

Concept Note: Mission to Ecuador to build Pilot National Economy-Wide Material Flow Accounts (EW-MFA)

Mission Dates: 11–15 November 2024 (5 working days)

Background

The mission to Ecuador is part of the ongoing efforts developed under the project titled "Resilient and Agile National Statistical Systems to Meet Post-COVID-19 Data Needs to Recover Better". This project is supported by the 14th tranche of the United Nations Development Account (DA14 project). The project aims to enhance the capacity of national statistical systems (NSS) in selected countries to provide high-quality, timely, and relevant data for post-COVID-19 recovery efforts and to enhance the resilience and agility of NSS of beneficiary countries to respond to emerging economic, social and environmental data needs in times of crises and disasters through the use of innovative data sources, advance data acquisition methods and modern technologies, while ensuring a path towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Specifically, the DA14 project is supporting several countries to strengthen the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) at the national level with a focus on Economy-Wide Material Flow Accounts (EW-MFA) and the calculation of relevant indicators under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 and 12. These indicators are critical for assessing progress towards sustainable economic growth, resource efficiency, and sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Objective of the Mission

The primary objective of the mission to Ecuador is to support the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE) and the National Statistics and Census Institute (INEC) in the development of pilot Economy-Wide Material Flow Accounts (EW-MFA). This will involve:

1. Presentation the EW-MFA framework and reviewing existing data: Presentation of the EW-MFA framework, understanding the current status of data collection and data availability, and identifying data gaps.
2. Engaging with key stakeholders: Collaborating with relevant institutions, including government ministries and agencies, and other organizations involved in data collection and environmental accounting.
3. Providing technical assistance: Offering technical support and capacity-building activities to strengthen Ecuador's ability to compile EW-MFA.
4. Developing a pilot EW-MFA for a determinate year: Drafting a pilot EW-MFA, which could serve as a model for the following years.

Preparatory Activities

In preparation for the mission, a series of preparatory activities will be undertaken to ensure the mission's success:

1. Initial call with the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition and the National Statistics and Census Institute. A preparatory call will be conducted with both institutions to discuss the country's previous experiences with EW-MFA, the availability of relevant data, and the key institutions concerned. This will help identify the current capacity and any specific needs or challenges faced by Ecuador in implementing EW-MFA.
2. Support in the identification of key stakeholders. Identifying and engaging key stakeholders from government ministries, agencies and academia, who are involved in material flow accounting.
3. Preparation of the mission's agenda. A proposal agenda was elaborated according to the technical, methodological and institutional needs described during the initial meeting and the proposed agenda will be adapted according to the information received from each institution about their availability and the available data sources.

Expected outcomes

1. A comprehensive understanding of Ecuador's current data availability and gaps in the context of EW-MFA.
2. Strengthened capacity of MAATE and INEC from Ecuador, NSO to develop and implement EW-MFA, as well as the rest of institutions participating in the mission's meetings.
3. Enhanced collaboration and coordination among key stakeholders involved EW-MFA.
4. A roadmap for the full implementation of EW-MFA in Ecuador.

Conclusion

The mission will play a crucial role in building Ecuador's capacity to develop EW-MFA, contributing to national efforts towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.