

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

03 May 2018, via WebEx

Meeting minutes

- **Present:** Bert Kroese (Chair), Lisa Wardlaw-Kelly (Australia Bureau of Statistics), Anton Steurer (Eurostat), Kevin Roberts (Statistics Canada), Gerhard Eding (Statistics Netherlands), Pierre-Alain Pionnier, Florian Flachenecker (OECD), Raul Figueroa (INEGI), Gerhard Bouwer (Statistics South Africa), Alessandra Alfieri, Jessica Ying Chan, Marko Javorsek (United Nations Statistics Division)
- **Regrets:** Francesco Tubiello (FAO), Romeo Recide (Philippines Statistics Authority), Raffaello Cervigni (World Bank)

## AREA A – COORDINATION (led by Andre Loranger, Statistics Canada)

- Statistics Canada reviewed the progress made on the quality assurance of the training materials. Statistics Canada will put forth a concept note/evaluation grid to aid the quality assurance review for discussion at the next Area A meeting.
- In terms of presentation of the materials, it was noted that the materials received were very diverse, with certain trainings being useful to certain groups. Statistics Canada has agreed to put forth a concept note for the next Area A meeting on how to classify and present the training materials on the website.
- In terms of mainstreaming the SEEA, for the SDGs, the working group hopes to open up formal communications between the UNCEEA and IAEG-SDGs, particularly in light of the 2020 indicator revision. UNSD will follow up internally to discuss the best way forward; as a member of the IAEG-SDG, INEGI will also discuss internally and will help review any draft letter.
- For climate change, UNSD summarized a meeting with UNFCCC in Bonn (facilitated by Australian Bureau of Statistics). UNFCCC has put UNSD in touch with IPCC, which has asked UNSD to make a presentation on the SEEA. It was thought that this could take the form of a half-day WebEx, with presentations from countries that have been working on air emissions and/or energy accounts.
- For the upcoming UNCEEA meeting, it was agreed that both topics of mainstreaming the SEEA in SDGs and mainstreaming the SEEA in climate change should be discussed.

## AREA B1 – METHODOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT FOR NORMATIVE STANDARDS AND OTHER RESEARCH SEEA CF (led by Sjoerd Schenau, Statistics Netherlands)

- For the upcoming UNCEEA meeting, Statistics Netherlands plans to present a final research agenda for review by the Committee.
- It was noted that there are two areas (classification of residuals, resource material equivalents) with is no topic area lead. Although Statistics Sweden has started to search for who could be area leads, the members of the Bureau were invited to search for potential leads as well.

- It was agreed prioritizing the topic areas on the research agenda would help manage the TC workflow. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) suggested to that developing criteria for prioritization could be useful. Suggested criteria included the relevance of the research topic to the promotion of the SEEA in policy areas, such as the SDGs or climate change, as well as the presence of a topic area lead.

## **AREA B2 – METHODOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT FOR NORMATIVE STANDARDS AND OTHER RESEARCH SEEA EEA (led by Anton Steurer, Eurostat)**

- Eurostat introduced the work done since the last Bureau meeting for the SEEA EEA revision. In particular, the SEEA EEA TC has posted an issues paper and the revision process will be structured around 4 areas, each of which has a dedicated area lead.
- UNSD gave a quick overview of the meeting in Bonn from 24-26 April. Participants at the meeting included people from academia, international organizations, NSOs, etc. All groups were eager to collaborate on the revision process. UNSD also met with IPBES and UNCCD, both of which are ready to engage more with the SEEA community.
- Eurostat noted that there was room to strengthen the ties between the SEEA and the SNA and the importance of reaching out to the national accounts community with regards to the SEEA EEA revision. It was determined that the SEEA EEA TC (as well as the SEEA CF TC) should liaise with the Advisory Expert Group (AEG) of the SNA, both with regards to the revision of the SEEA EEA, but also the revision of the SNA. As one of the three main topics on the research agenda for the AEG is sustainability and wellbeing, assuring that the SEEA and the SNA are aligned will be key.

## **AREA C – DEVELOPMENT OF GLOBAL DATABASES FOR SEEA (led by Peter van de Ven, OECD)**

- OECD informed the Bureau that the DSDs and their documentation have been finalized, with a public review having been launched today. It is anticipated that version 1.0 should be available by autumn.
- With regards to the upcoming UNCEEA meeting, OECD clarified that the roadmap will be circulated in advance of the UNCEEA to facilitate discussion during the meeting.
- On the validation process of estimated data, it was agreed that the UNCEEA should be responsible for validating the general methodology, based on TC recommendations. Once validated by the TCs and UNCEEA, the data should then proceed to countries for validation, only to be published with country consent, as per the most recent UN Statistical Commission.

## **AREA D – IMPLEMENTATION AND STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING (led by Joe de Beer, Statistics South Africa)**

- Statistics South Africa presented the outline of further descriptive statistics and a gap analysis based on the results of the Global Assessment. These statistics and analysis will

serve to frame the discussion at the UNCEEA on how to move forward with implementation.

- In addition, Statistics South Africa presented a spreadsheet on SEEA implementation, which tracks implementation by country, as well as the provision of technical assistance (both past and planned).
- OECD noted the importance of obtaining information on SEEA programmes, as well as compilation, regular funding and publishing, to allow us to fully track implementation over time.
- UNSD also noted that while it is important to obtain information on all aspects of SEEA implementation, it is equally important to consider how to report on implementation. In particular, it was suggested that during the UNCEEA, a discussion take place on identifying the contexts where the number of SEEA countries with a programme versus the number of SEEA countries with full implementation will be most useful to report on.

#### **AREA E – A PRACTICAL STRATEGY FOR THE APPLICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING TO EMERGING POLICY ISSUES (led by Lisa Wardlaw-Kelly, Australian Bureau of Statistics)**

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics informed the Bureau of its plans for the upcoming June meeting. The session is planned to have two parts: 1) A case study on the SDG 2020 revision. This portion of the session would capitalize on the 2017 UNCEEA, asking members to identify change makers and think about how they can promote the SEEA for SDGs in their own country; and 2) A hands-on twitter training session
- Members of the Bureau supported this plan and noted the importance of the session in catalysing action on the part of individual members.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

- It was agreed to have another Bureau meeting 1-2 weeks before the UNCEEA. UNSD will send out a Doodle poll.