

GEO-6 Emerges Winner of the 2020 Prose Category Excellence Winners

We are pleased to share the good news that the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) has won this year's prestigious Award for Environmental Science assigned by the Association of American Publishers.

Environmental Science

Global Environmental Outlook – GEO-6: Healthy Planet, Healthy People
Edited by UN Environment - Cambridge University Press

Please click [here](#) for the list of category winners.



PROSE Awards

The Association of American Publishers (AAP) annual PROSE Awards have been recognizing publishers who produce journals, books and digital products of extraordinary merit that make a significant contribution to a field of study each year since 1976. PROSE finalists are selected by a panel of judges from across the publishing industry.

Second Global Authors Meeting of the GEO for Cities



The GEO for Cities Advisory Committee, co-chairs and author teams met in Abu Dhabi for a writer's sprint to work towards producing the first-order draft of the four main chapters of the report. The agenda was structured to allow for a robust interaction between the chapter authors and the Advisory Committee, to ensure that main messages from the Advisory Committee were well-embedded in the report. The Advisory Committee was also meant to discuss the outreach strategy for the GEO for Cities and other communications, awareness-raising and impact strategies. Authors, meanwhile, were meant to advance the drafting of the chapters towards the first-order draft that would go for peer review in the month of March 2020.

Day 1 of the meeting reviewed the current state of the chapters and allowed the Advisory Committee to provide additional input on the chapters, raising specific issues of overlap and coherence. Authors took note of these issues and planned to work on them by restructuring the chapters. Chapters 4 and 5 meanwhile resolved the issues of how many pathways there would be in chapter 5 versus how many visions would be presented in chapter 4. In the end, they decided that 3 visions and 3 pathways would be presented. They would focus on:

- Cities that achieve deep decarbonization and circular economies;
- Cities that were resilient to climate change and other environmental issues;
- Cities that were socially and environmentally inclusive (i.e. nature-inclusive cities).

Day 2 of the meeting allowed authors to present the status of their chapters to the Advisory Committee once again but also to the UNEP cities team and to Andrew Rudd from UN Habitat. Messages from these groups focused on ensuring that the alarm is sounded for cities and that the time for incremental change was over. Cities need to now focus on transformational change in order to achieve the types of environmental improvements that are needed by 2050.





In the afternoon authors continued to work on coherence issues between chapters 2 and 3, followed by discussion of cohesion across chapters 2, 4 and 5. Authors had some time in the afternoon to advance the drafting of text for their chapters. Meanwhile, the Advisory Committee met to discuss the main elements of the launch of GEO for Cities, the outreach and engagement strategy as well as the different communications products that would help increase the impact of the publication.

The elements of this discussion that were agreed included:

- Use the audiences and key messages developed on day one for the advocacy and outreach work. Authors may not be able to write directly to these audiences and key messages and keep the flow of the narrative;
- Various communications and outreach products are likely to be produced for GEO for Cities: interactive website, social media cards (released through Twitter), short video, press release, fact sheets, etc. These can be the starting point for outreach material for the Advisory Committee (AC) organizations.
- Outreach strategy should take advantage of Advisory Committee networks and networks of networks. Dissemination should be broad and deep, complemented by audience and region-specific materials, including stock presentations that are tailored to audiences, issues or regions
- Primary audiences are policymakers (politicians, technical staff) at the city level, state/province, national level. Other possible primary audience is regional development banks. Possible outreach to the Adaptation Fund, GCF and GEF (UNEP to lead)
- Cities Alliance may help us reach those interested in our messages on informality.
- Could reach out through Global Platform for Sustainable Cities. Also, could reach out through Ross Centre for Sustainable Cities, Global Covenant of Mayors, UCLG-Africa, etc.
- A brochure for GEO for Cities is needed right now, to raise awareness. (UNEP to lead)
- Peer reviewers from a broad group of experts is needed (academics for fact checking, practitioners for reality checks, cities people for audience check). Peer review can also be used for awareness raising or anticipation.
- IIED now doing a podcast on Sustainable Cities which could be useful outreach tool.
- ICLEI can reach out through their regional managers to see what outreach opportunities there are
- List of cities events will help identify possible venues for additional awareness raising. Stock presentations to be made available on the GEO website or secure server and available to those who have upcoming events, after the launch.
- Launch date and event needs to be thought about. Perhaps a virtual, low cost launch can happen 2 weeks before CoP15 on Biodiversity with events then planned for CoP. Create awareness within the media at CoP15.

On day 3 of the meeting authors mainly focused on advancing their drafts, although chapters 2 and 5 did not advance as much as chapters 3 and 4. Gaps and coherence discussions continued between the authors of chapter 5 and other chapters, while chapter 2 focused mainly on the restructuring of their narrative. The co-chairs of the GEO for Cities requested that all authors send their chapters to them at the end of the day so that they could review and provide advice on the last day of the meeting.



Day 4 of the meeting reviewed the timeline for the overall GEO for Cities effort, stressing that the peer reviews were pretty well fixed in time and that first-order draft chapters would be needed by early March. The morning discussions also focused on providing encouragement and guidance to the authors to ensure that the drafting process advanced quickly. After the read-through the co-chairs expressed their concern that chapters 2 and 5 had not advanced or even provided new text in some instances. A plan was made to advance the drafting throughout the day and report back to plenary on progress by the end of the day. When chapters reported out at the end of the day, it was clear that not much more progress had been made on the text of chapters 2 and 5 and these chapters requested more time to deliver their first-order drafts. However, chapter 3 and especially chapter 4 had made good progress and were ready to deliver on time. The co-chairs and the Secretariat worked to find a new timeline that would allow for the delivery of quality first-order drafts and still allow to stay within the timeline established by the Advisory Committee.





In the end, the following was agreed:

- Authors would advance their drafts over the next week, following the meeting, and UNEP would organize individual chapter calls during the week of 24 February to review progress and identify whether authors needed any further assistance to ensure delivery by a 16 March deadline.
- Authors would deliver revised drafts on 3 March so that the co-chairs could review progress and provide any additional guidance necessary on these drafts.
- During the week of 2 March, UNEP would organize a chapter 4 and 5 coordination call and a chapter 2, 4 and 5 coordination call, to ensure the chapters were not departing too much from the agreed approach. Co-chairs encouraged each of the author teams to keep an eye on the progress of other chapters in the Google Drive to try to minimize divergence.
- Once again, authors would deliver revised drafts on 10 March so that the co-chairs could assess progress and provide any additional guidance necessary to the authors.
- UNEP would remain available to organize any further calls during the week of 8 March to ensure smooth delivery of the chapters by 16 March. UNEP would compile the first-order draft chapters submitted on 16 March, format these for the peer review, add in missing sections (Foreword, Co-chairs message, Introduction, Glossary) and publish the GEO for Cities first order draft to the peer review website for 17 March..
- Authors would receive back the peer review comments on 17 April and would have 3 weeks to address the review comments, such that revised chapters would be submitted again by the authors by 8 May. These would be chapters that would be worked on during the 18 to 22 March writer's sprint.
- UNEP would evaluate whether the location of the 18 May authors meeting could be in Mexico City or rather in Nairobi. Depending on this decision, the Secretariat would begin organizing the travel for that final authors meeting.

The meeting ended successfully at 16h00 on 13 February 2020.





In addition to the authors meeting, UNEP staff were involved in panel discussions, trainings and recruitment of authors during the 10th World Urban Forum, which was happening at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC).

Pierre Boileau participated in a panel launching the Urban Environment and Social Inclusion Index developed by the Envirodata initiative at the Yale school in Singapore. During the panel discussion highlights were provided of the main GEO findings and these were related to the types of actions that cities could take to address these important environmental issues.

An introductory presentation on the sixth Global Environment Outlook was also made at a training on sustainable urban planning organized by the Cities Unit of UNEP's Economy Division. The presentation provided an overview of the main GEO findings and set these in the context of the actions that cities would likely need to take to achieve environmental sustainability within a generation. The presentation clearly highlighted that systemic approaches that address the root causes of environmental problems would be needed, rather than the current end-of-pipe approach currently practiced.

Pierre Boileau also reached out to UN Habitat colleagues at the World Urban Forum to help find a female author from the global south to contribute to the Introduction chapter of the GEO for Cities. After some effort, a conversation was had with Mayor Maria Helena J. Correia Langa of Manjacaze, Mozambique. With the assistance of Wild do Rosario of UN Habitat (providing interpretation), Ms. Corella Langa agreed to contribute a global south, smaller city perspective to the Introduction chapter, to complement the global north, big city perspective to be provided by David Miller (former Mayor of Toronto, Canada). UNEP agreed to provide briefing material and organize a call between the two authors of the Introduction to help begin the drafting process.

