



## **State of the Global Environment** *1. latest science – 2. policy implications – 3. the way forward*



### Overview of scientific findings from the sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) and other major assessments



### The GEO-6

2,5 years of work; 146 authors, 78 members of advisory bodies, 41 review editors
From more than 70 countries (G & R balance)
301 UN reviewers; More than 1,000 technical reviewers

364 Intergovernmental reviewers

5 review periods, 2 of which were intergovernmental reviews

Summary for Policymakers Negotiated in January, 2019; 95 countries, 250 participants, 4 days; 37 page summary plus 'Key Messages'



#### Sustainable development challenges

No

Sociopolitical agreement

high

Non-intelligible scientific expertise Complicated Contested facts: communication, awareness building, mobilization, and building political majorities	Chaos Unkno non-ne denial, demag violent Wicked Contested knowledge gaps: scientific and societal actor jointly define problems and co-produce knowledge and solutions guided by equalit	wable and egotiable: , avoidance, goguery, ce s l d y	oolitical agreement low	Scientific expertise not understood by the public Complicated • Carbon taxation • Redistribution of wealth and income • The role of nuclear energy • Other	<ul> <li>Chao</li> <li>Ecoletippi</li> <li>Fund</li> <li>Fund</li> <li>Fund</li> <li>Othe</li> <li>Othe</li> <li>Equitable energy</li> <li>transition and decarbonization</li> <li>Sustainable food</li> <li>Equitable trade and investment flows</li> <li>tipping points</li> <li>Fighting corruption</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>	s ogical ing points damentalism er
Simple Uncontested facts: cause-effect relations, rational decision- and policy making, project planning	Complex Uncontested knowledge gaps: expertise, systemic analysis, modeling, scenario building	Matters of belief	high Sociop	Simple <ul> <li>Recycling</li> <li>Mosquito nets <ul> <li>against malaria</li> <li>Communication <ul> <li>technology</li> <li>Other</li> </ul> </li> </ul></li></ul>	<ul> <li>Complex</li> <li>Promoting eco- friendly farming</li> <li>Maintaining social cohesion</li> <li>Ensuring equal opportunities</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>	Religious duties
high F	Factual certainty	low Intergovernment as the Intergo	ntal scientific ass overnmental Panel	high Fact essments – on Climate	ual certainty	low

such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development or the Global Environment Outlook;

#### Source: GSDR, 2019

Examples of policy fields

## Thanks to donors and partners

- Not possible to conduct a project of this size without significant contributions from funders and partners
- Expertise and time from many authors
- Their institutions also allowed them time away from their main activities



#### GEO-6 Funders

Producing an assessment of this scale requires many generous contributions. The following organizations provided funding directly or indirectly to the sixth *Global Environment Outlook*: The Government of Norway, the European Union, the Governments of Italy, Singapore, China, Mexico, Switzerland, Denmark, Egypt and Thailand. Together with UN Environment's Environment Fund and Regular Budget, these contributions allowed for the production of GEO-6 and its accompanying Summary for Policymakers, as well as subsequent outreach activities.



#### **GEO-6 Partners**

GEO-6 also benefited from the generous contributions of several partners, including: GRID-Arendal, World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), The Centre for Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), The Big Earth Data Science Engineering Program (CASEarth), the European Space Agency (ESA), the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL), the Freie Universität Berlin and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).





















## State of the Global Environment 1. latest science – 1.1 key messages



## KEY MESSAGES emerging from all reports:







'under current trends, the world's social and natural biophysical systems cannot support the aspirations for universal human development that is embedded in the SDGs (GSDR, 2019 - 1.3)'

We need to radically transform our production and consumption systems, to preserve the basis for our development: the global environment (land, water, climate, biodiversity, clean air, minerals, oceans, etc.)

Small incremental changes to the Business As Usual will NOT be sufficient – 'breaking away from the current practice of growing first and cleaning up later'

Change needs to be more ambitious, rapid, systemic and transformational

## **Other Key Messages**

- A more integrated approach that addresses multiple goals simultaneously is needed
- Pollution, Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss are the three major interlinked environmental challenges to meet SDGs
- Tipping points coming, transformational change needed *yesterday* (GDP 3X increase in 2050)!
- Will and way: more solutions than problems, significant co-benefits in the context of SDGs
- Science and Technology matters



## **GSDR Focus**

- Strengthening human well-being and capabilities
- Shifting towards sustainable and just economies
- Building sustainable food systems and healthy nutrition patterns
- Achieving energy **decarbonization** with universal access to energy
- Promoting sustainable urban and periurban development
- Securing the global environmental commons
- Science and technology for sustainable development
- Not incremental change but transformation







## State of the Global Environment 1. latest science – 1.2 global issues



Figure SPM.8. Projected global trends in target achievement for selected Sustainable Development Goals and internationally agreed environmental goals

	Human development in	dicators	Environmental indicators							
Related Sustainable Development Goals	Target	Projection	Related Sustainable Development Goals	Target Projection						
2 ===	2.1 End hunger	Î	8 #######	6.3 Improve water quality 6.4 Reduce water scarcity						
3 means	3.2 End preventable deaths of children under 5	. <u> </u>		11.6 Improve air quality in cities						
6 KONAKA	<ul> <li>6.1 Achieve universal access safe drinking water</li> <li>6.2 Universal access to adequire</li> </ul>	to ate sanitation	13 章	13 Limit global warming						
7 ATTORNES AN ATTORNES	7.1 Achieve universal access modern energy services	to	14 filenan	<ul> <li>14.1 Reduce marine nutrient pollution</li> <li>14.3 Minimize ocean acidification</li> <li>14.4 Sustainably manage ocean resources</li> </ul>						
Legend	<b></b> 1	<b>_</b> 1	15 tilso <u> </u>	15.2 Achieve land degradation neutrality 15.5 Halt biodiversity loss						
On track to achie target (under bbusiness-as-usu scenarios target projected to be achieved)	ve Progress towards target, but at an ual insufficient rate is (unless effort is increased, target is projected not to be achieved)	Moving away from target (the trend is projected to be worse, rather than better)		GOBAL ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK						

### **Outlook for the future**

(current policies)

- Improvements in human development, but insufficient to meet environmental dimension of SDGs and IAEGs – environmental health risks remain prominent in 2030.
- Further degradation in nearly all environmental areas from climate change to biodiversity loss to water scarcity, land degradation and ocean acidification.
- Failure to act now will lead to ongoing and potentially irreversible impacts on the environment and human health.

Figure 2. SDG Tree



## **Drivers of Environmental Change**

- Population 9-10 billion 2050
- Urbanization 66% in cities 2050
- Economy eradicate poverty, hunger and manage consumption
- Technology positive and negative to environment (risks and solutions) – *Remote Sensing* and IT
- **Climate** hotter, too much/little water, sea level rise, disasters and conflicts…



Figure 1-1 Cross-national flows of information, goods, capital and people

Cross-national flows of information, goods, capital and people increased dramatically in the last decades, underpinning a world that is more interconnected than ever.<sup>22</sup>



Our world is increasingly interconnected:

<sup>(</sup>Source: GSDR, 2019)



## Air and Water

- Air Pollution 6-7 MN premature deaths and cost of \$5 TN/Year
- GHGs, major cause of climate change
- Water Disease –2.3 BN no access to safe sanitation and 1.4 MN deaths due to pathogens in drinking water
- Water ecosystem 40% of global wetlands lost 1997-2011.
   Population of water species declined by 81% 1970-2012

## Land and Soil

- Food production –need 50% more food for 10 billion in 2050 (land/yield increase)
- Monoculture crops –increase productivity but lose agrobiodiversity
- Animal protein 77% agricultural land for meat production
- Food waste -1/3 food wasted/year
- Deforestation The deforestation rate decreased to 6.5 MN ha/yr, planted forests increased to 3.2 million ha/yr
- Urbanization Urban area grown by 2.5 times since 1975, accounting for 7.6 per cent of land use in 2015.



### Impact of food on the environment: selected proteins







Note: Data are the mean values from approximately 38,700 commercially viable farms in 119 countries. Grains are shown here as they contribute 41 per cent of global protein intake, despite lower protein content.

Source: GSDR, 2019

## **Biodiversity**

- **Hidden crisis** We might observe the <u>sixth</u> <u>mass extinction</u> in Earth's history
- Nature's contribution to people 70% poor people rely on natural resources
- **Species decline** 60% decline in Living Planet Index between 1970 and 2014
- Ecosystem decline 10 out of 14 terrestrial habitats showed a decrease in vegetation productivity 2000 - 2013
- Marine biodiversity global fish stocks overexploitation increased from 10% in 1975 to 33% in 2015.
- Genetic diversity crop genetic diversity being conserved for enhancing productivity, nutritional content and resilience.





## **Oceans and Coasts**

- Coral Reefs bleach every 6 years, recover every 10 years
- Fisheries and aquaculture –58-120 MN people's livelihoods, and over 3 billion people 20% of their protein
- Marine plastics 8 million tons of plastic to oceans a year
- Sustainable fisheries overexploitation

## Impacts from human activities: Crosscutting

- Human health Pollution costs more death than WWII/Year
- Environmental disasters Affected more than 3 BN 2005-2015
- Energy –1.2 BN no access to electricity and 2.7 BN use traditional fuels for cooking and heating
- **Chemicals** More than 100,000 chemicals in use polluting the planet
- Waste and wastewater urban waste approx. 7-10 BN tons/year







## State of the Global Environment 1. latest science – 1.3 climate





## Global Warming of 1.5°C

An IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty



## • Every bit of warming matters • • Every year matters • • Every choice matters •

- Limiting warming to 1.5°C would require changes on an unprecedented scale
  - → Deep emissions cuts in all sectors
  - → A range of technologies
  - → Behavioural changes
  - Increased investment in low carbon options





GFCS

emissions gap assessments

Lessons from a decade of

UN 💮

environment

Pre-release chapter of EGR2019, Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Mitigation Ambition and Action at G20 Level and Globally http://www.unenvironment.org/emissionsgap

Lessons from a decade of emissions gap assessments (the 10-year summary) - https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-10-year-summary

United In Science (published by WMO in collaboration with many agencies including UNEP) - ttps://public.wmo.int/en/resources/united in science



### **Emissions Gap Report 2018**



### **Trends in global emissions**

- Global greenhouse gas emissions show no signs of peaking
- Global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased in 2017 to a record 53.5 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e, following a three-year period of stabilization
- In contrast, global GHG emissions in 2030 need to be approximately 25% and 55% lower than in 2017 to put the world on track for 2°C and 1.5°C global warming respectively



## 3x more ambition needed to fill the 2°C gap







## and 5x more to fill the 1.5°C gap











## State of the Global Environment 1. latest science – 1.4 resources



The **USE** of natural resources has more than **tripled** from 1970, and **continues to grow** 



**92** billion tons of global extraction

**12.2** tons materials demand per capita



Global material extraction and material productivity, 1970 - 2017



Myth: Technological advancement is making the global economy more resource efficient.

Fact: Some (high-income) countries are becoming much more efficient but **global productivity has not improved** in the last 20 years

The use of natural resources and the related benefits and environmental impacts are unevenly distributed across countries and regions



## Two Key Drivers of Middle-Income Resource Use Growth

## New infrastructure

buildup in developing countries

**Outsourcing** of material & resource intensive production from high-income countries

High-income countries still dominate material footprints per capita







## State of the Global Environment 1. latest science – 1.5 emerging issues





The Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption and Production 

### FRONTIERS 2018/19

Emerging Issues of Environmental Concern



### Report on Key Emerging Issues of Environmental Concern





## 1. Synthetic Biology

- Advanced genetic engineering technology
- Release of modified organisms may change entire species populations
- Potential impacts demand regulatory methods
- Risk assessments must be applied
- Inclusion of stakeholder perspectives is needed





## 2. Ecological Connectivity

- Habitat fragmentation disrupts ecological functioning
- Small and isolated fragments reduce species survival chances
- Restoring connectivity between habitat patches is a must to preserve biodiversity
- Connectivity should be a key element in any post-2020 global biodiversity framework



## 3. Permafrost Peatlands

- Permafrost peatlands hold almost half of the world's soil organic carbon
- They are undergoing rapid change due to climate change causing thawing

THINK

**IVF** 

BEYON

WITHIN

- Action is needed to ensure they retain their carbon deposits
- Otherwise, we may fail to avoid an uncontrollable "Hothouse Earth"



## 4. The Nitrogen Fix

- Nitrogen pollution affects the air, climate, oceans, biodiversity, health and food
- Caused mainly by inefficient use of nitrogen fertilizers in agriculture
- Circular economy provides a solution
- Value of nitrogen implies major economic opportunity for a nitrogen circular economy

LIVE

WITHIN



## 5. Maladaptation to Climate Change

- Climate adaptation planning needs to consider consequences up-front
- Successful climate adaptation has to be affordable for all, including marginalized peoples
- Maladaptation leads to dead ends
- Today's choices will determine the amount of options available in the on future





## State of the Global Environment Policy implications







**Effectiveness of environmental policies** 

- **Policy design** at least as important as policy choice when measuring effectiveness.
- Effectiveness Not enough information is available to assess effectiveness, so policies may not reach their full potential.
- **Diffusion** –successful policies are used as role models for adoption in other countries.
- Integration adding environmental concerns to other sectors of policymaking increases effectiveness.
- Efforts are insufficient existing policies insufficient to address the backlog of environmental problems.
- Systemic approaches transformative change by reconfiguring basic social and production systems and structures is needed.



Opposing Trends for Food Demand and Environmental Impact



### Changing the path we are on

 Pathways exist to meet the environmental dimension of SDGs/MEAs – transitions in consumption, production, access and environmental management.

**Transforming food and energy systems is central** to the pathways that could achieve environmental sustainability.

 Incremental policies will not be sufficient – all pathways require rapid and wide-ranging innovations; many beyond historic rates of change.

**Policy integration and coherence are needed** – integrate environmental concerns in all policy sectors at all levels to deal with possible trade-offs.

 More synergies than tradeoffs exist – e.g. phasing out fossil fuels will help achieve air pollution, climate and human health goals.

### Participatory approaches

- Ideas and small scale projects already exist Through workshops and crowd-sourcing, innovation can be found.
- Participation in development of policy approaches improves their effectiveness – Engagement is strengthened and local issues are addressed.
- Bottom-up initiatives can help refine our understanding of the future – Current models consider broad megatrends. These can be refined with bottom-up information.
- Both social and technical innovations are needed – participatory approaches can understand how to implement these systemic approaches.

Cluster	Measure category	No poverty (1)	Zero hunger (2)	Good health and well-being (3)	Quality education (4)	Gender equality (5)	Clean water and sanitation (6)	Affordable and clean energy (7)	Decent work and economic growth (8)	Industry, innovation and infrastructure (9)	Reduced inequalities (10)	Sustainable cities and communities (11)	Responsible consumption and production (12)	Climate action (13)	Life below water (14)	Life on land (15)	Peace, justice and strong institutions (16)	Partnership for the goals (17)
Energy, Climate	Energy access	2	2	2	1	1	2	4	2	2	1	0	1	4	1	1	0	2
and Air	Behavioural change (transport and households)	3	3	3	1	2	2	4	3	3	2	3	3	5	3	3	2	4
	End-use electrification	1	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
	Low/zero emission technologies (non-biomass)	3	4	4	1	2	3	5	4	2	2	2	0	5	1	2	1	3
	Bioenergy (with and without CCS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Improve energy efficiency	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	0	3	1	1	0	1
	Negative emission technologies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Air pollution control	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Non-CO, emission reduction	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Agriculture,	Reduce food waste	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2
ood, Land and	Yield improvement	3	3	2	0	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	3	0	1	0	2
Biodiversity	Nutrition management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Food access	7	10	10	4	6	4	6	8	3	5	4	6	10	3	6	2	8
	Diet change	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
	Manage soil carbon loss	3	3	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	2
	Minimize land damage	5	8	8	3	6	7	6	7	5	5	4	6	10	4	7	3	6
	Land ownership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Protection of terrestrial ecosystems	3	5	5	2	3	5	4	4	3	2	3	5	6	3	5	1	3
	Land-use planning	1	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	1
	Forest management	2	3	2	1	1	4	3	2	1	0	1	3	4	2	3	0	1
Human Well-	Poverty alleviation	8	9	9	3	3	5	5	7	4	4	3	5	10	3	5	1	5
being	Child/ maternal healthcare	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Education	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Freshwater and	Improve water-use efficiency	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Oceans	Blue carbon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WASH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wastewater treatment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Water quality standards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Desalination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Integrated water resource management	1	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	0	2	2	0	3	0	1	1	3
	Sustainable fisheries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ocean regulation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Protection of marine ecosystems	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other	Monitoring and reporting	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	1	2	2
	Circular economy	3	3	5	1	3	1	1	1	2	2	4	4	4	1	2	1	2
	Sharing economy	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2
	Plastics and consumer waste reduction	2	1	3	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	4	4	4	1	3	0	2
	Awareness and skills building	7	8	8	5	7	7	7	8	5	7	0	7	12	5	7	5	6
	Gender equality	5	6	7	2	7	3	3	1		-	1		5		4	HE	A
	Smart cities for sustainability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		•	0	C	1	0	PL	A
	Ecosystem restoration	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	-	/				1			HE	A
	Effective environments	10	10	10	10	10	10	0							-		DE	0

Numbers indicate the count of proposals coded with the specific pairing of intervention (row) and SDG (column). 'Other' is described more in Section 23.11

## **TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE**

80%

knowledge.

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE AGENDA 2030**





## CITIZEN SCIENCE

ENGAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS IN SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

#### **BENEFITS**

- Collection of data at lower cost.
- Increased scientific literacy
- Citizen engagement
- Cost-effective measure
- Improved environmental monitoring
- Exposure to scientific expertise and indigenous knowledge

### FIELD DATA AND REPORT GENERATION

- Top-down Scientists train volunteers
- Bottom-up Community-driven research

### CITIZEN SCIENCE INITIATIVES

- Collaborative knowledge (e.g. Wikipedia, OpenStreetMap)
- Volunteer computing (e.g. Citizen Grid, climateprediction.net)
- Pattern classification (e.g. Galaxy Zoo, eyewire)
- Community collection of observations (e.g. bird counting, air sensor toolbox)

#### **TARGETED RESPONSE**

- Technology revolution has introduced multiple ways of collecting, archiving, analyzing, transmitting, and processing huge volumes of data.
- Citizen science can be used to **sensitize and engage the community** on issues related to their natural environment

#### **BENEFICIARIES OF CITIZEN SCIENCE**

Features **user-configurable cause-effect** (DPSIR) indicator dashboards.

- Individual Citizen
- Governments
- Communities
- Scientists and Researchers







## State of the Global Environment 3. The way forward









### The way forward

- Healthy planet is a foundation for supporting all life forms – but, we have transformed earth's natural systems and disrupted selfregulatory mechanisms and life-support systems.
- Human health is now affected at a significant scale through exposure to harmful pollutants and reduced access to ecosystem services.
- **Policy innovation** can help guide the transformative change that is needed.
- Systemic innovation the key to socioeconomic development towards a sustainable world.
- **Transformative change** is a disruptive process that goes beyond incremental improvement, but can be achieved.



The **decoupling** of natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic activity and human wellbeing is an **essential** element in the transition to a sustainable future



The projections are based on the understanding that growth rates in emerging and other developing economies must be balanced by absolute reductions in resource use in developed countries.

## **Strengthening NDCs**

## Countries can bridge the emissions gap:

- NDCs can be strengthened in many ways
- Technical potential is available to close the gap entirely
- Coverage and effectiveness of national policies can be increased, roll out of good practices would narrow the gap considerably
- Most climate actions have significant sustainable development benefits





## Untapped potential: non-energy sectors & NSAs

Bridging the emissions gap - The role of non-state and subnational actors Pre-release version of a chapter of the forthcoming

UN 💮





#### Box 1 Defining international cooperative initiatives

Although there is no single definition of an international cooperative initiative (ICI), a number of terms and common characteristics help characterize them. When non-state or subnational actors from at least two different countries "adhere to rules and practices that seek to steer behaviour towards shared, public goals" across borders (Andonova *et al.*, 2017), they engage in "transnational climate governance" (Andonova *et al.*, 2009). Broader coalitions made up of countries, companies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, international organizations or subnational public actors, such as cities and regions, form cooperative initiatives (Blok *et al.*, 2012). When these coalitions cross national borders they become "international cooperative initiatives" (Widerberg and Pattberg, 2015).



Source: Adapted from International Resource Panel, 2017, Assessing global resource use: A systems approach to resource efficiency and pollution reduction "There is reason for hope: human well-being need not depend on intensive resource use"

"...it is possible to advance human development within the sustainability limits of impacting nature. In order to accelerate progress in that way, a more integrated approach that addresses multiple goals simultaneously is needed, rather than narrow, sectoral approaches that focus on one or an excessively narrow subset of goals at a time"



# world environment situation [site under construction] https://environmentlive.unep.org/situation



environment





### Thank you

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