



Institute for
European
Environmental
Policy

MAES Pilot Study on Natural Capital Accounting Summary of Day 1

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State of the art



- **Laure Ledoux**: many policy commitments and activities at the global, EU and national level -> momentum for environmental accounting. Need linkage between initiatives
- **Kremena Gocheva**: the MAES process – parallel work in different dimensions, wide MS involvement, many challenges
- **Anton Steurer**: SEEA process as a general framework for environmental accounting. NCA > ECA.
- **Cathy Maguire**: ECA – attempt to integrate land, carbon, water accounts; spatial explicitly data & use of maps; (in the future) monetary valuation based on restoration costs
- **Patrick ten Brink**: accounts can be used for policy design, implementation and assessment – important to link accounts to policy processes and be clear where there is added value

National experiences



- **UK:** developing ecosystem capital accounts, including cross-cutting accounts (roadmap 2013-20), based on priorities set by the NEA; Pragmatism of focus: build on areas of existing good data. NEC very active and interested; 8 papers published
- **France:** calculating *Non Paid Ecological Costs*: damage captured via different methodologies > ambition: to calculate the degradation-adjusted net saving and the ecological debt. Also preparation of a toolkit to value ES – cheap and easy to use
- **Lithuania:** 8 pilot studies on ES valuation, one of which in protected areas
- **Germany:** Indicators for ES or ecosystem capacity. Ambition: one integrated index for NC (problems: aggregability across ES; weights?). So far: physical accounts – ec. valuation of cultural ES only for illustration
- **Norway:** indicators of biodiversity (NCI) -> much can be done with simplified indicators with long time scale as proxies for BD. It is important to understand the link between indicators

Challenges



- **Governance and practical issues:**
 - Different experiences/capacity at the MS level, different data sets, also different approaches and priorities (grouping MS for common challenges)
 - How to balance the interests and views of different stakeholders as regards priorities, methods and also concepts
 - Sustainable funding – needed to ensure regular updating to allow time series
- **Methodological issues/data:**
 - How to deal with high uncertainty (ranges instead of exact data?)
 - Data availability / consistency
 - Data integration/translation to the same scale
 - Integration of multidisciplinary inputs into a statistical / accounting system
 - Different methodologies for monetary valuation -> impossible to sum up values across ES (issues of different type of value (e.g. welfare and market values) and risk of double-counting)

The way forward (I)



- Meeting the **biodiversity target** needs a monitoring system -> need for accounting
- Important to **clarify objectives/be transparent** on scope, limitation, assumptions (managing expectations)
- Need to **prioritise** according to **policy needs and added value of accounts in light of other assessment tools**
- Need to deliver outcomes in a **short time** to meet the policy demand and make the most of the existing momentum.
- Important to keep it **simple** without oversimplification
- Need for **repeatability**
- Need to **keep costs down**

The way forward (II)



- Need for **standardisation** vs. **flexibility** to meet different resource availability of countries – need for guidance for smaller countries (much can be done with available data)
- **Cooperation** important / need for **multidisciplinary work** and involvement of experts (e.g. on spatial data)
- Important to carry out **experimental studies** to keep learning and exchanging experiences – but aim for **common target** and **compatibility of approaches and results** (link to SEEA 1 and 2)