms of Reference for the UNCEEA Working Group on Business Accounting

Introduction

At its fifteenth meeting, the Committee agreed on the creation of a working group focusing on business accounting and the SEEA, acknowledging the significant benefits from building better linkages between the SEEA and private sector natural capital accounting and reporting. The Committee endorsed a road map for this area of work, which was prepared as one of the outputs of the Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services project. The road map provides a draft action agenda for the next five years with a view towards harnessing synergies between public and private natural capital accounting. The road map is structured around four main building blocks: coordination, communication, methodological development and capacity-building.¹

Objectives

The overall objectives of the Working Group on Business Accounting are:

- (a) Building better linkages between private sector natural capital accounting and reporting standards with the SEEA;
- (b) Increased collaboration and awareness raising between statistical and business communities; and
- (c) Greater exchange and use of high quality, interoperable data on natural capital between businesses and national statistical offices.

Governance

The Working Group on Business Accounting is established under the auspices of the UNCEEA with regular oversight from the Bureau of the UNCEEA. The Working Group will keep the UNCEEA and its Bureau abreast of its programme of work and progress. The Working Group will also contribute to the annual report of the UNCEEA for presentation to the UN Statistical Commission.

Members of the Working Group will include experts from national statistical offices of the UNCEEA who will coordinate and engage as appropriate with institutions in their respective countries that are active in compiling the SEEA and interacting with businesses. The Chair of the Task Team on Well Being and Sustainability of the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics will be invited to ensure synergies between the work of the two groups. Select representatives from the business and standard-setting communities will provide initial representation of the private sector in the Working Group. Members, both on the public and private side, will be selected so as to promote equitable regional representation.

The Working Group will be chaired by a member of the Bureau. The role of the Chair is to steer the advancement of the annual work programme set by the UNCEEA. Members will assist the Chair in advancing the work programme. UNSD will serve as the Secretariat of the Working Group. It will provide the day-to-day management and coordination and undertake internal and external communication on behalf of the Working Group.

¹ https://seea.un.org/sites/seea.un.org/files/business_accounting.docx