

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

5 March 2018, in person on the side-line of the UNSC

Meeting minutes

- **Present:** Bert Kroese (Chair, Statistics Netherlands), Marie Apostolou (Australia Bureau of Statistics), Andre Loranger (Statistics Canada), Enrique Ordaz (INEGI), Eduardo Barredo-Capelot (Eurostat), Paul Schreyer (OECD), Barbro Hexeberg (World Bank), Greg Gong (UNECA), Ivo Havinga, Alessandra Alfieri, Julian Chow, Jessica Ying Chan, Sokol Vako (United Nations Statistics Division)
- **Regrets:** Risenga Maluleke (South Africa), FAO, Philippines Statistics Authority.

## 1. PROGRESS AND METHOD OF WORK OF THE UNCEEA

The chair gave a brief overview of the modus operandi of the Committee and the work done over the past 12 months. Members of the Bureau noted that good progress has been made in all areas of work of the Committee, in particular on the implementation of the SEEA. The working methods of the Committee has proven efficient and has resulted in increasing buy in by countries and agencies.

Members noted that communication is key for the mainstreaming of the SEEA. The new website and the newsletter are important step forward but there is a need to improve communication around the SEEA and to tell stories where the data resulting from the SEEA have had an impact in the decision-making process. Compilation of accounts should not stop at the dissemination of the data but be accompanied by stories that can be inferred from the data.

The Bureau also discussed how the SEEA can be brought to the discussion on the SDG indicators more systematically. It was noted that only few IAEG-SDG members mention the SEEA during the deliberation but in general there is little awareness of SEEA and its use in the context of the SDG indicators. It was recommended that members of the Committee, in particular those from countries that are members the IAEG SDGs contact their representatives on the IAEG SDG to sensitize them and work together to ensure that the SEEA is properly reflected during the deliberations on definitions and methodologies of the indicators. The 2020 SDG review process provides an entry point to ensure that the SEEA is properly reflected in the SDGs, particularly for Tier III indicators.

Another important area where the SEEA should be properly reflected is the monitoring framework for climate change. Preliminary discussions on creating a separate work stream of the Committee's work programme were held. There is an opportunity now

that the monitoring framework is being re-evaluated. The Chair encouraged countries to make this point during the Statistical Commission as appropriate.

Members supported the revision process of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting noting the importance of maintaining close links with the national accounts framework.

ECA presented its approach to the implementation of the SEEA in Africa and building on projects on the development of the supply and use tables and implementation of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics. ECA suggested to communicate the implementation of the SEEA as compilation of extended supply and use tables to avoid resistance from countries.

## **2. EXPECTATIONS FROM THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION DISCUSSION – WHERE DO WE WANT TO COME OUT AFTER THE COMMISSION**

Members noted that no major issues are expected during the UNSC. As noted above, there is a need to ensure that the SEEA is properly reflected in the discussions on climate change statistics and indicators.

## **3. COOPERATION PRIVATE CLOUD AND DATA PROVIDERS (E.G. AMAZON, GOOGLE, ETC.)**

Members were briefed on recent meetings between members of the official statistics community and private sector cloud and data providers. It was noted that the business model used by private providers is different depending on the company. The proposal is to develop projects to be completed within 18 months periods that are of interest to the private providers. Priorities would need to be set from the statistical community in consultation with the data providers but it was noted that SDG indicators seem to be of interest as they provide the companies broad reach and high profile. It was also noted that the revision of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting presents an opportunity to test and experiment selected indicators in a parallel track to the development of concepts and methods.