

## SESSION DESCRIPTION

### ID: T17b

Moving forward in ecosystem services accounting: From the monetary valuation barrier to the mainstreaming into policy making

### Hosts:

	Title	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host:		Alessandra La Notte	Joint Research Centre of the European Commission	alelanotte@gmail.com
Co-host(s):		Ioanna Grammatikopoulou	Joint Research Centre of the European Commission	ioanna.grammatikopoulou@ec.europa.eu
		Benjamin Burkhard	Institute of Physical Geography and Landscape Ecology, University of Hannover	burkhard@phygeo.uni-hannover.de
		Soile Oinonen	Finnish Environment Institute	Soile.M.Oinonen@syke.fi

### Abstract:

The sessions of the ESP Thematic Working Group 17 on Ecosystem Services Accounting & Greening the economy have walked a long way. Initial proposals (2017, 2018) were focused on concepts and methodology. Then (2019, 2021) it moved from theory to practice, by encouraging the presentation of concrete applications. This year, the session acknowledges that there is already a critical mass of knowledge on ecosystem accounting and aims to zoom into two specific areas of interest that need further elaboration: a. the monetary valuation of ecosystem services within ecosystem accounting scope, and b. the policy implementation through ecosystem services accounts.

In March 2021, the System of Environmental Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) chapters 1 to 8 have been adopted as standard by the United Nations Statistical Commission. This important achievement concerns extent, condition and ecosystem services accounts in biophysical terms (chapters 1 to 8 in SEEA EA). The rest of the framework that refers to the monetary part of the ecosystem accounts (i.e. chapters 8 to 11) is just recognized but not adopted as an international standard. Certain concerns and knowledge gaps remain for the methodological applications in monetary valuation and for the policy relevance of terrestrial and marine ecosystem accounts. Hence, adoption of the full SEEA EA is pending.

On the one hand, this standard sets a milestone in the way ecosystems and ecosystem services gain (well deserved) room and importance within integrated accounting systems. The “experimental” phase is closed and now countries all around the world are legitimate to test, apply and implement the international accounting standard.

On the other hand, two important components are left behind:

1. Ecosystem services accounts in monetary terms;
2. Mainstreaming of natural capital accounts into policy making

### Goals and objectives of the session:

The first sub-session will focus on contributions of empirical studies that demonstrate the performance of monetary valuation methods for assessing specific ecosystem services. Findings of the studies should be presented in the context of terrestrial and/or marine ecosystem accounting, even if ecosystem accounting context is outside the scope of the study objective. The session will not cover methodological challenges per se (e.g. advanced econometric models). It rather aims to show how monetary valuation works in practice. The session will thus address the following questions:

- How did the selected monetary valuation method perform compared to other similar applications of the same method of assessing the same ecosystem services?
- How did the selected monetary valuation method perform compared to other valuation methods for assessing the same ecosystem service?
- How well did the monetary valuation method perform in relation to the biophysical assessment of the same ES (alignment of monetary to biophysical metrics)
- Are there certain indicators or criteria that can help us to decide whether the method is eligible for use in ecosystem accounting or not?
- Was the monetary valuation performed using certain tools (e.g. ARIES)? How did the tool perform?

The second sub-session on policy-making will welcome contributions that address case studies of terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystem accounting uses. Specifically, the mainstreaming of natural capital accounts into policy and private decision-making may concern:

- the integration of ecosystem accounts into already existing economic and financial tools which already have a well-settled course of action,
- the development of new tools that do not pass through the economic and financial conventional streams, or
- the role of both (settled and/or new) tools with respect to the transformative change that our society needs in order to tackle current crises.
- the potential of ecosystem accounts in demonstrating nexus (interlinkages) between sectoral policies e.g. water, food, energy, biodiversity

To demonstrate the usefulness of natural capital accounts remains a weakness of the whole system and seems to be one of the main reasons why many potential practitioners do not

actively engage. We encourage particularly (but not only) submissions concerning transformative change, sustainable finance or integration with economic modelling.

**Planned output / Deliverables:**

Two kinds of deliverable can be proposed:

- a JRC technical report collecting all contributions for interested authors;
- a Special Issue/Topical Collection open to the session presenters.

**Session format:**

Standard session (presentations)

**Voluntary contributions accepted:**

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

**Related to ESP Working Group/National Network:**

[Thematic Working Groups: TWG 17 – ES Accounting & Greening the economy](#)