

Third Global Author's Meeting, 9-14 October 2017, Guangzhou, China

The highly anticipated third global authors' meeting of the Global Environment Outlook was held at the Nansha Grand Hotel in Guangzhou, China from 9-14 October 2017. The meeting was co-organized by UN Environment and the China Southern (Nansha) International Cooperation Southern Centre with the support of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China. The meeting covered a full six days, with opening ceremonies and planning meetings on the first day and an outreach event and field trips on the last day. The global assessment authors for the sixth Global Environment Outlook met to address the review comments from the second-order draft review of the first nine chapters of the global assessment. They also had the opportunity to obtain guidance from the Review Editors on how to deal with the review comments and to advance the Policy Effectiveness chapters and Outlooks chapters towards their first-order draft quality. Outlooks authors were also involved in a stakeholder workshop that sought to gather more information on the Innovative Outlooks component of the assessment. The global assessment authors also participated in an expert elicitation exercise to assess the effectiveness of a select group of policy case studies. Lastly, the authors discussed how to advance the drafting of the 'common thread' of the economic or equity dimensions throughout the sixth Global Environment Outlook.

Decisions by the Global Environment Outlook [Co-chairs](#) and [Vice Co-chairs](#) about the assessment included the following:

- Authors were required to respond to all content and structure elements provided by the co-chairs and return these responses with their third-order drafts on Nov. 15, 2017;
- Correct usage of the Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact and Response (DPSIR) for the global assessment report as developed in the guidance;
- Extraction of key findings from their chapters with the purpose of providing a subset of these for the Summary for Policy Makers and the remainder for the technical summary which will be produced for the sixth Global Environment Outlook.
- Exploration of the possibility of publishing the sixth Global Environment Outlook through a university press (e.g., Cambridge, Oxford) by the Secretariat;
- Production of a preliminary first order draft of the Summary for Policy Makers in Singapore which will be finalized once the Policy and Outlooks chapters have key findings to contribute;
- Production of the key message for each issue by the Cross-cutting authors.
- The scoring from the expert elicitation exercise conducted during the meeting will not be used in the Global Environment Outlook report, but the lessons learned will.
- The approach to incorporating the findings of the Outlooks Game Changers workshops will need to assess whether these would be considered primary research in the assessment. The Scientific Advisory Panel has recommended against presenting primary research in the Global Environment Outlook.
- Authors from the first nine chapters should begin extracting their top ten key messages from the chapters and ensure the rationale for those key findings is present, and properly referenced, in the chapter.



Participants of the third global authors meeting pose for a group photo at the Nansha Grand Hotel, Guangzhou, China.

To prepare for the expert review of the Policy effectiveness and Outlooks chapters which starts on 1 December 2017, specific timelines were agreed on. Policy Effectiveness authors should submit their first-order drafts of their eleven chapters by 15 November 2017 while Outlooks authors should send their first-order draft of their seven chapters by 30 November 2017. Authors from the first nine chapters are expected to submit their completed grids to their chapter coordinators by 31 October 2017. These completed grids will then be forwarded to the Review Editors together with the third order drafts by 15 November 2017. A summary report will then be produced from these materials and the report submitted to the Scientific Advisory Panel.

The first expert review of the second-order draft of the full Global Environment Outlook will occur in April 2018. Authors will address comments from this review period through May 2018. The combined intergovernmental and expert review of the third-order draft of the Global Environment Outlook will occur through June and July 2018. Comments from this review will be addressed in August 2018 and this document will be the foundation for the creation of the second-order draft of the Summary for Policy Makers. Coordinating Lead Authors involved in the production of the first-order draft of Summary for Policy Makers will be present for consultation during the face-to-face meeting of the High-level and Intergovernmental and Stakeholder Advisory Group, which is meant to complete the second-order draft of the Summary for Policy Makers. The line-by-line negotiation of the Summary for Policy Makers by United Nations Member States will likely occur in December of 2018.



The meeting also featured a media and outreach event at the same venue. Representatives from the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and educators discussed how Green technology could deliver market value at Scale and its implications for people and the planet. The next author's meeting in Singapore (19-23 February 2018) could see a broad engagement on cities and urbanization. Media and outreach events could be organized in Singapore to once again raise the profile of the Global Environment Outlook with the messaging for these events likely focusing on the cities and urbanization. A third visioning workshop for the Outlooks group will probably occur at the February meeting. [Click here](#) for the Outcomes Document.

Multistakeholder Dialogue: Growing Green Sectors: Lessons from China

The third Outreach event related to the Global Environment Outlook-6 process took place on Saturday, 14 October 2017, right after the full drafting week which involved all the authors of the assessment. More than one hundred participants mostly representing the private sector, academia, public administration, and media, attended this prestigious event that focused on the role of green technologies and finance driving the extraordinary expansion of the market in China, in-house and across the world. The launch of the five pilot zones to promote "green finance," help fighting pollution and reduce environmental costs has framed the high-level discussion.

Professor Jian Liu, Chief Scientist of UN Environment and Mr. Zhang Jibin, Representative from Environment Protection Department of Guangdong set the scene through the opening remarks. Panelists debated on the future of the energy sector in China, to slowly move away from fossil fuels, promoting green transportation systems and distribution of clean power for both business and household. The discussion focused on the key role played by partnership development and the potential business opportunities arising from agreements and joint ventures implemented by Chinese companies with foreigner counterparts.



Panelists at the session

The first panel put emphasis the role of accessing the Green Finance to promote new investments and to aggregate entrepreneurs able to demonstrate their compliance with national laws concerning the environmental and social standards and having a green business plan. The second panel emphasized the equity component of this fourth industrial revolution highlighting the need to guarantee inclusivity during this fast-growing green economy.

Private sectors representatives showcased their experience on sectorial changes happening in the world of data collection and its use for green investment purpose, in the development of new technologies to improve access to natural resources and in promoting green insurance to support innovative companies. The successful panel discussion stimulated a spirited debate and high participation from the public, extending the session to



about thirty minutes beyond the scheduled time. The key recommendations of this event will serve as inputs for the UN Science-Policy-Business Forum, taking place in Nairobi from the 2-3 December 2017 leading up to the UN Environment Assembly, under the banner “Science for Green Solutions.”



Panelists at the session

The Outreach event represented the perfect occasion to inform the public about the new process UN Environment is engaging into; Global Environment Outlook for Business which aims to give voice to the corporate sector by promoting innovative and collaborative solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

List of Panelists for the entire event: Jiang Kejun (Director of China Research Institute and Vice-chairs of the Global Environment Outlook), Zhang Li, (Secretary General in Society of Entrepreneurs for Ecology (SEE), Gianluca Ghiara (Vice Chair of Environment Working Group, EU China Chamber of Commerce), Pan Zhaochuan (General Manager of Green Finance Department, Industrial Bank), Prof. Joyeeta Gupta (Co-Chair of the Global Environment Outlook), James Donovan (Chief Executive Officer ADEC Innovations), Zhao Yong (Vice President of Elion Resources Group), Guan Songtao (Vice General Manager of China Export&Credit Insurance Corporation), Chen Feng (Chairman, China Chamber of Commerce for Metals, Minerals and Chemicals Imports and Exports (CCCMC).

First Meeting of the Review Editors of the Global Environment Outlook

The review process is an essential process in the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook report. Both technical and intergovernmental reviews make it possible for the report to be both scientifically credible as well as policy-relevant at the same time. The just ended second order draft review of the first nine chapters of the assessment was two-fold in that technical experts were invited to review across the thematic areas while governments were requested to nominate experts to discuss the drafts using the policy-relevance lens. The outcome of the review; which ran for seventy-five days, was around four thousand seven hundred comments distributed among the chapters with an additional category of comments which referred to the whole process and assessment as a whole. On the road to Guangzhou China for the third Global authors meeting, it was therefore imperative to bring the team of review editors on board to help account for every comment and work with the authors, advisory panels and the Secretariat to achieve the highest quality of the drafts yet from the second order review.

With the leadership of two lead review editors, the team of review editors worked in China for three days familiarizing themselves with the process and interacting with the specific author groups to support the comments action task. The outcome was a strategic plan of drafting the review editor's report for each chapter and the guidance to the author teams that has now helped achieve maximum justification for each comment that was received from the second order draft review.

The meeting with the Scientific advisory panel gave excellent feedback that was quickly utilized by the teams to advance the process swiftly. There was also an excellent response from the Co-chairs who were responsible for most of the overall 'all chapters' comments and based on the nature of the comments and the rational, they have guided the author teams accordingly. Some of the primary responses included changing of the chapter structure to make it uniform in all the thematic chapters as well as having an interactive infographic at the introduction of each chapter to provide visual interest and summary of the chapter details.



Review Editors at the Guangzhou meeting



Review editors at one of the sessions

Presentation on the comments received during the review period

The review editor team is now moving on with the compilation of their report from the responses emanating from authors responses on the review comments. Meanwhile, the secretariat with the lead review editors will be fronting nominees for a quick review of the policy and outlooks sections of the assessment to the Scientific advisory panel before the start of the review expected from 1 December 2017.

Another Review editors meeting is expected to take place around October next year with the team interacting to develop the review editors report on the outcome of the whole assessment review that will involve the technical review just before the intergovernmental review. The two lead review editors are expected to work with a team of around fifty review editors to ultimately achieve this.



- Build on regional GEO-6 assessments and use data since then
- Thematic chapters need common structure: e.g. Land, Freshwater; DPSIR, SDGs/Agenda 2030; remove overlaps/repetition unless reinforcement in different context is desirable
- Common elements: infographic of key issues (e.g. DPSIR); conclusions (bullet points; three sentences); summary paragraph pointing forwards to policy response chapters
- Key remarks:
 - "It is in the interest of all countries to respond to the issues raised."
 - "The connection/deep linkages established between environment; social & economic activity; global justice and human well being in the introduction must somehow be the 'glue' holding all the chapters together."
- Key messages
 - "Economic activity has profound impacts (often negative) on the environment; environmental degradation can have profound negative impact on the economy and human well-being; policies for environmental maintenance and restoration can have substantial positive economic impacts."
 - Desired policy maker response to thematic chapters: "These issues are really serious and need immediate attention to stop them getting worse. We know that we have been able to give me ideas as to what can be done to build on these successes."

Author Profile: Dr. Farhad Mukhtarov

Dr. Farhad Mukhtarov is a public policy scholar specialized in water resources and the environment. His interest lies in institutional design for good water governance and the process of knowledge transfer and translation across various boundaries, such as nation-states and organizations. With over ten years of international research experience in public policy, he holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences and Policy from the Central European University in Budapest in 2009. Dr. Mukhtarov is currently a Researcher at Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development at Utrecht University, The Netherlands and an Adjunct Senior Researcher at the Institute for Water Policy at the National University of Singapore.



Farhad is excited to be a Lead Author for the Policy Effectiveness chapter of the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook which has provided him the opportunity to work with leading scholars and professionals to cover both the issues of freshwater sustainability and policy effectiveness. For him, this is an excellent opportunity to contribute to the most widely read and referred to United Nations publication on the global environment and help shape possible responses to the problems the world encounters concerning the environment.

He expects to work closely with both natural and social scientists within the global assessment author team to exchange knowledge and opinions on problems and solutions regarding the global environmental issues. He looks forward to participating in this process and having a chance at making a difference.



