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GEO-7 Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) Meeting Summary, February 14, 2023

Important Note: In order to make our calls more efficient and effective, members of the GEO-7 Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) are encouraged to keep their verbal interventions to a maximum of 3 minutes each. Members are encouraged to mute their telephone lines when they are not speaking to minimize background noise.

The Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) met at its fourth virtual call to discuss GEO-7 progress and plan next steps for the advancement of its work. Agenda items included:

1. Update on selection of the first list of GEO-7 authors and GEO-fellows.
2. Update on the ongoing preparation for the Bangkok meetings.
3. Review and discuss the provisional IMAG Agenda for the Bangkok meeting.
4. Review and discuss the approach for conducting the GEO coordination group meeting in Bangkok.
5. Any other business.

On these agenda items the IMAG decided:

- The IMAG welcomed the update on the selection of the first list of authors and looked forward to working with these experts. There will be a chance over the course of the next month to have additional authors invited. The author meeting in Bangkok will help to identify any gaps in expertise which might be filled from the list of nominees.
- The finalization of the list of GEO-7 fellows will be in parallel to the list of authors and follow the same schedule as the selection of additional authors, so that by the end of April, there will be a more complete view of the expert team to produce GEO-7.
- The IMAG thanked the secretariat for the ongoing preparations for the meeting in Bangkok. IMAG members who have any logistical concern for their participation to the meeting can get in touch with the secretariat for assistance. The secretariat confirmed the availability of virtual meeting capabilities in Bangkok for members who will not be able to participate in-person.
- The IMAG welcomed the changes made to the provisional IMAG Agenda for the Bangkok meeting. Meeting preparatory documents for this meeting will be sent to the IMAG two weeks to the meeting and in one package. The secretariat will work to send those documents including the author's list, MESAG list, discussion papers for the two workshops on solutions pathways and methodologies in good time for the meeting.
- IMAG members to review the provisional Bangkok meeting and provide comments by 17th of February 2023.
- The IMAG welcomed plans for the coordination group meeting which is envisaged to improve communication channels among the various advisory groups. Members of the IMAG can send inputs or items for discussions at the Coordination group meeting to the chair of the group for consideration. IMAG members will also have an opportunity to input on any items for discussion at the coordination group meeting throughout the three days of the IMAG meeting.
- The next IMAG meeting will be the second face to face meeting in Bangkok from 14-16 March.

Upcoming planning calls of the IMAG will be decided in the Bangkok meeting.

Rapporteur	Signature
Rafael Monge	

Summary of the meeting

The meeting was chaired by the co-chairs of the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG).

Update on selection of the first list of GEO-7 authors and GEO-fellows

The meeting started with a presentation by the Secretariat on the first list of GEO-7 authors and GEO-7 fellows. The secretariat noted that the MESAG was nominated in time to provide advice on the first selection of GEO-7 authors from 1st to 6th February. The presentation indicated the original proposed authors in green and yellow for the small changes that were made to the list to seeking to create a more geographic, gender and disciplinary balance.

The main changes highlighted by the secretariat were to substitute some experts with more qualified ones, replace overrepresented regions and gender with appropriate candidates to ensure regional and disciplinary balance and move some experts around to other more appropriate chapters. For the methodologies chapters, a key expert had withdrawn from the proposed role because of a change in his work position. This has since been replaced. During the author’s meeting in Bangkok, authors will help to identify any gaps in expertise which might be filled from the list of nominees.

The list of authors was approved by the Executive Director and the secretariat is now reaching out to all the 116 authors to invite them to the Bangkok meeting. It is expected that due to the tight timeline to the meeting, not all selected authors will be able to make it in person, but virtual participation capabilities will be available.

With regards to GEO-7 fellows, the IMAG requested for more information on the composition of the fellows list. The secretariat noted that the GEO process engages early entry professionals to be able to introduce them into the world of doing global assessments. Fellows generally help authors in producing chapters, prepare data analysis graphics, prepare citations and reference lists, glossaries and sometimes they are invited by authors to write portions of the chapter.

The secretariat noted that many nominations for the fellows came at the end of the nomination process and that there will be a process to consider other nominations as the fellows list is not yet final. The finalization of the list of fellows will happen in parallel to that of the authors during the gap filling exercise.

On this item the IMAG decided that the finalization of the author’s and fellows list will happen in parallel and that there will be a complete view of the team that will produce GEO-7 by April.

Update on the ongoing preparation for the Bangkok meetings

The secretariat presented on the status of the preparations for the Bangkok meetings which were confirmed to be logistically complete. All the required meetings rooms have been booked and allow for virtual meeting capabilities. The secretariat noted that the obtaining of Thailand visas was proving a challenge for some of the participants as for some locations, the requirements include sending

relevant documents to embassies in other countries and that would take time. IMAG members were encouraged to contact the secretariat to share any logistical challenges that they may have.

On this issue, the IMAG requested for elaboration on how the DSA card works. In elaborating, the secretariat noted that the cash cards will be loaded with DSA which IMAG members can then use the card as a debit card to pay for their meals and accommodation. Members will need to provide their boarding passes and a copy of their passport as part of the registration process to the meeting to receive the card. Members were also requested to keep the card for future in person meetings as issuing of new cards cost \$25. IMAG further highlighted with concern the possible damage of the airport in Turkey by the earthquake which is a transit stop for some flights headed to Bangkok. The secretariat noted this issue and promised to follow up with the the concerned and provide an alternative for any affected IMAG members and also ensure final plane tickets are distributed to members.

On this issue, the IMAG thanked the secretariat for the work done in preparation for the meeting.

Review and discussion of the provisional IMAG Agenda for the Bangkok meeting

The Secretariat presented the original meeting agenda for the Bangkok meeting and the proposed changes to that agenda. The objectives of the Bangkok meeting were outlined and areas where advice will be sought from the IMAG on key items were highlighted. These were such as, the completion of the draft workplan, the regional and sub regional analysis, the methodological approach that will be proposed by the authors for developing solutions pathways and the proposed outlooks methodology. Each agenda item had been allocated an hour or an hour and a half for discussion. The secretariat proposed the removal of the second discussion of the regional and sub regional analysis and focus on the supporting services item which will be crucial for GEO-7. This will also be discussed in the joint IMAG and MESAG meeting which been added to the agenda. The discussion on the supporting services that can be offered through GEO-7 and the IMAG and MESAG joint meeting will be the focus of the third day of the meeting. The joint IMAG and MESAG meeting will include a roundtable introduction and a review of what the two groups have been working on over the last two days of the meeting followed by a discussion on how the two advisory bodies might best work together.

On this issue, IMAG members sought clarification on the proposed briefings from the solutions pathways and outlook methodologies groups and the tight time allocation for those two separate briefings. Lastly, IMAG also sought clarity on when they would receive relevant meeting documents to aid in preparation of the Bangkok Meeting. On these issues, the secretariat clarified that there will be two workshops from the 8th to the 10th of March, just before the Bangkok meeting. In those two workshops, both the policy and outlooks authors will develop a methodology for establishing solutions pathways and the modelling work that needs to be done. They will also work on developing a joint approach to making sure that whatever comes out of the solutions pathways methodology is able to be input into the modelling and scenarios work. Focal points of those two workshops will brief both the IMAG and MESAG to receive advice from both a scientific view and policy perspective. The secretariat mentioned that the meeting rooms were available till 6pm and that should enable more time and flexibility needed for discussions on this issue or other issues, IMAG members can schedule additional time periods to aid discussions.

On this issue it was agreed that IMAG members will comment on the revised agenda and provide inputs by 17th February close of business to give enough time to the secretariat to prepare the necessary meeting documents.

The secretariat will work to provide the meeting documents two weeks before the meeting.

Review and discussion on the approach for conducting the GEO coordination group meeting in Bangkok

The secretariat explained that the 'coordination group' will exist for the first time in GEO and will include the Co-chairs of the assessment, IMAG, MESAG and those of the Ad Hoc open-ended meetings who will also be responsible for chairing the GEO-7 summary for policymakers, final review and approval meetings. The Coordination Group is meant to ensure that there's good communication, clear lines of responsibility, clear areas where each of the groups is tasked to do things in the GEO process. This group would meet on the final day of the IMAG meeting from 4-6pm Bangkok time. The secretariat also noted the overlap of the membership of this group as some of those members are in other advisory groups which would help to keep a close relationship in the group. The secretariat indicated that for this final agenda item, the Coordination Group wouldn't take up too much time of the main IMAG meeting and would basically only take up one of the final hours of the meeting and extend its time for another hour beyond that so that there could ample discussions within the group. The IMAG noted the inclusion of the item 'GEO coordination group meeting' in the agenda and supported the idea of such a group.

Some IMAG members enquired on the need for such a group. On this issue the Secretariat clarified that there was some friction with the advisory groups in GEO-6 because of the way the Summary for Policy Makers was prepared, and such a group could prove to be a useful coordination mechanism.

On this issue IMAG members welcomed the opportunity to input any elements into that meeting which will happen on a quarterly basis and noted that the policy questions for GEO-7 and the regional and sub regional analysis in GEO-7 could be potential inputs into that agenda of the coordination group. IMAG members were encouraged to also provide any inputs during the three-day IMAG meeting in Bangkok.

Any other business

- The IMAG sought clarification on whether all UNEP member States are required to prepare a state of the environment report. The secretariat explained that some countries have legislation that requires the production of a state of the environment report on a periodic basis and UNEP has assisted many countries especially in Latin America and the Caribbean to do so through the regional offices.
- The IMAG sought clarification on the MESAG membership constitution noting the inclusion of a new MESAG member. The secretariat explained that one member of the MESAG had dropped out and a new member included to ensure geographic balance.

Having no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 17h08 (EAT).

Action items

- The Secretariat will prepare a written summary of the meeting.
- The Secretariat to share author list of the first proposal of authors who will be in Bangkok
- The Secretariat to send out the revised draft agenda for the Bangkok meeting for IMAG comments.
- IMAG members to send feedback on the revised agenda by 17th February 2023 close of business.
- IMAG members to share any inputs to the Coordination Group meeting to the IMAG co-chairs
- The secretariat to prepare all meeting documents and send them as one package, and two weeks in advance of the Bangkok meeting.

- IMAG members to reach out to the secretariat for any logistical issues they may have in preparation for their participation in the Bangkok meeting.

List of Participants

Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Region(s) of Representation
Dr. Leila BENDIFALLAH	Professor, M'hamed Bougara University, Algeria	Algeria	African Group
Dr. Jerome Lugumira Sebadduka	Natural Resources Management Specialist (Soils and Land Use), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Uganda	Uganda	African Group
Ms. Anna Mampye	Director: State of Environment Information in the Branch, ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment	South Africa	African Group
Mr. Takashi Otsuka	Director of Knowledge and Communications, Strategic Management Office, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Hayama, Japan	Japan	Asia and the Pacific Group
Dr. Marek Haliniak	General Counsellor in the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Department of Strategy and Analysis, Poland	Poland	Eastern European Group
Mr. Rafael Monge	Director - National Center of Environmental Information (CENIGA) Ministry of Environment and Energy; Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Mr. Arthur EIJS	Policy coordinator Natural Resource Management & Sustainable Land Use - Ministry of Infrastructure & water management, department of International Affairs	Netherlands	Western European Group
Dr. Keri Holland	Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of Environmental Quality in the Bureau of Oceans, International and Scientific Affairs at the U.S. Department of State	United States	Western European Group
Ms. Yi Huang	Professor, School of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Peking University, China	China	Asia and the Pacific Group
Ms. Claudia Kabel	German Environment Agency (UBA), academic staff member, International Sustainability Strategies, Policy and Knowledge Transfer	Germany	Western European Group
Ms. Christina Komorski	Director, Information & Indicators Division, Sustainability Directorate, Environment and Climate Change Canada	Canada	Western European Group
Mrs. Dušica Pešević	Associate Professor, University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Eastern European Group
Mr. Miroslav Havránek	Director of the Czech Environmental Information Agency	Czechia	Eastern European Group
Ms. Meri Harutyunyan	Chief specialist of Strategic Policy Department, Ministry of Environment, Armenia	Armenia	Eastern European Group
Ms. Gillian Stanislaus	Environmental Programme Officer, Environmental Management Authority (EMA)	Trinidad & Tobago	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Dr. Salla Rantala	Development Manager, Environmental Policy Centre, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)	Finland	Western European Group
Dr. Toral Patel-Weynand	Director of the Southern Research Station at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service	United States	Western European Group
Ms. Neyra Herrera	Chief of Environmental Statistics; ministry of environment- Panama	Panama	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Ms. Margarita Guerra	ministry of environment- Panama	Panama	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Names	Gender	Nationality	Major Group
Ms. Ruth Viola Spencer	Chair, Marine Ecosystems Protected Areas(MEPA) Trust	Antigua and Barbuda	Women
Mr. Prem Singh Tharu	Regional Programme Officer, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) under Environment Programme	Thailand	Indigenous peoples
Ms. Merylene Chitharai	Lan Manager at UKZN Howard College	South Africa	Faith-based groups
Ms. Ingrid Coetzee	Director, Nature & Health; ICLEI Africa	South Africa	Local authorities
Dr. Fabian Wagner	Dean, Capacity Development and Academic Training, IIASA, Austria	Germany	Science and Technology

Apologies

Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Region(s) of Representation
Dr. Modibo sacko	Vice President of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CONACILSS), Mali	Mali	African Group
Dr. Thuraya AL Sariri	Assistance Director General of Nature Conservation at MECA- Oman	Oman	Asia and the Pacific Group
Mrs. Rolenas Baereleo	Principal Officer, Biodiversity and Conservation; Department of Environmental protection and Conservation (DEPC), Vanuatu	Vanuatu	Asia and the Pacific Group
Dr. Lisa Eriksson	Policy evaluation and analysis; Sustainable Development Department; Swedish Environmental protection agency	Sweden	Western European Group
Mr Silvio Albuquerque e Silva	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Brazil to UNEP; Embassy of Brazil in Kenya	Brazil	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Mrs. maha maayta	Director of the Policy and International Cooperation, Ministry of Environment, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	Jordan	Asia and the Pacific Group
Mr TOGHRUL FEYZIYEV	Advisor, International cooperation division of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan	Eastern European Group
Mr. Kenset Amaury Rosales Riveiro	Coordinator, Information Unit, Environment and Climate Change; Ministry of Environment and Resources Natural Resources (MARN)	Guatemala	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Mr. Thomas Chali	Senior Policy Advisor on Environmental Conservation and Natural Resources Management in Tanzania	Tanzania	African Group
Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Major Group
Ms. Djatougbe Aziaka	President and founder of welfare Togo; co-facilitator of UNEP NGO major group	Togo	Non-governmental organization
Mr Jan-Gustav Strandenaes	Advisory board member of sustainability/environment governance project at the University of Stockholm	Norway	Non-governmental organization
Ms. Zahra Abu Taha	Recycling officer at ZATARI refugees camp, Oxfam	Jordan	Children and youth
Mr Dominic Kailash Nath Waughray	Senior Advisor to the CEO World Business Council for Sustainable Development	India	Business and industry
Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf	Sustainability Research Program Director at Gulf Research Center (GRC)	Egypt	Science and Technology