

Options paper on the future of Global Environment Outlook (GEO)

At the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4) the sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO) and its accompanying Summary for Policymakers were welcomed with appreciation by Member States. Countries also discussed extensively how the Global Environment Outlook process and publication could be further improved. To meet this goal, countries decided to request the Executive Director of UN Environment, through a resolution, develops an options paper and conduct extensive consultation on these options in order to deliver recommendations on the future of GEO at the fifth UN Environment Assembly.

In requesting this options document, countries decided that the process should be overseen and managed by a Steering Committee established under the auspices of UNEA and pursuant to well-defined Terms of References. Members of the Steering Committee were to be nominated by Member States and all members of UN specialized agencies by May 30th, 2019 and were to be approved by the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The options document should be submitted by the Steering Committee to the UNEA-5 for consideration, to allow a decision on the future form and function of the GEO.

Member States thought that the Steering Committee (SC) would have key roles and responsibilities such as;

- Overseeing the consultation process
- Assuring the options are in line with the core mission and mandate of UNEP.
- Consulting broadly, taking stock of lessons learned from evaluations of, inter alia, the completed GEO-6 process, as well as from the Evaluation of the 'Environment Under Review' Sub-programme
- Submitting the options document including an assessment of the impact of the various options and providing recommendations to UNEA-5 for consideration.



146th session of the CPR discussing the nomination process of the Future of GEO membership

Nomination process

Following the fourth UN Environment Assembly the Secretariat opened a secure nomination portal and requested that Member States and UN specialized agencies submit nominations for the Steering Committee members that would have the best available expertise representing a range of disciplines, with geographic and gender balance and a particular emphasis on ensuring full representation from both developing and developed country experts. For each nominee CVs and an appropriate nomination letter were requested to be submitted to the Secretariat or through the nomination portal. Late nominations (i.e. received after May 30th) were also possible and these could be accepted at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

To meet the expertise requirements, the resolution also contained guidance on the competencies that were expected from nominees. These included:

- Significant documented professional experience with international environmental affairs and/or international sustainable development;
- Comprehensive understanding of environmental assessment processes and their role in informing policy makers;
- Extensive expertise with the international policy agenda and assessment work;
- Preferably previous experience with high-level intergovernmental processes in relation to environmental policy and sustainable development;

After the deadline, the qualifications of all candidates were evaluated using the above criteria and a list of proposed members was submitted to the 146th session of the CPR for consideration on 20th June 2019. The Committee of Permanent Representatives decided at this session to approve the first 25 members of the Steering Committee but requested that late nominations be considered by the Steering Committee to ensure better geographic and gender balance.

These late nominations will be considered at the first virtual meeting of the Steering Committee which is currently scheduled for July 24th. At this meeting the full membership of the Steering Committee should be established and the work of on preparing the options paper can begin.

Collaboration with ILRI in the works

by Eddah Kaguthi

On the margins of the Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA4) in March 2019, there were informal discussions between UNEP Global Assessments Unit team and colleagues from the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). It was recognized that the two organizations work on a range of common issues and there was need for further discussions to explore possibilities of developing a more strategic, long-term engagement. As such, a team from UNEP's Science Division and ILRI met at the ILRI Offices in Kabete, Nairobi on 14 June 2019. The main objective of the meeting was to explore areas of collaboration on common issues. The meeting discussed ILRI's livestock work including emission factors from various feed combinations on African Livestock; UNEP's science work on the Global Environment Outlook and food systems, the Frontiers and Emissions Gap report, and the World Adaptation Science Programme.

Amongst other things, the meeting agreed to:

- Explore the development of a Memorandum of Understanding on areas of a joint work programme;
- UNEP will consider inviting ILRI to become an author on FRONTIERS topics in an area relevant to the expertise of ILRI
- UNEP will explore opportunities for ILRI to join the Scientific Committee of the World Adaptation Science Programme (WASP).
- Both UNEP and ILRI will explore feasibility to conduct a holistic livestock systems analysis
- UNEP and ILRI will discuss the inclusion of a chapter on Livestock and Climate Change in the 2020 edition of the Emissions Gap report.

Contact eddah.kaguthi@un.org for more information on this engagement with ILRI.

GEO webinar series

In order to communicate, educate and raise awareness on the GEO messages to a wider audience, a series of focused GEO webinars have been organized to improve the reach of the report's key messages. These webinars are the first in a series of virtual meetings to be facilitated by Global Environment Outlook where learnings from the sixth Global Environment Outlook will be shared with interested stakeholders. To receive notifications of future GEO webinars, please email us on unenvironment-science-GEOHead@un.org to be added to the webinar mailing list.

Click [here](#) to access the GEO webinars.

