

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BUREAU
UN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS
ON ENVIRONMENTAL-ECONOMIC ACCOUNTING
(12 FEBRUARY 2008 – by teleconference)

Participants

Walter Radermacher (Chair, UNCEEA), Peter Harper (Australian Bureau of Statistics); Karen Wilson (Statistics Canada); Olav Ljones (Chair, Oslo Group on Energy Statistics); Mark de Haan (Chair, London Group on Environmental Accounting); Pieter Everaers (Eurostat); Ivo Havinga and Alessandra Alfieri (UNSD).

Agenda

1. Revised draft of the Project Management Framework for the revision of the SEEA-2003 (including budget for SEEA revision)
2. Draft governance of the UNCEEA
3. Upcoming Conference on Climate Change (Oslo, 14-16 April 2008)
4. Draft outline of the paper on fundamentals for EEA
5. Composition and size of the UNCEEA
6. SEEA revision:
 - (a) Valuation of degradation - how to move it forward?
 - (b) Funding
 - (c) Identification and appointment of Editor

Agenda items 1 and 2 - Revised draft of the Project Management Framework for the revision of the SEEA-2003 and Draft governance of the UNCEEA

The Bureau discussed the draft papers *Project Management Framework – Revision of SEEA-2003* and *Governance structure of the UNCEEA*. The Bureau agreed with the structure of both documents, however it noted that special attention should be paid to the way the content was presented and especially the drafting of the role and responsibilities in particular of the Committee and the Bureau. Neither of those entities is a legal entity and as such, they cannot appoint consultants nor hold a trust fund. In this regard, redrafting of the text in both documents was necessary to take into accounts the legal considerations in particular when discussing the roles and relationships of the various entities involved.

It was also considered necessary to clarify the role of the Bureau of the UNCEEA in the SEEA revision process as well as the roles of the Project Manager and Editor. It was recommended that the Bureau manages the revision process under delegated authority of the UNCEEA and, in turn, the Project Manager undertakes the day-to-day management of the revision of the SEEA on behalf of the Bureau. The Editor reports to the Project Manager and is responsible for the drafting of the revised SEEA. The Project Manager and the Editor are appointed by one of the members of the Bureau.

The Bureau discussed whether the papers *Project Management Framework – Revision of SEEA-2003* and *Governance structure of the UNCEEA* should be circulated as background documents to the UN Statistical Commission. It was decided not to distribute the documents unless the legal considerations in particular concerning the role and responsibilities of the UNCEEA and its Bureau could be clarified in advance.

Agenda item 3 - Upcoming Conference on Climate Change (Oslo, 14-16 April 2008)

The Bureau considered the Conference on Climate Change a timely initiative and considered it an important platform to promote the SEEA. The Chair proposed that the UNCEEA take a strong position in putting forward the SEEA as the framework for climate change in the context of official statistics. The Chair considered important that the Committee takes a common position on the issue.

Agenda item 4 – Draft outline on fundamentals of EEA

There was not enough time to discuss in detail the paper *Draft outline on fundamentals of EEA*. However, the proposal of organizing a meeting with academia with the objective of moving forward the discussion on the theoretical underpinning of the SEEA and in particular on the valuation was not supported. Members of the Bureau raised concerns that the meeting would rehash past discussions with advocates of different school of thoughts maintaining their position without reaching to any conclusions. The Bureau should address the issue of valuation and propose a way forward in its next meetings.

Agenda item 5 – Composition and size of the UNCEEA

The Bureau agreed with the proposed list of countries and international organizations as members of the UNCEEA as indicated in the paper *Composition and size of the UNCEEA*. It reiterated the importance that members participate in its meetings.

Agenda item 6 – SEEA revision:

(a) *Valuation of degradation - how to move it forward?*

See recommendations in agenda item 4.

(b) *Funding*

UNSD will prepare a first draft with suggested donors

(c) *Identification and appointment of Editor*

Due process will be followed for the appointment of the Project Manager and Editor once the funding has been secured.