

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, 23 March 2023
14:00 – 17:00 (GMT+3)
Conference Room 1, United Nations Office at Nairobi
Hybrid meeting

Agenda item 2: Secretariat briefing on the preparation of the 7th Global Environment Outlook report.

This background document has been developed by the Secretariat to inform the Committee of Permanent Representatives on overall progress made in the implementation of UNEA resolution 5/3: Future of the Global Environment Outlook. More specifically, it includes detailed information on the following aspects of the GEO-7 process:

- Update on the work of the Intergovernmental and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG)
- Update on the establishment and work of the Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG)
- Update on the selection of GEO-7 experts (authors, fellows and review editors) collaborating centers to support GEO-7 process.
- Update on the Solutions Pathways and Modelling and Scenarios Workshops (8-10 March, in person/hybrid, in Bangkok) and 1st GEO-7 Authors Meeting (13-17 March, person/hybrid, in Bangkok)

Following the presentation, Member States and Stakeholders are invited to engage in an exchange of views with the Secretariat to provide guidance to the Secretariat on the further of implementation of this resolution.

Progress made in implementation of UNEA resolution 5/3 on the Future of the Global Environment Outlook and next steps

Following the briefing on the implementation of [UNEA resolution 5/3 Future of the Global Environment Outlook](#) to the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) provided at its meeting of the subcommittee on 10 November 2022, two meetings (online) of the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) have taken place. The Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG) has been established and two meetings (online) have taken place. The call for nomination of experts (authors, fellows and review editors) and for expression of interest for collaborating centers to support the GEO-7 process closed on 31 January 2023. A first group of authors and fellows have been selected. The first authors meeting is planned for 13-17 March 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand. In advance of the meeting, two workshops will be organized, on the 8-10 March 2023, one on the modelling and scenarios development for GEO-7 and one on the methodology for the solutions pathways. This note has been produced prior to the meeting in Bangkok. The secretariat will provide an update on the outcome of this event at the CPR subcommittee meeting on 23 March 2023.

Update on the work of the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG)

On 6 December 2023, the IMAG met in second virtual call to discuss GEO-7 progress and plan next steps for the advancement of its work. The meeting proceeded to discuss and decided upon the following issues:

- A proposal for MESAG membership will be send after 15 December deadline for IMAG's feedback.
- IMAG will meet in the fourth week of January where the IMAG will discuss the author team selection proposal.
- The Secretary will update the IMAG as soon as possible the approval status of the scoping document and a confirmation on the face-to-face meeting in March in order to book their time.

On 25 January 2023, the IMAG met at its third virtual call. The meeting proceeded to discuss and decided upon the following issues:

- IMAG is satisfied with the manner in which its advice and recommendations have been addressed in selection of MESAG members and does not have any further advise on the Executive Director on the proposed membership. The Secretariat should proceed and seek appointment of the proposed MESAG members from the Executive Director.
- The deadline for nominations is 31st January and IMAG members will continue to encourage nominations through their networks.
- The update on the first list proposed for the authors is useful to provide a picture of the status and where gaps are. An augmented list of the first proposal will be shared with the IMAG 1st February for commenting by Close of Business 6th February.
- The IMAG will continuously receive feedback on modalities that have been agreed upon on how to prioritize and engage with collaborative centres. Further, local and regional expertise will be considered in selecting the centres to ensure inclusion of participation in the GEO process.
- When an agreement is envisaged with the selected collaborating centres, IMAG members will be invited to advice on the content of the MOUs that relate to scientific information for regions.
- An IMAG planning meeting will be conducted on 14th of February to discuss in detail the agenda of the upcoming Bangkok meeting.

The membership list of the IMAG can be found [here](#).

Update on the establishment and work of the Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG)

In accordance with the resolution EA.5/3 and with the advice of the IMAG, the call for the members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG) was issued by UNEP's Executive Director. The call closed on 15 December 2023 with a total of 179 nominations, to fill up to 30 positions. Nominations were received by Member States, members of specialized agencies, UNEP-accredited Major Groups and Stakeholders, specialized institutions, and groups of assessment experts.

The selection process considered whether nominated experts met the disciplinary and gender balance criteria as well as being geographically balanced across the five United Nations regions.

The membership list of the MESAG membership can be found [here](#). The following geographic and gender distribution was obtained for this proposal:

MESAG membership			
UN Region	Male	Female	Total
Africa Group	3	3	6
Western Europe	3	3	6
Eastern Europe	3	3	6
Asia Pacific	3	3	6
LAC	3	3	6
	15	15	30

The MESAG will undertake the following functions as directed by the Executive Director, with the advice of the IMAG:

- Oversee the scientific integrity of the entire Global Environment Outlook process, provide scientific oversight and advice on the selection of authors, fellows and review editors and represent the Global Environment Outlook process at key science events;
- Develop recommendations to promote approaches that help ensure the scientific credibility of GEO as a robust and rigorous assessment based on scientifically accepted methods and analysis from multiple sources, including grey literature, Indigenous and local knowledge and citizen science and science published in other languages than English;
- Provide validation of the GEO process by issuing a final opinion to UNEP's Chief Scientist on the overall scientific credibility of each GEO process; and
- Develop recommendations to help ensure the conceptual, analytical and scientific consistency and rigour in the development and implementation of the multi-year work plan and programme of activities, such as assessments and supporting services;

The first meeting of the (MESAG) took place online on 1 February 2023. The meeting was chaired by the GEO Secretariat since this was the first meeting of the MESAG and its bureau was not been elected yet. The meeting proceeded to discuss and decided upon the following issues:

- UNEP's Chief Scientist as well as the Secretariat look forward to the MESAG's guidance on the scientific integrity of the GEO process and the synergies that might be found with other international scientific processes.
- The Secretariat requests expressions of interest from the MESAG members to serve as officials on the Bureau of the MESAG. After receiving these expressions of interest, the Secretariat will form a proposal for the officials based on geographical and gender balance as well as diversity of leadership within the Bureau. This proposal will be send to the MESAG for approval through a 72-hour silence procedure.

- The Secretariat will share the proposed initial cohort of authors for the GEO-7 with the MESAG, hoping to receive comments by close of business on Monday, 6 February.

The second meeting of the (MESAG) took place online on 23 February 2023. The meeting proceeded to discuss and decided upon the following issues:

- The draft agenda for first in person MESAG meeting on 14 to 16 March 2023 in Bangkok was developed. The MESAG will have until 2 March 2023 to provide written comments on the draft agenda to the Secretariat.
- The MESAG process for providing scientific oversight and advice on additional authors, review editors and fellows will be discussed during the first in-person MESAG meeting 14-16 March in Bangkok.
- Draft MESAG procedures will be presented during the first in-person MESAG meeting 14-16 March in Bangkok and reviewed and agreed.

Update on the selection of GEO-7 experts (authors, fellows and review editors) collaborating centers to support GEO-7 process

The nomination period for authors, fellows and review editors, and the expression of interest for collaborating centres to support the GEO-7 process was extended until 31 January. The Secretariat reached out to a broad range of networks internally and externally to ensure a gender and geographically balanced selection and received over 700 nominations from interested Experts, Member States and Stakeholders and 45 expressions of interest from institutions to become collaborating centers.

The nomination process for these authors/experts has resulted in an initial cohort of 116 experts and 21 fellows being selected, based on the advice of the GEO-7 co-chairs and the two main advisory bodies. These authors have been initially assigned to the different chapters from the adopted annotated outline and the goal of the first authors meeting for them to develop their work plan for completing their first order drafts of their chapters by early 2024. Authors and experts will also begin expanding the annotated outline and defining the additional expertise that is needed to successfully complete their chapters. Following the 1st Author meeting there will be a gap-filling exercise where Lead Authors and Contributing Authors will be selected, with the help of the GEO-7 co-chairs and the Coordinating Lead Authors.

A total of 45 institutions expressed interest in being collaborating centers to support the GEO-7 process. Currently, the secretariat is assessing these expressions of interest and the most efficient way to coordinate these institutions taking into account the secretariat capacities.

Update on the Solutions Pathways and Modelling and Scenarios Workshops (8-10 March, in person/hybrid, in Bangkok) and 1st GEO-7 Authors Meeting (13-17 March, person/hybrid, in Bangkok)

The Modelling and Scenarios and Solutions Pathways workshops will run from 8th to 10th March 2023 with the aim of developing the methodological frameworks for the developing of the modelling and scenarios and the solutions pathways for GEO-7.

The Firsts Authors' meeting will run from 13th to 17th March and will convene experts responsible for drafting the GEO-7 to define and agree on the structure and content of their respective sections and chapters of the assessment with guidance from the Co-chairs of the assessment, the Intergovernmental

and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) and the Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG). The purpose of this first author's meeting, as with many other assessment processes, is to plan the work for the coming three years. This is the first time that the authors will be able to consider the issues that Member States have determined as priorities for the GEO-7

This note has been developed prior to the above-mentioned meetings. The outcome of these meetings will be presented by the secretariat at the CPR subcommittee meeting on 23 March 2023.

For more information on any of these points, please reach out to pierre.boileau@un.org .