



Working Group of Experts on Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism

Second meeting
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Using Ecosystem Accounting for MST

Thoughts and considerations

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Background

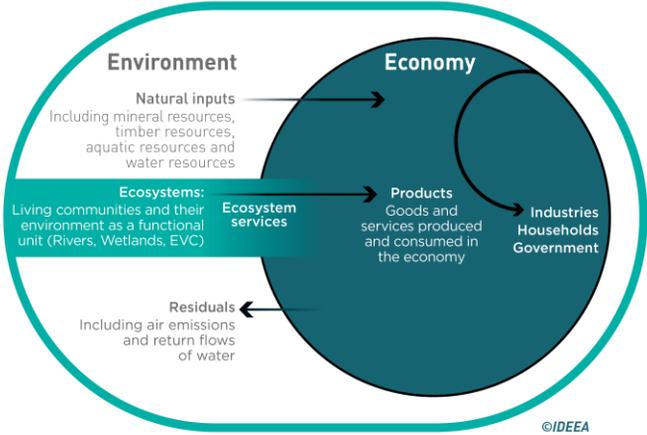
- The UN System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) has become established as the leading statistical framework for linking environment and economy
- The leading edge of the SEEA is ecosystem accounting that supports incorporating ecosystem services, ecosystem condition and biodiversity into economic discussions
- Ecosystem accounting has a focus on accounting at spatial levels and hence there seems a strong connection to measuring tourism at sub-national and destination level

Accounts of the SEEA

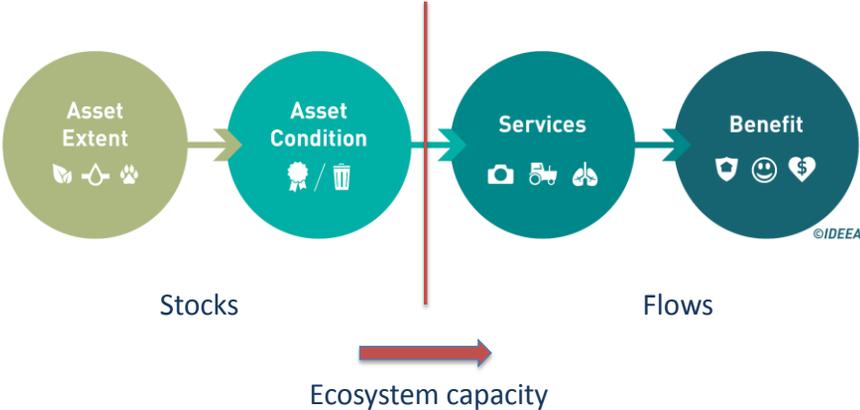
SEEA Framework



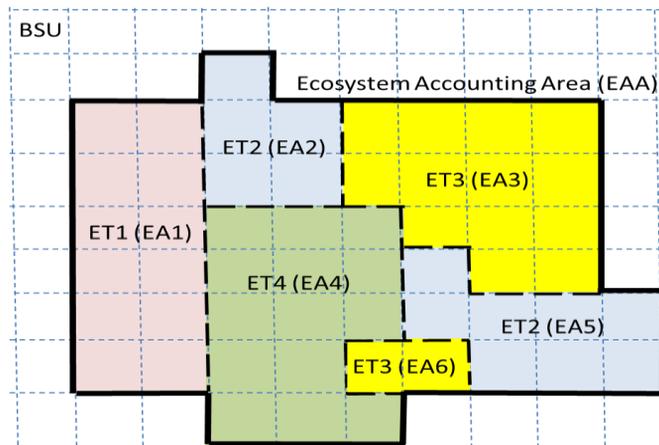
SEEA's systems view



Ecosystem accounting core model



Delineating spatial units - ecosystems



Connections to tourism

1. Use of ecosystem accounting information to support measuring changes in ecosystem capacity to support tourism activity
 - Condition of beaches, parks, reefs, etc to support recreation
 - Impacts of pollution or other emissions from tourism on ecosystem condition
 - Effects of restoration activity
2. Measurement and valuation of ecosystem services and benefits
 - Contribution of ecosystems to tourism value added
 - Support understanding connections to local knowledge and cultural values
 - Extended accounting for productivity, degradation, wealth
3. Framing for connection between key environmental issues and tourism – e.g. climate change, biodiversity

Connections to tourism (cont.)

4. Delineating spatial areas

- Land and ecosystems provide an underpinning of the location of tourism activity
- Agreed location and changes in extent of ecosystem assets relevant to tourism

5. Assessing trade-offs in land use and planning discussions

Conclusions

- Data from ecosystem accounts can provide direct support in assessing the environmental sustainability of tourism
- Use of nested systems provides a logical broadening beyond the economic dimension, framing of tourism – environment connection
- Spatial focus suggests there is the opportunity for measurement to be tailored to individual contexts at sub-national level
- Can't be used to resolve the delineation of spatial areas for tourism measurement, but general issues concerning spatial statistics will be relevant
- Keep engagement going: SEEA Ecosystem Accounting being updated to become an international statistical standard – recreation and tourism services, and marine and protected areas are important topics