



London Group on
Environmental Economic
Accounting

ISTAT Workshop Challenges in the measurement of nature in official statistics

Sven Kaumanns

Chair of the London Group on Environmental-Economic Accounting

Rome, 25-26 May 2026

Challenges in the measurement of nature in official statistics

...a timely workshop given recent developments?

Official Journal
of the European Union

2024/3024

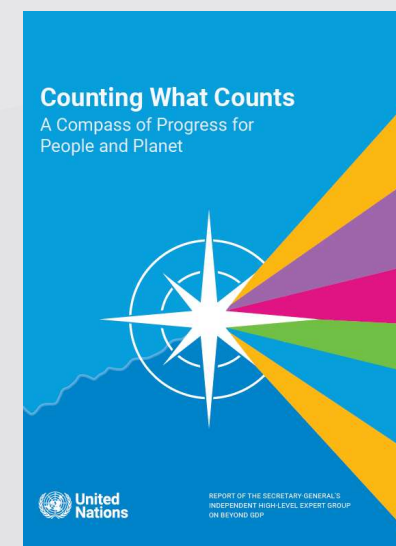
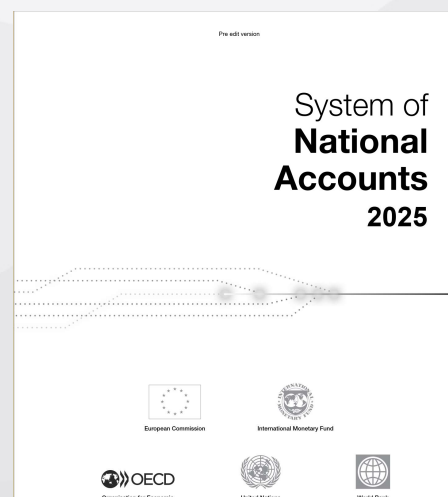
EN
L series

6.12.2024

REGULATION (EU) 2024/3024 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
of 27 November 2024
amending Regulation (EU) No 691/2011 as regards introducing new environmental economic
account modules

(c) the following paragraph is added:

‘3. In addition to the programme for pilot and feasibility studies in 2026, in cooperation with the Member States, carry out an assessment of the feasibility of monetary valuation, possible reporting values where the ways of measuring for ecosystem services accounts, taking into account the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA) and those studies, the Commission may submit to the European Council a proposal amending this Regulation in order to include the monetary valuation of ecosystem services.’



... but not a new issue



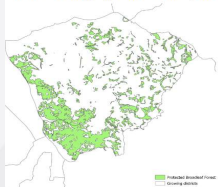
The London Group: Midwife to the SEEA

- The discussions we're having today aren't exactly new
- Official Statistics: Tension between accuracy, validity and communicability
- 1993 interim "Handbook of National Accounting: Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting" already discusses monetarization
- 1994 first London Group
- *German Advisory Board on Environmental Accounts 1990-2002: "It is not scientifically feasible to produce a comprehensive, purely monetary valuation of all natural capital in a single figure." (Third Report 1998)*

The London Group: Recent discussions on EA

The role of local reference in ecosystem capacity

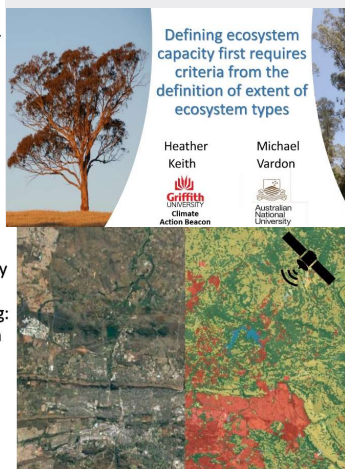
Marius Bellingén, Simon Schürz, Jonathan Reith,



Quantifying and reporting uncertainty in biophysical ecosystem service accounts for local policy and planning: the case of satellite-based ecosystem extent maps

Zander Venter
David N Barton

29th London Group Meeting



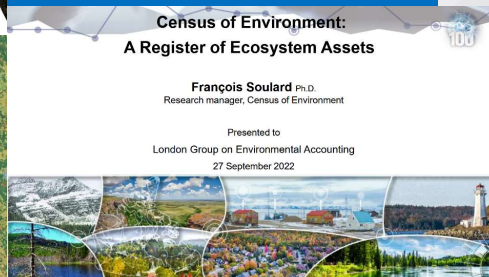
Defining ecosystem capacity first requires criteria from the definition of extent of ecosystem types

Heather Keith
Griffith University
Climate Action Beacon

Michael Vardon
Australian National University

Methodology for GBF Indicator A.2 using ecosystem condition information

Madli Linder, Hanna Kaarin Hermlin, Sander Ahi, Taavi Pipar, Laura Kütt
Estonian Environment Agency

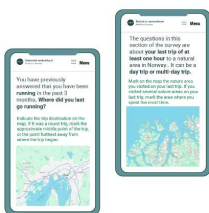


Census of Environment: A Register of Ecosystem Assets

François Soulard Ph.D.
Research manager, Census of Environment

Presented to
London Group on Environmental Accounting
27 September 2022

Connecting visits to ecosystem types



Nature-based tourism and recreation in Norway

LAVINIA SVAE, ANDERS DUGSTAD, TRINE RANDEN, KRISTINE GRIMSrud



Statistisk sentralbyrå
Statistics Norway

Towards Pollination Accounts in Brazil

31st Meeting of the London Group on Environmental Accounting

22-25 September 2025
Tallinn, Estonia

Authors: Leonardo L. Bergamini, Angelita S. Coelho, Mariza A. M. Pinheiro, Ivone L. Batista
(Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, IBGE)

Open issues remain

- ◉ Extent accounts
 - ◉ Classification issues
 - ◉ Validation
 - ◉ Distinction between Extent and Condition
- ◉ Condition accounts
 - ◉ Selection of indicators
 - ◉ Reference values
- ◉ Service accounts
 - ◉ Modelling choices
 - ◉ Plausibility
 - ◉ Services incomplete and often proxies

EA: linking monetary values in the London Group

Open issues remain

- Linking physical quantities to monetary values
- Accounting for different and multiple values
- Aggregation issues and overlapping services

Treatment of multiple economic values connected to ecosystems – theoretical aspects

Paper prepared for 31th London Group on Environmental Accounting meeting – Tallin 22-25 September 2025

based on the 2024 London Group paper “Treatment of monetary values connected to ecosystem services”

Lead Author: Aldo Femia (Istat).

Other authors, members of the task team and contributors: Alessio Capriolo (ISPRA), Üllas Ehrlich (Tallin University), Aki Kadulin (Statistics Estonia), Kaia Oras (Statistics Estonia), Simon Schürz (DESTATIS), Michael Wolf (Statistics Sweden), Menuka Udegama, (Wayamba University of Sri Lanka)

David Barton (NINA) and Ioanna Grammatikopoulou (European Commission) are kindly acknowledged for their valuable suggestions



A Sudoku approach to fit the Central Framework and Ecosystem Accounts in the SEEA...and SNA

Alessandra La Notte

30th Meeting of the London Group of Experts in Environmental Accounting



Defining the biodiversity economy with a view to developing a Biodiversity Economy Satellite Account: progress from South Africa

Amanda Driver, Riaan Grobler, Yuval Tchetchik, Aimee Ginsburg, Gerhardt Bouwer



Economic Methods for Water Ecosystem Services in the SEEA EA

Vittoria Reas, Silvia Ferrini, Alice Bartolini, Paul Ekins, Joe Grice

London Group on Environmental Accounting, 31st Meeting
25th September 2025, Tallinn



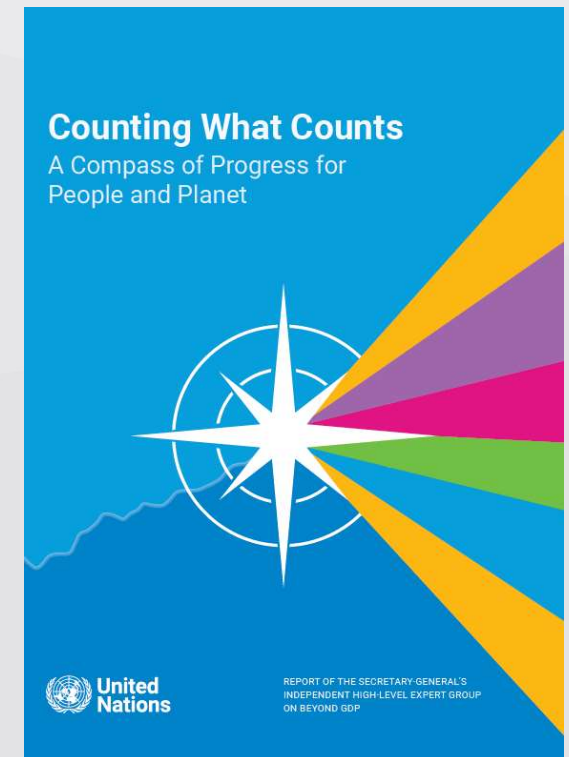
Is there a market for nature, or should we treat nature as if a market existed?

- "Nature is not a plc: While financial markets accept market capitalization as a proxy for asset values, this logic fails for ecosystems. If you try to liquidate the 'shares' of nature, the price doesn't just drop – the entire system ceases to exist."
- The paradox is that the more damaged and scarce the environment is, the 'more valuable' it would appear in statistical terms if calculated on the basis of marginal prices. An eco-social "product" based on this logic could send completely misleading signals to policymakers.
- A valuation that might work for subtracting depletion of nature in GPD might not work to communicate the asset "nature" itself – as high value might mean bad condition.

The mountain labored, and brought forth...

... yet another set of indicators?

- What's charming and appealing about GDP is that it's one number.
- An indicator such as the eco-social product (Green-GDP) discussed in the past would, of course, have many advantages in terms of communication and popularity.
- In addition to all the calculation issues, a Green-GDP carries an even greater risk of misinterpretation than GDP
- The proposed “environmental assets” indicator is likely to present us with significant challenges (session 3)





London Group on
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

THANK YOU

<https://seea.un.org/content/london-group-environmental-accounting>