

***SWOT Analysis and Evaluation
of the GEO-3 Process from
the Perspective of GEO
Collaborating Centres***

2004 United Nations Environment Programme

ISBN: 92-807-2387-1

DEWA Job number DEW/0541/NA

For bibliographic and reference purposes this publication should be referred to as:

UNEP (2004) Global Environment Outlook (GEO): SWOT Analysis and Evaluation of the GEO-3 Process from the Perspective of GEO Collaborating Centres

Disclaimers

The contents and views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the contributory organizations or the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The opinions, figures and estimates set forth in this publication should not necessarily be considered as reflecting the view or carrying the endorsement of UNEP.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNEP concerning the legal status of any country, territory or city or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers and boundaries.

Mention of a commercial company or product in this publication does not imply the endorsement of UNEP.

Reproduction

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part and in any form for educational or non-profit purposes without special permission from the copyright holder, provided acknowledgement of the source is made. UNEP would appreciate receiving a copy of any publication that uses this publication as a source.

No use of this publication may be made for resale or any other commercial purpose whatsoever without prior permission in writing from UNEP. Applications for such permission, with a statement of purpose and extent of the reproduction, should be addressed to the Director, DCPI, UNEP, P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi 00100, Kenya.

The use of information from this publication concerning proprietary products for publicity or advertising is not permitted.

Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA)

United Nations Environment Programme

P.O. Box 30552

Nairobi 00100, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 623562

Fax: +254 20 623944

Email: geo@unep.org

UNEP web site: <http://www.unep.org/geo>



Executive Summary

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)'s Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process incorporates evaluation and improvement on a regular basis to live up to expectations as a learning and adaptive process. This evaluation, conducted by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) of Winnipeg, Canada looks at the GEO process from the perspective of the GEO Collaborating Centres (CCs).

The evaluation used a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis to elicit comments on:

- Performance of GEO as an assessment and reporting process;
- Performance of the GEO CCs;
- UNEP's performance as the overall leader of GEO;
- Assessment and reporting methods used in the preparation of GEO-3;
- The GEO CC network.

In addition, a focused questionnaire section dealt with other important aspects of GEO, including:

- Coordination and management;
- The GEO-3 process;
- Capacity issues;
- GEO production support.

The results are to be used by UNEP in the evaluation of individual CCs, so the evaluation was not anonymous. Out of 36 GEO CCs that received the questionnaire 28 (78per cent) responded.

The results confirmed that the CCs value their participation and mostly agree that GEO fills a niche and fulfils its mandate as a multi-scale assessment and reporting system with a strong capacity-building component. There were, however, many suggestions for improvement that collectively point to the need to upgrade the GEO system - in the words of one respondent *"taking it to the next level"*.

The participatory process involves interaction among GEO CCs, under UNEP's guidance, in preparing the assessment, and consultations with policymakers and key audiences. Participation is considered to be a key aspect of GEO and is essential for its

success. CCs view GEO's multi-scale integrated environmental assessment (IEA) approach as a possible model for others and point to the increasing interest in adopting it by regional and national entities.

The CC network has a broad thematic and regional coverage and many competent members, but interaction between network members is very uneven and goes from short periods of very intensive activity to long periods of inactivity and silence. This works against the goal of having a real network and building sustainable institutional capacity for IEA.

CCs also point to problems associated with capacity limitations and analytical and data gaps as some of the key problems that require attention. Inadequate funding is a serious issue that affects many CCs and can only be dealt with on the basis of a long-term strategy and through dialogue between UNEP, CCs and donors.

While CCs consider GEO's IEA framework a clear strength, many elements require further development, including data analysis, integrated policy assessment and scenario analysis.

Important opportunities are arising from the increasing popularity and awareness of GEO, and in many cases better access to environmental data. Both GEO and other global, thematic, and regional assessments would benefit from better coordination.

There are further opportunities for building capacity in the CC network that may lead to better GEO assessments and help the further spread of know-how on IEA in the regions.

Among the threats to GEO most commonly mentioned is inadequate funding, but CCs also point to potential weakening interest in the environment as other issues attract the interest of the public and decision-makers.

Lack of scientific credibility and inadequate quality control represent another possible threat, particularly as GEO tries to integrate scientific and policy perspectives and as other, thematically or regionally more focused science assessments come on line and divide the attention of the public and decision-makers. Ways of strengthening the science that should be considered include better use of peer review and more rigour in selecting individual contributors.

As most CCs already take part in other IEAs, most of them have successfully integrated GEO into their activities, with the support of senior management. Many CCs make significant in-kind contribution in terms of staff time. About half report improved capacity as a result of their involvement in GEO.

CCs rate communication and feedback with UNEP through the GEO process generally adequate, but also point to a need for more clarity in guidelines and regular interaction.

CCs consider the work of most GEO Working Groups dealing with data, capacity building and scenarios as being important, even if their involvement in them was uneven. Data availability and quality as well as time to prepare GEO inputs continue to be problems, and there is also a need to identify a small number of core indicators. CCs considered the integration of SoE analysis, policy analysis and scenarios in GEO as largely successful.

With regard to consultations, CCs point to the need for more substantive and earlier involvement of stakeholders in the process and also highlight relatively weak connections to the private sector and NGOs.

There was almost unanimous agreement that capacity building is essential to the success of GEO, but the usefulness or scope of previous capacity building activities has been limited. There is a need for better understanding and response to the capacity needs of CCs and to assist national and regional organizations to adopt aspects of GEO's methodology.

UNEP has developed a number of tools to support different aspects of the GEO process. Opinion on the usefulness of these, which include the GEO Newsletter, Data Portal, the GEO Production Guidelines and the GEO Support System (GEOSS) is divided, with GEOSS having lower levels of acceptance.

Table of Contents

List of Figures.....	vii
Glossary	ix
1. Background.....	1
2. Methodology	2
3. General profile of GEO Collaborating Centres.....	3
4. Results of the SWOT analysis relating to GEO	4
4.1. Strengths	5
4.2. Weaknesses	10
4.3. Opportunities	15
4.4. Threats.....	20
5. Evaluation of GEO CCs and the GEO-3 process	25
5.1. Coordination and management	25
5.2. The GEO-3 process.....	33
5.3. Capacity development issues	44
5.4. Production support in GEO-3.....	47
5.5. General comments	48
6. Conclusions	51
7. References.....	53

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The survey instrument.....	54
Appendix 2: GEO CCs approached in the evaluation	65

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Number of professional staff of GEO CCs.....	4
Figure 2:	Strengths of GEO as an assessment and reporting process.	6
Figure 3:	Strength of GEO CCs.	6
Figure 4:	Strengths of UNEP’s leadership of GEO.	7
Figure 5:	Strengths of GEO’s assessment and reporting methods.....	8
Figure 6:	Strengths of CC network.	9
Figure 7:	Weaknesses of GEO as an assessment and reporting process.	10
Figure 8:	Weaknesses of GEO CCs.	11
Figure 9:	Weaknesses of UNEP’s leadership of GEO.	12
Figure 10:	Weaknesses of GEO assessment and reporting methods.	13
Figure 11:	Weaknesses of CC network.	14
Figure 12:	Opportunities for GEO as an assessment and reporting process.	15
Figure 13:	Opportunities for GEO CCs.	16
Figure 14:	Opportunities for UNEP’s leadership of GEO.	17
Figure 15:	Opportunities for GEO assessment and reporting methods.	18
Figure 16:	Opportunities for CC network.	19
Figure 17:	Threats to GEO as an assessment and reporting process as mentioned by per cent of CCs.....	20
Figure 18:	Threats to GEO CCs.....	21
Figure 19:	Threats to UNEP’s leadership of GEO.	22
Figure 20:	Threats to GEO assessment and reporting methods.	23
Figure 21:	Threats to CC network.....	24
Figure 22:	Integration of GEO-3 activities into the programme of work of CCs.....	25
Figure 23:	Level of senior management’s support for GEO activities.....	26
Figure 24:	In-kind contribution reported by CCs.	27
Figure 25:	CC participation in non-GEO assessments.	28
Figure 26:	Extent to which goals, objectives and responsibilities of CCs contributing to GEO were defined.	29
Figure 27:	Adequacy of feedback from UNEP during GEO-3.....	30
Figure 28:	Adequacy of opportunity for CC to provide feedback to UNEP during GEO-3.	31
Figure 29:	Adequacy of communication with GEO team throughout the GEO-3 process.	32
Figure 30:	Importance of selected GEO Working Groups.	33

Figure 31:	Degree to which GEO guidelines were followed.	34
Figure 32:	Degree of integration of SoE information, policy analysis and scenarios in GEO-3.	36
Figure 33:	Estimate of number of internal and external experts consulted by CC during the preparation of GEO-3.	37
Figure 34:	Involvement of other organizations in the GEO-3 process.	38
Figure 35:	Contribution of regional consultations to the GEO-3 process.....	39
Figure 36:	Suggestions for making the consultation process more effective.....	40
Figure 37:	Problems experienced when providing GEO-3 inputs.	41
Figure 38:	Potential benefit from having a core set of GEO indicators,	42
Figure 39:	Degree of CC involvement in GEO-related awareness raising activities.....	43
Figure 40:	Degree of success achieved by CC in balancing policy relevance and scientific credibility in GEO.	44
Figure 41:	Importance of continuous capacity building to the success of GEO.....	45
Figure 42:	Adequacy of available funding to ensure effective CC contribution to GEO.....	46
Figure 43:	Usefulness of training and capacity building initiatives for CC.	47
Figure 44:	Usefulness of selected GEO services.	48
Table 1:	Contribution of the CC's to Specific aspects of the GEO - 3 Report Preparation	35
Table 2:	General Comments	49

Glossary

ACSAD	-	Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones & Drylands
ADIE	-	Association pour le Developpement de l'Information Environnementale
AGU	-	Arabian Gulf University
AIT	-	Asian Institute of Technology
BCAS	-	Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies
CAPP	-	Centro de Analisis de Politicas Publicas (Center for Public Policy Analysis)
CC	-	Collaborating Centre
CEC	-	Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America
CEDARE	-	Centre for Environment & Development for Arab Region and Europe
CEU	-	Central European University
DO	-	Development Observatory
DEWA	-	Division of Early Warning and Assessment
EEA	-	The European Environment Agency
GEO	-	Global Environment Outlook
GEOSS	-	GEO Support System
HQ	-	Headquarters
IBAMA	-	Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis (Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources)
ICIS	-	International Centre for Integrative Studies
ICT	-	information and communication technologies
IEA	-	integrated environmental assessment
IFAS	-	International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea
IGCI	-	The International Global Change Institute
IISD	-	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IMERCSA	-	Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa
INEP	-	Instituto de Asuntos Publicos (Institute of Public Affairs)
IOC	-	Indian Ocean Commission

IRF	-	Island Resources Foundation
ISDC	-	Interstate Sustainable Development Commission
GMA	-	Global Marine Assessment
IPCC	-	Inter governmental Panel on Climate Change
LDC	-	least developed country
LAC	-	Latin America and the Caribbean
MA	-	Millenium Ecosystem Assessment
MOU	-	Memorandum of Understanding
MEA	-	multilateral environmental agreement
MSU	-	Moscow State University
NEMA	-	National Environmental Management Authority
NESDA	-	Network for Environment & Sustainable Development in Africa
NIES	-	National Institute for Environmental Studies
PSIR	-	pressure-state-impact-response
REC	-	The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe
RING	-	The Regional and International Networking Group
RIVM	-	National Institute for Public Health and the Environment
SARDC	-	Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre
SCOPE	-	Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment
SD	-	sustainable development
SEI-B	-	Stockholm Environment Institute – Boston Center
SEPA	-	State Environment Protection Administration
SIC	-	Scientific Information Center
SPREP	-	South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme
SWOT	-	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SWOT	-	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and threats (methodology)
SOE	-	State of the Environment
TEI	-	Thailand Environment Institute
TERI	-	Tata Energy Research Institute

- UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme
- UWICED - University of West Indies, Centre for Environment and Development
- WRI - World Resources Institute
- WSSD - World Summit on Sustainable Development



1. Background

UNEP's Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is an integrated environmental assessment and reporting initiative entering its fourth cycle. Given its complexity and the need for continuous improvement and learning, evaluation has been an important part of the GEO process. While GEO has been reviewed and evaluated before from the perspective of its relevance for key audiences as well as its design (Attere 2000; Universalia 2001; Pintér 2002), there has been no comprehensive assessment based on the views of participating GEO Collaborating Centres (CCs). In late 2001 the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) was commissioned to carry out an evaluation of the GEO-3 process, UNEP's role and the GEO approach from the perspective of the CCs. The evaluation was part of preparations for upgrading the GEO system for GEO-4. IISD itself has been a GEO CC since 1996, contributing to the North American and global synthesis components of the report and playing an active role in other activities associated with GEO, such as global data issues and capacity building.

The evaluation was to review lessons learnt and make recommendations regarding the reporting cycle, the production process, communications, products and other aspects of GEO from the CCs' perspective. One of our key considerations when preparing the evaluation was the understanding that GEO was both a process and a product. As a process, it involves carrying out the assessment from start to end with the participation of the CC network and other international, regional and national organizations. As a product, GEO is associated with a suite of outputs that includes the global GEO report, but also an increasing number of electronic and print publications and databases. Other key attributes that influenced our thinking was a view of GEO as a truly multi-scale and integrated environmental assessment, covering all key environmental issues in a globally synchronized but regionally differentiated fashion.

The authors appreciate for the feedback provided by UNEP-DEWA staff, particularly Anna Stabrawa, Marion Cheatle and Dave MacDevette with regard to the design of the questionnaire, and also acknowledge the help of Debbie Lehmann and Jennifer Bryant at IISD in processing the responses. Pumulo Muyatwa and Marlene Roy provided additional help with questionnaire design and data analysis. László Pintér took the lead in compiling this report and Jacquie Chenje edited the report.



2. Methodology

The evaluation involved a survey developed in close cooperation with UNEP. The survey instrument included three main sections: (1) the general profile of the GEO CCs; (2) a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis relating to GEO; and (3) questions focused on the evaluation of CCs and the GEO-3 process. The survey instrument is shown in Appendix 1.

The survey was distributed to 36 CCs in the course of early to mid-2002, out of which 28 (78 per cent) responded. Respondents and non-respondents are shown in Appendix 2. Data gathering was closed at the end of July, 2002. The survey was *not* anonymous i.e., respondents were required to provide their name. This was necessary because UNEP intended to use the results in its evaluation of CC performance. At the same time, it was agreed that the identity of respondents would not be disclosed except to those directly participating in the evaluation, that is IISD, UNEP and the specific CC itself. Because of these confidentiality requirements, detailed responses are submitted only to UNEP-DEWA under separate cover. For the same reason, the quotations used in this report are given without attribution.

In line with standard SWOT methodology (Horn and others 1994), the second part of the questionnaire covered strengths and weaknesses *internal* to the respondent's organization, and opportunities and threats arising from factors *external* to the organization. SWOT questions were asked in the context of five different, but related aspects of GEO:

- 1 performance of GEO as an assessment and reporting process;
- 2 performance of the GEO CC;
- 3 UNEP's performance as the overall leader of GEO;
- 4 assessment and reporting methods used in the preparation of GEO-3;
- 5 the CC network.

The section dealing with more specific aspects of GEO required participants to express their opinion on a ten-degree Likert scale and provide more detailed explanations for their responses if necessary (McIver and Carmines 1981). For analytical purposes the responses were converted into the more common seven-degree scale, with the terminology adjusted to the specific question:

- | | |
|-----|----------------------------|
| 0 | = not at all (integrated) |
| 1-2 | = very poorly (integrated) |
| 3-4 | = poorly (integrated) |
| 5 | = somewhat (integrated) |

- 6-7 = well (integrated)
- 8-9 = very well (integrated)
- 10 = fully (integrated)

Beyond the SWOT analysis a further questionnaire section was added to ensure that feedback was received on important aspects of GEO that may not have been covered by responses to more open SWOT questions. This section covered the following aspects of GEO:

- (1) Coordination and management;
- (2) GEO-3 process;
- (3) Capacity issues;
- (4) GEO production support.

Responses in the SWOT analysis and in the explanatory sections of the subsequent questionnaire were coded following standard qualitative research protocols in order to help identify common patterns (Miles and Huberman 1994). The data were cleaned and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 10 (SPSS Inc. 1999). For cases where several responses were recorded to a given question, the multiple response procedure within SPSS was employed to derive the frequency and cross-tabulation tables. However, due to the small number of respondents in each category, it was not possible to assign significance to the results of the Chi-square test for cross-tabulation results in both the multiple responses and single response cases. We do not, therefore, interpret and discuss the cross-tabulation results. The results are presented in graphical and tabular form.

Because of its status as a GEO CC for several years, having IISD as the administrator of the survey had several advantages as well as challenges. Among the advantages are familiarity with the GEO process and personal contacts at UNEP and at all GEO CCs. This is partially the explanation for the relatively high response rate. On the challenges side, because of its proximity to the process IISD is clearly less than a fully independent evaluator in this context. While all measures were taken to ensure neutrality in the evaluation, we invite readers to look at the results, particularly its qualitative aspects, while keeping these constraints in mind.

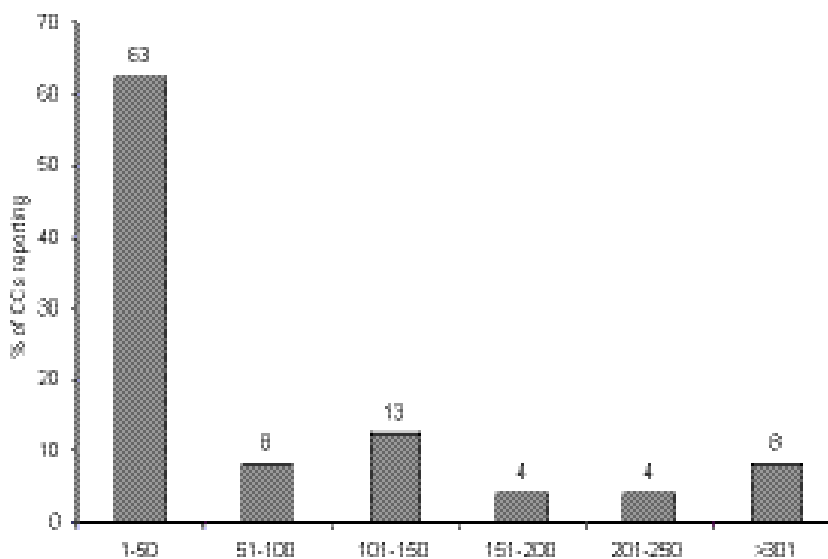


3. General profile of GEO Collaborating Centres

Names and coordinates of respondents as well as non-respondents to the survey are included in Appendix 2. As explained above, for reasons of confidentiality full individual responses are made available only to UNEP.

The majority of GEO CCs are small to medium-size organizations, 62.5 per cent reporting number of professional staff in the 1-50 range (**Figure 1**). 59.3 per cent contributed to all three GEO reports published to date, 29.6 per cent took part in GEO-2000 and GEO-3 and 11.1 per cent only in GEO-3.

Figure 1: Number of professional staff of GEO CCs.





4. Results of the SWOT analysis relating to GEO

By definition, the SWOT questions asked in the survey were broad and open. Given their breadth and the differences in the characters of the CCs and their role in the GEO process, the responses often had a very wide spread. This was expected, but despite the spread, in almost all cases we found convergence of opinions around a small number of issues. The analysis below focuses on the top three to five issues, whose interlinkages across the SWOT categories and the different aspects of the GEO system were examined through the series of questions. Issues with lower scores are highlighted primarily on the basis of their resonance with other key points identified. This does not mean that responses mentioned with less frequency are not valid, but they may reflect points of view that are particularly relevant in the context of a given organization.

4.1. Strengths

Strengths related to GEO as an assessment and reporting process are shown on **Figure 2**. Over half of the respondents referred to GEO's integrated approach as an overall strength. Integrated approach primarily means coverage of both the environment in all its main domains and its connection to socio-economic issues and policy. GEO's participatory approach and networking were both considered important. The two are in fact related: one emphasizes interaction with external audiences and the other interaction within the GEO network. This shows that CCs considered GEO's interactive element to be very important. Increasing visibility includes both the visibility of GEO and the visibility that CCs can gain through being associated with the initiative. Several people mentioned continuity of process as an important element, although this stands in some contrast with complaints mentioned later in this report that the GEO process was too fragmented.

The low score received by capacity and learning may reflect that although CCs consider the capacity-building aspects of GEO very important, they do not necessarily agree on their adequacy (see also **Figures 41 and 43**).

Figure 2: Strengths of GEO as an assessment and reporting process.

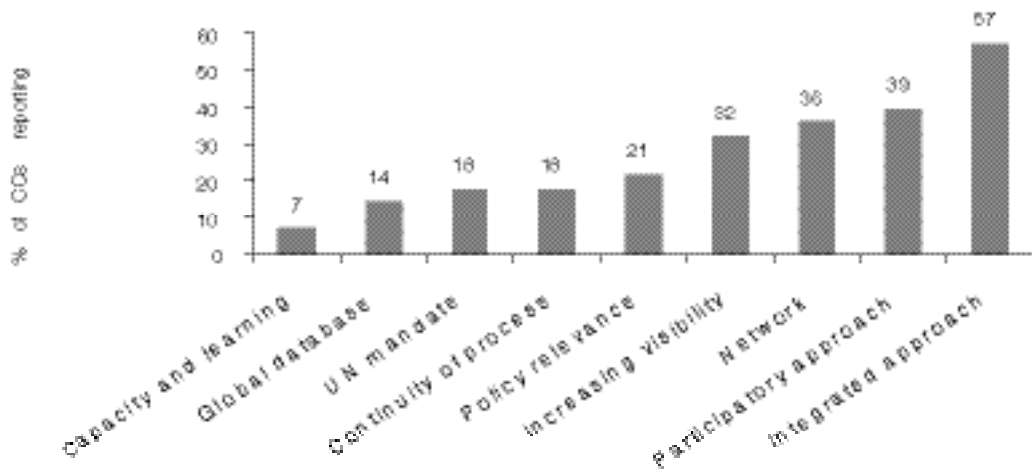
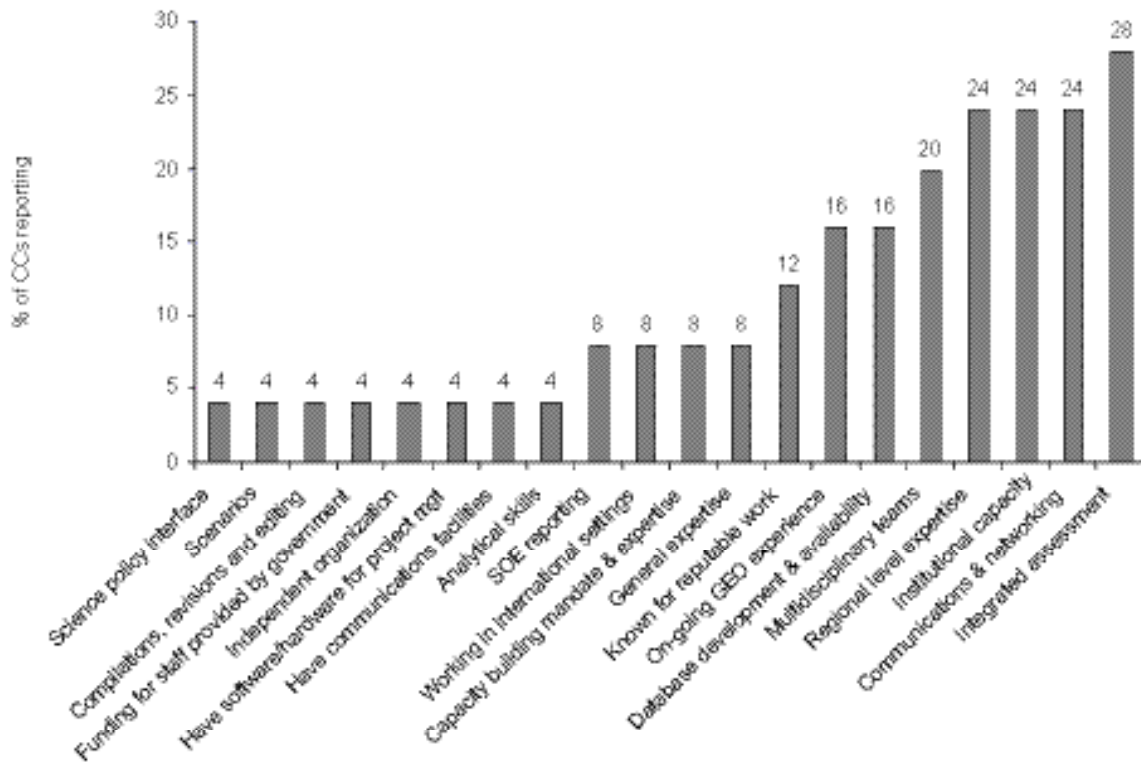


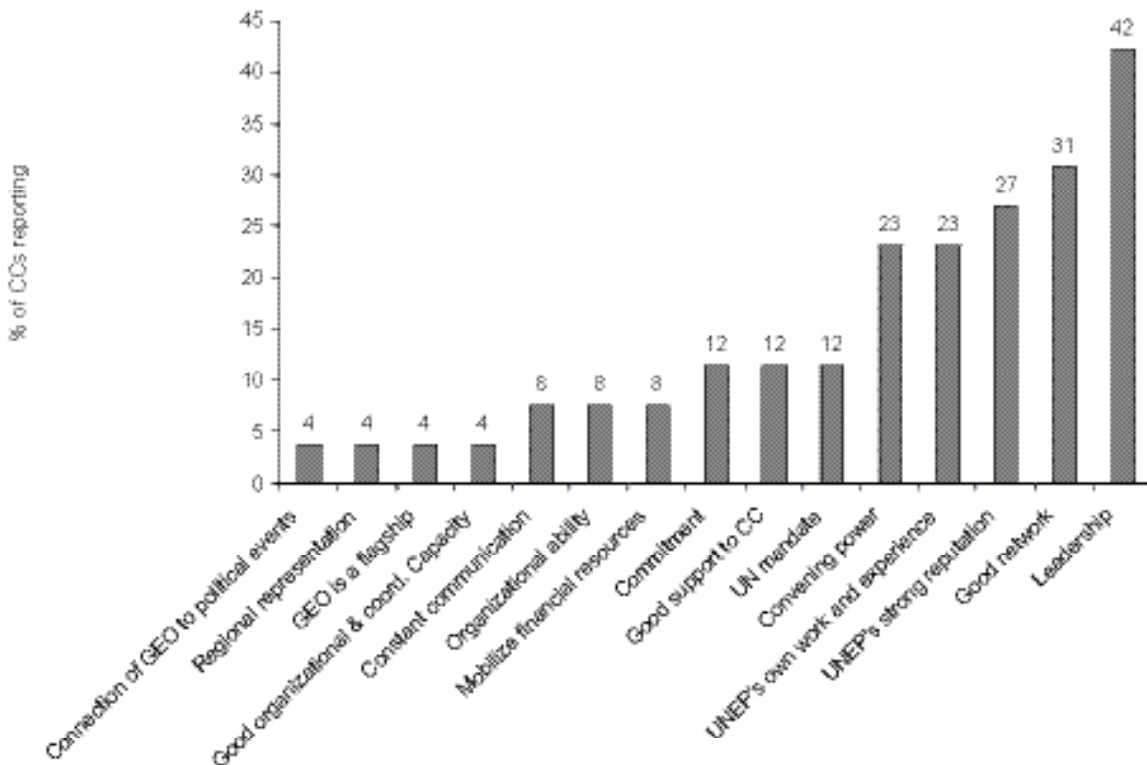
Figure 3: Strength of GEO CCs.



In addition to rating the strength of GEO as an assessment process, respondents were asked to rate their own organization's performance in this regard (**Figure 3**). While this self-assessment can best be interpreted in the context of individual CCs, pooled results show the way the network views itself as a whole.

GEO CCs saw their experience in carrying out integrated environmental assessment (IEA) as their most important strength. Several other highly-rated responses are related to this point, including having organizational capacity and multidisciplinary teams that one may consider a pre-requisite of IEA. The CCs also thought that they bring valuable networks to GEO, possess thorough knowledge of the region where they are located, and are recognized for their expertise.

Figure 4: Strengths of UNEP's leadership of GEO.

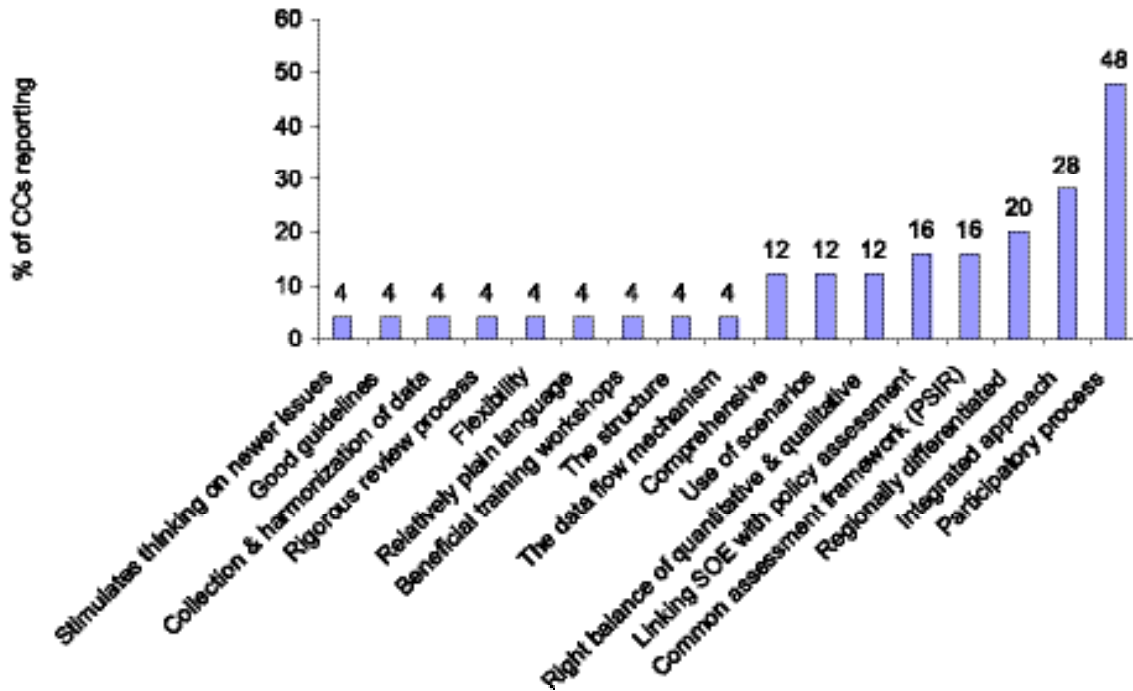


UNEP's most important strength in GEO is in its overall leadership of the process (**Figure 4**). CCs appreciated the fact that UNEP has a strong network and reputation with other governmental and intergovernmental organizations. They also recognized its convening power and thought that GEO gains from its UN mandate through UNEP and UNEP's Governing Council. As pointed out in one case:

"UNEP is one of the few international environmental organizations that reports on the state of the global environment and it has developed a niche in this area. One of its strengths is the fact that it has the membership of most of the world's nations and the capacity to influence them, as well as a certain authority and respect."

There was also recognition that UNEP itself has important expertise and experience in carrying out IEA that it can bring to bear on GEO.

Figure 5: Strengths of GEO's assessment and reporting methods.



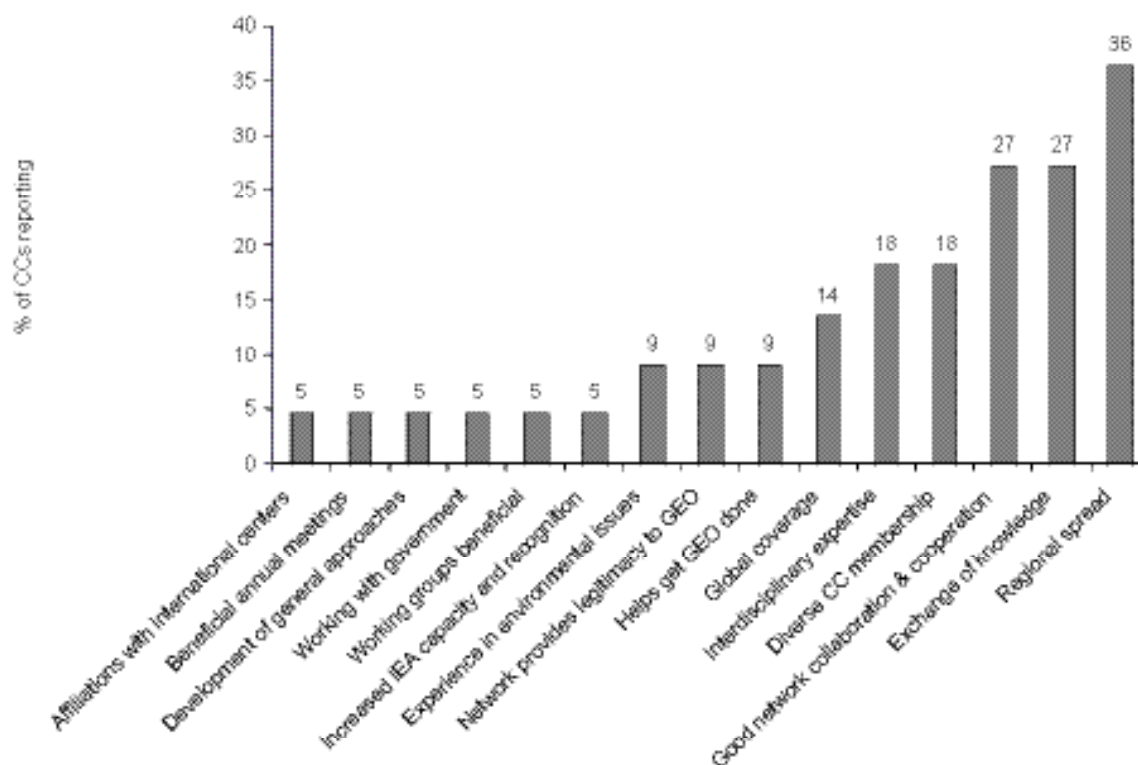
By a significant margin, CCs thought that the participatory process was the most important strength of GEO's assessment and reporting methods (Figure 5):

“A major strength is the very strong bottom-up approach of compiling information for assessment and reporting which strives to use national and sub-regional sources to the extent possible. Hardly any report at the global level has mobilized such a vast pool of researchers and institutions from different regions. This enhances the credibility of the report and sub-regional/regional level of capacity building.”

Consistent with the responses concerning the GEO process and the strength of GEO CCs, these responses confirmed again that GEO's integrated character is a key strength. In fact many of the other responses, although dealing with somewhat more specific issues, were also related to integration: the use of the pressure-state-impact-response (PSIR) framework, or the use of scenarios and policy analysis being relevant examples. As a respondent pointed out and as reflected in the answers, another of GEO's strengths is that it is comprehensive and differentiated at the same time. This applies to comprehensiveness and differentiation both in the spatial (global to local) and thematic (broad integrative vs. narrow issue-based analysis) sense.

It is striking that very few respondents mentioned the rigour of the review process as a strength, and the ratings were also low for the usefulness of capacity building activities and GEO production guidelines, among others.

Figure 6: Strengths of CC network.



Over one third of respondents mentioned the regional spread and representation of GEO CCs as an important strength of the network (**Figure 6**). They valued interaction with other members and the opportunity to work on global issues. As one participant put it:

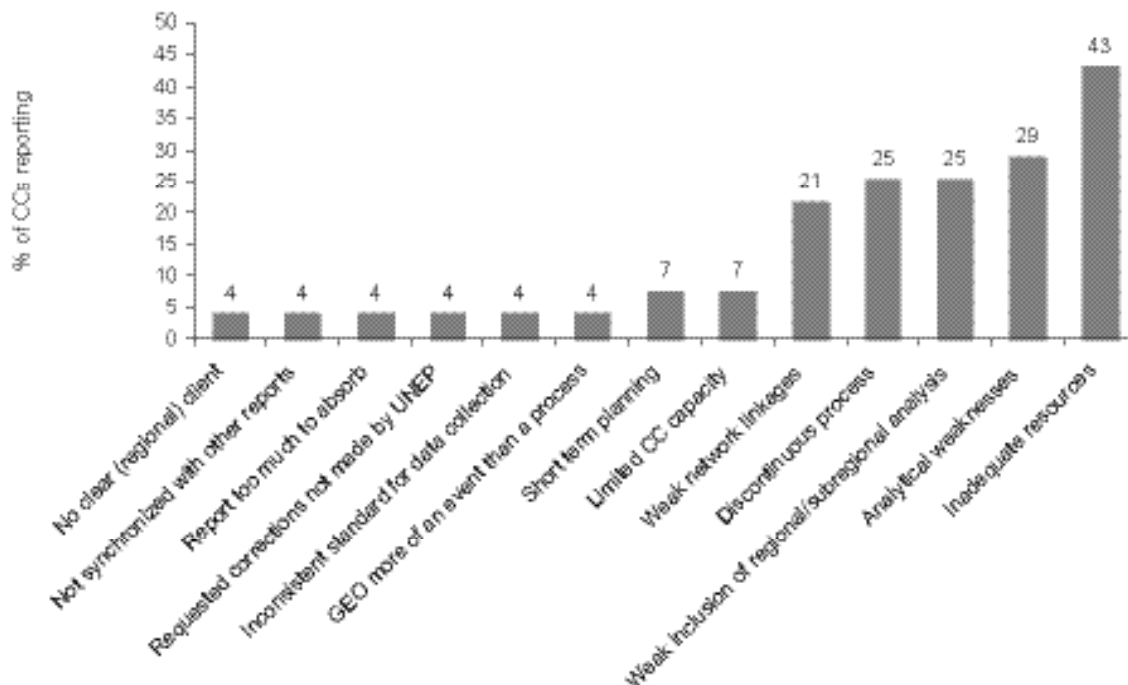
“Probably the only forum where Centres that devote their activities to the regional and local problems are exposed to the global experience and global problems. This helps a lot as it is very easy to be absorbed by regional problems and lose the global perspective.”

Besides different regional perspectives it is also important that CCs bring different, sometimes complementary expertise and capacity to the process. Working on a joint product facilitates interactions within this otherwise diverse group and represents an important capacity-building opportunity. These issues are at the heart of the other top strengths identified.

Although very few CCs noted the importance of GEO Working Groups or capacity building specifically in the context of this question, both were confirmed as having higher importance in more focused questions later (**Figure 30 and 41**).

4.2. Weaknesses

Figure 7: Weaknesses of GEO as an assessment and reporting process.



A major weakness, mentioned by almost half of the respondents in this section of the questionnaire and confirmed elsewhere, was related to the inadequacy of resources (**Figure 7**):

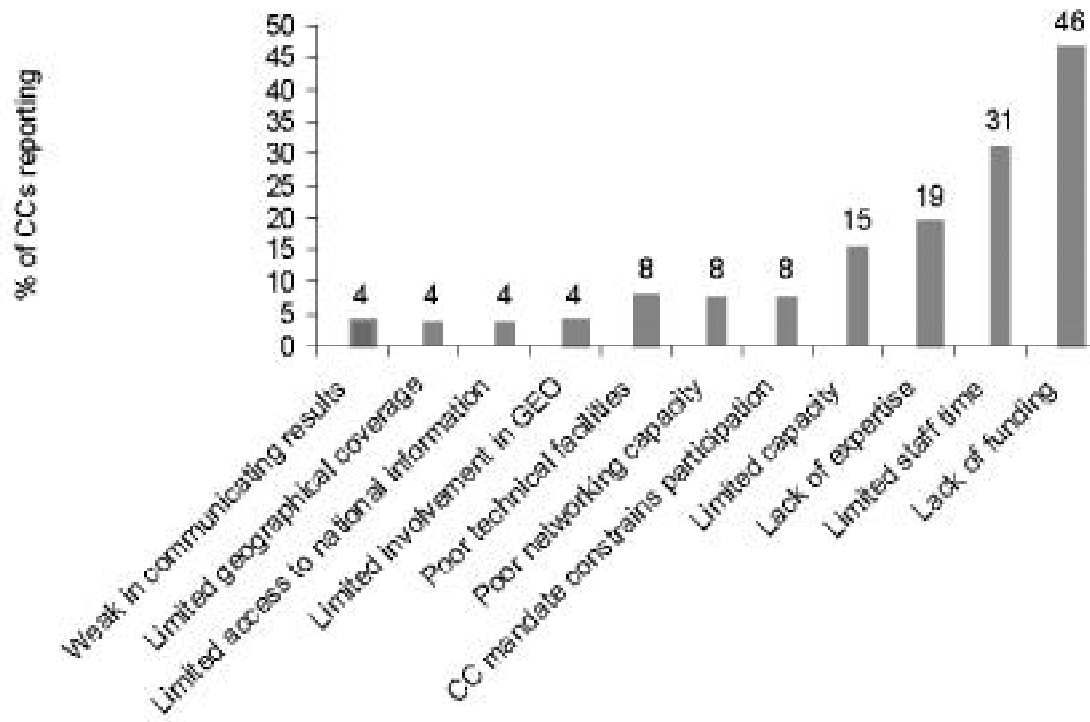
“Too few resources to support the programme properly—combined with lack of open discussion (with this cooperating centre, at any rate) of resource issues, options, and opportunities.”

Possibly as a result of what is seen as resource limitations, several respondents pointed to GEO being a project rather than a process, limited communication between high-intensity meetings and other activities and generally weak or uneven linkages among network members.

Respondents also pointed to difficulties associated with what they felt would be adequate coverage of regional and sub-regional issues. It is not clear from the responses whether this applies only to the global GEO report where the amount of detail on a particular region and issue that can go in the report is rather limited, or also to regional GEOs that are now available for several regions and where more detailed information can normally be made available.

As a related but separate point, respondents pointed to weaknesses in the analytic process, particularly to lack of clarity on how recommendations were derived from the analysis.

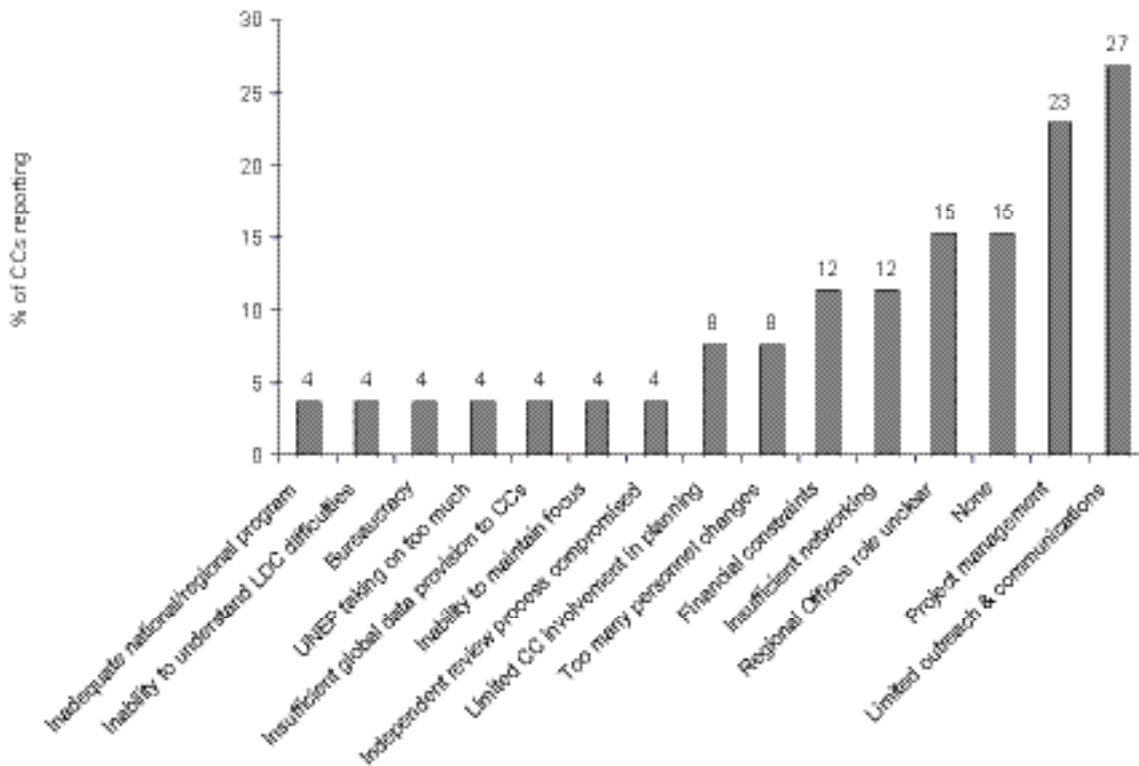
Figure 8: Weaknesses of GEO CCs.



Consistent with the view presented under GEO as an assessment and reporting process, lack of funding was the most commonly mentioned weakness (**Figure 8**). Based on the additional comments provided, the areas affected by resource constraints included maintenance of GEO-related databases, ability to assign staff to GEO-related activities on a more continuous basis, and more regular and substantive interaction with other network members.

Very closely related to and often mentioned together with resource constraints, committing adequate staff time was difficult for some CCs. Most people working on GEO have a high project load and need to balance their GEO-related activities with everything else they do. Some CCs located in poorer regions reported limited expertise and capacity and poor technical facilities as a significant constraint, again emphasizing the importance of capacity building, as confirmed later in this report.

Figure 9: Weaknesses of UNEP’s leadership of GEO.



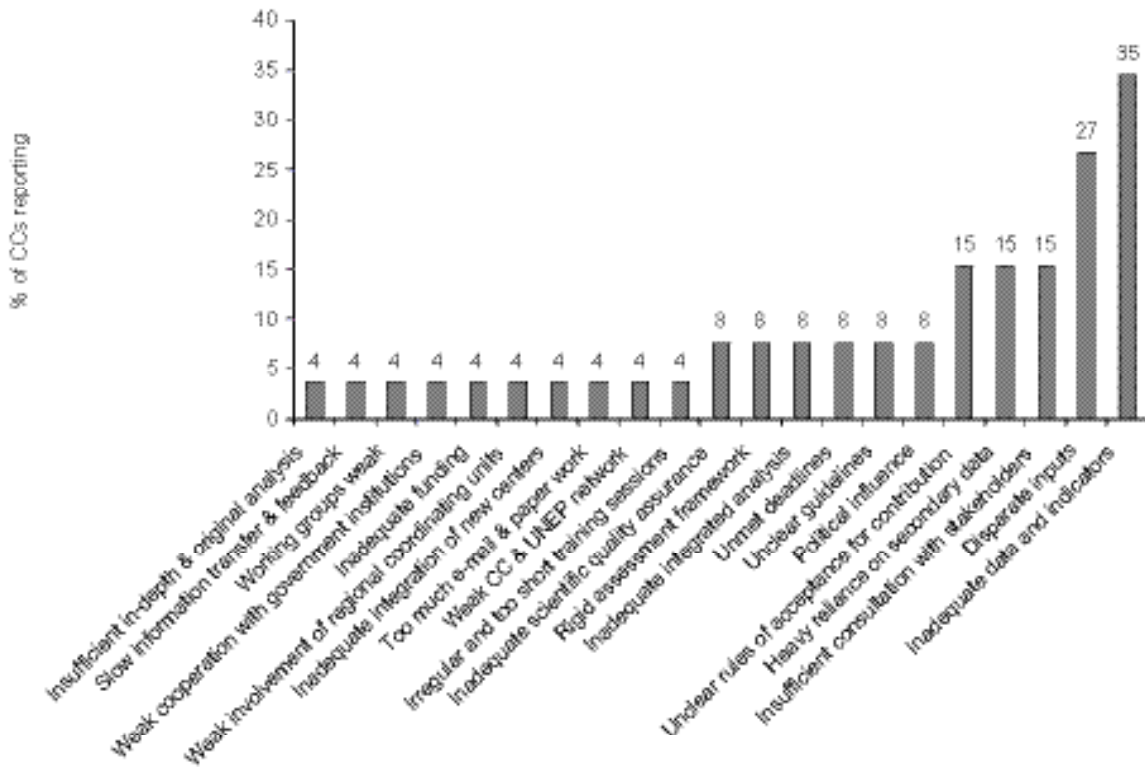
Although 15 per cent of respondents thought UNEP’s leadership had no weaknesses, others had different opinions (**Figure 9**). About one fifth felt that UNEP’s project management could be improved including the bureaucratic administrative process. Communication with CCs and outreach, that is communication of GEO results to the outside world, were also considered problem areas. Some respondents hypothesized about the causes of the observed weaknesses, and several mentioned resource constraints, staff turnover and staffing shortages at UNEP-HQ.

CCs from some regions pointed out that the role of UNEP Regional Offices and DEWA Regional Coordinators with regard to GEO was unclear. This issue would have to be considered in the context of individual regions, particularly as the DEWA Regional Coordinator’s relationship vis-à-vis the Regional Office is not always the same, even if respondents did not always make an explicit distinction between the two. Nevertheless, UNEP’s role in the regional GEO process does require more attention so that both CCs and UNEP Regional Offices as well as DEWA representatives are clear on what is expected of them:

“We would like to see the work of UNEP regional offices with regard to GEO process and relations with collaborating centers restricted to coordination and facilitation of their work not trying to be a substitute or taking over, which undermines the essence of the GEO process.”

UNEP-HQ and regional offices need to address this perception when working with CCs and their contributions: too little involvement may lead to complaints about weak leadership, too much to claims of interference.

Figure 10: Weaknesses of GEO assessment and reporting methods.

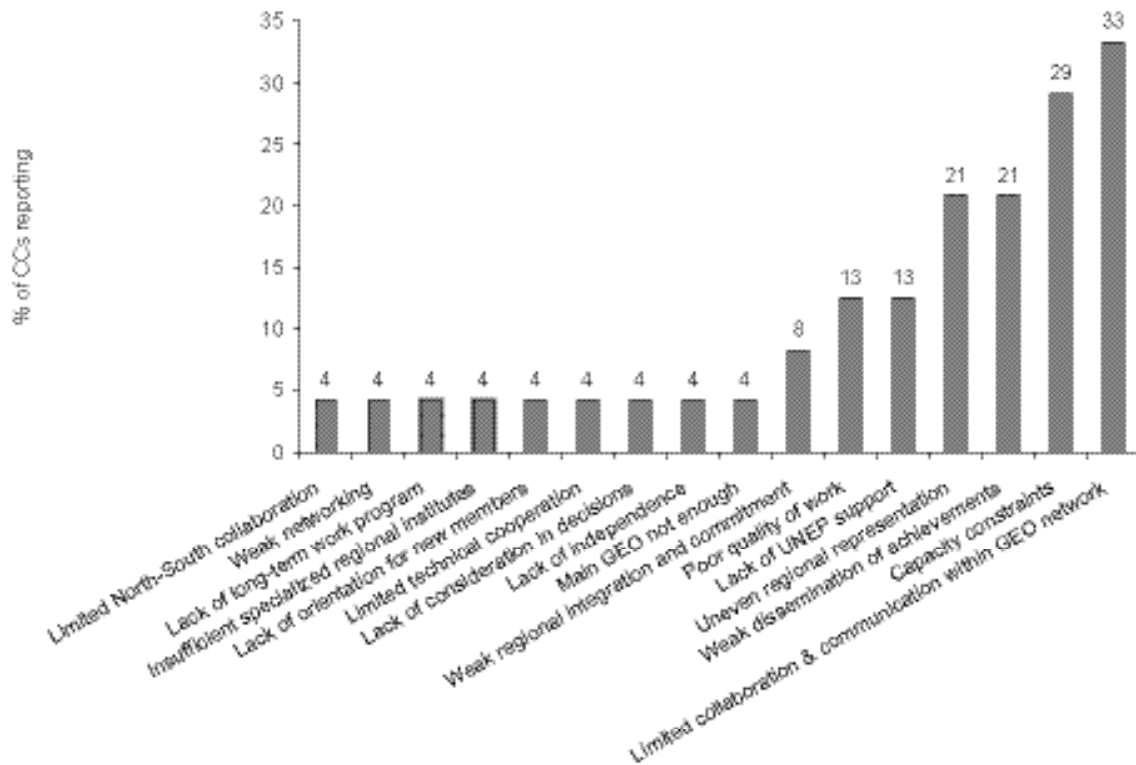


Based on the responses and analysis, the identified weaknesses cover broad areas with regard to GEO assessment and reporting methods (**Figure 10**). This reflects that participants saw a number of problems, but didn't necessarily agree on what these were. While there were several responses, for example inadequate funding or too much paperwork, that do not directly apply to assessment and reporting methods one of the themes that received considerable attention was related to data issues; including the availability of harmonized datasets and indicators, and too much reliance on secondary data.

Another theme that emerged was related to the diversity and quality of inputs from CCs and, as one respondent put it, "*unclear rules of acceptance for contributions*". It appears that at least some CCs (not necessarily those most heavily involved) see scientific quality control and GEO's scientific credibility as something that needs strengthening.

Although it received relatively little attention, some CCs mentioned, but without suggesting alternatives, that the PSIR framework was too rigid for the analysis and some of the production guidelines that were supposed to help to adopt it in the analysis could be improved.

Figure 11: Weaknesses of CC network.



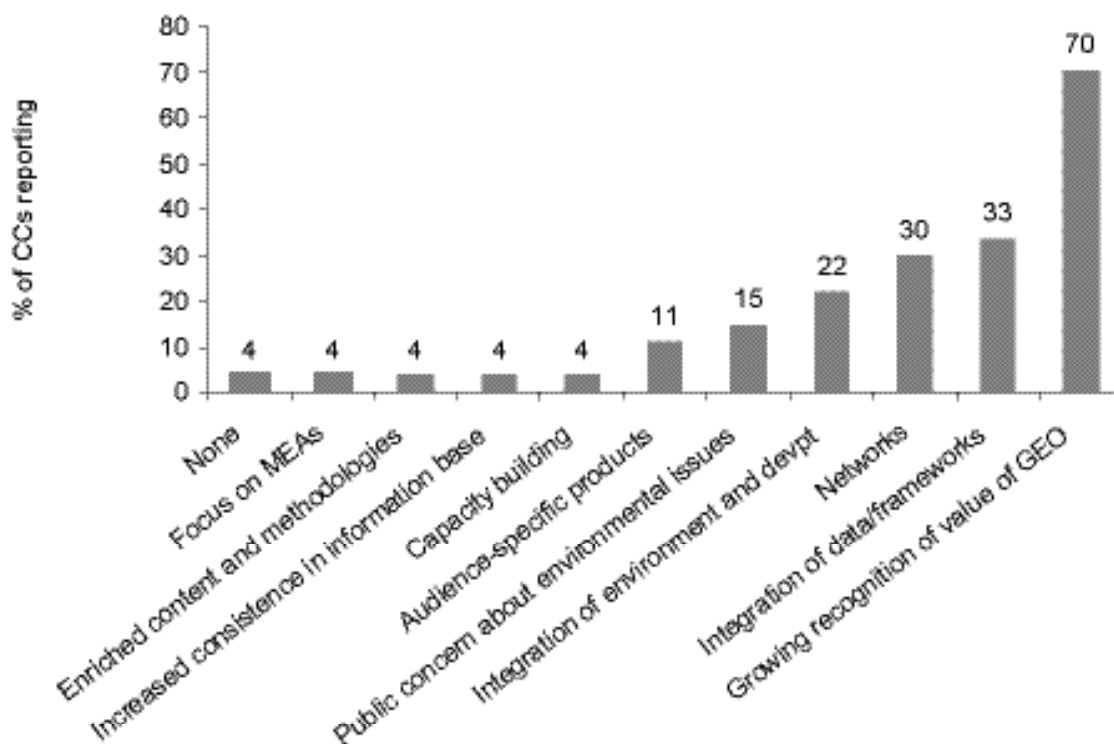
According to a third of CCs the network is underperforming in terms of one of its key functions: facilitating the interaction and collaboration of its members both on the global and regional/interregional level (**Figure 11**). This is possibly linked to a series of variables mentioned both here and in other sections, such as resource constraints, discontinuous nature of the GEO process, the perception that UNEP's support for the network is inadequate, or inadequate capacity and capacity building.

Uneven regional representation received significant attention. While the GEO network cannot include a representative CC for every country the question of network membership should be given critical consideration. Having thematic or regional expertise is important, particularly as some respondents pointed to lower than expected quality of inputs from CCs who lacked such expertise.

Several CCs mentioned that there continued to be significant blind spots in terms of regional representation and, as a result, possibly expertise. While the GEO network cannot include a representative CC for every country, there seems to be an implication that the question of network membership should be given some further critical consideration. Having thematic or regional expertise is important, particularly as some respondents pointed to lower than expected quality of CC inputs.

4.3. Opportunities

Figure 12: Opportunities for GEO as an assessment and reporting process.



According to the original survey methodology, opportunities are arising from conditions external to GEO (**Figure 12**). From the responses it appears that respondents mixed external and internal factors to some degree, and what they listed as opportunities are actually internal strengths. Therefore, some of the responses seem to confirm statements made earlier under the strengths part of the questionnaire, while others are genuine opportunities.

Some respondents pointed out that interest in environment and development issues continues to be high and is likely to increase, creating a demand for information. There was a feeling that GEO not only responds to a need for information on the environment, but also contributes to the creation of this interest and opportunity:

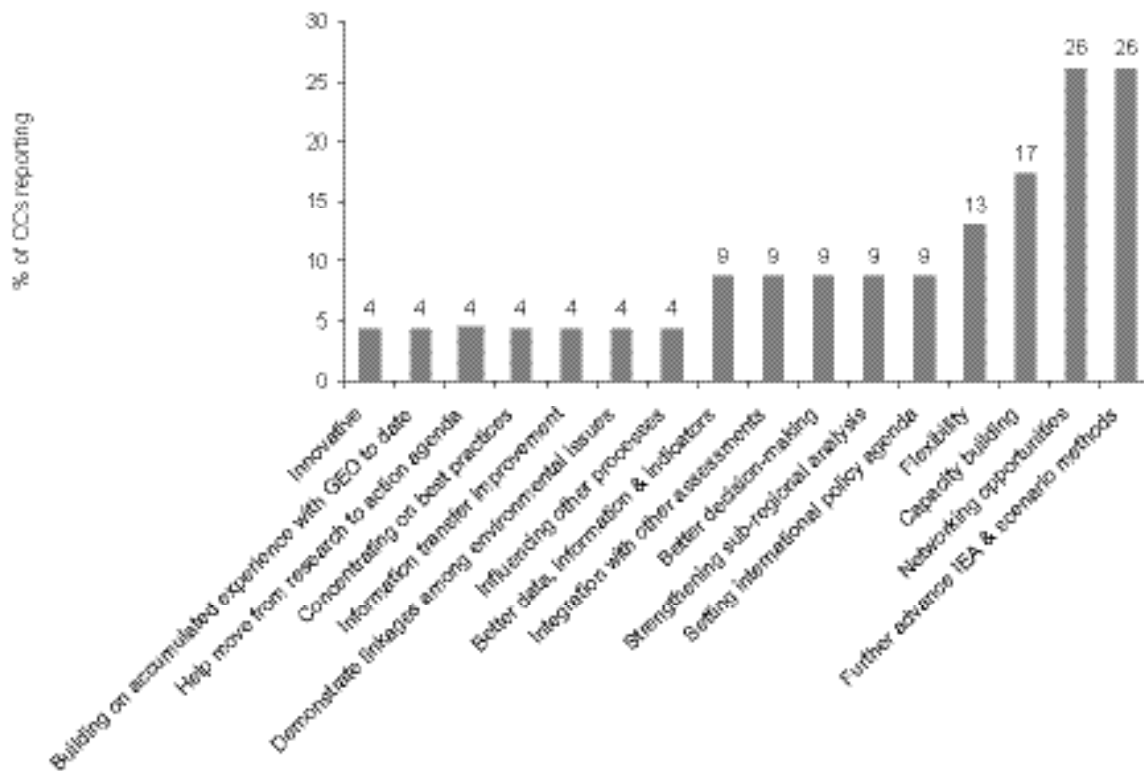
“Environmental assessments and reporting are becoming gradually part of political ‘culture’, thanks especially to the IPCC, and to GEO itself.”

When asked about opportunities for GEO as an assessment and reporting process, around 70 per cent made a point that GEO has *growing recognition* in the regions and that this was obvious, for example, from the interest in regional and national scale assessments modeled after GEO. CCs saw an opportunity for evolving internationally recognized reporting and assessment standards around the GEO approach and process:

“The major opportunity is to suggest some sort of internationally recognized standard for environmental reporting and policy assessment, so that assessments done for various regions and on regional scales can be mutually compatible and complementary.”

Additional opportunities arise from making better use of newly available data in GEO, and strengthening the participatory and networking aspects of the GEO process. UNEP has both a need and an opportunity to consolidate the CC network and to establish a routine process to support the CCs through fund-raising and capacity building.

Figure 13: Opportunities for GEO CCs.

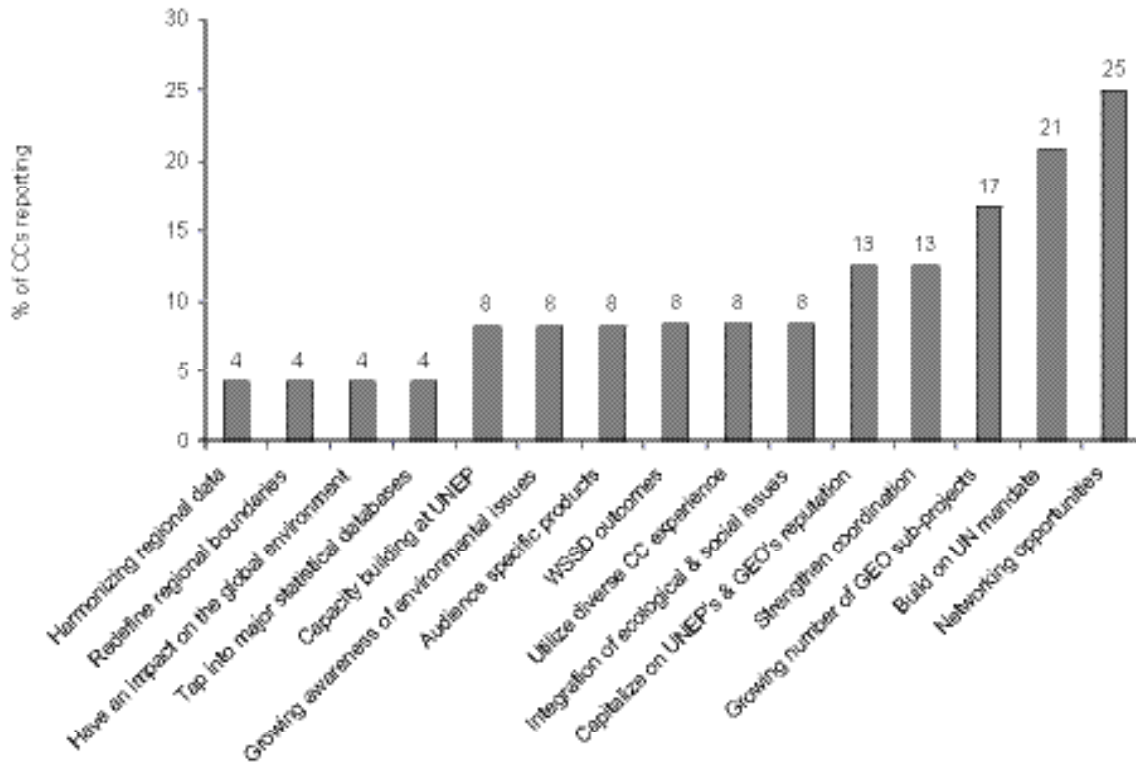


Most CCs considered more active networking with UNEP and other CCs as a major opportunity that brings benefits to their organizations (**Figure 13**). Obviously, networking is an activity CCs are already engaged in, but they also saw room for strengthening existing relationships. Related to this aspect, they also mentioned opportunities to network with organizations currently outside the GEO network as being important.

Many of the other opportunities mentioned, such as enhanced access to information, are actually related to networking, as CCs gain access to information in the form of data or publications that they may not otherwise be able to get. Access to information through a UN mailing list was mentioned as a more specific example. Some respondents also pointed to the opportunity to be involved in capacity building activities, either as a recipient or a provider. As a subset of this, providing assistance to countries in preparing their SoE reports was noted as a specific example.

A few CCs saw a role for themselves to influence the GEO approach either through its planning and review in general or through contributing to its specific aspects, such as communication strategies.

Figure 14: Opportunities for UNEP’s leadership of GEO.



About 25 per cent of respondents felt that there was a major opportunity for UNEP to strengthen GEO through better networking (**Figure 14**). This could involve improving cohesion and capacity in the existing network, reviewing membership, and improved networking activities with organizations outside the CC network. The other side of this opinion is the earlier-expressed view that pointed to weaknesses in the functioning of the network and UNEP’s role in it (**Figure 11**).

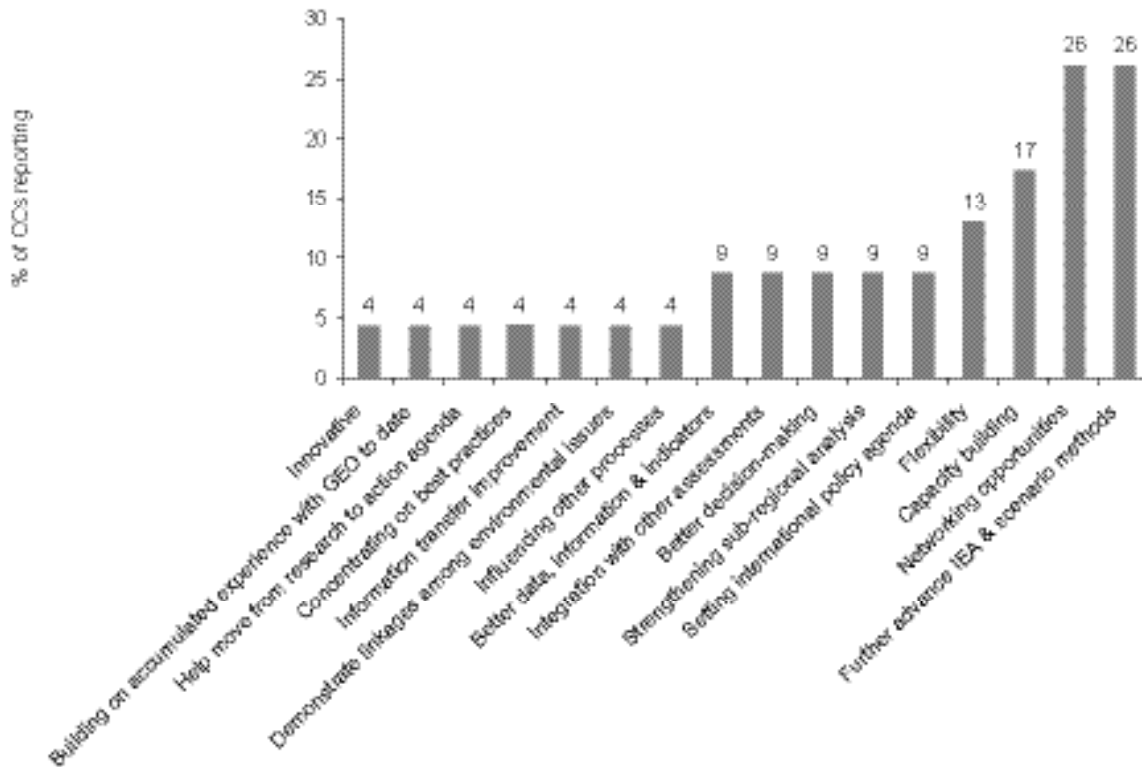
Many pointed out the opportunities that arise from UNEP having an international mandate and direct connection to governments through its Governing Council and Regional Offices. UNEP was also seen to have built a stronger profile through GEO, which may help its negotiations with partners and donors.

There are further opportunities in reaching out through thematic and expert reports that are important associated-products of the GEO process. Again, several respondents pointed to the possibility of replicating GEO on other scales e.g., through national or regional integrated outlooks using the GEO framework and process as a template (**also see Figure 12**):

“Possibility to initiate numerous projects in the framework of GEO – this is already happening in some regions in fact.”

Among the external factors contributing to increased opportunity for GEO, respondents mentioned increasing interest in sustainable development and environment from the local to global scales:

Figure 15: Opportunities for GEO assessment and reporting methods.

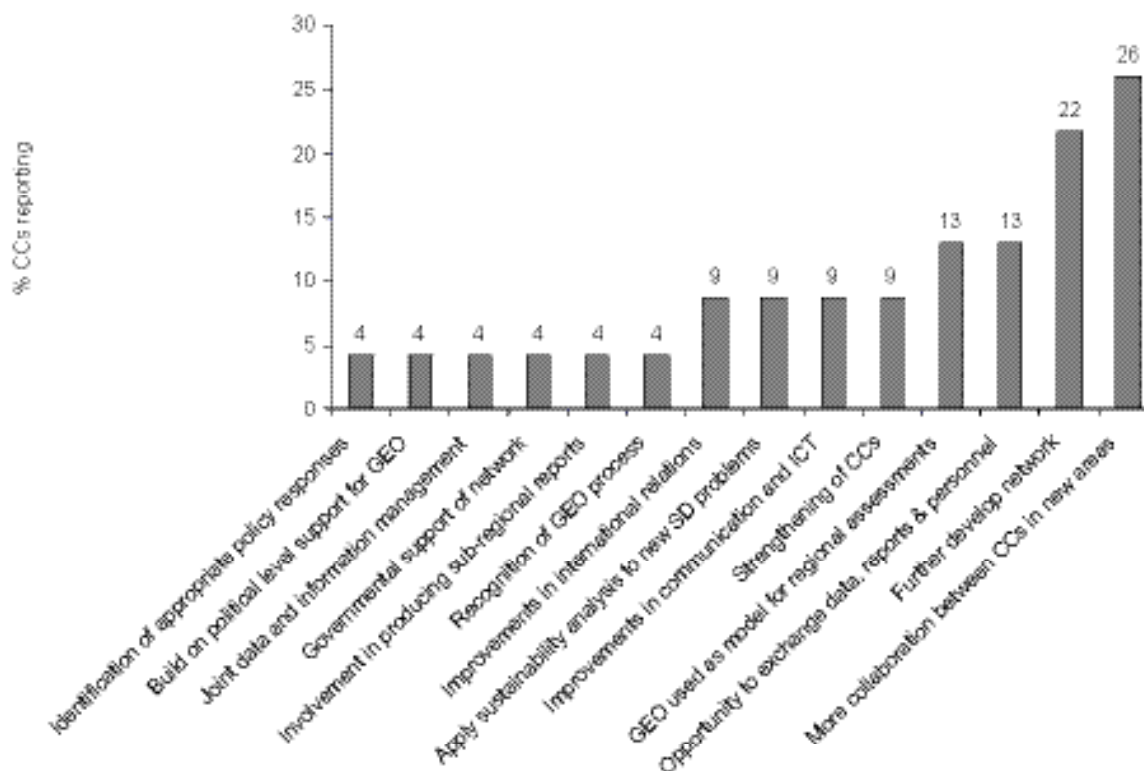


“Growing awareness and concern on regional and global environmental problems (e.g., acid rain, global warming) present huge opportunities for UNEP as a leader in GEO.”

With regard to assessment and reporting methods, a major opportunity lies in further developing IEA methods, including policy analysis and scenarios (**Figure 15**). Additional methodological elements mentioned by respondents in this context included the development and use of indicators and better analysis on the regional scale. The need for more work on indicators was clearly confirmed in response to targeted questions later in the questionnaire (**Figure 38**). Echoing earlier comments, many CCs thought that the methodology could be improved through better networking. This could involve a capacity-building element through the regular interaction, or perhaps twinning, of advanced and weaker members, and this was understood to require resources (also see **Figure 41**). These responses also show that networking / participation are considered integral elements of the assessment methodologies used in GEO.

Some respondents mentioned that because of its open and flexible process there is an opportunity for GEO to better handle regional perspectives and differences and integrate innovative analytic approaches. This resonates with earlier comments that pointed out that besides this opportunity there is actually also a need to improve the regional and sub-regional aspects of the analysis (see analysis related to **Figure 15**).

Figure 16: Opportunities for CC network.



The most commonly-mentioned opportunity for the GEO CC network was expanding the range of collaborative activities to new areas (**Figure 16**). Some of these may be related to GEO and involve the exchange of data, reports and personnel or joint research, but cooperation among CCs may also go beyond GEO into other areas. Ultimately, GEO CCs can become sources of authoritative regional information on the environment:

“If all goes well, [the] GEO network can become an authoritative network of institutions responsible for consultations and advice on the wide range of environmental problems on the regional level.”

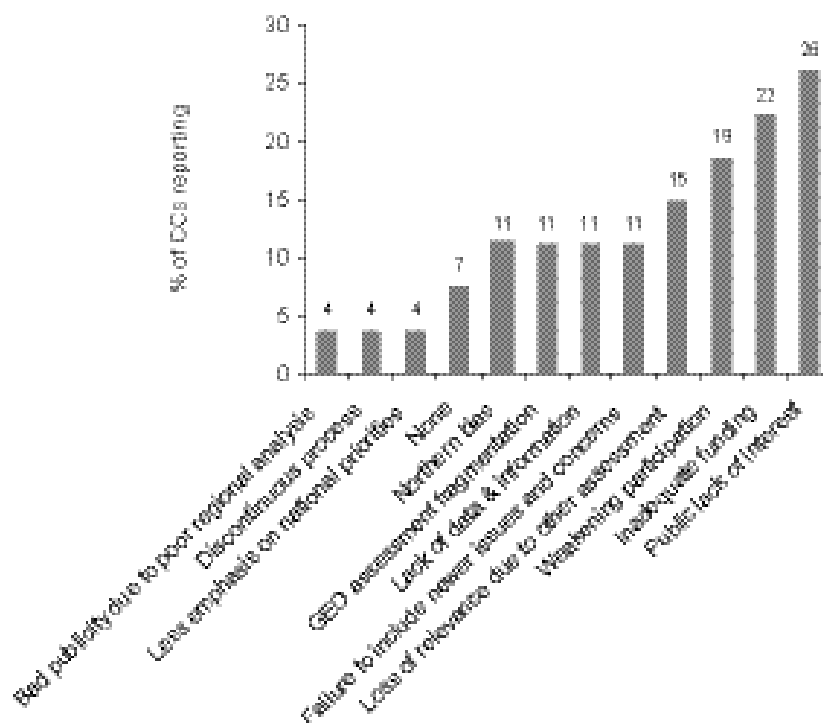
Although the GEO CC network has grown in size and some obvious thematic and regional gaps have been filled over the last few years, some CCs still saw a need to expand the network further (also see analysis under **Figure 11**). The emphasis was not on expansion per se, but on including centres with specific regional or thematic expertise, such as the UNEP Regional Coordination Unit in Jamaica, in the regional and global GEO process, as mentioned several times by one respondent. The network would further benefit from more effective use of information and communication technologies and in some cases increased willingness of governments to engage in processes dealing with the environment and sustainable development.

Respondents repeated again that GEO can be used as a model for regional or national assessments that may, in turn, strengthen the global GEO process itself.

4.4. Threats

Threats in SWOT questionnaires are defined as external risk factors that may threaten the effectiveness of the GEO process. Based on the review of summary responses it is obvious that some of the items identified as sources of threats by respondents are at least partially internal, i.e. associated with the GEO process.

Figure 17: Threats to GEO as an assessment and reporting process as mentioned by per cent of CCs.



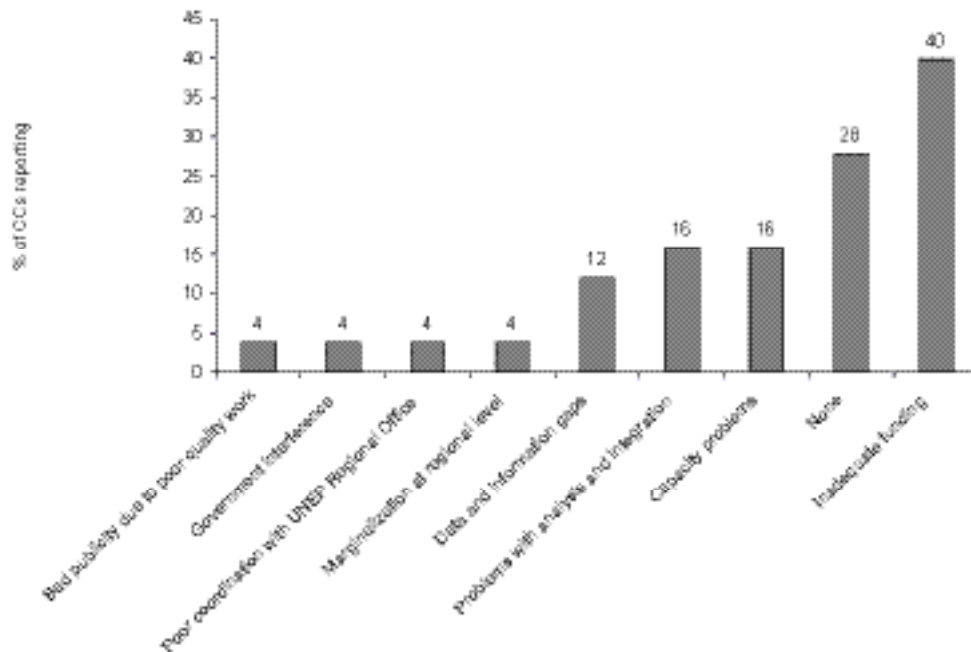
With regard to threats to the assessment and reporting process, CCs most frequently referred to the public lack of interest in environmental issues in general or GEO in particular as other, higher profile issues dominate the global agenda and as more recently published reports and assessments capture the attention.

Many pointed to financial instability and inadequate investment in GEO's infrastructure and process leading to problems with regard to maintaining the network (**Figure 17**). Related to this, some warned that GEO may lose its relevance in comparison with other emerging thematic or integrated environmental assessments, leading to reduced interest by donors and key audiences.

Weakening participation was identified as another threat, referring to participation both of CCs and of external stakeholders such as governments in the GEO process. One respondent drew attention to the threat associated with a possible discrepancy between alleged and actual participation:

“The contrast between the claims of participation and capacity-building, on the one hand, and limited achievements on the ground, on the other, could undermine legitimacy within CC community and, eventually, outside.”

Figure 18: Threats to GEO CCs.



Several respondents pointed to problems with access to data and information as a source of threat. Another important possible threat is fragmentation of the GEO process and products, as these are spun off and coordinated increasingly on a regional and, in some cases, sub-regional or even national level.

Almost 30 per cent of CCs reported no perceived threat to their participation in GEO (**Figure 18**).

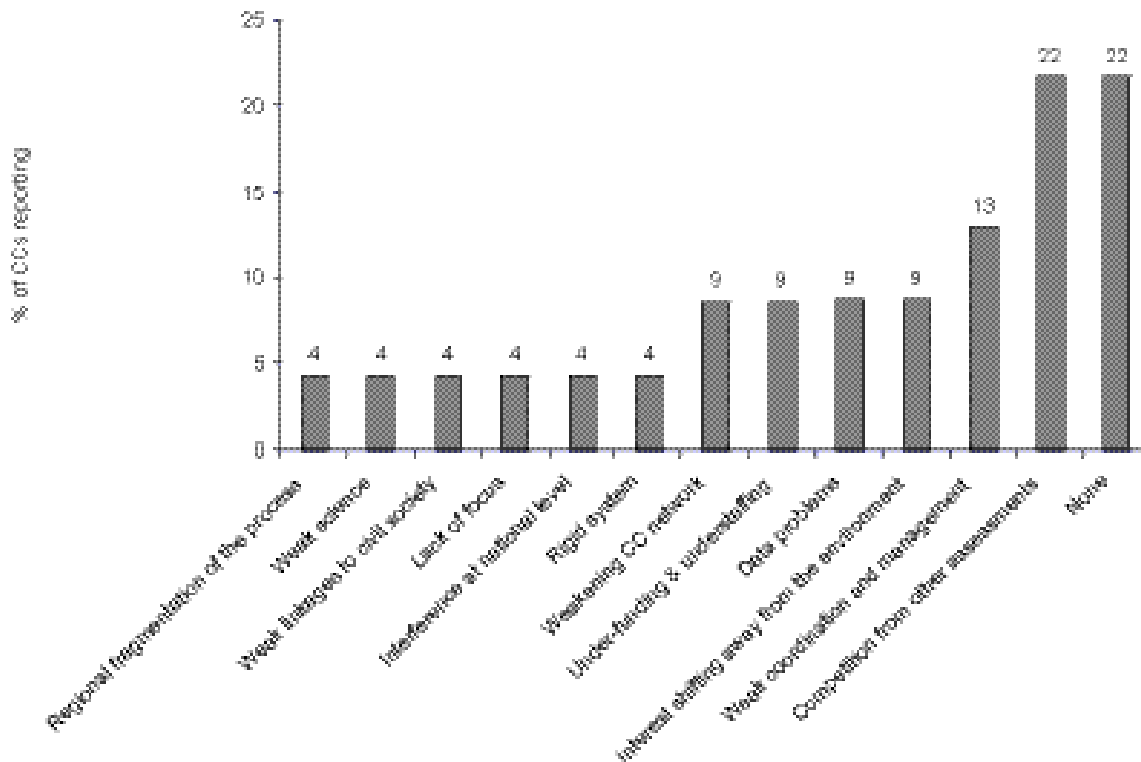
However, nearly half of respondents reported that the major threat to their successful participation in GEO was inadequate and/or unstable funding previously identified as a major weakness of both GEO CCs and the GEO process (**Figure 7 and 8**). This may have an effect particularly on their ability to play a role in the GEO process on a continuous basis:

“The organization does not have sufficient funds to keep the GEO process running during the period between phases.”

Possibly partly related to availability of funding, 16 per cent of respondents mentioned overextension of their current capacity.

Another possible threat is related to the increasing difficulty of integrating information as an increasing number of organizations produce reports on the environment and sustainable development using slightly different frameworks and approaches. Despite the perception of abundant information, there is also a parallel risk that data gaps still exist.

Figure 19: Threats to UNEP's leadership of GEO.



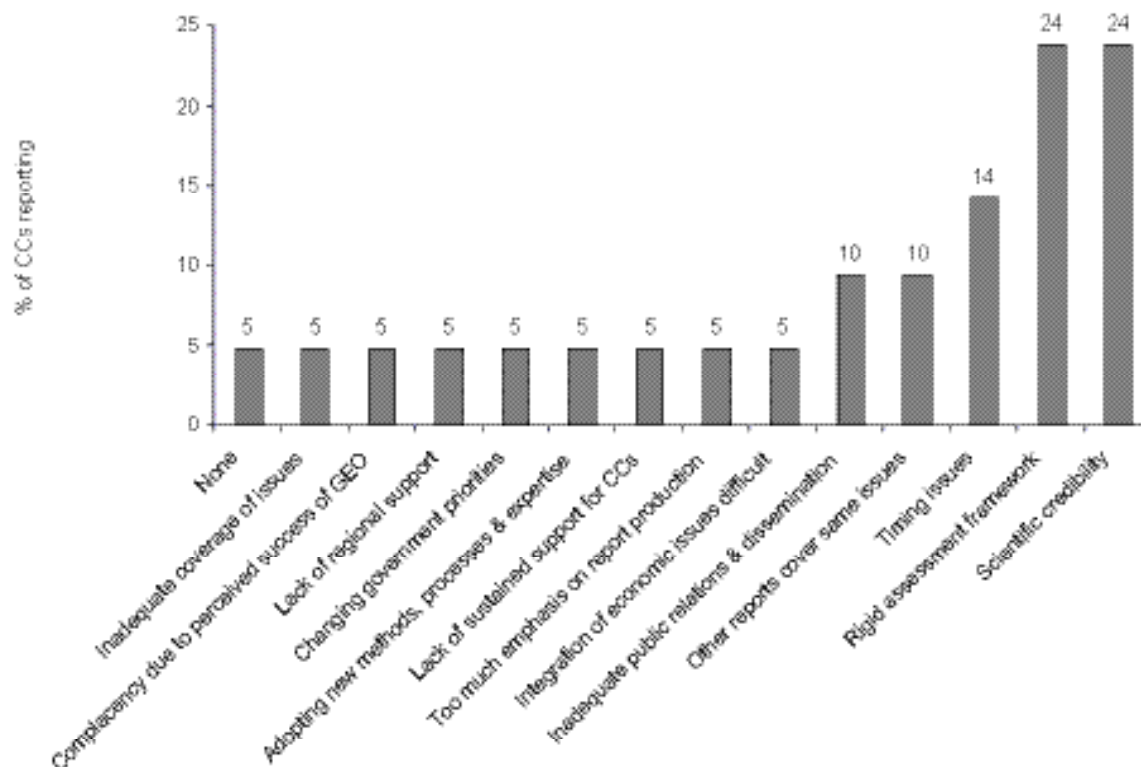
About one fifth of respondents thought there were no threats to UNEP's leadership of GEO (**Figure 19**). Those who thought threats were present mentioned competition from other assessments most frequently, some of them initiated after GEO. Related to this, some respondents pointed out that there is a need for better coordination of global assessment systems and that this may help to clarify GEO's role and position relative to others, such as thematic assessments like the Global Marine Assessment (GMA) and integrated programmes such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA).

13 per cent of respondents mentioned potential threats broadly associated with coordination and management of GEO, possibly related to underfunding and understaffing at UNEP. This may be related to ensuring adequate and equal involvement of all regions, or management of the GEO process:

“Over-worked staff and pressure of production makes early start-up on GEO rounds (capacity-building, etc.) and post-GEO efforts (e.g., catalyzing or supporting regional and national ‘GEOs’) difficult.”

Other threats mentioned included international interest shifting away from the environment, due particularly to the increasing risk of conflict; problems with data availability; and a weakening CC network.

Figure 20: Threats to GEO assessment and reporting methods.



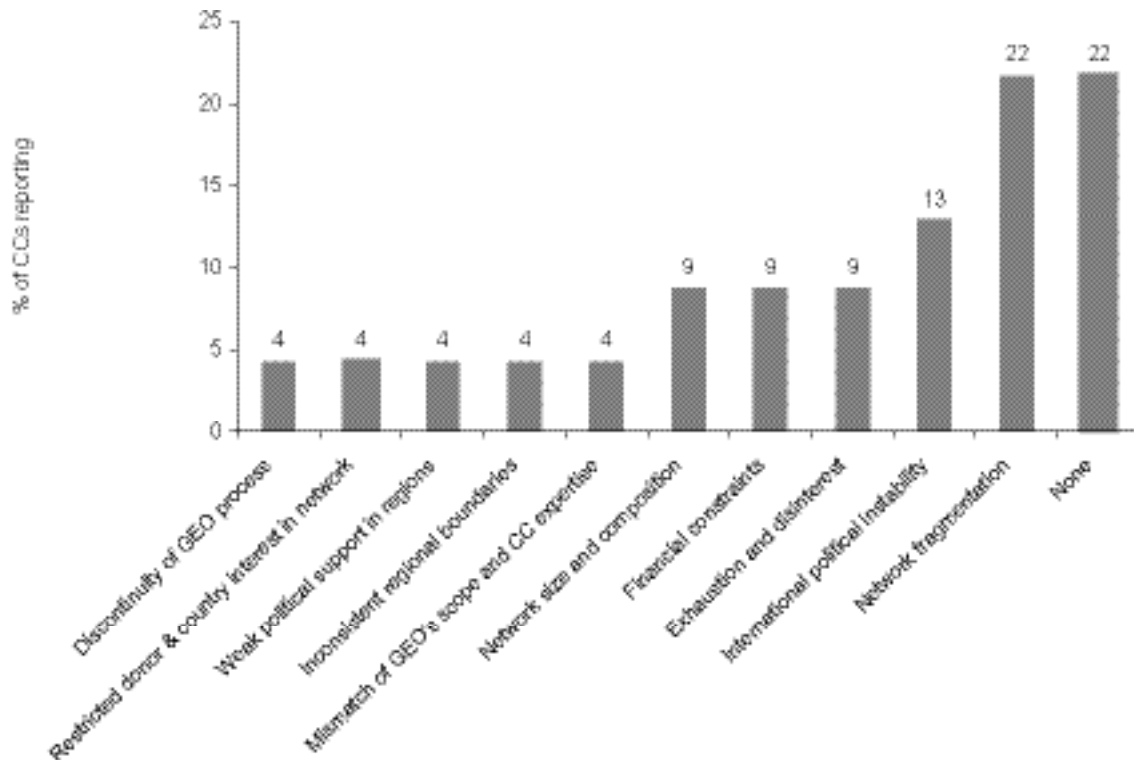
Threats to GEO’s assessment and reporting methods according to CCs are most likely to arise from concerns about scientific credibility and the way results are derived from often inadequate or incomplete sets of data (**Figure 20**). The risk is inherent in the GEO method, where scientific findings are vetted by stakeholders, including governments who may bring political perspectives as well as scientific ones to bear.

There are also risks associated with the choice and use of GEO’s assessment framework, although in other sections this was also identified as a strength (see analysis under **Figure 5**). The PSIR framework has certain limitations and may not facilitate the discussion of some cross-cutting issues, such as trade and the environment. Some saw a risk related to the rigid use of the framework without consideration of regionally different issues and approaches to assessment or adjusting it on the basis of new advances and lessons learned:

“A major threat is if UNEP adheres rigidly to the same assessment and reporting methods, without adjusting them in response to feedback from CCs, governments and other readers, or if it neglects to evolve with advances in the field of SoE reporting.”

There are potential threats associated with maintaining a two-year cycle for GEO, mostly because there is little perceptible change in environmental conditions in two years and little new data, so that a report that kept to the current GEO structure would end up repeating the same facts and analysis. In addition, keeping to a two-year cycle would probably increase costs to beyond what is currently available. Thorough analysis and the consultative process requires significant amount of time for due consideration of key issues in any given region.

Figure 21: Threats to CC network.



About a fifth of the respondents thought there were no threats to the GEO CC network (**Figure 21**). Among external threats, 12.9 per cent of respondents mentioned international political instability that would make global scale collaboration difficult. However, a majority of threats mentioned by others arise not from external but from factors internal to the network. One of the most obvious is the fragmentation of the GEO network that may result, for example, from weak institutional commitment and discontinuities in the GEO process (also see analysis under **Figure 17**):

“The network actually is composed of individuals, not institutions. The loss of personnel means the loss of experience with the whole process.”

CCs may also withdraw due to exhaustion or financial constraints, contributing to the disintegration of the network. Even from earlier comments it was clear that CCs consider the structure and composition of the GEO network a key issue. While some mentioned the risk associated with making the network too large, others pointed out that it is better to involve some key organizations in improving the process rather than have them externally criticize GEO.

Some respondents pointed to threats related to limited donor and country interest in GEO, and to the inconsistencies arising from the different definition of regions by different organizations e.g., the inclusion of Mexico in North America from the perspective of the CEC but not for GEO.



5. Evaluation of GEO CCs and the GEO-3 process

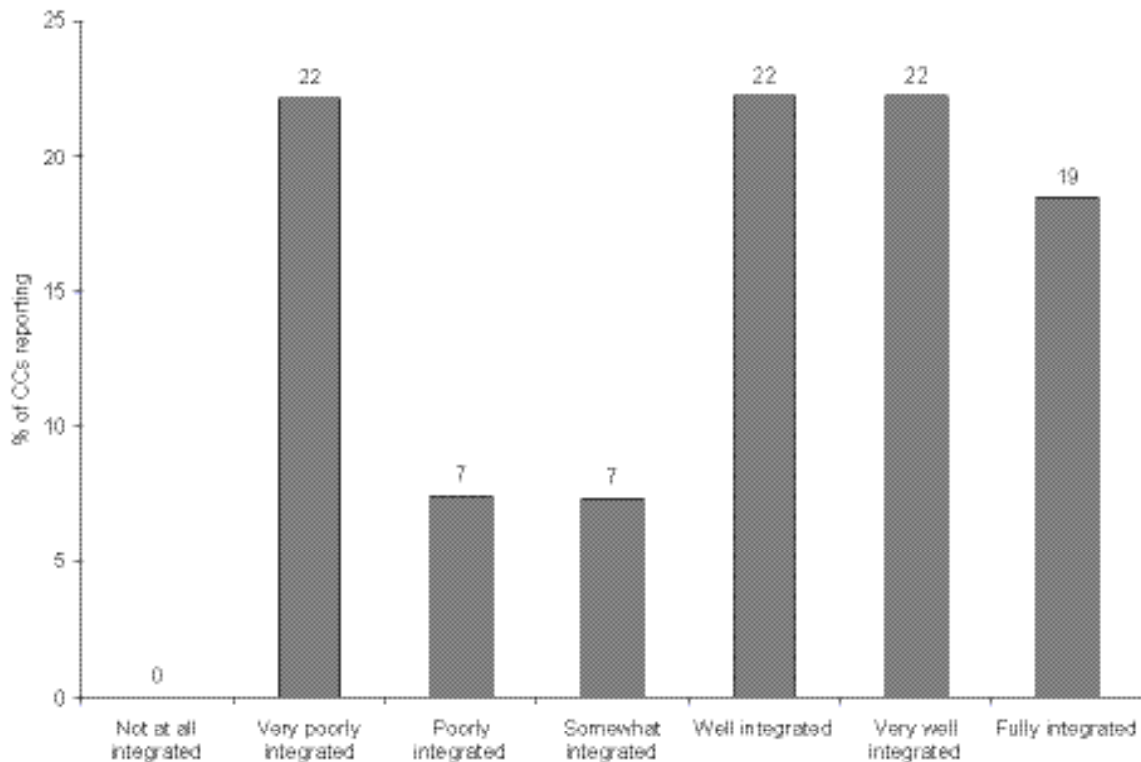
5.1. Coordination and management

To what extent were GEO-3 activities integrated into the programme of work of your CC?

The majority of CCs reported well to full integration of GEO into their work programme, while nearly one third rated it as poorly or very poorly integrated (**Figure 22**). As also mentioned in the SWOT analysis, many CCs commented that other SoE or assessment-related activities make GEO a natural fit for their programme of work.

On the problem side, some of the comments referred to financial constraints, language and cultural barriers. A few respondents also mentioned that participation in GEO was restricted, for example to the SoE section of the report, and that more even involvement would ensure better integration. There was at least one complaint that participation in the review phase of the GEO process was less than satisfactory.

Figure 22: Integration of GEO-3 activities into the programme of work of CCs.

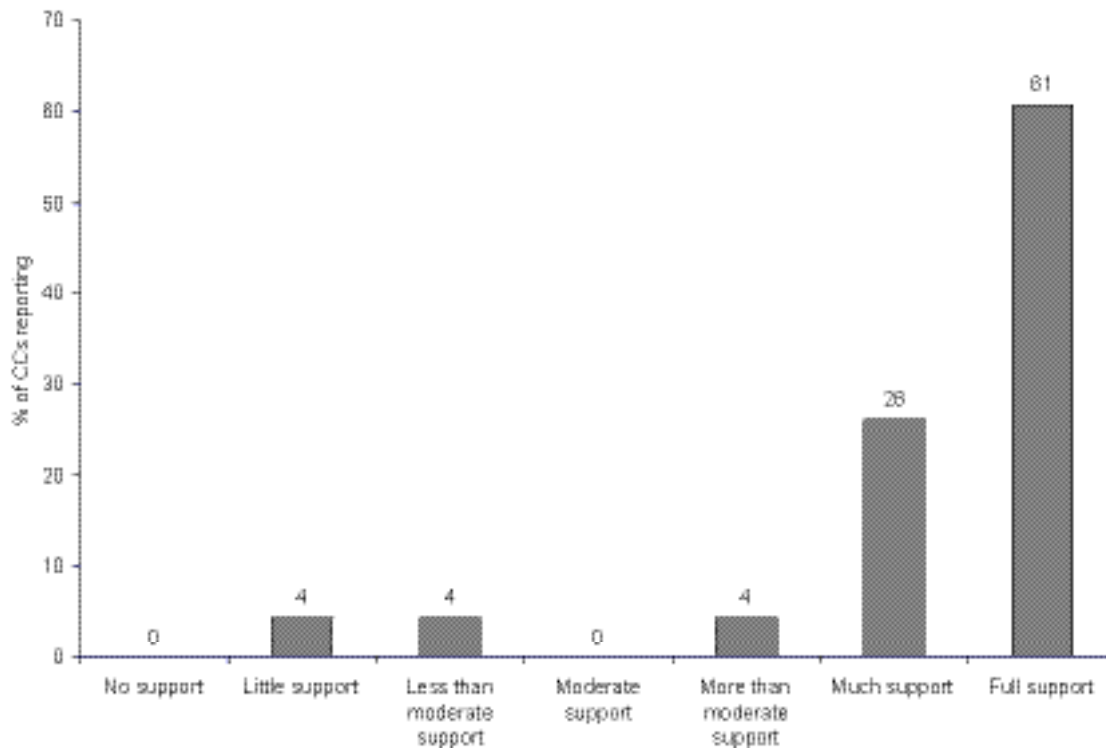


What is the level of senior management's support for GEO activities in your CC?

Based on the responses received, there is basically full or close to full support by senior staff for participation in GEO at most CCs (**Figure 23**). Comments by respondents largely reinforce this view.

Some of the problems mentioned include concerns related to the stability and availability of funding and allocation of staff time to GEO on a programmatic basis.

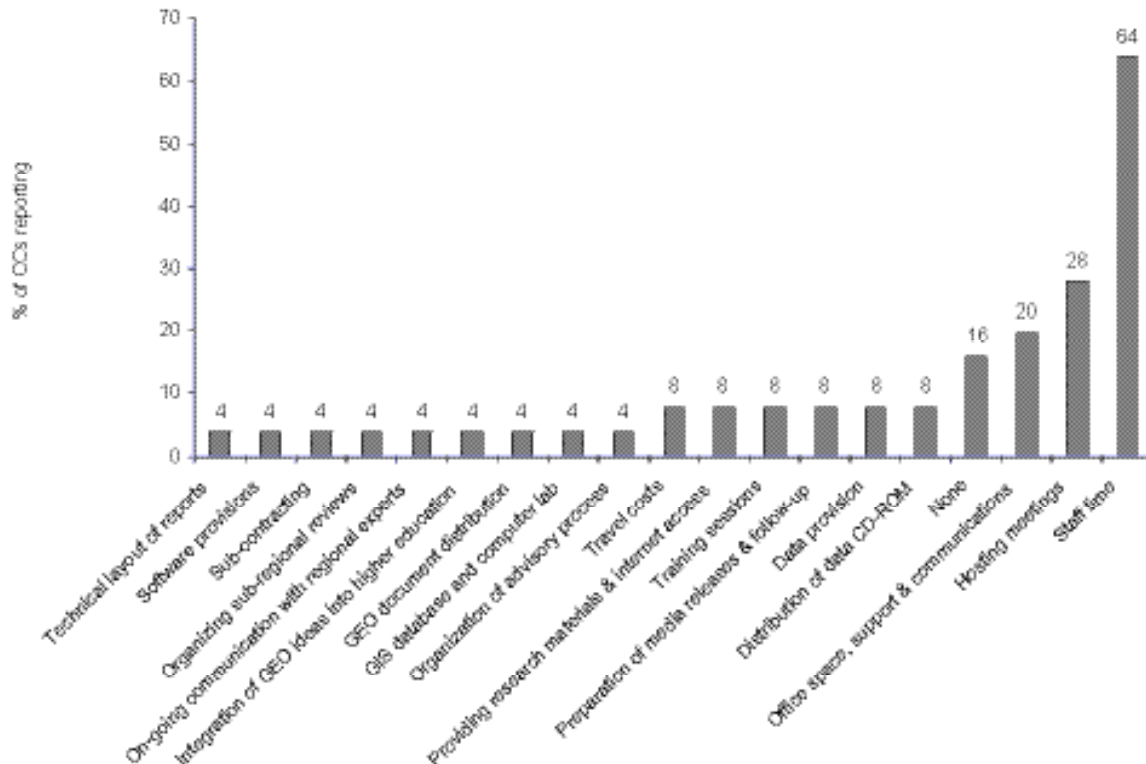
Figure 23: Level of senior management's support for GEO activities.



Please list the in-kind contribution made by your CC to the preparation of GEO-3 during 2000 and 2001. Note that in-kind contributions do not include activities paid for by UNEP under an MoU.

Most CCs reported in-kind contribution to GEO in the form of staff time, but in addition, there is a large variety of additional contributions, most significant of which include hosting GEO-related meetings, contributions associated with overhead costs such as office space and administrative support, or distribution of GEO and GEO-related products. There are CCs that also provided services related to their specialization, including data, GIS analysis, or the use of other specialised software.

Figure 24: In-kind contribution reported by CCs.



Did your CC's involvement in the GEO-3 process lead to the development of your organization's resources, such as research materials, software and/or computers, etc.?

74.1 per cent of CCs reported that participation in GEO leads to the development of their resources. Most of the gains were in terms of access to research materials, hardware and software. In a few cases GEO led to the broadening of existing research to new areas:

“Stimulated once more the broadening of ongoing scenario work and forced us again to think about presentation and significance of some of our findings.”

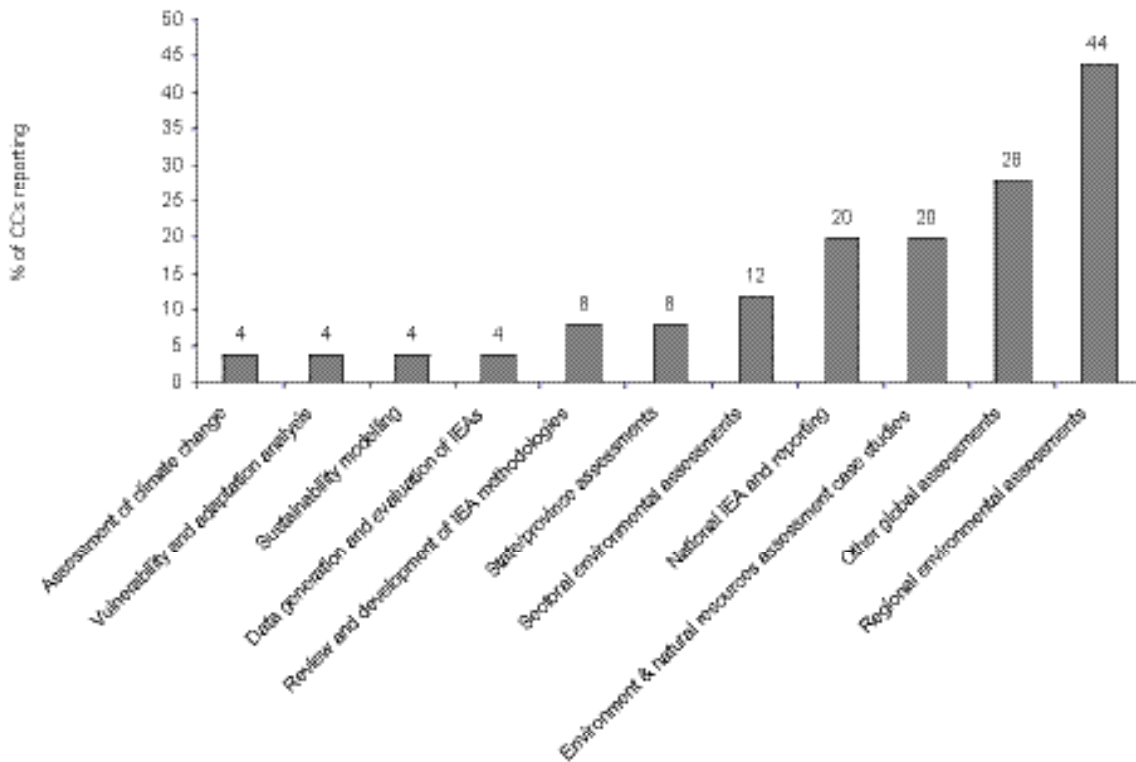
CCs that answered ‘no’ generally mentioned that they mainly used their organization’s existing resources.

Did your CC's involvement in the GEO-3 process lead to increased staff capacity and expertise to carry out IEA?

51.9 per cent of the CCs thought that involvement in GEO led to increased staff capacity and expertise to carry out IEA. Those reporting increased staff capacity mentioned, among other points, experience in various aspects of IEA, working on environmental issues in an international and global setting, and managing stakeholder participation.

Only two CCs provided an explanation for answering no, and they referred to their disappointment at not being included in GEO capacity-building activities or actually making a capacity contribution to GEO.

Figure 25: CC participation in non-GEO assessments.

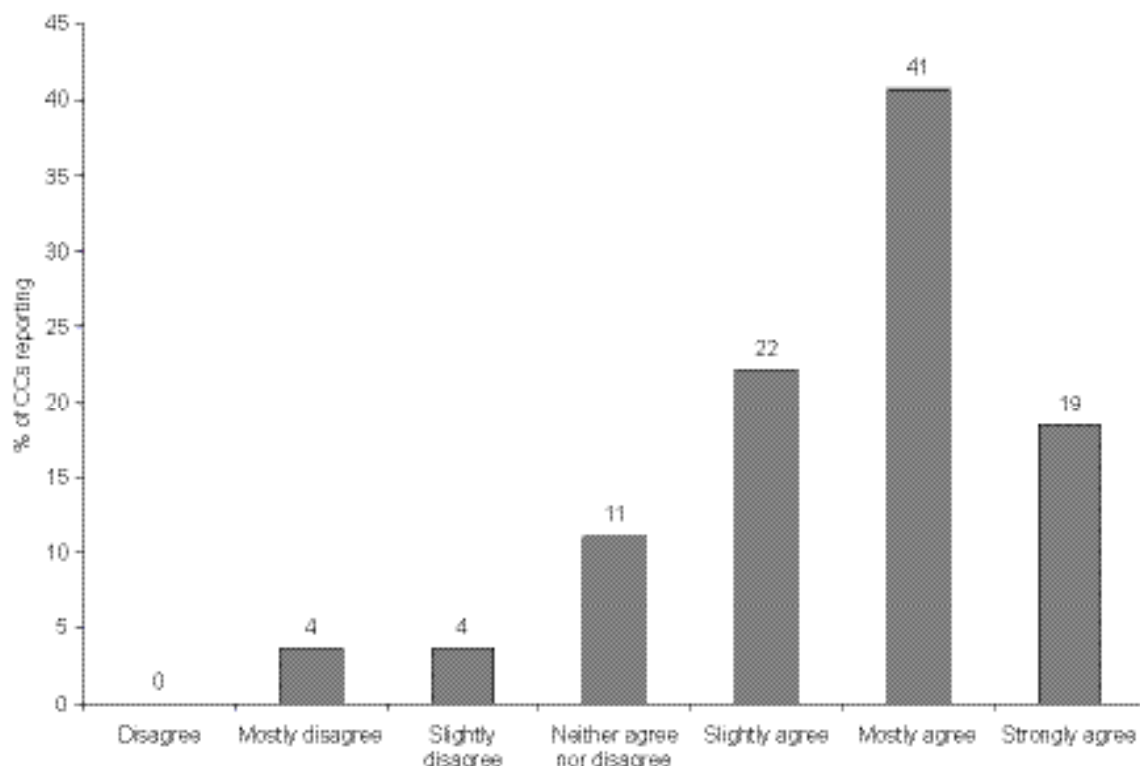


Does your CC carry out integrated environmental assessment work other than for GEO?

96.3 per cent of GEO CCs that answered this question reported involvement in IEAs other than GEO. Most of these were involved in regional assessments, but there are many CCs that participate in other assessment and reporting initiatives on the global, national, state/provincial or sectoral scale (Figure 25).

How far do you agree that the goals, objectives and responsibilities of your CC in GEO-3 were clearly defined?

Figure 26: Extent to which goals, objectives and responsibilities of CCs contributing to GEO were defined.



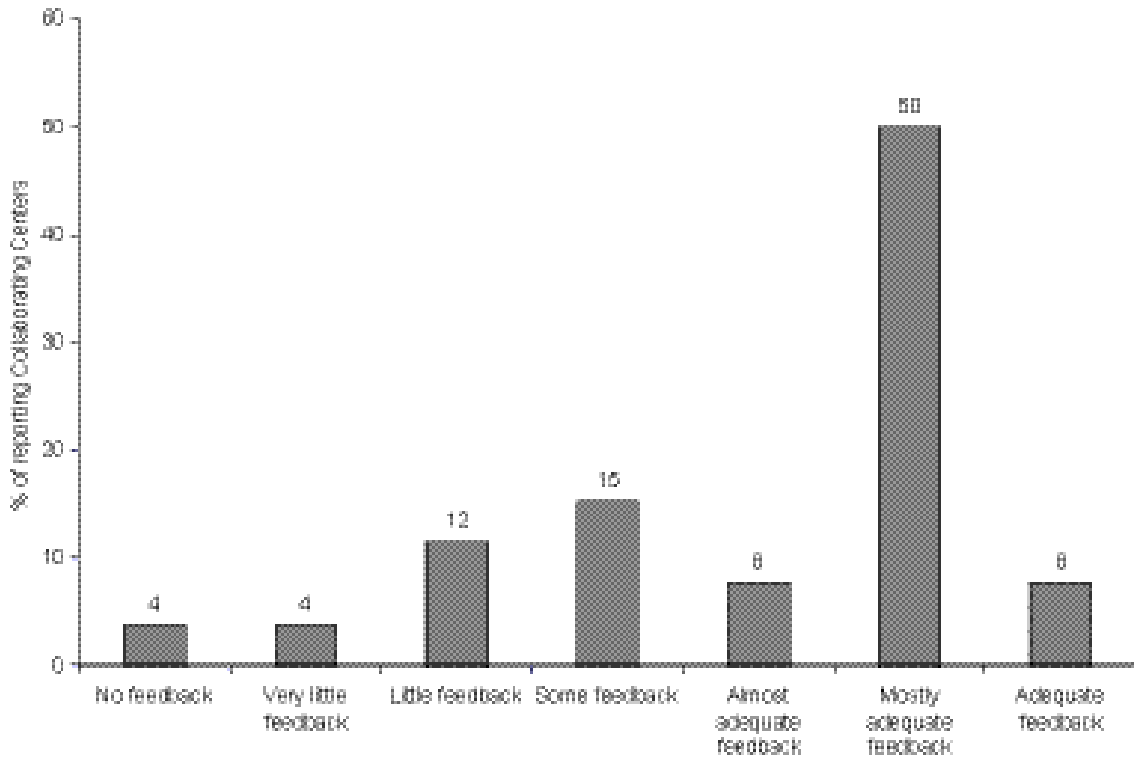
In order to be able to work effectively on individual tasks and together, GEO CCs need clear mandates and instructions from UNEP. Most CCs found the definition of their respective roles well defined, in accordance with their MoUs with UNEP (**Figure 26**).

However, many of the CCs made comments that also pointed to challenges with regard to understanding their role in the GEO process. Most commonly they referred to their roles shifting with regard to originally stated expectations as the GEO process unfolded and also mentioned the related uneven intensity of the process. Some of the difficulties arose from factors outside GEO, such as staff being familiar with GEO methods leaving in the middle of the process.

In your opinion, did your CC receive adequate feedback from UNEP regarding its contribution and performance during the assessment phase of preparation of the GEO-3 process?

Critical feedback – whether positive or negative – is essential to GEO’s success as a learning and evolving process. Feedback was expected from UNEP-Nairobi and Regional Offices. While the majority of CCs reported adequate feedback from UNEP, there were also clear indications for improvement (**Figure 27**).

Figure 27: Adequacy of feedback from UNEP during GEO-3.

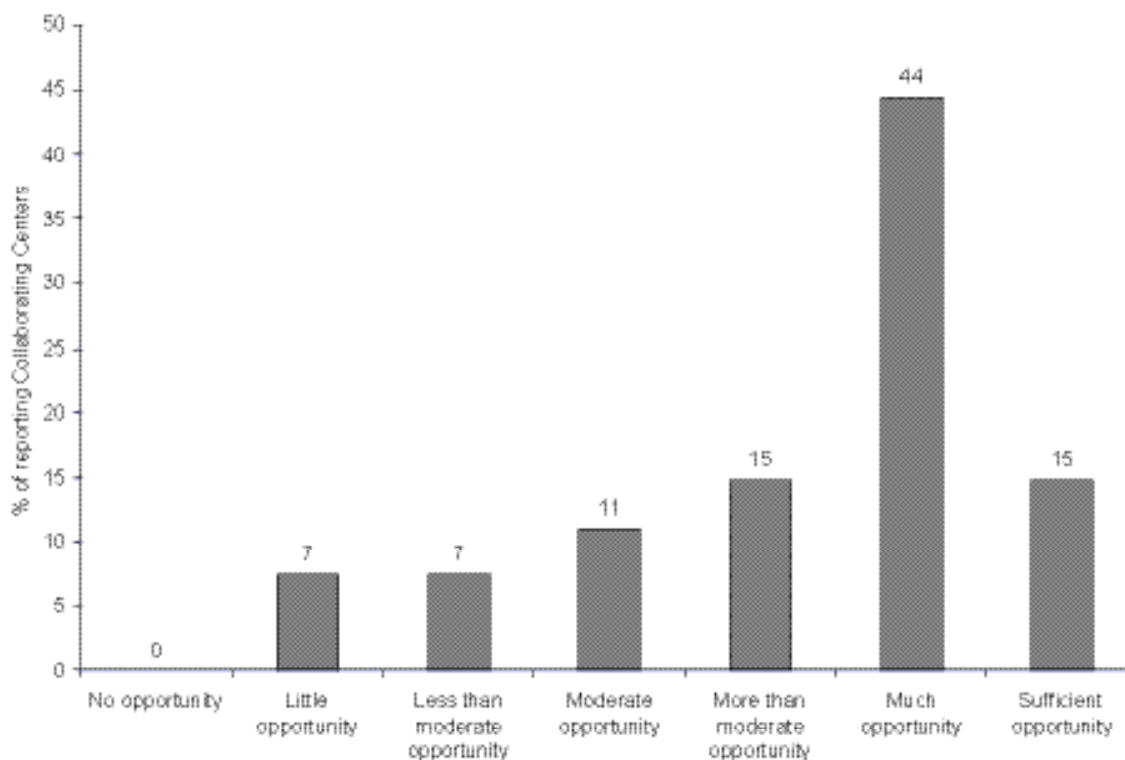


Based on the comments, feedback received from UNEP was weaker in the earlier phases of the process and intensified as deadlines were approached. A few CCs commented that they received no feedback on the quality of their inputs, thereby not having adequate sense of whether their submission met expectations.

In your opinion, was your CC given sufficient opportunity to provide feedback to UNEP during the preparation of GEO-3?

Satisfaction with opportunities for CCs to provide feedback to UNEP followed a largely similar pattern to satisfaction with feedback from UNEP (**Figure 28**). There were a few CCs that thought there was no opportunity to provide feedback or that UNEP should do more to seek feedback, particularly in early planning and final phases of the process. While CCs provided a generally favourable rating, they again expressed some concerns in their accompanying comments.

Figure 28: Adequacy of opportunity for CC to provide feedback to UNEP during GEO-3.



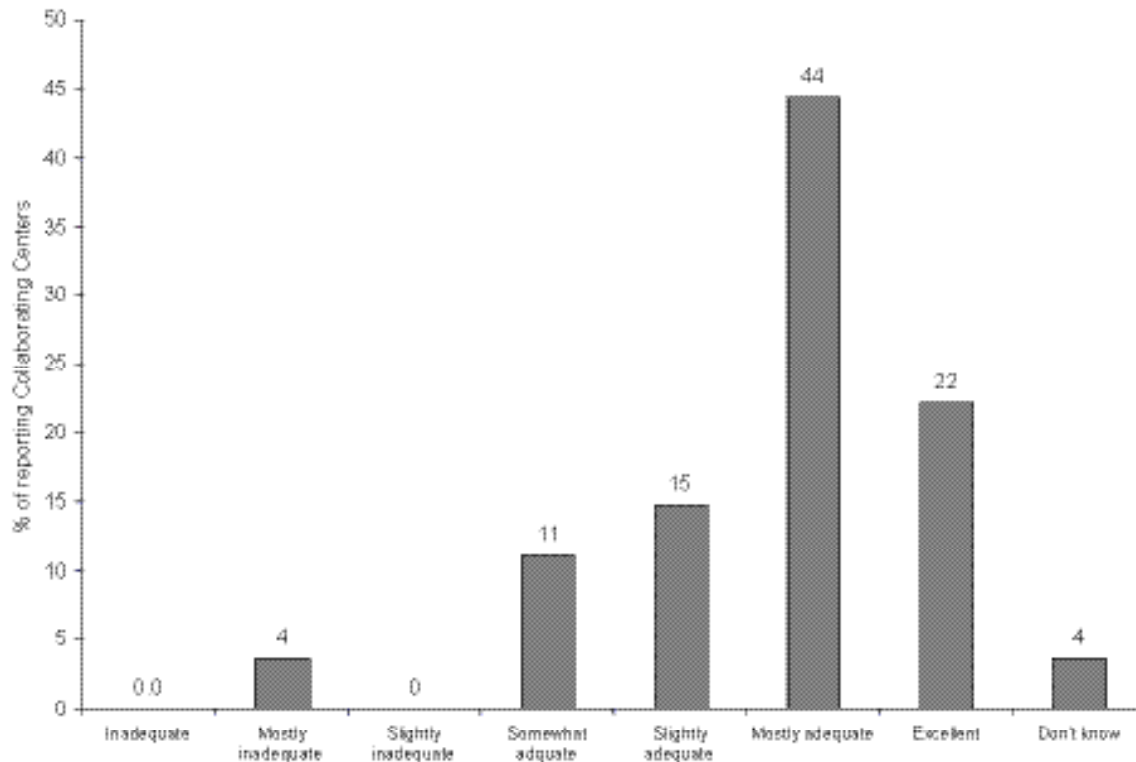
Several CCs mentioned that opportunity to provide feedback was sometimes constrained because of delays in submissions and the ensuing rush to meet deadlines towards the end of the process. Some were of the opinion that the problem with providing and receiving feedback was associated more with regularity of the process. As expressed by one CC:

“It was a lot like Kafka—sometimes the Castle answers the phone, and sometimes it doesn’t. Sometimes the Castle calls and asks a question, and sometimes it doesn’t.”

Overall, how would you rate communication between your CC and the GEO team (Nairobi headquarters and Regional Coordinator) throughout the entire GEO-3 process?

Figure 29 shows the distribution of responses to the question on communication between the GEO team and CCs. Over 70 per cent of respondents found communication with UNEP-HQ mostly adequate or excellent, and in addition around 30 per cent of respondents confirmed their satisfaction with regard to communication with the GEO team in their comments. Some of the respondents pointed to time and resource constraints and pointed out the lack of a GEO internet tool such as an electronic mailing list that would make communication much easier.

Figure 29: Adequacy of communication with GEO team throughout the GEO-3 process.

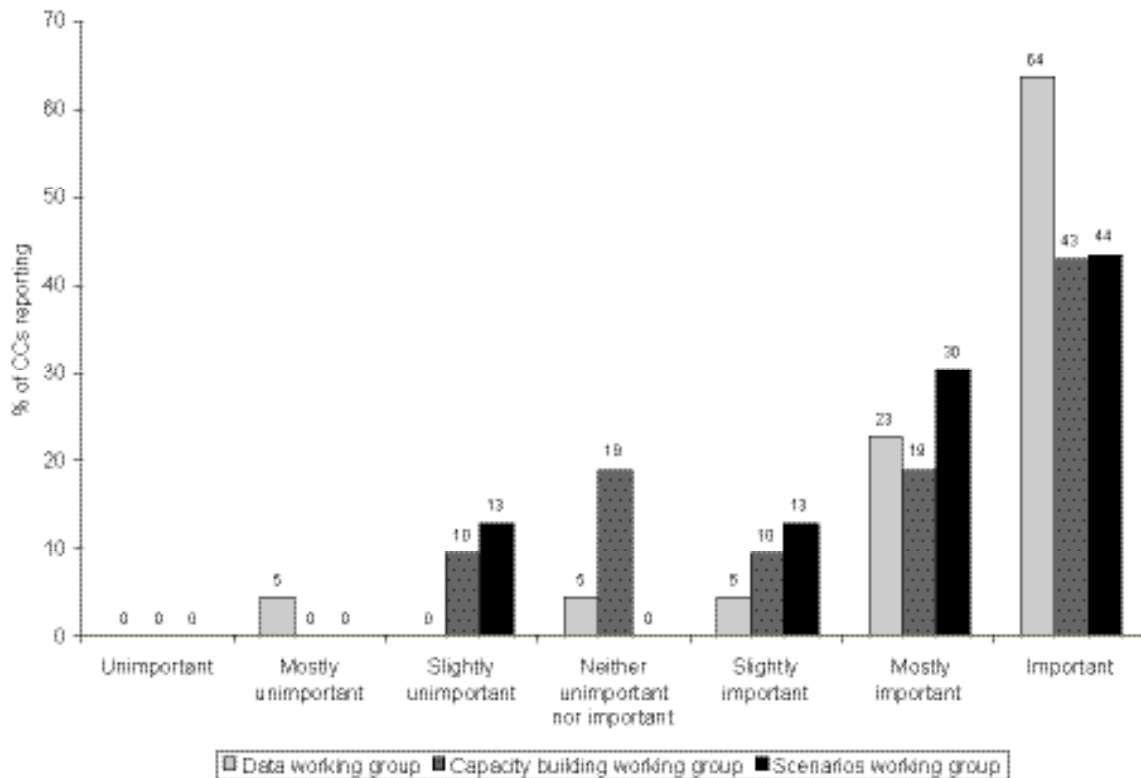


Indicate the importance of the following Working Groups: data, capacity building, scenarios, other.

Participants in the survey identified the Data Working Group as the most important, with the Scenario and Capacity Building groups coming second and third (**Figure 30**). It should be noted, as some respondents did in their comments, that the types and levels of activity in these Working Groups were quite different, ranging from training activities associated with the Scenario Group through advising the work on the GEO Data Portal by the Data Group to almost no activity in the Capacity Building Group.

These results should also be compared with those shown later in **Table 2** that indicate different patterns of activity in various activities associated with Working Groups. For instance, the activities of the Data Working Group received a high score here, even though over 30 per cent of CCs reported no involvement in its work.

Figure 30: Importance of selected GEO Working Groups.

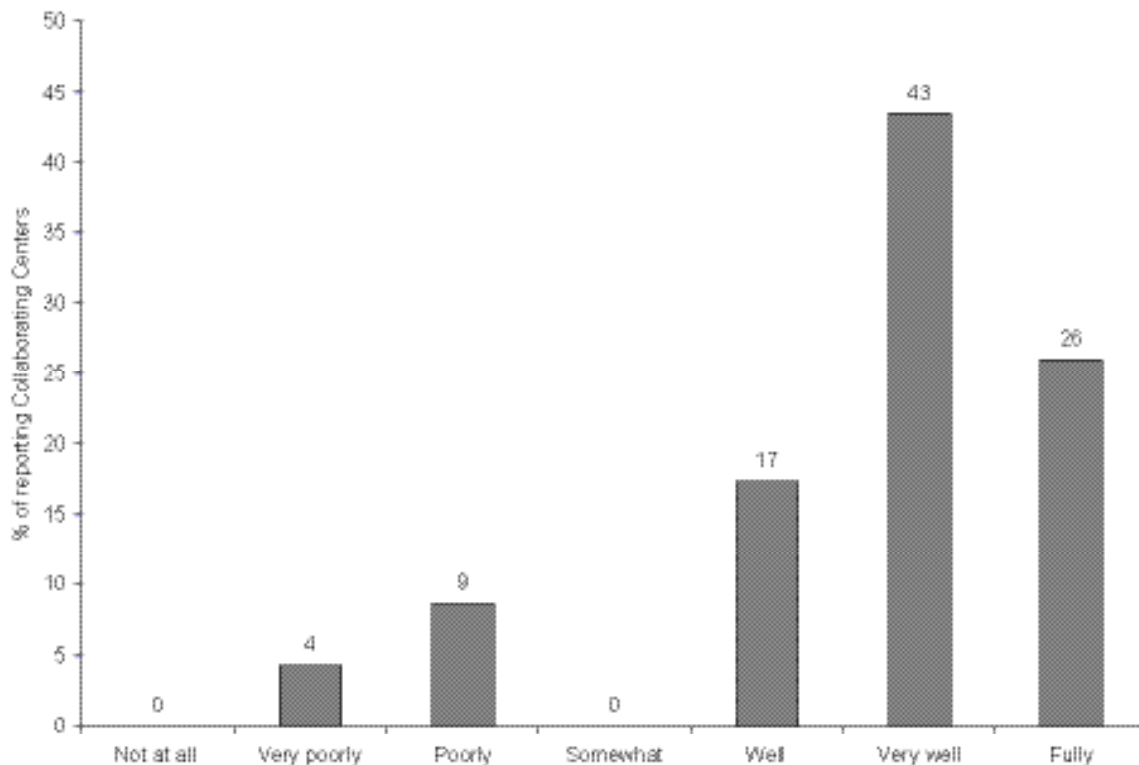


5.2. The GEO-3 process

To what degree did your CC follow GEO production guidelines provided by UNEP when preparing input to the GEO report?

Around 70 per cent of GEO CCs reported that they followed GEO production guidelines very well or fully, and provided additional confirmation in their comments (**Figure 31**). Some respondents pointed out that the guidelines changed during the GEO process, creating difficulties for those who had already produced results based on the earlier guidelines and format. Self-critically, a few CCs mentioned that following the guidelines was sometimes challenging and even admitted

Figure 31: Degree to which GEO guidelines were followed.



misreading them. As noted by one CC, the PSIR framework and the GEO guidelines need to be applied with some flexibility, depending on the issue and the available information.

Please indicate the degree of contribution of your CC to the following aspects/activities of GEO - 3 report preparation:

- **process planning;**
- **determining the structure of the GEO report;**
- **data collection;**
- **introduction and 30-year overview;**
- **integrated SoE and policy analysis;**
- **scenario analysis and/or modeling;**
- **vulnerability analysis;**
- **development of recommendations;**
- **regional consultations;**
- **capacity building;**
- **data working group;**
- **scenario working group;**
- **communication and publicity;**
- **other important aspect(s)**

The GEO process includes a sequence of activities some of which require the participation of all CCs, while others involve only a subset of them having specific interests or expertise. The question

above was meant to gauge the involvement of CCs in various aspects of the process and **Table 1** presents aggregated responses. While one can observe some general patterns, e.g. limited CC involvement in vulnerability analysis and substantive involvement in regional consultations, these could best be interpreted in the context of individual CCs where expectations are made clear in MoUs. Beyond that one can only raise questions such as whether broader involvement in vulnerability analysis would tend to benefit GEO in the future.

Apparently weak involvement in process planning and in determining the structure of the GEO report reflects earlier comments that called for more and earlier engagement of CCs with these issues.

Table 1: Contribution of CCs to specific aspects of the GEO-3 report preparation^a.

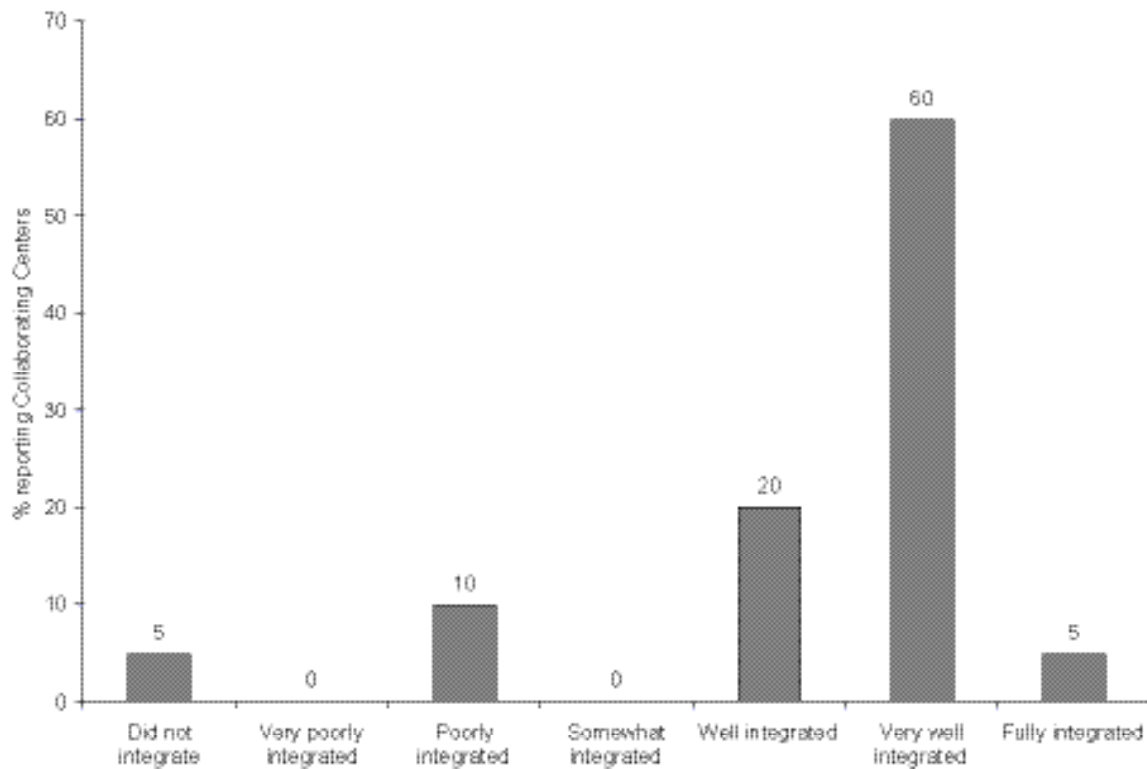
GEO process aspect	None	Little	Less than moderate	Moderate	More than moderate	Much	Substantial
Process planning	8	8	27	19	19	12	8
Determining structure of GEO report	12	0	31	19	19	12	8
Data collection	8	12	8	12	12	28	20
Introduction and 30-year overview	17	13	4	8	17	17	25
Integrated SoE and policy analysis	13	0	13	8	25	21	21
Scenario analysis and/or modelling	8	16	12	4	12	24	24
Vulnerability analysis	29	29	4	13	4	4	17
Development of recommendations	12	24	16	16	20	4	8
Regional consultations	0	0	8	12	8	28	44
Capacity building	17	8	17	8	17	17	17
Data working group	33	8	13	0	8	17	21
Scenario working group	17	8	17	0	17	25	17
Communication and publicity WG	22	17	17	13	17	9	4

The GEO-3 analysis required CCs to integrate SoE information and policy assessment. To what degree could your CC achieve this?

The majority of respondents thought that integration of SoE information and policy analysis had been achieved, even if there were some obstacles (**Figure 32**). The most commonly mentioned obstacle was the availability of good quality data, which is a major problem in most regions with the possible exception of North America and Europe. Another problem mentioned was establishing causal linkages between SoE outcomes and policies. As any given outcome is a result of many factors, attribution of success or failure to any given policy is difficult. This is an area where further research and capacity building is likely to be necessary.

Note: ^a as per cent of all reporting CCs; darker color corresponds to higher per cent

Figure 32: Degree of integration of SoE information, policy analysis and scenarios in GEO-3.

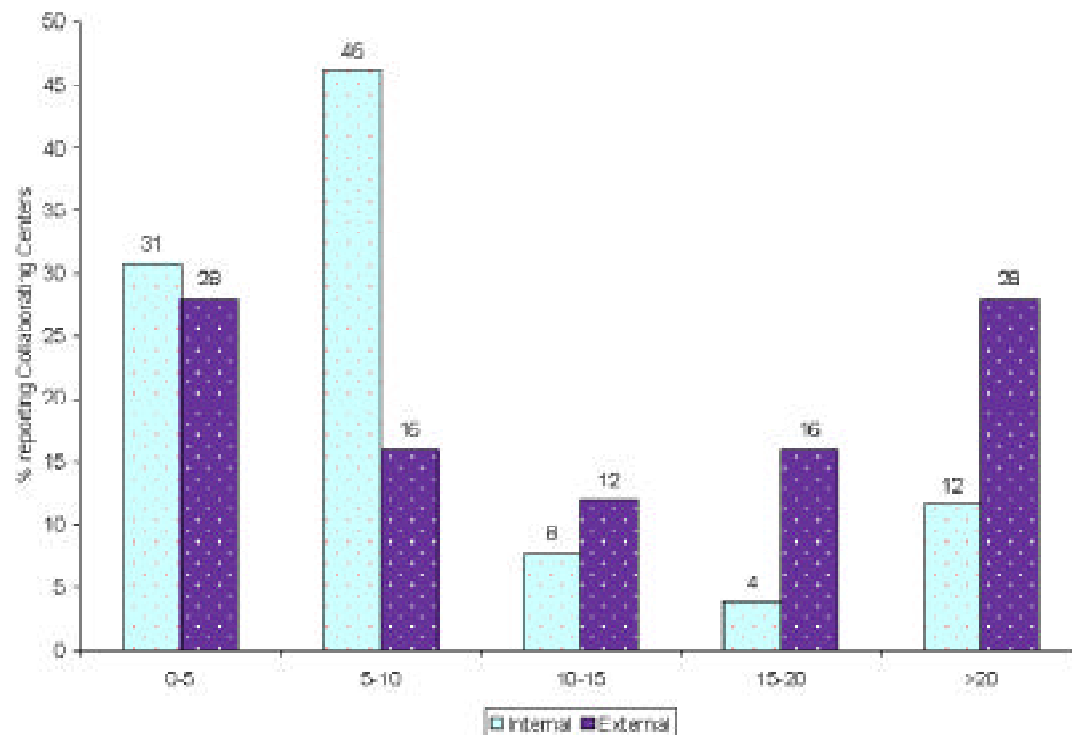


Please provide an estimate for the number of internal and external experts consulted during the preparation of your input for GEO-3.

Figure 33 provides a picture of the number of external and internal experts consulted during the GEO-3 process by CCs. The numbers include individual experts contacted, participants at regional consultations, and internal contributors and peer reviewers. A few CCs mentioned that time constraints limited their ability to conduct more extensive peer review of their outputs. This resonates with the views earlier expressed that pointed to weaknesses in peer review and quality control in GEO's assessment and reporting methods (**Figure 10**).

The pattern showing fewer CCs consulting larger number of in-house experts is not surprising, given the small to medium size of most CCs, as shown on **Figure 1**, that automatically puts a limit on the number of people providing feedback on GEO internally.

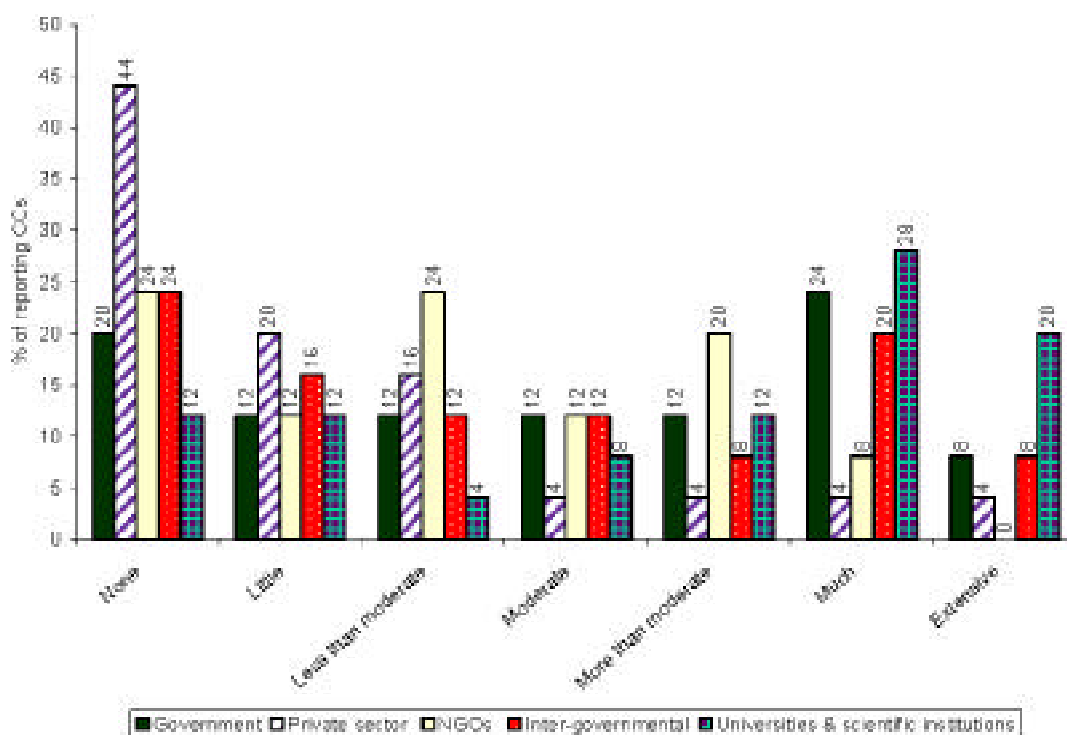
Figure 33: Estimate of number of internal and external experts consulted by CC during the preparation of GEO-3.



Please indicate the extent to which your CC engaged other organizations in your region in the GEO process

In addition to the number of participants, the type of organizations consulted provides additional important information because it helps to understand the character of GEO and the source of major influences on CCs. From the aggregate responses shown on **Figure 34** it is clear that the private sector is the least likely to be involved in the GEO process. The most likely to be consulted are academic and scientific institutions, intergovernmental and governmental bodies and the least likely the private sector.

Figure 34: Involvement of other organizations in the GEO-3 process.

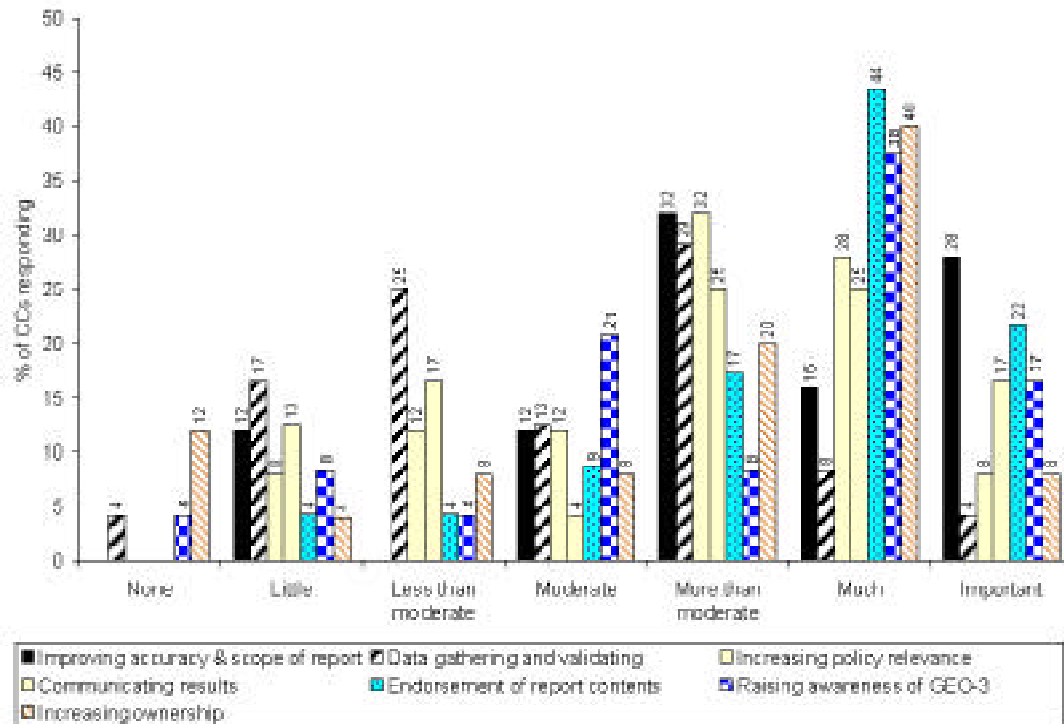


To what extent did the following aspects of the Regional Consultations contribute to specific aspects of the GEO-3 Process:

- improving accuracy and scope of report;
- data gathering and validating;
- increasing policy relevance;
- communicating results;
- endorsement of report contents;
- raising awareness of GEO-3;
- increasing 'ownership' of process and products amongst a wide range of stakeholders;
- others, please specify.

On the basis of the responses received, CCs seem to think that regional consultations help to improve policy relevance, strengthen endorsement of the GEO report, increase ownership among invited participants, and play an important awareness-raising role (Figure 35). Consultations are less likely to help with data gathering and validating, perhaps mainly because by the time consultations are held many data gaps have been filled or are not indicated in the drafts put forward.

Figure 35: Contribution of regional consultations to the GEO-3 process.



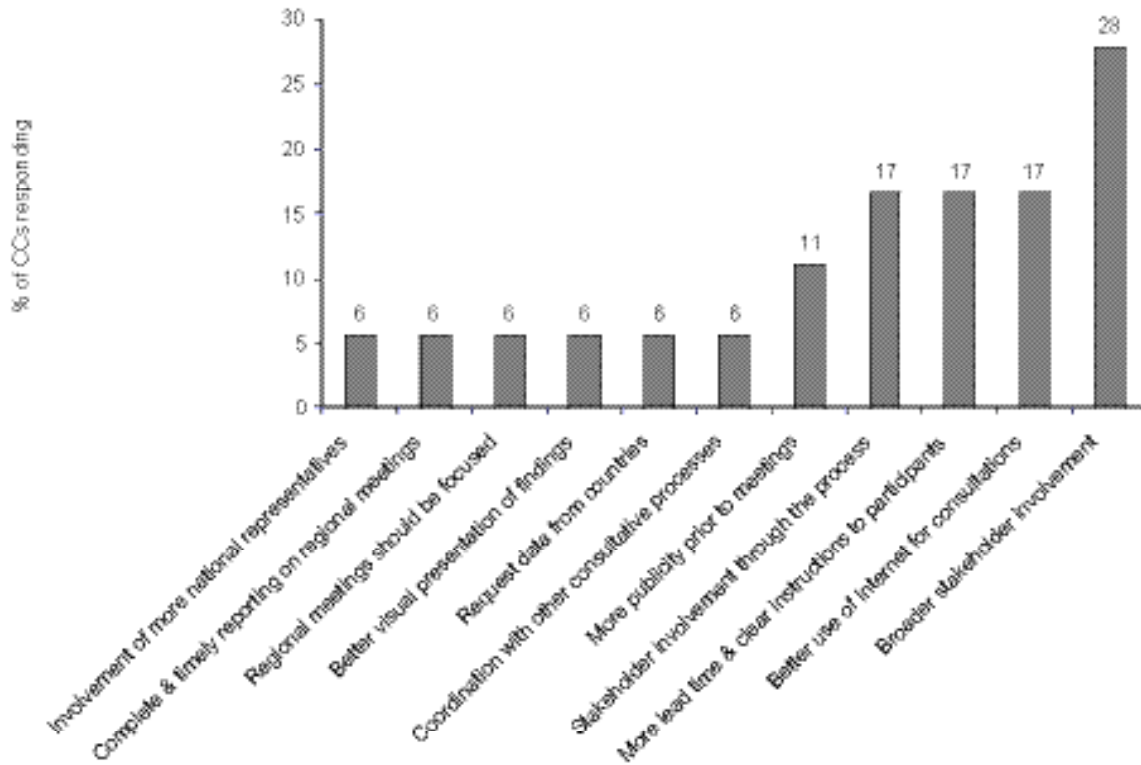
Have you any suggestions for making the consultative process more effective?

The most common suggestion from respondents was that the involvement of stakeholders should be strengthened (**Figure 36**). This could involve increasing the number of participants in consultations and more focused efforts to engage sectors that are often less represented, such as NGOs or the private sector.

Additional suggestions were provided for improving the quality of the consultations by more regular stakeholder participation throughout the entire GEO process instead of a one-off meeting towards the end. In particular, up-front consultation in the early scoping phases of the assessment may be valuable and help to ensure focus on key priorities and increase policy relevance. Consultations may also be coordinated with other consultative processes that CCs are involved in, such as the consultations carried out by the European Environment Agency (EEA) for its regional reports.

The better use of the Internet for communicating with stakeholders should be explored. Consultations are also likely to be more effective if participants are given sufficient lead time and more easily readable drafts, including visuals rather than text and numbers only. Better utilization of the GEO data portal, which only became fully functional towards the end of the GEO-3 process, should offer some important opportunities in terms of creating clear and attractive but simple graphics.

Figure 36: Suggestions for making the consultation process more effective.

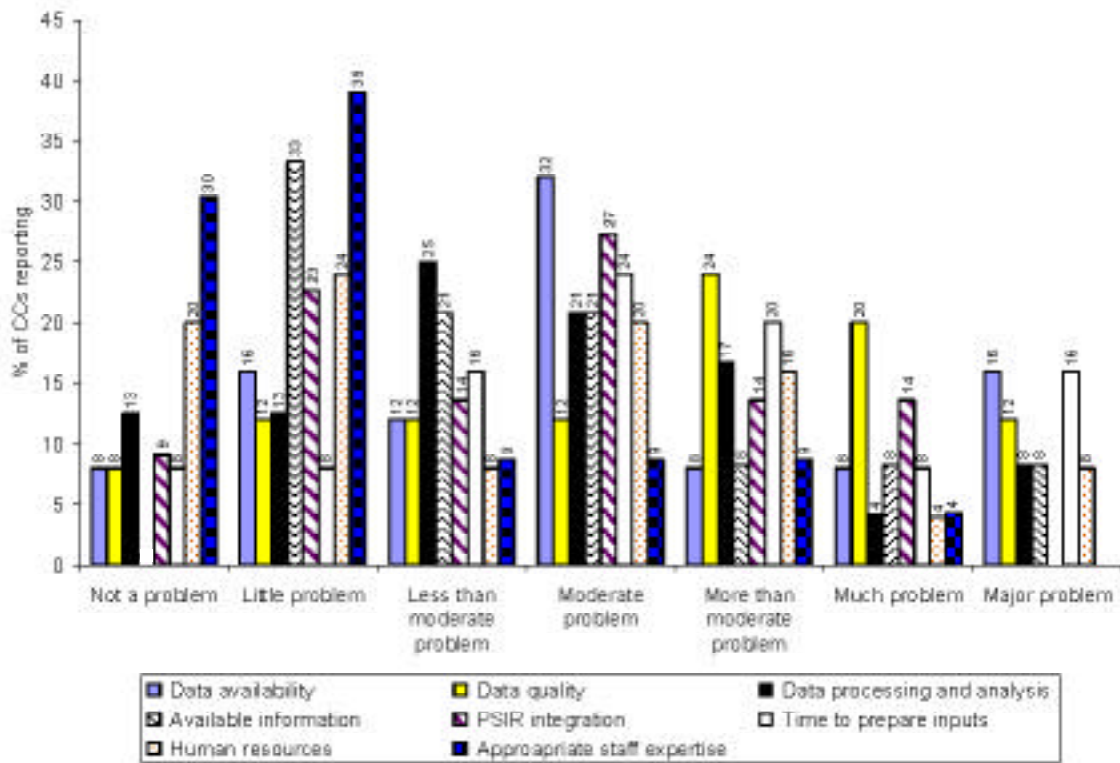


To what extent have any of the following been a problem for your CC when providing GEO-3 inputs:

- **data availability;**
- **data quality;**
- **data processing and analysis;**
- **information availability;**
- **PSIR integration;**
- **time to prepare inputs;**
- **available human resources;**
- **available staff expertise;**
- **other (please explain).**

As expected given the diverse character and often different tasks of GEO CCs, the problems experienced varied (**Figure 37**). There was some convergence of opinion that staff expertise and human resource were less of a problem, while, consistent with views expressed in other sections of the survey, CCs reported data quality and to a lesser degree data and information availability as being of concern.

Figure 37: Problems experienced when providing GEO-3 inputs.



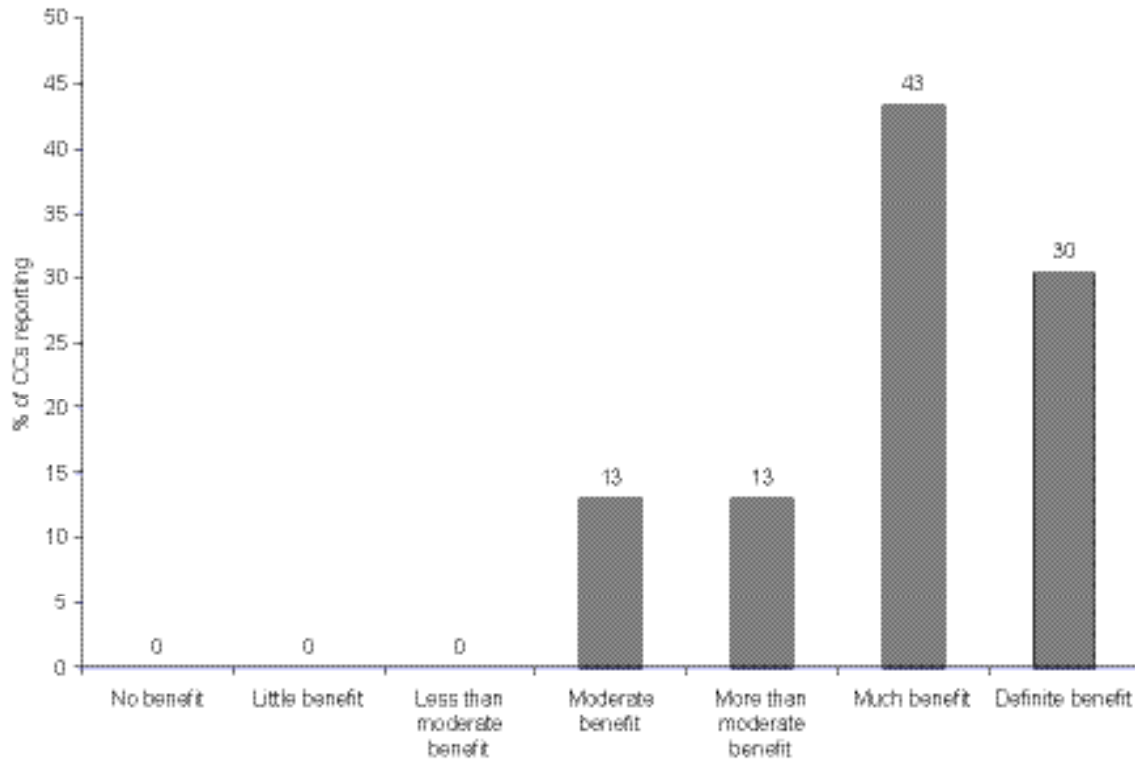
Would your regional assessment for GEO benefit from having a clearly identifiable core set of GEO indicators?

CCs expressed a clear preference for having a core set of GEO-specific indicators (Figure 38). Indicators were seen as being useful in guiding the data collection and analytic process and strengthening harmonization across regions. Some CCs, however, warned that indicators in IEA are only tools and do not replace, but only complement qualitative information and analysis.

Indicators were seen as useful only if they are limited in number, or if global-scale indicators are linked to regional or sub-regional indicator sets and processes. Several CCs are already engaged in indicator initiatives and mentioned the possibility to link these to GEO, but only if there is consensus on regional issues and priorities before indicators are defined:

“Clearly defined set of indicators would be useful. However, it would be more useful to have the issues for the region defined before preparing sub-regional reports otherwise the sub-regional reports are prepared and sent to whoever is doing the regional integration, but ignored because the issue is not important to anybody else.”

Figure 38: Potential benefit from having a core set of GEO indicators.



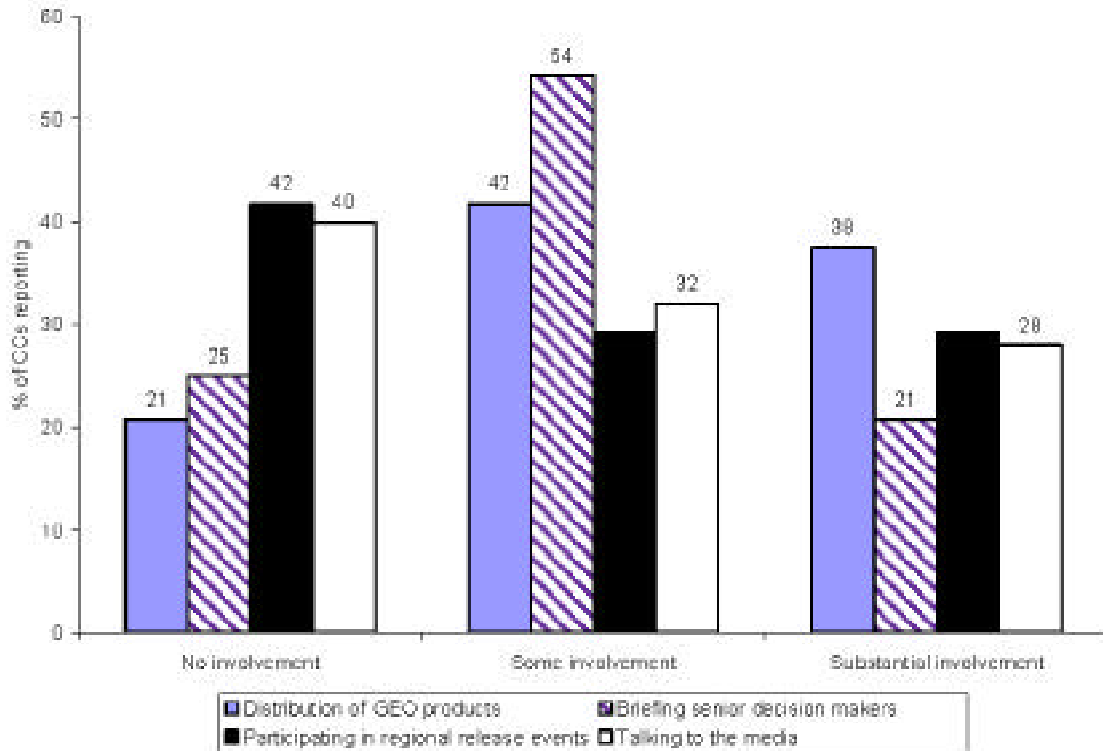
Please indicate the degree of your CC's involvement in the following aspects of raising awareness about GEO:

- **distribution of GEO products;**
- **briefing senior decision makers;**
- **participation in regional release events;**
- **talking to the media;**
- **other, please specify.**

CCs, through their regional and professional networks, represent a very significant opportunity to raise the profile of the GEO process and products (**Figure 39**). It is clear there are major opportunities for involving CCs more actively in publicizing the GEO process and products.

Almost half of the CCs were not talking to the media at all about GEO and not participating in the release of GEO products. The situation seemed to be somewhat better with regard to briefing senior decision-makers and distributing GEO products, but even in that case 20-25 per cent of CCs reported no involvement at all. Keeping at least intermediate level officials informed about progress throughout the GEO process could help to build GEO's profile more than publicity concentrated only around release events and may offer another important opportunity for CC involvement.

Figure 39: Degree of CC involvement in GEO-related awareness raising activities.



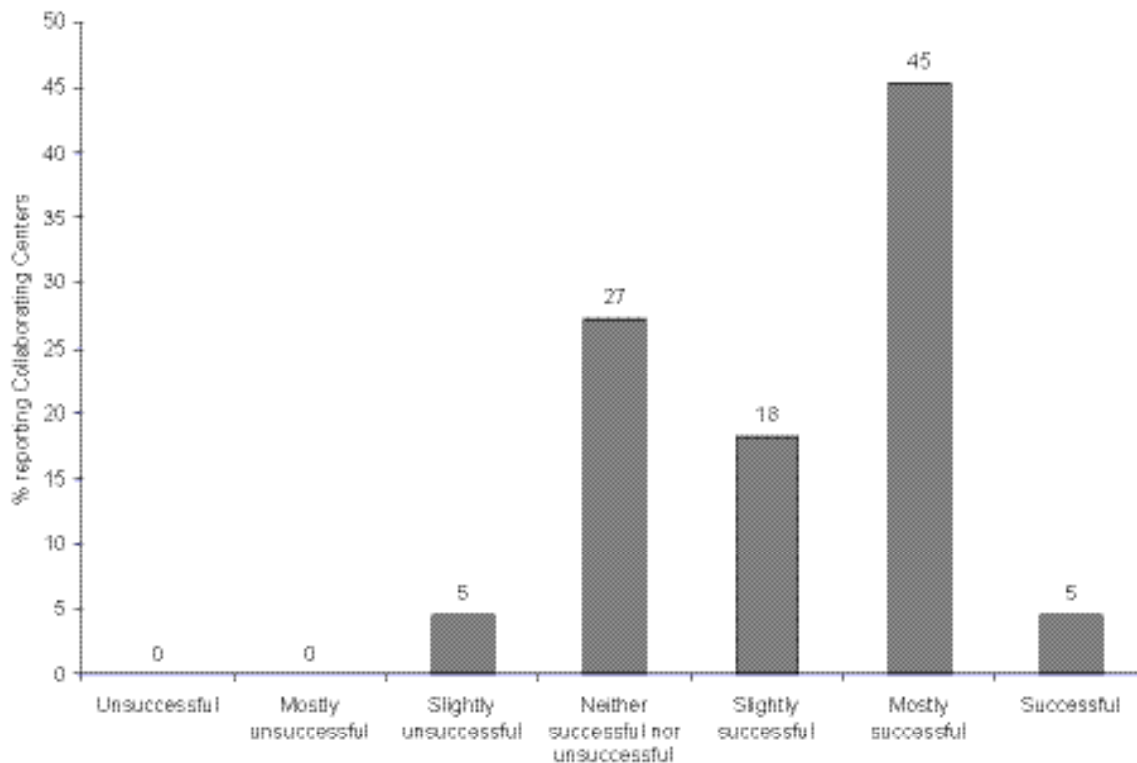
How successful was your CC in balancing policy relevance and scientific credibility in the GEO-3 process?

Almost 50 per cent of respondents considered balancing policy relevance and scientific credibility in GEO-3 successful (**Figure 40**). Some respondents expressed concern about their ability to make an objective judgment:

“I believe we did our best, but it is not for us to be our own judges.”

In their comments many pointed out that even if compromises had to be made, keeping to the dual requirements of policy relevance and scientific credibility were at the core of CC activities. A better link to development issues and social goals could be achieved, for example if there were *“clearer policy questions to lead the analysis, more formal review, and more time to connect the 1972-2002 retrospective and the 2002-2032 outlook”*.

Figure 40: Degree of success achieved by CC in balancing policy relevance and scientific credibility in GEO.



5.3. Capacity development issues

Capacity building activities in GEO were aimed both at CCs and external audiences, such as regional or national organizations and experts involved or planning to be involved in IEA. They also included a range of activities to address different dimensions of capacity, such as human resource development or resource allocation. Specifically, capacity building in the context of GEO-3 involved, among others, funding to hire staff or purchase software, participation in training workshops, and providing access to data and information.

How important is continuous capacity building to maintaining GEO as a flagship global assessment and reporting programme?

There was almost unanimous agreement that continuous capacity building is essential for the success of GEO, with the obvious footnote that some CCs, particularly in North America and Europe, act more as providers than recipients of capacity-building activities (**Figure 41**).

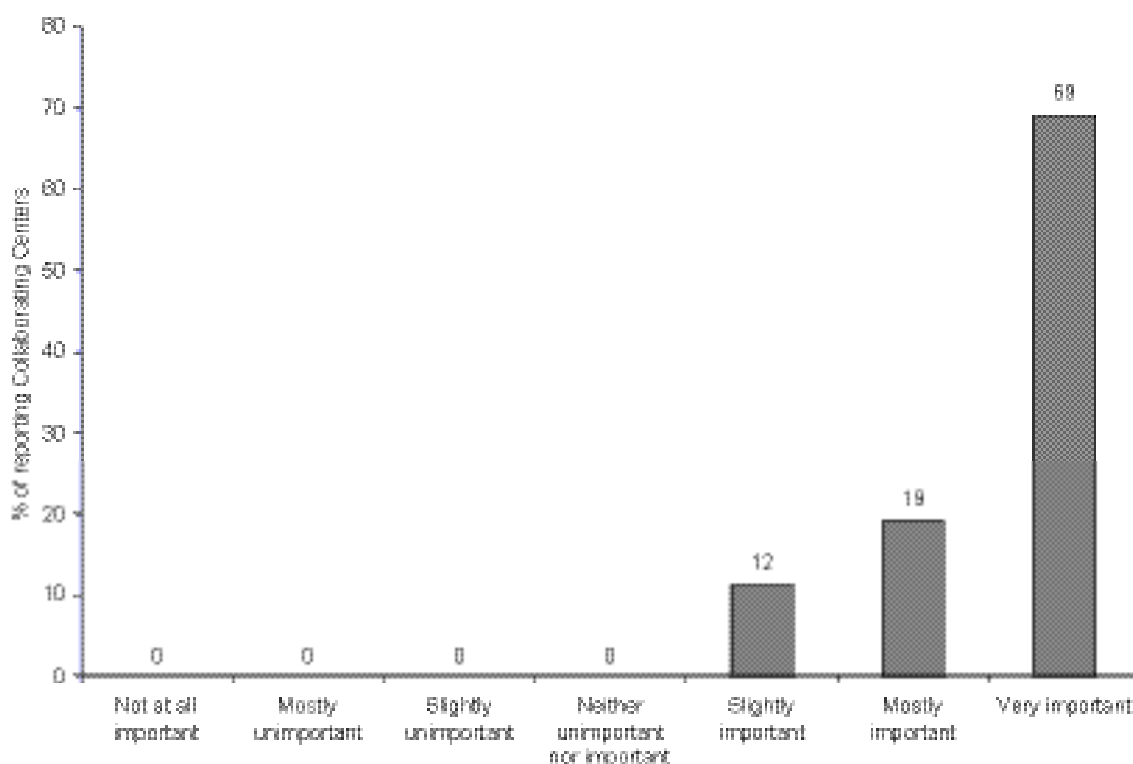
In their comments CCs pointed to GEO's original design as a learning-by-doing process in which capacity building was meant to play a central role. The areas mentioned where capacity building is particularly important include data analysis, integrated policy assessment and scenario analysis.

Capacity building can serve to make GEO more a process than an event, and also help link the global process with regional, sub-regional and national processes, as in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC):

“Compilation/analysis/editing of data, information and other sources for GEO assessment and reporting is already a continuous necessity, given the linkages between regional (including national and sub-regional) and global GEO reports. The GEO-LAC-2 & GEO-3 case is a good example: initial drafts for GEO-3 were developed in late 2000, early 2001, presented for regional consultations in April 2001, perfected for GEO-3 and then practically non-stop developed further (with updates on all relevant sources) for GEO-LAC-2 CC consultations in February 2002, and since then further developed and updated for final editing and publication. Meanwhile, other sub-regional and national GEO reports are keeping CCs busy.”

As some respondents pointed out, capacity building should not be limited to training; longer GEO cycles may provide an opportunity for new types of capacity building, such as staff exchanges among CCs.

Figure 41: Importance of continuous capacity building to the success of GEO.



The funding levels available are adequate to ensure effective contribution of my CC to the GEO process.

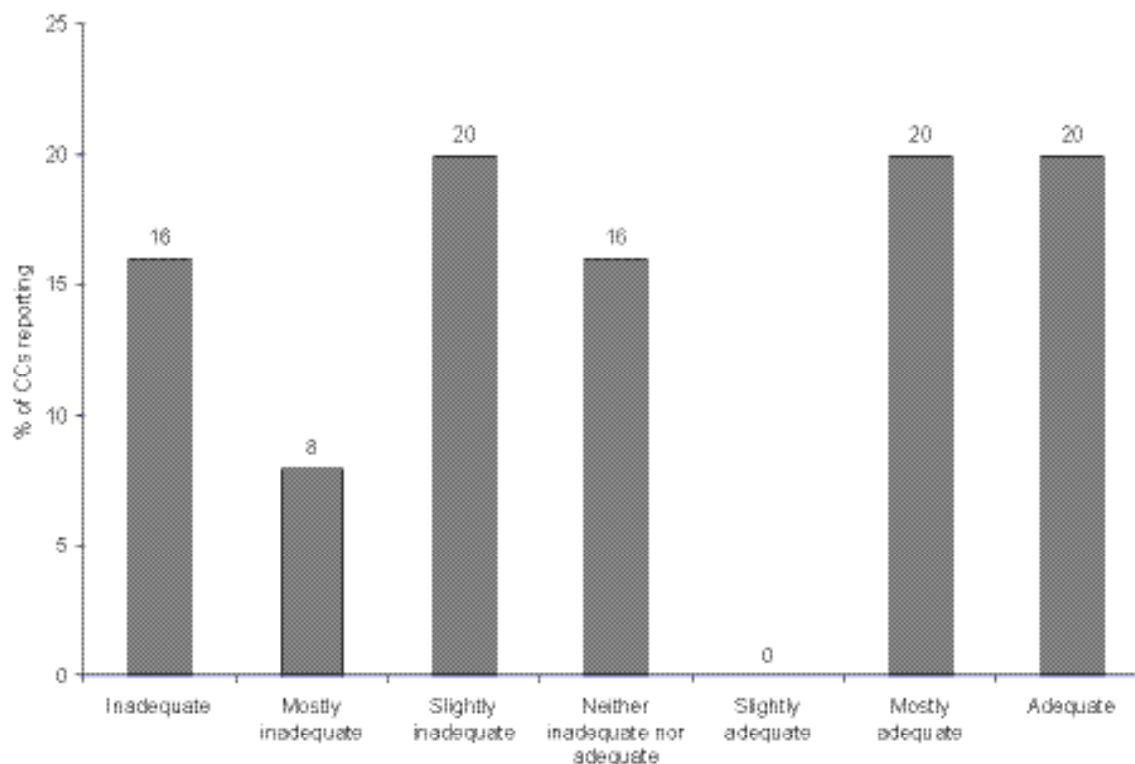
Respondents were almost equally divided in their opinion with regard to the adequacy of funding for GEO-related work (**Figure 42**). Perhaps most importantly, many pointed out that even if funding were adequate or marginally adequate for the current level of activities, making GEO truly a process would require significantly increased funding:

“To take it to the next level of participation, capacity-building, provision of web-based resources, etc., will require more funding and perhaps redirected funding.”

This is obviously an issue for developing country CCs, but also for CCs based in developed countries but not having access to core funding for GEO, such as most NGOs.

More continuity in the GEO process would also require more continuity of funding, not limited to the production phases of global GEO reports. Activities that may require additional funding include data collection and improvement of analytic capabilities. Increased funding would be also required for more inclusive regional consultations, involving a larger number of stakeholders.

Figure 42: Adequacy of available funding to ensure effective CC contribution to GEO.

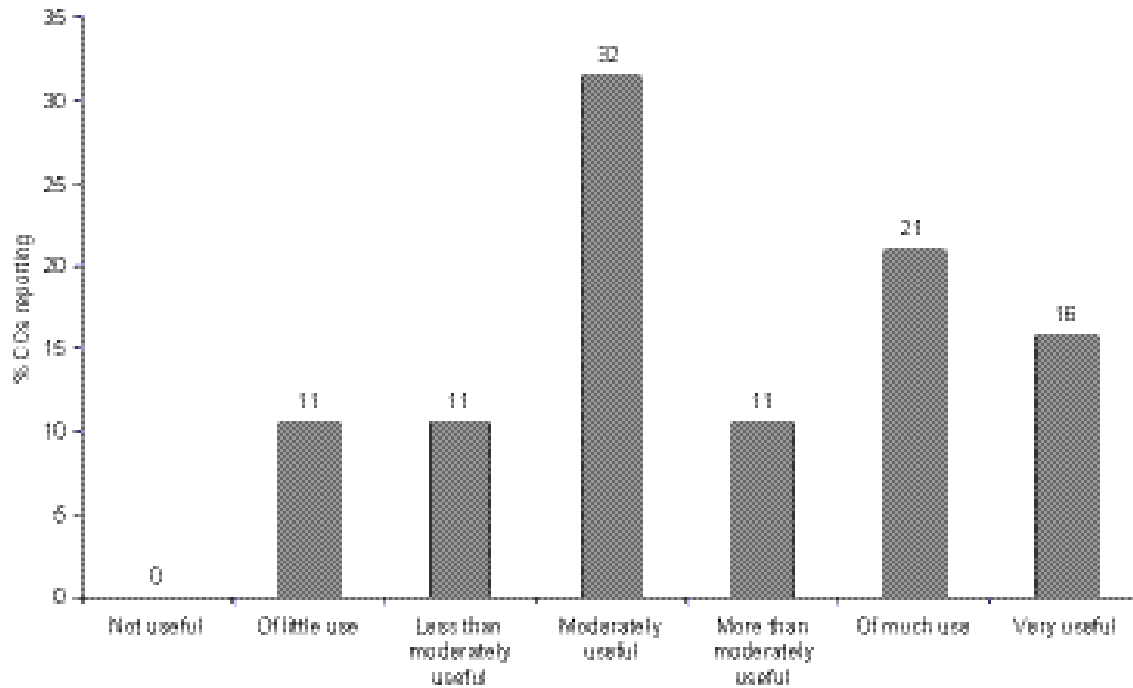


Please rate the usefulness of training and capacity building initiatives under GEO for your CC.

*While tending to rate capacity building as useful, as shown on **Figure 43**, many respondents commented that they took part in only one or two such activities, most commonly training on presentation tools and scenario analysis. Some went beyond training sessions and mentioned the importance of global GEO meetings and their usefulness for capacity building.*

The overall impression gathered from the rating and responses confirms conclusions from previous capacity questions: capacity building is an essential component of the GEO process, but there is clearly a need for better understanding and response to the needs of CCs than was the case during GEO-3. This is particularly important as the GEO cycle is likely to change and if GEO is indeed to become more process oriented.

Figure 43: Usefulness of training and capacity building initiatives for CC.



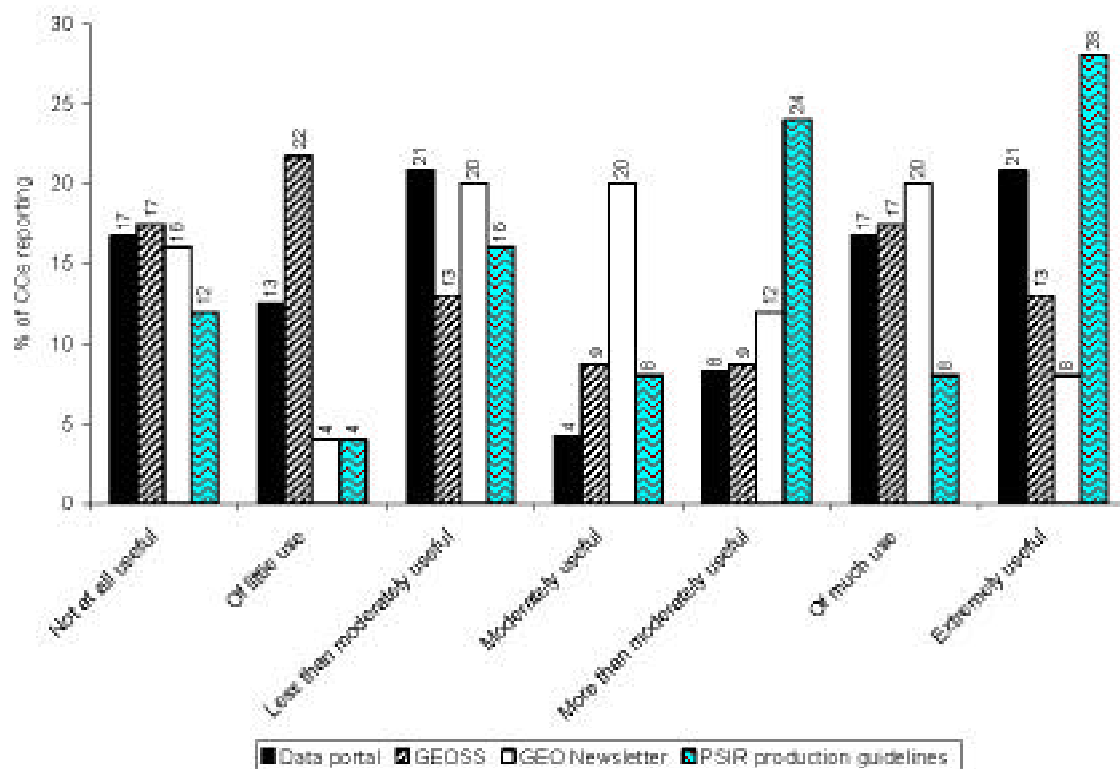
5.4. Production support in GEO-3

How useful did you find the following in your work on GEO-3:

- **Data portal;**
- **GEOSS**
- **GEO Newsletter;**
- **PSIR production guidelines;**
- **Other, please specify.**

Opinions on the usefulness of the GEO support tools and services mentioned were divided (**Figure 44**). What is notable is that a significant number of CCs considered some of the tools as not or only marginally useful; GEOSS in particular seems to be in this category. In the absence of detailed comments it is not possible to elaborate on the causes of low ratings, but it would be advisable to consult CCs about the need for these and possibly other tools and services as the new design for the GEO process emerges.

Figure 44: Usefulness of selected GEO services.



5.5. General comments

Please provide suggestions for improving the GEO process for GEO-4

As expected, responses to this question resulted in very wide-ranging comments, often repeating previously elaborated positions. There were, however, a few exceptions where CCs made recommendations that were often very specific.

Table 2 below provides a generalized summary of the responses, including the frequency of the particular responses received in the last column. For easier navigation, issues that are mentioned most are shown at the top of the table.

Table 2: General comments.

No.	Issue Score ^a	Explanation	
1	Funding	Strengthen fundraising and significantly increase funding	●●●●●●
2	Strengthen CC network	Multi-year programme aimed at strengthening North-South and South-South collaboration	●●●●●●
3	Indicators	Develop / adopt suitable systematic framework and indicators for GEO	●●●●
4	Process planning	More CC involvement in GEO process design and more up-front clarity on schedules	●●●●
5	Capacity planning	Intensify capacity-building activities	●●●
6	Communication strategy	Develop communication strategy for GEO and enable CCs to play a more active role to ensure increased coverage	
7	GEO Data Portal	Improve functionality of GEO Data Portal, considering merging with WRI's Earth Trends portal and collaborating in related capacity building	●●●
8	GEO cycle	Lengthen GEO cycle	●●●
9	Strengthen	Make GEO an ongoing programme rather than GEO's mandate just a project	●●
10	Regional boundaries	Ensure that regional boundaries correspond to boundaries accepted by other main relevant organizations	●●
11	Improve focus	Formulate policy questions and determine key issues to be dealt with in GEO early in the programme	●●
12	GEO maturity	GEO process and products are well established and recognized	●●
13	Taking a position	Need for GEO to take a clear position on key issues	●●
14	Time availability	Increase time available for preparing input and consultations	●●
15	Signing off	CCs to sign off on final version to ensure requested corrections have been made	●●
16	Peer review	Strengthen peer review	●
17	Country	Direct involvement of more developing countries involvement in GEO process	●
18	Reporting on process	More timely reporting on GEO meetings	●
19	Annual statement	Publish annual thematic GEO statements	●
20	Timely access to GEO products	Ensure GEO products are available to CCs prior to release events	●
21	Emerging issues	Pay more attention to emerging issues	●

22	Involvement in global analysis	More CC involvement in the discussion of global issues	●
23	Regional leadership	Identify lead CC for each sub-region	●
24	CC team building	CCs to have more than one person involved in GEO	●
25	UNEP capacity	Ensure GEO Team human resources capacity at UNEP HQ is stabilized	●
26	Advisory body	Establish high-level science policy advisory body for GEO	●
27	Working Groups	Revitalize GEO Working Groups	●

Note: ^a number of CCs that mention issue



6. Conclusions

The purpose of this project was to help UNEP revisit the GEO process and approach from the perspective of GEO CCs, and to help evaluate individual CC performance and UNEP's own role. Evaluation, learning and subsequent adaptation have been considered important aspects of GEO and this exercise is expected to provide input to the planning process for the future of the GEO system as it enters its fourth cycle.

Providing a coherent view of a complex and ambitious process, such as GEO, on the basis of perspectives of organizations as different as the GEO CCs has been a challenging task. This complexity was further increased by the very detailed questionnaire and the high response rate. However, despite the richness of data, a convergence of opinion on key issues could often be identified. While not being exhaustive, the points below try to capture, and to a limited degree, interpret the essence of the responses to the SWOT and subsequent questions.

Upgrading the GEO system

GEO, by its third cycle, has gained wide recognition as an authoritative UNEP flagship report on the status and direction of the global environment. Participation in a process with a UN mandate is valued by CCs, and has helped to increase their capacity and recognition. However, many CCs pointed out that, at current levels of effort, the GEO process may not live up to its full potential in terms of its dual objectives of producing GEO reports on a two-year cycle and building real and sustainable capacity for IEA in the regions. There is an emerging need to rethink GEO's approach on a longer term programmatic rather than a short-term project basis.

Niche and coordination with other assessments

Because of GEO's broad scope and partial overlap with other assessment processes in the multilateral system, GEO's relationship with these other processes should receive continuous attention. This applies to other global and also regional and even sub-regional assessments as well as thematic assessments, many of which fall under the authority of UNEP.

GEO process and network

While the participatory aspects of the GEO process were met with general support, several CCs experienced their involvement in GEO as a stop-go process rather than a continuous and systematic construction of knowledge and

capacity. Many CCs would like to see earlier involvement in process planning, more regular interaction throughout the process, and opportunities for more substantial involvement of stakeholders and policymakers in regional consultations.

More frequent and substantive cooperation among network members should be engineered to help build capacity and carry out research and assessment work that can directly strengthen global, regional and sub-regional assessments using the GEO approach.

Methodology development

Although many respondents expressed support for the IEA approach underlying the global GEO report, there is a need for more work on several of its elements, particularly to improve data management and analysis and, closely related, on core indicators that are applicable throughout the GEO report. Other critical methodological issues include the further development of integrated policy analysis methods and analysis of policy options on the basis of alternative future scenarios.

Scientific quality control

The scientific quality of the input of GEO CCs varied, partly as a result of capacity differences. While this can be expected in the first cycles of the GEO report, the questions of scientific quality and quality control should receive serious attention as GEO matures. This may require more rigorous peer review and selection of individual contributing authors to GEO at CCs.

Capacity building

Besides its goal to produce reports, capacity building has been the other key element of the GEO initiative. While past capacity building activities are appreciated by CCs, there is a clear need for a more systematic approach to building sustainable capacity. UNEP may also need to broaden its approach to capacity building; in addition to offering training workshops it needs to understand the implications of other capacity-building dimensions and constraints faced by CCs, including human resources, funding and in some cases even equipment.

Capacity building should also be aimed at regional and sub-regional audiences, including countries and even cities that are already showing active interest in the GEO methodology. During GEO-2000, and less so during GEO-3, there were capacity shortages at UNEP-HQ that may have led to management problems, including irregular communication with CCs.

Funding

Making the GEO process more continuous, paying more attention to capacity issues, and addressing most of the summary points above has significant funding implications. There is a very strong view among CCs that substantially increased funding would be needed to move GEO to the next level.

Communication and outreach

The success of GEO depends on its ability to communicate its messages to key stakeholders and policymakers. GEO CCs see opportunities for improving communication and outreach around GEO products, and increased responsibilities for themselves. Having and implementing a suitable communication strategy and better coordination of GEO events at all levels is one way of increasing the overall effectiveness of the reports.

Given its core early and early warning assessment mandate, UNEP/DEWA will continue to produce regular updates on the state and direction of the global environment. GEO is playing a key role in fulfilling this mandate. While meeting the needs of the organization it also helps to spread the message around the world that science-based, policy-relevant information on the environment is a prerequisite for sustainable development. There is now an expectation for this work to continue on a higher level and the results of this survey should help to achieve this.



7. References

- Attere, A.F. (2000) *Evaluation Report of Global Environment Outlook-1 and -2 Processes*. Nairobi: Evaluation and Oversight Unit, UNEP.
- Horn, L., F. Niemann, C. Kaut, and A. Kemmler. (1994) *SWOT Analysis and Strategic Planning*. Hamburg: GFA.
- Mclver, John P. and Edward G. Carmines. (1981) *Unidimensional Scaling. Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences*. London: Sage Publications. 96p.
- Miles, M. B. and A. M Huberman. *Qualitative Data Analysis*,
2nd ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Pintér, L. (2002) *Making Global Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting Matter*. Doctoral thesis. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- SPSS Ins. (1999) *SPSS 10.1 for Windows*
- Universalialia. (2001) *Global Environment Outlook: User Profile and Impact Study*. Montreal: Universalialia.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The survey instrument

GEO-3 QUESTIONNAIRE

Please note that the questionnaire should be answered by the GEO-CC focal person.

SECTION 1: GENERAL PROFILE OF THE GEO CC

1.1. Name of GEO CC:

1.2. CC Coordinates

Office telephone number:

Fax number:

E-mail address of director:

Website:

1.3. Number of professional staff:

Please attach or mail an organogramme of CC if available.

1.4. Please mark with an X the first GEO report in which the CC participated

GEO-1

GEO-2000

GEO-3

1.5. Name and title of respondent(s):



SECTION 2: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES OF AND THREATS RELATING TO GEO

****Note that strengths are positive aspects internal to your organization or GEO process (e.g. good communication among team members can be an internal strength) while weaknesses are negative aspects internal to your organization or the GEO process (e.g. lack of communication), while opportunities are positive external conditions external (e.g. an opportunity arising from increasing political support for your CC or UNEP) and threats should be understood as negative external conditions (e.g. decreasing public interest in environmental matters). Please note that the examples in brackets, where applicable, are hypothetical and serve only to explain what we mean on terms.****

2.1. Performance of GEO as an assessment and reporting process

(Scope note: Includes UNEP & CC data collection, interpretation and analysis of the data, and writing the analysis for the GEO Report)

Please describe major overall strengths of GEO as an assessment and reporting process:

Please describe major overall weaknesses of GEO as an assessment and reporting process:

Please describe major opportunities for GEO as an assessment and reporting process:

Please describe major threats to GEO as an assessment and reporting process:

2.2. The performance of your organization as a GEO CC

Please describe major strengths of your organization as a GEO CC:

Please describe major weaknesses of your organization as a GEO CC:

Please describe major opportunities for your organization as a GEO CC:

Please describe major threats to your organization as a GEO CC:

2.3. UNEP's performance as the overall leader of GEO

Please describe major strengths of UNEP's leadership in GEO:

Please describe major weaknesses of UNEP's leadership in GEO:

Please describe major opportunities for UNEP as a leader in GEO:

Please describe major threats to UNEP as a leader in GEO:

2.4. Assessment and reporting methods used in the preparation of GEO-3.

Please describe major strengths of the GEO assessment and reporting methods:

Please describe major weaknesses of the GEO assessment and reporting methods:

Please describe major opportunities for GEO arising from its assessment and reporting methods:

Please describe major threats to GEO associated with its assessment and reporting methods:

2.5. Collaborating Centre network

Please describe major strengths of the CC network:

Please describe major weaknesses of the CC network:

Please describe major opportunities for the CC network:

Please describe major threats to the CC network:



SECTION 3: EVALUATION OF CCs AND THE GEO-3 PROCESS

3.1: Coordination and Management

3.1.1. Please name the three key individuals most involved with GEO-3 at your CC, and in a few words describe their specific contribution.

Name:
 Email address:
 Specific contribution:

Name:
 Email address:
 Specific contribution:

Name:
 Email address:
 Specific contribution:

3.1.2. To what extent were GEO-3 activities integrated into the programme of work of your CC? Please place X in the cell which indicates the extent of integration and provide explanation. 0 = not at all, 10 = fully.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.1.3. What is the level of senior management's support for GEO activities in your CC? Place X in the cell which corresponds to the level of support in your opinion and provide explanation. 0 = no support, 10 = full support.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.1.4. Please list the in-kind contribution made by your CC to the preparation of GEO-3 during 2000 and 2001. Note that in-kind contributions do not include activities paid for by UNEP under a MoU. Examples of in-kind contribution may include staff time, hosting meetings, or funding a specific activity related to GEO-3 from the CCs own budget.

3.1.5. Did your CC's involvement in the GEO-3 process lead to the development of your organization's resources, such as research materials, software and/or computers, etc.?

Yes
No

Please provide details:

3.1.6. Did your CC's involvement in the GEO-3 process lead to increased staff capacity and expertise to carry out IEA?

No
Yes

If yes, please list the type of staff capacity and expertise strengthened:

3.1.7. Does your CC carry out integrated environmental assessment work other than for GEO?

No
Yes

If yes, please describe:

3.1.8. How far do you agree that the goals, objectives and responsibilities of your CC in GEO-3 were clearly defined. Please write X in the cell which corresponds to your opinion and provide a brief explanation. 0 = disagree, 10 = agree.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.1.9. In your opinion, did your CC received adequate feedback from UNEP regarding its contribution and performance during the assessment phase of preparation of the GEO-3 process? Place X in the cell which corresponds to the adequacy of feedback and provide a brief explanation. 0 = no feedback, 10 = adequate feedback.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.1.10. In your opinion, was your CC given sufficient opportunity to provide feedback to UNEP during the preparation of GEO-3? Place X in the cell which corresponds to the adequacy of opportunity and provide a brief explanation. 0 = no opportunity, 10 = sufficient opportunity.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.1.11. Overall, how would you rate communication between your CC and the GEO team (Nairobi headquarters and Regional Coordinator) throughout the entire GEO-3 process. Place X in the cell which corresponds to the level of communication and provide a brief explanation. 0 = inadequate, 10 = excellent.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.1.12. Indicate the importance of the following Working Groups in the GEO process by placing an X in the cell which corresponds to your opinion, and provide a brief explanation., 0 = unimportant, 10 = important.

Working	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	Not Group Known
Data												
Capacity building												
Scenarios												
Other, please specify:												

Please explain:

3.2: GEO-3 Process

3.2.1. To what degree did your CC follow GEO production guidelines provided by UNEP when preparing input to the GEO report? Place X in the cell which corresponds to your opinion and provide explanation. 0 = not at all, 10 = fully.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.2.2. Please indicate the degree of contribution of your CC to the following aspects/activities of GEO-3 report preparation by writing X in the appropriate cell after every aspect/activity. 0 = no contribution, 10 = substantial contribution.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Process planning											
Determining the structure of the GEO report											
Data collection											
Introduction and 30-year overview											
Integrated SoE and policy analysis											
Scenario analysis and /or modeling											
Vulnerability analysis											
Development of recommendations											
Regional consultations											
Capacity building											
Data Working Group											
Scenario Working Group											
Communication and publicity											
Other important aspect(s), please specify:											

3.2.3. The GEO-3 analysis required CCs to integrated SoE information and policy assessment. Place X in the cell which corresponds to the degree of achievement by your CC and provide a brief explanation. 0 = did not integrate, 10 = fully integrated.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.2.4. Please provide an estimate for the number of internal and external experts consulted during the preparation of your input for GEO 3.

	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	over 20
Internal					
External					

Please comment as needed:

3.2.5. Please indicate the extent to which your CC engaged other organizations in your region in the GEO process by writing X in the appropriate cell after every stakeholder. 0 = no involvement, 10 = extensive involvement.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Government											
Private sector											
NGOs											
Inter-governmental organizations											
Universities/scientific /specialized institutions											
Other, please specify:											

3.2.6. To what extent did the following aspects of the Regional Consultations contributed to specific aspects of the GEO-3 Process? Please indicate the degree of their contribution by writing X in the appropriate cell after the aspects listed below. 0 = no contribution, 10 = important contribution)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Improving accuracy and scope of report											
Data gathering and validating											
Increasing policy relevance											
Communicating results											
Endorsement of report contents											
Raising awareness of GEO-3											
Increasing 'ownership' of process and products amongst a wider range of stakeholders											
Other, please specify:											

3.2.7 Have you any suggestions for making the consultative process more effective?

3.2.8. To what extent have any of the following been a problem for your CC when providing GEO-3 inputs? Please indicate your opinion by writing an X in the appropriate cell after each item. 10 = major problem, 0 = not a problem.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Data availability											
Data quality											
Data processing and analysis											
Information available											
PSIR integration											
Time to prepare inputs											
Available human resources											
Appropriate staff expertise											
Other (please explain)											

3.2.9. Would your regional assessment for GEO benefit from having a clearly identifiable core set of GEO indicators? Please indicate your opinion by writing X in the cell that reflects your opinion and provide explanation. 0 = there would be no benefit, 10 = definite benefit.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.2.10. Please indicate the degree of your CC's involvement in the following aspects of raising awareness about GEO by writing the appropriate number after each aspect. 1 = substantial involvement; 2 = some involvement; 3 = no involvement.

Distribution of GEO Products:

Briefing Senior Decision Makers:

Participation in Regional Release Events:

Talking to the Media:

Other, Please Specify:

3.2.11. How successful was your CC in balancing policy relevance and scientific credibility in the GEO-3 process? Place X in the cell which corresponds to the level to which this was achieved, in your opinion, and provide a brief explanation. 0 = unsuccessful, 10 = successful

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Explain:

3.3: CAPACITY ISSUES

3.3.1. How important is continuous capacity building to maintaining GEO as a flagship global assessment and reporting programme? Write X in the cell which corresponds to your opinion and provide a brief explanation. 0 = not at all important, 10 = very important.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.3.2. The funding levels available are adequate to ensure effective contribution of my CC to the GEO process. Place X in the cell which reflects your opinion and provide a brief explanation. 0 = inadequate, 10 = adequate.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain:

3.3.3. Please rate the usefulness of training and capacity building initiatives under GEO for your CC. Place X in the cell which corresponds to your opinion and provide a brief explanation. 0 = not useful, 10 = very useful.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Explain:

3.4: GEO PRODUCTION SUPPORT

3.5.1. How useful did you find the following in your work on GEO-3? 0=not at all useful; 10=extremely useful

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Data Portal											
GEOSS											
GEO Newsletter											
PSIR Production guidelines											
Other, please specify:											



SECTION 4: GENERAL COMMENTS

Please provide suggestions for improving the GEO process for GEO-4:

Appendix 2: GEO CCs approached in the evaluation

Respondents

1. National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)
2. Stockholm Environment Institute – Boston Center (SEI-B)
3. National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES)
4. Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)
5. Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC); Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (IMERCSA)
6. State Environment Protection Administration (SEPA)
7. The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)
8. Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI)
9. International Centre for Integrative Studies (ICIS), University Maastricht
10. Earth Council
11. Moscow State University (MSU)
12. The International Global Change Institute (IGCI), University of Waikato
13. Development Observatory (DO), University of Costa Rica
14. Arabian Gulf University (AGU)

15. Scientific Information Center (SIC) of Interstate Sustainable Development Commission (ISDC), International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS)
16. Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)
17. Island Resources Foundation (IRF)
18. Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE)
19. Instituto de Asuntos Publicos (Institute of Public Affairs, INAP), Universidad de Chile ; Formerly: Centro de Analisis de Politicas Publicas (Center on Public Policy Analysis, CAPP), Universidad de Chile
20. World Resources Institute (WRI)
21. Central European University (CEU)
22. Centre for Environment & Development for Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)
23. Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America (CEC)
24. Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)
25. International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
26. The European Environment Agency (EEA)
27. Network for Environment & Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA)¹
28. Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

Non-respondents

1. Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones & Drylands (ACSAD)
2. Association pour le Developpement de l'Information Environnementale (ADIE)
3. Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis/Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources (IBAMA)
4. National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA)
5. The Regional and International Networking Group (RING)
6. South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP)
7. University of West Indies, Centre for Environment and Development (UWICED)
8. Gateway Antarctica GRID-Christchurch

