System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) -
Ecosystem Accounting
(e-Learning course)

11 April – 10 June 2022

Guideline

1 OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

It is well established that healthy ecosystems and biodiversity are fundamental to supporting and sustaining our wellbeing, our communities and our economies. Protecting and properly managing ecosystems is key to ensure the continuous provision of ecosystem services such as pollination, carbon sequestration, flood protection, etc. Understanding the contribution of nature to our well-being and the impacts of our activities on the state of ecosystems are key for sustainable development The System of Environmental Economic Accounting - Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) provides the agreed statistical framework for collecting such information on ecosystems and their relationship to human activity. It provides an integrated statistical framework for organizing biophysical information about ecosystems, measuring ecosystem services, tracking changes in ecosystem extent and condition, and linking this information to measures of economic and human activities. It supports the compilation of indicators for several global policy frameworks including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the associated SDGs indicators as well as the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Agenda. This E-learning course introduces the SEEA EA, the international statistical standards for measuring the ecosystems.

The course is being organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (UNSIAP), under the overall guidance of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental Economic Accounting (UNCEEA).

2 LANGUAGE

The course will be offered in English.

3 TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Target participants are staff of national statistical offices, line ministries, other agencies working on issues related to the environment and those interested in learning more about the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting.

4 LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, participants will be expected to:
  (a) Have a general understanding of the accounts presented in the SEEA EA and their relevance in policy;
  (b) Understand how spatial units of ecosystem types can be delineated and are used in accounting for compiling ecosystem extent accounts;
  (c) Understand the concepts and the general approach for the measurement of ecosystem condition and ecosystem services;
  (d) Describe how biophysical modelling can be applied for ecosystem accounting;
  (e) Describe the purpose and approaches to the valuation of ecosystem services and ecosystem assets

5 COURSE DESIGN AND CONTENT

Each module consists of slides with explanations. After all modules have been completed, participants will be required to complete a final test that will cover all modules. The course is expected to take a maximum of 20 hours to complete. Participants are also expected to attend regularly scheduled webinars. The webinars will provide an overview of the course topics and allow for participants to ask questions; more details will be provided at the beginning of the course. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to actively participate in the online forum of the course.

Outline

Module	Coverage
1. **Key concepts in ecosystem accounting**	• Introduction • The ecosystem accounting framework • Related accounts and presentations
2. **Accounting for ecosystem extent**	• Spatial units • Ecosystem extent accounts • Complementary presentations of ecosystem extent data
3. **Accounting for ecosystem condition**	• Ecosystem condition • Ecosystem condition indicators • Applications of ecosystem condition accounts
4. **Accounting for ecosystem services**	• Concepts and principles in accounting for ecosystem services • The reference list of selected ecosystem services • Accounting for ecosystem services in physical terms
5. **Valuation of ecosystem services and ecosystem assets**	• Introduction to valuation
6. **Guidelines on biophysical modelling**	• Modelling for ecosystem accounts • Using the ARIES modelling platform
7. **Compiling SDG indicators using the SEEA EA**	• Deriving indicators using the SEEA EA • Example calculations for four indicators • Institutional considerations
8. **Scenario analysis and the SEEA**	• Introduction to policy scenario analysis and forecasting

6 EVALUATION

Participants must receive a 70% or higher in the test at the end of this course.

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Participants will be given 60 minutes to complete the test. They may take the exam up to three times and retain their best score. Participants may not work together on the test. The course facilitator reserves the right to deny course certificates to participants suspected of cheating on the test. The supervisor is expected to ensure that the test of the course is taken in his/her presence.

7 SOURCE MATERIAL

This course draws upon various sources, including international statistical standards and case studies from national statistical offices.