



Outcome Document of the Inception Meeting of the GEO for Business Advisory Committee – September 24, 2019 held at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France.

On 24 September 2019, the Inception meeting of the Advisory Committee for the GEO for Business initiative met to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Welcoming remarks
2. Introductions
3. Presentation and findings of GEO-6
4. Discussion of terms of reference for the Advisory Committee
5. Review of workplan for GEO for Business
6. Discussion of provisional annotated outline for GEO for Business
7. Potential authors list

For these agenda items the advisory committee decided:

- The terms of reference (TOR) for the Advisory Committee are adopted (see Annex 1).
- GEO for Business will be an on-going engagement process with business, rather than a single or periodic publication.
- The Secretariat will update the work plan for GEO for Business to reflect the recommendations from the Inception meeting. The updated work plan will be discussed during the next call of the Advisory Committee in October/November 2019.
- Six issues briefs of importance to business, (one to be delivered about every two months over the next year) will be prepared over the next year. These will be short, demand driven documents that could use non-standard review processes i.e. webinars.
- The themes of the issue briefs will consider the key big systems discussed at the meeting (e.g. energy, food, waste) and their contribution to economics, business opportunities,

trade and finance (suggested outlines will be produced by the Secretariat for discussion at the next Advisory Committee meeting).

- The format of these issue briefs will be:
 - A problem statement(s) based on the findings of GEO-6.
 - What would constitute good risk management (i.e. what can companies do themselves)?
 - What market or other opportunities does this create for businesses?
 - How to measure progress?
 - What enablers, such as certain policies, will needed? (e.g. the need for support from governments and investors).
- Outreach on the issue briefs will be widened by partnering with key mainstream media outlets used by the target audience (e.g. the Economist), and other UN agencies e.g. UNIDO, UNCTAD, FAO, WHO (link to pharmaceuticals).
- A mapping exercise of other initiatives will be conducted in the GEO for Business space (to be undertaken by the Secretariat) to find out if there is overlap or duplication with other efforts and to ensure a unique product is being offered.

Meeting Summary

1. Welcoming Remarks

- Russel Mills, on behalf of Business at OECD (BIAC) welcomed participants to the meeting. He presented an overview of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as an evidence-based organisation. On GEO-6 for Business, he advised that the Advisory Committee needed to incentivise business to change with real investments in cutting down Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. BIAC would be interested in this venture in driving numbers and providing evidence.
- Anthony Cox on behalf of the Environment Directorate of OECD said that he was pleased to be part of the GEO for Business initiative. OECD's Environmental Policy Committee (EPOC) has been active in the link between environment and business by collecting the evidence base, with analytical work to support policy guidance in countries. He hoped that GEO for Business would contribute towards communicating and packaging information for decision makers with hard evidence and the business case for driving change.
- Pierre Boileau (Head, Global Assessments Unit, UNEP) expressed gratitude to OECD for hosting the Inception meeting of the GEO for Business Advisory Committee.

2. Introductions

- All members present introduced themselves, the organization they represent and what they bring to the Advisory Committee (see Participants List).

3. Presentation on the findings of GEO-6

- Pierre presented the main findings of the GEO-6 report. There are 25 case studies in the report evaluated for policy effectiveness following 12 criteria. There is lots of literature on

how to assess policies but not much on the evaluation of policies. From literature, there are no incentives to conduct policy effectiveness as it is complex and does not take into full consideration the full strength of policies.

Comments from the Advisory Committee

- Was there a discussion in the main report about why the policies did not work and what would prevent the world from achieving its internationally agreed upon goals?
- The GEO-6 identifies that policies seem to be more focused on achieving outputs rather than outcomes.

4. Discussion of terms of reference for the Advisory Committee

- There was no objection to the terms of reference for the Advisory Committee and they were adopted.
- The advisory committee would like a demand driven product and process with a proper budget and counting on support and sponsorship from the Advisory Committee, that embodies the integrity ensured by the organisations represented in the Committee.

Comment from the Advisory Committee

- The Secretariat should clarify the role of the Advisory Committee in mobilising resources.
- This will be done in the revised work plan.

5. Review of workplan for GEO for Business

- The audience of GEO for Business is intended to be business leaders in public, private and state-owned enterprises to speak to them about a solutions orientated story. The target is also businesspeople that understand the environmental agenda and empower them to be more effective; businesspeople that are not in this realm and empower them to be more engaged to take their first steps; and policy makers to understand the policy environment for effecting policy changes of importance to business. We can present the transition towards a sustainable world in 2050 as a business opportunity as well as protecting the environment. GEO for Business could include content on finance, trade and production. This group is diverse in its positions and can speak to various communities. The GEO findings could be translated into sectoral issue briefs that translate science to the context of business.
- Six issue briefs could be produced (one every two months through to October 2020), the first one released in January 2020. The process would be peer reviewed with relevant corporate representatives during a webinar before release. The issue briefs need to speak to key 'influencers' within companies, such as accountants, lawyers and directors. The format and method of communicating these briefs has to be clear from the beginning. Liaising with a media partner to feature some of the solutions and case studies presented in the issue briefs would provide a broader outlook for the initiative. Some of the communication methods proposed included business magazines e.g. Economist, pod casts, shorter reports, innovation labs, ADEX (online learning platform).
- In November 2019 the Secretariat will be launching the GEO for Youth, a publication that is a one-stop on daily sustainability action and design career paths on the actions. GEO for Business could look into innovations to strengthen and propel sustainable business models.

- The Secretariat will revise the workplan and share it with the Advisory Committee for their review and approval.

Comments from the Advisory Committee

- Who is the real target audience for the GEO for Business? Who will act on the recommendations of this work?
- We should link up with several ongoing efforts involving big companies and multinationals that are switching their business models and value chains. For Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), who represent the biggest chunk of business globally, we would need to consider changing mindsets in a cost-effective way.
- Are we considering a GEO for Finance?
- It would be good if there were opportunities to present GEO for Business and for the businesses involved to showcase the work they are doing at the UN Environment Assembly (e.g. a business tent).
- Is the approach provocative enough to create a paradigm shift? Could letters to CEOs / Boards and policymakers, highlighting opportunities and encouraging action, be considered?
- It is essential that GEO for Business is owned by business and draws on the Advisory Committee's experience for how to do this.
- This effort needs to keep in mind who within business is being targeted (SMEs, sustainability specialists, CEOs etc.)
- Larger companies can influence SMEs through their supply chains.
- Lessons should be learned from other processes, such as IPBES. This process was successful in raising awareness among the business community because it was covered in business-relevant publications (e.g. the Economist) that are read by CEOs who, in turn, may request more information from their sustainability teams.
- There is the Generational question – considering the younger generation and what they expect. Businesses are looking to the future including young consumers and their expectations. If environmental issues are important to young consumers, it would be important to understand this demographic and include this in the GEO for Business. One of the channels to communicate to younger generations would be to get a big personality (influencer) on YouTube to speak to them about GEO for Business.
- Go for low hanging fruit as we figure out more ambitious targets e.g. business type metrics for climate change risks. What is needed to get to systemic change and what does this look like?
- An important driver of change that can help business would be through trade unions that strongly demand sustainability. Companies are driven by workers and would need dialogue with policy makers for action on workers unions requests for sustainability. No action on resource efficiency and climate change would result in 20% of worktime lost due to a warming planet, which is the equivalent of 80m jobs.
- Businesspeople are looking for broader engagement on SDG17 on Partnerships and we can use part of GEO for Business to implement a sustainable business model through UN agencies and Multilateral Environmental Agreements to work together for win-win solutions.

- To unleash the potential of the private sector to address the challenges from GEO-6, the issues briefs need to be based on facts, analysis and how to help business take it up even with trends on upcoming issues relating to low emissions technologies and fostering resource efficiency.

6. *Discussion of provisional annotated outline for GEO for Business*

- UNEP experts provided short presentations on energy, food and finance.
- GEO for Business will be a niche product that appeals to businesspeople, including CEOs, to take action upon. A systems-based approach, focusing on energy, food and water, with relevant business sectors integrated within each could be used in the development of the issue briefs. GEO for Business needs to include a range of regionally applicable examples that include multinationals and SMEs (i.e. highlight solutions coming out of SMEs to create a positive dynamic that large companies will have to look at).
- An issues brief with the following structure was proposed, discussed and broadly agreed.
 - A problem statement(s) based on the findings of GEO-6.
 - What would constitute good risk management?
 - What opportunities does this create?
 - How to measure progress.
 - What enablers are required to do this (e.g. support from governments and investors)
- Multiple formats could be used, including diagnostic analysis; technology pathways; disruptive risk analysis. The concept of ranking company performance was discussed and rejected due to challenges around time and resources, developing robust criteria and the risk of alienating parts of the business community. Solutions to ranking were to partner with others in providing GEO data to drive bigger media coverage.
- Given the ongoing nature of the deliverables (as opposed to a single report) the branding could focus on GEO for Business rather than being limited to “GEO-6” for Business.

Comments from the Advisory Committee

- Some questions need to be asked to lead this initiative:
 - What would constitute good risk management if you are running an environmentally sustainable company?
 - What opportunities that this issue would create
 - What could be the strategic ambitions to deal with the risk side – what would be our response and how do we measure progress?
 - What kind of enablers do we need for this? Volunteers, businesses, innovation, leadership, governments, investors, finance.
 - Translate this – how do we manage risks, opportunities,
- How do we draw synergies between the GEO Derivatives and their link to GEO for Business.
- We could focus on case studies to showcase best practice

- GEO for Business needs to consider the language and vocabulary of marketing and business and deliver this in an innovative way. An incentive for business to interact with GEO-6 would be to use business language, endorsed by CEOs and informed by data.
- Connect with other UN institutions that would help find ways to national governments and their policy apparatus.
- Experience has shown that moving ahead with the sustainability agenda is driven by individual interests and beliefs rather than Boards and Directors.
- The next 15 months are important as the world sets new targets on key environmental issues. We need to change the set of indicators to measure our impact in the real world to switch the narrative and give solutions to people.

7. *Potential authors list*

- The Secretariat will redraft the TOR of the author teams in light of the discussions on the new workplan of GEO for Business. The TOR will be included in the invitation letter to the author teams to request their contributions and engagement. It is preferable to have a big enough pool of individuals with enough back up in case some drop out. Author pools will be on call based on the theme of the six issue briefs with a commitment for a year. Authors will be broken into approximately 10 Coordinating Lead Authors (CLA) and 15 Lead Authors (LA). All members of the Advisory Committee were asked to nominate 5 people each that Secretariat can draw from and reach out to. The purpose of reaching out is to have the best mix of people. From the Secretariat's experience, we want individuals that have a business writing background or that may not be located within a company but have a generalist background. We need to insist that authors should avoid bias and not represent the views of a single company. We want individuals that are amenable to working with us in a collaborative way. It is recommended that the Advisory Committee members reach out to respective authors to get their buy-in before the Secretariat does so formally. It allows the advisory committee member to explain the importance of this effort and why the author could join the effort. It helps create a more synergetic team and demonstrates how to participate in a positive way to the process. The writing team would have to ensure a business CLA and academic to be the LA to be able to do analytic work for the issues brief. The author teams will be advised that they will be volunteering their time to develop these issues briefs.
- The Secretariat will follow up with the Governance Affairs team on how business can best participate at the next UNEA.

Comments from Advisory Committee

- How can we have best practices and case studies displayed during the next UNEA?
- Can we pay a Consultant to develop all the issue briefs for us?

Action Items:

- The Secretariat will produce an Outcomes Document and circulate it to the Advisory Committee.

- The Secretariat will arrange the next Advisory Committee in approximately one month (October / November 2019).
- Advisory Committee members were requested to submit prospective names of authors using the template provided.
- Members are invited to nominate themselves or others as the second co-chair to the Advisory Committee.
- The Secretariat will consider the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee and update the work plan, annotated outline and Terms of Reference for authors in line with the discussions at the meeting.

Annex 1 – Participant List for the Inception Meeting of the GEO for Business Advisory Committee

First name	Last name	Title	Affiliation	Gender
Paul	Ekins	Director, UCL Institute for Sustainable Resources	University College London (co-chair)	Male
Aik Hoe	Lim	Director, Trade and Environment	World Trade Organization	Male
Jake	Reynolds	Executive Director, Sustainable Economy	University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership	Male
James	Donovan	Chair	UNEP Business and Industry Major Group	Male
Simone (alternate)	Targetti-Ferri		ADEC Innovations	Male
Daniel (alternate)	Fule		World Business Council for Sustainable Development	Male
Moustapha Kamal	Gueye	Coordinator, Green Jobs Program	International Labour Organization, also Green Economy Coalition	Male
Jennie (alternate)	Gleed		Carbon Disclosure Project	Female
Rachel	Dignam	Knowledge Manager – Inclusive and Green Growth	International Chamber of Commerce	Female
Rodolfo	Lacy Tamayo	Director, Environment Directorate	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	Male
Yannick	Beaudoin	Director General, Ontario and Northern Canada	David Suzuki Foundation	Male
Liesel	Van Ast	Membership and Regional Coordination Manager	UNEP Finance Initiative	Female
Russel	Mills	Secretary General	Business at OECD (BIAC)	Male
Dominik (alternate)	Kummerle	Policy Manager	Business at OECD (BIAC)	Male
Sean	Gilbert	Director, Member Engagement	Global Impact Investor Network	Male
Ifeoma	Malo	Chief Executive Officer	Clean Technology Hub	Female
Brian	Huloi		UNEP	Male
Clementine	O'Connor		UNEP	Female
Denise (observer)	Delaney		Sustainability	Female
Katie	Dawkins		WCMC	Female
Matt	Jones		WCMC	Male
Eddah	Kaguthi	Environmental Affairs Officer	UNEP	Female
Pierre	Boileau	Senior Environmental Affairs Officer	UNEP	Male
Jorge	Laguna-Celis	Director, Governance Affairs	UNEP	Male
Mia	Turner		UNEP	Female

Apologies

First name	Last name	Title	Affiliation	Gender
Antonia	Gawel	Head, Circular Economy & Innovation	World Economic Forum	Female
John	Lelliot	Chairman of the Board	Natural Capital Coalition	Male
Maria	Mendiluce	Managing Director, Climate and Energy	World Business Council for Sustainable Development	Female
Paul	Dickinson	Executive Chair	Carbon Disclosure Project	Male
Li (Aster)	Zhang	Board Member & Secretary General	Society of Entrepreneurs for Ecology (China)	Male
Richard	Welford	Chairman	CSR Asia	Male
Helen (alternate)	Roeth		CSR Asia	Female
Jorge	Càceres	Director Ejecutivo	Centro de Medioambiente y Energía, Federation of Chilean Industry	Male

Annex 2 – Terms of Reference of GEO for Business Advisory Committee

- Ensure leadership for the GEO for Business process and provide overall strategic guidance to the co-chairs and authors on content matters.
- Take overall responsibility for coordination and ensuring coherence across all GEO for Business deliverables.
- Represent the GEO for Business in relevant outreach and communication initiatives.
- Identify the main authors approve the annotated outline of the report
- Identify key actors and initiatives to link with the GEO for Business process and strengthen the partnership
- Lead the resource mobilization strategy in collaboration with the UN Environment
- Where possible, attend face-to-face meetings to support the process of producing GEO for Business