

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE UNCEEA 2017-2020

Introduction

This document outlines a Programme of Work for the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental Accounting (UNCEEA), to guide its activities for 2017-2020.

At its 11th meeting in June 2016 the UNCEEA:

- *“Requested that Bureau members take an active role in making progress in the various work streams of the Committee; in particular the Bureau members are to facilitate the efforts on behalf of the Committee in the various work streams of the UNCEEA’s work programme to support the Secretariat, i.e. SDGs, training and capacity building, research agenda of the SEEA CF and the SEEA EEA, data, and coordination*
- *Requested that the Bureau meet at a higher frequency (i.e. quarterly) and that the relevant documents and decisions from Bureau meetings are shared with the members of the Committee”*

The UNCEEA’s operational guidelines outline 6 main work streams¹. Members of the Bureau were identified to act as area leads for these different areas. The role of the area lead is to a) act as a champion and provide leadership in advancing the assigned area of work, b) develop more detailed work plans and strategies to advance the given area of work, and c) coordinate with other members of the UNCEEA who could further augment the resources in the assigned area of work. The Bureau identified the following members to act as area leads:

- (a) Statistics Canada will lead ‘Coordination and promotion’;
- (b) Statistics Netherlands will lead ‘Methodological development for normative standards and other research’ for the SEEA Central Framework;
- (c) Eurostat will lead ‘Methodological development for normative standards and other research’ for the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting;
- (d) The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) will lead ‘Development of databases’, in close coordination with relevant agencies such as FAO, Eurostat, and UNSD;
- (e) Statistics South Africa will lead ‘Implementation and Statistical Capacity Building’;
- (f) The Australian Bureau of Statistics and The Statistical Office of Mexico (INEGI) will co-lead ‘Formulation of a statistical response on emerging policy issues’.

The area leads have developed Programmes of Work as detailed below.

¹ The Operational Guidelines can be found here: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/ceea/documents/guidelines.pdf>. Note that promotion has been added to the area of coordination (merging areas a and e in the operational guidelines), in consideration of overlapping stakeholders and programmes of work.

AREA Implementation and statistical capacity building:

- Area Lead: South Africa (global coordinator)
- Members of the group: The global coordinator will be assisted by members from various regional agencies and institutions. This includes UNEP, ECA, FAO, ESCWA, ECE, ESCAP, UNDP, ECLAC and the World Bank.

A.1 Background and main objectives

This project of the UNCEEA aims to support the SEEA central framework and SEEA experimental ecosystem services implementation targets of 100 and 50 countries by 2020 respectively.

A.2 Approach

SEEA implementation can only be successful if it becomes part of the core statistical system within countries. It should therefore form part of any regional or country initiative that aims to strengthen integrated economic statistics in a meaningful manner. The project requires a multi-pronged approach, including:

- Formalising SEEA implementation in regions and countries

The SEEA global assessment provides a backdrop of which countries are already in a position to deliver on the target of 100 and 50, and should be used to identify which other countries are in a position to receive support to aid in obtaining this goals.

Sustainable SEEA implementation requires that individual countries include it in their work programmes and mainstream the activities. This is of particular importance following the completion of external assistance for the development of an initial set of accounts.

In order to achieve this countries need to be clear on its SEEA related priorities, which subsequently impacts on the focus areas for the statistical capacity that is required. This UNCEEA initiative can, with its partners, assist in the provision of the training as well advice on mainstreaming the activities as part of its integrated statistics.

A multitude of agencies and countries are active in the promotion of the implementation of SEEA globally. In addition to the World Bank (WAVES), various UN regional commissions are active in the field. Experienced countries, i.e. Australia, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands provide support at workshops or on an individual country basis.

To aid in the coordination and development of the above, different regions will require different types of support. It is therefore necessary to have regional bodies that can assist with the coordination and provision of capacity building.

On a country level it will be necessary for the NSO to coordinate multiple activities as required.

As there are many capacity building events ongoing, a centralized schedule of events need to be maintained by the regional coordinating body with inputs from the countries. This will be inputs into a calendar of events, maintained by the global coordinator.

- Increasing statistical capacity in the field of SEEA.

The existing material need to be supplemented by targeted training initiatives in the form of e-learning modules and other new training mechanisms. These e-learning modules are currently under development and testing and will be rolled out in 2017.

Identification of gaps in training will become clear once the existing material is compared with the priorities of regions and countries (as part of the coordination of implementation activities).

This needs to be aligned to other training initiatives such as compilation guides, methodological notes etc.

A.3 Outputs

The outputs and related activities of this work-stream is outlined in the table below. Briefly there are 4 outputs: Status report of SEEA implementation and gap analysis; Schedule of focus country and corresponding capacity building initiative; Status reports of regional coordination mechanisms for SEEA implementation and the Development of an annual event calendar. Each of the outputs take the form of recurring annual reports in November each year, except for the events calendar that is scheduled for June each year.

The success of the approach is dependent on the establishment and the cooperation of regional working groups. A regional coordinator, preferably a UNCEEA member, will provide inputs to the global coordinator in order to coordinate and develop the various outputs.

The capacity building will be based on countries that are identified as being in a position to start SEEA implementation after receiving and participating in capacity building. To ensure economies of scale, training will be done on a regional basis to ensure that multiple countries in the region can benefit from training initiatives.

No specific budget can be developed at this stage of the work stream. It will be developed based on inputs from the regional coordinators, depending on, amongst others, the situation, number of countries, amount of training initiatives required. Funding will be carried by the global, regional and country coordinators as part of current work. Beyond 2017, all additional capacity building initiatives will need to be funded based on the strategy that is yet to be developed.

Partnerships will be required from UNCEEA as regional coordinators, regional commissions to establish working/expert groups, international implementing agencies as well as individual countries that are providing support.

Output / Activity	Date
Establish regional representatives and regional commissions for the work stream	August 2017
Identify UNCEEA members to represent various geographic regions	February 2017
Establish SEEA working groups / expert groups for each of the geographic regions by the UN regional commissions	August 2017
Status report of SEEA implementation and gap analysis	November, annually
Conduct an assessment of existing training materials available to other countries	November 2017
Use results of 2017 Global Assessment of SEEA implementation to identify countries to focus on for support	August 2017
Sub-regional coordinators to engage countries on specific capacity building needs	September 2017
Develop gap analysis for focus countries	November 2017
Update gap analysis based on 2017 Global Assessment of SEEA implementation	November 2018
Status reports of regional coordination mechanisms for SEEA Implementation	November, annually
Compare needs of regions with support currently provided by regional organizations. Identify synergies for multi-country training	
Link support required with agencies capable of providing the support (statistical capacity, training)	
Schedule of focus country and corresponding capacity building initiatives	November, annually
Compare needs of focus countries with support currently provided by regional organizations or country-to-country projects. Identify gaps, duplication and synergies	
Link support required with agencies capable of providing the support (statistical capacity, training)	
Develop an annual event calendar for international capacity building initiatives	June, annually
Draft the global calendar with the inputs from the regional events calendar as well as other known training initiatives	

A.3 Roadmap

Output	Responsible parties	Timeline
Status report of SEEA implementation and gap analysis	Global coordinator, regional coordinators	November, annually
Schedule of focus country and corresponding capacity building initiatives	Global coordinator, regional coordinators	November, annually
Status reports of regional coordination mechanisms for SEEA Implementation	Regional commissions	November, annually
Develop an annual event calendar for international capacity building initiatives	Global coordinator, regional coordinators	June, annually