

## GEO for Youth

The Outreach event organized during the second authors' meeting, held in Bangkok from the 22nd to the 26th of May 2017, presented an occasion to focus on one primary derivative product of the Global Environment Outlook, namely *GEO for Youth*.

The *GEO for Youth* product is meant to stimulate dialogue within the youth community on environmental themes and issues, as well as to educate and provide capacity-building tools to foster active youth commitment toward achieving sustainable development.

The goal of *GEO for Youth* is to firstly inform younger generations about the drivers of the environmental change, the current state of the environment and the future pathways we need to undertake to reach a sustainable future and achieve a healthy planet for future generations. Secondly, *GEO for Youth* should educate, raise environmental awareness and connect young generations across the world to raise their voice and deeply involve them in the decision-making processes in all regions. Past editions of *GEO for Youth* have facilitated cooperation between youth and other key stakeholders in working towards a sustainable future (e.g. *GEO for Youth* for Latin America and the Caribbean). In other words, *GEO for Youth* was conceived as a result of the awareness that Youth can make the difference!

*GEO for Youth* has played a key role since the second edition of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO 2000) where a joint initiative between UNEP and Peace Child International released the so-called "PACHAMAMA: our Earth - our Future," proving success beyond all expectations. The idea behind this first experiment was to learn how to establish a personal relationship with Mother Earth and take care of her in the same way we do in our families.

PACHAMAMA was followed by several regional and national *GEO for Youth* publications which summarized the main environmental topics and concerns highlighted in the different editions of the main Global Environment Outlook publication.

Based on the results of the findings of the fifth edition of the Global Environment Outlook, UN Environment decided to produce the most recent version of the *GEO for Youth*, entitled "TUNZA: acting for a better world." Written by youth, for youth, it examines a variety of trends related to the Earth's system and explores whether internationally agreed environmental goals – such as those on climate change, biodiversity loss and emissions of dangerous chemicals – are being achieved. This *GEO for Youth* explored the meaning of acting together for change, showing that there is hope for environmental change and that successes are happening every day.

With this in mind, and following the incredible success of the previous editions, UN Environment launched in Bangkok the production process of a new version of this derived product. *GEO for Youth* will begin at a regional level focused on the main findings of the recently released Global Environment Outlook regional assessments. When the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook is finalized in 2019, a global *GEO for Youth* is intended to be released.



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## Role of the Assessment Methodologies, Data and Information Working Group (AMG)

The key mandate of the [Assessment Methodologies, Data and Information Working Group \(AMG\)](#) is to “to provide guidance on assessment methodologies and to guide the overall quality assurance of data and information flows.” It was established to provide advice and inputs on assessment methodologies, data and information flows and quality assurance procedures. Provide leadership and guidance on assessment methodologies, data and information sourcing to the Global Environment Outlook authors with a special focus on the Data and Knowledge, Policy Effectiveness and Outlook chapters;

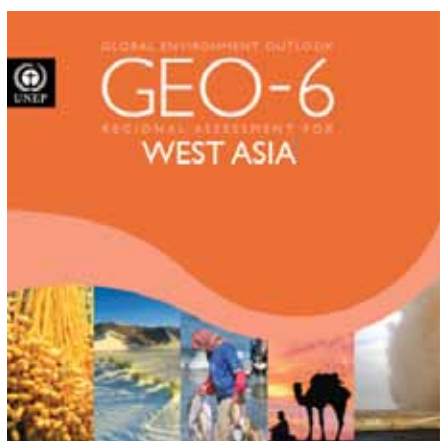
The [Assessment Methodologies, Data and Information Working Group \(AMG\)](#) provide guidance on the linkages between the environmental themes, cross-cutting issues and the Sustainable Development Goals and this to ensure coherence throughout the assessment. It also conducts periodic internal evaluations of the global assessment on adherence to the Integrated Environmental Assessment Guidelines produced to improve the effectiveness of the Assessment. Lastly, it actively participates in the Environment Live Communities of Practice to review the draft of the chapters, upload supporting documentation and connect with both the advisory bodies and the authors.

The members were selected through the nomination and engagement process and comprised of three experts from each UNEP region, plus up to six global assessment, data and information experts. The Assessment Methodologies, Data and Information Working Group, is supported by the UNEP Live teams in Nairobi and regional offices.

### The Second order draft review

The review of the second order draft will start on 3 July 2017 through to 15 September 2017. During this period all GEO-6 nominees will be engaged in the expert review of the drafts to ensure the scientific integrity of the texts. An intergovernmental review will be done in parallel by government appointed nominees and its primary purpose will be to review the policy relevance of the drafts. The larger UN family thematic experts will also be contacted to review the drafts during this period. By reaching this larger group during the second order draft review, the secretariat aims to ensure more extensive involvement of the process and therefore gain much in pursuit to help authors improve the quality of the drafts. Twenty review editors will also be contacted and briefed to assist in ensuring that this process's outcome is adequately addressed and that every comment is acted upon by the drafting teams. The review involves only the first nine chapters of the assessment. The innovative outlook and the policy relevance chapters will be available for review in 2018.

## Global Environment Outlook: Regional Assessment for West Asia



The [West Asia assessment](#) is a unique assessment as it is the only assessment that brings out the picture of conflict and human migration an emerging issue now affecting the environment. West Asia has suffered from ongoing wars and political conflicts. As a result, significant environmental health concerns now exist, including radioactive health impacts from missiles and soil and water contaminated with hazardous chemical residues from explosives. These effects are considered to be serious causes of death for children, women and older people. As a result of the conflict, the region has witnessed significant displacement of individuals, leading to numerous environmental stresses to which refugees themselves are the most vulnerable. The influx of refugees is greatly intensified by the refusal of governments to acknowledge informal settlements and, subsequently, to provide adequate stabilization solutions. Current conflicts and human displacement have a significant impact on the waste sector:

The [assessment](#) presents a spreading land degradation and desertification issue of which environmental consequences are the most critical challenges facing the countries in this region. The scarcity of the area's renewable water resources also poses a major problem, denting the region's ability to produce enough food to meet the growing population's needs. Climate scenarios project changes in the region's temperature, rainfall and sea level, which will have impacts on both the availability and use of water resources. High population growth and endless conflicts and wars mean that the carrying capacity of the land has become too small to support people with freshwater and food. Shrinking of farmland is caused by population growth, urbanization, land degradation and desertification. Increasing water demand has exacerbated the region's severe water scarcity and exerted pressure on groundwater extractions rates. The region has been recognized as one of the major regions where sand and dust storms originate causing environmental, social and economic impacts.





## Farming on the Slopes of Mt. Kenya

by Caroline Mureithi

Gatarakwa Location forms one of the driest areas of Kienu West Division, Nyeri North District in Kenya with annual rainfall ranging from 500mm to 950mm. The area is predominantly characterized by small primary vegetation productivity and high geographical and seasonal variability in water availability (both surface and available groundwater). This area is semi-arid and suitable for cattle grazing and planting of hay and wheat. I have been planting wheat and grass and relying on seasonal rains for watering. However, due to the ever-increasing reality of climate change, our harvesting seasons have been very disappointing. For example, during the last planting season of March-April, we registered losses due to lack of enough rain as shown in the photo.

The Nyeri County government plans to formulate a climate change policy to mitigate against the effects of global warming. Nyeri hosts two major water towers namely the Aberdares and the Mount Kenya catchment areas making it necessary for the county to formulate a policy to conserve the ecosystem and mitigate against the effects of climate change.

As the area is remote, the main means of transport is by *boda boda* though there are a few *matatu's* that ferry locals from the main town to the farm. There are increasing challenges of water pollution from horticulture farms along the riverine areas. Increasing population pressure is forcing people to encroach on fragile water catchment areas for farming and pasture. While livestock production is a significant economic activity, diseases and pests is another constraint. Possible opportunities to address these problems include value addition for livestock products and crop farming using drought resistant crops.



A poor harvest



Hay in harvested bales and stored in an open store/granary to allow for air circulation and to keep the grass fresh



Boda boda



Mount Kenya

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