

Chinese Language Version of GEO-6 Launched!

With the support of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China, UNEP China Office and UNEP Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-EMP), the Chinese language edition of the UNEP flagship environmental assessment, the sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) was launched in Beijing on 20 December 2020. Inger Andersen, the Executive Director of UNEP, and vice-minister of ecology and environment, Zhao Yingmin both sent [video messages](#) for this high-level event. This launch event was broadcasted through China-Net, Xinhua News, China.com and other national media nationwide.



Representatives from Central Government, Universities, Private Sectors, UNEP-IEMP and UNEP

'If 2020 has taught us anything, it is that we cannot have healthy people without a healthy planet. GEO-6 and other reports over the last few years have highlighted the important link between extensive biodiversity loss and the link to zoonoses, or diseases that are transferred from animals to humans. It reminds us that we are all interconnected and that we can solve complex environmental challenges only by making systemic linkages through transforming systems themselves, food systems, energy systems and waste management.' said Inger Andersen.

'Committed to multilateralism, China has been playing an active part in global governance on environment and climate change. On multiple occasions recently, President Xi Jinping has pledged new measures to enhance China's future climate actions, including hitting peak carbon emissions before 2030 and realizing carbon neutrality before 2060. This has manifested China's resolute determination to proactively cope with climate change and stick to a green and low-carbon development path. GEO-6 was launched as China is drafting its 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) and will provide important references for its efforts to tackle climate change and protect the environment in the coming five years.' said Zhao Yinming.

Specially invited guests from well-known scholars in the field of ecological environment, report authors, representatives of universities and scientific research institutions, etc. attended the event.

This launch event was broadcasted through China-Net, Xinhua News, China.com and other national media to people nationwide especially the young in China.



Wang Jinnan, Academician of Chinese Academy of Engineering and President of Chinese Academy of Environmental Planning (CAEP) is giving speech on the panel discussion.

The GEO-6 for Youth Launch at the Youth Environment Assembly

The Global Youth Environment Assembly is an official youth forum toward the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN Environment Assembly (UNEA). The first YEA of 2021 will take place on 12, 13 and 18, 19, 20 February in lead the up to UNEA 5.1.

This Assembly will comprise sessions on variety of environmental topics, interactive segments, regional and thematic breakouts, dedicated plenary sessions and a high-level segment featuring dialogues between environment ministers and youth.

The GEO-6 for Youth is working closely with the UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) to organize an engaging event that will include a presentation of the report, interactive activities, video messages and a panel of young scientists, environmental activists and entrepreneurs.

The GEO-6 for Youth will be launched at this youth led event on 19 February 2021 at 13h30-15h00 UCT.

Join the largest youth-led environmental event and register for the Youth Environment Assembly, [here!](#)



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Article: Transformational change during the time of COVID

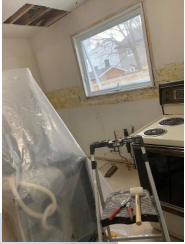
By Pierre Boileau

The last year was a time of turbulent change for many people. Sickness, lost jobs, poverty, starvation have all been part of a very challenging time in all parts of the world. Even those of us who were able to work from home during the long periods of lockdown and uncertainty struggled with issues of childcare and schooling as well as boredom, weight gain and depression. COVID-19 has touched all aspects of our lives and has clearly shown us how closely we are all connected.

My own experience has not been nearly as traumatic as many others, so I will not say that I have suffered in any way. I was able to continue working and earning an income, my children are old enough that they are now on their own and, so far, I have not had any contact with the virus, so I count myself very lucky. The one worry that I had during the pandemic was with my father, brother-in-law and mother-in-law, who are among the most vulnerable to COVID because of their illnesses or their age. They all live in Canada, so my wife and I quickly made arrangements to travel there once flights were allowed in and out of Nairobi, this past August.

Upon arrival in Canada we noticed that both my father and my mother-in-law had taken downturns during the extensive lock-down. My father's memory has continued to fade, and he is now suffering from episodes of delirium, while my mother-in-law has lost weight and has suffered from boredom and depression during this time. My brother-in-law suffers from Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and was fortunate to not be in a long-term care facility during the extensive COVID-19 outbreaks that were experienced in Canada during the first wave of the virus. He still has suffered though, from isolation and other medical issues related to his MS.

Once we had ensured everyone was safe and healthy though, my wife and I decided to embark on a renovation of our house, in part to raise our spirits but also to make good use of the time we were going to spend at home. In most areas of Canada, construction work has been considered an essential service, so contractors were still busy and available. Many people have had the same idea during the lockdowns, which made finding the right tradespeople quite difficult. However, after some searching and consultation with friends and family, we were able to draw up a plan and hire a team of very responsible professionals to take care of our renovation.



Our renovation focused on our kitchen, which had not been updated in 27 years. Our goal was to make it much more functional and to use the limited space that we had as wisely as we could. This meant that we had to upgrade our furnace and water heater to remove a smokestack that ran through one wall of the kitchen. We also asked the contractor to reinstall some closets in the upstairs bedrooms that had been previously removed and also to upgrade the main floor powder room. Finally, we had to renovate the shingles on the roof of the house because they were in very poor shape.

The renovations progressed well in the first 2 months, but we struggled with not having a functioning kitchen for about 1 month. Much of our food was ordered in and occasionally we could use the stove to cook a meal. We were fortunate that the workmen took great care not to bring the virus into the house, partly by practicing social distancing when in the house, but also by ensuring they were responsible at their own homes. My mother-in-law is 88 and she spent much each day in her own bedroom while the work was going on, mainly emerging in the evenings to have supper with us.

In the last month of the renovations, however, a new lockdown was implemented by the provincial government. This made obtaining the materials for the renovation much more difficult, with ordering online and curbside pickup being the only way to obtain these materials. We also helped by ordering and purchasing some small items that would help with the final small finishing details of the renovation. We also spent many weekends cleaning and painting walls in most of the rooms of the house. It was exhausting and at times frustrating, but it made the time pass more quickly and kept us from severe boredom.

At the same time, we were busy setting my brother-in-law up with his new mobile phone, so that he could control many of the electronic devices in his house with his voice. We discovered amazingly that new technology has made accessibility for disabled persons easier and cheaper than it has been in the past. We also helped with some renovations at my father's house and kept him company during these challenging times. What we have done hasn't been transformational for them, but it has made their lives easier in some ways.

In the end the renovation was an impressive success and allowed us to ensure my mother-in-law has a comfortable space to live in. This helps give us some peace of mind when we are far away in Nairobi, Kenya. It is difficult sometimes to be away from your loved ones but making their lives a bit more enjoyable can help ease that burden a little bit.

