



**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment
Programme**

Distr.: General
4 August 2016

Original: English

**United Nations Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme**
Second session
Nairobi, 23–27 May 2016

**2/13. Sustainable management of natural capital for sustainable
development and poverty eradication**

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and the Sustainable Development Goals and targets,

Recalling also paragraph 2 of Governing Council decision 27/8 and resolution 1/10 adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly, which acknowledge that United Nations Member States have developed different approaches, visions, models and tools in order to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication,

Acknowledging that natural capital is a concept whose meaning is still under discussion, and that, for the purposes of this resolution, natural capital assets have different intrinsic values and are subject to national jurisdiction and sovereignty,

Mindful that sustainable management of natural capital will contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Mindful also of the importance of integrating information and data relating to natural capital into economic analysis, national planning and decision-making for sustainable management and use of these resources,

Taking note of the fact that natural capital and natural resource valuation and accounting mechanisms can help countries to assess and appreciate the worth and full value of their natural capital and to monitor environmental degradation,

Acknowledging the challenges faced by Member States in accurately valuing their natural capital and factoring it into their economic analyses, decision-making, national accounts and development planning processes,

Welcoming the agreement by the United Nations Statistical Commission on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting as a statistical standard and its decision to encourage the application and further refinement of the System’s Ecosystem Accounts,

Noting that efficient, responsible, inclusive institutions, appropriate policies and laws, and implementation of relevant international instruments, including the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, can contribute to the promotion of good governance in the sustainable management of natural capital,

Noting also that sustainable harnessing of natural capital in a manner that ensures the protection of ecosystems and mitigates environmental degradation can help countries add value to their environmental assets and thereby contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda,

Taking note of outcomes related to discussions of natural capital, including the outcomes of the fifteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held under the theme of “Managing Africa’s natural capital for sustainable development and poverty eradication”; the International Conference on Valuation and Accounting of Natural Capital for Green Economy (VANTAGE) in Africa; the eighth African Development Forum; the Summit for Sustainability in Africa, held in Gaborone in 2012; and the Natural Accounting Regional Workshop for the Europe and Central Asia Region, held in Istanbul in 2015 with a focus on natural capital accounting, among other issues,

Stressing that research and development, innovative technology, finance mobilization, capacity-building and knowledge sharing among countries are important for sustainably managing their natural capital,

1. *Invites* Member States to take measures to promote sustainable management of natural capital, including protection of ecosystem services and their functions, as part of the contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;

2. *Recognizes the importance* of integrated, holistic and balanced natural capital approaches for enhancing the capacity for management of natural resources and for promoting sustainable development and poverty eradication in a coordinated and effective manner. These approaches shall aim to:

- (a) Increase awareness on appreciation and value addition of natural capital resources;
- (b) Build capacities to integrate the valuation and accounting of natural capital and natural resource contributions into national planning and decision-making for sustainable development;
- (c) Promote public- and private-sector partnerships to support capacity-building and develop innovative approaches and technologies for promoting value addition to natural capital;

3. *Invites* Member States to *incorporate* information and knowledge on natural capital analyses into national accounts, development planning and decision-making, especially through implementing the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting among others, in order to improve the sustainable use of natural resources for sustainable development;

4. *Requests* the Executive *Director*, in partnership with Member States, to continue to strengthen efforts led by the United Nations Environment Programme, including, among others, the Poverty-Environment Initiative, the Green Economy Advisory Services and the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, that seek to:

- (a) Assess and monitor the status and trends of natural capital;
- (b) Consider integrating natural-capital-related data, information, and knowledge into policy development and decision-making;
- (c) Build capacity in Member States to apply, among others, the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, consistent with Member States initiatives such as the Gaborone Declaration;

5. *Also requests* the Executive Director in partnership with United Nations agencies and other partners to support countries, upon request and subject to availability of resources, in promoting:

- (a) Awareness of natural capital and respect for nature, and their contribution to the sustainable development of countries and the wellbeing of their populations;
- (b) Capacity-building mechanisms for sustainable management of natural resources and natural capital accounting;
- (c) Public and private partnerships to promote sustainable management of natural capital, value addition and accounting, and reversing environmental degradation and biodiversity losses;
- (d) Research and development and technological innovations, as well as the technical capacity to sustainably manage national natural capital;

6. *Further requests* the Executive *Director* to report on progress in the implementation of the present resolution to the United Nations Environment Assembly no later than in 2019.

*6th plenary meeting
27 May 2016*