

MANDATE AND GOVERNANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL-ECONOMIC ACCOUNTING

Updated on 7 June 2024

The original terms of reference can be found here:

https://seea.un.org/sites/seea.un.org/files/websitedocs/coordination/tor_unceea.pdf

A. Mandate

1. The United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting was established by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its 36th Session in March 2005.insert here a reference to the updated mandate.... The Committee has the main objectives to: (a) provide strategic vision in the field of environmental-economic accounting and related statistics; (b) mainstream environmental-economic accounting and related statistics into national statistical systems and policy and decision making; (c) maintain the System of Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA) and supporting documents through regular updates to ensure its relevance and coherence with other statistical standards; and (d) advance the implementation of the SEEA in countries.

2. To achieve these objectives, the Committee's programme of work broadly focuses on the following:

- Ensuring coordination, integration and complementarity of programmes and initiatives on or relevant to environmental-economic accounting and related statistics;
- Promoting the use of environmental-economic accounting in support of policy and decision making;
- Revising and updating the SEEA and developing supportive normative international statistical standards and other methodological documents on the SEEA and related statistics;
- Supporting the implementation of the SEEA and related statistics in countries and its mainstreaming into policy, taking into consideration policy priorities, capacity needs and data availability and ensuring coordination among international agencies and countries; and
- Developing global and regional databases for environmental-economic accounts.

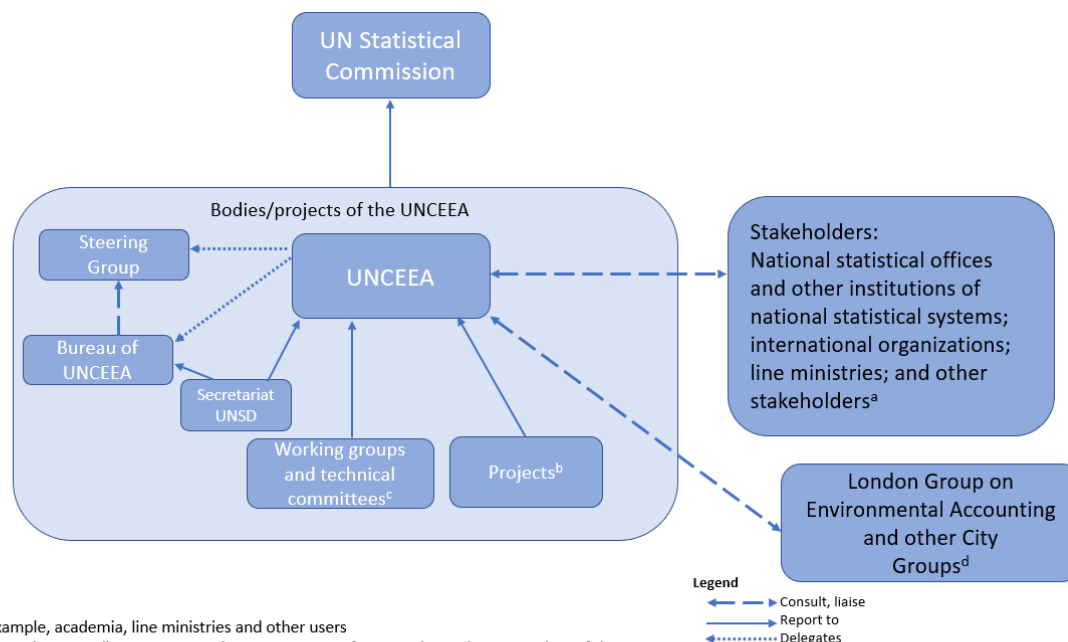
3. The Committee reports annually to the United Nations Statistical Commission on the progress of its work and new priorities and developments related to environmental-economic accounting, as well on behalf of other groups working under its auspices and other activities of groups working on environmental-economic accounting.

4. The Committee has an umbrella function in providing overall vision, coordination, prioritisation and direction in the field of environmental-economic accounting and related statistics. The Committee will ensure that existing or new groups working in environmental-

economic accounting and related statistics work in a complementary fashion with the Committee through developing collaborative partnerships in line with its priorities and programme of work.

B. Governance

5. The major elements of the governance arrangements are shown in the diagram below. The description of the governance follows the diagram, and the roles and responsibilities of the various entities is described below.



^a These include, for example, academia, line ministries and other users

^b This includes specific projects needing separate project management frameworks, such as an update of the SEEA

^c Groups of experts to carry out the work programme of the Committee. They may in turn establish time-bound task teams to address specific topics

^d City groups working on environmental economic accounts and related statistics. The UNCEEA liaises and consults with these groups to coordinate its output with these groups.

United Nations Statistical Commission

6. The United Nations Statistical Commission approves the mandate and work programme of the Committee and monitors its work progress. The mandate of the Committee is periodically reviewed by the Committee and amendments will be submitted to the United Nations Statistical Commission for endorsement.

Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting

7. The Committee of Experts is a country-led group, comprising members from Member States and international organizations, responsible for carrying out the mandate outlined in section A above. The Committee, under delegated authority from the UN Statistical Commission, is responsible for advancing the programme of work in environmental-economic accounting and related statistics and reports annually to the UN Statistical Commission on its activities and the activities of relevant city groups, including the London Group on Environmental Accounting,

inter-secretariat working groups and other groups working on environmental-economic accounting.

8. The Committee develops a programme of work that reflects its ongoing priorities and objectives, leveraging on and coordinating with existing initiatives. The Committee establishes working groups and technical committees to carry out its work programme.

9. The Committee includes high-level representatives from national governments and international/regional organizations with a broad range of experience in the compilation and uses of environmental-economic accounts and related statistics. Members are selected so as to ensure equitable regional representation.

10. Representation is from senior officials of participating institutions, which is necessary to ensure the strategic role of the Committee in setting priorities, bringing forward a research agenda, taking decisions on standards and developing strategic vision.

11. Committee members play an important role in advancing the work on environmental economic accounting and are expected to actively participate in the work of the Committee (and in its working groups, as appropriate) and promote the compilation and use of the SEEA in their countries and regions, as appropriate.

12. Observers may participate in the meetings of the UNCEEA depending on the specific topics being discussed by the UNCEEA and upon recommendation by the Bureau.

Chair

13. The Committee will elect a Chair who will serve for a 3 year-period, renewable every three years. The role of the Chair is to develop, in close cooperation with the Secretariat and the Bureau, the Committee's strategic direction and a multi-year work programme for the Committee, monitor progress of the various areas of work and set the agenda for meetings of the Committee. Should the Chair need to resign mid-term, the Bureau will appoint an interim Chair until the next UNCEEA meeting.

14. The Chair may recommend to the Bureau the designation of a Deputy Chair or Co-Chair, as appropriate. The Deputy/Co-Chair will work closely with the Chair to carry out the overall duties of the Chair. The Deputy/Co-Chair will also serve as a member of the Bureau.

15. The Chair and the members of the Bureau will represent the Committee at international meetings and will play a key role in promoting and communicating the work of the statistical community with other communities, including the scientific, academic, business and policymaking communities. The Chair will engage the various stakeholders and seek support for Committee projects.

Bureau

16. The Bureau of the Committee works under delegated authority from the Committee to assist with the management of its programme of work. Decisions taken by the Bureau, under the delegated authority from the Committee, will be reported back to the Committee.

17. The Bureau oversees the activities of the Committee and provides strategic advice to the Committee in line with the workplans and projects within its mandate. The Bureau holds regular quarterly meetings, with the Chair convening ad-hoc meetings as necessary.

18. The Bureau will include the Chair, Deputy/Co-Chair (as applicable), Secretariat, working group and technical committee leads, and selected Committee members endorsed by the Committee from among its members. The members from international organizations and leads of the Committee's working groups and technical committees are permanent members, whereas other members are for a limited period.

19. In order to enhance coordination with relevant groups, the Bureau may also invite chairs of relevant city- and expert- groups to participate in the meetings of the Bureau.

20. In addition to the Bureau, a Steering Group, consisting of the Bureau's delegates to the United Nations Statistical Commission, will provide strategic guidance on the Committee's programme of work and activities. The Steering Group will meet annually on the sidelines of the United Nations Statistical Commission, with an additional meeting being organized during the year.

Secretariat

21. The United Nations Statistics Division serves as the permanent Secretariat of the Committee. It provides support to the day-to-day management and coordination of the Committee's activities and undertakes internal and external communication on behalf of the Committee. In particular, in close cooperation with the Chair and the Bureau, the Secretariat will undertake the following:

- (a) Consultation with countries and/or regional and other expert meetings on major substantive aspects of its programme of work, such as methodological standards;
- (b) Management of the Committee's website and newsletter and other outreach channels;
- (c) Preparation of correspondence with the members of the United Nations Statistical Commission and other stakeholders as appropriate;
- (d) Preparation of reports to the United Nations Statistical Commission on behalf of the Committee and its Bureau;
- (e) Provision of other substantive and administrative support to the Committee and its Bureau, as appropriate.

Working groups, technical committees and other groups

22. The Committee will establish working groups and technical committees to carry out its work programme. These groups and committees fall under its overall management and coordination.

These groups will have clear terms of reference and will be composed of members of the Committee and non-members of the Committee with the relevant technical expertise. The working groups and technical committees may create time-bound task teams.

23. The Bureau will review and approve the creation of working groups, technical committees and any other groups as necessary, and appoint their leads. Appropriate balanced regional representation will be considered in the composition among the members of these groups.

24. The Committee works in close collaboration with the London Group on Environmental Accounting, which provides a forum for discussion, sharing of experiences and work towards the conceptual and methodological development of environmental-economic accounts. The Committee provides guidance regarding the work programme of the London Group and the agenda for its meetings, though the London Group remains an independent technical expert group.

Periodicity of Committee meetings

25. The Committee will have a meeting once a year (face-to-face, as resources allow). In special circumstances, ad-hoc meetings may be organized. The meetings will, as possible, be organized back-to-back to other meetings that are likely to be attended by the senior officials of countries/organizations.