



System of Environmental Economic Accounting

Area A: Coordination

The Committee:

- Thanked Statistics Canada for their leadership during their time as chair of the Area A Working Group on Coordination and warmly welcomed the Australian Bureau of Statistics as the new chair of the Working Group;
- Welcomed the overall work plan of the Working Group;
- Welcomed the initial work done on the landscape assessment and noted its importance in enabling collaboration, coordination and prioritization of efforts, as well as reducing duplication of effort;
- Encouraged other Working Groups of the Committee to provide feedback on the landscape assessment and the subsequent finalization of the Assessment by Area A;
- Welcomed the development of a webinar series noting that each webinar may have different objectives and target different audiences. In some cases, they may be targeted to specific policy makers and may showcase the benefits, applications and value-added of using the SEEA for analysis, policy and decision making; and in others they may be more technical, bringing together experts from different communities working on measurement issues; and
- Noted the suggestions for possible webinar topics and encouraged Members to provide further suggestions to Area A.

Biodiversity

The Committee:

- Welcomed the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Conference on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- Noted the adoption of SEEA-based headline indicators for the Global Biodiversity Framework and emphasized how the compilation of these indicators can facilitate interinstitutional collaboration between line ministries and national statistical offices, and provide an opportunity to develop linkages with other headline indicators that are not SEEA-based;
- Stressed the important role of the Committee to support the finalization of the methodological work on the SEEA-based headline indicators and provide guidance on operationalizing these indicators at the national level, including drawing on global datasets where relevant;
- Reiterated the important role played by the Committee as well as national statistical offices in the development and operationalization of the monitoring framework, noting the work already done by the Committee on the metadata for goals A and B and targets 9 and 11 as well as the need to finalize the metadata for these indicators; and
- Called for further engagement between national statistical offices and CBD focal point to strengthen their collaboration, in particular through the SEEA focal points.

Data Gaps Initiative

The Committee:

- Welcomed the adoption of the Data Gaps Initiative (DGI) 3, including the strong relevance of the SEEA for many of the recommendations related to climate change (recommendations (1- 7), stressed the importance of using the SEEA as the basis for these indicators, and further noted the opportunity to elevate environment statistics to the level of economic statistics especially within ministries of finance and central banks, which are not typical users of such data;
- Noted the importance of coordination and collaboration between the Committee and the DGI initiative, as well as between national statistical offices and ministries of finance/central banks, to the success of the initiative;
- Emphasized the importance of spillover effects for SEEA-related recommendations from the G20 to non-G20 countries, noting that collaborative platforms and “hackathons” could be potential vehicles for which more developed countries could assist others;
- Noted that mapping initiatives, such as that of Area A, could help inform the DGI Secretariat and Inter-Agency Group of initiatives and organizations that could be involved or contribute to the DGI; and
- Welcomed its representation in all DGI climate-related task teams and its incorporation into the overall governance structure of the DGI.

Area B1: Methodology - Central Framework

The Committee:

- Emphasized the need to keep the SEEA, as other international statistical standards, up-to-date and aligned, as appropriate, with other statistical standards and classifications (e.g. SNA, BPM, ISIC, CPC, SIEC, COFOG, etc.);
- Agreed to an update of the SEEA Central Framework with a focused scope while requesting the SEEA CF Technical Committee to further elaborate the criteria for prioritization of the issues, further evaluate the costs and benefits of addressing the issues and develop a timeline for addressing each issue;
- Noted concerns on resources and the capacity of national statistical offices and international organizations, and requested the Bureau to identify resources to support the SEEA update;
- Noted that a proposal for the SEEA CF update should be developed for consideration by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2024 and thus would need to be finalized before November 2023; and
- Took note of the engagement by members in the revision processes of ISIC, CPC, SIEC and COFOG and the development of the CEF.

Area B2: Methodology – Ecosystem Accounting

The Committee:

- Welcomed the work of the Technical Committee on the implementation of the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting, including regular bi-monthly meeting and engagement on several substantive topics;
- Approved the proposed TOR with minor changes related to aligning the text in the TOR with the text used in the UN Statistical Commission report clarifying the different status of chapters 1-7 versus 8-11 of SEEA EA and proposed new language for bullet (g) as follows “resolving the outstanding methodological aspects in chapters 8 to 11”. The TOR with these changes will be submitted to the Bureau for final approval;
- Agreed with the proposed broad workplan for the Technical Committee for the next year, acknowledging that the detailed work programme will be discussed by the Technical Committee at its next meetings;
- Stressed the importance of further conceptual work on monetary valuation of ecosystem services and assets and agreed that the Technical Committee will discuss the conceptual work on valuation upon completion of the discussions on valuation principles being undertaken in the context of the SNA update and in alignment with the proposed update of the SEEA CF;
- Noted the proposal by one member to consider alternative approaches to the treatment of monetary values connected to ecosystems and their services;

Area B2: Methodology – Ecosystem Accounting (continued)

The Committee:

- Noted the request to take a range of perceptions of value into account in ecosystem accounting, including those of indigenous peoples;
- Endorsed the disbanding of the Working Group on SEEA EA Indicators and the Subgroup on Accounting for Biodiversity that were established to support the revision process in 2020, while highlighting the importance of the work on the biodiversity indicators and their metadata, which will be taken up by the whole Technical Committee and possibly ad hoc task teams that may be established to address specific indicators; and
- Welcomed the intention to strengthen country and regional representation by including additional members in the Technical Committee.

Area C: Global SEEA databases

The Committee:

- Welcomed the progress made in the data collection of the priority accounts namely of air emission, physical energy flow, and material flow accounts stressing its importance and providing visibility to the SEEA;
- Further welcomed the estimation and dissemination of quarterly air emission accounts; and the release of the OECD maritime transport CO2 emissions database;
- Reiterated that, as agreed by the UNCEEA at its meeting in June 2019, national data, if available, should always have priority in global databases;
- Requested to report on the coordination between Area C activities and DGI-3 activities in further communication materials; and
- Emphasized the need for international organizations to provide further capacity building and technical assistance to countries, in collaboration with Area D, in order to help countries compile accounts, both using national data sources and global datasets as relevant.

Area D: Capacity Building

The Committee:

- Welcomed the work of Area D over the past year, in particular the work on the Global Assessment and the Implementation Guide;
- Endorsed the implementation guide while noting that the guide is a live document to be updated with additional examples from countries, and requested a pdf copy of the document as an additional dissemination tool;
- Agreed with the priorities for the workplan of Area D for 2023/24 and highlighted the importance of revitalizing the SEEA Focal Points network;
- Recommended updating the TOR of the Focal Points network and entrusted the Bureau to approve the TOR after consultation with the Committee, and requested to make the list of focal points public on the SEEA website taking into consideration confidentiality clauses. The Committee further suggested to consider having separate focal points for the SEEA Central Framework and SEEA Ecosystem Accounting, as these may be different in some countries; and
- Requested the new benchmark questionnaire of the 2023 Global Assessment be shared with the Committee for review and comments before its launch.

Area E: Business Accounting

The Committee:

- Expressed appreciation for the progress made by Area E in terms of furthering alignment of the SEEA and business accounting frameworks and standards on the environment and ecosystems, for example through working with the SEEA EA Technical Committee to provide feedback on GRI's draft biodiversity standard, as well as communication and collaboration with relevant groups and initiatives;
- Noted the importance of the Committee remaining engaged and visible in this area, particularly given the rapid pace of development of private sector frameworks and standards and the private sector's interest in the SEEA;
- Given current resources, agreed to integrate the work of Area E into Area A and requested that the two groups meet to agree on how to implement the work at a practical level; and
- Noted that the Committee could focus its efforts in providing guidance to national statistical offices on engaging with the private sector, covering for example what the SEEA can offer to the private sector.

Overall programme of work

- Supported the presentation of the programme of work in a single document outlining activities, responsible agencies/groups and timeline;
- Noted that some groups are still discussing their detailed programme of work and requested that the document is considered the document as a live document to be updated on a regular basis and;
- Welcomed the proposal of including the programme of work as part of the Annex to the UN Statistical Commission report.

Working methods and nomination of the Chair

The Committee:

- Elected André Loranger of Statistics Canada as the Chair of the UNCEEA, noting his long history with the Committee and his previous role in chairing Area A, and congratulated him in his new role;
- Thanked Alessandra Alfieri of UNSD for her longstanding role as Secretary of the UNCEEA and congratulated her in her new position at the IMF; and
- Thanked Myriam Linster and Vivian Ilarina for their longstanding contributions in the UNCEEA.



THANK YOU

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