

Summary of the development of the Global Chemicals Outlook II

Information Note (October 2019)

GCO-II Mandate

The first Global Chemicals Outlook was published in 2013. Decision 27/12, adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2013, requested the Executive Director to continue work on the Global Chemicals Outlook (GCO), particularly in areas where data were found to be lacking or inadequate, and to enhance transparency through regionally balanced stakeholder involvement, inter alia, with a view to developing in the future a tool for assessing progress towards the achievement of the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, including the existing 2020 goal, taking into account and building upon other existing sources of information.

Resolution 2/7, adopted at the second United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) in 2016, requested the Executive Director to submit an update of the first GCO, addressing, inter alia, the work carried out particularly in relation to lacking or inadequate data to assess progress towards the 2020 goal, the development of non-chemical alternatives, and the linkages between chemicals and waste, in coordination with the Global Waste Management Outlook, and providing scientific input and options for implementation of actions to reach relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets up to and beyond 2020. Resolution 2/7 also requested the Executive Director to ensure that the updated GCO addresses the issues which have been identified as emerging policy issues by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) as well as other issues where emerging evidence indicates a risk to human health and the environment.

Initial expert consultation, April 2016

A Consultative Meeting for the Preparation of the GCO-II took place in April 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland. Seventy experts from all sectors and regions provided advice on a range of aspects relevant for preparing the GCO-II. Through a number of plenary sessions and interactive working groups, participants reviewed and provided insights on the rationale, the scope and the process of GCO II, an initial outline, and the process of conducting research on priority topics.

Guidance and oversight through Steering Committee

A Steering Committee (see Annex) was established to provide oversight, strategic directions and guidance on all aspects of the report's development, as well as technical inputs, where applicable. The Steering Committee was composed of 38 representatives, including 17 female and 21 male representatives. It had 15 representatives from governments, 15 representatives from non-governmental organizations (including 5 from civil society, 3 from the private sector, 4 from academia, 1 from the labour sector, and 2 others), and 8 representatives from intergovernmental organizations, also representing the 9 Participating Organizations of the Inter Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC). Government participation covered all regions, with 7 representatives from developing countries or economies in transition and 8 representatives from developed countries (2 from the Africa Region, 2 from the Asia-Pacific Region, 2 from the Central and Eastern Europe Region, 2 from the Latin America and the Caribbean Region, 2 from the North America Region, 5 from the Western Europe and Others Region).

The Steering Committee held three face to face meetings (15-16 December 2016, Geneva, Switzerland; 17-18 January 2018, Berlin, Germany; and 10-11 December 2018, Geneva, Switzerland), three online meetings (29 June 2017, 21 November 2017 and 15 May 2018) in addition to regular interaction via electronic means.

Throughout the development of the GCO-II, the Steering Committee reviewed relevant documentation, including the draft outline and annotated outline, foundational papers, draft chapters, the zero draft, various drafts of the full GCO-II as well as various drafts of the Summary for Policymakers and the Synthesis Report.

Backcasting methodology

Following a review of various assessment methods and given the absence of an overarching framework against which progress could be evaluated (as done in the Biodiversity cluster with the Biodiversity Outlook evaluating progress against the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity with its Aichi targets), the back-casting method was used as an overall methodological framework to prepare GCO-II. Back-casting starts with defining a desirable future and then working backwards and identifying, based on sound research, possible management interventions to attain the desired future.

An annotated outline of GCO-II was developed in close cooperation with the Steering Committee and underwent several rounds of feedback and refinement. The identified priority topics were organized across five Parts, identified based on a review of the global context, trends and key developments and relying on the back-casting methodology.

Identification of lead and contributing authors, April 2016 - early 2018

Beginning with the consultative meeting (see above) and working closely with the Steering Committee and other relevant partners, calls were made for recommendations for experts that could serve as lead and contributing authors on the respective topics. Invitations were also sent to institutions engaged in natural science, policy and economic research focusing on, or related to, chemicals and hazardous waste management, to express an interest to contribute and outline their past or ongoing work and relevant experience. The purpose of this survey was to identify potential partners to support initial work on indicative topics considered of relevance for the Global Chemicals Outlook-II.

Various institutions and organizations subsequently contributed to the GCO-II in varying capacities, including through the development of foundational papers and provision of in-kind logistical support. In total, 25 lead authors (incl. regional experts) from all regions were identified and contributed to the drafting of the GCO-II. Among these were 12 from developing countries or countries with economies in transition and 13 from developed countries (see Figure 1). The majority of authors (68 %) were from Academia, followed by intergovernmental organizations (20 %) (see Figure 2). In addition, 33 contributing authors supported the development of the GCO-II with targeted input. Overall, substantive contributions in various forms were received from more than 400 experts.

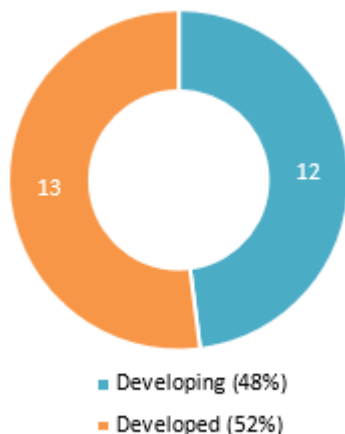


Figure 1: Lead authors (incl. regional experts) by developed vs. developing countries/countries with economies in transition

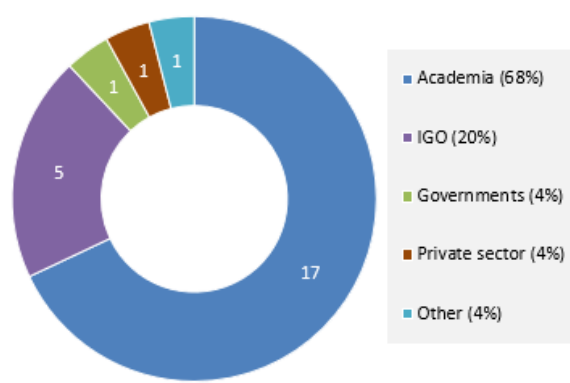


Figure 2: Lead authors (incl. regional experts) by institution type

Research and drafting of foundational papers, 2017- mid 2018

For a number of topics identified as particularly important, foundational papers were prepared by led authors. In close collaboration with the Steering Committee, terms of reference were developed for each foundational paper, covering among others research questions and an initial bibliography. State-of-the-art research and thorough literature reviews, including preparation of annotated bibliographies, were undertaken on each of the identified topics. Following the analysis, key findings and options for action were drawn from the analysis. Key insights from these foundational papers fed into the preparation of respective chapters featured in the GCO-II. In most cases, foundational papers are being separately published by respective lead authors.

Regional contextualization and input

While GCO-II was mandated to be a global assessment, various activities were undertaken to bring in regional knowledge and perspectives. Initial regional briefings on the GCO-II, including opportunities to contribute, were provided at the Regional Meetings of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, held in January and February 2018. Subsequently, regional workshops were organized in Nairobi, Kenya (Africa), 7-8 March 2018; Frankfurt, Germany (Europe, including Central and Eastern Europe), 26-27 March 2018; Panama City, Panama (Latin America and the Caribbean and North America) and Bangkok, Thailand (Asia-Pacific), 25-26 April. The workshops brought together a total of 115 experts from governments, the private sector, civil society, and academia, providing valuable insights for the regional contextualization of the GCO-II.

An expert in each region was identified to capture regional perspectives. They compiled relevant regional background information and insights, drawing among others on the inputs received at the above-mentioned meetings, background research and expert consultations. Based on the gathered information, background reports were developed for each region.

Global stakeholder workshop, June 2018

A global workshop, bringing together some 100 participants from all sectors and regions, was held in June 2018 in Bonn, Germany, to review zero drafts of available chapters as well as foundational papers. The participants also reviewed the structure, content and narrative of the GCO-II, provided input and case studies, discussed linkages across thematic areas, filled knowledge gaps and identified options for action.

Preparation of a first draft of GCO-II, first comment period and independent peer review

Based on the foundational papers, as well as the regional and global workshops, five draft Parts of GCO-II were prepared by September 2018 and circulated for review by the Steering Committee and its networks. The deadlines for providing written comments were 24 October 2018 (Parts I-III) and 31 October 2018 (Parts IV and V).

Furthermore, approximately 100 independent experts were invited to review the draft GCO-II. They were identified based on nominations received from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility, the secretariat supporting the preparation of the next Global Environment Outlook, and the International Solid Waste Association. The independent reviewers received terms of reference for the review.

In addition, 44 external experts were invited to review selected sections based on their expertise. Moreover, various organizations reviewed relevant sections of the GCO-II, including the Participating Organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals as well as secretariats of relevant multilateral treaties and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

Meeting on the Summary for Policy-makers, Dec 2018

The meeting to discuss and advise on the Summary for Policy-Makers of the Global Chemicals Outlook II (GCO-II) took place on 10-11 December 2018, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting brought together a sub-group of members of the Steering Committee of the GCO-II, based on expressions of interest received from its members. Among others, the participants agreed on the development of a longer synthesis report to complement the summary for policymakers and the full report. The participants also provided substantive guidance on the development of the summary for policymakers as well as input and comments on the synthesis report. Moreover, the participants discussed and voiced general support for a draft of the options for action grouped around a number of thematic areas.

GCO-II documents and final clearance, Dec 2018-March 2019

During the final period three GCO-II documents were completed. They included the full Global Chemicals Outlook (appr. 700 pp), a Summary for Policymakers (appr. 15 pp.) and a Synthesis Report (appr. 100 p). The Summary for Policymakers is available in all six UN languages. Translation of the Synthesis Report in all UN languages is currently being finalized. The Synthesis Report summarizes key findings and insights of the full report and follows the same five-part structure. All three documents were submitted to the Steering Committee for final review and clearance.

GCO-II launch events

The Summary for Policymakers was tabled as a working document of UNEA-4 in March 2019. The Synthesis Report was launched at a press event at UNEA-4, accompanied by a press release and worldwide media coverage in more than 50 newspapers or journals. The full GCO-II was launched at a technical briefing in the margins of the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, Montevideo, Uruguay, 2-4 April 2019, with around 100 participants. The full GCO-II in final layout was presented at a side event at the Conferences of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions in April/May 2019.

Outreach to date

To date, various outreach materials have been prepared and disseminated, such as videos (available on youtube as well as the website of UN Environment), an interactive brochure, a poster, a banner etc. Content from the GCO-II has been presented at various meetings, tailored to the respective target audiences. Further outreach is planned for the second half of 2019.

Presentations on the GCO-II and its findings were delivered at various meetings and events. These include a presentation at the European Association of Automotive Suppliers Materials Regulations Event 2019 (21-22 May, Germany), a lunch talk at the European Chemicals Agency (17 June 2019, Finland), a keynote at the ChemicalWatch Chemicals Management for Electronics and Electricals USA 2019 Conference (16-17 September 2019, United States), a workshop organized by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (24-25 July 2019, Netherlands), a seminar at Yale University (12 September 2020, United States) and a keynote presentation at the 1st International Conference on Green and Sustainable Chemistry (17-19 October 2019, China). These presentations reached more than 500 experts.

Annex: Members of the GCO-II Steering Committee

Title	Country/ Institution
Governments	
Florencia Grimalt Embassy Secretary General Directorate of Environmental Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship	Argentina
Leticia Carvalho Director of Department Department of Environmental Quality in Industry Ministry of the Environment	Brazil
Suzanne Leppinen Director Safe Environments Directorate Health Canada	Canada
Kouame Georges Kouadio Directeur Général Direction Générale de l'Environnement Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Salubrité Urbaine et du Développement Durable	Côte d'Ivoire
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Mungath Kutty Additional Secretary Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	India
Heidar Ali Balouji Deputy Secretary National Authority for Chemicals Conventions Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Iran
Sverre-Thomas Jahre Senior Adviser Department for Climate Change and Pollution Control Norwegian Ministry of the Environment	Norway
Szymon Domagalski Senior Specialist Department for Dangerous Substances and Mixtures Bureau for Chemical Substances	Poland
Vladimir Lenev Deputy Permanent Representative Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to International Organizations in Nairobi	Russia

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Katherine Weber Foreign Affairs Officer Office of Environmental Quality and Transboundary Issues Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs	United States of America
Mr. David Kapindula Principal Inspector Pesticides and Toxic Substances Section Zambia Environmental Management Agency	Zambia
Juergen Helbig International Chemicals Policy Coordinator European Commission (replaced Bjorn Hansen)	European Commission
Non-governmental organizations (incl. civil society, industry/private sector, labour, and academia)	
Christoph Neumann Director International Regulatory Affairs Crop Life International AISBL	Croplife International
Tatiana Santos Senior Policy Officer, Chemicals and Nanotechnology, European Environmental Bureau	European Environmental Bureau
Melissa Wang (alternate: Ms. Nadia Haiama) Research Scientist Greenpeace International	Greenpeace International
Susan Wilburn Sustainability Director Global Green and Healthy Hospitals Health Care without Harm	Health Care without Harm
Veronique Garny Director Product Stewardship Programme European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) Affiliation: ICCA	European Chemical Industry Council
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Brian Kohler Director, Health Safety and Sustainability Industrial Global Union	International Trade Union Confederation

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IGO Participants and IOMC Representatives (* nominated by IOMC to represent IOMC organizations not participating directly)	
Bob Diderich* Head of Division, ENV / EHS Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	Organisation for Economic Co- operation and Development
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Other IGO Participants	
Baskut Tuncak UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Hazardous Substances and Wastes Sustainable Human Development Section Special Procedures Branch	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)	
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