

**Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation  
National Statistical Office**

**Dated: 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2022**

**Seminar on**

**Data for Sustainable Development: India's Environmental Accounts and its Role in Policy and Decision-Making**

1. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is celebrating 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) week starting from 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022 by organizing a series of activities. As a part of the celebration, the Ministry organized a half-day seminar today on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 in hybrid mode on the topic "Data for Sustainable Development: India's Environmental Accounts and its role in Policy and Decision Making".
2. The seminar intends to provide an accelerated push towards 'valuing nature' and using these values in the global and national statistics aligning with the International Statistical Standard "System of Environment Economic Accounts (SEEA) framework". With the global commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the use of the SEEA in the assessment of natural resources has increased manifolds. The SEEA framework is aligned with the SDGs and around 40 global indicators for nine Sustainable Development Goals can be evaluated using SEEA data. These accounts provide a consistent monitoring framework that produces actionable indicators on ecosystem extent and condition, as well as the supply and use of ecosystem services. It can also be used to inform a wide range of climate change related policy questions related to climate impacts and adaptation strategies.
3. The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation has adopted the SEEA framework in 2018 and has been regularly compiling accounts on various ecosystems. In order to showcase the work done by India in the domain of Environment Accounting and to pave the way for future endeavours toward expanding the coverage of the Environment Accounts in India, the Ministry organised this seminar.
4. The seminar was held at the India International Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. However, being hybrid in nature, participants also joined the event through other media modes. The seminar was also live streamed on YouTube and Facebook. The seminar started with the opening session followed by two technical sessions. The event witnessed remarkable participation from all over the nation and international organisations. The recordings of the seminar will be made available in the Ministry's website.
5. Dr. G. P. Samanta, Chief Statistician of India and Secretary, MoSPI in his welcome address talked briefly about the initiatives of the ministry in the area of environment accounts including adoption of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA). This was followed by key note address by Shri Suman K. Bery, Vice Chairman, NITI AAYOG who was the Chief Guest of the Seminar. He appreciated MoSPI embracing environment accounts at an early stage and its continuing efforts in this direction. He emphasized the importance of ocean accounts considering the vast coast line the country

has and its role in the economy. He suggested that NITI AAYOG and MoSPI should continue its partnership. Other eminent dignitaries included Shri Ashish Chaturvedi, Head Environment, Energy and Resilience, UNDP, India, and Shri Arun Kumar, Senior Economic Advisor, MoEFCC. The central idea that surfaced during the seminar was that environmental concerns do not respect any border and affect all the lives of the current and future generations. It was duly acknowledged that environment and sustainability are the road towards prosperity and policies need to be framed mainstreaming the 'environment' into decision making.

6. The first technical session of the event on the theme SEEA perspective and its inter-linkages with SDGs was dedicated to the discussions on the efforts made by India in the realm of Environment Accounting, the linkages of the SEEA and the SDGs and applications of the SEEA at the sub-national level. Since the 'Ocean Account' is one of the priority areas identified in Ministry's Five-Year Strategy Document for Environmental Economic Accounts (2022-2026), the second technical session of the seminar was a panel discussion dedicated to the subject of 'Ocean Accounting' recognizing the significant contribution of ocean and coastal resources to India's economy. The session discussed on various approaches and challenges faced towards development of ocean accounts thereby suggesting the roadmap for ocean accounting in India.

7. The seminar underscored the importance of using a conceptual framework that integrates scientific and economic data with traditional accounting principles emphasizing the fact that SEEA can help in framing evidence-based policies which ensures having a sustainable future. It was also stressed that it had become imminent, especially for developing countries like India, to ensure that mechanisms are set up for systematic considerations of the environment in all economic decisions. The seminar was an attempt by NSO, MoSPI to make environment a key dimension in the policy paradigm. NSO, India looks forward towards support and cooperation from all the national and international agencies.

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