

## **Eighth Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on the Implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)**

*13-15 March 2023*

### **CONCEPT NOTE**

#### **1. Background**

The *Eighth Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on the Implementation of SEEA* is organised as an in-person meeting at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland from 13-15 March 2023.

Members of the Organising Committee are from the National Statistical Offices of Australia, Canada, Estonia, Finland (chair), Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States. Eurostat, UNEP and UNSD are represented in the Organising Committee in addition to OECD and UNECE.

The aim of the seminar is to provide a platform for exchange of knowledge and experiences on SEEA implementation and to facilitate coordination between all relevant partners in the OECD and UNECE regions. The seminar is organised regularly with a long-term view to support the implementation of the SEEA.

Documents for the seminar will be available on the Seminar's webpage <https://unece.org/info/Statistics/events/373223>.

#### **2. Introduction**

The target audience for the meetings are producers and users of SEEA, including participants from National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and other agencies of National Statistical Systems, environment, agriculture, and finance ministries, central banks, NGOs, and academia.

The exchange of practical experiences between statisticians producing SEEA accounts is one of the key features of this annual event. In keeping with this principle, the Eighth SEEA Seminar will emphasize the exchange of practical examples, challenges, and outcomes, with a cross-session emphasis on examples of new implementation of SEEA and related statistics and on organisation and institutional arrangements for SEEA implementation. SEEA accounts inform policies addressing some of this century's biggest challenges, such as climate change and degradation to ecosystems. The seminar will discuss both accounts' producers and users' perspectives in a diverse group of countries.

#### **3. Organisation of the Seminar**

The meeting will be held with English-Russian Interpretation from 09:30 – 17:30 Central European Time (CET) on each of the three days.

Participants will benefit from presentations of countries and international organisations. The presentations will be combined with panel discussions and other forms of interactions with the audience (e.g. by using an electronic voting tool and allocating sufficient time for discussions).

The event will also feature experience-sharing via poster presentation organised during the lunchbreak of 13 March. This will allow more participants of the seminar to present their work on SEEA in a more informal setting. The idea is that presenters prepare an A1/A0 size poster which will be put up

in the meeting room. They present this poster to the other participants who will mingle and walk past the various posters in the meeting room. There will be an award for the best poster!

Participants who are interested to give presentations to any of the sessions or would like to submit a proposal for the poster session are invited to contact Daniel Clarke ([daniel.clarke@oecd.org](mailto:daniel.clarke@oecd.org)) or Michael Nagy ([michael.nagy@un.org](mailto:michael.nagy@un.org)) by **14 January 2023** at the latest.

Participants should register at <https://indico.un.org/event/1002063/> by **28 February 2023**.

## Monday, 13 March 2023

### **Session 1: Opening**

This session will include short opening remarks and a presentation of the detailed programme of the seminar.

### **Session 2: Setting the scene: Informing indicator frameworks and policy frameworks with SEEA**

This session has become a constant each year for this seminar, as a way of providing substantive updates from groups and events like the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA), the Forum of Experts on SEEA Ecosystem Accounting and the London Group on Environmental Accounting.

It will also inform about latest developments on important international policy frameworks which can be informed with SEEA, e.g. the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or the EU Nature Restoration Law.

### **Session 3: Towards Circular Economy Measurement**

This session will provide an update of the work of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Task Force on Measuring Circular Economy, related work at the OECD, Eurostat and other international organisations. Countries will be invited to present national examples on measuring circular economy with SEEA.

## Tuesday, 14 March 2023

### **Session 4: Implementing Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA)**

The international SEEA Ecosystem Accounts guideline was only adopted in 2021. However, many practical examples with implementing the ecosystem accounting framework have blossomed around the world and can be shared as illustrations for a potential way forward in other countries.

The session will feature presentations on selected key topics from the ecosystem accounting framework, including Measuring Ecosystem Services, Ecosystem Extent Accounts, and Ecosystem Condition Accounts.

Presenters will be invited to discuss how information produced with SEEA EA supports informing one or more policies related to the triple planetary crisis (climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss).

### **Session 5: Forest Accounts**

Measuring flows in wood resources and forest areas, and their related economic values in the national economy has become increasingly important for informing multiple national and international policy frameworks.

The session will feature an introduction of SEEA for forestry and discuss latest international developments, for example in the European Union.

Experiences concerning the implementation of Forest Accounts from SEEA-CF and Ecosystem Accounts for Forests will be shared as well as SEEA for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (SEEA AFF).

Countries will be invited to present their experiences in producing forest accounts and to discuss how this information informs one or more policies related to the triple planetary crisis.

### **Session 6: Water Accounts and related indicators**

There have been developments in harmonising international collections of water statistics and aligning them better with SEEA-CF and SEEA Water. The session will discuss these new developments in water statistics and water accounts as well as the applications of related indicators.

Experts will be invited to present their experiences in producing water accounts.

The session will also discuss, based on national examples and from international projects, on how information produced with water accounts supports informing one or more policies related to the triple planetary crisis.

**Wednesday, 15 March 2023**

### **Session 7: Environmental taxes and subsidies, including harmful subsidies**

Environmental taxes and subsidies are one of the important ways to link SEEA compilations to policy. Environmental taxes are part of the European Union's environmental-economic accounts compilations since 2011. Despite past pledges to phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, recent data show that support for fossil fuels is on the rise. But there are many challenges to producing comparable statistics across countries. The objective in this session is to review and discuss current practices in collection and use of data on environment-related taxes and subsidies by countries and by international organisations.

### **Session 8: Integration of accounts for analytical purposes (e.g. water, energy, AEs)**

Countries and International Organisations will be invited to present examples where development of multiple SEEA accounts creates opportunities to establish links between databases and data sources towards a system of accounts that can be compiled, verified, and combined into efficient production of indicators for monitoring environmental-economic policies.

### **Session 9: Organisational and institutional arrangements for SEEA Implementation**

SEEA-CF was adopted as an international standard by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) at its forty-third session in 2012. Since then, many countries have gained experience in developing the necessary organisational and institutional arrangements for regular production of accounts.

The session will present the draft SEEA Implementation Guide and allow for a dialogue between experienced countries and less experienced countries to discuss the main challenges the key factors for success in the implementation of SEEA.

### **Session 10: Conclusions and recommendations**

The session is expected to conclude with some recommendations for SEEA implementation and a summary of lessons learned during the Seminar. The session will include discussion open to all participants with presenters from previous sessions towards common conclusions.