

Strengthening statistical capacities to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member countries



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Project evaluation report

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Expanded Form
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
ANCA	Advancing Natural Capital Accounting
APFSD	Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
APRU	Association of Pacific Rim Universities
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
EA	Expected Accomplishment
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	United Nations Economic Commission of Europe
ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EEA	Experimental Ecosystem Accounting
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia?
FAO	The Food and Agriculture Organization
FDES	Framework for Development of Environmental Statistics
GOAP	Global Ocean Accounts Partnership
GEO	Group on Earth Observation
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NCAVES	Natural Capital Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services
NOAA	The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Institute
NSO	National Statistical Organisation
OECD	The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEEA	System of Environmental Economic Accounting
SPC	The Pacific Community
SPREP	The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TSA	Tourism Satellite Accounts
UNCEEA	UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UNSC	United Nations Statistics Commission
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
USP	University of the South Pacific
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
WIO	Western Indian Ocean
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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Executive Summary

The importance of the oceans in the Agenda for Sustainable Development is reflected in the inclusion of an exclusive goal for the oceans (SDG 14 'Life under water') among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The ten SDG 14 indicators have linkages with measures of ocean ecosystem condition (quality of marine water, nutrients, fish production, biodiversity, etc.). Ocean accounts involve compilation and monitoring of data that can be used to report against several SDG indicators (covering besides SDG 14, 15, 2, 9, 13).

The Development Account project "Strengthening statistical capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member countries" with a focus on developing technical guidance for and piloting ocean accounts aims to fulfil a global gap: the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) does not presently have a statistical standard for ocean accounting (unlike for other themes such as land, energy, waste).

To place the project in relation to the final goal of supporting selected countries in achieving SDG 14, the evaluation developed a theory of change that shows several intermediate outcomes to lie beyond the project's scope and influence. The trade-offs between economic gains from resource exploitation and the sustainable regeneration of ocean ecosystem assets involve significant political economy pressures, and these are beyond the influence of the project as designed. However, ocean accounts can help build the narratives on the ecosystem condition, pressures and drivers, to help the policy decisions and addressing the inherent trade-offs.

Conclusions

This evaluation concludes that the project was largely successful in meeting its objectives to strengthen statistical capacities to achieve (through support for collection and use of statistics on ocean) SDG 14 in selected countries in Asia and the Pacific.

The project has made **a leading contribution to develop the concepts and technical guidance on ocean accounts** as a theme of the SEEA-EEA framework. It has led to enhanced stakeholder understanding of the relevance and utility of ocean accounting, extending beyond statisticians and scientists to policy makers. The project demonstrated promising results in its five pilots, and led to an increased demand for similar support to other countries in the region. It has also initiated and seed-funded the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, a (regional/global) knowledge network on ocean accounts comprising policy makers, ocean scientists, environmental statisticians and experts in other domains.

The key factors of the project's performance and contributions were: ESCAP's mandate and role as regional commission in supporting member countries develop quality environmental statistics and monitor and report progress against relevant SDG and CBD targets; ESCAP's established institutional relationships with member countries'- especially national statistical agencies, who are primary stakeholders in mainstreaming ocean accounts for ocean policies and environmental governance; ESCAP's high convening power (as a UN regional commission) engendering the participation of diverse stakeholders from government, academia, inter-governmental and non-governmental agencies; Partnerships with experts, research institutions, academia (including many pro bono contributors) to evolve authoritative technical guidance and practice on ocean accounts.

Areas that remained weak in the project and limited the project's results effectiveness are: absence of a comprehensive communications strategy for dissemination of the

results and demonstrating use cases for ocean accounts; and non-explicit engagement with the global EEA revision process and calendar towards finalizing texts for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems chapters.

Relevance

The project responded to an important priority need of several member countries: gaps in capacities to monitor SDG 14, the need for ocean accounts and the challenges in adapting environmental accounting frameworks to ocean accounting. ESCAP undertook a systematic, multi-step needs and capacities assessment to identify the needs and priorities of beneficiaries of the project. There is considerable evidence of wide consultation with stakeholders and due deliberation in the identification of priorities in all pilots. The project also responded to observation in the ECOSOC Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) review of regional commissions including their statistical work (in 2017)¹ that regional commissions allocated far lower resources towards support to environmental statistics compared to economic and social statistics.

An important element of the project design was the flexibility in selection of themes and non-imposition of rigid formats and structures for the pilot themes, which allowed for experimentation and adaptation of the framework by implementing institutions. The varied experiences from the pilots enriched the technical guidance.

Effectiveness

The project fully achieved two of its three Expected Accomplishments (EA). For the third EA (enhanced capacity for application of ocean accounting for policy analysis) while there are positive indications of the enhanced capacity for ocean accounting, an assessment of policy analysis resulting from the pilots (which by themselves are not comprehensive or multisectoral at this stage) is premature to be done within the duration of the project. The maturity of the pilots and the resources for upscaling vary among the five countries, thus the likelihood of EA3 is not uniform across countries.

The formal inclusion of the technical guidance in the Marine Eco Systems Chapter of the EEA revision is a significant milestone towards long-term impact of the project. Even though ESCAP and UNEP have volunteered to lead the guidance on ocean accounts, the project's engagement with the EEA revision calendar and processes has not been explicit. Also, while the project has delivered good results and lessons, the absence of a communications strategy and budgets for target communication to diverse stakeholders limited its outreach.

Efficiency

All activities have been completed within a rather short implementation period (15 months). This is commendable given that the implementation was spread across different countries. All the pilots completed their scoped activities and were able to present early results at the regional workshop. Timely backstopping by ESCAP in pilot countries was an important element ensuring timely completion. The project received significant amounts of in-kind contributions (ESCAP's contributions to the preparatory phase, *pro bono* engagement of experts, engagement of national experts for pilots, etc.) that strengthened the project's results delivery.

¹ E/AC.52/2017/8 The evaluation document was shared by the Director of ESCAP Statistics Division

Sustainability

The project ensured a high level of country ownership, confirmed by national stakeholders from several (pilot and non-pilot) countries in the form of ‘intent to use’ statements and specific work plan commitments at institutional level. The technical guidance and the pilot accounts have provided the tools and experience to carry on and upscale the scope of accounts in the five countries.

The continued involvement of ESCAP in support to member countries in the domain of environmental statistics and ongoing engagement with the EEA revision process and the establishment of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership ensure continued support towards ocean accounting. With the increasing donor interest in supporting more pilots, ESCAP has prospects for follow-on programmes.

The final shape, scope and detailing of Marine Ecosystems in the EEA revision, and eventually a formal guidance document on Oceans Thematic Accounts have the power to accelerate adoption of ocean accounts reporting by countries and also promote aggregation and comparative assessments of progress across countries. However, this is not within the project’s influence.

Gender

The nature of the project offers limited scope for gender mainstreaming in substantive aspects; although the emphasis on age and sex disaggregated data exists in all global statistics initiatives including in the SDGs and is also implicit in ocean accounts sub-headings (economic, social and ecosystem service provision and usage aspects). Other aspects such as the gender balance in the project’s activities have not been explicitly highlighted.

Lessons

The project has demonstrated or reinforced the following lessons in respect of successful design and implementation of development account projects.

- Needs Assessments and Stakeholder Consultation ensure stronger ownership
- Oceans are multidisciplinary, not the remit of only environmental statisticians
- Political motivation and leadership is key; engagement with policy makers necessary to advance the agenda
- Modest beginnings based on scant data are more useful than inaction
- Targeted communications play a key role in advancing the agenda and adoption of successful practices

Recommendations

The evaluation makes three recommendations for action by ESCAP:

- ESCAP should, as co-Chair of the GOAP and in collaboration with relevant partners, ensure that the Technical Guidance is finalized.
- ESCAP, as Co-Chair of the GOAP in 2020, should design and disseminate targeted Communications and Guidance products aimed at different stakeholders drawing from the project’s results.
- ESCAP, in collaboration with partners, should develop a follow-on regional project proposal for ‘Building and Using Ocean Accounts to monitor SDG 14’

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The project ‘Strengthening Statistical Capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member countries’ is a UN Development Account projects approved under Tranche 11 (Project ID: 1819BC), implemented by ESCAP (one of the DA’s ten implementing entities) during 2018-2019 and is nearing completion. All DA projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation at the end of the project and hence this evaluation. The evaluation was conducted during Nov-Dec 2019. The target users of the evaluation results include the ESCAP management and staff, donor and member States of ESCAP. The detailed term of reference of the evaluation is provided to the appears as Annex 1.

1.2 Purpose, objectives and scope

This Development Account project aims to further the establishment of national, regional and international partnerships to strengthen governance, data and statistics for SDG14 and other ocean-related targets in the Asia Pacific region, building on ESCAP’s experience in supporting member States to produce environment statistics.

1.3 Scope and Evaluation Questions

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Assess the performance the project against evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and gender and human rights mainstreaming
- Formulate lessons learned and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision- making and improve future project design and implementation.

The main evaluation criteria proposed are: Relevance, Effectiveness, and Sustainability. Impact is not assessed as sufficiently explained in the UNDA Project evaluation guidelines (para 46): ‘the criterion of impact proves usually less applicable to DA projects as results in terms of effects on people would usually only be assessable sometime after the phasing out of the project, with a variety of other intervening factors playing a role, and given the limited budget and time frame of DA projects, they cannot necessarily be expected to show impact level changes.’ The evaluation also examined efficiency (through the lens of partnership synergies), and gender equity.

In line with the DA guidelines recommending a limited number of questions (six or seven main questions), the evaluation enlisted seven main questions addressing the three major criteria of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, complemented by six questions covering other aspects prescribed by the DA guidelines – partnerships, SDGs, human rights and gender equality, and innovation. Table 2 below. A detailed evaluation matrix around these questions is presented as Annex 4. While these questions guided the data collection and analysis, the report texts are not structured question by question, and findings and conclusions are presented by the main evaluation criteria as required. However, Annex 7 presents a table of references in the report texts to each evaluation question in Table 2.

Table 2. Evaluation Questions by criteria

Criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance	How were the needs and requirements of the project beneficiaries assessed and incorporated in the project design and implementation?

	To what extent did the project beneficiaries find the project outputs met their needs and tailored to their national context? What could have been done better to improve the relevance of the project design and implementation?
Effectiveness	To what extent have project beneficiaries been able to make use of learnings from the project and changed the way they conduct their work in order to enhance results? What outcome results were achieved and the key factors responsible for their achievement? What could have been done better to improve the effectiveness of the project design and implementation?
Sustainability	Did the project include a plan or approach to continue, upscale and replicate the results, and how has this been implemented? Have the pilot countries put in place institutional mechanisms and articulated action plans to continue the methodologies and practices for oceans accounting? Has the project identified partners and funding arrangements that will enable continuation and advancing the achievements of the project?
Efficiency	To what extent did the project achieve efficiency through comparative advantages and synergies of implementing agencies and partners?
2030 agenda and SDGs	How has the project contributed to improve the availability and quality of statistical data for monitoring and reporting on SDG 14?
Partnerships	To what extent has partnering with other organizations enabled or enhance reaching of results?
Human rights and gender equality	To what extent has the project contributed to human rights and gender related objectives and to SDG 5 and gender objectives in other SDGs? Did the project have specific gender equality targets in its results frameworks?
Innovation	Did the project evolve any innovative aspects that proved successful? How can these be upscaled and replicated with funding from outside the DA?

Source: based on the guidance in UNDA Guidelines Oct 2019

Evaluation Ratings: ESCAP guidelines require terminal evaluations to provide ratings using a five-point scale (very low to very high), for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and gender. The evaluation used four descriptors for each of the criteria (broadly related to the evaluation sub-questions) in order to substantiate the ratings. These descriptors were assigned relative weights in accordance to their importance as deemed by the evaluator in contributing to the score. Fig 1. shows the weights for each evaluation criterion.

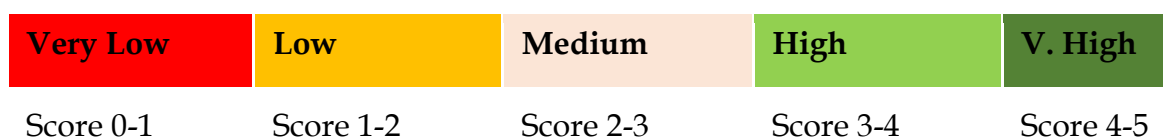




Fig 1. Weights for Ratings of evaluation criteria

1.4 Data Collection

Inception phase: The inception phase included a desk review of relevant documents prepared in the project, and other relevant materials to assist the evaluation in framing the project in relation to the broader context. A list of over 70 documents perused appears in Annex 5.

Key informant interviews: The evaluation had face to face interviews with the teams that conducted pilot studies in the five countries, besides several other delegates and experts attending the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership Dialogue Event in Sydney. Also, the evaluation interviewed ESCAP staff, UNSW, World Bank and WWF. Besides, Skype interview was held with a relevant officer at UNEP. Attempts to contact UNSC remained futile, with no response to three email requests.

Questionnaire survey: A questionnaire consisting of was administered to all attendees of the GOAP Dialogue, and drew responses from 44 attendees including pilot countries, expert contributors and other delegates. The questionnaire appears in Annex 6.

1.5 Limitations

The evaluation is based on the following premises: a) ocean accounts or equivalent approaches are essential for systematic diagnosis and will be required for countries to systematically identify and implement priority actions; b) that supported by technical guidance, Asia and Pacific countries will be able to adopt Ocean Accounts as the standard or preferred tool to support monitoring and policy decisions; b) there are no competing methodologies or approaches for environmental statistics on oceans being developed by other authoritative entities. Based on the desk reviews, these premises appear to be prima facie valid, and therefore, the basis of the project design is not examined ab initio. These aspects will be reconfirmed in the interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The evaluator is not a statistical expert or an oceans expert, and the findings and conclusions will represent the views of an evaluator who is adequately conversant with the SDGs including SDG 14 rather than those of a domain expert. Therefore, the issue of whether the Oceans Account methodology advanced by ESCAP and its partners in the project is the most effective and pragmatic one compared to other alternatives, or even

the extent of its convergence with the Framework of Development of Environmental Statistics (FDES) is not an issue within the competence of the evaluator. To arrive at conclusions on these areas, the evaluator shall seek and be reliant on the opinions of experts involved in the project and a selection of other agencies closely associated with the development of SDG indicators and other methodologies for environmental and natural resource accounting.

The findings of the evaluation are based mostly on the discussions with persons conversant with the project: these were mainly the participants in the project's activities whether as expert contributors or as direct beneficiaries of the training and pilot studies. A large part of the evaluation's primary information came from interactions at the congregation of project beneficiaries and experts for the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership dialogue event in Sydney in Nov 2019. There is a likelihood of positive bias in the perceptions gathered in the face to face interviews and the questionnaire survey administered to participants at the event.

2. Subject of the Evaluation

2.1 Project Results Chain

The project ‘Strengthening Statistical Capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member countries’ is a UN Development Account projects approved under Tranche 11(Project ID: 1819BC), implemented by ESCAP (one of the DA’s ten implementing entities) during 2018-2019 and is nearing completion. All DA projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation at the end of the project and hence this evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted during Nov-Dec 2019. The target users of the evaluation results include the ESCAP management and staff, donor and member States of ESCAP.

The project’s principal focus is to pilot the development of priority Ocean Accounts, based on ESCAP’s existing initiative to adapt the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) for ocean assets and ecosystems². Ocean accounts support monitoring and assessments such as the contribution of the ocean to the economy, the beneficiaries of ocean resources, the costs and benefits of rehabilitation and protection, and the main sources of land-based pollution. Ocean accounts also provide useful information for other SDG indicators, such as SDGs 1, 5 and 10, SDG 8, SDG 11, SDG 12 and SDG 13.

The project’s expected accomplishments are:

- EA1. Enhanced partnerships among international, regional and national stakeholders- agreed on statistical framework standardisation of oceans accounting and application for sustainable management of oceans and marine resources
- EA2: Enhanced technical capacities of beneficiary countries to regularly produce a coherent set of ocean accounts
- EA3: Enhanced capacity [of beneficiary countries] to apply ocean accounts for policy analysis and effective governance actions

The project aims to attain these by: providing reliable technical guidance documentation on ocean accounts; supporting pilot studies in countries; and documenting results in a regional knowledge platform. The Project Results Framework is attached as Annex 2.

The project is implemented by ESCAP (led by Statistics Division, and supported by the Environment and Development Division and the Pacific Office). Pilot accounts were conducted in five countries: China, Malaysia, Samoa, Thailand and Vietnam. The project was implemented over 15 months with a budget of around USD 550,000 (Table 1).

Table1. Project initial budget as in project document and final budget (after reallocation)

Expense head	Budget USD	Actual USD
Project coordination	43500	28800
International consultants	282700	267000

² Ocean Accounts” are an application and extension of the SEEA for integrating data on drivers of change, ocean assets including ecosystems, their condition, the services they provide beyond economic benefits and policy mechanisms to sustainably manage the ocean. See **Annex 3** for a more detailed explanation.

Individual and other contractual services		33500
ESCAP staff travel	84000	75400
General operating expenses and equipment	4600	
Grants (regional workshop coordination, includes travel for some delegates)	135040	145140
Total	549840	549840

Source: Project Document

The project document (Table 3, Section 4.2 of Pro Doc) contains a logic framework with a formulation of an Objective, three Expected Accomplishments [within the project timeline], six indicators of accomplishment, and nine activities. The expected accomplishments and indicators are summarized below in Box 1.

Box 1. Project Results Framework

Objective: To **strengthen national capacities** of selected developing countries in the ESCAP region on **ocean data and statistics** to improve the **sustainable management** of the ocean and marine resources.

Expected accomplishments

EA1: Enhanced partnerships among international, regional and national stakeholders **focusing on an agreed statistical framework for the standardization of ocean-related statistics and their application to the sustainable management of oceans.**

- **IA1.1:** An international partnership on ocean accounts to collaborate on a statistical guidance document, regional ocean accounts platform and future implementations of ocean accounts.
- **IA1.2:** Five member countries have improved access to global and regional ocean-related data and guidelines to produce national ocean accounts, as made available through enhanced partnerships.

EA2: Enhanced technical capacity of beneficiary countries to regularly produce a coherent set of priority ocean statistics (ocean accounts).

- **IA2.1:** Five member countries produce (or if existing, enhance) work plans to develop a core set of relevant standardized ocean accounts.
- **IA2.2:** Five member countries report enhanced engagement between national departments, international agencies and other stakeholders to share, compile and use relevant ocean accounts.
- **IA2.3:** Five member countries share knowledge on how they use ocean accounts for policy analysis at the closing workshop.

EA3: Enhanced capacity to apply ocean accounts for policy analysis for the sustainable management of ocean resources

- **IA3.1:** Five member countries report incorporating ocean accounts into subsequent policy analyses.

2.1.1 Key Outputs

The key activities and milestones in the project's implementation are summarized below. These are analysed in necessary detail in Chapter 3.

Regional Capacity Assessment. In 2018, ESCAP undertook a Regional Capacity Assessment-³ consisting of an online survey and interviews of national (30) and international (30) experts in ocean science, statistics and policy makers to assess readiness and capacities related to SDG 14.

First Regional Expert Workshop: The first **Asia and the Pacific Regional Expert Workshop on Ocean Accounts** in Bangkok on 1-3 August 2018 had 85 participants, including experts in ocean statistics, science, and policy from national governments and research institutions as well as regional and international organizations. Another 37 experts who were interested, but unable to attend, contributed to the development of issue papers and will continue contributing to the resulting guidance documents. was instrumental in preparing the ground for countries to consider and deliberate collectively on actionable approaches to ocean accounting.

Five pilot account studies. the ESCAP assisted accounting pilots in five countries- China, Malaysia, Samoa, Thailand and Vietnam.

The **Second Regional Expert Workshop, the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) Dialogue** in Nov 2019, brought together over 100 experts (statisticians, economists, ocean scientists and ministerial officials) from 22 countries.

Global Ocean Accounts Partnership. The project also facilitated the establishment of the **Global Ocean Accounts Partnership**, a group of diverse member institutions aiming to serve as a regional technical platform to support ocean accounting. Hosted by ESCAP and the UNSW, GOAP is a formal entity, presently consists of eight members and is open to national governments, intergovernmental institutions, private sector bodies, and formal not-for-profit research institutions with commitment to support sustainable development of the ocean.

2.2 Theory of change

Ocean accounts involve compilation and monitoring of data that can be used to report against several SDG indicators (covering besides SDG 14, 15, 2, 9, 13). The ten SDG 14 indicators have linkages with measures of ocean ecosystem condition (quality of marine water, nutrients, fish production, biodiversity, etc.) that are reported in ocean accounts under the heads of Asset, Condition, Services, Drivers and Governance.

The core logic of the intervention is to develop a statistical guidance document through an international partnership and expert network, pilot the guidance to develop illustrative ocean accounts in five countries, and demonstrate the usefulness of ocean accounts to address key issues (economic, social and environmental) related to the ocean at national and international level. This is expected to help countries in: assessing policy priorities that could be addressed with available data, compiling bespoke ocean accounts (focusing on the priority areas), and monitoring/reporting on progress in improving the

³ Assessment of Capacity Development Needs of countries in Asia and Pacific for implementation of SDG 14

https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP%20Ocean%20Assessment_1.pdf

state of the ocean and its sustainable use, as reflected in SDG 14 and other related indicators.

The project's focus on developing technical guidance for and piloting ocean accounts aims to fulfil a global gap: The System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) does not presently have a statistical standard for ocean accounting (unlike for other themes such as land, energy, waste).

To place the project in relation to the final goal of supporting selected countries in achieving SDG 14, the evaluation developed a theory of change that identifies:

- outcome pathways from the project linking to SDG targets through intermediate outcome states;
- key drivers of change influencing intermediate outcomes, and
- key assumptions determining intermediate outcomes

A schematic of the Theory of Change was presented in the Inception Report and reproduced below as Fig 2. As can be observed, several intermediate outcomes lie beyond the project's scope and influence. The trade-offs between economic gains from resource exploitation and the sustainable regeneration of ocean ecosystem assets involve significant political economy pressures, and these are beyond the influence of the project as designed. However, ocean accounts can help build the narratives on the ecosystem condition, pressures and drivers, to help the policy decisions and addressing the inherent trade-offs.

The translation of the knowledge and capacities developed through the project into results towards SDG targets depends on:

- endorsement/ incorporation of the technical guidance in the updated SEEA -EEA guidelines
- mainstreaming of ocean accounting in national environmental accounting mechanisms and setting priority targets linked to SDG indicators
- due investments by countries in institutional and governance mechanisms for improving ocean resources and their sustainable use



Figure 2. Theory of Change for 1819 BC, constructed by the evaluator

3. Findings

3.1 Performance Assessment

3.1.1 Relevance

As portrayed in Fig 2, the evaluation's assessment of Relevance draws on four dimensions: alignment with context, responsiveness to needs, and quality of design in terms of adaptiveness and flexibility.

3.1.1.1 Alignment with context-Rationale for Prioritizing Ocean Accounts

The First World Ocean Assessment (2016, UNDOALOS) notes the state of decline in the ocean health, with the loss or erosion of productive habitats from coastlines (mangroves), coastal shallows (corals and seagrass), open ocean and deep seas (ocean benthos) as a result of extractive and non-extractive activities at local and global scales. In addition, the growth of the human population compounds the stress on ocean ecosystem services.

At the global level, the 2030 Agenda and SDG 14 offer a framework for how countries can conserve, restore and sustainably use the ocean, seas and marine resources for development. The high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development' (convened in June 2017) led to countries making a number of voluntary commitments for the implementation of Goal 14, registered in the Ocean Conference Registry of Commitments. The most frequently addressed targets were 14.2, 14.1, and 14.a. (Fig 3).

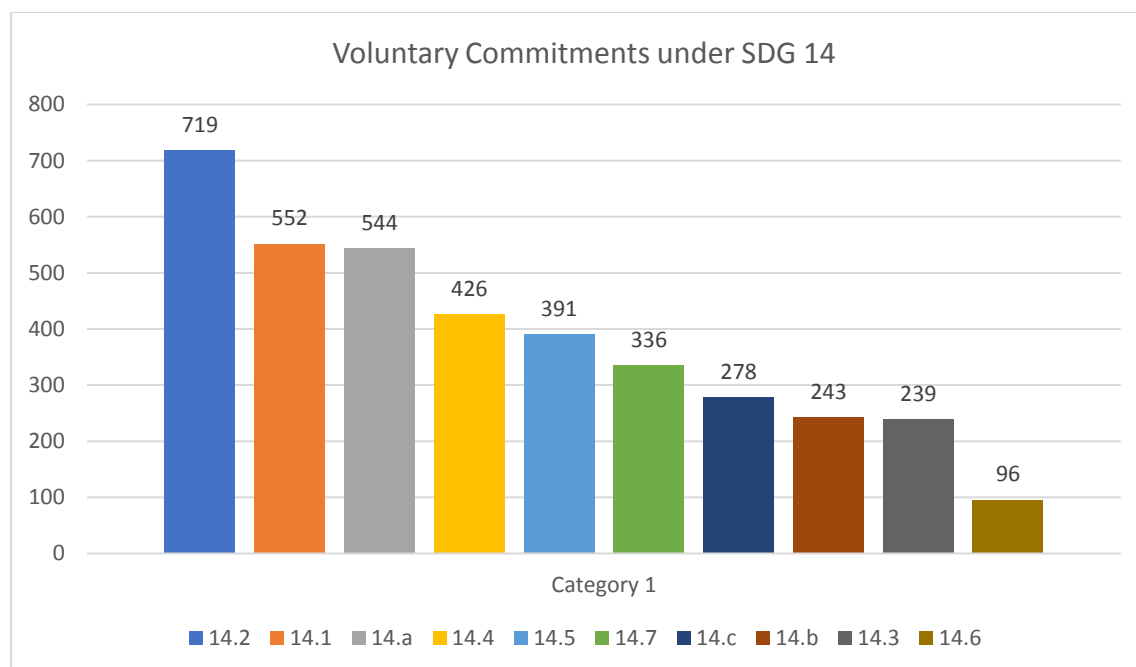


Fig 3. SDG 14 commitments

Source: Analysis of Ocean Conference Voluntary Commitments, 2017

Several Asia Pacific countries have prioritized SDG 14 in their Agenda 2030 implementation plans and thus readying to monitor and report on at least a selection of SDG 14 indicators. Also, in respect of biodiversity conservation, SDG 15.9 targets by 2020, to integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts. Countries have

undertaken to monitor and report progress towards national targets established in accordance with Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020. These require systematic collection, analysis and reporting of environmental statistics.

Although substantial information exists on the ocean and its resources, (a) the countries with the greatest need have the least capacity to access and apply this information in their policy decisions and (b) the information is fragmented among numerous institutions nationally, regionally and internationally. There is no standard approach for integrating diverse data on the ocean and no forum for the regional exchange of information and best practices on integrated ocean statistics and policies.

The international statistical standard System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) has proven instrumental in harmonizing and prioritizing collection of environmental statistics in other domains (land, water, energy, waste, ecosystems). SEEA sets out internationally agreed standard concepts, definitions, classifications, accounting rules and tables. ESCAP and its partners have supported member states to implement SEEA in the region.

The SEEA Central Framework has gained ground internationally and is now being applied and thematic accounts are reported by more than 50 countries. However its application to ocean environments has been limited to date and presents a range of conceptual and technical challenges (e.g. concerning the classification of ocean ecosystems and associated benefits, across large and dynamic spatial scales). These are further complicated by the practical importance of interlinking environmental and various socioeconomic statistics (e.g. concerning ocean livelihoods, poverty, disaster risk and climate change), and structured information about the status of characteristics of oceans governance, that fall beyond the core scope of the SEEA framework⁴.

Ocean Accounts are fundamentally a collection of tables and supporting data structures that are organised in terms of a conceptual framework that describes: interactions between the economy and the environment, the stocks and changes in stocks of environmental assets (natural capital) that provide benefits to people, and social and governance factors affecting the status and condition of environmental assets and associated benefits.

Ecosystem accounting. In 2013, the UNSC released an Experimental Ecosystem Accounting manual (SEEA -EEA), which has since been used by several government agencies, environment NGOs and environment statisticians. Based on technical recommendations, the EEA manual is slated to be revised in 2021, as a definitive guidance document (no longer experimental) for ecosystem accounting. The processes toward the revision are under way, and the revised manual will include a chapter on Coastal and Marine Ecosystems.

The United Nations Statistical Commission⁵ accepted ESCAP and UN Environment's offer to lead the development and testing of the SEEA Ocean Accounts as an input to the SEEA revision for 2020. Progress will be reported through the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEE) in 2019.

⁴ Adapted from explanations in the Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounts

⁵ 6-9 March, 2018; <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/49th-session/documents/>

3.1.1.2 ESCAP Mandate and Comparative advantage

Statistics is a key domain of ESCAP's role as a regional commission, which includes activities to strengthen capacity of MS to produce, use and disseminate official stats and also provide regional platforms for sharing experiences and practices in statistics work. ESCAP assists member states in adapting, implementing and measuring progress toward implementation of NDPs, influences quality of statistics and methodologies, innovative and new methodologies and sources of data, which are set or endorsed by the UN Statistics Commission at the global level.

With the adoption of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, this role also specifically touches on support to measurement, monitoring and reporting of progress towards the SDGs. Resolution 72/6 of ESCAP on "Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific" that requests ESCAP (inter alia) to: "*Strengthen support to member States in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda in an integrated approach, inter alia, with analytical products, technical services and capacity-building initiatives through knowledge-sharing products and platforms, and to enhance data and statistical capacities*".

A thematic evaluation of the regional commissions by the ECOSOC Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) including their statistical work (in 2017)⁶ found that: Regional commissions have been largely responsive to the statistical support needs of Member States. preparation for the post-2015 development agenda, and promoted dialogue and decision-making and facilitated the adoption of regional positions that were subsequently presented and used by Member States in the negotiation process of the 2030 Agenda. Regional commissions have forged consensus on significant statistical issues, which has contributed to the strengthening of national statistical systems. Regional commissions have effectively enhanced the capacities of Member States to produce high-quality statistics and there was positive feedback from MS in this regard; however, the support on dissemination and use of statistics has been less effective.

With regard to environmental statistics in particular, regional commissions have undertaken a range of thematic interventions relating to the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (ECE, ESCAP, ECLAC and ECA), emissions and waste-related statistics (ECE), the energy efficiency indicators database (ECLAC), water and energy statistics (ESCWA) and disaster risk reduction data (ECLAC, ECE and ESCAP). However, there has been more capacity-building and technical assistance on economic and social statistics than on **environmental statistics, which accounted for only 10 per cent of the overall statistical support provided**. This is worthy of note considering **environmental statistics are required for compiling indicators on nearly half of the Sustainable Development Goals**. The lack of global statistical guidance is also reflected in the SEEA Research Agenda⁷ as an area of high priority.

ESCAP is a lead convener of regional dialogue and policy advice, and a knowledge hub for policy analysis, capacity development and strengthening of statistical systems. ESCAP's multi-disciplinary focus, extensive expertise on issues of environmental governance, multi-stakeholder engagement and wide network of regional partners including the national statistical agencies of member countries, environmental statisticians and experts, and collaboration with several UN entities, provide it with a high convening power in the region to engage in development of international technical guidance on emerging areas of environmental statistics. ESCAP has been collaborating

⁶ E/AC.52/2017/8 The evaluation document was shared by the Director of ESCAP Statistics Division

⁷ See, for example: https://seea.un.org/sites/seea.un.org/files/area_b2_-_progress_and_next_steps.pdf

with UN Environment on methodologies for the three SDG14 indicators for which they are custodian (14.1.1, 14.2.1 and 14.3.1).

3.1.1.3 Responsiveness to needs

ESCAP undertook a systematic, multi-step needs and capacities assessment to identify the needs and priorities of beneficiaries of the project. There is considerable evidence of wide consultation with stakeholders and due deliberation in the identification of priorities in all pilots.

As part of its role, ESCAP convenes a pre-eminent regional inter-governmental platform for the follow up and review of SDG implementation in Asia and the Pacific – the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD). At the APFSD event in 2017, ESCAP member States explicitly acknowledged ocean's role in management of natural resources in attaining the SDGs and the importance of engaging local governments and other stakeholders. Countries indicating coastal, marine or ocean-related priorities were: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Hong Kong China, Indonesia, Iran, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Lao PDR, the Maldives, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Viet Nam and Vanuatu. It is likely the demand for improved ocean statistics is greater since not all countries responded, and the response represents the findings of a small interdepartmental statistical working group.

In 2018, ESCAP undertook a Regional Capacity Assessment⁸ consisting of an online survey and interviews of national (30) and international (30) experts in ocean science, statistics and policy makers to assess readiness and capacities related to SDG 14. This assessment was in response to ESCAP Resolution 72/9⁹ requesting ' ESCAP to undertake an assessment of capacity development needs of the countries in Asia and the Pacific for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in collaboration with United Nations specialized agencies and international, regional and sub-regional organizations'. The results, presented at the Asia and Pacific Regional Expert Workshop on Ocean Accounts (the first of two workshops in this project) brought out that:

- Although 92% of respondents indicated that SDG14 is a national priority, only 72% indicated that specific institutional mechanisms were in place to address it.
- Only 13% indicated the country had significant capacity to address the challenges of SDG14.
- Although 70% indicated that stakeholders were involved in the decision making process through community consultations, 60% believed that public awareness of ocean policy was inadequate.

The main **obstacles to effective coordination** (in rank order) were: Overlapping, unclear, non-existing allocation of responsibilities; Lack of technical capacities; Limited financial resources; and Difficult implementation of central government decisions at local and regional⁹ level . The **main governance challenges** for ocean policy were: Local and regional governments' capacity to design/implement ocean policies; Horizontal coordination across ministries; Enforcement of environmental/sectoral norms; and vertical coordination between levels of government The **most important capacity-**

⁸ Assessment of Capacity Development Needs of countries in Asia and Pacific for implementation of SDG 14

https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP%20Ocean%20Assessment_1.pdf

⁹ E/ESCAP/RES/72/9:

building needs were: Skilled human resources; Legal framework, regulation and enforcement ; Access to data and data management; International guidance and connecting to regional/ international support; and access to funding.

The assessment suggested that ESCAP and its partners could **facilitate** implementation of SDG14 by: **enhancing technical capacity** (through focussed training), **strengthening governance** (mandates and policies) and partnerships (coordination), supporting the **capacity to produce and use statistics** (by providing guidance materials and expert technical advice), and supporting awareness-building and stakeholder engagement.

Besides the regional assessment, ESCAP also applied its (desk-based) **Diagnostic Tool for Environment Statistics** in eight countries: China, Bangladesh, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Samoa and Thailand; these were the candidate pilot countries for ocean accounts. The purpose of the Diagnosis was to establish a shared understanding and acceptance of the national vision, policy priorities, stakeholder mapping, institutional mechanisms data and statistics, and international cooperation, to inform the priority themes and accounts.

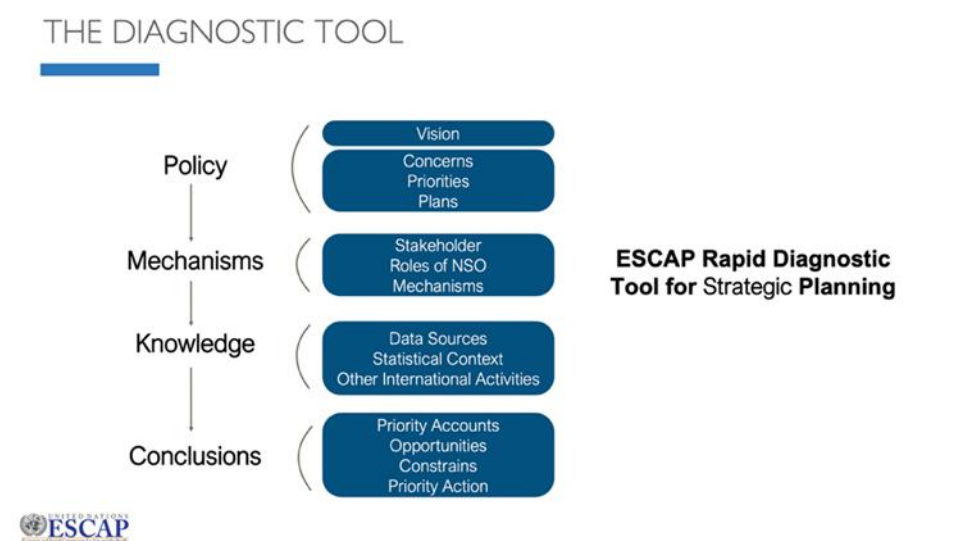


Fig 4. ESCAP Rapid Diagnostic Tool applied for candidate countries

The key messages from the diagnostics were: the ocean is not specifically addressed by all countries in their environment and sustainability assessments; loss of habitat and biodiversity, pollution and climate change impacts are the most common concerns; IUU fishing (south east Asia) and natural disasters (Pacific) are important sub regional issues; in most countries, national statistical organisations (NSOs) coordinate with national environmental authorities for environmental statistics; and specific intergovernmental mechanisms for ocean governance exist only in a few countries (China, Thailand, Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu). Data related to the ocean are collected by many sources, separately.

This preliminary diagnostic did not set priorities, it only provided a preliminary outline of the context, issues and stakeholders. In the five pilot countries selected (China, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Samoa), information from the diagnostics was supplemented by stakeholder dialogue to prioritize statistics to be strengthened, and set the basis for a discussion on constraints and opportunities for producing these statistics. The selection of thematic priorities for ocean account pilots was done through scoping missions and national multi-stakeholder workshops. Pilot themes were selected through deliberations and, in some cases, by voting among alternatives.

The evaluation noted that a similar regional assessment and capacity building had been conducted in the Pacific sub region by ESCAP Pacific Office, for the implementation of SEEA. This included a Pacific regional training programme on SEEA, 2016, Fiji, detailed assessment missions to FSM, Fiji, Palau, Samoa and Vanuatu, and support missions to compile identified accounts (energy, water and solid waste).

Addressing thematic issues in ocean accounting

The first **Asia and the Pacific Regional Expert Workshop on Ocean Accounts** in Bangkok on 1-3 August 2018 was instrumental in preparing the ground for countries to consider and deliberate collectively on actionable approaches to ocean accounting.

While the SEEA framework has been around for more than twenty years and thematic accounts have been developed for land, water, a similar framework has not been developed for the ocean ecosystem. The project, through the deliberations by experts, threw light on several issues that differentiate the ocean from other thematic areas of the SEEA. The key distinctions are that: it is three dimensional (several layers with distinct features); a large part of it is beyond national jurisdictions; it houses highly migratory assets and exhibits large seasonal variations, and has complex interactions with land and freshwater ecosystems and the atmosphere, which affect its condition.

From a national perspective, additional issues in preparing ocean accounts (as mentioned to the evaluator) are: the marine environment in some countries (especially small island states), which is much bigger than terrestrial environment, but much less accessible; high mobility of marine natural assets and scarcity of information, and the risk of double counting by countries along the migration paths of assets.

In applying the SEEA framework to the ocean, the project **identified nine issues**¹⁰ to be clarified, unpacked and adapted, and requiring mutual understanding or resolution among experts to agree on standard approaches. The guidance document addressed these issues.

The other important need was for a multidisciplinary approach, involving not only the National Statistics Offices (NSOs) which have responsibilities of compiling monetary accounts and spearhead SEEA reporting. However, few NSOs have the capacity to compile spatial data, which is an important component of Ocean Accounts. There is need for statisticians, scientists and policy makers from various ministries to be involved in designing and implementing ocean accounts frameworks at the national level. Accordingly, in the pilot studies and also in the regional workshops, the project has advocated inclusion and active involvement of departments such as environment, fisheries, spatial planning and others, besides the NSOs.

Box 2. Technical issues to be addressed for ocean accounts

Issue 1: Spatial units and ecosystem type classification: To recommend a standard approach to delineating ocean and coastal spatial units and to classifying ecosystem types coherent with international methods and the SEEA.

Issue 2: Ecosystem services: To review ecosystem services classifications with respect to the ocean and recommend adaptations or expansions if required.

¹⁰ These are explained in the Workshop notes and also in the Technical Guidance.

Issue 3: Disaster risk and climate change: To review existing frameworks of (a) disaster risk and (b) climate change statistics. To suggest where linkages to the ocean exist and where such linkages need to be developed.

Issue 4: Links to social concerns: To integrate social concerns into ocean accounts by distinguishing beneficiaries and populations at risk.

Issue 5: Links to economic concerns: To integrate economic concerns into ocean accounts by (a) ensuring that standard economic accounts (SNA-based) fully include the direct economic benefits of the ocean, and (b) augmenting standard economic accounts with approaches to valuation of additional (non-SNA) benefits of marine resources.

Issue 6: Global data availability: To review sources of global data that could be applied to national, regional or global ocean accounts.

Issue 7: Progress on measuring SDG14: To review efforts to develop metadata (measurement standards) for SDG14-related indicators. Can these be linked to specific components of the ocean accounts?

Issue 8: Ocean governance: To review international, and selected regional and national governance mechanisms (policy and regulatory frameworks, including transboundary issues) with respect to their approaches, enforcement challenges and information needs. This issue could also include initiatives new technologies, sustainable management approaches.

Issue 9: Modelling the ocean: To review existing modelling approaches to the ocean and recommend areas for testing.

3.1.1.4 Adaptability of design and flexibility

With the design of very specific and discrete deliverables (a technical guidance document, and five pilot studies) and a tight implementation period of 15 months, the scope for adaptation and flexibility was minimal in the project. However, the evaluation notes an important element that was instrumental in the implementation of the five pilot studies. The project's approach to allow countries flexibility to select their pilot sectors and locations and even limit the scope of coverage based on data availability (subsets of assets and small geographies) was a key factor in generating pilot accounts even though they may not be completely representative of a full ocean accounts structure. The evaluation concurs with the observations of some respondents that the flexible approach was a major influence on national ownership of the pilots, and that rigid requirements and a standard approach for all pilots could have been counterproductive.

3.1.2 Effectiveness

For assessments of effectiveness, the key elements considered were: achievement of target results; significance of the results in relation to the development outcomes, and influencing factors. The inclusiveness dimension was considered irrelevant as the results – being chiefly knowledge products – did not have any bias in terms of beneficiary composition.

The three outcomes (Expected Accomplishments) of the project are:

- Creating a regional/global expert network and community of practice to develop an agreed statistical framework for the standardization of ocean-related statistics and their application to the sustainable management of oceans.

- Enhanced technical capacity of beneficiary countries to regularly produce a coherent set of priority ocean statistics (ocean accounts)., and
- Enhanced capacity to apply ocean accounts for policy analysis for the sustainable management of ocean resources

The project fully achieved two of its three Expected Accomplishments (EAs 1 and 2); for the third EA (enhanced capacity for application of ocean accounting for policy analysis) while there are positive indications of enhanced capacity for ocean accounting, an assessment of policy analysis and actions resulting from the pilots (which by themselves are not comprehensive or multisectoral at this stage) is premature within the duration of the project. The project's accomplishment against each EA is analysed below, from the perspective of the utility to immediate beneficiaries (project participants) and ultimate beneficiaries.

3.1.2.1 Development of technical guidance under a global expert network

EA1: Creating a regional/global expert network and community of practice

A specific goal of the project was the development of technical guidance on Ocean accounts to be incorporated into the on-going SEEA EEA revision processes. In this direction, ESCAP mobilized a large number of experts and influencers – environmental statisticians, economists, ocean scientists, governance and policy experts, and political leaders for discussions on issues, approaches and utility of ocean accounts. Through ESCAP's regional networks, the project was able to bring together several diverse actors to contribute to the technical guidance. ESCAP refers to this large grouping informally as the Ocean Accounts Partnership (more details in Para 82).

The ESCAP Ocean Accounts Partnership has developed the (draft) Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounts, the first version of which will be finalized in early 2020. The Technical Guidance adapts the SEEA and adds components to more fully address SDG14 and related goals. For example, the SEEA Central Framework provides methods for compiling solid waste data at the national level, but not at the local level. Knowing where solid wastes are generated, collected and disposed would improve the measurement of land-based sources of marine pollution. Neither the SEEA Central Framework, nor SEEA Ecosystems Accounting provide detailed guidance on implementation. The Technical Guidance on Ocean accounts provides recommendations on governance (international, regional and national), data sources (global and national) and modelling. The technical guidance is part of ESCAP's contributions to the SEEA EEA revision process to be concluded in 2021.(This aspect is presented in more detail later in the report).

Contributors to the Technical Guidance Document: The Ocean Accounts Draft Technical Guidance is the collaborative output from over 120 contributing statisticians, scientists and governance experts from governments, international organizations, universities, private sector and research institutes.¹¹ A full listing of these appears in the Partnerships section.

Countries that participated in technical events include: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Fiji, France, Germany (contributor), Indonesia, Japan (contributor), Malaysia, Maldives, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa,

¹¹ Para 6 of the draft 0.7 of the document 'The Need for Partnerships'

Seychelles (contributor), Singapore (contributor), South Africa (contributor), Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, UK, Vanuatu and Viet Nam.

Regional organizations that participated in the discussions in the two regional workshops include: Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), ASEAN, the Atlantic Research Centre, FAO, GEO/Blue Planet initiative, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Pacific Community (SPC), SOLSTICE-WIO (Western Indian Ocean), UN Environment and UNITAR.

Box 3. Ocean Accounts - Excerpt from the Technical Guidance document

Ocean accounts as an expansion of the SEEA-EEA provide spatially detailed information on key themes representing the state of the ocean, such as: Drivers, Assets (Extent and Condition), Ocean Services (Quantity and value), and Governance (including management practices). Accounts could be compiled for sub national areas or national territories, but regional and global data may also be available for international waters/high seas.

Stylized Ocean Accounts

Drivers			Ocean Assets: Ocean Extent					Ocean Services Supply (physical)		
Specific units	Industry	% to ocean	hectares	Ecosystem Type ²	Minerals (T)	Energy (MtoE)	Fish stocks (T)	Service (specific units)	Ecosystem Type	
SEEA Air emissions			Beginning of period					Provisioning		
SEEA Effluents ¹			+ additions					Regulating and maintenance		
SEEA Solid wastes ¹			- reductions					Cultural		
¹ would benefit from spatial disaggregation			End of period					Abiotic: Minerals, energy, medium for transport		
Ocean governance			Ocean Conditions					Ocean Services Use (physical)		
Specific units	Industry		Specific units	Ecosystem Type ²	Minerals (T)	Energy (MtoE)	Fish stocks (T)	Service (specific units)	Beneficiary type ⁴	
Policies, plans and regulations			Acidification (pH)					Provisioning		
Institutions			Eutrophication (BOD)					Regulating and maintenance		
Management practices			Plastics (T)					Cultural		
Technologies			Carbon ³					Abiotic: Minerals, energy, medium for transport		
SEEA Protection Expenditures			Biodiversity ³					⁴ Disaggregated by coastal/urban/rural, high/low income, male/female		
- research			Temperature (°C)							
- enforcement			Accessibility/quality							
SEEA Goods and Services			² Including critical natural capital areas, settlements, coastal infrastructure, protected areas, fishing zones, designated tourist areas, coral reefs, mangroves, coastal beaches...					Ocean Services Supply (Monetary⁵)		
- technologies			³ As in the SEEA-EEA, Carbon and Biodiversity could be full accounts.					Service (monetary unit)	Ecosystem Type	
								Provisioning		
								Regulating and maintenance		
								Cultural		
								Abiotic: Minerals, energy, medium for transport		
Note: This is a stylistic representation of the SEEA-EEA with additional components required for including sources of land-based pollution, abiotic services (such as minerals, energy and medium for transport), expenditures and governance. This is not as comprehensive as described in the text. Much of the data on flows of land-based pollution, ecosystem types, and condition would be derived from detailed maps and aggregated as shown in the tables for reporting.			SNA for some services ⁶					Abiotic: Minerals, energy, medium for transport		
			⁶ Would benefit from disaggregation by large/small enterprise and linkage to employment by beneficiary type.					⁵ Only some services can be valued in monetary terms.		
								Ocean Services Use (Monetary⁴)		
								Service (monetary unit)	Beneficiary type	
								Provisioning		
								Regulating and maintenance		
								Cultural		
								Abiotic: Minerals, energy, medium for transport		

Source: Ocean Accounts Technical Guidance draft, ESCAP.

Regional Expert Workshops: The first regional workshop in Aug 2018 had 85 participants, including experts in ocean statistics, science, and policy from national governments and research institutions as well as regional and international organizations. Another 37 experts who were interested, but unable to attend, contributed to the development of issue papers and will continue contributing to the resulting guidance documents. The second workshop, the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) Dialogue in Nov 2019, brought together over 100 experts (statisticians, economists, ocean scientists and ministerial officials) from 22 countries.

Global Ocean Accounts Partnership: An important outcome of the project is the establishment of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, a group of diverse member

institutions aiming to serve as a regional technical platform to support ocean accounting, through technical guidance and capacity-building towards developing holistic ocean accounts in line with international statistical standards. Hosted by ESCAP and the UNSW, GOAP is a formal entity, presently consists of eight members and is open to national governments, intergovernmental institutions, private sector bodies, and formal not-for-profit research institutions with commitment to support sustainable development of the ocean. The GOAP is preparing a two-year work plan and has secured some funding from Govt of Australia and World Bank to support parts of the work programme. The Govt of Canada has offered to host the second Annual Dialogue in 2020.

An important result of the GOAP Dialogue was the effect of the discussions on policy makers and managers that were part of several delegations, especially the pilot countries. By engaging stakeholders from other ministries along with the national statistics agencies, the GOAP dialogue event struck an important balance between the science/data aspects of ocean accounts and their importance for policy decisions and governance measures.

The workshop design with equal weightage to 'Building Ocean Accounts' and 'Using Ocean Accounts' besides the plenary discussions was instrumental in developing a practical understanding of the 'why' besides the 'how' of ocean accounts, and created a constituency outside the statisticians and scientific experts in delegations. For policy makers, the use case needs to be established sufficiently to answer questions such as:

- What does the ocean economy encompass in this country? How do ocean-related industries create resources, products, livelihoods? To whom? To what extent?
- How will changes in the ocean affect the economy?
- How will a policy change affect aspect of the ocean economy? What are the trade-offs in consideration?

The other useful result of this was the emerging consensus that context, policy needs and priorities should drive the design, scope and thrust of ocean accounts, and not the other way around, as was perceived to be the case with environment statistics in general. As presented by one expert, the usefulness of accounts lies in their contribution to: issue identification, policy design, implementation, monitoring and review.

For ocean accounts to find more interest among key stakeholders, participants noted the need for broadening the scope of capacity building not only to statisticians, but also to policy makers, media and influencers, to adopt a national action plans for oceans governance and monitoring, informed by accounts and policy analysis. This led to several recommendations and requests that the technical guidance document- which is directly relevant for statisticians and data collectors - should be supplemented by a more concise, general guidance targeting policy makers. Importantly, it should include case studies and illustrations to flesh out the differences and relative merits of accounts for specific sectors (fisheries, shipping, tourism) as against an all-encompassing ocean ecosystem account. Also emphasised was the importance of international cooperation, knowledge transfer and communities of practice. In this direction, ESCAP's initiative to create a regional knowledge platform (web portal on ocean accounts) and the Global Ocean Account Partnership were highly appreciated.

Regional Ocean Accounts Portal: Another important contribution (a regional and potentially global public good) of the project towards SDG 14 is the piloting of the Pacific Ocean Accounts Portal. A demonstration of the Portal was presented by ESCAP at the GOAP Dialogue event clearly showed how the portal can be used as a monitoring platform for SDGs, as illustrated by the screen shot below (Fig 7), which shows data

against SDG 14.5 at global, national levels, with drill-down features containing data sets for each level. The fact that the same technology is being used by the UN SDG Hub increases the likelihood that eventually the Portal can scale up to be a global Ocean Accounts portal.

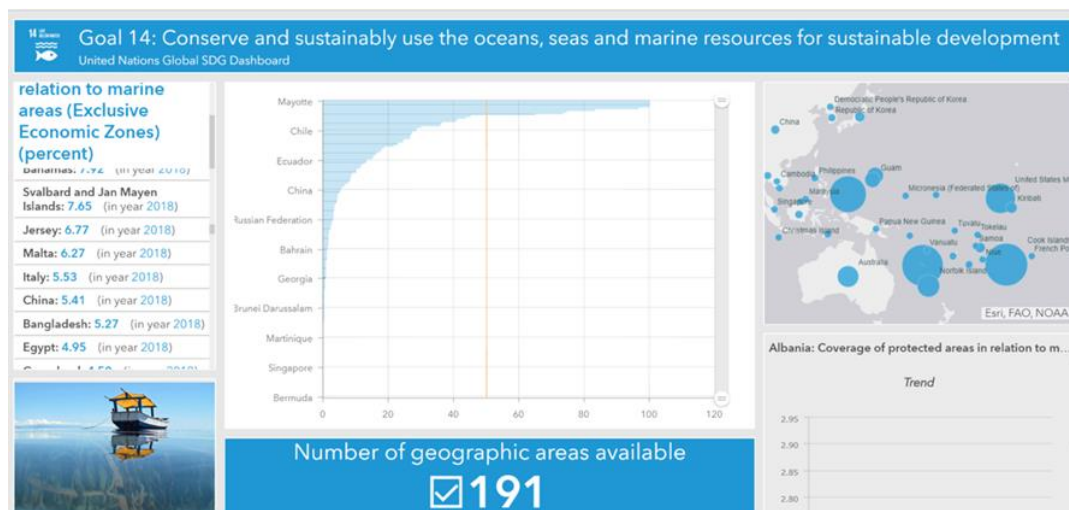


Fig 7. Screenshot of infographic from Ocean Accounts portal, presented by ESCAP

Innovation: The evaluation tried to identify any elements of innovation in the project (with full disclaimer as to the evaluator’s technical competence to judge these). The fact that ocean accounting is a new domain and that ESCAP volunteered to lead the development of guidance on ocean accounts makes the project a first mover in this space. The expert deliberations led to the Ocean accounting adopt the broad terminologies of SEEA EEA but also add new elements - drivers and pressures, and governance - to address the specificities of ocean ecosystems. Whether this can be called an innovation or merely a response to the complexity of ocean issues can be debated.

3.1.2.2 Extent of use of learnings by beneficiaries and institutional/governance change indicators

EA2: Enhanced technical capacity of beneficiary countries to regularly produce a coherent set of priority ocean statistics (ocean accounts)

The project’s main vehicles developing technical capacities were the two international workshops (Aug 2018, Bangkok and Nov 2019, Sydney) and the ESCAP assisted accounting pilots in five countries- China, Malaysia, Samoa, Thailand and Vietnam. The evaluation notes **these specific dimensions of capacity development** as being important to the eventual adoption and mainstreaming of ocean accounts in the pilot countries, and in the region at large:

Establishing priorities and institutional arrangements:

- National diagnostic/ scoping assessment of capacities to implement SDG 14 and the reflection of oceans into national plans and policies
- Review/mapping of national and sub national institutions and arrangements working on oceans
- Multi-stakeholder consultations to identify and select a national ocean-related priority to inform the pilot account product based on ocean accounts framework
- Agreement on ownership and lead responsibilities for the pilot and its subsequent upscaling

Building the pilot account:

- Training on the ocean accounts framework
- Data assessment needs, sources
- Data collection including limited surveys
- Report generation using ocean accounts framework

Dissemination, knowledge exchange and learning:

- Multi-stakeholder national workshops to present the pilot accounts
- Presenting results of pilot studies at the regional workshop
- Learning from other pilots
- Adapting the technical guidance document based on implementation of pilots

Each pilot was supported technically by consultants besides supervision and interaction by ESCAP staff from the Statistics Division. The processes resulted in identification of priority themes and sectors relevant to a province or local area and focusing on impact of interactions of human activities and the marine environment in consideration. Interestingly, the tourism sector emerged as a common theme in several pilots and was the pilot theme for both Thailand and Samoa, besides forming an important component in the Vietnam pilot.

The evaluator's first-hand interactions with delegates from all the five pilot countries yielded an overall positive impression among beneficiaries of the experience with the pilot accounts. These perceptions were also confirmed by the questionnaire survey of participants (which covered a wider audience including the pilot countries), wherein a large proportion of respondents agreed that:

- The dialogue had enhanced understanding of the importance of ocean accounts for the institutional/country context and priorities (43/44)
- Useful technical guidance for compiling ocean accounts was provided (41/44)
- There is greater clarity on the utility and use cases for ocean accounts (41/43)
- A number of action areas have been identified for compiling and using ocean accounts (42/43)



Fig 5. Survey results on usefulness of training and workshops

There was also a high level of endorsement for the technical authority of the experts that were involved in the development of the guidance materials, and the usefulness of the guidance materials in identifying specific scientific and technical issues, as well as policy and governance issues (Fig 6).

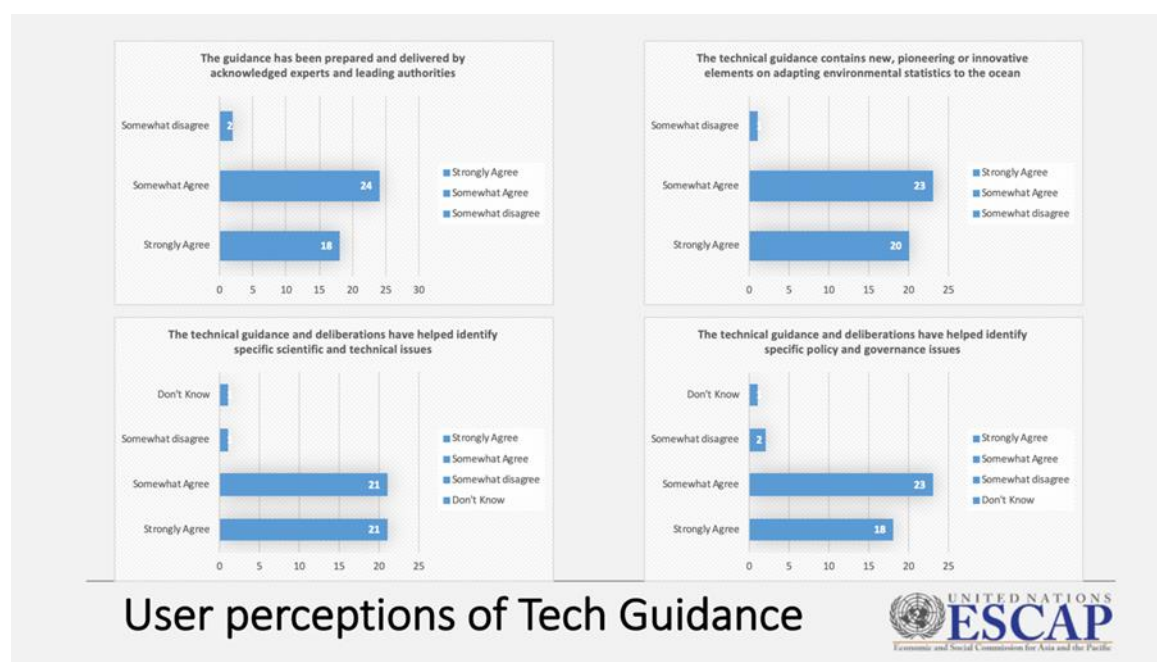


Fig 6. Survey results on quality of technical guidance

The salient highlights of the five pilot studies as understood by the evaluator are presented below.

China Pilot: Mapping mangroves in Beihai Bay

China, with its ocean economy contributing over 9.2% of GDP, with strategies for building into a maritime power and at the same time aspiring towards ecological civilization, has placed emphasis on natural resource accounting as an important governance measure: natural resource balance sheets are used to audit performance of officials responsible for resource management. China has compiled data relating to the ocean for over thirty years, with several publications such as Marine Statistical Handbook, Ocean Development Index, Marine Economic Climate Index, among others. The project prioritised mangrove assets and ecosystem services as the focus for the pilot, in order to improve understanding of how accounting could be conducted for China's diverse coastal ecosystems (mangroves, tidal marshes, sea weeds, sea grasses, coral reefs, oyster reefs, bays, estuaries, etc.) comprising its mainland coastline of 18000 km and inland coastline of 14000 km. Mangroves (assets and ecosystem categories) were selected as the pilot subject in view of the availability of data (open source public data and remote sensing) and potential linkages to the National Green House Gas inventory, Blue Carbon and other Coastal Restoration initiatives, and given the short time scale of the project.

As understood by the evaluator from interviews and from the presentations made at the regional workshop, the pilot project provided several useful lessons. Firstly, it enabled a mapping and correspondence of ocean assets to the SEEA 2012 Environmental asset classes. Mangrove assets could be mapped to land (sea area), soil resources (sediment and seawater nutrients), timber resources (marine higher plants), aquatic resources (marine living resources, cultivated and natural), and Water (marine freshwater

resources). The project was able to populate these classes with sub categories and compile stock levels, based on area, depth and biomass measurements. Second, it enabled a listing of ecosystem services corresponding to provisioning, regulating and cultural services (although no measurements were considered in the project). Third, based on the methodologies used, the project was able to estimate the sediment contents (TOC, N, P) area of natural and cultivated mangroves, soil carbon stocks, benthic biomass (molluscs and crustaceans), fresh water additions (river runoff and rainfall). For instance, the changing trends in distribution of several land classes (aggregate area 78200 ha) over thirty years, showed an increase in natural mangrove areas from 468 M ha to 3279 ha, tidal marshes from nil to 645 HA, ponds from 5276 to 29026 ha, and a reduction in farm land from 14062 to 767 ha, water bodies from 47637 ha to 38425 ha.

Periodic measurements will enable ecosystem restoration initiatives (biomass cultivation for instance), marine freshwater resource management, and inventory of blue carbon. The pilot is to be extended to other coastal ecosystems and eventually become an experimental data framework for an SEEA Ocean for China. Specific data acquisition technologies, ocean monitoring systems and modelling methods have been identified to improve the quality of three-dimensional data on the ocean.

Thailand pilot: Tourism Satellite Accounts Andaman Cluster

Tourism is one of Thailand's flagship economic sectors, contributing close to 9% of GDP. In 2017, and supporting 4.2 million jobs (over 11 % total national employment) as the world's fourth largest tourist destination (by tourist arrivals). However, the rapid increase in tourism has created negative impact on socioeconomic and environmental conditions, particularly natural exploitation, unequal income distribution and waste management problems. Infrastructure construction, aquaculture, and tourism expansion have made major ecosystems such as mangroves, coral reefs and sea grass vulnerable. With over two million tons of plastic waste tons per year, a large share going into the ocean, the Thai Marine and Coastal Resources Department reported that at least 300 sea animals on average—60 per cent of which are whales and dolphins—die from eating plastic fishing gear and trash each year. Thus, even as Thailand aspires to become by 2036¹², the world's leading tourism destination, the need to develop tourism in a sustainable manner has also become a primary concern, with a focus on carrying capacity of ecosystems into account.

The Andaman Cluster (Phuket, Krabi, Phang Nga, Trang, Satun Provinces) was selected for the pilot study as it is one of the major tourism centres for Thailand and also home to 15 of Thailand's 22 marine national parks. Tourism contributes to over half the revenue of the cluster, and faces rising pressures in popular spots such as Phi Phi Islands, as national tourist arrivals have crossed 20 million annually. Therefore, a balance between the tourism revenues and environmental protection has become an urgent priority. Thailand has been publishing national Tourism Satellite Accounts, since 2010. However, as it is aligned to the SNA, the information is mostly monetary and not physical thus less useful for environmental accounting and monitoring purposes. The pilot study sought to compile water, energy and solid waste accounts for the Andaman Cluster working back from the Input/output tables to derive physical values from monetary/market price data.

The major findings were: tourism accounted for 21% of water consumption, but distribution losses at 30% were even higher than water consumption in tourism; solid

¹² As stated in the National Tourism Development Plan 2017-2021)

waste generated by tourism at 2.36 kg/capita/day was much higher than households (0.86kg/c/day), and over 28% of waste collected was improperly collected, treated or disposed; tourism sector uses over 57% of the energy in Andaman cluster and 72% of GHG emissions in the region are attributable to the tourism sector. Resultantly, several areas of Andaman carry risks of overcapacity, represented by high population density, inefficient waste disposal and limited natural resources (mangrove, seagrass, coral reef). The pilot also showed the limitations of back working physical values from value tables, and the need for specific surveys to fill in data gaps and reference prices for non-market values.

With the Ministry of Tourism and the Statistical Organization both actively involved in the pilot, plans are afoot to expand the exercise to all the tourism clusters, and develop codes of practice and eco-tourism laws and engage stakeholders from multiple interconnected domains to arrive at sustainable development plans for the tourism industry.

Vietnam pilot: Land-based pollution, tourism and ecosystem impacts in Quang Ninh province

The Quang Ninh province is an important economic hub of Vietnam, with a fast-growing GDP (12%), the only deep sea port in north Vietnam, closeness to two biggest cities Hanoi and Haiphong, and international borders with China (two corridors, one economic belt). It also has 2 marine protected areas. However, the environmental impacts of the rapid growth are emerging: The rapid rise of industrial parks near coast, especially the impact of heavy industries (coal mining, thermal power, cement), rising tourist flows (over 10 million people visit the Ha Long Bay) and urbanization (65% compared to 32% national average) and the high economic power (province GDP per capita is twice the national levels) have led to several environmental issues: water pollution, air pollution, forest degradation and reduction of biodiversity from over exploitation.

Coordinated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the pilot study focused on the changes to mangroves, sea grass and marine pollution (boats, aquaculture) and tourism related pollutant discharge. Seven near shore marine units were zoned for study. Key findings were: a major reduction in mangrove (19280 to 6200 ha during 2015-2018) mainly due to land use change; loss of 80 % or more in 6 of 7 seagrass sites studied, and 30% reduction in coral species richness and 70% reduction in area; high water pollution from use of toxic chemicals in fishing and aquaculture. While tourism is a major economic driver, accounting for almost 11% of GDP, the effect on pollution is considerable too. The results from the pilot will be used for communicating to key target audiences and to inform policy makers to consider regulatory changes as appropriate.

Malaysia pilot: Living Resources of Malacca Straits

Malaysia used the SEEA framework in addition to the System of National Accounts, and the pilot was considered as complementing the existing body of work. A review of the country's capacity to implement SDG 14 demonstrated that though oceans were integrated into national policies and indicative plans, in the governance landscape of SDG 14, there were implementation gaps leading to fragmented governance. The diagnostic studies showed a high level of fragmentation: there were at least 10 ocean-related ministries and about 31 agencies involved in the management of the seas bordering Malaysia. Furthermore, several policies on the environment were in place but there was no oceans policy.

The scoping consultations in Malaysia led to identification of four priorities : Living Resources (Straits of Malacca); Protecting Marine Habitats (Peninsular Malaysia); Ocean conservation (indicators) and Klang Straits (Land Based Sources of Pollution). The Living Resources (Straits of Malacca) got the most votes from participants. The presentations at the regional workshop highlighted results pertaining to the Living Resources Straits of Malacca topic, which touched upon several SDG 14 areas, such as habitats, mangroves, coral reefs, fisheries production, stocks, and livelihoods.

The pilot used a range of data including: fish landings (by vessel type), satellite data on phytoplankton chlorophyll (feed); sea surface temperature (NOAA), total suspended matter (satellite sensors), land and spatial data, and brought out several findings: the steady rise of fish landings from 1998 until 2016 and then a sharp decline in 2018; the steady reduction in fish landings by outboard powered vessels, and substitution by inboard powered vessels; and a decline in the fish landings per vessel pointing to increased fishing effort. The data also shows the positive correlation between fish landings and chlorophyll trends, and the inverse relationship between sea surface temperatures and phytoplankton biomass chlorophyll (a proxy for production), confirmed by three major El Nino events. The study also pointed out a 73.7% reduction in mangrove areas, and related impact on anchovy landings (purse seine gear), a 102% increase in coastal construction and a 238% increase in aquaculture in the pilot areas (Selangor).

The main use of the pilots will be to improve governance measures and inform the 11th Malaysia Plan, especially Pillar V: 'Enhancing Environmental Sustainability through Green Growth' and Priority B: Conserving natural resources (terrestrial and inland water areas, coastal and marine ecosystems, and enhancing livelihood and capacity of indigenous and local communities).

Samoa pilot: Sustainability of Tourism Industry- Tourism Satellite Account

Samoa has prioritized implementation of SEEA, and accounts for water, energy, solid waste, marine and coastal resources are recognized as having high policy relevance for Samoa. Samoa has also initiated water accounts, with support from a UN Development account project implemented by the ESCAP Pacific Office. The ocean has a special significance for Samoa, with the high contribution of tourism and fisheries. Samoa is currently developing a National Ocean Strategy, and Ocean Accounts are seen as a useful statistical framework to assist planners and policy makers with the tools to effectively manage Fishing and Tourism as an example in a sustainable manner.

The scoping studies identified several relevant issues: sediment build up in rivers, mangrove area changes, coral bleaching, water levels and salinity, illegal waste dumping, etc., and weighed three possible pilots: a tourism satellite account, marine spatial planning, and strengthening monitoring of national and sector development indicators. Based on stakeholder consultations, the pilot selected was: Sustainable Development of the Tourism Industry - development of an experimental Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) and estimating the linkages with national accounts, and also water, energy and waste accounts.

The pilot showed that Tourism represented 12.4% of GDP and over 21% of formal employment, accounted for 11.5% of total water expenditure, and 10.1% of electricity consumption (value terms). However, several data gaps were identified, including the need for establishing updated benchmarks for TSA indicators, and the need for surveys to fill gaps in administrative data on waste management, land use and energy accounts. Investments in capacities, human resources and financial resources for conducting full-

fledged TSAs including budgets for periodic surveys are considered significant and potentially a constraint for adoption.

The evaluation observes that the Samoa pilot (as presented at the GOAP Dialogue) focused more on the economic aspects of the tourism sector (the SNA- linked aspects) and less on linkages to ecosystem condition and impacts, including the impact of tourism on water and energy accounts. Very little use was made of Samoa's National Environment Indicator Reporting System, which enlists 43 marine resource indicators, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - supported initiative on Marine Spatial planning and for compiling the Ocean Health Index. Resultantly, the use case for ocean accounts based on use values and non-use values of marine resources, rate of depletion of ocean assets and conditions, and the trade-offs between tourism promotion and marine conservation efforts in Samoa did not receive necessary coverage. However, the evaluation notes that the TSA is an initial step towards developing a sustainable tourism and ocean economy in Samoa and there will be more initiatives to strengthen ocean accounts.

Box 4. Issues to be dealt with in Ocean Accounting Frameworks

Despite clear evidence that healthy marine ecosystems provide services that are essential to life on Earth, they are less well-studied and less well-measured than terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems. This has led to fragmented approaches and inadequate efforts to manage human activities that have serious negative consequences on their ability to provide these services.

Although there are many efforts to measure various aspects of ocean ecosystems, these efforts are also fragmented across several disciplines, sectors and organizations. An ESCAP/UNEP-led initiative, the Ocean Accounts Framework, suggests expanding, adapting and augmenting the SEEA Central Framework and SEEA Ecosystems to provide a coherent measurement framework for the ocean. This framework is necessarily broader than SEEA Ecosystems, since it is designed to address issues of the ocean economy, drivers of change and governance.

The participants addressed several challenges in detailing the technical guidance for ocean accounts including spatial units, ecosystem classification, definition of the ocean economy and integrating the social dimension. Ongoing collaborative expert contributions will produce a Technical Guidance document for consultation by July 2019. National pilot studies were initiated in China, Malaysia, Samoa, Thailand and Viet Nam in early 2019 and will be complete by November 2019. Training materials were developed and presented at national pilot workshops.

The Ocean Accounts Framework is largely SEEA-based, but several national and global initiatives have made advances without explicitly applying the SEEA. For example, China's Ocean Economy Accounting System (OEAS) (Zhao et al., 2014) focuses on assessing the extent of the ocean-related economy and its employment.

The classification of coastal and marine ecosystems/land covers are not detailed in the SEEA. The SEEA CF provides 15 classes of land cover. These include: "Mangroves", "Coastal Water Bodies and Intertidal Areas"; and "Sea and Marine Areas". The Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard (CMECS)³ provides a detailed framework for classifying four components: water column, geofom, substrate and biotic. USGS/ESRI (Sayre et al., 2017) provide further insights on mapping the water column in terms of Ecological Marine Units (EMUs).

Questions deliberated at the session:

How can we set SEEA-EEA in a broader context to ensure all contributions of the ocean to the economy and human activities are measured coherently?

Can we converge on a short list of coastal and marine ecosystem types? How do we define coastal?

How do we ensure coherence between land, freshwater, coastal and marine accounts on ecosystem types?

Source: extracted from Report of Panel of Experts 2019, UN CEEA, SEEA -EEA revision, texts of Session 5 b: Marine Areas

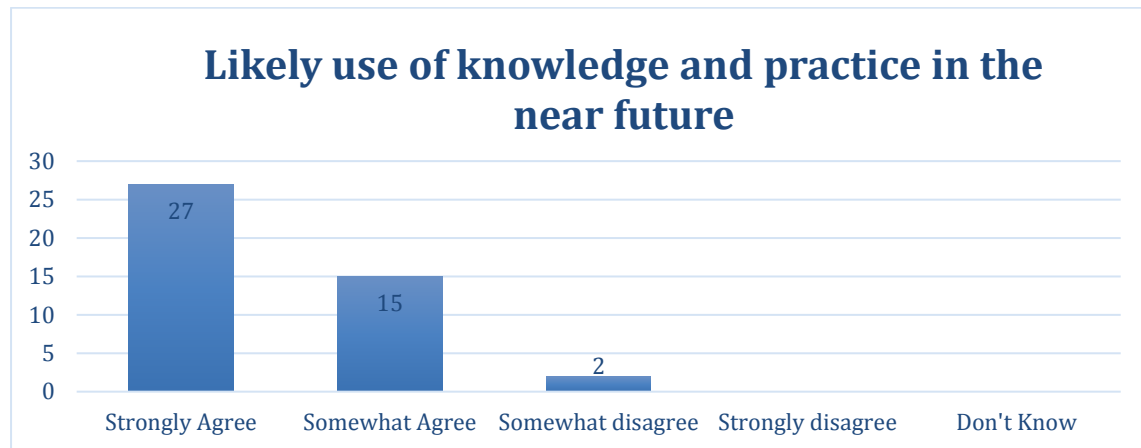


Fig 8. Survey results on likelihood of use of knowledge and practice

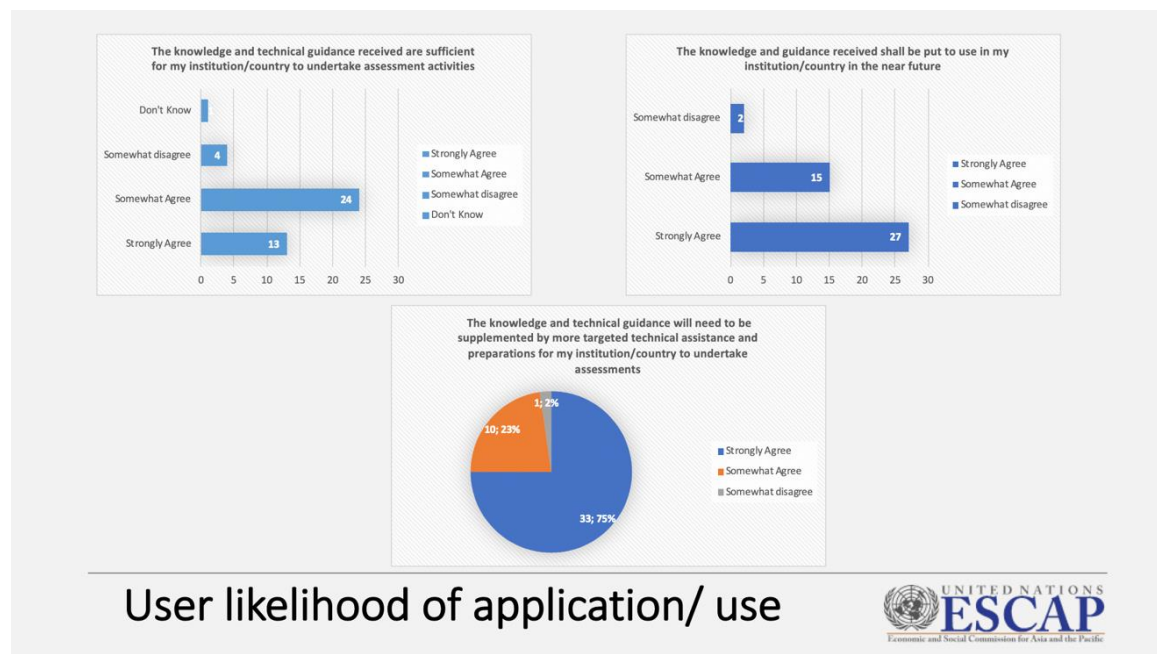


Fig 9. Survey Results on likelihood of application of ocean accounts

3.1.2.3 Contributions towards SDG 14

Contribution to monitoring and reporting on SDG 14 is central to the project’s objective, as explicitly stated in the project title ‘Support to Strengthen Statistical Capacities for SDG 14 in selected member countries.’ The ten SDG indicators have linkages with measures of ocean ecosystem condition (quality of marine water, nutrients, fish production, biodiversity, etc.) that are reported in ocean accounts under the heads of

Asset, Condition, Services, Drivers and Governance. A mapping of Ocean accounts with specific SDG indicators was carried out in the project design, and is reported below (Table 4), along with the relevant topics in the FDES, which is the underlying statistic informing the SEEA including ocean accounting.

Thus, conceptually, the technical guidance for ocean accounts would help countries identify the specific statistics to assist in tracking and reporting against prioritized SDG indicators. However, not all countries prioritize all SDG 14 indicators; according to ESCAP, only one indicator (coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas) comes across in the SDG 14 priorities of several Asia and Pacific countries. The majority of indicators are relevant to countries which have a high dependency on the ocean for economic development, i.e. island and coastal states. The importance of tourism to some countries such as Thailand and Samoa may lead to prioritizing floating plastic debris, for instance. For countries in regions which do not have regional fisheries governance bodies, indicators relating to IUU fishing may be important. For others, these indicators would be less relevant.

Table 4. Ocean Related SDG Indicators and links to Ocean Accounts

SDG 14 TARGET	INDICATOR	Link to Ocean Accounts	Location in FDES component, sub component and topic	Statistics used in the SDG indicator compiled from corresponding to BSES
14.1.1	Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris intensity (Tier III)	SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection Expenditures, Ocean Services	Comp 1. Environmental conditions and quality Sub comp 1,3 Env quality Topic 1.3.3: marine water quality	1.3.3a nutrients and chlorophyll 1.3.3.a.1. concentration level of nitrogen 1.3.3.a.2. phosphorus 1.3.3.h plastic waste and other marine debris 1.3.3.h.1 amount of plastic waste and other debris in marine waters
14.2.1	Proportion of national EEZ managed using ecosystem-based approaches T 3	SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection Expenditures, Ocean Services		
14.3.1	Average marine acidity pH measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations Tier 3	SEEA Water Emissions, Ecosystem Condition, Biodiversity, Governance	Comp 1. Environmental conditions and quality Sub comp 1,3 Env quality Topic 1.3.3: marine water quality	1.3.3.f: physical and chemical characteristics: 1.3.3.f.1: pH/acidity/alkalinity
14.4.1	Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels T1	SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection Expenditures, Governance	Component 2: Environmental Resources and their use: SC 2.5: Biological Resources Topic 2.5.2 Aquatic Resources	2.5.2.a. Fish capture production 2.5.2.b. Aquaculture production 2.5.2.f Aquatic resources 2.5.2.f.1: stock of aquatic resources 2.5.2.f.2: additions to aquatic resources 2.5.2.f.3: Reductions in aquatic resources
14.5.1.	Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas T1	SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection Expenditures, Ocean Services	Comp 1. Environmental conditions and quality SC 1.2: Land cover, ecosystems and Biodiversity Topic: 1.2.2: ecosystems and Biodiversity	1.2.2.d. Protected areas and species 1.2.2.d.1. protected terrestrial and marine area
14.6.1	Progress by countries in degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat IUU fishing T II	SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection		

		Expenditures, Governance		
14.7.1	Sustainable fisheries as proportion of GDP in SIDS, LDCs and all countries T 1	SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection Expenditures, Governance	Component 2: Component 2: Environmental Resources and their use: SC 2.5: Biological Resources Topic 2.5.2 Aquatic Resources	2.5.2.a. Fish capture production 2.5.2.b. Aquaculture production 2.5.2.f Aquatic resources 2.5.2.f.1: stock of aquatic resources 2.5.2.f.2: additions to aquatic resources 2.5.2.f.3: Reductions in aquatic resources
14.a.1		SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection Expenditures, Governance		
14.b.1		SEEA Aquatic Resources, Ecosystem extent, Environmental Protection Expenditures, Governance		
14.c.1	Number of countries making progress in ratifying accepting and implementing through legal, policy and institutional frameworks, ocean related instruments that implement international law as reflected in UNCLOS, for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources T3	SEEA Environmental Protection Expenditures, Governance	Component 6: Environmental protection, management and engagement, Sub component 6.2 Environmental governance and regulation Topic 6.2.3: Participation in MEAs and environmental conventions	6.2.3.a Participation in MEAs and environmental conventions 6.2.3.a.1: list and description (e.g. country's year of participation) of MEAs and other global environmental conventions

Compiled by the evaluator, with data from Project Document and FDES 2013 Handbook

3.1.3 Efficiency

For efficiency assessments, the aspects considered were: timely and in budget completion; partnerships; in-kind contribution; and cost-reduction measures. Partnerships, an important element in the project are covered in a separate section.

3.1.3.1 Timely and in-budget completion

The project was designed with a duration of 15 months (Oct 2018 – Dec 2019) and a budget of USD 549,800. The project was implemented in time and with full utilization of the project budget as approved.

Expert professional fees of USD267,000 accounted for more than 60% of the budgets: Consultants and Experts: \$ 102,000 International experts (11 work months, including 2 for evaluation) and \$ 175,000 national consultants (7 work months per country). Delegate travel for the international workshops represented over 25% of the budgets; however, actual expenditure would be closer to 40% of actual expenditures (see table 5). UN staff travel costs related to the preparation of guidance (\$ 60,000, for 10 support missions) and advocacy for the Ocean Accounts Partnership (US\$ 24000 for eight missions).

No budgets were set aside for Communications. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.2.4.1 *'What could have been done better'*.

Table 5. Project Budget and actual expenditure

Expense head	Budget USD	Actual USD
Project coordination	43500	28800
International consultants	282700	267000
Individual and other contractual services		33500
ESCAP staff travel	84000	75400
Grants (regional workshop coordination, mostly covering delegate travel)	135040	145140
Total		549840
Additional funding mobilized (GOAP)		34300
	549840	584,140
<i>Unfunded activities that contributed significantly</i>		145,000
<i>In-kind resources from five pilot study countries</i>		
<i>True cost of the project</i>		729,140

Source: Project Document and evaluation findings

The evaluation notes that the project budget and expenditures understate the project's true costs: significant preparation costs were incurred prior to the project approval, and funded by other sources. The major such activities that contributed to the project include:

- The ESCAP Assessment of capacity development needs of countries in Asia and the Pacific for implementation of SDG 14
- National diagnostics for ocean accounts – ESCAP desk study, adapting from the ESCAP Diagnostic tool
- The Regional Workshop (Aug 2018), which was a key part of the preparatory phase for the project, but was funded from other sources.

The exclusion of the Regional Workshop, which brought together more than 80 experts, represents a significant understatement of the project expenditures: considering that the costs budgeted for the regional workshop in Sydney entailed nearly US\$ 145,000 in delegate travel costs. Assuming a similar cost for the Bangkok workshop, the project's rightful budget would be closer to USD 750,000 than the USD 550,000 as designed. Another way to represent these unbudgeted expenditures would be to show them as co-financing contributions by the respective sources.

In respect of timely completion, two observations need to be made. Firstly, the underbudgeting of financial resources also corresponds to an underbudgeting of the duration. Taking into account the completion of the diagnostic studies and the regional workshop in August 2018, the true timeline of the project is closer to 21 months than the officially stated 15 months. Secondly, the project was able to replace two original pilot candidates Indonesia and Vanuatu (both had completed their diagnostic studies) upon neither country eventually committing to the project. They were efficiently replaced by Samoa and Vietnam without any adverse impact on the project implementation.

3.1.3.2 In kind resources

The project obtained significant support through in-kind resources from a diversity of sources. The most important is the pro bono contribution of several contributing experts to the technical guidance review (at their own time with no cost). The technical guidance document received contributions and inputs from UN agencies, universities, ocean research institutions, regional bodies, and international non-government agencies. These included experts that are considered leading authorities in ocean science, environmental statistics and related domains. Also, several experts participated at the

regional workshop events in Bangkok and Sydney with no cost to the project. Details from ESCAP indicate that over 80 delegates attended the GOAP Dialogue event¹³ in Sydney. Of these, the project supported travel of only 54 delegates from pilot and other developing countries in the region. Other delegates from international agencies, research institutions and government institutions from developed countries attended with no costs to the project. Similarly, in the first regional workshop in Aug 2018, there were pro bono contributors from Germany, Japan, Seychelles, Singapore and South Africa.

Secondly, costs incurred by host institutions in pilot countries to prepare the pilot accounts and convene the two national workshops are important in-kind contributions that have not been quantified. It is assumed that several persons from relevant ministries would be involved in compiling data and other information for the pilots, besides support to the national workshops before and after conduct of the studies.

As a notional value, in-kind resources could be valued to be close to USD 235,000, i.e. US\$ 145,000 toward expert delegate participation (for the un-costed August 2018 regional workshop), and US\$ 87,500 for the five pilot studies (un billed in-kind national support budgeted at 50% of budgets for national, regional consultants in the pilots). This represents a significant level of in-kind contributions for the project.

3.1.3.3 Cost-reduction measures

A perusal of the latest data on expenditures¹⁴ shared with the evaluation shows that the project effected a saving of US\$ 33,461 (6%) from the received funds. The main savings were from: grants and contributions (regional workshop delegate travels, \$ 24,386); and consultants/ experts (\$9,777). However, the evaluation considers the more important measure of cost reduction is the savings to the Development Account from the supplementary sources of funding which represent a significant share of the budget.

3.1.4 Factors of performance

The evaluation observes five factors that contributed to the overall satisfactory performance of the project: ESCAP mandate and role as regional commission and established institutional relationships with national statistical agencies; catalyst for mainstreaming ocean accounts; stakeholder engagement, national ownership and flexibility of design; high convening power and participation of leading experts, research institutions, academia; and significant in-kind and pro bono contributions.

ESCAP mandate and role in statistical support for SDGs: The project is not an isolated intervention for ESCAP; rather it is aligned to ESCAP's role as a regional commission with a mandate to support member countries in development, use and dissemination of environmental statistics. The project can be seen as an extension of ESCAP's work on environmental statistics and complements ESCAP support on SEEA thematic accounts. With the ocean being an important feature of several countries in the region, the project touches on an important capacity need across countries, and has the potential to build a future pipeline of technical assistance for ESCAP not only for Statistics but also for other divisions.

National statistical agencies as entry points: Ocean accounts are ultimately official publications of governments, produced and released by national statistical agencies

¹³ Mentioned by Director Statistics Division in her statement

¹⁴ Excel sheet DA 11 Summary of Expenditure and Plan, part of desk review documents

albeit with due cooperation from several interconnected ministries with mandate and jurisdiction on ocean issues. The continuation, promotion and upscaling of pilots depends heavily on the initiative of national statistical agencies. Thus, the buy-in and active involvement of national statistical agencies in the project was a key factor, especially with resource constraints in least-developed countries and small island states. ESCAP's ongoing programme of work in statistical support has enabled strong institutional entry points in national statistical agencies of member countries

High convening power and securing participation of authoritative actors: Ocean accounts represent 'uncharted waters' in the SEEA domain, and impose the need for thought leadership to evolve appropriate terminologies and methodologies that can be endorsed as authoritative technical products contributing to formulation of international standards and good practices. The involvement of leading experts in drafting and reviewing the guidance was key, and a result of ESCAP's volunteering to lead the development and testing of the SEEA Ocean Accounts as an input to the SEEA revision for 2020, which brought credibility and gave a somewhat official status to the technical guidance on ocean accounts. ESCAP's convening power in bringing together statisticians, ocean scientists and governance experts from several countries has resulted in due deliberation by relevant stakeholders that are also representative of the global consultations envisaged for the EEA revision. These actions contribute to the weight and authority of the draft technical guidance in informing the final texts of the EEA revision.

Stakeholder consultations and national ownership: The comprehensive needs assessment preceding the project's activities, the discussions with several member countries and the national diagnostic studies played a useful role in identifying the five pilot countries, and the national consultations with all key stakeholders in scoping and selection of priority accounts for the pilot studies ensured due national ownership of the pilots and ensures their continuation as affirmed by representatives from all the five pilot countries.

In-kind and pro-bono contributions: As explained in the Efficiency assessments, the project benefited considerably from the in-kind and pro-bono contributions forthcoming from research institutions, experts, national governments, besides ESCAP's budgets, which led to a comprehensive package of activities in a well-reasoned sequence. The qualitative value brought in by the collective expertise supporting the project outweigh the notional costs of these contributions.

3.1.4.1 What could have been done better

What could have been done better to improve the relevance of the project design and implementation?

Based partly on the feedback from participants and also the potential risks associated with meeting the EEA revision deadlines, the evaluation notes (in hindsight) two areas that could have been strengthened in the project design: a) provision for a more explicit engagement and specific activities around the EEA revision process led by UNSC and the UNCEEA; and b) a comprehensive communications strategy and action plan for disseminating the huge body of work accomplished in the project beyond the regional workshops and the online Ocean Accounts contents on ESCAP portal. The addition of these two components could have maximised the effectiveness of the project. As for resource implications of adding these, the evaluation notes that while there is no explicit guideline on ceilings for Development Account project budgets, the 57 approved projects have ranged from US\$ 477,000 to US\$ 1,500,000, and 34 projects had budgets higher than \$550,000 (the reference point for this project). There were 21 projects with budgets of \$ 650,000 and more. The inference is that ESCAP could have proposed a larger project with

an additional US\$ 100-150,000 to cover these two components, and a 24-month implementation period. However, the Statistics Division clarified that the DA11 project was approved as an additional project, utilizing non-spent funds from other projects under the same tranche [DA11]; asking for larger budget and more time was therefore not an option. The advantage of seeking residual funds was a much shorter gestation period than usual.

A component with more explicit engagement with the EEA revision process: The project document mentions the United Nations Statistical Commission's acceptance of ESCAP and UN Environment's offer to lead the development and testing of Ocean Accounts as an input to the SEEA-EEA revision for 2020, and also that progress will be reported [by ESCAP/UNEP] through the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) in 2019.

Formal mechanisms, processes and a calendar have been put into place for the EEA revisions. The roadmap until Dec 2020 includes the following important milestones:

- April- June 2019: Discussion papers to be discussed by the 2019 Forum of Experts (preceded by expert review of discussion papers)
- June-Dec 2019: SEEA - EEA Technical Committee oversees drafting of chapters (involves drafting of chapters, research on individual topics and cross cutting issues)
- June 2020: UNCEEA and 2020 Forum of Experts review progress (involves global consultation on individual chapters)
- Dec 2020: SEEA-EEA is finalized for discussion (global consultation on the whole document)

ESCAP expects to share the Technical Guidance document with the UNSC in March 2020 and with the UNCEEA in June 2020. The details of the process and what will be asked by these bodies are under discussion with UNSD at the moment.

Based on the available documentation and web search, the evaluation notes that the project contributed to the parallel session on marine areas as one of the four themes under Session 5: Ecosystem accounting for specific themes, during which ESCAP work on development of ocean accounts and the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership were presented, along with presentation of the Samoa pilot on Tourism Satellite Accounts.

The draft report of the 2019 Forum of Experts (June 2019) mentions¹⁵ that 'the breadth of material in the presentations and the associated discussion highlighted both the complexity and the relevance of ocean accounts with discussion ranging across ecological, economic, social and institutional aspects. The importance of communication with and involvement of all the interested institutional actors in the preparation, compilation of accounts and communication of results of the accounts sparked a major interest among the participants. Engagement at the international level on designing the measurement framework for the oceans is very timely.'

¹⁵ Session 5a: Marine areas, page 11 Draft Summary Report Forum of Experts in SEEA EEA, Sept 2019, Glen Cove, USA.

Revision process: keystones & timeline

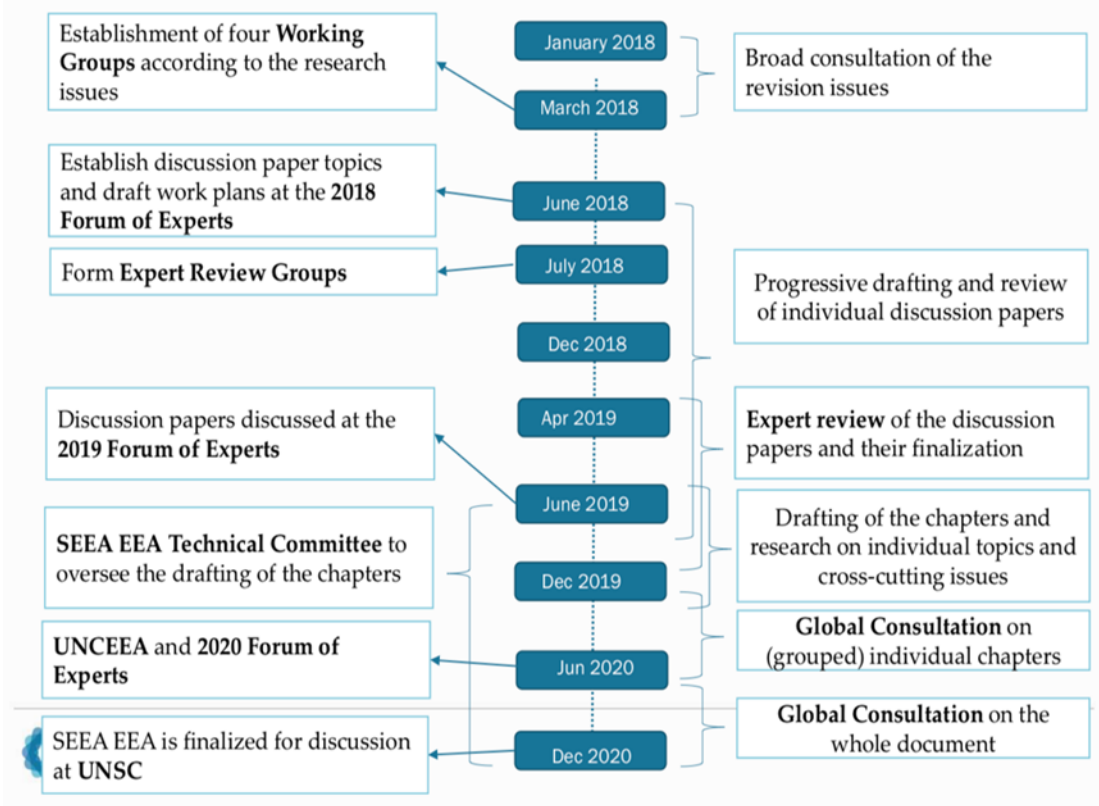


Fig 10. SEEA EEA Revision calendar and steps, source: UN SC

The report in its introduction mentions that ‘under the auspices of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA), the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) supports the methodological development of the SEEA EEA and implementation of ecosystem accounting in countries through its regular work program and externally-funded projects including the recently-finished Norwegian-funded Advancing Natural Capital Accounting (ANCA) project and more recently the European Union-funded Natural Capital Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) project.’¹⁶ The establishment of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership is listed among the global initiatives on ecosystem accounting in Annex 1: Opportunities for Advancing SEEA accounts.

The evaluation notes that the project could have included a specific component covering the engagement with the EEA revision process, with specific deliverables such as: contributions to the drafting of the Marine Areas section of the Thematic Ecosystem Accounting for Specific Themes, and Global consultation on individual chapter on Marine Areas. The EEA revision chapter wise outline has several specific placeholders: Spatial Units: delineation of spatial units in marine areas; Extent: scope of ecosystem accounting - terrestrial, fresh water, marine; and Condition, biodiversity and ecosystem capacity: key characteristics in measuring condition - terrestrial, freshwater, marine, and biodiversity species. According to ESCAP staff, the June 2020 meeting of the UNCEEA would be a critical milestone, with expectations of an interim agreement on

¹⁶ Page 2, Draft Summary Report Forum of Experts in SEEA EEA, Sept 2019, Glen Cove, USA.

“recommendations” rather than finally agreed classifications on these issues. The UNSC is expected to review the SEEA EEE revision in 2021, with a view to endorsing the recommended adjustments and extensions.

A component for comprehensive communications strategy and action plan. Even though the project’s core is development and sharing of technical knowledge on a specific subject of ‘ocean accounts’ the multidimensionality of the subject requires engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, beyond the statistical agencies. The project workshops have clearly brought out the strong message that ocean accounting cannot be spearheaded by statisticians alone, and need buy-in and ownership of other key agencies, especially finance, planning, environment ministries. There is need for disseminating use cases appropriate to national context and priorities (e.g. sustainable tourism, ecosystem service restoration, etc.) As observed in the GOAP dialogue, the knowledge also needs to be translated into national and subnational languages. In this direction, there is a need to create simpler documentation targeted at different stakeholders, to ensure the mainstreaming of ocean accounts in policy analysis.

This was also evident from the observations of some participants at the GOAP Dialogue event (Sydney), who mentioned the need for more clarity on some fundamental aspects to support adoption of policies for preparing ocean accounts.

Thus, logically, there should have been a dedicated communications component in the project. However, no budgets have been set aside in the project towards communications. The evaluation sees this as a missed opportunity, given that the project has generated many useful knowledge products and tools to support countries to explore and pilot ocean accounts specific to their contexts. Compressing this knowledge into simpler messages would be more efficient at ESCAP rather than in beneficiary countries. At a minimum, the project design could have included budgets for a communications consultant with a work plan for synthesis and dissemination of the knowledge emerging from the regional workshops and also the five pilot studies.

3.1.5 Partnerships

The development of technical guidance on a global subject such as ocean accounts demanded partnering with several profiles of organizations. The project enlisted a huge diversity of partners, UN agencies, universities, ocean research institutions, regional bodies, international non-government agencies, academia and international advocacy organizations.

Contributors to the Technical Guidance Document: The Ocean Accounts Draft Technical Guidance is the collaborative output from over 120 contributing statisticians, scientists and governance experts from governments, international organizations, universities, private sector and research institutes.¹⁷ In the GOAP Dialogue held in Sydney alone, the technical guidance document received valuable inputs from more than 100 experts and policy makers from 22 countries, and over 80- experts attended the first regional workshop in Bangkok in Aug 2018.

Inputs for the technical guidance document came from several institutions such as: ESCAP Pacific Office, ESCAP Environment and Development Division, The Blue Planet Initiative of the Group on Earth Observation (GEO), Conservation International, The European Environment Agency, Eurostat, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, The

¹⁷ Para 6 of the draft 0.7 of the document ‘The Need for Partnerships’

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), GRID-Arendal, The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Institute (NOAA), The Ocean Frontier Institute, The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), UN Environment, IOC-UNESCO/WESTPAC, UN Statistics Division (UNSD), University of the South Pacific (USP), and the US Geological Survey.

Countries that participated in the project technical events include: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Fiji, France, Germany (contributor), Indonesia, Japan (contributor), Malaysia, Maldives, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Seychelles (contributor), Singapore (contributor), South Africa (contributor), Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, UK, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. Regional organizations that participated in the discussions in the two regional workshops include: Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), ASEAN, the Atlantic Research Centre, FAO, GEO/Blue Planet initiative, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Pacific Community (SPC), SOLSTICE-WIO (Western Indian Ocean), UN Environment and UNITAR.

Global Ocean Accounts Partnership: For the promotion and propagation of ocean accounts at the regional and international level, ESCAP, along with the University of New South Wales, Australia and other entities created the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP), with the main purpose of fostering collaboration, coordination and planning of joint activities and sharing of knowledge around ocean data, statistics and governance. Open to governments, intergovernmental agencies, private sector representative bodies, and not-for-profit research institutions, so far GOAP has eight members. The University of New South Wales, Australia (which houses a Centre for Ecosystem Science, Global Water Institute, and initiatives in coastal and estuarine management, aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity, served as the secretariat for the GOAP. The project's regional event in Nov 2019 marked the first Dialogue of the GOAP. The GOAP is preparing a two-year work plan and has secured some funding from Govt of Australia and World Bank to support parts of the work programme. The Govt of Canada has offered to host the second Annual Dialogue in 2020.

Environmental Systems Research Institute: ESCAP, in collaboration with Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), a software company supplying geographic information system software, web GIS, and geodatabase management) created the pilot Pacific Ocean Accounting Portal, which draws relevant ocean data (extent, conditions, services) real time from 26 authoritative databases including the UN SDG HUB, and presents visualized results (geo-spatial 3D imagery) organized around three narratives: investments (ecosystem protection, restoration); capital (ecosystem condition), and benefits (ecosystem services received).

UN Environment: As noted from the project document, ESCAP and UN Environment jointly offered to lead the development and testing of the SEEA Ocean Accounts as an input to the SEEA -EEA revision for 2020. On SDG 14, UN Environment is a custodian agency for indicators 4.1.1, 4.2.1 and 4.5.1 and has been focusing more specifically on marine pollution, eutrophication, and biodiversity loss. All these themes have linkages to ocean accounts frameworks. The project did not have any specific work plans involving UNEP particularly in the development of the technical guidance. However, UNEP has stayed updated on the progress in technical guidance through consultations in the SEEA EEA revision process technical committee meetings. According to the UNEP officials interviewed, there is substantial text on the coastal and marine ecosystems, contributed from the ESCAP project and also others especially Canada. However, these will still be less developed than the other chapters (land, for instance), which have seen

more interest and substantive contributions from countries besides donor support for investments in methodologies. In comparison there have been only a few countries with experience on ocean issues and methodologies. Also, monitoring oceans requires efforts at national level and international levels, and the institutional mechanisms are not established, there is also no international legal binding instrument to operationalize the UNCLOS in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

UN Statistical Commission: The project's links to the EEA Revision process would imply a more active involvement of the UNSC – a key beneficiary – in some components of the project. The evaluation noted that the project did not explicitly engage with UNSC in the project; at the very least, UNSC could have been present at the GOAP Dialogue event. However, ESCAP plans to engage with the EEA technical committee in 2020, once the technical guidance is finalized. Despite several attempts, the evaluation could not get to interview relevant persons at the UNSC to get their perceptions on the project and the possible greater engagement of UNSC in the activities.

3.1.6 Sustainability

Development Account projects do not have the possibility of a second round of funding from the Development Account itself, and therefore sustainability of results is an important element in the design.

Two streams of results: The evaluation notes two streams of results for the project, both having impact on the enhanced adoption of ocean accounting in the region. The project's influence on each has been somewhat different.

The first stream is the learning of lessons from the five pilot studies and the technical guidance, especially the use cases of ocean accounts, which can lead to more countries developing pilots and later upscaling them. These will assist countries in formulating their own versions of ocean accounts using the project's guidance, but without the onus of comparability and external certification of compliance to any statistical standard. While this can be acceptable for policy makers, statisticians would be reluctant to bring out accounts that do not follow an agreed international standard or official guidance, along the lines of the EEA revision in this case.

The second stream of results is the contribution of the draft technical guidance into the texts of the SEEA official guidance and incorporation into international statistical standards. The formulation of these standards will be instrumental toward wide-spread adoption of ocean accounts and resource investments, by countries and also international agencies with an interest in aggregation and comparison of trends across countries. Particularly, agencies tracking and reporting progress on SDG 14 indicators would be more amenable to accounts that are based on an international standard.

The evaluation considered these elements of sustainability of the project's results: a) buy-in, ownership and political commitment to prioritize and incorporate ocean accounts into evidence-based national policy making; b) investments into adequate institutional/technical capacities, skills and operational budgets to undertake reliable periodic accounting; c) funding of regional knowledge platforms set up by the project; and d) incorporation of the technical guidance prepared by the project into international statistical standard or best practice. The evaluation notes that the project has duly recognized these risks and has made due efforts to address them through the pilots. However, some risks are beyond the scope of the project itself, whose primary aim is to develop the knowledge and demonstrate (in a limited way) the preparation of ocean accounting in practice.

TWO RESULTS STREAMS

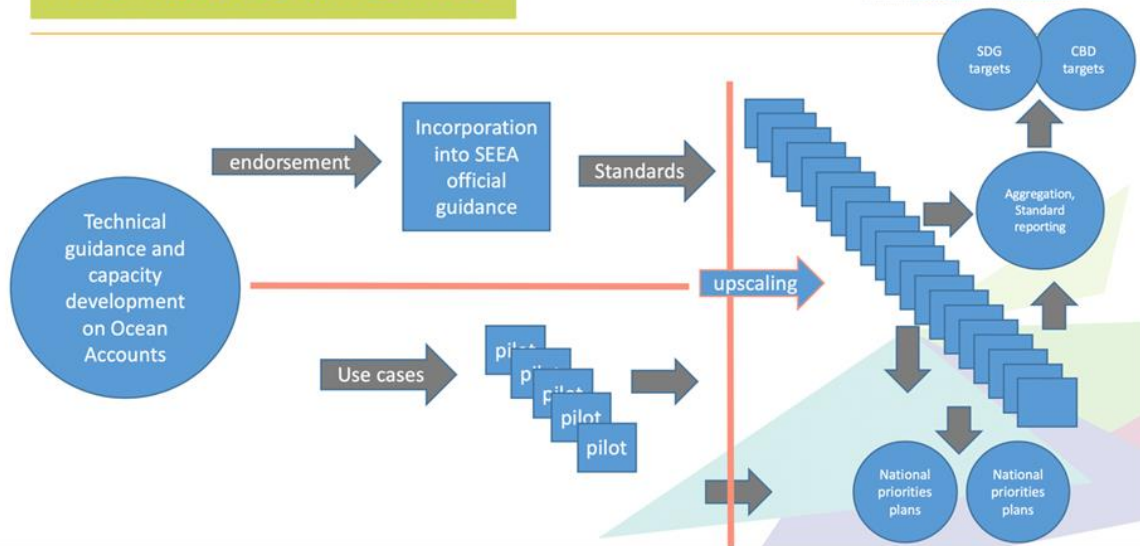


Fig 11. Schematic for two results streams from the project, prepared by evaluator

3.1.6.1 National ownership - upscaling pilot initiatives

One of the project's key results – developing technical guidance for ocean accounts framework consistent with the SEEA framework—being a knowledge product, can be considered generally irreversible even after the end of the project. Similarly, the first-hand experience of participating institutions in the five pilot countries in preparing accounts for a specific priority, can be extended to other themes and geographies. However, these will depend on the national ownership to continue and upscale the pilots.

An important action to ensure sustainability was the preparation of national diagnostic assessments for eight countries (including four of the five pilot study countries) covering several dimensions, most importantly: policy, institutional mechanisms, and data/information collection. These, along with the scoping report for each country brought together a diversity of national stakeholders to formulate the scope and priority areas for pilot accounts. The identification of a broadly consulted 'priority account' ensured the greater likelihood of the practical usefulness and thereby a case for continuation of the accounts at least in the scoped manner in the chosen geographies.

For instance, the scoping report for China mentions that '**the priority of Ocean Accounting for China is to incorporate oceanic natural resource assets into the system of Natural Resources Assets Accounting, in the NRA Balance sheets as well as performance Audits of officials in charge of natural assets management.**' Also, China has been collecting marine economy statistics for almost thirty years, however, there are no clear definitions of asset categories and ecosystem services to categorise the data in more meaningful ways.

In Malaysia, the ESCAP diagnostic matrix led to identification of over 20 government ministries and agencies as providers and users of ocean data, and the inception national workshops led to extensive deliberations on the choice of the priority accounts from four topics, resulting in the popular selection of 'Living resources in Straits of Malacca as the pilot account. In Thailand, which already compiles and reports Tourism Satellite Accounts at the national level, the inception workshops led to the decision to pilot

accounts for the tourism sector in five provinces of the Andaman, with an emphasis on disaggregating physical data, which is presently absent in the national TSA.

In Vietnam, the workshop resulted in the identification of land-based pollution, tourism and ecosystem impacts in Quang Ninh province as a focus of the pilot. The province is among the top five provinces in terms of economic contribution (coal, cement, shipping, heavy industry and tourism), and with interrelated environmental issues: water pollution from industry and coal mining. Urban and industrial solid waste, air pollution (thermal power plants), and forest degradation and biodiversity reduction (loss of mangroves, seagrass and coral reefs) due to coastal construction, sedimentation and aquaculture. The project was led by the Institute of strategy and policy on natural resources and environment (ISPONRE), a unit of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, with specific tasks assigned to three institutions: to lead on spatial data collection and analysis; GSO to provide key data analysis on economic, industry and tourism accounting; and ISPONRE for economic valuation.

In Samoa, which already produces SEEA accounts for water, energy (electricity) and solid waste, the decision to adopt an experimental Tourism Satellite Account which could link to the National Accounts as well as to enable useful disaggregation of the information featuring in the thematic environmental accounts to have a holistic view of the environmental footprint of Samoa's Tourism sector.

However, the evaluation also ascertained the intent of several countries to continue and upscale the pilots, or undertake new pilots. Several participants at the GOAP dialogue event made statements as to their further actions. These are summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Commitments made by pilot study countries and others for ocean accounts

Delegation	Commitments made by delegates in individual/institutional capacities
Pilots	
China	At the institutional level, follow up ocean accounts closely, integrate ocean accounts in coastal economy, and provide more concrete information in Blue Carbon Accounting, and incorporate ocean accounts in annual work plans
Malaysia	Use the ocean account pilot results as inputs to Malaysia's 8 th National Plan, disseminate it to the National SDG Council and establish a working committee on natural resources
Samoa	Samoa government has already made many commitments on the ocean, and acknowledges the importance of ocean accounts, and will implement these based on availability of financial (including extrabudgetary) resources
Thailand	Scale up the pilots to add more tourism sites
Vietnam	Scale up the ocean account pilots and bring to the attention of policy makers, and discuss possibilities with other agencies (UNDP and ADB) Become a member of the GOAP
Other countries	
Australia	Pledge government support to the ESCAP partnership, undertake one domestic and one regional pilot project
Bangladesh	Incorporate oceans accounting in 8 th Five Year Plan document (2020-25) Raise awareness among stakeholders: economists, statisticians, academia, scientists and politicians
Maldives	Advocate for inclusion of natural capital accounts in Strategic Action Plan 2019-2023 Become a partner member of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership

	Consider arrangements for mainstreaming ecosystem data into one integrated system
Philippines	Popularize the concept and usefulness of ocean accounts among planners and decision makers (executive) Compile ocean accounts and evolve institutional arrangements for regular data support to ensure comprehensive and quality ocean accounts
Palau	Take actions to launch a pilot (based on development support)
PNG	Exploring pilot accounts contingent on obtaining funding
Sri Lanka	Establish a national focal point for ocean accounts and develop study, action plan and partnership needs
Timor-Leste	Establish a national focal point for ocean accounts, pilot the technical guidelines shared by GOAP with possible UN support

Source: compiled from participant statements at the GOAP Dialogue

3.1.6.2 Investments towards reliable periodic accounting

The scope of the project being limited to the demonstration of pilot accounts, the design itself did not include specific steps for institutional investments for continuing or upscaling the activities. Rather, the purpose of the pilot studies was to provide a compelling business case for developing ocean accounts based on specific national priorities. At the same time, the fact that an international statistical standard for ocean accounts is still in the process of formulation makes it difficult for national statistics organizations to advocate for budgetary resources for ocean accounting. Thus, it is somewhat premature to expect countries to outline budgetary investments for comprehensive oceans accounting already.

The five pilot countries are exploring different modalities to continue the pilots and upscale them based on national priorities. Thailand, already produces Tourism Satellite Accounts and allocates budgets for surveys to collecting key data, and these will be extended to additional provinces. The budget requirements for preparing provincial level accounts are considerably lower than the field survey costs and therefore will be included in future budgetary allocations. In China, the Fourth Institute of Oceanography has its own budgets and will include ocean accounts in its workplans. Also, China is in discussions for a World Bank supported initiative in the Beihai province. Malaysia plans to use the results of its pilot to undertake a more comprehensive assessment under a GEF project.

The evaluation also took note that for the smaller Pacific countries, despite a strong interest in ocean issues, there will be challenges in enhancing institutional capacities to undertake comprehensive ocean accounts. Very few countries (Fiji and Samoa in particular) have the required experience and human capacities in this regard.

3.1.6.3 Financial sustainability of regional knowledge platforms - retaining the experts

The GOAP's activities so far have been supported under this project besides AU\$34,300 contribution from the Govt of Australia to cover the Global Dialogue on Ocean Accounting, Sydney Nov 2019. The GOAP aims to further the results of the project through expert meetings and multi-stakeholder dialogues, besides advocacy through the High-Level Panel on Ocean – one of the 16 Blue Papers commissioned by the HLP for the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon June 2020 is on 'National Accounting for the ocean

and ocean economy', whose authors include several experts associated with the Global Dialogue and the technical guidance being prepared under the project.

Further support has been forthcoming from the World Bank Pro Blue Programme (\$ 200,000 to host another dialogue event in Africa in 2020) and a matching contribution by the Government of Australia (USD 200,000 matching the World Bank contribution), which should support activities to advance pilots in more countries and also develop consensus on the technical guidance as an authoritative document. Also, Fisheries and Oceans Canada has volunteered to host the next Global Ocean Account Summit in 2020. According to ESCAP officials, the UK has expressed interest in supporting the platform besides sharing experiences from their pilot (which was also presented in the Dialogue).

3.1.6.4 ESCAP technical assistance pipeline

For ESCAP, Oceans is the focus theme for 2020, and there have been indications of China's interest in partnering with ESCAP, including sharing its experience of the past twenty years of monitoring ocean data and the use of remote sensing technologies.

At the regional level, maintaining partnerships will require an ongoing commitment of ESCAP. The statistical guidance, assessments, training materials and Regional Ocean Accounts Platform will remain available beyond the duration of the project and will be used to support the project partners and the global community in subsequent analyses and training.

A spinoff of the Global Dialogue was the opportunity for delegates to explore possibilities for technical assistance and funding for new pilots or for upscaling existing pilots. Based on the knowledge shared under the project, delegates noted opportunities to prospect the World Bank (Pro Blue programme), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Asian Development Bank, and bilateral donor channels (Australia, Netherlands, Norway and Canada). Of these, the most structured are the GEF portfolio, especially the focal areas International Waters (FA4) and Biodiversity (FA2). Delegates from both Malaysia and Vietnam mentioned that they were likely to pursue opportunities for GEF support to progress ocean account initiatives.

The World Bank's Blue Economy program has initiated PRO BLUE, a multi donor trust fund to support implementation of SDG 14, and raised over USD 150 million in donor commitments (Norway, Sweden, Iceland, France, Germany and, Canada). Countries can apply for funding under PROBLUE together with the World Bank, for work under four priority themes:

- Management of fisheries and aquaculture
- Threats posed to ocean health by marine pollution including litter and plastics
- Sustainable development of key oceanic sectors such as tourism, maritime transport and off-shore renewable energy
- Building capacity of governments to manage their marine and coastal resources in an integrated fashion to deliver more and long-lasting benefits to countries and communities including the role of nature-based solutions to climate change

3.1.6.5 EEA Revision outcomes

As shown in Fig 11, the acceptance of the evolving technical guidance act to an agreed methodological document - international statistical standard or best practice is an important milestone in sustainability of results. This would imply the broad concurrence by appropriate intergovernmental and expert bodies of the final version of the technical guidance (through peer reviews and endorsement), and eventually its incorporation by

the UN Statistics Commission in the SEEA-EEA framework which is expected to be revised in 2021. While formal mechanism and processes have been put into place for the EEA revisions, especially the creation of Committee of Experts UN CEEA, the project needs to engage more actively to present its emerging technical guidance for UNSC's consideration and incorporation.

3.1.7 Gender

3.1.7.1 Scope for Gender mainstreaming

The nature of the project offers limited scope for gender mainstreaming in substantive aspects; although the emphasis on age and sex disaggregated data exists in all global statistics initiatives including in the SDGs and is also implicit in ocean accounts sub-headings (economic, social and ecosystem service provision and usage aspects).

The evaluation notes that gender sensitive statistics is a broader subject linked to several SDGs especially SDG 5 and receives the attention of several UN agencies based on their mandates. Specifically, fisheries and tourism the two putatively highest women-employment intensive sectors linked to the ocean, have embarked on initiatives for age- and sex- disaggregated reporting of employment along value chains. Other aspects such as the gender balance in the project's activities have not been explicitly highlighted.

3.1.7.2 Project Design

The project design did not contain any explicit gender component based on gender analysis; however, gender perspectives are explicitly targeted in ESCAP's subprogramme 4 on Environment and Development (Expected Accomplishments (a) and (b)), through the emphasis on age and gender-disaggregated statistics in rural and urban areas under the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The stylised Ocean accounts template clearly identifies the need for disaggregation of the ocean services value by beneficiary types, which provides scope for classification of beneficiaries and service providers by gender, income class, industrial subclassification and other specific attributes. The sex-disaggregated work force distribution across sectors supporting and benefiting from the ocean economy is one of the potential data features in ocean accounting.

3.1.7.3 Participation in Activities

Guidance on gender mainstreaming requires gender analysis of project-supported events and activities, as a gender-sensitive good practice. The evaluation noted a mixed composition of men and women participants in the GOAP events, although whether the balance was appropriate or not from a gender perspective is lower in weight than the expertise brought towards the technical guidance and capacity development. However, the evaluation could not find any explanatory note explicitly stating considerations for gender balance, voice and representativeness in the selection of consultants, delegates and expert contributors.

Table 7. Participation of women in project activities

Project activities	Men	Women	Sex ratio (male/female)
National workshop participants (2 workshops per pilot country)	244	218	1.12
Nov 12-15, 2019 delegates	63	34	1.85
ESCAP staff in project	3	4	0.75
Consultants in the project	9	5	1.8
Total	319	261	1.22

Source: ESCAP staff

4. Conclusions

4.1 Overall Conclusions

This evaluation concludes that the project was largely successful in meeting its objectives to strengthen statistical capacities to achieve SDG 14 in selected countries in Asia and the Pacific.

Specifically, the project has made a leading contribution to develop the concepts and technical guidance on ocean accounts as a theme of the SEEA-EEA framework. It has led to enhanced stakeholder understanding of the relevance and utility of ocean accounting, extending beyond the statisticians and scientists to policy makers. The demonstration of the policy use case for ocean accounts is a major contribution to its increased consideration by national governments. The project demonstrated promising results in its five pilots, and led to an increased demand for similar support to other countries in the region. It has also initiated and seed-funded a (regional/global) knowledge network on ocean accounts partnership comprising policy makers, ocean scientists, environmental statisticians and experts in other domains.

The key factors of the project's performance and contributions were: ESCAP's mandate and role as regional commission in supporting member countries develop quality environmental statistics and monitor and report progress against relevant SDG and CBD targets; ESCAP's established institutional relationships with member countries'- especially national statistical agencies, who are primary stakeholders in mainstreaming ocean accounts for ocean policies and environmental governance; ESCAP's high convening power (as a UN regional commission) engendering the participation of diverse stakeholders from government, academia, inter-governmental and non-governmental agencies; Partnerships with experts, research institutions, academia (including many pro bono contributors) to evolve authoritative technical guidance and practice on ocean accounts.

Areas that remained weak in the project and limit the project's results effectiveness are: absence of a comprehensive communications strategy (and budgets) for dissemination of the results and demonstrating use cases for ocean accounts; and lack of explicit engagement with the global EEA revision process and calendar towards finalizing texts for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems chapters.

4.2 Ratings by evaluation criteria

4.2.1 Relevance

The evaluation rates the project Very High on Relevance, with a score of 4.5/5.

The project responded to an important priority need of several member countries: capacities to monitor SDG 14, the need for ocean accounts and the challenges in adapting environmental accounting frameworks to ocean accounting. In this direction, the project undertook systematic assessments of needs and capacities to formulate the project components. The project also responded to a key DESA finding that regional commissions allocated far lower resources towards support to environmental statistics compared to economic and social statistics.

The emphasis on statistical capacities to fill in the data and monitoring gaps in SDG 14, the identification of oceans as an important economic contributor to several countries in the region, and supporting an important element in the SEEA EEA revision, reflects strong alignment with the context.

An important element of the project design was the flexibility in selection of themes and non-imposition of rigid formats and structures for the pilot themes, which led to experimentation and adaptation of the framework by implementing institutions. The varied experiences from the pilots enriched the technical guidance.

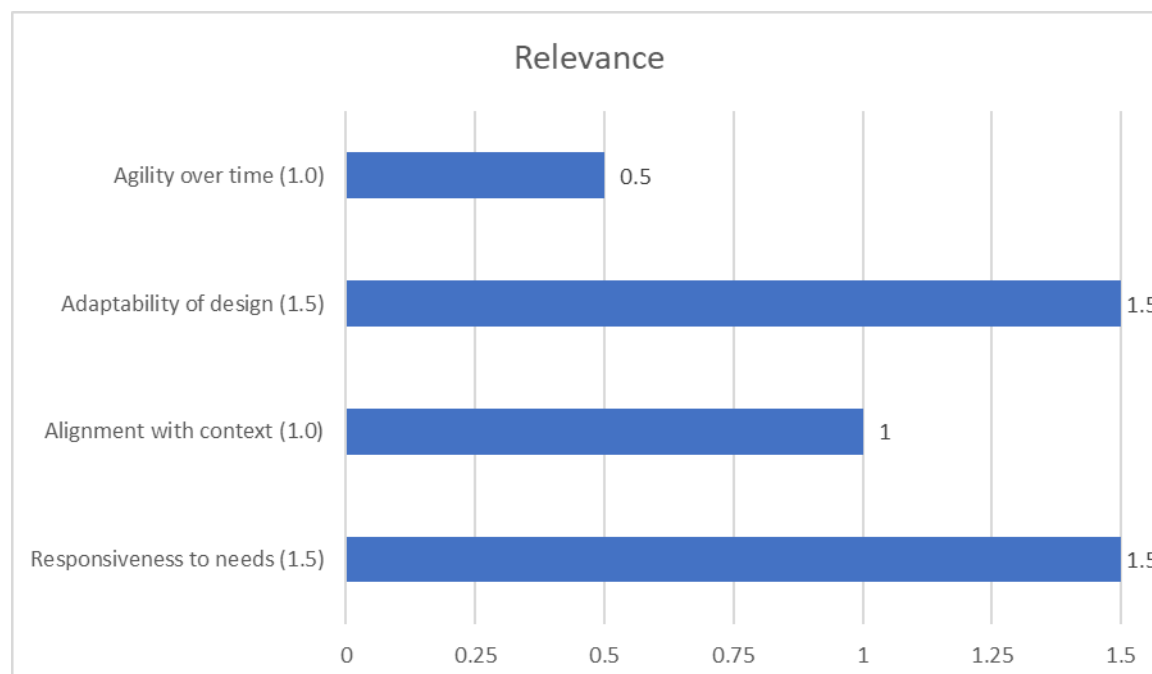


Fig 12. Ratings on Relevance

4.2.2 Effectiveness

The evaluation rates the effectiveness as High, with a score of 4 out of 5.

The project fully achieved two of its three Expected Accomplishments; for the third EA (enhanced capacity for application of ocean accounting for policy analysis) while there are positive indications of the enhanced capacity for ocean accounting, an assessment of policy analysis resulting from the pilots (which by themselves are not comprehensive or multisectoral at this stage) cannot be done within the duration of the project. The maturity of the pilots and the resources for upscaling vary among the five countries, thus the likelihood of EA3 is not uniform across countries. Also, the requirement for Development Account projects to have an evaluation within the project time line do not support *ex post* assessments of emerging impacts which require a threshold of time for impacts to manifest.

The formal inclusion of the technical guidance in the Marine Eco Systems Chapter of the EEA revision is a significant milestone towards long-term impact of the project. Thus, the project's influence on the EEA revision is of paramount importance. Even though ESCAP and UNEP have volunteered to lead the guidance on ocean accounts, the project's engagement with the EEA revision calendar and processes has not been explicit: there are no specific deliverables towards this key result of the technical guidance. Thus, while a good output has been delivered, it has not been sufficiently disseminated within the duration of the project to the technical committees of the EEA revision.

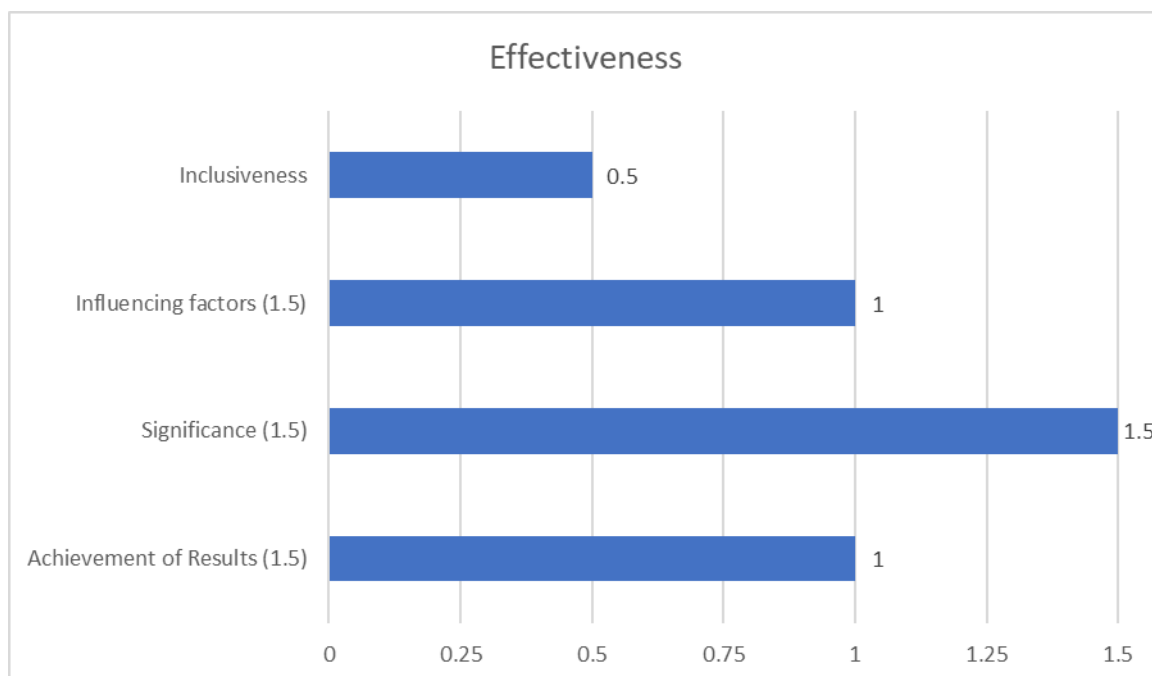


Fig 13. Ratings on Effectiveness

4.2.3 Efficiency

The evaluation rates the Efficiency as Very High, with a score of 4.5 out of 5.

All activities were completed within a rather short implementation period (15 months). This is commendable given that implementation was spread across different countries. All the pilots completed their scoped activities and were able to present early results at the regional workshop. Timely backstopping by ESCAP in pilot countries was an important element ensuring timely completion.

The project's agility in responding to the setback from Vanuatu and Indonesia withdrawing their candidatures by replacing them with Samoa and Vietnam also contributed to the completion of five pilots in time and share the results for consideration in the technical guidance and regional workshops.

The project received significant amounts of in-kind contributions, which have been understated in the expenditure documents. ESCAP incurred significant costs for the preparatory diagnostics and first regional workshops, which were not billed to the project accounts. The notional value of these contributions is assessed at over 25% of the project budget. The value of the pro bono expertise of several contributors to the technical guidance although intangible is perceived to be high.

The project showed cost efficiencies by saving over USD 30,000, about 6% of budgets¹⁸, which can be deployed for essential activities that were not in the original design.

Overall, the project reflects effective partnerships: statisticians, ocean scientists, environmental statisticians, policy makers, governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies. However, a more structured partnership with UNEP and UNSC could have improved the results effectiveness further.

¹⁸ Data from Excel table on project expenditures as shared by ESCAP team

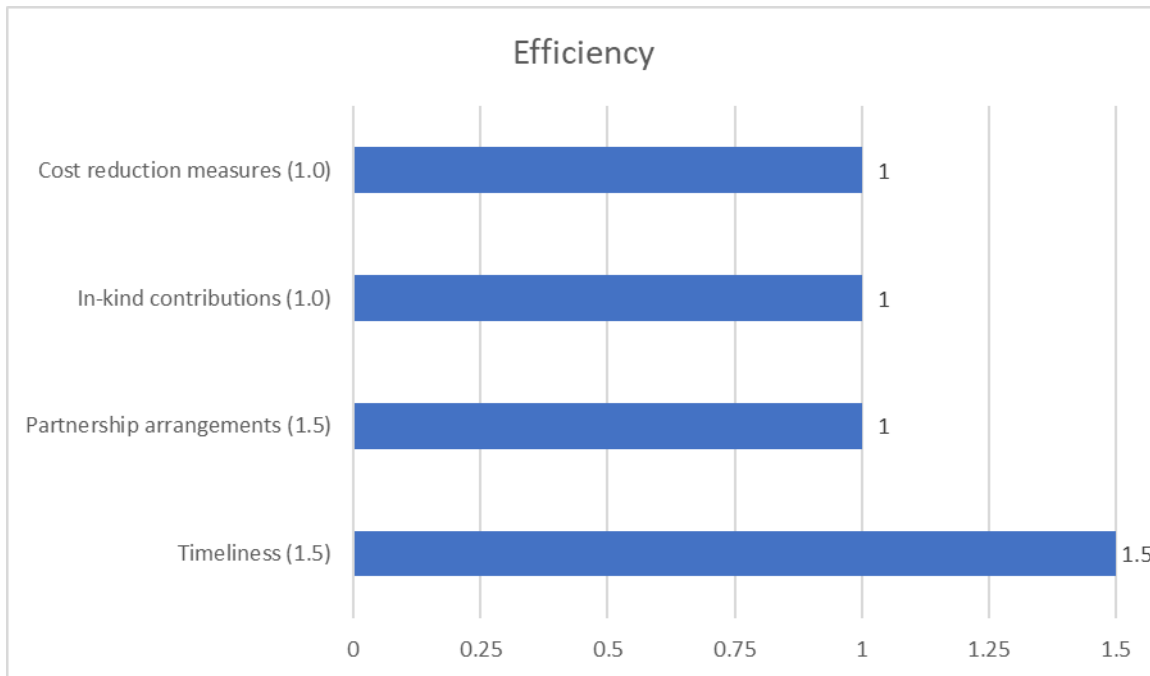


Fig 14. Ratings on Efficiency

4.2.4 Sustainability

The evaluation rates the Sustainability as Medium with a score of 3.5/5.

The project ensured a high level of country ownership, which was confirmed by national stakeholders from several (pilot and non-pilot) countries in the form of ‘intent to use’ statements and specific work plan commitments at institutional level. The technical guidance and the pilot accounts have provided the tools and experience to carry on and upscale the scope of accounts in the five countries. However, the irreversible point in the transition would be when countries mainstream ocean accounts as part of the governance and policy tools and allocate resources for ocean accounts.

The continued involvement of ESCAP in support to member countries in environmental statistics, the ongoing engagement with the EEA revision process, and the emerging demand for more pilots ensure continued attention to ocean accounts in future. With the increasing donor interest in supporting more pilots, ESCAP has prospects to develop follow on programmes.

The final shape, scope and detailing of Marine Ecosystems in the EEA revision, and eventually a formal guidance document on Oceans Thematic Accounts cannot be foretold at present. However, they are important milestones in the overall sustainability of the project’s results, as they have the power to accelerate adoption of ocean accounts reporting by countries and also promote aggregation and comparative assessments of progress across countries. This is not within the project’s influence beyond the engagement with the revision process. It is expected that the authority of the experts that prepared the guidance would be ESCAP’s most effective influence on UNSC’s endorsement.

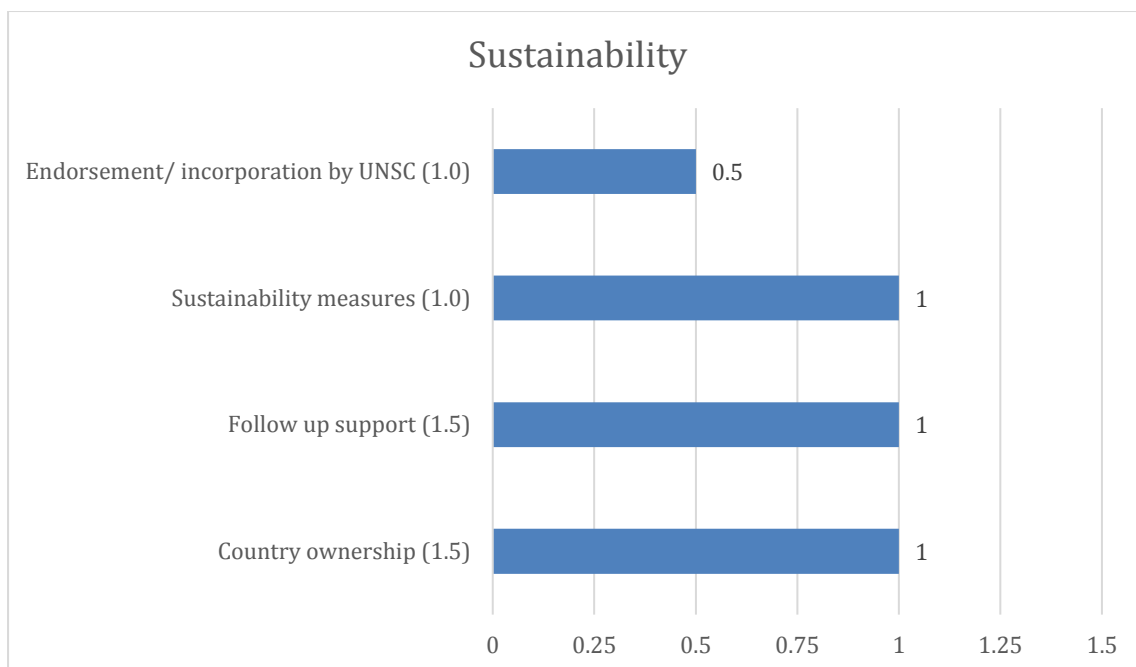


Fig 15. Ratings on Sustainability

4.2.5 Gender

The evaluation rates the project low on gender with a score of 2 out of 5, based on two factors: one, the absence of any narrative on gender considerations in the project document, including the absence of any justification of the limited scope for gender mainstreaming in the substantive aspects of the project, and two, the absence of any deliberation or record note explaining the criteria for selection of delegates experts and resource providers, including gender balance, voice and representativeness. However, although gender sensitivity is important and a good practice in its own right, the evaluation also did not note any indication of adverse impact of gender balance in the project's results.

4.3 Lessons Learnt

The project has demonstrated or reinforced the following lessons in respect of successful design and implementation of development account projects.

- Needs Assessments and Stakeholder Consultation ensure stronger ownership
- Oceans are multidisciplinary, not the remit of only environmental statisticians
- Political motivation and leadership is key; engagement with policy makers necessary to advance the agenda
- Modest beginnings based on scant data are more useful than inaction
- Targeted communications play a key role in advancing the agenda and adoption of successful practices

Needs Assessments and Stakeholder Consultation ensure stronger ownership: The successful conclusion of the five pilot studies was a cornerstone of the project's success, and depended heavily on the ownership of not only the statistical agencies but also of other key stakeholders. ESCAP's investments in the needs assessment surveys and application of the regional diagnostic tools for eight candidate countries set the ground for the pilot studies; and also aided in risk mitigation - the withdrawal of initial candidates Indonesia and Vanuatu after completing national assessments was also a reflection of due consideration of readiness and ownership. The process of stakeholder

consultations in each pilot contributed to the continued ownership and interest in the pilots.

Ocean issues are multidisciplinary, not the remit of only environmental statisticians:

The project made a strong case for the complexity of ocean ecosystems and the collective impact of human economic activities from several sectors on the state of the ocean. A recurrent message from the guidance and the deliberations of experts was that while the compilation and analysis of data may relate primarily to statistics, the analysis of drivers and pressures and the governance measures required are beyond the remit of statisticians, and call for collective involvement of statisticians, scientists, economists and policy experts. Thus ocean accounts are not merely a branch of environmental statistics. Accounts merely provide the data and evidence which trigger policy actions.

Political motivation and leadership is key; engagement with policy makers necessary to advance the agenda: The project ensured a good balance between resolving technical issues and challenges in compiling ocean accounts and demonstrating use cases of ocean accounts, bringing out the clear message that ultimately, the use cases dictate the priorities and scope of accounts. Thus, the decision by governments to incorporate ocean accounts as part of the public accounting and review processes is determined more by the use cases and a consideration of trade-offs associated with the multi-sectoral dependencies involved. Therefore, engagement with policy makers is crucial to mainstream ocean accounts as part of the policy review process.

Modest beginnings based on scant data are more useful than inaction waiting for perfect data: The project also showed clearly that ecosystem accounting in general and ocean accounts in particular are an evolving and imperfect domain, and there are both conceptual and data gaps to be bridged. The statisticians and scientists' propensity for more data and robust methods while desirable can lead to inaction based on scientific and technical constraints in data availability; however, policy decisions are often taken without complete information, and policy makers are more amenable to initiating processes that evolve with time and experience, beginning with small pieces rather than attempting the entire realm of ocean accounts. The project pilots showed that beginnings can be made with limited data and small geographic footprints, and even these can provide useful information for policy actions, and yet be improved and upscaled over time, with the policy use acting as a catalyst for upscaling and enhancing the scope of data collection and reporting, based on specific policy needs. Thus, the size and scope of ocean accounts is determined more by the policy needs and size by itself need not be a limitation.

Targeted communications play a key role in adoption of knowledge and successful practices: The project generated a wealth of information that can assist member countries towards a better understanding of the role and usefulness of ocean accounting. The regional workshops helped build a shared understanding among diverse stakeholders on how policy actions can benefit from and drive the compilation of ocean accounts. However, the full potential of outreach could not be tapped in the absence of a communications strategy. Communications need to be tailored for statisticians, economists and policy experts according to their roles and needs. Projects that involve follow on actions by direct and ultimate beneficiaries should have appropriate components and budgets for communications and outreach.

5. Recommendations

Recommendation 1. ESCAP should, as co-Chair of the GOAP and in collaboration with relevant partners, ensure that the Technical Guidance is finalized.

After several iterations and consultations, the first draft Technical Guidance was introduced at the GOAP Dialogue, Sydney, for comments and discussions. While this is a major milestone, further work remains to be done over the coming months to finalize the guidance.

ESCAP should as Co-Chair of GOAP and in collaboration with relevant partners ensure that the Technical Guidance is finalized, including:

- Reflection of feed-back from the November 2019 Global Dialogue and final inputs from expert reviewers
- Engagement in relevant ocean events to solicit additional feedback from compilers and users
- Engagement with the EEA revision process until March 2021, including submission of relevant parts of the Guidance to the EEA Revision Technical Committee for discussion and adoption where appropriate

ESCAP's work plan for 2020 should include activities to complete the guidance, including setting aside expenditures for necessary expert consultations. Necessary arrangements including budgets for engagement of key experts (Michael Bordt, and others) should be arranged to ensure effective participation at the events listed above.

Recommendation 2. ESCAP, as Co-Chair of the GOAP in 2020, should design and disseminate targeted Communications and Guidance products aimed at different stakeholders drawing from the project's results.

GOAP should develop a targeted communications package (in e-content as well as physical) including a compendium of the five pilots and the main messages from the GOAP Dialogue event in Sydney. The package should highlight numerous examples demonstrating the policy use of ocean accounts and links to useful materials (including to the ESCAP Ocean Portal).

As already requested widely, GOAP should create a short User Manual on Ocean Accounts targeted at non-statisticians and policy makers, to serve as an introductory guide on the basics of ocean accounts and the policy usage aspects of the same. Ideally, summaries should be also made available in national language for higher levels of outreach.

Unspent funds from the project (approx. USD 30,000) could be used for preparation and dissemination of the communications package.

Recommendation 3. ESCAP, in collaboration with partners, should develop a follow-on regional project proposal for 'Building and Using Ocean Accounts to monitor SDG 14'

To sustain the momentum built by the Ocean Accounts project, ESCAP should collaborate with relevant partners to formulate a follow-on regional project focusing on implementation and institutional capacities, for potential funding from donor partners (Australia and China have shown interest in funding ESCAP). Based on the several demands expressed by participants, these could include (illustrative):

- Support a pilot with multiple themes (Malaysia/ Vietnam)

- Establish regional and national working groups to upscale ocean accounts in the five pilot countries (Thailand would like to expand the process to all provinces)
- Technical support to new pilots that are raising funding (e.g. Vanuatu/ PNG)
- Comparison studies and experience-sharing in similar sectors (e.g. tourism satellite accounts from Thailand, Samoa and Vietnam)
- Develop (with UNSC guidance and acceptance) an Ocean Accounts Assurance manual and training Programme for Assurers, and guidelines for empanelment of Assurers in Asia and Pacific.

Table 8. Correspondence between Recommendations and basis texts in report

Recommendation	Conclusions	Findings
Recommendation 1. ESCAP should finalize the Technical Guidance and submit relevant parts formally to the EEA Revision Technical Committee.	Para 178, 183, 187	Para 126 -130
Recommendation 2. ESCAP, as Co-Chair of the GOAP in 2020, should design and disseminate targeted Communications and Guidance products aimed at different stakeholders drawing from the project's results.	Para 171	Para 112 Paras 133-134
Recommendation 3. ESCAP, in collaboration with partners, should develop a follow-on regional project proposal for 'Building and Using Ocean Accounts to monitor SDG 14'	Para 186	Para 158-163

ANNEXES

Annex I: Terms of Reference

Evaluation of the project “Strengthening statistical capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member Countries”

Terms of reference

<i>Job Opening number:</i>	19-Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific-125643-Consultant
<i>Job Title:</i>	Project Evaluator
<i>General Expertise:</i>	Management and Analysis
<i>Category:</i>	Evaluation
<i>Department/ Office:</i>	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
<i>Organizational Unit:</i>	ESCAP SD

Duties and Responsibilities

Evaluation at ESCAP complies with the regulations and rules of the United Nations Secretariat as put forth by the Secretary-General, which mandate that all programmes shall be evaluated on a regular, periodic basis. The present evaluation is undertaken in accordance with the ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines that requires each capacity development project to allocate a dedicated budget for evaluation.

The project “Strengthening statistical capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member countries” focuses on developing capacity in member countries by (a) providing reliable technical guidance documentation on ocean accounts, (b) supporting pilot studies and (c) documenting the results in a Regional Ocean Accounts Platform.

ESCAP has engaged several member States in conducting pilot studies. These pilots are being conducted in China, Malaysia, Samoa, Thailand and Viet Nam. The pilot studies are testing and applying the draft technical guidance from the regional expert workshop in their respective national/provincial context. In turn, the outcomes of the pilot studies are expected to provide practical evidence and inputs to the revision/improvement process of the draft technical guidance on ocean accounts. As part of the project, ESCAP has also committed to developing a Regional Ocean Accounts Platform, which will make knowledge gained from the project easily and publicly accessible.

To respond to ESCAP resolution 73/5, the increasing recognition and global demand for better integrated data and statistics on the ocean, and to sustain the project impact beyond 2019, ESCAP and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) established the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) in June 2019. The GOAP seeks to establish a coordination and communication structure for diverse member institutions, who have a common interest to ensure that the values and benefits of oceans are recognized and accounted for in decision-making about social and economic development.

The purposes of evaluation are to promote accountability and learning, and support results-based management. Evaluations are used to enhance future project planning, inform programming and budgeting and report on achievements and results of ESCAP’s work to member States and donors. The use of evaluations for accountability and organizational learning is facilitated through the development of a management

response and follow-up action plan to the findings and recommendations of each evaluation. The target users of the evaluation results include the ESCAP management and staff, donor and member States of ESCAP.

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- 1) Assess the performance the project against evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and gender and human rights mainstreaming;
- 2) Formulate lessons learned and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project design and implementation.

A detailed term of reference of the evaluation is provided to the consultant to guide the evaluation process in line with the ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines and the UNEG norms and standards for evaluation.

Ultimate result of service

The evaluator will assume overall responsibility for carrying out the evaluation in an objective and independent manner. This includes, among other activities, managing the work, ensuring the quality of interviews and data collection, preparing the draft report, presenting the draft report and producing the final report after comments have been received in line with standard templates provided by ESCAP. ESCAP management use the findings and recommendations of the evaluation to enhance future project planning, inform programming and budgeting and report on achievements and results of ESCAP's work to member States and donors.

Title & ID number of programme/project

SB-011136.01, Funds Center 11529, 64ROA

Is any other department or office of the Secretariat or any other organization of the United Nations involved in similar work to the best of your knowledge?

No

Travel Details

Travel to Sydney, Australia to attend the First Annual Meeting of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, 12-15 November 2019, for in-depth assessment of results. Travel-related cost is included in the consultancy fee; consultant is expected to arrange for his/her own travel.

Outputs/Work Assignment

The following outputs will be delivered to ESCAP's management and the Reference Group through the Strategy and Programme Management Division:

1. Inception report, including an evaluation work plan and framework detailing the approach of the evaluator
2. Consultation meetings with project stakeholders
3. Online survey
4. First draft and final evaluation reports
5. Presentation (PPT) on the findings, conclusions and recommendations

The draft evaluation report, including preliminary findings and recommendations, will be shared with key stakeholders prior to finalization for their review and suggestions.

Consultancy fee

The consultancy fee is USD 15,500. Payment schedule will be based on the completion of outputs as follows:

- First payment of US\$ 5,500 upon submission of evaluation inception report
- Final payment of US\$ 10,000 upon the submission of the final evaluation report, including the PPT presentation

Expected Duration

The evaluation duration covers the period from 1 November to 31 December 2019.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Academic Qualifications:** Bachelor's degree in an area related to economic and social development, or other related fields.
- **Experience:**
 - Knowledge of the United Nations System; principles, values, goals and approaches, including human rights, gender equality, cultural values, the Sustainable Development Goals and familiarity with the operations of United Nations Economic and Social and Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific and its governing structure;
 - Knowledge of results-based management and the formulation of indicators for measuring impact/results, as well as familiarity with the planning and monitoring framework of the UN Secretariat;
 - Professional and technical experience in evaluation (application of evaluation norms, standards and ethical guidelines and the relevant organizational evaluation policy and promotion of evaluation and evidence-based learning).¹⁹
 - Good technical knowledge and experience related to the subject of the project to be evaluated.
- **Language:** It is essential that the evaluators have an excellent command of the English language and should have demonstrated their ability to communicate results effectively.

¹⁹ See Standard 3.1. Competencies, UNEG. 2016. *Norms and standards for evaluation*.

Annex II: Project Results Framework

Objective: To strengthen national capacities of selected developing countries in the ESCAP region on ocean data and statistics to improve the sustainable management of the ocean and marine resources.

Expected accomplishments

EA1: Enhanced partnerships among international, regional and national stakeholders focusing on an agreed statistical framework for the standardization of ocean-related statistics and their application to the sustainable management of oceans.

- IA1.1: An international partnership on ocean accounts to collaborate on a statistical guidance document, regional ocean accounts platform and future implementations of ocean accounts.
- IA1.2: Five member countries have improved access to global and regional ocean-related data and guidelines to produce national ocean accounts, as made available through enhanced partnerships.

Activities:

- A1.1 Establish (or collaborate with existing) international, regional and national working groups to conduct assessments of mandates, programs and data holdings. This includes participation in international workshops and conferences to promote, solicit support and obtain advice on the approach being developed.
- A1.2 Produce an inventory of selected global and regional ocean-related data and statistics. The establishment of the inventory will entail desk research and discussions with global data holders by ESCAP staff and stakeholders to obtain appropriate metadata.
- A1.3 Produce a draft internationally-authoritative guidance document for the collection, standardization, integration, and interpretation of a core set of national ocean accounts (SEEA-Ocean). Draft guidance will be produced by ESCAP and partners. This has already commenced as an output of the August 2018 oceans workshop.
- A1.4 Produce a joint ESCAP knowledge distribution and online publication of technical and training resources (Regional Ocean Accounts Platform). A joint knowledge distribution will be produced by ESCAP and partners by producing the inventory, draft guidance, pilot results and core global data.

EA2: Enhanced technical capacity of beneficiary countries to regularly produce a coherent set of priority ocean statistics (ocean accounts).

- IA2.1: Five member countries produce (or if existing, enhance) work plans to develop a core set of relevant standardized ocean accounts.
- IA2.2: Five member countries report enhanced engagement between national departments, international agencies and other stakeholders to share, compile and use relevant ocean accounts.
- IA2.3: Five member countries share knowledge on how they use ocean accounts for policy analysis at the closing workshop.

Activities:

- A 2.1 Establish (or collaborate with existing) national stakeholder partnerships in selected beneficiary countries with the view to facilitating production of ocean accounts.
- A 2.2 Conduct two national workshops per country to (a) assess policy priorities, develop work plans for collection and production of ocean accounts and (b) compile ocean accounts and develop a communications strategy for the select member countries. The national workshops will be conducted by ESCAP and optional partners.
- A 2.3 Conduct a regional ocean accounts expert workshop to present results of case studies and Regional Ocean Accounts Platform with the view to establish the South-South collaboration on future work, share experiences and refine recommendations on draft guidelines for the future production of ocean accounts.

EA3: Enhanced capacity to apply ocean accounts for policy analysis for the sustainable management of ocean resources

- IA3.1: Five member countries report incorporating ocean accounts into subsequent policy analyses.

Activities:

- A3.1 Conduct a post-assessment to determine how selected member countries share knowledge and incorporate ocean accounts into plans for subsequent ocean-related policy analysis, including documenting best practices and lessons learned. The post-assessment will be conducted by ESCAP and partners as a review of the pilots and overall process.
- A3.2 Incorporate best practices and lessons learned into ESCAP Regional Ocean Accounts Platform described under A1.4

Annex III: Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources of Information	Data collection methods	Risk and limitations
Relevance	<p>To what extent does the project design respond to the needs of Member States?</p> <p>How were the needs and requirements of the project beneficiaries assessed and incorporated in the project design and implementation?</p> <p>To what extent did the project beneficiaries find the project outputs as designed meet their needs and tailored to their national context?</p> <p>What could have been done better to improve the relevance of the project design and implementation?</p>	<p>National priorities as expressed in SDG VNRs...</p> <p>Results of Capacity Needs surveys</p> <p>Volunteering for pilots</p>	<p>Agenda 2030</p> <p>SDG documents</p> <p>ESCAP</p>	<p>Desk reviews</p> <p>Interviews with: ESCAP project team</p> <p>Counterparts in pilot countries</p>	<p>There may not be official statements of the priorities and challenges related to oceans governance. However, some countries have issued VNRs on SDG implementation</p> <p>Scoping studies are expected to reflect the needs and priorities of pilot countries.</p>

Effectiveness	To what extent and in what ways have the technical guidance, national pilot studies and knowledge platforms contributed to participants' enhanced knowledge and statistical capacities for oceans accounting?	Beneficiaries and partner perceptions of benefits from the project	Post assessment report (?) Interviews with key authors/ national stakeholders in pilot studies countries ESCAP perceptions of capacity absorption	Interviews with key authors/ teams for pilot studies Counterparts in pilot countries Questionnaire survey of participants at Second Regional Workshop (GOAP)	The bounds of the project influence are a few anchor stakeholders, with influence on national and regional actions building on the project. Actions towards ocean governance are largely voluntary and there is no international legally binding instrument to enforce ocean accounting.
	To what extent have participants been able to make use of learnings from the project and changed the way they conduct their work in order to enhance results?	Evidence of use by pilot countries in oceans accounting Policies and actions towards compiling and reporting on ocean accounts Views on potential use of endorsed technical guidance	Post assessment report (?) Interviews with key authors/ national stakeholders in pilot studies countries ESCAP perceptions	Interviews with: ESCAP project team authors/ teams for pilot studies Counterparts in pilot countries Questionnaire survey of participants at Second Regional Workshop (GOAP)	Same as above
	What are the key factors responsible for the outcomes achieved? What		ESCAP team	Interviews with: • ESCAP project team	-

	are the risks to the results leading to desired impacts?		National counterparts of pilot countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authors/ teams for pilot studies • Counterparts in pilot countries 	
	<p>To what extent have project beneficiaries been able to make use of learnings from the project and changed the way they conduct their work in order to enhance results?</p> <p>What outcome results were achieved and the key factors responsible for their achievement?</p> <p>What could have been done better to improve the effectiveness of the project design and implementation?</p>				
Sustainability	Did the project include a plan or approach to continue, upscale and replicate the results, and how has this been implemented?	Plans for new ESCAP projects; tie up for supplementary funding to continue regional platform and adoption of technical guidance	<p>ESCAP team</p> <p>National counterparts of pilot countries</p>	<p>Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP project team • Counterparts in pilot countries 	The uptake and replication of the technical guidance will depend on formal endorsement (IAEG-SDG, UN Statistical Commission and other international bodies) as an authoritative and

		Technical assistance proposals from member states			internationally accepted best practice, contributing to improvement of relevant SDG 14 indicators.
	Have the pilot countries put in place institutional mechanisms and articulated action plans to continue the methodologies and practices for oceans accounting?	Institutional frameworks in pilot countries for SEEA and Natural Assets accounting Ministerial responsibilities allocated for ocean accounts preparation and coordination	ESCAP team National counterparts of pilot countries		With counterpressure from a diversity of stakeholders, political economy of multisectoral oceans governance mechanisms is not always easy. Low general awareness of underlying issues can impede consensus.
	Has the project identified partners and funding arrangements that will enable continuation and advancing the achievements of the project?	New partners and sources of future programme funding National co-finance	Govt of Australia World Bank National counterparts		International partner strategies and priorities around SDG 14 will influence funding towards specific targets.
Efficiency	To what extent did the project achieve efficiency through comparative advantages and synergies of implementing agencies and partners?	Existing and complementary ESCAP interventions with project's key stakeholders, implementing agencies and partners	ESCAP team Experts associated with technical guidance drafts	Desk reviews Interviews with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP senior management • ESCAP project team 	Implementing arrangements and time lines of related projects may not facilitate maximizing of synergies.

		Sharing of resources (staff, expertise, coordination, communications), knowledge and outreach mechanisms with other similar projects and ESCAP events			
Partnerships	<p>To what extent has partnering with other organizations enabled or enhance reaching of results?</p> <p>What would not have happened in the absence of specific partners?</p>	Partnership approach of the project Key partners, comparative advantages, their specific roles in project	ESCAP, UNSW, UNEP, World Bank	<p>Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP project team • International agencies, expert institutions and individuals involved with the technical guidance and regional platforms 	<p>Listing of several partners in the project design does not assure a commensurate role in the project activities.</p> <p>Partners' effective utilisation also depends on project resources or co-financing.</p>

2030 Agenda and SDGs	How has the project contributed to improve the availability and quality of statistical data for monitoring and reporting on SDG 14, SDG 15, and SDG 17?	<p>Links to SDG 14 targets and indicators</p> <p>Synergies with other ESCAP projects supporting SDGs</p>	<p>ESCAP team</p> <p>National counterparts of pilot countries</p> <p>Experts associated with technical guidance drafts</p>	<p>Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP project team • authors/ teams for pilot studies • Counterparts in pilot countries • International agencies, expert institutions and individuals <p>Questionnaire survey of participants at Second Regional Workshop (GOAP)</p>	<p>Ocean accounts causal linkages to reaching SDG targets are not direct and immediate. Ocean accounts only provide the knowledge tools for diagnosis and policy actions towards SDGs and contribute to the progression of Tier III indicators into Tier I over time.</p>
Human rights and Gender Equality	<p>To what extent has the project contributed to human rights and gender related objectives and to SDG 5 and gender objectives in other SDGs?</p> <p>Did the project have specific gender equality targets in its results frameworks?</p>	<p>Inclusion/ consideration of sex disaggregated data in ocean accounts</p> <p>Coverage of marginal stakeholders' rights in ocean accounts</p> <p>Gender balance in project activities</p>	<p>ESCAP team</p> <p>National counterparts of pilot countries</p>	<p>Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP project team • International agencies, expert institutions and individuals involved with the technical guidance and regional platforms 	<p>Sex-disaggregated data may not be relevant to all the SDG 14 indicators.</p> <p>Gender equality dimensions are more relevant and can be assessed in policy decisions and actions around specific SDG targets.</p>

Innovation	Did the project evolve any innovative aspects that proved successful? How can these be upscaled and replicated with funding from outside the DA?	<p>Presence of other initiatives for SEEA for ocean accounting</p> <p>Distinctive features of the ESCAP Ocean accounts approach.</p> <p>Endorsement and peer review of Ocean Account methodologies</p>	<p>ESCAP team</p> <p>Experts associated with technical guidance drafts</p> <p>National counterparts of pilot countries</p>	<p>Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP project team • International agencies, expert institutions and individuals involved with the technical guidance and regional platforms 	<p>Several initiatives might be progressing at the same time to develop an SEEA framework for ocean accounting. Innovation aspects can be studied better through comparison. Information on comparable initiatives may not be readily available on public domain.</p>
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Annex IV: List of Documents Perused

Project Documents:

United Nations ESCAP. October 2018. Eleventh Tranche of the Development Account Project- Strengthening statistical capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member Countries

United Nations ESCAP. September 2019. Building Ocean specific environmental-economic accounting capability of countries in Asia and the Pacific

2018 Progress Report:

January 2019. Annual Progress Report of Development Account Project – Strengthening statistical capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member countries

Global Dialogue on Ocean Accounting

September 2019. Global Dialogue on Ocean Accounting: 12–15 November 2019

Evaluation References

UNESCAP. 2017. ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines

UNESCAP. October 2019. Terms of Reference - Development Account Project Strengthening statistical capacity to achieve SDG 14 in selected ESCAP member Countries

UN Development Account. October 2019. Project Evaluation Guidelines

Technical Assistant Outputs:

Lytong CAI (ESCAP Statistics Division). 30th September 2019. Monthly working report

Lytong CAI (ESCAP Statistics Division). 31st August 2019. Monthly working report

Lytong CAI (ESCAP Statistics Division). 31st July 2019. Monthly working report

Lytong CAI (ESCAP Statistics Division). 30th June 2019. Monthly working report

Activity 1.1

UNESCAP. September 2019. Trust fund agreement between the United nations and Commonwealth of Australia

Global Dialogue on Ocean Accounting: 12–15 November 2019 in Sydney

University of new south wales (UNSW). May 2019. Partnership letter-A Global Ocean Accounts Partnership for Sustainable Development

Term of Reference: A Global Ocean Accounts Partnership for Sustainable Development

Activity 1.2

Overview - Ocean Accounts Global Ocean Data Inventory

June 2019. Feasibility Study for “Mapping Global Ocean Ecosystems”

July. Feasibility Study for “Mapping Global Ocean Ecosystems”

September. Feasibility Study for “Mapping Global Ocean Ecosystems”

Lyutong CAI (ESCAP Statistics Division). Ocean State Forecast Products For Disaster Risk Reduction In The Pacific SIDS: A Case Study Of Samoa V1.0

Executive Summary

Activity 1.3

UNESCAP, GOAP. Version 0.5, 20 June 2019. Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Development

UNESCAP, GOAP. Version 0.6, 26 August 2019. Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Development

UNESCAP, GOAP. September 2019. Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Development

Activity 1.4

ESCAP Communities - Ocean Accounts, Environment Statistics

The Global Ocean Accounts Partnership

UNESCAP. 2019. Pacific Ocean Accounts Portal - Demonstrating the use of ESRI Hub Technology for Integrated Environmental-Economic Accounts

Activity 2.1

DA11 Ocean Accounts Key Stakeholders

Activity 2.2

Mission Reports:

UNESCAP. October 2018. Mission Report – Mission to Nusa Dua, Indonesia 30-31 October 2018

October 2018. Apia Outcome - Inter-Regional Meeting for the Mid-Term Review of the SAMOA Pathway Apia, Samoa

Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). November 2018. Samoa Declaration on Climate Change in the Context of Sustainable Development for SIDS

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UNOHRLLS). 2019. Draft Work Plan For the network of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) national focal points (NFPs)

UNESCAP. December 2018. Mission Report – SIDS National Focal Points’ Inaugural meeting, Samoa partnership dialogue & interregional preparatory

meeting for Samoa pathway mid-term review, follow-up on ocean partnership pilot proposal 29 October-1 November 2018

UNESCAP. March 2019. Mission report by Gemma Van Halderen, Rikke Munk Hansen. UN Statistical Commission, 50th Session, formal deliberations (5-8th March)

UNESCAP. March 2019. Mission report- Mission of director of statistics division and chief, economics and environment statistics section, statistics division to New York, USA, 1-8 March 2019

UNESCAP. February 2019. Mission report- Mission of the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP and Director of Statistics Division to California, United States of America, 19-20 February 2019

UNESCAP. March 2019. Mission report-Mission to Apia, Samoa (11-15 February 2019)

UNESCAP. March 2019. Mission report-Mission to Guangzhou, China (21-23 February 2019)

UNESCAP. May 2019. Mission report-Mission to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (3-5 April 2019)

UNESCAP. May 2019. Mission report-Mission to Hanoi, Vietnam (23-25 April 2019)

UNESCAP. May 2019. Mission report-Mission to Apia, Samoa (6-10 May 2019)

UNESCAP. September 2019. Mission report-Mission to Tokyo, Japan (31 July -2 September 2019)

Consultant Reports:

China

Developing Oceanic System of Environmental-Economic Accounting: A China Perspective

UNESCAP. Prepared by ZHAO Peng, LI Feixue, ZHANG Yunlan. July 2019. Extend the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) to Ocean: A Chinese Perspective

UNESCAP. ZHAO Peng. The First Progress Report of UNESCAP Ocean Accounts pilot study of China

UNESCAP. ZHAO Peng. The Second Progress Report of UNESCAP Ocean Accounts pilot study of China

Malaysia

UNESCAP. Prepared by Mary George, Professor. May 2019. Ocean Accounts Partnership for Malaysia Final Scoping Report

Data for Ocean Account

Research Proposal, Malaysia: Pilot Study on Sustainable Fisheries In The Straits Of Malacca

UNESCAP. Prepared by Mary George, Professor. August 2019. Ocean Accounts Partnership for Malaysia Progress Report 2

Samoa

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, UNESCAP. Prepared by Silafau Paul Meredith, Consultant. Ocean Accounts Partnership Samoa Pilot Study - Scoping Report 10 May 2019

Thailand

Prepared by Ms. Prapasri Pongwattana, Consultant On Ocean Accounts. May 2019. Thailand Ocean Pilot: Case Study on Sustainable Tourism, The Environment and The Ocean

Vietnam

Report on Ocean Account Consultant

Prepared by Viet Anh Hoang. Inception Report Ocean accounts pilot study in Viet Nam

UNESCAP. Vietnam Ocean account Case study in Quang Ninh province

Activity 3.2

UNESCAP. November 2019. Pacific Ocean Accounts Portal-Demonstrating the use of ESRI Hub technology for integrated environmental-economic accounts

Other Docs:

World Bank Group. Prepared by Arjan Ruijs and Michael Vardon. May 2018. 2nd Policy Forum On

Natural Capital Accounting for Better Decision Making- Applications for Sustainable Development. Part 2

GOAP. Version 1.0 11 June 2019. A Global Ocean Accounts Partnership for Sustainable Development

UNESCAP. Assessment of Capacity development needs of the countries in Asia and the Pacific for the implementation of SDG 14

UN. July 2013. Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics

UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2017. Framework for the development of environment statistics (FDES 2013)

A Healthy Ocean for A Sustainable Asia-Pacific

Annex V: List of People Contacted

Pilot countries

Country	Name	Organization	Email address
China	Mr. Zhao Peng	Fourth institute of oceanography	zp-zp@163.com
Malaysia	Ms. Siti Zakiah Muhamad Isa	Department of Statistics Malaysia	zakiah@stats.gov.my
Thailand	Ms. Kanjana Phumalee	National Statistical Office of Thailand	daneen252011@gmail.com
Samoa	Ms. Frances Reupena	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment	fran.reupena@mnre.gov.ws
Samoa	Mr. Papalii Benjamin Sila	Samoa Bureau of Statistics	benjamin.sila@sbs.gov.ws
Viet Nam	Ms. Kim Thuy Ngoc	Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment	kimthuyngoc@gmail.com

ESCAP and other Intergovernmental institutions

Name	Organization	Email address
Dr. Gemma van Halderen	ESCAP	
Dr Rikke Munk Hansen		
Mr. Teerapong Praphotjanaporn		
Mr. Michael Bordt	Fisheries and Oceans Canada and former ESCAP regional advisor on environment statistics	mbordt@gmail.com
Mr. Sanjesh Naidu	ESCAP Pacific Office	naidu@un.org
Mr. Ben Milligan	University of New South Wales	b.milligan@unsw.edu.au
Ms. Jillian Campbell	United Nations Environment Programme	campbell7@un.org
Ms Glen Marie Lang	World Bank Pro Blue Program	

Other Delegates

Full Name	Organisation	Email
Ms. Michelle Voyer	University of Wollongong	mvoyer@uow.edu.au
Mr. Michael Huang	Ocean Policy Research Institute	c-huang@grips.ac.jp
Mr. Andy Steven	CSIRO	andy.steven@csiro.au
Mr. Charles Colgan	Center for the Blue Economy	ccolgan@middlebury.edu
Rear Admiral (Retd.) Mohammad Khurshed Alam	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	khurshed.alam@mofa.gov.bd
Mr. Bikash Kishore Das	Statistics and Informatics Division, Bangladesh	bikashkishore@gmail.com
Mr. Pakeer Mohideen Amza	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	pakeer.amza@mfa.gov.lk
Ms. Shafiya Naeem	Maldives Marine Research Institute	snaeem@mrc.gov.mv
Prof. Dato' Dr. Azizan Bin Abu Samah	Institute of Ocean and Earth Sciences, University of Malaya (IOES, UM)	azizans@um.edu.my
Ms. Khazlita Adzim Abdol Aziz	Department of Fisheries (DOF), Ministry of Agriculture & Agro Based Industry	khazlita@dof.gov.my; khazlitaadzim@gmail.com
Ms. Vivian Ilarina	Philippine Statistics Authority	v.ilarina@psa.gov.ph
Mr. John Lourenze Poquiz	Philippine Statistics Authority	l.poquiz@psa.gov.ph
Full Name	Organisation	Email
Dr. Yimnang Golbuu	Palau International Coral Reef Center	ygolbuu@picrc.org
Mr. Fredrick Kuelinad	Department of Justice and Attorney General	fredrick.kuelinad@gmail.com
Mr. Arthit Kraomkaew	National Statistical Office of Thailand	Arthit.k@nso.go.th
Mr. Pinsak Suraswadi	Department of Marine and Coastal Resources	icsd.dmcr@gmail.com
Mr. Ukkrit Satapoomin	Marine and Coastal Resources Research and Development Institute	ukkrit@yahoo.com
Mr. Mario Cabral	PEMSEA	mariomarcab@yahoo.com

Mr. Rodolfo Soares	Department of National Account, National Directorate of Economic Statistics and Social, Directorate General for Statistics of Ministry of Finance	rdsoares@mof.gov.tl
Ms. Thi Thuy Ngoc Kim	Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment	kimthuyngoc@gmail.com
Mr. Ngo Nhu Ve	General Statistics Office of Viet Nam	nnve@gso.gov.vn
Mr. Papali'i Benjamin Sila	Bureau of Statistics	benjamin.sila@sbs.gov.ws
Mr. Leota Aliielua Salani	Bureau of Statistics	aliielua.salani@sbs.gov.ws
Mr. Robert Ah Sam	Samoa Tourism Authority	robert@samoa.travel
Mr. Kitiona Pogi	Samoa Tourism Authority	kit@samoa.travel
Mr. Gerard Tuii Anapu	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	asiata@mfat.gov.ws
Ken Findlay	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	findlayk@cput.ac.za
Mr. Bimlesh Krishna	Fiji Bureau of Statistics	bkrishna@statsfiji.gov.fj
Dr Laurence McCook	World Wildlife Fund Hong Kong	

Annex VI: Questionnaire survey used at GOAP event and Responses

Question/statement	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Self-assessment of national readiness					
There is adequate awareness and consensus among diverse stakeholders in my country of the importance of oceans and marine resources to our economic, social and environmental sustainability					
My institution has identified ocean accounting as a priority towards SDG 14 monitoring and review					
My institution/ country has the required legal/ regulatory frameworks and inter-sectoral institutional arrangements in place to undertake ocean accounting					
My institution/ country has adequate technical capacities and human resources to undertake ocean accounts					
The GOAP Global Dialogue					
Has enhanced my understanding of the importance and contribution of Ocean Accounts to developing a sustainable ocean economy					
Has enhanced my understanding of the importance of Accounts for my institution/ country's policy context and priorities					
Has provided useful technical guidance towards compiling Ocean Accounts					
Has provided greater clarity on the utility and use cases for Ocean Accounts					
Has helped identify a number of action areas for my institution/ country to put into place to compile and use Ocean Accounts					
Should be institutionalized as a regional mechanism for knowledge and best practice sharing					
Quality of the technical guidance and deliberations					
The technical guidance contains new, pioneering or innovative elements on adapting					

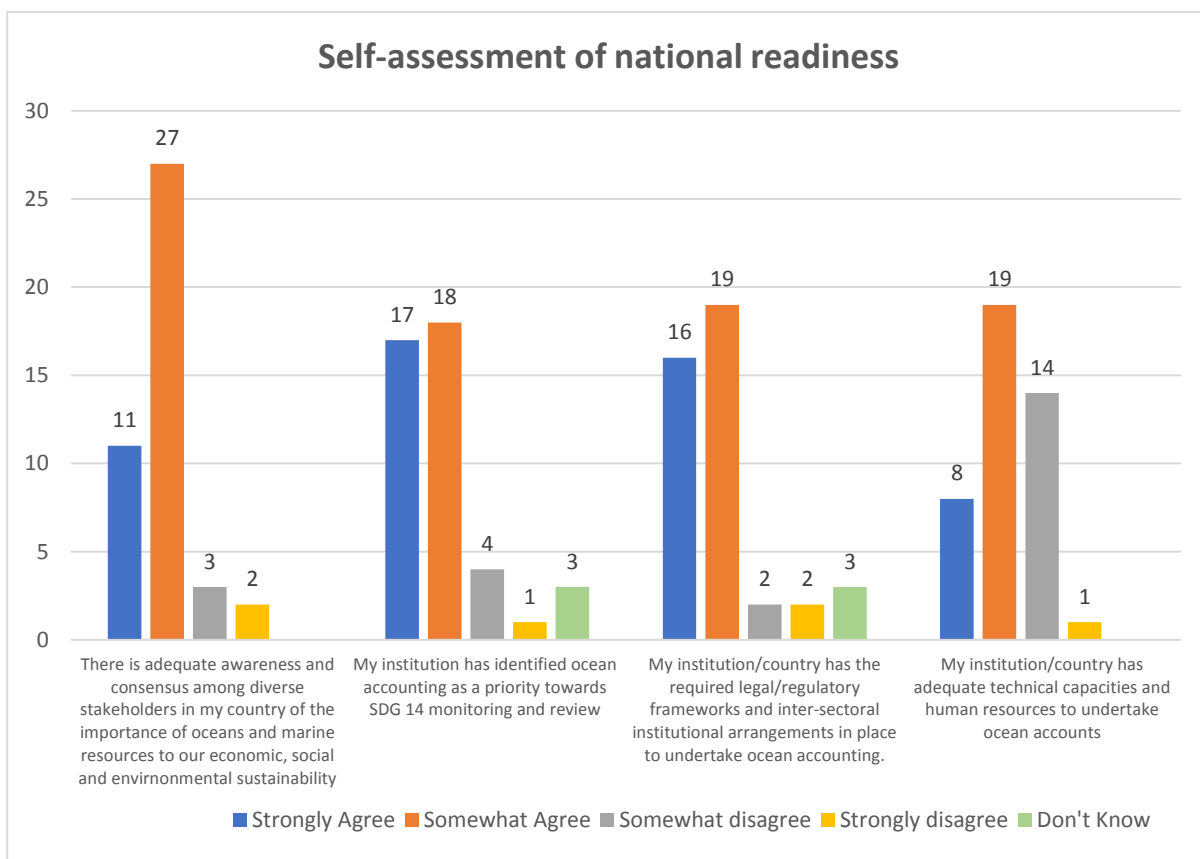
environmental statistics to the ocean					
The guidance has been prepared and delivered by acknowledged experts and leading authorities					
The technical guidance and deliberations have helped identify specific scientific and technical issues					
The technical guidance and deliberations have helped identify specific policy and governance issues					
Likelihood of use of the knowledge and guidance					
The knowledge and technical guidance received are sufficient for my institution/ country to undertake assessment activities					
The knowledge and technical guidance will need to be supplemented by more targeted technical assistance and preparations for my institution/ country to undertake assessments					
The knowledge and guidance received shall be put to use in my institution/ country in the near future					

Participant Survey responses GOAP Dialogue, Sydney

Self-assessment of national readiness

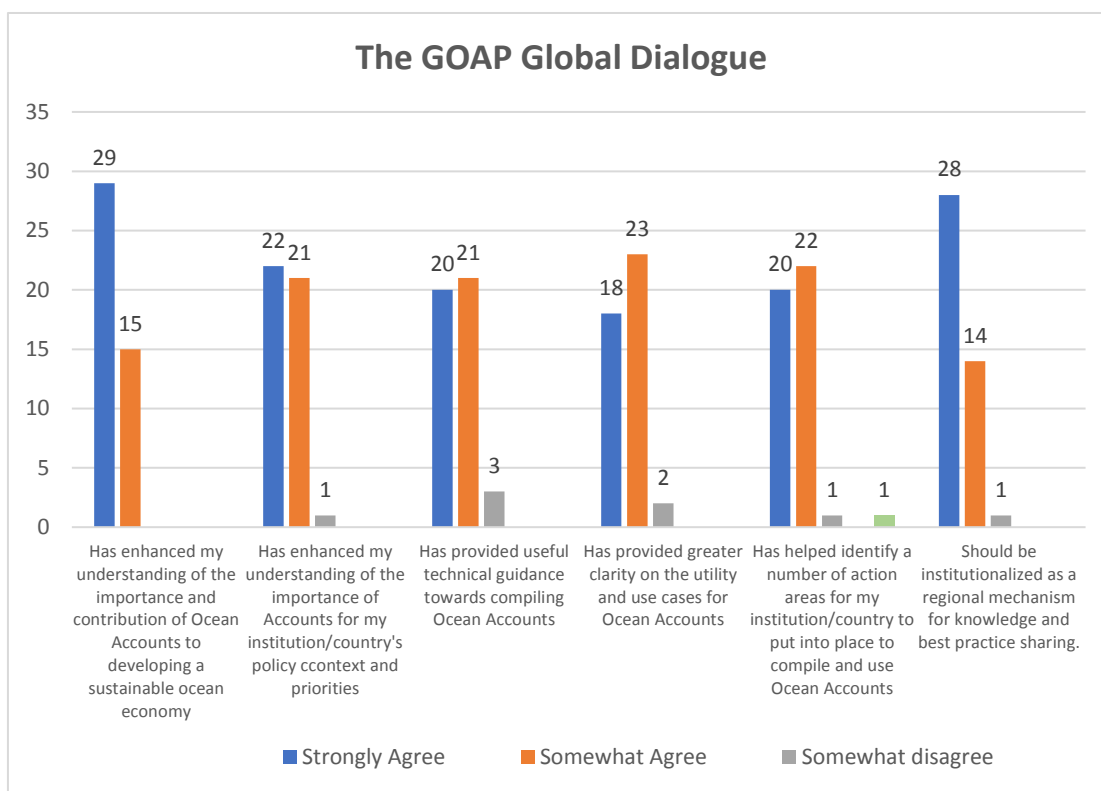
	There is adequate awareness and consensus among diverse stakeholders in my country of the importance of oceans and marine resources to our economic, social and environmental sustainability	My institution has identified ocean accounting as a priority towards SDG 14 monitoring and review	My institution/country has the required legal/regulatory frameworks and inter-sectoral institutional arrangements in place to undertake ocean accounting.	My institution/country has adequate technical capacities and human resources to undertake ocean accounts
Strongly Agree	11	17	16	8
Somewhat Agree	27	18	19	19

Somewhat disagree	3	4	2	14
Strongly disagree	2	1	2	1
Don't Know		3	3	
Total	43	43	42	42



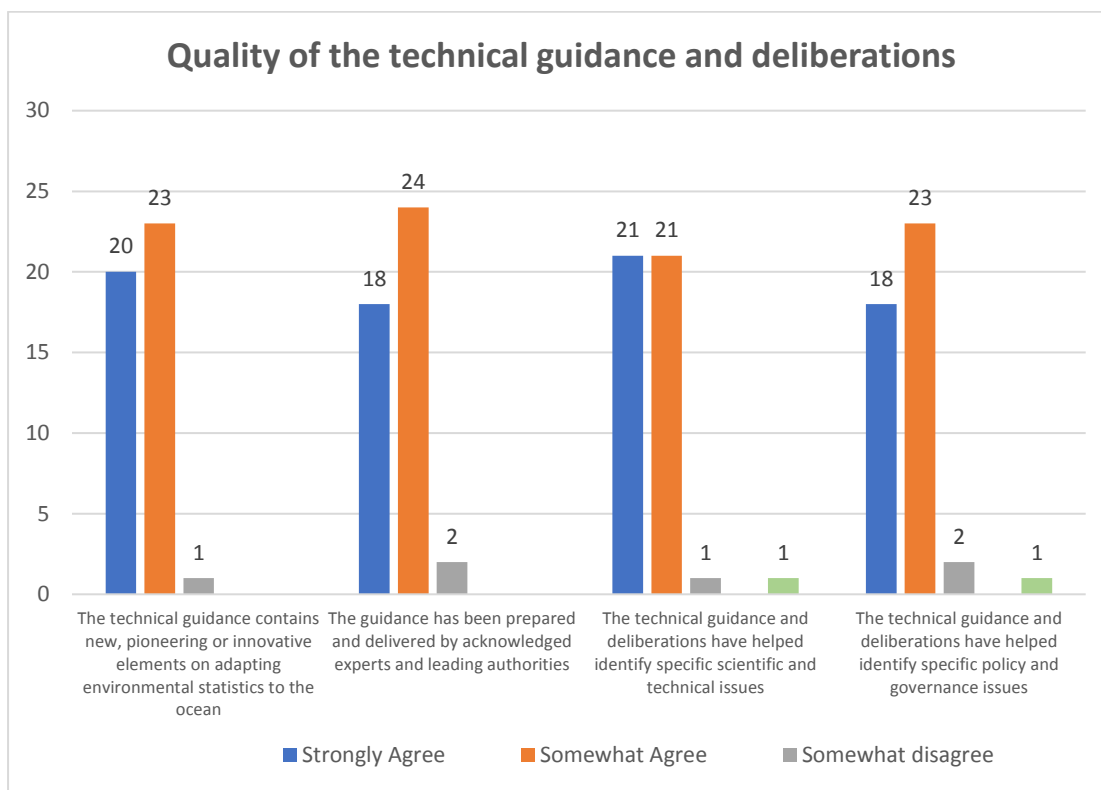
The GOAP Global Dialogue

	Has enhanced my understanding of the importance and contribution of Ocean Accounts to developing a sustainable ocean economy	Has enhanced my understanding of the importance of Accounts for my institution/country's policy context and priorities	Has provided useful technical guidance towards compiling Ocean Accounts	Has provided greater clarity on the utility and use cases for Ocean Accounts	Has helped identify a number of action areas for my institution/country to put into place to compile and use Ocean Accounts	Should be institutionalized as a regional mechanism for knowledge and best practice sharing.
Strongly Agree	29	22	20	18	20	28
Somewhat Agree	15	21	21	23	22	14
Somewhat disagree		1	3	2	1	1
Strongly disagree						
Don't Know					1	
Total	44	44	44	43	44	43



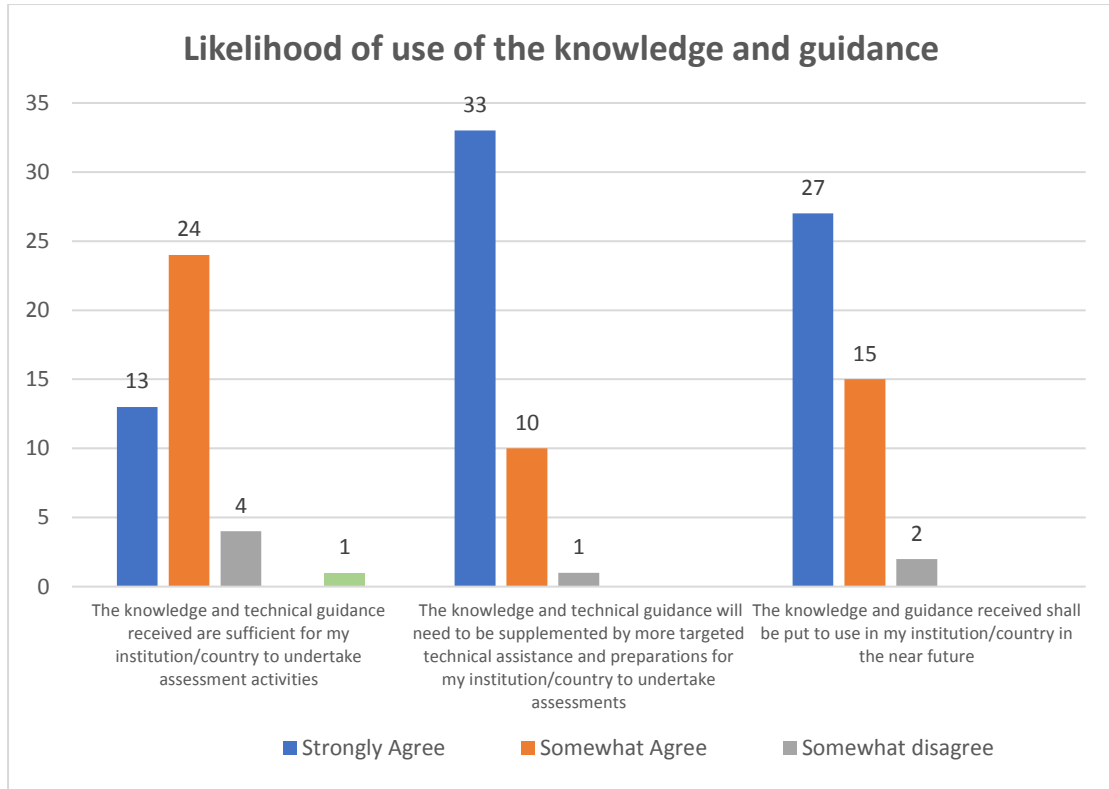
Quality of the technical guidance and deliberations

	The technical guidance contains new, pioneering or innovative elements on adapting environmental statistics to the ocean	The guidance has been prepared and delivered by acknowledged experts and leading authorities	The technical guidance and deliberations have helped identify specific scientific and technical issues	The technical guidance and deliberations have helped identify specific policy and governance issues
Strongly Agree	20	18	21	18
Somewhat Agree	23	24	21	23
Somewhat disagree	1	2	1	2
Strongly disagree				
Don't Know			1	1
Total	44	44	44	44



Likelihood of use of the knowledge and guidance

	The knowledge and technical guidance received are sufficient for my institution/country to undertake assessment activities	The knowledge and technical guidance will need to be supplemented by more targeted technical assistance and preparations for my institution/country to undertake assessments	The knowledge and guidance received shall be put to use in my institution/country in the near future
Strongly Agree	13	33	27
Somewhat Agree	24	10	15
Somewhat disagree	4	1	2
Strongly disagree			
Don't Know	1		
Total	42	44	44







Annex VII: References to report texts for questions in the evaluation matrix

Criteria	Evaluation questions	Report text references
Relevance	How were the needs and requirements of the project beneficiaries assessed and incorporated in the project design and implementation?	Section 2.2.1.3 Responsiveness to needs Paras 36- 49
	To what extent did the project beneficiaries find the project outputs met their needs and tailored to their national context?	Section 2.2.1.1 Alignment with context Paras 25, 37, 38, 40; Section 2.2.1.4 Adaptability of design and flexibility Para 50
	What could have been done better to improve the relevance of the project design and implementation?	Section 2.2.4.1 'What could be done better' paras 114-123
Effectiveness	To what extent have project beneficiaries been able to make use of learnings from the project and changed the way they conduct their work in order to enhance results?	Section 2.2.2.1 Extent of use of learnings by beneficiaries and institutional/ governance change indicators paras 54-75
	What outcome results were achieved and the key factors responsible for their achievement?	Assessments done for each Expected Accomplishment EA2: Paras 54-74 EA1: Paras 76-87 EA3: Paras 88-93
	What could have been done better to improve the effectiveness of the project design and implementation?	Section 2.2.4.1 What could have been done better Paras 114-123
Sustainability	Did the project include a plan or approach to continue, upscale and replicate the results, and how has this been implemented?	No specific references. The project aim was to develop and pilot the guidance. Results were not known at the time of design.
	Have the pilot countries put in place institutional mechanisms and articulated action plans to continue the methodologies and practices for oceans accounting?	Section 2.2.6.1 National ownership-upscaling pilot initiatives Para 137-146
	Has the project identified partners and funding arrangements that will enable continuation and advancing	Section 2.2.6.3 Financial sustainability, Paras 147-148 Section 2.2.6.4, Paras 149-152

	the achievements of the project?	
Efficiency	To what extent did the project achieve efficiency through comparative advantages and synergies of implementing agencies and partners?	Section 2.2.3.2 In-kind resources, Section 2.2.4: Factors of performance Paras 110, 112, 113, 114.; Section 2.2.5 Partnerships Para 125-126
2030 agenda and SDGs	How has the project contributed to improve the availability and quality of statistical data for monitoring and reporting on SDG 14?	Section 2.2.2 Contributions to SDG 14 Paras 94-97.
Partnerships	To what extent has partnering with other organizations enabled or enhance reaching of results?	Section 2.2.5, Paras 125-131
Human rights and gender equality	To what extent has the project contributed to human rights and gender related objectives and to SDG 5 and gender objectives in other SDGs?	No direct contributions from the project. However, the underlying data for ocean accounts is expected to be age and sex disaggregated in line with SDG targets 17.18.
	Did the project have specific gender equality targets in its results frameworks?	No.
Innovation	Did the project evolve any innovative aspects that proved successful? How can these be upscaled and replicated with funding from outside the DA?	No texts address this aspect. Ocean accounting is a new domain and fact that ESCAP volunteered to lead the development of guidance makes the project a first mover. Ocean accounting follows the broad terminologies of SEEA EEA but also adds drivers and governance issues in the mix to address the specificities of ocean ecosystems. Whether this can be called an innovation or merely a response to the underlying issues, can be debated.

ESCAP Management response and follow-up action plan

Title of Evaluation: Development Account Project (11 th tranche) Strengthening Statistical Capacities to Achieve SDG 14 in Selected ESCAP Member Countries (Completed in December 2019)		
	Signature	Date
Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana Executive Secretary ESCAP		19 May 2020
Mr. Kaveh Zahedi Deputy Executive Secretary ESCAP		18 May 2020
Mr. Adnan Aliani Director, Strategy and Programme Management Division, ESCAP		15 May 2020
Ms. Gemma Van Halderen Director, Statistics Division ESCAP		13 May 2020
General Remarks by Management		
<p>Management welcomes the overall positive assessment of the project relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. The evaluation found that the interventions undertaken by the project contributed to enhanced partnerships on ocean-related statistics and governance through the foundation of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP), enhanced statistical guidelines and methods on ocean accounting as well as their policy applications, and strengthened technical and institutional capacity to produce and apply ocean accounts for national ocean policy and priorities in China, Malaysia, Samoa, Thailand and Viet Nam. Knowledge products of the project were produced and disseminated for public utility and reference on the Regional Ocean Accounts Platform¹.</p> <p>Management supports the recommendations to sustain and further enhance the project's accomplishments to support the implementation and monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other ocean-related goals, targets and indicators. These recommendations are valuable to ESCAP's design and implementation of new projects related to ocean data, statistics and governance. ESCAP Management therefore supports the follow-up actions outlined below to address the respective recommendations.</p>		

¹ <http://communities.unescap.org/node/1144/view>

Recommendation	Management Response	Follow-up Action	Lead Unit/Collaborating Units	Expected completion date	Indicator of completion of follow-up action ²
1. ESCAP should, as co-Chair of the GOAP and in collaboration with relevant partners, ensure that the Technical Guidance is finalized.	Management notes that further development and revisions of the Technical Guidance will be carried out under the purview of the GOAP, with ESCAP as an active member. To ensure alignment with related statistical frameworks and processes, ESCAP will coordinate with the United Nations Statistics Division including engagement with the SEEA EEA revision process ³ and submission of relevant parts of the Guidance to the EEA Revision Technical Committee for discussion and adoption where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit the current version of the Guidance for review by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) at its 51st session (3-6 March 2020). • Facilitate inclusion of the Guidance in the work of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) to revise the SEEA EEA. 	SD SD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed • July 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of the Guidance to UNSC. • Establishment of a mechanism within UNCEEA to discuss ocean accounting.
2. ESCAP, as Co-Chair of the GOAP in 2020, should design and disseminate targeted Communications and Guidance products aimed at different	Management supports the recommendation towards targeted communications products and suggests the GOAP to take the lead with ESCAP providing substantive contributions,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested preparation of communications products be included in the work plan of GOAP for 2020 	SD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the Annual Administrative Meeting of GOAP, 15 November 2019

² * This information provides evidence of completion of action. Examples include issuance of an official memo, completion of a study or report, launching of a website, etc.

³ <https://seea.un.org/content/seea-experimental-ecosystem-accounting-revision>

stakeholders drawing from the project's results.	particularly on visualizing ocean accounts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiment with visualizing ocean accounts using available technology and platforms. 	SD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ocean accounts' visualization.
3. ESCAP, in collaboration with partners, should develop a follow-on regional project proposal for 'Building and Using Ocean Accounts to monitor SDG 14'.	<p>Management agrees with the recommendation. ESCAP and the Department of the Environment and Energy (DoEE), Australian Government signed a trust fund agreement to support a national ocean accounts pilot project in the Pacific. The Agreement places strong emphasis not only on the statistically robust production of ocean accounts but also facilitation and engagement of the national user community in using the accounts to support ocean policy and priorities. In addition, ESCAP submitted a proposal for the 13th Tranche of the Development Account entitled "navigating policy in Asia-Pacific with data to leave no one behind" where the Technical Guidance is part of the toolbox of resources to support strengthening of national statistical systems for the 2030 Agenda. Other financing avenues will also</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the production and use of ocean accounts in a Pacific Island country. • Incorporated ocean accounts as part of the DA13 project implementation. The project proposal has been prepared and submitted for approval 	<p>SD</p> <p>SD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2020 • Completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a pilot study. • Submission of the project proposal (DA 13th)

	be explored through the GOAP (e.g., the World Bank Blue Economy Program).				
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