

April 20, 2023

The Quest for Green GDP

A joint session by GPS and Africa Natural Capital Accounting Community of Practice in partnership with the UN Statistics Division

[Seminar Recording](#)



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Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the most commonly used measure of a nation's performance and growth. While the scope of GDP is to measure the monetary value of the goods and services produced in a given year, it is often used as proxy for things that it is not well suited for, such as long-term growth or the well-being of a country. In many cases, economic growth is happening at the expense of nature, and therefore at the expense of future prosperity.

The concept of 'Green GDP' was coined in the late 1980s with aspiration to modify GDP to better reflect the impacts of economic activities on the environment. The "Green GDP" is derived from Net Domestic Product

(NDP), - which is obtained by subtracting the depreciation of produced assets such as machines and buildings from GDP - by deducting the cost of depletion of natural resources and degradation of ecosystems.

This webinar familiarized the audience with headline indicators that can be derived with natural capital accounts, as well the World Bank's approach to adjusting the standard macroeconomic indicators from the System of National Accounts to reflect how the country is managing its natural and human capital. Furthermore, the linkage between the two, and possibilities to complement one with estimates or data from the other, was explained.

Welcome Remarks



Peter Katanisa, NCA CoP Coordinator

Mr. Peter Katanisa is the Africa Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) Community of Practice Coordinator and National Programme Coordinator for the Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) World Bank WAVES/NCA programme and now the Global Program for

Sustainability (GPS) in Rwanda since November 2018. Also Mr. Katanisa is also a member of the Advisory Panel for Capitals Coalition since 2020. Mr. Katanisa is a Senior Environment and Climate Change consultant with the World Bank since 2018. Previously he served as the Advisor the Ministry of Natural Resources and later Environment Ministry for the Government of Rwanda.

Moderator



Gemma van Halderen, Acting Chair of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental Economic Accounting

Gemma Van Halderen is the General Manager of the Population, Labour, Industry, and Location Insights Division at the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Currently she serves as Interim Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA). Over the last 20 years, she has held several senior executive positions in the Australian public sector. Gemma has extensive experience with the global statistical system. She was Director of the Statistics Division in the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for three years. Gemma is an elected member of the International Statistics Institute, an Executive Committee member of the International Association of Official Statisticians and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Speakers



Giles Atkinson, London School of Economics

Giles Atkinson is Professor of Environmental Policy at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Giles has published extensively on the sustainability of economic development with much of this research examining policy-makers can construct better measures of economic progress via wealth accounting. His current research is exploring 'distributional and equity issues' in natural capital accounting. Outside of LSE, Giles has been a past Member of the UK Natural Capital Committee, the Policy and Technical Experts Committee (PTEC) for the World Bank's WAVES partnership (Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services), the Advisory Board for TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and

Biodiversity) and the Steering Group for the Natural Capital Accounting Project of the UK Office for National Statistics.



Bram Edens, UN Statistics Division

Bram is a Senior Statistician with the United Nations Statistics Division in New York, where his main role consists of supporting countries with the implementation of the System of Environmental Economic Accounting. Prior to his return to the UN, Bram worked in various roles for Statistics Netherlands in the National Accounts Department, most recently as Head of industry, energy and construction in the Business Statistics Department. Bram holds a Ph.D. in environmental economics from VU University Amsterdam and has published numerous articles on environmental-economic accounting topics.



Stefanie Onder, World Bank

Stefanie Onder is a Senior Environmental Economist in the Environment, Natural Resources and Blue Economy (ENB) Global Practice, where she is currently leading the update of the ENB flagship report *The Changing Wealth of Nations*. She has also worked for the ENB teams in South Asia and the East Asia and Pacific region. Her work covered both lending operations as well as technical assistance, focusing on key development issues in natural resource management with an emphasis on natural capital accounting, livelihoods of the natural resource-dependent poor as well as climate mitigation and adaptation. She also worked as an Assistant Professor at the School of International Service of American University, where she has developed a broad research agenda in development and environmental economics and, more recently, the economics of forced displacement. She holds a PhD in Economics from the London School of Economics.

Country Experiences

Dr. Sam Mugume, Assistant Commissioner, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development, Uganda

Ellen Clowser, Head of Natural Capital Accounts Development, Office of National Statistics, UK

Presentations

- [Natural Capital Accounting Uganda Experience](#)
- [SEEA: Measurement Framework for Green Indicators](#)
- [The Concept of Green GDP and Its Successors](#)
- [Towards Global Measures of Economic Sustainability](#)

Resources

- [Australia's Nature Positive Plan: Better for the Environment, Better for Business](#)
- [System of Environmental-Economic Accounting \(SEEA\)](#)
- [The Changing Wealth of Nations 2021: Managing Assets for the Future \(CWON\)](#)
- [Adjusted Net Savings Database](#)
- [CWON Data Explorer](#)
- [The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review](#)
- [Developing supply and use tables for UK natural capital accounts: 2023](#)

- [Natural Capital Accounts Roadmap: 2022](#)
- [Uganda's Adjusted Macroeconomic Indicators Report 2021 "Going Beyond GDP"](#)
- [Beyond Valuation. Monetary Aggregates for the SEEA-EA. The Italian Proposal](#)