

6th ESP Europe Conference

18-22 May 2026 | Prague, Czechia

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: B1a

Coastal and Marine Ecosystem Accounting: gaps, challenges, and future perspectives

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host (s):	Miguel Inácio	Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania	miguel.inacio@mruni.eu
Co-host(s):	Evangelia Drakou	Department of Geography, Harokopio University, Greece	e.drakou@hua.gr
	Miguel Villoslada	Digital Geosciences Lab, University of Eastern Finland, Finland	miguel.villoslada@uef.fi
	Anda Ruskule	Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia	anda.ruskule@bef.lv
	Kristīna Veidemane	Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia	kristina.veidemane@bef.lv
	Francisco R. Barboza	Department of Marine Systems, Estonian Marine Institute, University of Tartu, Estonia	francisco.barboza@ut.ee

Abstract:

Over the past few decades, there has been a growing effort to map, assess, and value coastal and marine ecosystem services (CMES), resulting in a comprehensive body of scientific knowledge, a wide array of tools and methods, case study examples, and guidelines. All this knowledge has been crucial in supporting the implementation of marine policies and directives (e.g., Marine Spatial Planning). However, achieving a nature- and people-positive future for Europe's coastal and marine environments requires strategies that provide a deep understanding of ecosystems and their impact on socio-ecological systems, both spatially and economically. It is necessary to go beyond simply mapping, assessing, and valuing to understand the condition of ecosystems and their capacity to supply CMES and benefits in a sustainable and resilient manner. In this sense, ecosystem accounting offers an opportunity to link the spatial distribution of coastal and marine ecosystems, their condition and the services and benefits they provide.

Coastal and marine ecosystem accounting is a rapidly developing field, primarily driven by the adoption of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA-EA) by the United Nations in 2021, as well as initiatives like those developed under the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP). The SEEA-EA was created as an international framework to quantify ecosystems' contribution to human well-being in a consistent and transparent manner, structured into physical (extent, condition, and services) and monetary (services and assets) ecosystem accounts. The application of SEEA-EA in coastal and marine areas is still in its early stages, with numerous knowledge and data gaps, alongside challenges and pitfalls that must be addressed for its operationalisation. This can be facilitated through capacity and knowledge development by sharing experiences, case studies, methods, and tools.

We invite contributions on methodologies, tools, case studies and best practices, focused on implementing the ecosystem accounting framework in coastal and marine ecosystems across Europe and globally. Contributions are welcome on any of the topics under the SEEA-EA, including ecosystem extent, condition, and ecosystem services (both physical and monetary).

Goals and objectives of the session:

1. Synthesise advances on the implementation of ecosystem accounting in coastal and marine ecosystems.
2. Identify, through case studies and examples, recent advances, gaps, and challenges associated with operationalising ecosystem accounting for coastal and marine ecosystems.
3. Explore policy applications of coastal and marine ecosystem accounting.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Opinion paper on persisting challenges and needs for operationalisation of the SEEA-EA in coastal and marine environments. Organisation of future workshops, webinars or training sessions based on the implementation of ecosystem accounting in the different case studies presented.

Session format:

Introduction (10 min) + Presentations (10 min + 5 min discussion) + roundtable (30 minutes).

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

Related to ESP Working Group:

[BWG 1 – Marine systems](#)