

MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE UN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING

04 December 2018, via WebEx

Meeting minutes

- **Present:** Bert Kroese (Chair, Statistics Netherlands), Jacky Hodges (Australia Bureau of Statistics), André Loranger, Carolyn Cahill (Statistics Canada), Raúl Figueroa (INEGI), Gerhard Eding (Statistics Netherlands), Gerhard Boucher (Statistics South Africa), Peter van de Ven, Pierre-Alain Pionnier, Florian Flachenecker (OECD), Alessandra Alfieri, Jessica Ying Chan, Marko Javorsek (United Nations Statistics Division)
- **Regrets:** Romeo Recide (Philippines Statistics Authority), Anton Steurer (Eurostat), Francesco Tubiello (FAO), Raffaello Cervigni (World Bank)

DRAFT REPORT TO THE UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION (UNSC)

The Bureau agreed with the report, subject to the following amendments:

- In the Section on Area C on Global Databases, it was suggested that the language around obtaining approval from countries before publishing official statistics and estimates be changed to reflect that communication with the countries need to take place before dissemination of the results. This text would reflect the concerns expressed by countries in the Statistical Commission of ensuring that estimates of countries data are first vetted by the countries.
- The importance of distinguishing between official statistics and estimates was noted and it was suggested to keep separate databases, one more analytical presenting data that are comparable and one based on data reported from countries. This issue would need to be further discussed by the UNCEEA at its meeting in June 2019.
- Actions:
 - UNSD, together with OECD, to edit report to refer to the need for communication with countries before publishing.
 - UNSD to circulate finalized document by the end of the week.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES RELATED TO SEEA-EEA

- UNSD provided a recap of recent outreach activities related to the SEEA-EEA, including the Biodiversity [COP14 side event](#) in November, [the NCA in Support of Better Policy Decisions forum](#) and the [recent webinar](#) on valuation held for members of the UNCEEA and Advisory Expert Group (AEG). Upcoming events include a meeting (as part of the NCAVES project) in February in Cambridge on how the SEEA can support indicator frameworks, in particular in the context of the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, which is being developed during the next two years.
- In terms of the revision process, there has been substantial engagement with the scientific and environmental economics community from government, academia and

NGOs (IUCN, CI), etc. for the 10 issues papers being written on specific ecosystem services.

- UNSD is also preparing a document on behalf of the UNCEEA, on the SEEA as a measurement framework for the post-2020 Agenda. This document will be sent to the Bureau and members of Area A for review shortly and be sent to the Secretariat of the CBD next week.
- To ensure that synergies are harnessed between the AEG on National Accounts and the UNCEEA on the SEEA-EEA revision, and in particular on the issue of valuation of ecosystem assets services and integration into the accounting framework as well as on the research agenda of the SEEA Central Framework, it was suggested that a few AEG/UNCEEA members join Working Group 5 on valuation concepts, to serve as liaisons between the two communities.
- Actions:
 - Joint AEG/UNCEEA members to discuss who can join Working Group 5
 - UNSD to share paper for CBD for Bureau and Area A comments
 - UNSD to share draft papers and event details for the indicators meeting in February 2019

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- UNSD provided a recap of the latest developments on the proposed SEEA subgroup of the Interlinkages Working Group of the IAEG-SDGs. The Interlinkages Working Group mentioned the SEEA in a paper for the most recent IAEG-SDGs meeting in November in Stockholm. Additionally, Sven Kaumanns (Federal Statistics Office of Germany) gave a well-received presentation at the meeting.
- The UNCEEA will build on previous efforts and papers to prepare a document on how the SEEA can be used for the SDGs for submission to the IAEG-SDGs in light of the 2020 revision.
- However, it remains the case that the IAEG-SDGs is not in favour of a formal working group.
- It was mentioned that Eurostat is in a similar situation with the EU SDG indicator set, in that not all SEEA relevant indicators use the SEEA, and that the Eurostat experience could inform the current situation of the UNCEEA.
- **Actions:**
 - As a next step forward, UNSD will set up a teleconference to discuss the strategy on how to mainstream the SEEA in the SDGs between Bert Kroese, Andre Loranger, Sven Kaumanns, Viveka Palm and Nancy Steinbach.