



Implementation of the System of Environment-Economic Accounting for Water

Fourth Meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting
New York, 24-26 June 2009

United Nations Statistics Division



Outline

- The SEEAW implementation strategy
- Global Assessment of Water Statistics and Water Accounts
- Progress with implementation
 - International Recommendations for Water Statistics
 - Technical cooperation and promotion
 - 5th World Water Forum
- Key issues and lessons from SEEAW implementation
- The way forward
- Questions to UNCEEAA



SEEAW implementation strategy

1. Development of International Recommendations for Water Statistics (IRWS)
2. Development of training and promotion material
3. Development of a technical cooperation programme
4. Harmonisation of international data collections with the SEEAW



Global Assessment of Water Statistics and Water Accounts

1. To obtain an understanding of country practices in the compilation of water statistics and accounts
2. To assess the use of the SEEAW
3. To support the preparation of the International Recommendations for Water Statistics (IRWS)
4. To assist with the development of targeted technical cooperation activities in these areas.



44 Countries have, or are planning, water accounts

Global Assessment of Water Statistics and Water Accounts (GAWSWA)

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc09/BG-WaterAccounts.pdf>

- Andorra
 - Australia
 - Austria
 - Bahamas
 - Botswana
 - Canada
 - China
 - Colombia
 - Denmark
 - Dominican Republic
 - Egypt
 - France
 - Germany
 - Guatemala
 - Hungary
 - Iraq
 - Israel
 - Italy
 - Jordan
 - Mexico
 - Namibia
 - Netherlands
 - New Zealand
 - Peru
 - Philippines
 - Portugal
 - Singapore
 - South Africa
 - Spain
 - Sweden
 - Switzerland
 - Trinidad and Tobago
 - Ukraine
 - Armenia
 - Estonia
 - Greece
 - Lebanon
 - Mauritius
 - Norway
 - Occupied Palestinian Territory
 - Romania
 - Tunisia
 - Turkey
 - United Kingdom
- Plus 4 (Data not from GAWSWA)**
- Bahrain
 - Brazil
 - Oman
 - Panama



International Recommendations for Water Statistics

- Outline presented at the 3rd UNCEEAA meeting in June 2008
- Expert Group Meeting held November 2008
- Next draft scheduled to go to expert group in July-August 2009
- Final Draft for Global Consultation on web in October 2009
- Final Draft and comments from Global Consultation to UNCEEAA by December 2009 for transmission to the UN Statistical Commission



Key findings of the Global Assessment and lessons from countries implementing SEEAW

1. Build on existing knowledge and recognise that a range of different systems are already in place
2. Cooperation is essential
3. High level support is needed
4. An agency needs to take the lead
5. A phased approach is needed and pilot or experimental accounts are very useful
6. A lot of progress can be made quickly



Technical cooperation and promotion

Since adoption in 2007 UNSD has:

- Conducted six regional workshops
- Provided 11 country missions
- Conducted the expert group meeting on the international recommendations for water statistics
- Received three delegations in New York for training
- Contributed to two workshop via video link
- Provided training material and other assistance to two Med Stat II Missions and one for the EU Europe Aid Project “Upgrading the Statistical System of Turkey”
- Remote assistance to countries



5th World Water Forum

UNSD with World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) organised the topic “Data for All” in four sessions

- 6.4.1 Data needs and data acquisition
- 6.4.2 Data integration and dissemination
- 6.4.3 Barriers to data availability
- 6.4.4 Action to ensure data for all

UNSD created a web page to host material for these four sessions,

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/workshops/wwf2009/1od.htm>



Outcomes from 5th World Water Forum - Data for All

- “.. the lack of integrated water data was a systematic impediment to informed decision making related to the sustainable use of water resources”
- “.. SEEA-W offers a coherent and valuable framework to support national data collection and is an important part of the way forward”
- “..data collection, integration and dissemination must be elevated on the agenda at the next World Water Forum. There is a need for strong leadership to achieve this, and clear goals and timelines to support data for all need to be established by an ongoing process. This process should bring together hydrologists, economists, social scientists, statisticians, etc, to strengthen coordination and cooperation between countries and international agencies”



Key issues in SEEAW implementation

- Lack of knowledge and understanding of the SEEAW by the users and producers of water statistics
- Institutional arrangements
- Data availability



The way forward

- Promotion
- Training and network of experts
- Certification
- International data collections
- Data availability



Promotion

- SEEAW needs to be promoted to countries, regional and international agencies.
- In particular, it needs to be brought to the attention of leaders in the field of water policy and decision making.
 - E.g. the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation and UN Water
- Demonstrate usefulness of SEEAW to policy makers



Proposed publication on SEEAW

- It is proposed to develop a brief publication (20-30 pages) covering the main concepts of the SEEAW, illustrated with country examples and linked to key policy issues such as climate change, water pricing, water efficiency and the MDGs.
- This publication would be developed by UNSD with assistance from two regional commissions (ESCWA and ECLAC) and would include country examples (e.g. Australia, China, The Netherlands and Mexico).
- WWAP and UNSD would produce the publication and it would be launched at the World Water Week (August 2010, Stockholm, Sweden)



Training and network of experts

- At present many countries are requesting assistance with the implementation of the accounts but the number of people able to provide assistance is limited
- It is proposed to establish a network of water accounting experts from countries, regional and international agencies that can be drawn upon to provide assistance
- As part of this a programme to train-the-trainers would be developed



Certification

- Several countries have requested certification, endorsement or approval of water accounts by the UNSD
- At present no process exists for the certification of environmental account
- A process to address this issue could be considered and developed under the auspices of the Committee.



International data collections and data availability

- There is a strong demand for global water data. However, the water data available at the global level are very poor and in many cases the availability of data in countries is declining
- The existing data collection have many gaps and deficiencies
- Existing regional and international data collections need to be examined to see if they can collectively be used to produce a more comprehensive suite of water data or fill gaps in existing datasets.



International and regional coordination

Proposal to establish a small working group under the auspices of the UNCEEA and World Water Assessment Program

The working group would aim to:

- Strengthen the water data at country levels
- Coordinate and improve the regional and international activity relating to water data collection
- Ensure that the water data are regularly reported to regional and international agencies, through either an expansion of existing activities or through new initiatives, and that these data are available to a range of data users

This group could build on the World Water Assessment Program Expert Group, the UN Water Task Force and the UNSD Expert Group convened for the development of the IRWS as well as members of the expert group involved in the development of the SEEAW (a sub-group of the London Group on Environmental Accounting).



Questions to UNCEEA

The Committee may wish to consider the following questions:

- (1) *Do you agree with the proposed way forward? In particular do you agree with the following activities:*
 - a. *Development of a publication promoting water accounts (para.40-41)*
 - b. *Establishment of network of water accounting experts (para. 44)*
 - c. *Development of standardised training modules and programme of train-the trainers (para. 44 -45)*
 - d. *Development of a process for the certification of water accounts and environmental accounts in general (para. 46)*
- (2) *Do you agree that the regional and international data collection activities should be reviewed and updated to provide better global data? (para. 47-52)*
- (3) *Do you agree to the proposal to establish a working group consisting of countries regional and international agencies to help coordinate the collection and sharing of water data by regional and international agencies and assist in building basic statistical capacity in countries? (para. 56-58)*