Developing a national strategy for environmental-economic accounting

Sarah-Jane Hindmarsh
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Greenhouse Gas emissions (Department of Environment)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Natural resources on balance sheet (ABS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Energy account (ABS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Mineral account (ABS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Environmental expenditure, local government (ABS)</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Water account – Physical and Monetary Supply and Use (ABS)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Greenhouse gas emission accounts (ABS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Accounting for Nature Model (Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Land account – Great Barrier Reef (ABS)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Water account – Asset (BoM)</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Completing the Picture (ABS) Environmental Taxes (ABS)</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>Waste accounts (ABS)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Environmental Accounting Landscape (BOM)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ecosystem accounts (Victorian Environment and Primary Industry)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accounting for Nature - Proof of Concept Trials (Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>First Australian Environmental-Economic Accounts (AEEA) (ABS)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Experimental Environmental Expenditure Accounts (EEA) (ABS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>First experimental Ecosystem Account for Great Barrier Reef</td>
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Adapted from a table presented by the ABS in Aug 2017
Ministers agreed to work together to develop a common national approach to environmental accounts in 2017. This important work will ensure accurate and reliable information is available to governments, communities and business to better understand the condition of the environment and make better decisions. It will improve the ability to track outcomes in specific locations and across state and territory boundaries, and demonstrate the value of the environment to our standard of living.

Meeting of Environment Ministers
November 2016
Why a national approach?

• Systematically inform decision making and environmental management decisions
• Improve consistency in reporting across Australia
• Create stronger links for decision makers between social, economic and environmental outcomes
• Coordinate effort and ensure the efficient use of resources
Developing the strategy for a common national approach

• A collaboration between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, with input from across sectors.

• Strategy – why a common national approach and what will it look like?

• Action plan – how will we achieve a national approach?
Key elements of the national approach

- Agreeing on national standards and methods for implementing the SEEA in Australia.
- Ensuring accounts are driven by policy and decision making needs
- Developing core accounts to address national priorities
- Developing nationally relevant account ready data
- Collaborating and information sharing; building capacity to produce, analyse and apply accounts
Application to government process

• To be guided by a user needs assessment next year.

• Possible applications being considered:
  • State of the Environment reporting
  • Strategic regulatory assessments
  • Intergenerational reports
Next steps

• Consideration of strategy by Environment Ministers December 2017.

• Foundational activities in 2018:
  ➢ Consultation on action plan.
  ➢ Assess policy and decision making needs.
  ➢ Stocktake of activities in data collection, account development and application.