

Press Release

Anguilla's first Ecosystem Accounts have been published!

Developing a system of accounting for the value of the environment

Ecosystem accounts provide evidence to support environmental and economic management for Anguilla and were published in September 2021 as part of a programme to account for the value that the environment provides across five Caribbean Overseas Territories (Anguilla, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands, and the Virgin Islands).

These ecosystem accounts generate environmental statistics that complement other national economic and social statistics (such as GDP and demographic trends). The evidence can support policy development and decision making, including:

- Decisions which impact on the environment and the benefits it provides.
- Action on climate change including mitigation, adaptation and resilience.
- Delivery of international initiatives, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and
- A green post-COVID economic recovery, and in particular a sustainable tourism sector.

Current work includes incorporating ecosystem accounting into Anguilla's national statistics, with government statisticians working alongside eftec environmental economists and Government environmental practitioners to update the 2020 Ecosystem Account. The Caribbean Overseas Territories Practitioners conference will take place in Anguilla in March 2022 and will see participation from each of the OTs.

Anguilla's ecosystem account was developed with financial support from the Darwin Initiative (funded by the UK Government) and delivered by a partnership between eftec, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and the Ministry of Economic Development, Commerce, Information & Natural Resources.

Honourable Hodge, Minister of Economic Development, Commerce, Information Technology & Natural Resources has said, ***“Ecosystem accounting enables us to translate the value of our natural resources into actual dollar figures, which is a language that most people can understand. In so doing, we can accurately justify decisions that promote conservation and sustainability.”***

At 35 square miles, the island nation of Anguilla is highly dependent on its abundance of natural assets, which is estimated to contribute at least \$90 million annual value. These benefits include the attraction of some of the world's most beautiful beaches (\$71m/ year); terrestrial and marine ecosystems sequestering carbon (\$1.68m/year); and additional difficult to measure values such as the biodiversity that makes life richer to both local inhabitants and visitors. The ecosystem

accounts provide a framework for measuring these benefits, and produces evidence which can help to address several fundamental questions for policy and planning, such as:

- What environmental assets are present and what state are they in? How does this change over time?
- What benefits does the environment provide? How are these received by beneficiaries?
- What is the economic value of these benefits? How is this value distributed across the population?

Inger Anderson, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme, has said of ecosystem accounting as ***“The new framework can be a game changer in decision-making. By highlighting the contribution of nature, we now have a tool that allows us to properly view and value nature. It can help us bring about a rapid and lasting shift toward sustainability for both people and the environment.”***

For more details on Anguilla’s ecosystem account please find the full report [here](#). [link]

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Notes to editors:

Anguilla’s ecosystem accounting work links to the development of the System of Environmental Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounts (SEEA-EA) by the United Nations (UN). Officially adopted by the UN as a statistical standard in March 2021, the SEEA-EA supports the implementation of ecosystem accounting as a part of National Accounts by National Statistics Offices around the world.

For media enquiries please contact

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