

# MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE UN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING

13th December 2016, by teleconference

- **Present:** Bert Kroese (Chair), Lisa Wardlaw-Kelly (Australia Bureau of Statistics), Andre Loranger (Statistics Canada), Francisco Guillen (INEGI, Mexico), Gerard Eding (Statistics Netherlands), Joe de Beer (Statistics South Africa), Ivo Havinga and Alessandra Alfieri (United Nations Statistics Division)
- **Regrets:** Romeo Recide (Philippines Statistics Authority), Anton Steurer (Eurostat), Francesco Tubiello (FAO), Peter van de Ven, Stig Johansson (World Bank)

## FINALIZATION OF THE UNCEEA'S REPORT TO THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION FOR MARCH 2017

- It was noted that UNSD has incorporated all of the written comments provided by the Bureau, and it was agreed that the report shall be submitted.
- The Bureau took note of the World Bank's suggestion that the UNCEEA reengage with the IMF to support implementation of the SEEA.

## FOLLOW UP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAMMES OF WORK FOR THE UNCEEA

*In its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016, the Bureau agreed to play a more active role in driving the work of the UNCEEA. To this end, area leads were selected from Bureau members to draft programs of work for the 5 different work streams of the UNCEEA for the next 3-4 years. The Bureau discussed progress towards drafting each these programmes of work for each specific work area.*

### Area D: Implementation and statistical capacity building

- Statistics South Africa is the area lead. They have begun drafting a work programme which consists of two main parts; 1) supporting implementation, and 2) capacity building. The work plan will include the following important elements
  - Strategically pinpointing countries which have the highest chances of successful implementation based on the results of the 2014 and upcoming 2017 global assessment
  - Discussing coordination of international agencies' capacity building efforts and the use of existing regional coordination mechanisms to support implementation
- It was also noted that while Statistics South Africa will coordinate the overall work programme, they intend to be more operational on the African continent; working to leverage existing institutional mechanisms at the regional level to support implementation of the SEEA

### Area E: Formulation of a statistical response on emerging policy issues

- INEGI Mexico and the Australian Bureau of Statistics are working together to develop this programme of work. They intend to have a draft by end-January.

## Area B: Methodological development for normative standards and other research

### B.1: SEEA Central Framework

- Statistics Netherlands is the area lead and has drafted a programme of work which was presented to the Bureau, based on comments provided by the UNCEEA at its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, as well as input from the London Group on Environmental Accounts. The programme of work assigns a lead agency to each topic, for which they will be expected to draft a 10-page short issue paper presenting the issue at hand and possible solutions. A detailed timetable of next steps has been developed.
- The London Group has agreed to contribute to the Research Agenda and Statistics Netherlands will do a call for interested parties to work with lead agencies to advance specific topics in Q1 of 2017.
- The Bureau agreed to think further about how it can promote the issues on the Research Agenda and garner participation of research institutes and academia in advancing these areas.

### B.2 – SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting

- Eurostat is the area lead and is drafting a programme of work and, alongside UNSD, is looking to secure funding to support an editor for the revision of the SEEA EEA.

## Areas A and E: Coordination and Promotion

- Statistics Canada is the area lead and has drafted a programme of work which was presented to the Bureau. The programme of work takes note of a few key issues:
  - There is a need for everybody to know what is happening in SEEA related work at all times. A website platform may help, but any website that is developed needs to link to work of different groups and provide an overarching picture.
  - It is important to develop messaging on ‘why SEEA’ to assist UNCEEA members in promoting the SEEA and facilitating engagement with other communities.
- It was suggested that Statistics Canada develop more specific activities with timelines and suggest who does what. The current draft is sufficient to send to the UNSC but more detail will be needed for the next UNCEEA meeting.

## Area C: Development of Databases

- OECD is the area lead and prepared a work programme which the Bureau reviewed. It was noted that the proposal is quite ambitious, and more thinking may need to be done on how to address the tension between 1) building something experimental to show results quickly, in particular to make the case for the SEEA in the context of the SDGs, and 2) building something coherent and long lasting, including the development of DSDs, which will take much more time. Some more thought is needed to see how to reconcile these different views

## ACTIONS:

- The various programmes of work will be consolidated into a single programme of work for the Committee and submitted as a background document to the Statistical Commission. The final draft should be available by end of January 2017 for final submission by 15 February at the latest. Area leads will therefore complete the

documents by end-January, UNSD will consolidate them into a final document, and a Bureau meeting will be held to discuss the complete draft during the week of 6 February.

- UNCEEA members should be engaged in the preparation and delivery of the programme of work.