

Advancing Experimental Ecosystem Accounting in South Africa

Stakeholder Engagement Report for Phase 1

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Preface

South Africa is one of seven pilot countries involved in a global initiative called Advancing SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting,¹ led by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), with funding from the Government of Norway. Within South Africa, the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) have worked in partnership with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) to take this project forward.

This Stakeholder Engagement Report forms part of a set of deliverables resulting from South Africa's participation in Phase 1 of Advancing SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, which took place from mid-2014 to May 2016.

Related reports

This document forms part of a set of deliverables from South Africa for the AEEA project. Related project reports include:

- National River Ecosystem Accounts in South Africa: Discussion Document
- Land and Ecosystem Accounting in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa: Discussion Document
- National Plan for Advancing Environmental-Economic Accounting: South Africa

¹ Also referred to in some of the global project documents as Advancing Natural Capital Accounting or ANCA.

Acronyms

AEEA	Advancing SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
DWS	Department of Water and Sanitation
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal (a province of South Africa)
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SEEA	System of Environmental-Economic Accounting
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division

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1. Introduction

This report reviews the engagement with stakeholders that was undertaken as part of Phase 1 of the Advancing SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (AEEA) Project in South Africa. The focus of stakeholder engagement was both on obtaining input into the two sets of pilot accounts that were undertaken as part of Phase 1, and on informing and building support for a national programme of work to take environmental accounting and ecosystem accounting forward in South Africa.

The report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 sets out the objectives and deliverables of the project within South Africa,
- Section 3 outlines the governance structures that were established to guide the work of the project,
- Section 4 outlines the stakeholder engagement process and events.

2. Objectives and deliverables of Phase 1

The objectives of Phase 1 of the AEEA Project in South Africa were:

- To demonstrate that South Africa has the capability (including sufficient data and relevant expertise) to take experimental ecosystem accounts forward, including by producing some basic accounts and providing a narrative that links the accounts to policy,
- To introduce ecosystem accounting to a broader audience in South Africa,
- To build and demonstrate institutional buy-in and commitment from core partners: Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Department of Water & Sanitation (DWS),
- To establish a high-level group on environmental and ecosystem accounting at the national level, including sponsors, producers and users of the accounts, to provide strategic co-ordination and oversight,
- To identify policy needs, data gaps, institutional requirements and key challenges for taking ecosystem accounting forward,
- To develop a National Program of Work for SEEA, which could inform a potential Phase 2 of the project,
- To identify linkages between SEEA, South Africa's Medium-Term Strategic Framework and Presidential Outcomes, and the global Sustainable Development Goals,
- To feed into the global strategy for SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting.

Phase 1 of the AEEA project ran from mid-2014 until October 2015 in South Africa, continuing until May 2016 globally. The work was divided into the following activities and deliverables for South Africa:

1. *National River Ecosystem Accounts*

Brief description: National accounts for river ecosystems, produced in partnership by Stats SA, SANBI, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and DWS, as proof of concept for national ecosystem asset accounts that can be disaggregated to a range of spatial scales from national to local.

Deliverable: National River Ecosystem Accounts Discussion Document

2. *Experimental Ecosystem Accounts for Kwa-Zulu Natal*

Brief description: Feasibility study for integrated land and catchment accounts for KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province, produced in partnership by SANBI, CSIR, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and Stats SA, as proof of concept for integrated land and ecosystem accounts at the provincial scale, with a view to replicating nationally.

Deliverable: KwaZulu-Natal Ecosystem Accounts Discussion Document

3. *Information and engagement required to complete the Assessment Report and National Programme of Work*

Brief description: Substantive inputs to the Assessment Report and National Programme of Work, including ensuring appropriate consultation and stakeholder engagement at the national level

Deliverables:

3a. Contributions to Assessment Report and National Programme of Work

3b. Report on stakeholder engagement process in support of development of the National Programme of Work

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3. Project governance

This section discusses the project team, the Strategic Advisory Committee on Ecosystem Accounting, and the Technical Reference Group for Ecosystem Accounting.

3.1 Project team

The project team consisted of staff from the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). Project team members are listed in Table 1. In addition, staff from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and the Department of Water and Sanitation played a key role in the project.

Table 1: Project team members

Organisation	Name	Title
SANBI	Mandy Driver (<i>project leader</i>)	Senior Biodiversity Policy Advisor
	Carol Poole (<i>project co-ordinator</i>)	Project Coordinator: Biodiversity Research
	Fahiema Daniels	Deputy Director: Biodiversity Planning
CSIR	Dr Jeanne Nel (<i>lead technical specialist</i>)	Principal Scientist: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
	Janis Smith	Researcher: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
	Odirilwe Selomane	Researcher: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
	Lindie Smith-Adao	Senior Scientist: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
Stats SA	Ester Koch	Chief Economist: Environmental Economic Accounts
	Robert Parry	Principal Economist: Environmental Economic Accounts
	Thembalihle Ndlovu	Economist: Environmental Economic Accounts
	Brenda Mphakane	Economist: Environmental Economic Accounts

To support the achievement of the project deliverables, the project team set up a governance structure that consisted of a high-level Strategic Advisory Committee and a Technical Reference Group. The terms of reference of these two structures are outlined below. The intention is that both of them will continue to exist beyond Phase 1 of the project.

3.2 Strategic Advisory Committee on Ecosystem Accounting

The Strategic Advisory Committee on Ecosystem Accounting comprises key knowledge holders who are able to provide strategic guidance on content and process issues related to ecosystem accounting. The Committee is convened by SANBI and met twice during Phase 1, on 17 March 2015 and 8 October 2015.

The Terms of Reference of the Committee include:

- Considering how effective links can be made between ecosystem accounting and a range of socio-economic policy priorities and questions, including supporting national planning and reporting on sustainable development,
- Advising on how to present ecosystem accounts most effectively to meet the needs of a range of sectors and contexts,
- Advising on priorities for taking ecosystem accounting work forward in South Africa,
- Giving input on the establishment and composition of a proposed inter-departmental or inter-governmental committee on environmental accounting,
- Sharing and integrating knowledge across different sectors and disciplines that have not traditionally worked together.

Membership of the Strategic Advisory Committee consists mainly of high-level officials from various national government departments and agencies. Members of the committee are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Members of the Strategic Advisory Committee on Ecosystem Accounting

Name	Job Title	Organisation
Rob Anderson	Geographer	Stats SA
Gerhardt Bouwer	Executive Manager: National Accounts	Stats SA
Joe de Beer	Deputy Director-General: Economic Statistics	Stats SA
Mandy Driver	Senior Biodiversity Policy Advisor	SANBI
Lorenzo Fioramonti	Jean Monnet Chair in Regional Integration & Governance Studies, Director of Centre for the Study of Governance Innovation	University of Pretoria
Celia de Klerk	Executive Manager: Strategy Planning	Stats SA
Natalie Feltman	Director: Biodiversity Economics	DEA
Riaan Grobler	Manager: Application of National Accounts	Stats SA
Sharlin Hemraj	Senior Economist	National Treasury
Eiman Karar	Director: Water Resources Management	Water Research Commission
Ester Koch	Chief Economist: Environmental Economic Accounts	Stats SA
Stanley Liphadzi	Executive Manager: Water-Linked Ecosystems	Water Research Commission
Peter Lukey	Chief Policy Advisor: Strategic Environmental Intelligence	DEA
Wadzi Mandivenyi	Chief Director: Biodiversity Specialist Monitoring & Services	DEA
Moscow Marumo	Chief Director: Biodiversity Economy & Sustainable Use	DEA
Kristal Maze (<i>Chair of the committee</i>)	Chief Director: Biodiversity Information & Policy Advice	SANBI
Ndileka Mohapi	Chief Director: Water Ecosystems	DWS
Oscar Mokotedi	Specialist Advisor: Climate Change Monitoring & Evaluation	DEA
Marlanie Moodley	Manager: GIS	DEA

Name	Job Title	Organisation
Yandiswa Mpetsheni	Executive Manager: National Statistical Systems	Stats SA
Kiruben Naicker	Director: Science-Policy Interface	DEA
Jeanne Nel	Principal Scientist	CSIR
Preshanthie Naicker-Mannick	Deputy Director: Biodiversity Economy	DEA
Tendani Nditwani	Acting Director: National Water Resource Planning	DWS
Wandile Nomqophu	Executive Manager: Water Resource Management	Water Research Commission
Dirk Roux	Freshwater Conservation Specialist, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow	South African National Parks, Monash South Africa
Isa Thompson	Chief Engineer: National Water Resource Planning	DWS
Elsona van Huyssteen	Principal Urban & Regional Planner	CSIR
Neil van Wyk	Chief Engineer: National Water Resource Planning	DWS

3.3 Technical Reference Group for Ecosystem Accounting

The Technical Reference Group for Ecosystem Accounting comprises key technical knowledge holders who are able to provide guidance on data and methods related to ecosystem accounting. For Phase 1 of the project, the guidance related particularly to Deliverable 2, so there was a strong focus on KwaZulu-Natal in the membership of the Technical Reference Group.

The role of the Technical Reference Group includes:

- Providing input on technical matters related to data and analysis
- Making links with other relevant projects and research
- Giving input on interpretation of key findings and presentation of results

The Technical Reference Group met twice in the course of Phase 1, on 24 February 2015 and 10 September 2015. Members of the group are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Members of the Technical Reference Group for Ecosystem Accounting

Name	Organisation
David Clark	University of KwaZulu-Natal
Fahiema Daniels	SANBI
John Dini	SANBI
Mandy Driver	SANBI
Boyd Escott	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
Debbie Jewitt	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
Graham Jewitt	University of KwaZulu-Natal
Jean Harris	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
Stephen Holness	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
Catherine Hughes	University of KwaZulu-Natal
Ester Koch	Stats SA
Dean Muruven	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Name	Organisation
Jeanne Nel	CSIR
Xolile Nkomo	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
Lehlohonolo Joe Phadima	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
Robert Parry	Stats SA
Carol Poole	SANBI
Kate Pringle	Institute of Natural Resources
Mathieu Rouget	University of KwaZulu-Natal
Odirilwe Selomane	CSIR
Simangele Sithole	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
Andrew Skowno	SANBI
Kerry Sink	SANBI
Lindie Smith-Adao	CSIR
Mark Thompson	GeoTerralimage

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4. Stakeholder engagement process and events

Since inception, the AEEA Project has facilitated a number of stakeholder engagement opportunities. These are summarised in Table 4 and described below in chronological order. The UNSD's missions to South Africa were convened by Stats SA. All other events listed in the table were convened by SANBI in collaboration with project partners.

Table 4: Key stakeholder engagement events in AEEA Phase 1 in South Africa

Event	Date	Place
National River Ecosystem Accounts: Technical Workshop	22 July 2014	Pretoria
First UNSD mission to South Africa	Week of 25 August 2014	Pretoria
Second UNSD mission to South Africa	Week of 10 November 2014	Pretoria
National Introductory Workshop on Advancing Experimental Ecosystem Accounting	13-14 November 2014	Pretoria
Technical Reference Group for Ecosystem Accounting – first meeting	24 February 2015	Durban
Strategic Advisory Committee on Ecosystem Accounting – first meeting	17 March 2015	Pretoria
Stakeholder Workshop on Experimental Ecosystem Accounts in KZN	21 April 2015	Durban
Work session on national river ecosystem accounts	12 May 2015	Pretoria
Technical Reference Group for Ecosystem Accounting – second meeting	10 September 2015	Durban
Third UNSD mission to South Africa	Week of 5 October 2015	Pretoria
Strategic Advisory Committee on Ecosystem Accounting – second meeting	8 October 2015	Pretoria

- 1. National River Ecosystem Accounts: Technical Workshop, 22 July 2014**, Pretoria National Botanical Garden. The purpose of this one-day workshop was:

 - To explain the proposed data and methods to develop national river ecosystem accounts for South Africa, and to present initial draft results
 - To engage in technical discussion on data, methods and draft results, in order to ensure that key role players are comfortable with these
 - To discuss the way forward / next steps, including opportunities for linking with the international process on ecosystem accounting led by the UNSD

The workshop was attended by 23 participants from a range of organisations, including Stats SA, SANBI, CSIR, DWS, DEA, Institute of Natural Resources, and PrimeAfrica.
- 2. In the week of 25 August 2014, a project team from the UNSD** visited South Africa on their **first mission** to assess ecosystem accounting work currently underway in the country and to explore opportunities and priorities for taking the work forward as part of the AEEA project. The UNSD produced an Assessment Report based on this mission, summarising the policy context in South Africa and highlighting opportunities for environmental and ecosystem accounting to support national policy and monitoring needs related to sustainable development.

3. In the week of **10 November 2014**, a project team from the **UNSD** visited South Africa on their **second mission**. This second mission produced a draft National Plan for Advancing Environmental-Economic Accounting in South Africa. It was also an opportunity to conduct initial SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting training and to engage a range of stakeholders to discuss national priorities for ecosystem accounting and options for institutional arrangements.

4. **Introductory Workshop on Advancing Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, 13-14 November 2014**, Pretoria National Botanical Garden. The purpose of this two-day national workshop, which coincided with the second mission of the UNSD to South Africa, was:

- To introduce the Advancing SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting project to participants,
- To report back on key findings and recommendations from the UNSD's first mission to South Africa, which took place in the week of 25 August 2014,
- To introduce participants to key concepts in ecosystem accounting, and to explore how these might be applied in the South African context – the agenda included a substantial training component in this regard,
- To present initial ecosystem accounting work that has been undertaken in South Africa to date, including draft results from pilot national river ecosystem accounts and pilot land accounts in KZN,
- To discuss priorities for taking forward ecosystem accounting in South Africa, to inform the development of a national programme of work, including:
 - Data requirements related to ecosystems, and key data gaps,
 - Linking ecosystem accounts to socio-economic data – potential options, data requirements, directions to explore,
- To explore the potential role and contribution of the AEEA project, and to outline an initial proposed workplan for a potential Phase 2 of the project.

The workshop was attended by over 30 people from several organisations, including CSIR, SANBI, DEA, DWS, Department of Education, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, PrimeAfrica, Stats SA, UNEP, UNSD.

5. The **first Technical Reference Group Meeting was held on 24 February 2015** at the SANBI KZN Herbarium in Durban. The main points for discussion at this meeting included:

- Based on the initial results, what other data should be used and what other analyses should be done?
- How to present the findings,
- Links to other projects and/or individuals,
- The role and membership of the Technical Reference Group,
- Plans for broader engagement of stakeholders on the KZN land and ecosystem accounts.

The meeting was attended by 11 people from SANBI, Stats SA, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, CSIR and the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

6. The **first Strategic Advisory Committee meeting of Phase 1 was held on 17 March 2015** at the Pretoria National Botanical Garden. The agenda included a review of the headline results based on the work to date, a discussion on next steps and priorities for a longer term programme of

work, and a discussion on the high-level inter-departmental committee that was proposed as a deliverable for AEEA Phase 1. Twelve participants attended this meeting, with representation from Stats SA, SANBI, CSIR, DWS, University of Pretoria, DEA and GeoTerralimage. It was suggested that representatives from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and the Department of Economic Development be included on the Committee.

7. Stakeholder Workshop on Experimental Ecosystem Accounts in KZN, 21 April 2015, Paradise Valley in Durban. The purpose of this one-day workshop was:

- To introduce participants to the concept of ecosystem accounting,
- To present an analysis of land cover change in KZN,
- To present draft land and ecosystem accounts for KZN,
- To discuss the findings and identify key high-level messages or policy implications that emerge from the results,
- To discuss possible next steps, including opportunities for taking ecosystem accounting work forward in KZN and nationally,
- To inform the development of a discussion document on Experimental Ecosystem Accounting in KZN.

The invitation to the workshop was distributed to over 100 people and while many people were unable to attend the workshop they wanted to remain informed about the project. Twenty-five people participated in the workshop from several organisations, including Stats SA, CSIR, SANBI, Wildlands Conservation Trust, KZN Department of Agriculture & Rural Development, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Institute of Natural Resources, Ethekwini Metropolitan Municipality, and Msunduzi Local Municipality.

8. National River Ecosystem Accounts: Work Session, 12 May 2015, Pretoria National Botanical Garden. The purpose of this one-day work session was to have in-depth discussion with key representatives of DWS on a series of issues related to the national river ecosystem accounting, including:

- Confirming the method used to convert Present Ecological State to index of ecological condition (originally discussed at technical workshop on 22 July 2014)
- Deciding whether to present 1999-2011 trends for quaternary mainstems only, or whether to include tributaries (using modelled scores for tributaries for 1999)
- Land cover change in strategic water source areas – initial results of this analysis
- Findings and trends that should be highlighted in the report

The work session was attended by ten participants, from SANBI, CSIR, DWS and Stats SA.

9. The second meeting of the Technical Reference Group was held on 10 September 2015 at the Krantzkloof Nature Reserve in Durban. The meeting consisted primarily of going step-by-step through the draft Discussion Document (“Land and Ecosystem Accounting in KZN Discussion Document DRAFT 31 August 2015”) that had been circulated to all members before the meeting. 11 members of the Technical Reference Group attended the meeting.

10. In the week of **5 October 2015**, a project team from the **UNSD** visited South Africa on their **third mission**, to engage senior stakeholders in the planning for SEEA implementation in South Africa and to take forward the National Plan for Advancing Environmental-Economic Accounting in South Africa.

11. The **second meeting of the Strategic Advisory Committee** was held on **8 October 2015** at the Pretoria National Botanical Garden, coinciding with the UNSD's third mission to South Africa. The agenda included presentation and discussion of the results of the Land and Ecosystem Accounts for KZN and the National River Ecosystem Accounts, as well as the National Plan for Advancing Environmental-Economic Accounting in South Africa. Eighteen participants attended the meeting, with representation from Stats SA, SANBI, CSIR, Department of Environmental Affairs, Department of Water & Sanitation, and the UNSD.

Each of the meetings and workshops described above has a meeting report that is available on request.

In addition to these meetings and workshops, which were convened as part of the project, members of the project team gave presentations on South Africa's ecosystem accounting work at various other national meetings and events. These included:

- Updates and progress reports to meetings of the Inter-departmental Committee on Inland Water Ecosystems (convened by DWS), on 5 July 2013, 20 February 2014, and 18 September 2014,
- Presentation at the Beyond GDP in Africa workshop, convened by the Centre for Governance Innovation at the University of Pretoria, 28-29 October 2014,
- Presentation at a Quarterly Research Meeting of the Environmental Policy Research Unit at the University of Cape Town, 6 March 2015,
- Plenary presentation at the 12th annual National Biodiversity Planning Forum, convened by SANBI at Salt Rock in KZN, 23-26 June 2015.

Further to the national engagements described above, members of the South African project team benefited greatly from participating in a number of international events linked to Advancing SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting. These included:

- Pilot Country Workshop, Delhi, 14 October 2014,
- Regional Training Workshop on the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, Santiago, 13-16 April 2015,
- Forum of Experts on Ecosystem Accounting, New York, 28-30 April 2015.