



Towards a Global Data Collection and Dissemination Programme on Environmental-Economic Accounts

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Objectives for this session

- To initiate a reflection on a possible global data and dissemination programme on environmental-economic accounts

- To consider such programme carefully in light of
 - Existing data collection activities inside and outside of UNSD
 - Resources implication

- Set out the points to be considered and invite the Committee to contribute and provide advice with your technical expertise



Relevant papers

1. Discussion paper

- **UNCEEA/10/9: *'Towards a Global Data Collection and Dissemination Programme on Environmental-Economic Accounts'***

2. Relevant documents

- **UNCEEA/10/2: *'Terms of Reference of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting'***
- **UNCEEA/10/BK9a: *'SEEA Technical Note: Land Accounting (draft)'***
- **UNCEEA/10/BK9b: *'SEEA Technical Note: Energy Accounting (draft)'***
- **UNCEEA/10/BK9c: *'SEEA Technical Note: Environmental Goods and Services Sectors (EGSS) (draft)'***
- **UNCEEA/10/BK9d: *'SEEA Technical Note: Water Accounting (draft)'***
- **UNCEEA/10/BK9e: *'Global Assessment of Environmental-Economic Accounting and Supporting Statistics 2014'***



Mandate from UN Statistical Commission

The Statistical Commission at its 46th session (2015):

- *Appreciated the progress made in the drafting of the SEEA technical notes and core tables for the SEEA Central Framework, noting their usefulness in supporting a scheduled approach for the compilation of SEEA-based accounts and derivation of SEEA-based sustainable development goal indicators, and recommended that countries test the proposed core tables in view of the creation of an SEEA global database* [E/CN.3/2015/40, 46/108(g)]



Objectives of the global data collection and dissemination programmes

- To monitor SEEA-related SDGs as well as relevant thematic policy areas
- To provide policy makers with indicators and descriptive statistics to monitor the interaction of economic and environmental information as well as a database for strategic planning and policy analysis
- To establish a common framework for the collection, compilation transmission and evaluation for environmental economic accounts
- To foster international statistical comparability
- To mainstream the SEEA as the statistical framework to measure the environment pillar of sustainable development integrated into official statistics
- To organize environmental data into an accounting framework to measure the environment-economy nexus



Current status of SEEA Implementation

- Global Assessment conducted in 2014 to assess the current status of SEEA implementation
- 85 countries responded to the Assessment, corresponding to a response rate of 44 percent
- **54 countries** (64 % of respondents) had programmes on environmental-economic accounting
- **15 countries** (18% of respondents) were planning to start the compilation for the first time

Existence of Environmental-Economic Accounting Programmes in Countries

Table 1: Existence of Environmental-Economic Accounting Programmes in Countries

	<i>Number of Responses</i> (1)	<i>Number countries* without a programme</i> (2)	Existing Programme		Planning a Programme	
			<i>Number of countries with a programme</i> (3)	<i>Percentage countries with a programme</i> (3÷1)	<i>Number of countries* planning a programme</i> (4)	<i>Percentage of countries planning a programme</i> (4÷1)
All Member States	85	31	54	64%	15	18%
By Economic Region:						
<i>Developed</i>	40	9	31	78%	3	8%
<i>Developing</i>	45	22	23	51%	12	27%
By Geographical Region:						
<i>Africa</i>	15	10	5	33%	5	33%
<i>Central, Eastern, Southern and South-Eastern Asia</i>	12	5	7	58%	3	25%
<i>Europe and Northern America</i>	37	8	29	78%	3	8%
<i>Latin America and Caribbean</i>	10	4	6	60%	2	20%
<i>Oceania</i>	3	0	3	100%	0	0%
<i>Western Asia</i>	8	4	4	50%	2	25%

*Where countries refers to those which responded to the questionnaire

Status of Integration between Programmes on Environmental-Economic Accounting and Environment Statistics

Table 2: Percentage of Countries with Programmes on Environmental-Economic Accounting which use the same Definitions, Classifications and Data Collection as their Environment Statistics Programme

	<i>Percentage of integrated programmes</i>	<i>Percentage of non- integrated programmes</i>	<i>Percentage of countries not responding</i>
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<i>▮</i> Where integrated refers to the use of the same definitions, classifications and data			
All Member States	45%	49%	6%
Developed Region	55%	38%	7%
Developing Region	36%	60%	4%
Countries with a programme	59%	37%	4%
Developed Region	68%	29%	3%
Developing Region	48%	48%	4%
Countries without a programme	19%	71%	10%
Developed Region	11%	67%	22%
Developing Region	23%	73%	4%

Modules/Accounts covered in Environmental-Economic Accounting Programmes by Economic Region

Table 3: Modules/Accounts covered in Environmental-Economic Accounting Programmes by Economic Region

All Member States	Developed Region		Developing Region		
<i>Account/Module</i>	<i>Number of Countries</i>	<i>Account/Module</i>	<i>Number of Countries</i>	<i>Account/Module</i>	<i>Number of Countries</i>
Air Emission Accounts	34	Air Emission Accounts	27	Water Accounts	12
Material Accounts ^a	32	Environmental Taxes and Subsidies	25	Energy Accounts	11
Energy Accounts	30	Material Accounts	24	Material Accounts	8
EPEA ^b	28	EPEA	21	Air Emission Accounts	7
Environmental Taxes and Subsidies	27	Energy Accounts	19	EPEA	7
Water Accounts	23	EGSS	17	Forest Accounts	6
EGSS ^c	18	Water Accounts / Forest Accounts	11	Land Accounts	6

a. Including Material Flow Accounts and Supply and Use Tables for Material

b. Environmental Protection Expenditure Accounts

c. Environmental Goods and Service Sector Accounts

Table 4: Modules/Accounts for which countries plan to begin compilation

All Member States		Developed Region		Developing Region	
<i>Account/Module</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>Account/Module</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>Account/Module</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>
All Countries (i.e. those with and without programme):					
Energy Accounts	35	Energy Accounts	16	Energy Accounts	19
Water Accounts	28	EPEA	14	Water Accounts	19
EPEA	21	EGSS Accounts	11	Environmental taxes and subsidies	10
EGSS	18	Water Accounts	9	Land Accounts	9
Environmental taxes and subsidies	16	Environmental taxes and subsidies	6	Waste Accounts	8
				Ecosystem Accounts	
Countries with a programme on environmental accounting:					
Energy Accounts	25	Energy Accounts	14	Energy Accounts	11
Water Accounts	16	EPEA	13	Water Accounts	9
EGSS Accounts	14	EGSS Accounts	10	Ecosystem Accounts	6
EPEA	14	Water Accounts	7	Environmental taxes and subsidies /	5
Environmental taxes and subsidies	10	Environmental taxes and subsidies	5	Land Accounts	
Countries with no current programme:					
Water Accounts	12	Water Accounts	2	Water Accounts	10
Energy Accounts	10	Energy Accounts	2	Energy Accounts	8
EPEA	7	<i>All other accounts had one response indicating they planned to begin compilation(except ecosystem and soil accounts which received zero)</i>		EPEA	6
Environmental taxes and subsidies	6			Environmental taxes and subsidies	5
Waste Accounts	6			Waste Accounts	5



Results for consideration

■ Developed countries

- Choice of accounts was **shaped largely by EU legislation**
- Top 5 accounts which countries plan to begin or expand compilation: **Energy, EPEA, EGSS, Water, Environmental taxes and subsidies**
- Existence of integrated programmes: **55 %** of responded countries

■ Developing countries

- Existing activities and future plans were largely **linked to accounts related to water and energy**
- Top 5 accounts which countries plan to begin or expand compilation : **Energy, Water, Environmental taxes and subsidies, Land, Waste and Ecosystem**
- Existence of integrated programmes: **36 %** of responded countries



Existing initiatives

Non-exhaustive list of existing data collection initiatives on environmental-economic accounts and related statistics

- Eurostat
- OECD
- FAO
- UNSD on environment statistics
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Gaps

- Global SEEA database and the dissemination of comparable environmental-economic accounts for all UN Member States from a single interface under the auspices of UNSC do not exist
- Although individual set of environment and energy statistics have been collected by several international agencies, recommendations govern the production of these statistics may not consistent with that of the SEEA



Recommendations

- The UNCEEA to consider on a possible global data collection and dissemination programme on environmental-economic accounts

- On harmonization
 - **Short term** - recommend conversion/concordance table/ approach or collect additional data items to integrate basic statistics into accounts
 - **Medium term** – mainstream already agreed concepts, definitions and classifications of the SEEA into regular statistical, administrative and policy programmes



Considerations for the design of the programme

- Use
- Identification of priority accounts/indicators
- Core table and indicator as a basis for global data collection
- Building on existing initiatives
- Resources



Use

- **Monitoring and reporting process** for the SDG and related indicators
- **UN Statistical Commission** to monitor the implementation of statistical standards at the national and international level
- **Member States of the United Nations** to improve the efficiency of the statistical production process through the development of an integrated statistical system with inputs from multiple data sources
- **International and regional agencies** who are embarking on green economy and sustainable development related initiatives
- **Public community**, including academic and research institutes, non-governmental organization, public citizens to access coherent and consistent information on environmental-economic accounts



Identification of priority accounts/indicators

Possible considerations:

- Accounts which indicators have been adopted as part of the SDG indicators will be given the highest priority
- **Energy accounts** are the topic priority based on the result of the Global Assessment
- The next account of priority based on the result of the Global Assessment
 - Developing countries – **Water accounts**
 - Developed countries – **EPEA and EGSS accounts**
- **Land accounts** were also identified as they form the basis for the testing of SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting



Data collection

- **Core tables and accounts** from the SEEA Technical Notes could serve as a basis for global data collection
- **Build on existing initiatives** to lighten report burden of countries and to ensure close coordination
- **Build on/integrate existing questionnaires** currently sent by international and regional agencies



Resources

- Efforts should be made to ensure sufficient resources for the planning and implementation process
 - Design and set up the statistical production processes of the data collection mechanism
 - Design and set up the statistical infrastructure
 - Pilot testing
 - Manage and regularly update the database
 - Documentation and metadata
 - Dissemination

- Time frame
 - Determine within a realistic timeframe in the medium term subject to resources availability



The Committee may wish to

- Express its opinion on the global data collection and dissemination programme on environmental-economic accounts