

UNITED NATIONS STATISTICS DIVISION (UNSD)**Progress report for London Group**

(Canberra, 15-19 November 1999)

Integrated environmental and economic accounting

UNSD and UNEP, in collaboration with the Nairobi Group, have prepared the Operational Manual on Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting. The manual has been submitted for editing and publication and it is expected to be published as a United Nations sales publication early 2000. A preliminary version of the manual has been printed and widely distributed. Based on the experience in developed and developing countries, the manual provides a practical step-by-step description on how to implement the SEEA. It also articulates the uses of integrated environmental and economic accounting in policy making. UNSD, in collaboration with the Fondazione ENI Enrico Mattei, also prepared a user-friendly software on the implementation of the SEEA, in support of the manual.

Fishery accounting:

UNSD, FAO and UNU are jointly preparing a manual on Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting for Fisheries. A draft of the manual was discussed at a Workshop organized jointly by UNSD and FAO in New York in June 1999. The manual provides guidelines on environmental-economic accounting for capture fisheries and aquaculture allowing a better understanding of the interrelationship between the production of fish, creation of income and employment and physical flows and quality of environmental goods and services. It is expected to be published in 2000.

Country projects:

Philippines: The National Statistical Coordination Board, with the technical assistance of UNSD, completed the pilot project on the implementation of the SEEA. Asset accounts for forests, fishery, mineral resources, land/soil and water were compiled in physical and monetary terms. Emissions into land, air and water were also assessed and costed for selected industries. The results of the projects were presented in a national seminar. A final report of the project results has been published by UNDP, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). A second phase of the project will involve improvement of the original accounts and testing of integrated environmental and economic accounting for fisheries.

Environmental statistics and indicators

UNSD circulated a questionnaire on selected environmental indicators to all non-OECD countries in early 1999. The questionnaire was based on the list of indicators (variables) selected by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Advancement of Environment Statistics for the purposes of international data collection. It covered only those indicators that were not collected by other international organizations or specialized agencies. UNSD cooperates with OECD in this area and similar arrangements are being made with the other international organizations, specialized agencies and secretariats of international conventions so as to avoid duplication of efforts. These data, compiled from the countries and from other sources, will form the core of the environment statistics database to be started by UNSD.

As part of the methodological work of UNSD a "Manual of Environment Statistics" is being prepared. The Manual will focus on how to start, build up and develop basic environment statistics. The first draft chapters of the Manual were discussed by an Expert Group at the end of September 1999. The revision of the draft, based on extensive input from the experts, is under preparation. The first volume of the Manual covering general issues and selected thematic fields of environment statistics will be submitted for publication in the second half of 2000.

Workshops

UNSD organized a Workshop on Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting in New York in June 1999. The workshop trained data producers on the implementation of the SEEA and provided a forum for the exchange of information on country experiences. The Operational Manual and the accompanying software were used as training material in the Workshop. Representatives from all regions of the world attended the Workshop.

UNSD and FAO organized a joint Workshop on Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting for Fisheries in New York in June 1999. The Workshop discussed the draft guidelines on integrated environmental and economic accounting for fisheries and provided a forum to share experiences in the uses, practices and constraints of current fisheries accountings. It also identified measures, which could facilitate future implementation of SEEAF with regard to data collection and compilation, institutional arrangements, pilot projects and external support.

A joint UNSD-ECA workshop on environmental statistics indicators and accounting was organized in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 1999. The seminar served the purpose of building awareness of concepts and methods used for data compilation.

Organization

The Environment Statistics Section comprises 4 professional staff members, 1 working on environmental accounting and 3 on environment statistics and indicators.