

9th Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on the Implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)

18-20 March 2024, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Background

The *Ninth Joint OECD/UNECE Seminar on the Implementation of SEEA* will be organised as an in-person meeting at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland on 18-20 March 2024.

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, IMF, 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 experience 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 SEEA.

Documents for the seminar will be available on the webpage at <https://unece.org/info/events/event/383686>.

2. Introduction

The target audience are producers and users of SEEA, including National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and other agencies of National Statistical Systems, line ministries (e.g. environment, agriculture, finance), academia and NGOs. Furthermore, the seminar also targets international organisations which support countries in their efforts to implement SEEA and/or use SEEA for regional and global policy analysis or policy making.

For the Ninth Joint Seminar, the Organising Committee selected two main themes to focus on a limited number of key challenges and emerging practices for SEEA implementation. The agenda covers selected accounts to allow sufficient time for exchange of practical experience and for discussions on producing and using the SEEA accounts by practitioners.

The selected policy themes that can be informed with SEEA are **circular economy** and **climate-change-related risk reduction** policies. For each of the themes, the Organising Committee is designing a programme according to the following basic scope and structure:

- a. Short overview of core (including emerging) statistical demands for the policy theme.
- b. Presentation of examples of current practices for meeting those demands with SEEA.
- c. Presentations and open discussion on key challenges in SEEA implementation related to the theme.

3. Organisation of the Seminar

A “World Café” allowing participants to attend small group discussions on selected thematic areas in an informal setting (without interpretation) will be organised on 18 March from 9:00 -11:00, before the formal part of the meeting starts.

The formal part of the meeting will be held with English – French - Russian Interpretation 11:00 – 17:30 on 18 March and 9:30 – 17:30 Central European Time (CET) on 19 and 20 March.

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

The event will also feature experience-sharing via poster presentations organised during the lunchbreak of 18 March. This will allow more participants to present their work on SEEA. 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 at any of the sessions or would like to submit a proposal for the poster session are invited to contact Bram Edens (bram.edens@oecd.org) or Michael Nagy (michael.nagy@un.org) by **12 January 2024** at the latest.

Participants should register at <https://indico.un.org/event/1007081/> by **1 March 2024**.

4. Agenda

18 March 2024

Pre-Seminar World Café

This pre-seminar World Café will allow participants to discuss priorities, capacity development needs and other issues related to the implementation of SEEA in an informal and interactive setting. The main discussion points or outcomes will be reported back to the seminar.

Session 1: Opening & Setting the Scene

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

The session will also provide substantive updates from groups and events such as the 2024 session of the UN Statistical Commission and a new baseline SEEA Global Assessment, the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEAA), the London Group on Environmental-Economic Accounting, the Update of the System of National Accounts, as well as updates and discussion on latest developments in important international policy frameworks that can be informed with SEEA.

Session 2: Utilising SEEA for Measuring Circular Economy

The main objectives of the session are to share experiences on producing and using selected SEEA Accounts for measuring Circular Economy, and to identify further activities of international organisations supporting countries in managing and measuring transition towards a circular economy with SEEA. The outcomes of this session will be considered in the *Guidelines for Measuring Circular Economy (Part B)* which is currently being drafted by a dedicated CES Task Force.

The session is divided into the following sub-sessions:

2a - Introduction, information needs, existing measurement frameworks and their links with SEEA

This sub-session will set the stage for the following discussions on the production and use of selected SEEA accounts for measuring circular economy.

Participants will be informed about recent developments: the work of the CES Task Force on Measuring Circular Economy, related work at the OECD, Eurostat and other international organisations.

The sub-session will be concluded with a moderated discussion to identify strengths and weaknesses of existing monitoring frameworks and indicators frameworks for informing circular economy policies, and how they should be further developed.

2b - Utilising SEEA for measuring physical flows of plastics

This sub-session aims to inform about the work on statistical guidelines, get feedback from the SEEA expert community, and share national experiences on using SEEA for measuring plastic flows.

UNEP and UNITAR together with other partners have initiated work on developing a “Statistical guideline on measuring flows of plastic along the lifecycle”. The guideline will be based on existing international guidelines and classifications, including SEEA-CF. Some countries have already started utilizing physical supply and use tables (PSUT) for measuring plastic flows and will be invited to present them.

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2c - The "circular economy sector": New developments and utilising Environmental Goods and Services Sector Accounts (EGSS) for measuring jobs, goods and services related to circular-economy

The objective of this sub-session is to explore with the help of national examples strengths and weaknesses of EGSS for measuring the socio-economic aspects of a circular economy, such as CE-related jobs or value added by the “circular economy sector”.

International organisations will be invited to present ongoing work on updating relevant classifications. Countries will be invited to present national experiences in producing and using EGSS for measuring circular economy.

2d - Measuring flows of biomass and bio-based material in a circular economy

Biomass flows and the cascading principle are part of the circular economy. The sub-session will discuss strengths and limitations of applying SEEA to measure circularity of biomass and bio-based material in a circular economy.

2e - Waste Accounts for measuring circularity

Measuring flows of waste is usually a key starting point for measuring circular economy. However, according to the Global Assessment of SEEA, currently only about 20 countries are producing SEEA waste accounts on a regular basis. Countries will be invited to share experience in producing and using waste accounts for measuring circularity.

2f - Panel discussion and wrap-up

This sub-session consists of a panel discussion with inputs from the audience. Panellists will be invited to summarise the main lessons learned from the previous sub-sessions.

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Session 3: Informing climate-change-adaptation and response policies with SEEA

The session aims at identifying and reviewing current practices for using SEEA in relation to climate adaptation and policy response. This includes climate change-related expenditures and monitoring ecosystem condition and degradation, which can lead to reduced resilience against climate-related hazards. Work has started on a COFOG (classification of the functions of government), and on the development of a measurement framework as part of the Data Gaps Initiative (DGI-3).

The session will be organised in the following four sub-sessions:

3a – Introduction, information needs, existing measurement frameworks and their links with SEEA

The main objective is to set the scene by clarifying the information requirements, main terminologies used in disaster-risk management as well as informing about latest international developments on guidelines and classifications.

3b - Climate change expenditures

There is a rapidly growing policy interest for assessing expenditures associated with climate change in a standardised way. Policy analysis would benefit greatly from comparable measurements of national investments in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The session will feature examples from current national practices.

3c - Measuring ecosystem condition, degradation and loss of ecosystem services

One of the major potential impacts from climate change and other disasters is to the natural capital itself, i.e. to the condition of ecosystems. Ecosystems also serve a role in disaster risk reduction, for example coastal ecosystems. The sub-session will include 2-3 focussed country presentations on current work related to measurement of ecological degradation and its relationships to climate change.

3d - Panel discussion and wrap-up

This sub-session will consist of a panel discussion with inputs from the audience, summarising the main lessons learned from presentations and discussions producing and using selected SEEA accounts for informing climate-change-adaptation and response policies. Panellists will be invited to summarise the main lessons learned from the previous sub-sessions.

Session 4: Conclusions & Recommendations

The session is expected to conclude with some recommendations for SEEA implementation, including a report of outcomes from the informal World Café held at the start of the seminar. The session will allow for a discussion with presenters and chairs from previous sessions towards common conclusions and recommendations.