



Press Release

Kampala, November 22, 2019— The Government of Uganda today took a significant step in adopting natural capital accounting by launching the national plan and the first set of land and water accounts for the country based on the statistical standard System of Environmental Economic Accounting.

The land accounts show land use and changes in land cover associated with human activity such as agriculture, settlement, industry and natural processes between 1990 to 2015. The accounts found that the land cover for subsistence agriculture consistently increased while forest cover, particularly woodlands and natural forests declined.

The water accounts show the largest proportion of water is directly abstracted by households for own use. Agriculture is the largest economic activity extracting water. The water accounts contribute to the reporting of SDG 6 on water efficiency.

"The land and water accounts will help to align data from different levels of government and data sources. The accounts are particularly important for the management of land use and water to deliver benefits to people as well as conserve biodiversity and natural processes," said Hon. Matia Kasaija, Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The minister appreciated the World Bank Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) Global Partnership Program and the United Nations Statistics Division for the technical and financial support provided in developing the accounts. He also applauded the agencies involved in implementing the program, including Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, the National Planning Authority, the Ministry of Water and Environment, National Forestry Authority and the National Environment Management Authority for the collaboration and strong workmanship in ensuring timely delivery of the program's outputs.

In his remarks, Dr. Chris Mukiza, the Executive Director, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) said, "There is no better time as this to have the national plan and the natural capital accounts developed. They provide a sound basis for land use and water use planning and a foundation for continued development of natural capital accounts in the country."



In addition to the accounts, the Government is also launching its National Plan for Advancing Environmental Economic Accounting. The development of the NP-AEEA was spearheaded by Uganda Bureau of Statistics, with involvement of key Ministries, Departments and Agencies and with support by the UNSD and WAVES.

It provides a roadmap for the development of NCA using the international statistical standard System of Environmental Economic Accounting to support the national development plan, the Sustainable Development Goals, Uganda's Vision 2040 and the Uganda Green Growth Strategy.

"The WB is pleased to support the Government of Uganda's development of its natural capital accounts. These will help inform the sustainable development policies of the government of Uganda and ongoing national development planning," said Tony Thompson, Country Manager, World Bank.

"The launch of the national plan and the release of the land and water accounts under the leadership of UBOS mark an important step towards mainstreaming NCA into the regular statistical production process and into policy. The Government of Uganda should be congratulated for this important achievement," said Stefan Schweinfest, Director, United Nations Statistics Division.

During the launch, the program also disseminated the following issue papers:

- Analysis of natural resource depletion estimates vis a vis standard GDP calculations.
- Woodfuel sector overview in Uganda which provides data on the scale, value and employment contribution of woodfuels to the economy of Uganda.
- Natural capital accounting and its link to NDPIII with the objective to mainstream NCA into development dialogue and NDPIII planning processes.

Natural Capital Accounting is an accounting framework to provide a systematic way to measure and report on stocks and flows of natural capital – such as land, forests, and water – and their interaction with the economy. The System of Environmental Economic Accounts (SEEA) is the statistical standard for environmental-economic accounts. This systematic way of accounting for natural capital provides a measure that complements gross domestic product (GDP).

