



**Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India,
10 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi - 110 - 124.**

(Government Accounting Standards Advisory Board)

Minutes of meeting on virtual presentation Natural Resource Accounting for the Chief Secretaries, other Officers and Accountants General of States

Background: As part of the implementation process envisaged in the Concept Paper on NRA released by the GASAB Secretariat in July 2020, GASAB Section has developed tentative templates for the Asset Accounts on Minerals and Energy Resources for implementation in the States. The templates, besides being successfully piloted in three States (Goa, Meghalaya and Rajasthan) have been vetted by a Consultative Committee set up by GASAB consisting of important stakeholders and eminent environmentalists. The templates are in final stage and are planned to be rolled out in the States by September 2021 after necessary approvals for preparation of Asset Accounts for the year 2020-21, targeted to be completed by March 2022.

In order to discuss the matter with the highest echelons in the State Government to ensure smooth co-ordination between GASAB headquarters, the field Offices of the CAG and the State Governments in steering the implementation process, virtual presentation on NRA was planned for the Chief Secretaries and other State Government Officers besides the Accountants General in the States. The first such meeting was held on 31 August 2021.

Date and time : (Second meeting) - 3 September 2021 at 11 AM.

Participating States: Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Sikkim and Uttarakhand

Mode: Virtually through MS Teams

Chair : Ms Parveen Mehta, Deputy CAG & Chairperson, GASAB chaired the meeting. A list of Officers attending the meeting is at Annexure – A.

At the outset, Additional Deputy CAG, GASAB, welcomed all dignitaries involving the Chief Secretaries, Secretaries of Mines, Finance and the Accountants General of the States besides other Officers involved in this prestigious endeavour of GASAB on implementing NRA across the country. The contribution of accounting of natural resources towards long term economic performances and India's obligations on implementing resource accounting as part of the sustainable development goals were highlighted. He brought out the action plans envisaged in the Concept paper which, inter-alia, envisaged short, medium and long term goals starting from 2020 and converging with the target date of SDGs, i.e. 2030 in consonance

with the four stage implementation strategy suggested by the SEEA – CF; of which, the first such goal is preparation of Asset Accounts on Mineral & Energy Resources, more importantly the non-renewable resources because of its finiteness in nature, to commence from the States and gradually moving towards the national level.

The Addl Dy CAG set the tone of the meeting as a platform for conveying to the States regarding the idea of NRA, status as on date and way forward along with the expectations from the States in GASAB's zeal to implement NRA across the country.

To take the meeting further, he requested the Deputy CAG (Government Accounts) & Chairperson, GASAB (hereinafter referred as CP, GASAB) to kindly inaugurate the meeting and provide the key-note address.

In her keynote address, CP GASAB, while conveying sincere gratitude to the Chief Secretaries and other senior Officers and Accountants General in the States for sparing time for attending the meeting, highlighted the crucial role played by the natural resources in economic development of a country and their inbuilt value of inter-generational equity and sustenance. Important milestones on natural resource accounting and economic environmental accounting like the UN conference on Human Environment in 1970, the Brundtland Commission, the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro in 1992, international standards for the compilation of national accounts in 1993 revised in 2009, deep inter-linkages of economic environmental accounting with the SDGs, the System of Economic and Environmental Accounting – Central Framework (SEEA – CF) in August 2012 – which is the latest internationally accepted and adopted framework for resource accounting were touched upon.

CP, GASAB informed the august house about the progresses made towards implementing NRA in India by the concerned stakeholders and ministries and stated that despite best efforts, a system of collation of a periodic database in the shape of an Asset Accounts on available natural resources linked with the inter-related factors like revenues and costs involved in exploitation of such resources, their sustainability for the future generations – which is the first stage of implementation of NRA as suggested by the SEEA - CF, was still to be achieved.

In the above backdrop, CP GASAB underscored GASAB's initiatives in hand holding the country and the States to implement NRA across the country through the release of the Concept Paper on NRA, drawing up of tentative templates for capturing data related to selected natural resources, testing the templates in the States on pilot basis, getting them vetted by the Consultative Committee from important stakeholders and readying the templates for implementation, to commence from the States.

CP, GASAB requested the State Governments to attach due priority to this project of national importance and support it wholeheartedly which is imperative for its successful implementation. Inputs/suggestions on the templates from the States were also sought for further fine-tuning the templates before implementation. While assuring the State Governments of unhindered support of GASAB headquarters and Offices of the Accountants General, CP GASAB informed that the NRA Cell constituted with joint representations from the AsG Offices and the State Government Departments shall, under consultation with the GASAB headquarters, design and install the systems and procedures to ensure regular flow of data into the system for collation into the Asset Accounts in future years.

After the key-note address, a powerpoint presentation on NRA was made by SAO, GASAB highlighting the concept and importance of NRA; international developments vis-à-vis those in India, implementation strategy suggested by SEEA framework and those adopted/works done by GASAB and successes thereagainst; key takeaways on implementation of Asset Accounts on Mineral & Energy Resources in the States; way forward and expectation from the States.

Copy of the presentation is enclosed as Annexure – B.

After the presentation, the following were discussed.

Arunachal Pradesh while hailing the idea of NRA and GASAB's work towards its implementation assured that the State would provide all support and attempt to prepare the Asset Accounts. The State also requested for State specific workshops for capacity building and guidance to which CP, GASAB agreed.

Himachal Pradesh: Economic Advisor speaking on behalf of Himachal Pradesh Government appreciated GASAB's initiative in implementing NRA and requested for a copy of the PPT. The Officer highlighted the need for scaling up the preparing forest Asset Accounts in the lines of Forest Resource Assessment of one district carried out in 2013-14 in the State. CP, GASAB requested for a copy of the report to which the EA agreed. The Finance Department of HP requested for State specific workshops in Shimla.

Meghalaya : The Chief Secretary, Meghalaya while complimenting GASAB for this huge work and requesting for a copy of the PPT highlighted that there were data gaps in regular flow of information for the compilation of Asset Accounts and the State was working to overcome it to make the system robust by March 2022. It was also suggested that in view of the immense importance of forests, forestry sector should be prioritised after completion of the works related to mineral and energy resources. The Officer also requested for holding State specific workshops for Meghalaya, which was agreed to by CP, GASAB. He assured GASAB of all support of the State Government of Meghalaya in implementing NRA in the State.

Uttarakhand: Representative of Uttarakhand Government highlighted the importance of minor minerals in the economy of the State Government and added that more thrust be given to these minerals while preparing the Asset Accounts in the State.

Before concluding, CP GASAB once again thanked the dignitaries from the State Governments for their enthusiasm and attending the meeting to make it a success and expressed confidence that the States would continue to support GASAB in implementing NRA across the country. CP, GASAB also assured all the State Governments that GASAB would be more than happy to assist in training and capacity building of the States towards implementing NRA.

At last, CP GASAB affirmed that successful implementation of Asset Accounts on Mineral & Energy Resources in the States would mean that India not only meets the first of the four-stage implementation strategy prescribed by the SEEA - CF but will also get into the elite list of countries where Asset Accounts on natural resources (importantly non-renewable resources) are being generated.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

Annexure – A

Officers attending the Virtual Presentation on NRA from States (Date 3.9.2021)

Orgn/Stater	Chief Secretary/ Representative	A&E/Audit Offices
GASAB/CAG of India	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Parveen Mehta, Deputy CAG & Chairperson, GASAB Shri Ram Mohan Johri, Addl Deputy CAG, GASAB Shri Sudipta N Biswas, Sr. Admin Officer, GASAB/NRA 	
Arunachal Pradesh	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Naresh Kumar (CS) R. K. Singh Principal Secretary (Environment & Forests), Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh Dr. Ashish C. Verma Principal Secretary (Finance), Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh Prashant Lokhande Commissioner (Economics & Statistics), Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh Secretary (Geology & Mining), Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh Secretary (Water Resources), Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh Secretary (Land Management), Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> C A Bodh, Pr. AG
Uttarakhand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Manisha Pawar, ACS (Fin.) R. Minakashi Sundaram Pr. Secy. (Mines & Geology) Amit Negi, Secy. (Fin.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Kavya Deep Joshi Sr. DAG (A&E) R. S. Negi, Sr. A/Cs officer Manisha Sinha, AAO
Meghalaya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> M.S. Rao, (CS) Dr. Shakeel P. Ahammed Pr. Secy. Mines Shantanu Sharma, Joint Secy. (Fin.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> F Syiemlieh, AG (A&E) Shefali S Andaleeb, AG (Audit) Subbaiah, D A G, AMG-II, AG (Audit)
Sikkim	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> M L Sirvastava, ACS (Forest and Environment Deptt.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sushil Kumar, PAG (Audit) Arumugam Paventhan, DAG (A&E) SAO

Minutes of meeting on presentation on Natural Resource Accounting to the States by GASAB

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Bharti Joshi, Pr. Secy. (Mines and Mineral Deptt.)3. Devika Sharma, DG/DESME	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. AAO
Himachal Pradesh	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Akshay Kapoor, Financial Advisor2. Deepak Bhardwaj, Addl. Director-TA (Fin. Deptt.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Satish Kumar Garg, PAG (A&E)2. Ritu Dhillon, PAG (Audit)3. Ranjan Sushant, Sr.DAG, Admn. (Audit)4. Abhishek Kumar, DAG, A/CS, VLC