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# Future of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO)

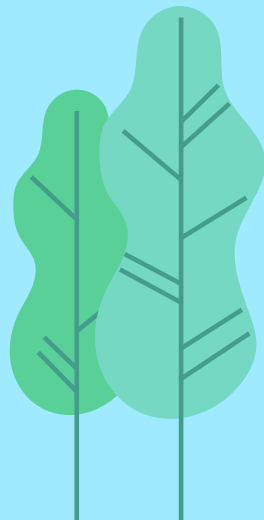
Briefing to the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives,  
October 26, 2021

Ivar Baste Co-chair of the Future of GEO Steering Committee



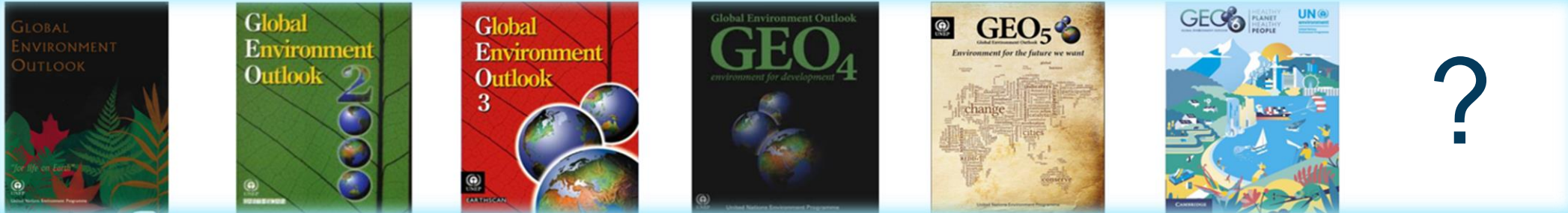
***Established an intergovernmental consultation on options for the future of the GEO overseen by a Steering Committee of 37 Member State experts which:***

- Has met in-person once & virtually some 20 times in meetings and work-shops
- Consulted member states, stakeholders and experts on draft material in 2020
- Presented its interim report to UNEA-5.1 in February 2021
- Just consulted on a draft feasibility study on administrative and financial implications
- Will consider its final options report in a digital workshop 8-11 November and present it to UNEA 5.2



# Which way for future GEO...

2020 consultation: - overwhelming support for the continuation of GEO



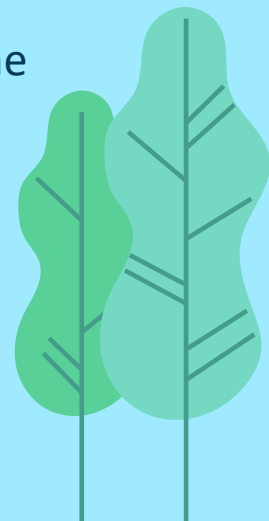
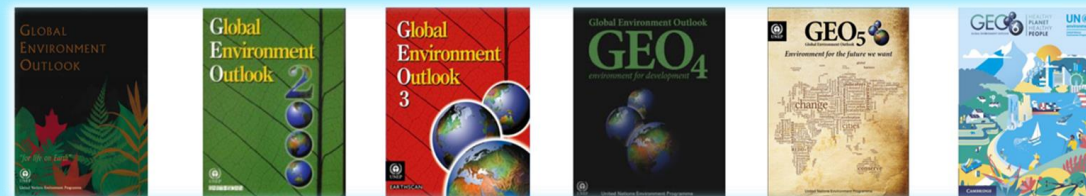
## ***Finalising potential resolution points UNEA may wish to consider with pros and cons:***

- *Setting the rationale for GEO*
- *Affirming the objectives, functions, design criteria and process for GEO*
- *Establishing GEOs governance and implementation structure (2 alternatives +1 hybrid) & *requesting it to:*
  - ✓ *Develop a set of agreed procedures (2 alternatives)*
  - ✓ *Prepare future GEO assessments (3 partly complementary options +1 hybrid)*
  - ✓ *Identify needs & provide capacity building, knowledge generation and policy support services**
- *Requesting the ED to administer the GEO process and facilitate its resourcing*



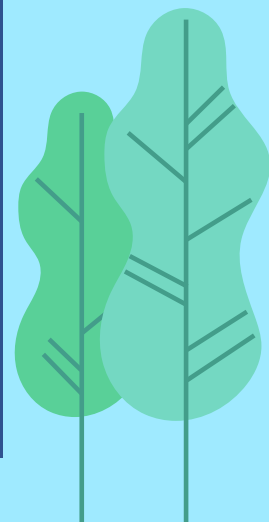
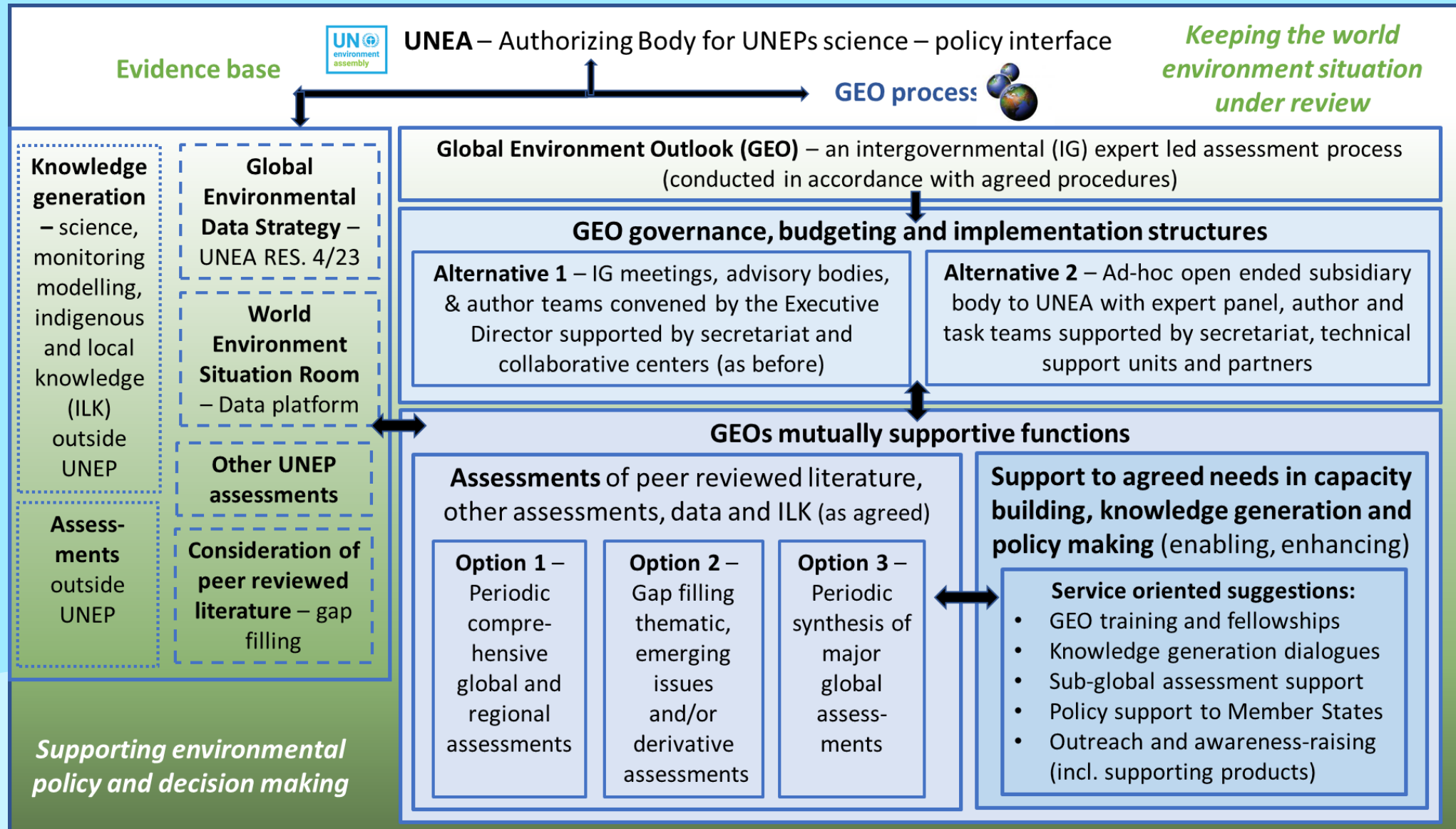
## ***UNEA may wish to:***

- a) Be mindful of UNEPs science-policy mandate on – keeping under review the world environmental situation – promoting the contribution of the scientific communities - providing policy guidance & recommendations
- b) Acknowledge that the growing body of environmental knowledge, is key to achieving a sustainable future set out in the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs
- c) Recognise the role of credible, relevant and legitimate intergovernmental expert led assessments in promoting dialogues between the science and policy communities on environmental issues vital for a sustainable future
- d) Recognise that the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process since 1995 has generated flagship reports and strengthened UNEPs science-policy interface, - mobilises in-kind support from experts and partner institutions
- e) Recall its resolution 4/23 on the future of the GEO process; and welcome the inputs received through the consultative process





# Overall orientation of the GEO process

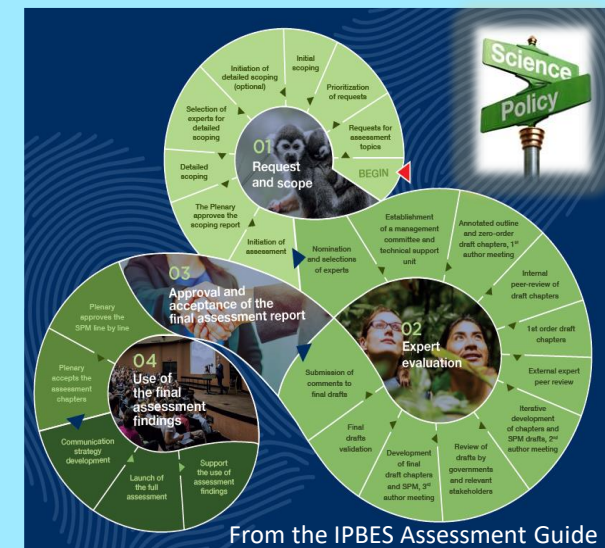


# GEO's objectives, functions, criteria and process

## UNEA may wish to consider:

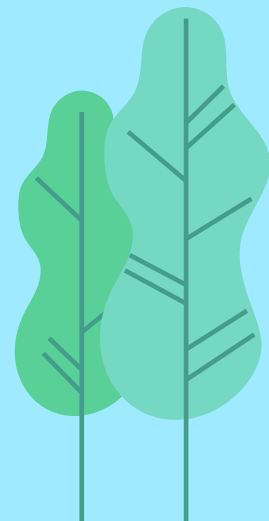
- Affirming that the objective of GEO is to keep the world environmental situation and outlook under review in order to periodically inform and support action by UN Member States, stakeholders and other actors, while strengthening UNEP's science-policy interface
- Affirming that GEO's functions is - undertaking intergovernmental expert led assessments and providing support to agreed needs in capacity building, knowledge generation and policy making
- Acknowledging that the design of GEO should be guided by principal criteria - for ensuring mandate consistency, relevance, legitimacy, credibility, accessibility, added value and overall feasibility
- Recognizing that the intergovernmental and expert led GEO process is vital to achieving the principal design criteria for GEO:

- ✓ Planning, budgeting and scoping of deliverables
- ✓ Nomination and selection of experts and drafting of assessments
- ✓ Expert, government and stakeholder review and quality control
- ✓ Clearance of assessments and deliverables and their use



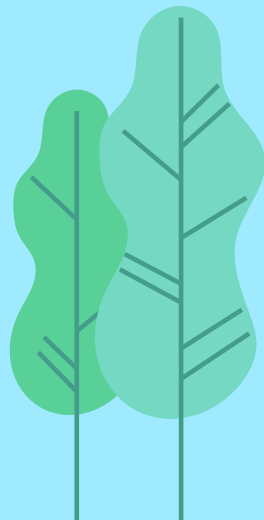
## *UNEA may wish to either:*

- a) Request the Executive Director of UNEP to convene open-ended intergovernmental and multistakeholder meetings, advisory group, scientific panel and author teams supported by the secretariat and collaborative centers (as before); or
  - b) Establish a standing ad-hoc open-ended subsidiary body to UNEA open to observers with bureau, expert panel, author and task teams supported by the secretariat, technical support units and partners (building of the future of GEO experience); or
  - c) Set up a hybrid where a steering committee is established to oversee the request made to the Executive Director in alternative a) above and preside over the intergovernmental and multistakeholder oversight meetings requested there
- **Annual cost estimate** for the alternatives are:
- ✓ 0.5 million USD for intergovernmental oversight
  - ✓ 0.1 million USD for scientific oversight



***UNEA may wish to request the relevant parts of the structure to:***




- a) Develop a set of procedures agreed by Member States - either a comprehensive set of procedures, or - a leaner & flexible set complemented by technical guidelines;
  - b) Plan, budget, scope and undertake one or several among 3 options and 1 hybrid the following intergovernmental expert led GEO assessments (next slide):
  - c) Identify the needs for support to capacity building, knowledge generation and policy making and to plan and budget services for addressing those needs in partnership with relevant institutions.
    - Integrating capacity building in the GEO process through training and fellowships, exchanges, and dialogues
    - Partnerships meeting capacity needs in the science policy interface (support to sub-global assessments)
    - Dialogues with research, modelling, scenario and data communities to address knowledge generation needs
    - Working with Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK)
    - Support the use of GEO findings in support of policymaking as requested by Member States and stakeholders
    - Outreach and awareness-raising (incl. supporting products)
- ***Estimated annual costs 0.9 million USD***





# Assessment options for GEO

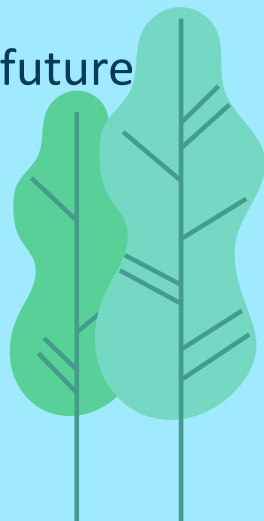
The GEO options would follow the same process and include Summaries for Policy Makers (SPMs)

OPTION	ANNUAL COST (USD)	PROCESS	SCOPE	EVIDENCE
 <b>1) Comprehensive global and regional integrated assessment (3 year)</b>	2.25 million	Approved SPM & accepted report	Comprehensive, integrated global and regional	Existing assessments, scientific literature, data, scenarios, national reports, indigenous and local knowledge
 <b>2) Focused thematically-based assessments (2 year)</b>	2.41 million	Approved SPM & accepted report	<b>Thematic</b> , methodology, specific actors	Existing assessments, scientific literature, data, scenarios, national reports, indigenous and local knowledge
 <b>3) Periodic synthesis of major global assessments (2 year)</b>	1.45 million	Approved SPM & <b>adopted</b> report	Comprehensive global	Existing assessments <b>with limited use of additional literature</b>
<b>4) Hybrid between 1 and 3</b>		Approved SPM & accepted report	Comprehensive, integrated global and regional	Existing assessments and full use of additional literature

***UNEA may wish to request the Executive Director to:***

- a) Administer the GEO process, including by providing its secretariat, by facilitating partnerships with collaborating centres and technical support units; and
- b) Facilitate the mobilization of extrabudgetary resources for the process, including by creating a Trust Fund to receive voluntary contributions from donors for the implementation of the GEO process in accordance with a budget agreed by Member States

- ***Annual resource mobilization*** needs over and above core funding is in the range of 2 million USD
- Planning, budgeting and scoping is key to predictability of funding, stability of the process, maintaining the GEO community and UNEAs authoritative role in the transition to a sustainable future



# Thank you!

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