



System of Environmental-Economic Accounting

Updates from international work



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Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on Implementation of SEEA

20-21 February 2019, Geneva



Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on Implementation of SEEA

Previous seminar: 20-21 February 2019, Geneva



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3 substantive sessions, some of their outcomes:

1. Water accounting

- Presentations and panel discussions by Armenia, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Kazakhstan and Mexico
- Significant progress made, but some problems remain, e.g. data availability and quality, conflicting data sources, key terms (e.g. water use) have different meanings in international questionnaires, SEEA-Water etc.
- Water accounts provide additional value in comparison with water statistics (which provide the main starting point for water accounts)
- One of the recommendations is to continue collaboration among International Organisations to harmonise questionnaires and frameworks

2. Environmentally related taxes and subsidies

- Presentations and panel discussions by Costa Rica, Estonia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Sweden, Eurostat and OECD
- Relatively easy to find data and expertise to initiate compiling environmentally related tax revenue accounts. These provide a good starting point, also for communication to users.
- For the development of these accounts Ministries of Finance are potential strong allies
- International Organisations were called to draft guidelines and to maintain platforms for sharing of best practices

3. SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (EEA)

- Presentations by Mexico and the Netherlands
- A relatively new area within SEEA, it was suggested to start with small pilot work
- International exchange of experience has to continue, including exploring the potential of EEA in policy applications and using maps for communication

Report and presentations available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=50357>

Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on Implementation of SEEA

Next seminar: 13-14 February 2020, Geneva



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3 substantive sessions with presentations and panel discussions

1. Circular Economy

- emerging policy issue with links to several SEEA accounts.

2. Environmental Goods and Services Sector (EGSS)

- Relevant for many countries
- Proposed by many participants of previous seminar

3. SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting

- Revision process
- Great interest of participants of previous seminars

If JTF members are interested to contribute with papers, presentations or on the panel, please let us know!

Organising Committee (next to OECD and UNECE): Australia, Belarus, Canada, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Eurostat, UNSD

14th Meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA)

24-25 June 2019, New York



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Selected conclusions per working area

Working Area A: Coordination

- Emphasized to reach out to representatives of the UN Statistical Commission and to the IAEG SDGs, to drive uptake and mainstreaming of the SEEA in the SDGs
- Evaluation and dissemination of SEEA training materials on the SEEA website (<https://seea.un.org/>)

Working Area B1: Methodology – Central Framework

- The UNCEEA Bureau to further explore the potential for a revision
- Work started in developing a Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism

Working Area B2: Methodology – Ecosystem Accounting

- Ongoing revision process
- Recognized the aspiration to drop “experimental” from the title and decided to discuss this further at the next UNCEEA session

Working Area C: Global SEEA databases

- Priority accounts: air emissions, energy, land cover, material flow
- Principles for the creation and maintenance of global SEEA databases, e.g. they comprise nationally disseminated accounts where they exist and report estimates only in cases where countries do not disseminate accounts
- Dissemination on the SEEA Website

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Working Area D: Capacity Building

- Emphasized the importance of South South collaboration, with more experienced countries providing guidance and support to less experienced countries in a similar region, as well as the provision of technical assistance by developed countries.

Working Area E: Communications

- Acknowledged the usefulness of collecting case studies that relate to all areas of environmental economic accounting
- Underscored the need for compilers to systematically engage with policy makers and other users of the accounts in order to better understand user needs and tailor dissemination;
- Recognized the need to pay special attention to the terms used when communicating the accounts, in order to ensure precision, while at the same time maintaining flexibility to tailor communication to specific audiences;

Meeting conclusions and background documents available at

<https://seea.un.org/events/fourteenth-meeting-unceea>

25th Meeting of the London Group on Environmental Accounting

7-10 October 2019, Melbourne



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Issues on the agenda

- SEEA-CF Research Agenda, including “Identifying fossil fuel subsidies in the SEEA for SDG reporting”
- SEEA Experimental ecosystem accounting
 - Ecosystem type classification
 - Ecosystem services and valuation issues
 - Carbon accounts
 - Linking the SEEA-EEA to the SEEA CF and the SNA
 - Marine Accounting
 - Big data and SEEA
- Communication and policy applications

→ We will invite the London Group to present main outcomes at the Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on SEEA Implementation in February 2020

Thank you very much for your attention!

Michael Nagy

