

Assessment Report and its recommendations for a strategy on advancing NCA in SA

Aimee Ginsburg



stats sa

Department:
Statistics South Africa
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SANBI

Biodiversity for Life

South African National Biodiversity Institute



United Nations



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting



What is it?

The purpose of the Assessment Report was to

- assess the national situation for advancing natural capital accounting
- as an input into a larger process of strategic planning
- to build statistical and institutional mechanisms
- that will strengthen statistical systems and statistical production processes and
- enable South Africa to produce natural capital accounts.

The report is based on desk study and meetings with key stakeholders.

Developing the assessment report

- Incorporated comments from stakeholders including:
 - National Stakeholder Workshop (March 2018)
 - Project Reference Group (August 2018)
 - UNSD, DRDLR (NGI), National Treasury, ISS-ZA, CWRR, SANBI, GeoTerraImage, CSIR, and Stats SA
 - Several internal reviews
- Final Assessment Report was distributed to stakeholders and is available on the Stats SA website.

A. Policy commitments to sustainable development, integrated management of environment, society and economy.

- National Development Plan 2030 (NDP)
- Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF)
- New Growth Path Framework (2010-2020)
- National Infrastructure Plan and Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs)
- Spatial Development Frameworks and the National SDF (NSDF)
- Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF)
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)
- National Biodiversity Framework
- Biodiversity Economy Strategy and its implementation plan Biodiversity Lab
- Framework for investing in ecological infrastructure
- National Protected Area Expansion Strategy
- National Framework for Marine Spatial Planning
- Biodiversity Finance Plan
- Strategic Framework and Overarching Implementation Plan for Ecosystem-based Adaptation
- National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
- Biodiversity Sector Climate Change Response Strategy
- National Water Resource Strategy
- National Water and Sanitation Master Plan
- Regional and international policies:
 - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
 - UN Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi targets)
 - UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
 - Agenda 2063
 - Gaborone Declaration on Sustainability in Africa (GDSA)
 - Paris Agreement

NC accounts provide a source of statistical information relevant to evaluation of a range of policies.

NCA adds to the richness of evidence available to policy and decision-makers.

B. Policies & frameworks related to national statistics & improving info on sustainable development

- Stats SA's Strategic Plan (2015-2019) and work plan
- SA National Statistical System (SA NSS) (provides framework for the NSDS)
- National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)
- SA Statistical Quality Assessment Framework (SASQAF)
- Integrated Indicator Framework (IIF) (aligning indicators for SDGs, NDP, Agenda 2063 & MTSF)
- SA Spatial Data Infrastructure (SASDI) (Spatial Data Infrastructure Act 2003)
 - Draft SDI Regulations & draft SASI Compliance Guidelines
- Policy framework for Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&ES)
- Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information
- National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF)
- Environment Sector Research, Development and Evidence (R,D&E) framework
- International and regional policies:
 - CT Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data
 - Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA)
- Statutes that underpin these:
 - Statistics Act (No. 6 of 1999)
 - Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) Act (No. 54 of 2003)
 - Integrated Planning Framework Bill



These provide for the systems and institutional mechanisms through which the production of natural capital accounts would be supported..

Stats SA's mandate to coordinate the development of statistics underpins its role in coordinating the compilation of information and statistics for the SDG report..

C. Review of relevant institutional mechanisms

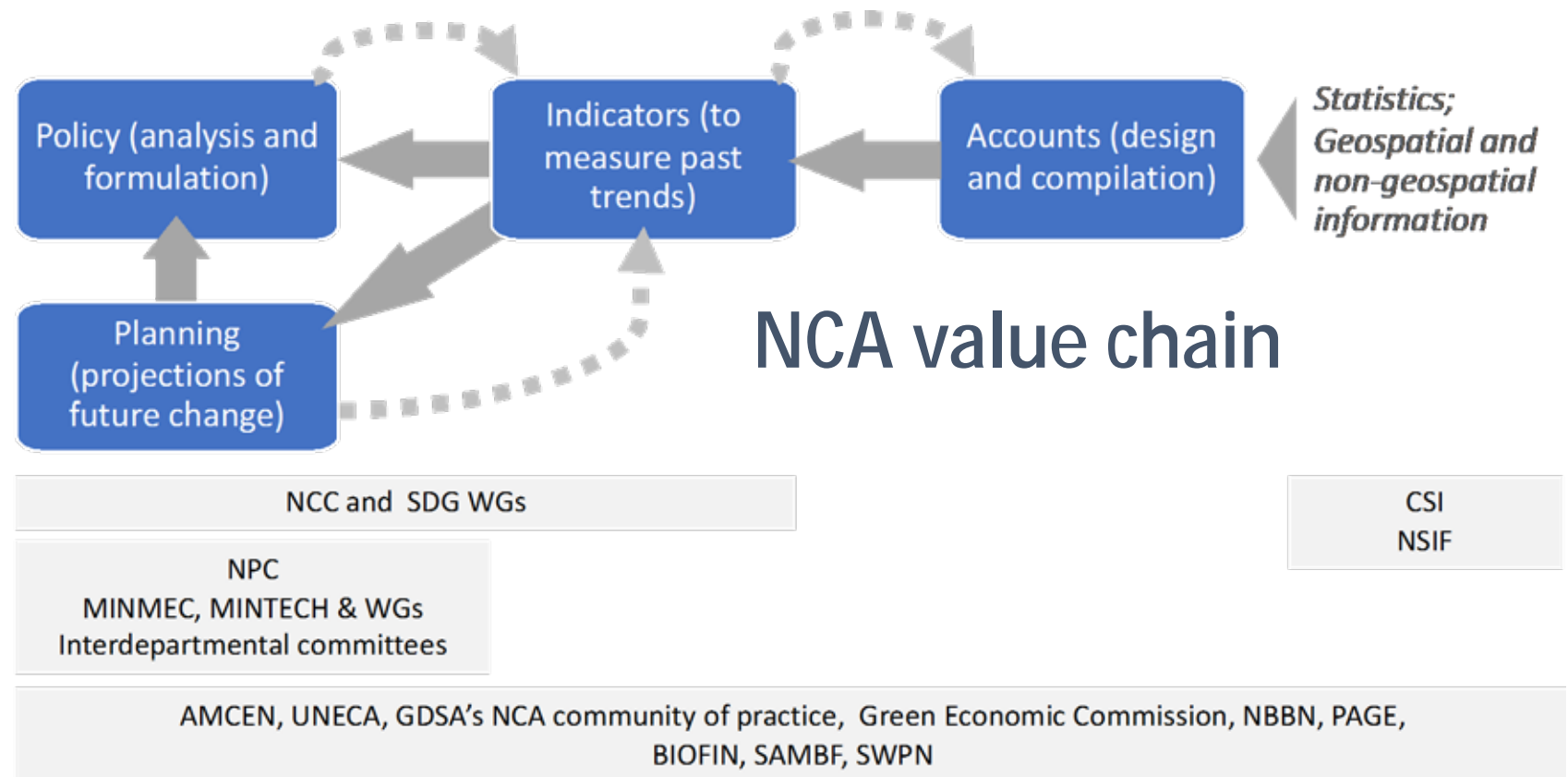
- Implementing SA's national policies & users of information:
 - National Planning Commission (the Presidency)
 - Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and ES (IPBES) (DEA)
 - Intergovernmental coordinating forum on R,D & E (DEA)
 - Interdepartmental Committee on Inland Water Ecosystems (DWS, DEA..)
 - Interdepartmental Project Implementation Committee (IPIC) (DMR, DWS, DEA)
 - Regional Mining Development and Environmental Committees (RMDEC) (DMR, DEA, others)
- Strengthening statistics and data:
 - National Coordinating Committee & WG structure to address info needs for the SDGs (Stats SA)
 - Committee on Spatial Information (CSI) & National Spatial Information Framework (DRDLR)
 - A Strategic Advisory Committee for Ecosystem Accounting (still to be established)
- Regional platforms:
 - African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN)
 - GDSA's NCA Community of Practice
- Bridging public-private-NGO groups:
 - National Business and Biodiversity Network (NBBN) (EWT & DEA)
 - Strategic Water Partners Network (SWPN) (NEPAD Business Foundation & DWS)
 - South African Mining and Biodiversity Forum (Chamber of Mines, pvt sector)

C. Review of relevant institutional mechanisms

A number of multi-sectoral institutional mechanisms exist that can support and enable the production and uptake of NCA in SA.



Make use of existing mechanisms (structures) to mainstream NCA into existing statistical plans and processes.



Stats SA has an existing role in several of these.

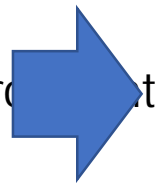
D. Key stakeholders

Influential in the production and uptake of NCA in SA *at this time*:

- The Presidency
- Stats SA
- DPME
- National Treasury
- DRDLR
- DEA
- SANBI
- Other gov depts as data providers and users of information
- WRC
- DST & CSIR
- International & regional stakeholders: UN Environment
- GDSA

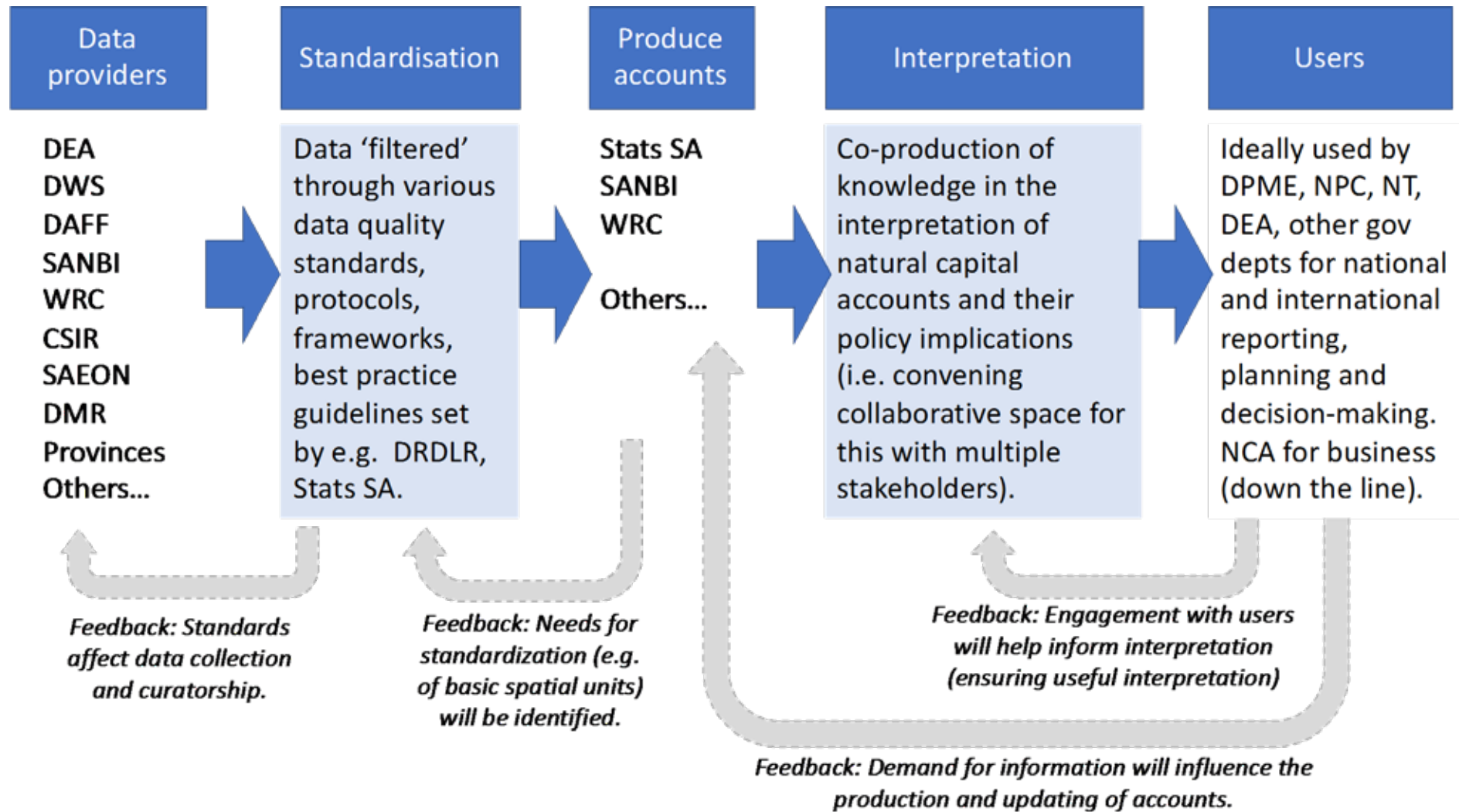
Additional stakeholders:

SANParks
South African Cities Network
Private sector



Should be involved in development of a strategy

Involved in the production and use of accounts



E. Information & knowledge

- Good foundations of environmental, social and economic data
- Data quality and data management are being continuously improved
- Relevant geospatial data are collected and curated by several organisations
- Reasonably coordinated initiatives to support research and address evidence needs
- Broadly speaking, there is a culture of data availability and sharing
- Standards & guidelines exist for the development, management, curating, archiving and disseminating of credible, quality and comprehensive statistics / indicators.
- Natural capital accounts have been developed
- Valuation studies on ecosystems and their services exist

F. Capacity

- A range of capacity needed to produce accounts:
 - coordination and convening capacity to facilitate cooperation;
 - technical capacity across disciplines e.g. ecological, social and economic; and
 - interpretation and communication capacity.
- There is capacity around data foundations (spatial & non-spatial) across different entities, but generally fully utilised and in need of support to maintain and improve data foundations.
- There is technical capacity to build on, but only a small group with experience in developing and interpreting accounts (including demonstrating policy applications).
- Small unit in Stats SA, under-capacitated and in flux due to budget constraints.
- There is convening capacity, currently supported by donor funding.
- NCA work has been largely supply-driven with interpretation in terms of policy applications being applied to what has been produced = natural in emergent phase, but needs to shift to being demand-led (used).

So what?

- There is a solid groundwork for mainstreaming NCA into policy and implementation in South Africa.
- South Africa is committed to evidence-based policy-making. NCA is part of that evidence.
- Recommendations for a strategy to advance NCA in South Africa...

Recommendations for form and institutional home

- Strategy could be a standalone document or form part of a chapter or section of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
- It should be published by Stats SA as the national statistical office
- There are other opportunities to mainstream NCA into other national strategies, policies and plans
- NCA is inherently multi-disciplinary – Stats SA could be primary home, but other departments should be closely involved in the process of developing it..
 - Close involvement of DPME as a cross-sectoral government dept in the Presidency, DEA (and SANBI as co-lead in NCA&VES project).

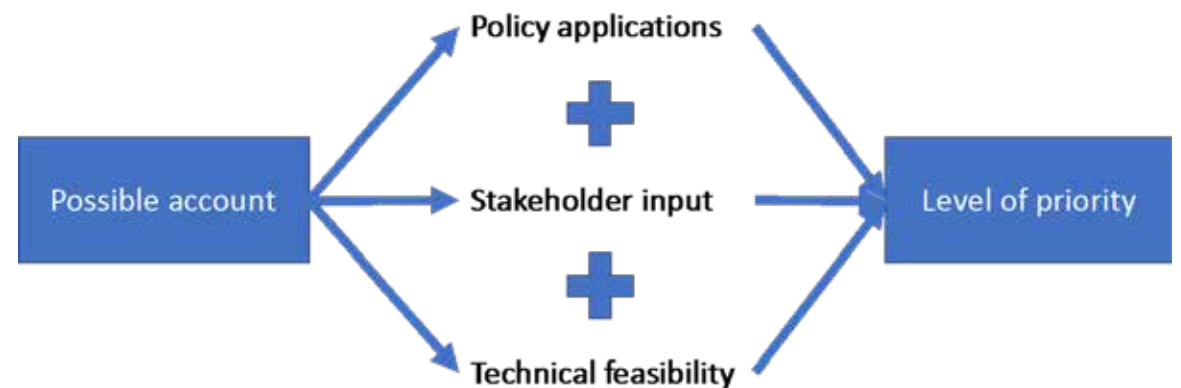
And involve civil society and private sector.

Recommendations for process of development

- Led by Stats SA
- Engaging stakeholders
- Seek alignment with other relevant policy
- Use existing institutional mechanisms wherever possible (e.g. structures guiding the NSDS and SDG reporting, Environment MINTECH and its Working Groups)
- Actively build partnerships and working relationships in the course of developing the strategy

Recommendations for content

- Set out a vision, goal and objectives over a 10-year timeframe with mid-term review
- Aim to mainstream NCA nationally and be aligned with national priorities and international commitments
- Identify clear priorities for accounts to be developed
- Focus on national level environmental-economic and ecosystem accounts
- Address the need for strategic guidance for NCA (addressing demand, uptake, and coordination) and identify existing institutional mechanisms to achieve this



Recommendations for content (continued)

- Address the importance of coordination and collaboration
- Address resource mobilization, responsibilities, and make recommendations to donors
- Consider developing both a high road and a low road scenario for implementation
- Include a stakeholder engagement and communication plan
- Include a glossary of terms
- Call for a NCA Community of Practice to support implementation

