

# The System of Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA)

Workshop on Environment Statistics

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United Nations Statistics Division

# SEEA

SEEA-2003 jointly published by UN,  
the European Commission, IMF,  
OECD and the World Bank

SEEA-2003 represents a major step  
forward in the harmonization of  
concepts and methods in  
environmental-economic accounting

SEEA to become a statistical standard  
by 2010 as recommended by the UN  
Statistical Commission

# SEEA

- Satellite system of the *System of National Accounts* (1993 SNA)
- Brings together economic and environmental information in a common framework to measure the contribution of the environment to the economy and the impact of the economy on the environment

# Satellite accounts

- Information systems that, while maintaining consistency with the SNA, are more flexible and expand the analytical capacity of national accounts
- Systems which describe in depth aspects that are hidden in the accounts
- Enlarge the boundaries of the SNA
- Include complementary elements (e.g. physical information, etc.)

# Why an accounting approach?

- Encourages the adoption of standards
- Introduces accounting concepts to environmental statistics
- Improves both economic and environmental statistics by encouraging consistency
- Implicitly defines ownership and hence responsibility for environmental impacts
- Encourages the development of comprehensive data sets
- Facilitates international comparisons

# Strengths of the accounting approach

- Organised body of information facilitates integrated economic-environmental analysis (complements sustainable development indicators, modelling)
- Comprehensive and consistent, routinely produced
- Provides a system into which monetary valuations of environmental costs can be