

ESP 11 World Conference

“From global to local ecosystem services: pathways to Nature-based Solutions inspired from Down Under”

23-27 June 2025 | Darwin, Australia

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: T1a

An overview of the rapidly emerging field of Ocean Accounting: extending international standards towards the social and equitable valuation of ocean ecosystem services

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host:	Jordan Gacutan	Global Ocean Accounts Partnership / UNSW	j.gacutan@unsw.edu.au

Abstract:

The field of Ocean Accounting is rapidly emerging as a national framework to measure and manage the complex interactions between ocean ecosystems, society and the economy. Aligned with international statistical standards such as the System of Environmental–Economic Accounting (SEEA), Ocean Accounting extends these frameworks to include the unique characteristics of marine ecosystems and the services they provide. This session will provide an overview of Ocean Accounting, with a focus on case studies demonstrating its potential to support the social and equitable valuation of ocean ecosystem services.

Over 30 countries are now extending their national accounts to incorporate ocean ecosystems and their services, with increasingly ambitious efforts to link Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to the benefits provided by these ecosystems. Drawing from initiatives in the Maldives, Fiji, Vanuatu, Viet Nam and many others, this session will demonstrate how ecosystem services—such as coastal protection, carbon sequestration, and fisheries— have increasingly been linked to economic performance while maintaining environmental sustainability.

Further, we will explore efforts to develop of social accounts is broadening the scope of traditional metrics by integrating dimensions such as equity and community well-being. By combining environmental, economic, and social data, Ocean Accounting provides a comprehensive approach to assess the contributions of ocean ecosystems to human welfare while addressing pressing issues of inclusivity and equity.

This session will draw upon knowledge and insights from the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP), which is actively supporting global and regional communities of practice. Through its collaborative networks, GOAP is fostering the development and implementation of Ocean Accounting frameworks to build capacity and drive sustainable and equitable ocean governance.

Goals and objectives of the session:

1. Introduce Ocean Accounting: Provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the Ocean Accounting framework and its relevance to ecosystem services, sustainability, and equitable governance. Demonstrate its difference to the myriad of ecosystem and natural capital accounting approaches.

2. Demonstrate practical applications: Highlight how Ocean Accounting is being implemented globally and regionally, showcasing its potential for influencing policy and management decisions.

3. Foster collaboration: Find potential collaborations across the 30 countries with ambitions to implement OA, to encourage interdisciplinary dialogue among scientists, and practitioners to strengthen Ocean Accounting methods.

4. Promote equity and inclusivity: Emphasize the importance of social accounts in addressing equity, cultural significance, and community well-being in ocean management.

5. Build capacity: Share resources and best practices from the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) to support participants in applying Ocean Accounting in their respective fields.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Networking and collaboration Plan: A follow-up strategy with a contact list and links to global and regional communities of practice, fostering ongoing dialogue and partnerships. As the communities of practice are mostly public servants and policy advisors, this provides an opportunity to link scientists with these members through dialogue.

Session resource pack: A comprehensive package including slides, key readings, case studies, and tools from the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) to support implementation of Ocean Accounting.

Summary document: A summary of session insights, best practices, and recommendations for integrating Ocean Accounting into ecosystem service science and policy.

Session format:

Approximately 1:10 – 1.5 hrs (max)

1. Opening and Introduction (5 minutes)

Brief overview of Ocean Accounting and its relevance to ecosystem services, equity, and sustainability.

2. Keynote Presentation (20 minutes)

In-depth presentation on Ocean Accounting, its alignment with international standards, and its applications in linking GDP to ocean ecosystems and services. Highlight case studies and insights from the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP).

3. Case study presentations (20 minutes)

Diverse experts (scientists, policymakers, practitioners) share experiences and challenges in applying Ocean Accounting globally and regionally. Emphasis on innovations like social accounts and examples of equitable valuation.

4. Interactive Breakout Groups (15 minutes)

Small group discussions on specific themes (e.g., linking ecosystem services to GDP, social accounts, regional applications). Facilitators guide discussions, and groups present key points back to the main audience.

5. Closing and Next Steps

Summary of key insights and outcomes from the session. Presentation of deliverables (resource pack, networking opportunities, etc.) and invitation to join GOAP communities of practice.

Voluntary contributions accepted:

Yes, I allow any abstract to be submitted to my session for review

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