Mapping and Assessment for Integrated ecosystem Accounting (MAIA)

Sprawozdania

Informacje na temat projektu

MAIA

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Periodic Reporting for period 3 - MAIA (Mapping and Assessment for Integrated ecosystem Accounting (MAIA))

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Podsumowanie kontekstu i ogólnych celów projektu

MAIA aimed to mainstream natural capital accounting (NCA),in Europe, including Norway and 9 EU Member States (MS). MAIA uses the System of Environmental Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA-EA) as the methodological basis for NCA. The SEEA EA is a system for NCA developed under auspices of the UN Statistical Commission. It provides a consistent framework for

analysing and storing information on ecosystem assets and flows of ecosystem services (ESs). The SEEA is part of the System of National Accounts, used by statistical agencies world-wide for the production of economic and other statistics. In MAIA, a flexible approach was followed, allowing for adaptation of the SEEA EA framework to the conditions of the individual EU MS.
The specific objectives of MAIA were to: (i) assess policy priorities for NCA; (ii) test, pilot and mainstream NCA in EU MS through the compilation of pilot accounts; (iii) test innovative approaches for NCA in the EU context; and (iv) support NCA in EU MS through various communication and dissemination activities such as the development of guidelines, a website and other facilitating actions.

Prace wykonane od początku projektu do końca okresu sprawozdawczego oraz najważniejsze dotychczasowe rezultaty

At the start of the project, the main focus was on assessing the state-of-the-art of NCA in each of the 10 participating countries, and to determine policy priorities that guide the development of pilot accounts with the support of the project. Extensive stakeholders consultations at national and pan-European levels were conducted through workshops, surveys and interviews.
Following the stakeholder consultations, pilot accounts were compiled with the support of MAIA. The project provided financial and technical support to countries via on-line thematic webinars, on-line technical exchanges in workshops and in country visits of the project coordinator, given that travel options were limited because of the COVID pandemic. The pilot accounts that were implemented in the MAIA countries cover all SEEA EA core and three thematic accounts (extent, condition, biophysical and monetary ESs, ocean, urban and biodiversity accounts). Accounts have been compiled at different scales (national, regional, local).
Country experiences gained in pilot accounting endeavours have been assessed in national workshops and with stakeholders surveys and interviews. Two final synthesis reports analyse lessons learnt, with respect to applications of SEEA EA to support policy decision-making, and the mainstreaming of SEEA EA in EU MS. Online country factsheets compiled in close collaboration with national statistical offices synthetize information on SEEA EA implementation in each country, the main stakeholders involved in the process, access to published accounts and studies, etc..
Furthermore, project partners developed and tested innovative approaches for SEEA EA implementation in five thematic areas: (i) modelling water regulation services in support of ecosystem accounting, (ii) exploring big data sources for quantifying cultural ESs, (iii) valuing ESs and ecosystem assets, (iv) biodiversity accounting, and (v) piloting marine accounts. These innovative research tasks aimed to fill key knowledge gaps in NCA more broadly and SEEA EA in particular, thereby supporting the compilation of accounts in EU MS. The project has generated 37 publications in peer-reviewed journals. Other outputs are technical exchanges between partners, shared technical resources and pilot accounts.
MAIA also contributed to a large range of dissemination and communication activities on NCA, such as presenting the project outputs in conferences, stakeholders consultations at national and EU levels, dissemination of information on the website and social media, and a series of nine webinars on SEEA EA core and thematic accounts. MAIA produced technical documents to provide guidance on SEEA EA: a technical report on valuation of ESs and assets for ecosystem accounting, developed

jointly with the UN SEEA NCAVES project, and guidelines on biophysical modelling of ESs for ecosystem accounting. In addition, MAIA developed a web-based analytical tool to view, analyse and report ecosystem accounts data. The web-tool covers accounting data from five countries (Bulgaria, France, Netherlands, Norway, Spain).

Innowacyjność oraz oczekiwany potencjalny wpływ (w tym dotychczasowe znaczenie społeczno-gospodarcze i szersze implikacje społeczne projektu)

The project has allowed participating countries to establish and strengthen linkages between stakeholders, thereby increasing cooperation on SEEA EA implementation in each country. Participation in the MAIA international network and actual NCA demonstration through the compilation of pilot accounts were also key elements to advance operationalisation and mainstreaming of SEEA EA in MAIA countries. Participation in the project led to an increased policy support for NCA, enhanced financial resources and personnel dedicated to SEEA EA, building of technical skills and knowledge, and improved access to data. Countries that relatively recently started compiling SEEA EA accounts reported that it was too soon to tell what policy implications might arise from their pilot ecosystem accounting work. However, the most advanced countries could point to specific policy impacts, especially when accounts are downscaled to regional or municipal levels at the required granularity to inform decision making.
Testing of innovative approaches for SEEA EA has led to new developments in SEEA EA applications, methods and concepts. Innovative applications have been developed in the domain of flood regulation (Bulgaria and Czechia), water provision and the reduction of drought risks (Flanders). A novel approach to model cultural ESs using on-line, big data in support of SEEA EA was developed. Following this, a new ES model using big data and artificial intelligence to capture landscape aesthetics was developed and tested in the Netherlands, Spain and the UK. With regards to valuation, MAIA led to advances in the use of simulated exchange values for accounting for ESs not traded in market, the use of maintenance and restoration costs for ecosystem assets accounts, and scaling up ESs valuation with Bayesian network models. MAIA contributed new insights on how better accounting for biodiversity can be achieved (e.g. in Greece), how the SEEA EA can best mainstream biodiversity into economic and national planning processes, and SEEA EA application to protected areas. The project also advanced marine ecosystem accounting, by developing extent and condition accounts using existing datasets in Finland and France, and conceptual advances on the links between marine biophysical accounts and the valuation of marine ecosystem assets.
The project generated a wealth of resources that support the adoption of SEEA EA in Norway and in the EU: (i) country factsheets that provide an overview of the state of affairs of NCA in each MAIA country, (ii) a series of nine webinars on the SEEA EA core and thematic accounts, (iii) guidance documents on biophysical modelling and monetary valuation for ecosystem accounting, (iv) a web-based tool to view and analyse ecosystem accounts, including an e-learning tool and (v) scientific publications (37). These resources have been channeled to EU stakeholders in SEEA EA implementation and use via webinars, stakeholder meetings and dissemination on MAIA website and

social media. Through these dissemination activities, the project has also actively engaged with non-project countries, reaching out to stakeholders in 26 EU MS.

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