

Draft terms of reference for officers to preside over the GEO-7 open-ended meetings

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) through resolution 5/3 entitled “Future of the Global Environment Outlook”, requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to “Convene an intergovernmental, multi-stakeholder and expert meeting to establish a set of procedures that reflects the objectives and core function of the Global Environment Outlook process” (paragraph 10(a))

UNEA also requested the Executive Director to “Strengthen the science-policy interface by developing, for each assessment, a scoping document and a summary for policymakers prepared by experts, to be considered for review and endorsement by representatives of Member States at ad hoc open-ended meetings” (paragraph 10(f))

These terms of reference for officers to preside over the open-ended meetings under the GEO-7 process, are prepared pursuant to UNEA resolution 5/3 and are in line with the rules of procedure and established practice of UNEA.

Pursuant to section IV and in particular rule 18 of the UNEA rules on elections of a bureau, it is proposed that two co-chairs, two vice-chairs and a rapporteur are elected to preside over and support the following three open-ended meetings foreseen to take place, to provide guidance from Member States to the GEO-7 process:

1. Procedural meeting (virtual, Sept. 19 – 22 2022)
2. Scoping meeting (in-person/hybrid, Nairobi, Oct. 17 – 20 2022)
3. Review and approval of the Summary for Policymakers (currently planned for Jan. 2025)

In accordance with rule 18 of the UNEA rules and established practice, each of the five regional groups of States will nominate one officer, to constitute a five-member bureau.

1. Co-chairs

The primary role of the co-chairs is to lead preparations and conduct of the GEO-7 Open-ended meetings. With the assistance of the Secretariat, the co-chairs will:

- Co-chair the virtual and in person open-ended meetings of GEO-7.
- Ensure as far as possible that the open-ended meetings are based on openness, transparency, and inclusiveness.
- Ensure as far as possible that the open-ended meetings fulfil the mandate as outline in UNEA resolution 5/3 in accordance with the needs of Member States' experts and the core mission and mandate of UNEP.
- Provide guidance to the Secretariat and experts in the preparation of meeting documents and reports.
- Facilitate a broad consultation process with Member States, experts, stakeholders, and the Secretariat to reach agreement on a GEO-7 procedures document, approval

of a GEO-7 scoping document and a GEO-7 Summary for Policy Makers document and to submit this last document to UNEA-7 for endorsement.

2. Vice-chair

The role of the vice-chairs is primarily to:

- support and represent the co-chair(s) in the preparation of and presiding over the GEO-7 Open-ended meetings.
- In collaboration with the other members of the bureau and with the assistance of the Secretariat, the vice co-chairs will support the co-chairs in any of the tasks outlined in (1) above.
- If either Chair cannot preside at a meeting or any part thereof, they shall appoint a Vice-Chair to take their place. A Vice-Chair acting as Chair shall have the same powers and duties as the Chair." (Rules 21 and 23)

3. Rapporteur

The role of the rapporteur is to ensure that the reports from the GEO-7 Open-ended meetings are accurate and reflect the inputs from Member States' and stakeholder experts in a balanced manner. In collaboration with the other members of the bureau and with the assistance of the Secretariat, the rapporteur will:

- Attend and monitor developments and procedures taking place at the open-ended meetings.
- Review and clear draft reports prepared by the Secretariat and ensure that they correctly reflect the main outcomes of the meetings.
- Approve the meeting reports, including key decisions and outcomes from each open-ended meeting.

The rapporteur may also be requested to perform other roles upon request from a co-chair.