

## The Development of Environmental Accounting Frameworks and Indicators for Measuring Sustainability in Japan<sup>1</sup>

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### Overview of Research Activities on Environmental Accounting and Indicators in Japan

It was in 1991, more than 10 years ago, when several governmental research institutes in cooperation with researchers in universities started an inter-agency research project on environmental accounting and indicators in Japan. Since then, with some changes of participating institutions, the project has been renewed three times, under funding by the “Global Environmental Research Fund” of the Ministry of the Environment (formerly the Environment Agency of Japan).

The initiation of this research project in the early 1990’s was strongly motivated by the worldwide studies on environmental accounting, which had been getting more and more active towards SEEA 1993. The National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), which used to belong to the Environmental Agency (Ministry) and later became an independent agency, has been taking a leadership role in organizing the project. The NIES mainly undertook studies on environmental accounting in physical terms. Another key institution in the project has been the Economic Research Institute (ERI) of the Economic Planning Agency (later restructured to be the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) of the Cabinet Office). Apart from the environmental accounting studies, the ERI (ESRI) has been the responsible institution for the System of National Accounts (SNA) in Japan. Thus, both experts in environmental information and statistics and those in national accounting have played key roles in the project.

In the earlier phases of the project, more attention was paid to environmentally-adjusted aggregated indicators to follow up the SEEA 1993. The first trial estimate of the Japanese SEEA, which corresponded to SEEA version 4.2 (maintenance cost approach), was published in 1995. An updated/revised edition, as well as its time-series, was published later in 1998. They were all undertaken by the ERI. In the later phases, the attention of the ERI’s study shifted from the SEEA version.4.2 to other components of the SEEA. In particular, it focused on the measurement of environmental protection expenditures and a case study on physical/monetary accounting, in which waste management activities were accounted for. As described later in more detail, the current

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1. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the authors’ institutes. We would like to thank the discussant at the workshop, Robert Smith of Statistics Canada, for providing helpful comments.

focus of the ERI (ESRI)'s study is to compile the Japanese edition of the National Accounting Matrix including Environmental Accounting (NAMEA).

On the other hand, the NIES consistently undertakes empirical studies on physical accounting. Initial attention was directed to international physical flows of natural resources to Japan from the rest of the world, which explained Japan's high dependency on imported natural resources. More in general, Material Flow Accounting (MFA) has been applied to the accounting for international trade flows, total inflows to and outflows from the national economy, as well as inter-industry (inter-sectoral) flows.

Key players of these Japanese studies have also actively participated in international efforts on environmental accounting and indicators, such as the London group and meetings organized by the OECD. Moreover, in 1996 the ERI and United Nations University(UNU) organized the International Symposium on "Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting in Theory and Practice" in Tokyo, in cooperation with the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth (IARIW).

Physical MFA studies, which are mainly undertaken by the NIES, have been keeping in close collaboration with the OECD and other organisations' international activities. The NIES is one of the collaborators in the international joint publication of 'Resource Flows' (Adriaanse et al., 1997) and 'The Weight of Nations'(Matthews et al, 2000) by the World Resources Institute, which focused on the total material inflows and outflows of industrialized economies. In fact, this joint effort was triggered by an international scientific workshop for indicators of sustainable development at the Wuppertal Institute in Germany, organized by the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE). More recently, special sessions and workshops on MFA were organized by the working groups under the OECD Environmental Policy Committee (EPOC), and the NIES consistently contributed to these meetings. The linkage between the accounting framework(s) and the indicators was repeatedly discussed throughout these meetings.

The current Japanese research project in its fourth phase for FY 2001-2003 is being undertaken by the ESRI, the NIES, as well as another new participating institution. It is the National Institute for Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), which deals with studies on environmental accounting and performance indicators at the company level. The project as a whole aims at the development of environmental/sustainability indicators and accounting at three different levels, namely the national (macro) level, the sectoral (meso) level, and the company (micro) level. The ESRI, the NIES, and the AIST share their roles in these three levels' studies respectively. More ambitiously, possible linkages among these different scales are being considered.

The first author of this paper has been continuously involved in both the ERI (ESRI)'s and the NIES's studies. In the next section, the technical details of the Japanese studies will be described, focusing on the structure of accounting frameworks.

### **The role of environmental accounting frameworks in the Japanese research project**

As denoted in the previous section, in the Japanese research project, the ESRI, the NIES, and the AIST share their roles in the three different levels and undertake the development of environmental accounting frameworks and indicators for measuring sustainable development. In this project, the linkage between the research done at the three levels, as well as the progress of the research, is very important.

In general, the research on sustainable development indicators has resulted in a large number of indicators giving information on developments in the economic, environmental and social areas. Thus, the interrelationships between these indicators are sometimes lost. For example, a little change in one economic area gives some effects to the environment and societal areas, as well as other parts of the economic area. Therefore each of the indicators has to reflect such actual interrelationships. In order to satisfy this requirement, it is necessary to construct a common accounting system that serves as an underlying statistical information system, which adequately represents the interrelationships between the economy, the environment and society, as well as bringing about the linkage between the various indicators. Such a common accounting system enhances the mutual consistency, reliability and comparability of the indicators.

The Japanese research project aims at the construction of a common accounting system and its derived indicator sets at the national economy level, the industrial sector level, and the company level. Figure 1 shows the relationships between the various kinds of accounts and indicators which the Japanese project undertakes. Though figure 1 gives a simple description of each account, more detailed structures of the accounts are shown in tables 1 through 8 at the end of paper.

#### (1) NAM (National Accounting Matrix)

In the center of figure 1, the National Accounting Matrix (NAM) of the SNA is shown. The NAM denoted here has the stock accounts of the non-financial assets, while the stock accounts of the financial assets are omitted for simplicity. The NAM is a core account of the Japanese system of accounts and indicators for sustainability.

#### (2) I-O table

To the left of the NAM, the I-O table is shown. It is an analytical accounting framework which is closely related to the NAM.

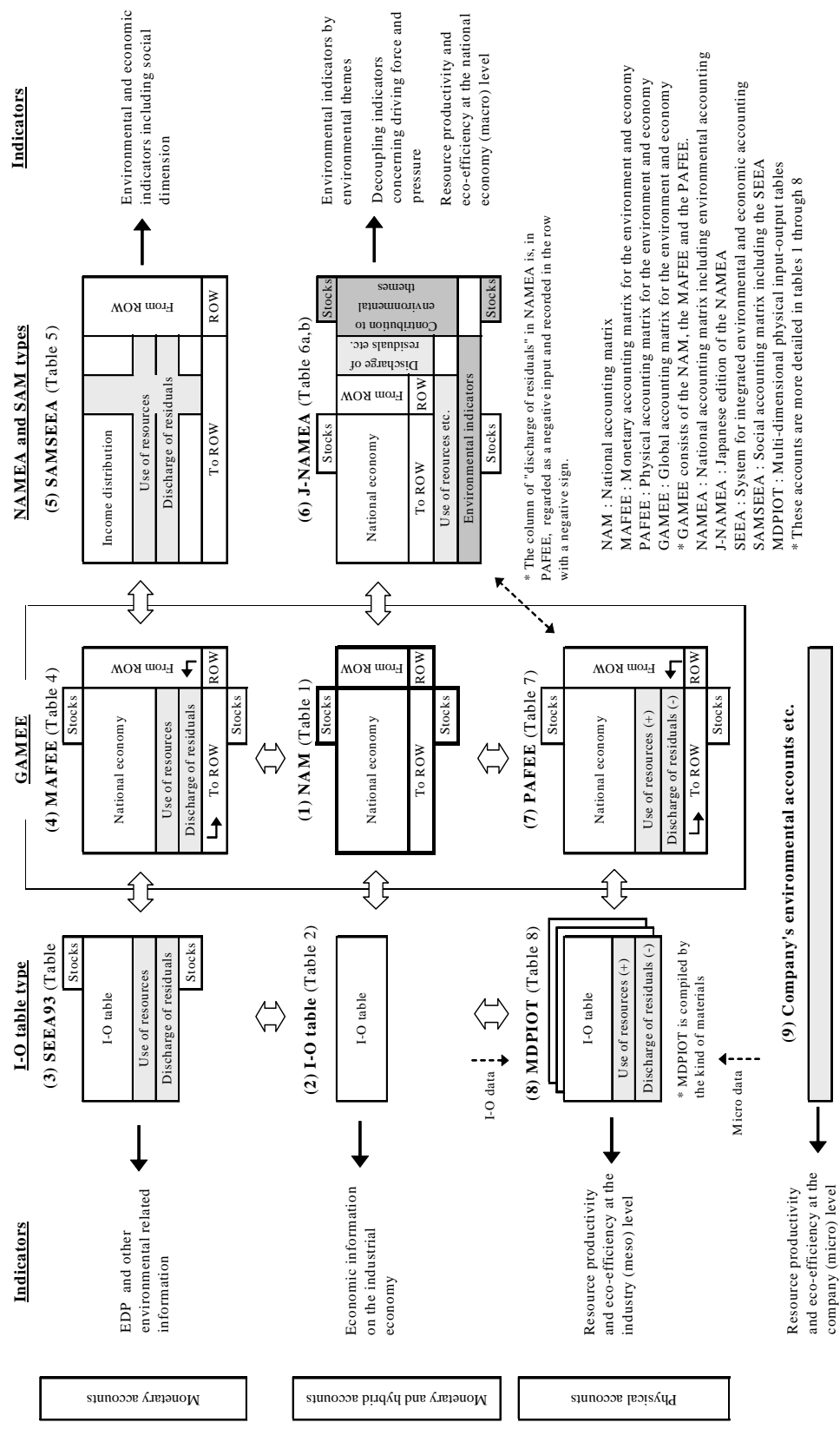
#### (3) SEEA93

In the top left of figure 1, the SEEA93 version 4.2 (maintenance cost approach) is shown. The research and trial estimation of the SEEA93 has been conducted by the ESRI (formerly the ERI) since 1991. The distinctive aims of the SEEA93 are to introduce the environmental related activities into the I-O table, to attach the stock account including non-produced natural assets, and to describe the environmental pressures caused by economic activities and the derived depletion of non-produced natural assets by those pressures. In figure 1, the environmental pressures are classified into the use of natural resources (input) and the discharge of residuals (output or negative input). In Japan, the research and trial estimation of the regional edition of the SEEA93 is also being undertaken (Yamamoto et al., 1998).

#### (4) MAFEE

In the top middle of figure 1, there is an unfamiliar account which is named the “Monetary Accounting Framework for the Environment and Economy” (MAFEE). The MAFEE is a kind of “mediate account” which links the NAM to the SEEA93. It is constructed by introducing the above mentioned distinctive features of the SEEA93 not to the I-O table but rather directly to the NAM.

Figure 1. Interrelationships between environmental accounts and indicators



## (5) SAMSEEA

In the top right of figure 1, the Social Accounting Matrix including the SEEA (SAMSEEA) is shown. Recently, the first author of this paper started on the construction of the SAMSEEA and CGE analysis based on it along with his colleagues. The progress of this research may bring about a set of indicators including the social dimension as well as policy implications.

## (6) NAMEA

To the right of the NAM, the Japanese edition of the NAMEA (J-NAMEA) that has been undertaken by the ESRI, is shown. A more detailed sketch of the J-NAMEA is shown in table 6a, and the first trial estimate of the J-NAMEA is given in table 6b. The J-NAMEA is revised regarding the following points in comparison with the Netherlands' NAMEA.

- 1) It estimates the emission of pollutions not only by households, but also by the government.
- 2) It attaches the stock accounts of non-financial assets to capital accounts and records the various social capitals and environmental protection plants. Refer to cell (OA, 8) and (CA, 8) in table 6b.
- 3) It adds coal, forests, water, and fish to the category of natural resources. Refer to the 11p-11u accounts.
- 4) It introduces the land use accounts which are closely related to environmental issues. Refer to the 11v-11aa accounts.
- 5) It records the depletion of natural resources in the rest of the world caused by imports, in order to figure out Japan's high dependency on imported natural resources. Refer to cell (11p-11u, 9).
- 6) It introduces the hidden material flow account, which records the hidden material flows caused by domestic activities and imports. Refer to the 11ab account.
- 7) It attaches the stock accounts to parts of the environmental theme accounts.

The ESRI adopts the Driving Force–Pressure–State–Effect–Response (DPSER) indicator framework which is an extension of the PSR framework and covers the economic and environmental dimensions. Thus, the J-NAMEA gives not only the indicators based on environmental themes, but also the decoupling indicator concerning the driving force and pressure in the DPSER framework. Moreover, it also gives the resource productivity and eco-efficiency indicators at the national economy (macro) level.

## (7) PAFEE (Physical Accounting Framework for the Environment and Economy)

In the bottom middle of figure 1, there is another unfamiliar account which is named the “Physical Accounting Framework for the Environment and Economy” (PAFEE). The PAFEE is another kind of “mediate account” which links the NAM to the MDPIOT denoted shortly hereafter. It basically has the same accounting structure as the MAFEE. However, it is an account with physical terms and the discharge of residuals is recorded as negative inputs with physical terms. The PAFEE and the MAFEE along with the NAM

compose a core framework which is named the “Global Accounting Matrix for Environment and Economy” (GAMEE) (Ariyoshi, 1998).

(8) MDPIOT (Multi-Dimension Physical Input Output tables)

To the left of the PAFEE, the Multi-Dimension Physical Input Output tables (MDPIOT) is shown, which has been developed by the NIES. The distinctive features of the MDPIOT are denoted as follows:

- 1) It records not only the use of resources from the environment and discharge of residuals to the environment, but also the material flows between industrial sectors according to the kind of materials.
- 2) Data for the MDPIOT can be compiled in two ways, either top-down from I-O data or bottom-up from the company’s data.
- 3) It gives indicators such as resource productivity and eco-efficiency at the industrial sector (meso) level.
- 4) The MDPIOT including the material flows induced by imports to Japan is being undertaken (reference table 8).
- 5) It has a sub-module to calculate the intersectional material flows induced by final demands.

(9) Company’s environmental accounts

The data from the company’s environmental accounts provide the information needed to calculate resource productivity and eco-efficiency at the industrial sector and company levels.

Among the accounts (1) – (9), the I-O table (2) and the J-NAMEA (6) are directly related to the NAM. Moreover, the SEEA93 (3) and the SAMSEEA (5) are indirectly related to the NAM via the MAFEE, and the MDPIOT (8) is indirectly related to the NAM via the PAFEE. Therefore, the indicators based on these accounts are considered to satisfy the requirements for indicators, such as mutual consistency, reliability and comparability. However, the company’s environmental account (9) is not related to the NAM.

Thus, the establishment of the relationship between macro environmental accounting and the company’s micro environmental accounting is considered an important task in achieving a consistent system of accounting frameworks and indicators for sustainable development.

## **Policy application of environmental accounting and derived indicators**

There is no inter-agency activity in Japan to establish a comprehensive set of indicators covering the whole scope (environmental, economic and social pillars) of sustainable development. However, some efforts have been made to incorporate a harmonized set of indicators into the national environmental policy. In 1994, the first "Basic Environmental Plan" was established by the cabinet decision based on "Basic Environment Law". The plan mandated the government to develop comprehensive indicators for implementing the plan and for reviewing policy performance towards four long-term policy goals set by the plan. An expert advisory committee was established in the Environment Agency to elaborate the concept and to show options of the indicators,

drawing upon related activities in international organisations such as the OECD and the UNCSO, as well as those in other countries. The committee published "A draft set of comprehensive environmental indicators" in 1997, and then submitted a revised report to the Central Environmental Council in 1999. Several indicators based on the MFA were adopted in the report as a sub-set of indicators representing the "sound material cycle" (Moriguchi, 2000).

Very recently, indicators derived from physical material flow accounting were adopted more formally and clearly, with quantitative targets within another national environmental policy framework. The Government of Japan formulated "The Basic Plan for Establishing a Recycling-Based Society" in a Cabinet decision on March 14th, 2003, based on the provisions of Article 15 of "The Basic Law for Establishing a Recycling-Based Society". The purpose of the plan is to promote comprehensive and systematic policies for establishing a recycling-based society. Furthermore, the plan serves as a ten-year program aimed at changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption into sustainable ones based on the "Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development" held in September 2002.

For establishing a recycling-based society, the plan set quantitative targets for indicators based on Material Flow Accounts, which are used to understand the entire flow of materials in a national economy. More specifically, the plan set a target for each of the three indicators that represent the three aspects of the material flows in our society. They are indicators of input, cyclical use and output. As the input indicator, a so-called "resource productivity" indicator was adopted.

Resource Productivity =  $GDP / DMI$  (Direct Material Input)

This formula is completely identical to the material use indicator in the OECD's indicator set for measuring decoupling of environmental pressure from economic growth (OECD, 2002). The plan set a target that Resource Productivity should be about 390 thousand JPY per ton in FY 2010 (almost double that of about 210 thousand JPY per ton in FY 1990, and about a 40 per cent improvement from about 280 thousand JPY per ton in FY 2000).

Whereas the other two indicators on material cycle (cyclical use rate) and material output (final disposal amount of waste) stand for a more conventional view of waste management and recycling, this input indicator reflects a holistic view of the relationship between economic activities and material use.

Needless to say, statistical basis and analytical soundness have to be ensured and further improved, in order to meet the policy needs and to support the actual measurement of the indicators. It should also be kept in mind that a typical criticism against oversimplification (everything should not be equally measured by mass) has been repeatedly directed to this simple indicator. Physical material flow accounting, if classified by the type of material, enables us to not only weigh materials as the simple sum of the mass, but also to weigh with some weight reflecting economic, social or environmental values. We may seek further elaboration of the accounting framework and derived indicators through international joint studies.

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**Table 1. Basic structure of the NAM (National Accounting Matrix)**

(Monetary term)

		Nation A				Rest of the world (ROW)	
		Goods & services (product groups)	Production (activity groups)	Distribution & use of income	Capital	Current account	Capital account
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Opening assets		0				Opening assets	
Nation A	Goods & services (product groups)	1	Intermediate consumption	Final consumption	Capital formation	Export	
	Production (activity groups)	2	Output				
	Distribution & use of income	3	Value added				
	Capital	4		Saving			Net lending from ROW
Rest of the world	Current account	5	Import				
	Capital account	6				Current external balance of ROW	
Closing assets		7				Closing assets	

 : SNA's monetary flows

**Table 2. Basic structure of the I-O table**

(Monetary term)

		Nation A			Rest of the world (ROW)	
		Production activities (activity groups)	Final consumption	Capital formation	Export	Import
		1	2	3	4	5
Use of products (activity groups)	1	Intermediate consumption	Final consumption	Capital formation	Export	Import
Value added	2	Value added				
Output	3	Output				

**Table 3. Basic structure of SEEA93 (version 4.2)**

(Monetary term)

		Nation A				Rest of the world			
		Production (activity groups)	Final consumption	Non-financial assets (uses and stocks of assets)		Export	Import (negative sign)		
				Produced assets	Non-produced assets				
		1	2	3	4	5	6		
Opening assets		0	Opening assets						
Nation A	Use of products (activity groups)	1	Intermediate consumption	Final consumption	Capital formation		Export	Import(-)	
	Use of non- produced natural assets	Use of natural resources (types)	2	Use of resources (+)	Use of resources (+)	Depletion of natural resources (-)			
		Discharge of residuals (types)	3	Discharge of residuals (+)	Discharge of residuals (+)	Deterioration by residuals (-)		Discharge of residuals (+)	
		Eco-margin (negative sign)	4	Sum of the above pressures (-)	Sum of the above pressures (-)	Sum of the above pressures (+)		Sum of the above pressures (-)	
	Value added	5	Value added						
	output	6	Output						
Closing assets		7	Closing assets						

□ : Cells for environmental flow data

**Table 4. Basic structure of the MAFEE (Monetary Accounting Framework for Environment and Economy)**

(Monetary term)

		Nation A					Rest of the world			
		Goods & services (product groups)	Production (activity groups)	Distribution & use of income	Capital		Current	Capital		
					Sectors	Non-financial assets (types)				
		1	2	3	4	5	9	10		
Opening assets		0	Opening assets			Opening assets				
Nation A	Goods & services (product groups)	1	Intermediate consumption	Final consumption	Capital formation		Export			
	Production (activity groups)	2	Output							
	Distribution & use of income	3	Value added							
	Capital	Sectors	4		Saving				Net lending from ROW	
		Natural Assets (types)	5			Capital formation				
	Use of non- produced natural assets	Use of natural resources (types)	6	Use of resources(+)	Use of resources(+)	Depletion of resources (-)				
		Discharge of residuals (types)	7	Discharge of residuals (+)	Discharge of residuals (+)	Deterioration by residuals (-)		Discharge of residuals (+)		
		eco-margin (negative sign)	8	Sum of the above pressures (-)	Sum of the above pressures (-)	Sum of the above pressures (+)		Sum of the above pressures (-)		
ROW	Current account	9	Import				(Production etc. in ROW)			
	Capital Account	10					Current external balance of ROW			
	Discharge of residuals (types)	11	Discharge of residuals (+)	Discharge of residuals (+)			Discharge of residuals (+)	Deterioration by residuals(-)		
	Sum of pressures	12	Sum of the above pressures (-)	Sum of the above pressures (-)			Sum of the above pressures (-)	Sum of the above pressures (+)		
Closing assets		13	Closing assets			Closing assets				

-----> : Monetary flows (including imputed environmental cost flows)

□ : Cells for environmental flow data

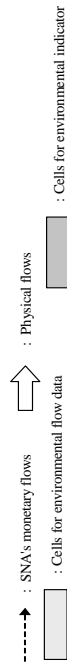
Table 5. Basic structure SAMSEEA

	Nation A													Rest of the world			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13				
Primary distribution of income (value added categories)	Primary distribution of income	Secondary distribution of income (sectors)	Use of income (sectors)	Sectors	Non-financial assets (types)	Use of natural resources (types)	Discharge of residuals (types)	eco-margin (negative sign)	Final consumption (purposes)	Production (activity groups)	Goods & services (product groups)	Current	Capital				
1										Value added		Compensation of employees from ROW					
2	National income											Property income and current transfers from ROW					
3	Use of income (sectors)	Disposable income															
4	Sectors		Saving														
5	Natural Assets (types)			Capital formation													Net lending from ROW
6	Use of natural resources (types)				Depletion of resources (-)				Use of resources								
7	Discharge of residuals (types)				Deterioration by residuals (-)				Discharge of residuals								
8	eco-margin (negative sign)				Sum of the above pressures				Sum of the above pressures (-)								
9	Final consumption (purposes)		Final consumption														
10	Production (activity groups)										Output						
11	Goods & services (product groups)				Capital formation				Final consumption	Intermediate consumption		Export					
12	Current account	Property income and current transfers from ROW									Import						
13	Capital Account			Capital transfers to ROW (net)													Current external balance of ROW

□ : Cells for environmental flow data

**Table 6a. Basic structure of the Japanese edition of NAMEA**

	(Monetary term)							(Physical term)		(Physical term)				
	Nation A							Rest of the world (ROW)		Substances		Environmental themes		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Global	Regional	Natural resources	Land use	
Opening assets	Opening assets									Opening stocks				
Goods & services (product groups)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9					
Production (activity groups)	Output	Intermediate consumption	Final consumption		Capital formation	Export		Emission of pollutants by producers						
Final consumption (purposes)			Final consumption	Final consumption				Emission of pollutants by consumers						
Distribution & use of income		Value added		Saving				Other domestic emission of pollutants and changes in natural resources						
Capital						Net lending from ROW								
Current account	Import					(Production, etc. in ROW)		Cross border flow of pollutants from ROW						
Capital Account						Current external balance of ROW								
Substances	Absorption of substances in the production process				Cross border flow of pollutants to ROW		Contribution of pollutants to environmental themes							
Pollutants														
Natural resources														
Environmental themes					Environmental indicators									
Closing assets	Closing assets									Closing stocks				



**Table 6b. First Trial Estimate of the Japanese NAMEA (1995)** (The top left of the J-NAMEA)

←----- Monetary flows      ← Material flows      : Cells for environmental data      : Cells for environmental indicator

Account (classification)	Monetary flows										Material flows										Environmental indicators																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		
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Emission of pollutants by producers												Emission of pollutants by consumers		Emission of pollutants by total		Origin of generated income		Current receipts		Tax payments, net		Capital receipts		Capital formation		Current payments to ROW		Capital payments to ROW		Total																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		
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Table 7. Basic structure of the PAFEE (Physical Accounting Framework for Environment and Economy)

		Nation A				Rest of the world (ROW)				(Physical term)	
		Goods & services (product groups)	Production (activity groups)	Distribution & use of income (sectors)	Sectors	Capital	Material balance in A	Current account	Capital account	Material balance	
		1	2	3	4	Natural assets (types)	8	9	11	14	
Opening assets		Opening assets									
	0										
Goods & services (product groups)	1	↑	Intermediate consumption	Final consumption	→	Capital formation	→	Export			
Production (activity groups)	2	↓	↓								
Distribution & use of income (sectors)	3		(Value added)				Final consumption				
Sectors	4			(Savings)					(Net lending from ROW)		
Natural Assets (types)	5				(Capital formation)		Capital formation, Total use of resources(-) & total discharge of residuals(+)				
Use of natural resources (types)	6		Use of resources(+)	↓	↓	Total use of resources(-)					
Discharge of residuals (types)	7		Discharge of residuals(-)	↑	↑	Total discharge of residuals(+)		Discharge of residuals(-)			
Material balance in A	8									Material balance in A	
Current account	9	Import						(Production etc. in ROW)	(Capital formation in ROW)	Final consumption	
Sectors	10							(Capital external balance of ROW)			
Natural Assets (types)	11									Capital formation, Total use of resources(-) & total discharge of residuals(+)	
Use of natural resources (types)	12							Use of resources(+)	↓	Total use of resources(-)	
Discharge of residuals (types)	13		Discharge of residuals(-)	↑	↑			Discharge of residuals(-)	↓	Total discharge of residuals(+)	
Material balance	14										
Closing assets	15						Closing assets				

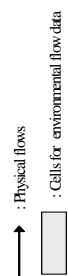


Table 8. Basic structure of the MDPIOT (Multi-dimensional physical input-output tables)

Sheets for resource type as 3rd dimension

		Nation A											Nation B (Major trade partners)						Resource A		Resource B		Resource total
		Production			Accumulation			Environment			Production		Accumulation		Environment		The rest of the world (ROW)	Other resources					
Supply(input)	Level	Base material	Manufacturing	Service	Waste management	Capital formation	Waste storage	Env. as source	Env. as sink	Base material	Manufacturing	Service	Waste management	Capital formation	Waste storage	Env. as source	Env. as sink	Exports from A to ROW (+)					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			17	18		
Production	1	(-+)*	Flow of intermediate products (-+)*	Intern. inputs for waste management (+)		Material flows to final demand sectors (+)																	
Nation A	2	Flow of intermediate products (-+)*																					
	3	Material flows other than wastes accompanied by waste management activities (+)																					
Recovery material	4	Recovery of by-products(-) and outputs to recycle/treatment(disposal(+))				Recovery of materials (-)																	
Intermediate products	5	Apparent intermediate flows				Stock (+)																	
Waste storage	6	Final disposal (-)				Stock (+)																	
Environment as source	7	Resource extraction, oxygen input for combustion, etc (+)						Extraction total (-)															
Environment as sink	8	Direct emission of substances (CO2, etc.) from economic activities to the environment (-)						Emission total (+)															
Production	9																						
Production	10	Imports into A from B (+)																					
	11	Imports into A from B (+)																					
	12	Imports into A from B (+)																					
	13	Imports into A from B (+)																					
Recovery material	14																						
Intermediate products	15																						
Waste storage	16																						
Environment as source	17																						
Environment as sink	18																						
The rest of the world (ROW)	19																						
Internal transformation	20																						

\*) For diagonal elements in production activities, gross production should be indicated with negative sign and self-consumption should be indicated with positive sign.  
 □ : Cells for environmental flow data     □ : In the short term, these cells will be filled by incomplete accounts to record the material flows induced by imports into A

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