

## United Nations Statistical Commission

### Fifty-second session

1–3 and 5 March 2021

Item 3 (f) of the provisional agenda

### Items for discussion and decision: environmental-economic accounting

## Document E/CN.3/2021/10–Report of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting

#### *Statement provided by:*

National Statistical Office, Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of India

#### *Statement:*

The discussions on sustainable development have brought to the fore, the need for mainstreaming the environment in the economy with an aim to make the nature's value visible. In the context of ecosystems, which are an important source of benefits to the society, this mainstreaming requires a statistical framework for organizing data, tracking changes in the extent and the condition of ecosystems, measuring ecosystem services and linking this information to economic and other human activity. The System of Environmental Economic Accounting Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) provides the conceptual guidance for developing ecosystem and ecosystem services accounts. It complements the SEEA Central Framework, which helps the assessment of individual environmental resources within a specific spatial area. **NSO, India supports the declaration of the SEEA EA as a statistical standard** as it can help provide a holistic view of the diverse ecosystems of the country and their contribution to the economy.

India has commenced the compilation of the accounts adopting the SEEA framework pertaining to some selected ecosystems. The NCAVES Project has been successfully implemented, with all the envisaged objectives having been achieved in time. The Ministry of Statistics & PI also organized NCAVES India Forum -2021 which witnessed a huge participation globally.

India is striving to improve the coverage in order to have the complete set of accounts following the methodology and guidelines of the UN-SEEA so that the accounts can play a vital role for the decision making process. It would be helpful **if there is a mechanism put in place in UNSD to provide technical guidance on the different aspects of the compilation, including selection of data sources and methods of accounts, which would also help in standardization of the accounts across countries.**

India has now extended its domain towards the ocean accounts as well and is currently the member of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP). This would aid India initiate the process of compilation of the Ocean accounts. **In this context, MoSPI supports the proposal of developing the SEEA Oceans** and MoSPI looks forward to being a part of the Task Teams developing the framework, so that the concerns developing countries are addressed appropriately in the framework.

In view of the importance of giving due regard to the spatial context in ecosystem accounting, it would be desirable to develop a 'bottom-up' approach for these accounts i.e. summing the sub-national estimates to have national level estimates. This, in turn, mandates training at various sub-national levels that can address the requirements of different sections of people. **For this progressive e-learning courses – starting from short-basic courses to longer-advanced courses, and training of trainers courses – may be developed.** In addition, short videos and training module can also be

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developed for the school children to create an awareness and to inculcate the 'value' for nature. As a next step towards capacity building and outreach, **a well-defined strategy on how to include the environment-accounting related topics in the school curriculum could also be developed.**

**NSO, India agrees with the work programme of the Committee of Experts on Environmental Economic Accounting.** There has been growing demand for the generation of good quality and timely statistics for environment. In this context, the administrative data when coupled with the data from the private players becomes a huge source for environmental accounting. NSO, India also realizes the potential and the wealth of knowledge of the private parties and looks forward to the guidance on integration of these data streams.

The key aim of the statistics office is to be able to generate statistics which would cater to the needs of the policy makers; because ultimately it is the policies that have the potential to bring a change in the society. **India supports the work of the UNCEEA towards use of SEEA in the development and implementation of the various global monitoring frameworks** which is expected to build the required linkages with policy.

Submitted on:

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