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**GEO-7 Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) Meeting Summary,
February 12, 2025**

The Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) met for its fifteenth virtual call to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Review and feedback on the outcome of the review process for the SOD review of the main report and FOD of the SPM
2. Review and feedback on the GEO-7 IK & LK third Dialogue
3. Review and feedback on the draft timeline to provide the IMAG validation opinion
4. Any Other Business

On these items the IMAG decided:

- To monitor the challenging comments that the authors and co-chairs will be working to address consequently from the SOD review of the main report and the FOD of the SPM.
- That the Secretariat ensure a well-balanced report.
- That the Secretariat will share relevant information on how IMAG can access the SOD review statistics on the READ portal.
- That there's always room of improvement in geographical balance of meeting participants especially IK&LK dialogues.
- To present the validation opinion from both IMAG and MESAG to the open-ended meeting of the review and approval of the SPM.
- That the Secretariat will provide a draft final validation opinion document in consultation with the co-chairs and producing a draft that is ready for revision by IMAG.
- To provide a validation opinion of the GEO process and not the GEO-7 report.
- To shift the agreement of the final validation opinion of the IMAG from September to June/July.
- That the Secretariat will send an embargoed version of the main report and the SOD of the SPM to both Member States and IMAG during the SOD review of the SPM.
- That the Secretariat will provide translated versions of the SPM into all six UN official languages at UNEA-7.
- That the Secretariat shares the revised GEO-7 timeline to IMAG.
- That the Secretariat sends out a doodle poll for the next three IMAG meetings.

Rapporteur	Signature
Ana Julieta Calvo Obando	

Summary of the meeting

The meeting was chaired by the co-chairs of the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG).

Review and feedback on the outcome of the review process for the SOD review of the main report and FOD of the SPM

An introductory briefing was provided by the Secretariat on the concluded SOD review period of the main report and FOD of the Summary for policymakers. The Secretariat indicated that during that review period of November 2024-January 2025, six review orientation webinars were conducted and were complemented by weekly email reminders to reviewers. An assessment of the review status of each chapter, necessitated a one-week extension of the review period due to the holiday period in January.

A total of 14,830 comments were received, with the SPM receiving the highest number of comments at 2,845. 36.54 per cent of the registered reviewers submitted comments and the State and Trends chapters drew considerable input, while the solutions and pathways section required targeted outreach to experts by the Secretariat to ensure comprehensive feedback. The breakdown of comments indicated that 75.82 per cent of the reviewers were expert reviewers, while 7.69 per cent were from government, and 16.49 per cent were attributed to the Indigenous Peoples from the third IK&LK dialogue who contributed to the peer review and UNEP's gender team.

Regional participation was remarked as improved, especially from Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa, which were previously underrepresented during the FOD review. 33 out of 44 Member States that nominated experts provided feedback, with 100 of the 163 government nominated experts submitting comments. The Secretariat further explained that the authors would have till the 22nd of March to address SOD comments after which a review editing exercise will take place leading up to the GEO-7 June meeting.

IMAG inquired on their ability to access the platform to view the statistics and the comparison from the first FOD review. The Secretariat responded that there was an increase of reviewers from the LAC and African regions which were underrepresented in the FOD. It was noted that IMAG, as an advisory body, can access the READ platform and view the statistics which can be broken down through comment categories. IMAG also inquired on the type of comments received and where most attention should be paid by decision makers, noting the need for a well-balanced report. The Secretariat explained that the most challenging comments requiring further discussion from the co-chairs and authors relate to the perceived disconnect between state and trends analysis and the scenarios as well as with the solutions pathways chapters and the scenarios. Additionally, the Secretariat also noted that comments from Indigenous Peoples representatives highlighted concerns that some proposed solutions were very developed countries focused and would not apply to Indigenous People's Communities.

IMAG remarked on the great improvement in the SOD review process given previous IMAG's discussions on how to best improve the review process and noted the importance of the participation of government reviewers as an important step towards the SPM review and approval meeting in November 2025.

Review and feedback on the GEO-7 IK&LK third Dialogue

The Secretariat provided an update on the third GEO-7 IK&LK Dialogue noting IMAG's previous discussions on the GEO-7 IK&LK process which included decisions from the IMAG such as the

integration of IK&LK across all the chapters and chapeaux, integration of IK&LK Task Force members into the chapter teams amongst others. It was highlighted that these dialogues draw upon previous experiences from IPBES. The first dialogue (March 2024) focused on conceptualizing key issues presented in the GEO-7 report, including Indigenous perspectives on nature and other concepts while the second dialogue (May 2024) addressed existing gaps of IK&LK and facilitated the co-creation of content for the SOD of the GEO-7 report. The third dialogue (January 2025 – see below) concentrated on reviewing the SOD of GEO-7, IK&LK chapeaux, and the FOD of the SPM. A fourth dialogue is planned post-launch of GEO-7 to reflect on outcomes and close the process.

The third GEO-7 IK&LK Dialogue took place in Chiang Mai, Thailand (January 2025) and hosted 20 participants (eight women and twelve men) representing the different UN regions. Also in attendance was the facilitation team which included five Task Force members, three facilitators, two MESAG observers, and three Secretariat representatives.

The Secretariat noted that participants emphasized the importance of transitioning from viewing Indigenous Peoples (IPs) as stakeholders to recognizing them as rightsholders, reinforcing self-determination, land and cultural rights, food sovereignty, and freedom from violence. Participants requested to be perceived as leaders, including leadership of IP's elders, women, and youth (in particular, the role of women as leaders was highlighted, related to their key role for IP's knowledge transmission). Participants require effective participation of IPs in decision making and implementation. Participants also advocated for greater recognition of IPs' science as a valuable knowledge system. Lastly, the Secretariat noted the financial contributions from the Government of Canada and the Government of UK which have supported the IK&LK process in GEO-7.

The Secretariat noted the improvements to the third dialogues based on the outcomes from the second dialogue and highlighted some key next steps in the IK&LK process which have been shared as a separate attachment.

IMAG inquired on the participation of the Caribbean islands in the dialogue to which the Secretariat noted that they may have been included in previous dialogues and that geographical balance always has room for improvement.

IMAG noted with great appreciation the participation of the dialogue participants and their contributions through the review into the GEO-7 process given it's the first time that the GEO is working on including IK&LK perspectives in its process and will form part of IMAG's validation process. IMAG also appreciated the [Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact](#) (AIPP)'s involvement in the organization of the third dialogue.

Review and feedback on the draft timeline to provide the IMAG validation opinion

The Secretariat noted that the IMAG had approved its Midstream Review Document during its tenth IMAG call. It was further highlighted that during the third face to face meeting of the IMAG, IMAG agreed it would produce its own validation opinion based on the approach used in the Midstream Review Document. The validation opinion, would be formulated on a consensus-based approach, avoiding formal minority opinions where possible. The validation opinion should be prepared and agreed upon before it is finally agreed and that IMAG and MESAG should maintain consistency in their validation opinions. It was noted that the validation opinion from both IMAG and MESAG will be presented to the open-ended meeting of the review and approval of the SPM.

It was noted that the Secretariat will provide a draft validation opinion document in consultation with the IMAG co-chairs that is ready for revision by IMAG. IMAG suggested not to put a lot of effort into the reviewing and updating of the Midstream Review Document, as this almost means drafting a final validation document. It was also highlighted that the IMAG validation opinion is of the GEO process and

not of the GEO-7 report itself. To streamline the process, IMAG proposed shifting the final validation opinion from September to June/July, allowing ample time for finalization.

Any Other Business

GEO-7 June Meeting: The GEO-7 June Meeting is scheduled for 2-6 June 2025 in Jeju Island, South Korea. The meeting will be co-hosted and co-financed by the Government of South Korea which is also hosting the World Environment Day (5th of June). The meeting will provide an outreach and awareness opportunity for GEO, as authors and co-chairs will be participating in some of the panel discussions on World Environment Day. The objective of the meeting will be the advancement of the SOD of the SPM and the drafting of the validation opinion of the MESAG. The lead review editors will also be in attendance presenting their final evaluation of the peer review processes in GEO-7 and the quality of authors responsiveness to the comments to the MESAG. The Secretariat is therefore starting preparations internally to secure approvals and send out invitations.

GEO-7 Production and Communication: The deadline for finalizing responses to the SOD comments is 22nd of March. The Secretariat is in the process of hiring science editors to enhance coherence and terminology consistency in the GEO-7 report, alongside a layout company for the final design and support with the graphics. The science editing team will work together with the authors from 1st April until July, while the layout company will start working on the layout of the main report on 1st of July. The Secretariat noted that this had been made possible by the contributions from the Netherlands to support GEO-7 communication efforts.

The Secretariat noted that the embargoed version of the main report and SOD of the SPM will be sent to Member States during the SOD SPM review. It was agreed that this package will also be sent to IMAG to ensure awareness of the process. It was further remarked that the translated versions of the SPM in all six UN languages will be made available at UNEA-7. The Secretariat noted that since the September meeting of 2024 where the communication and outreach of GEO-7 was discussed, there have been positive outcomes from the collaboration with the communications division including the inclusion of some key messages from GEO-7 into UNEP's Executive Director and deputy Director speeches. There also has been some positive engagement of GEO-7 in the ongoing discussions of UNEP's medium-term strategy. Lastly, it was noted that UNEP's Executive Director had made a request to Member States during a Committee of Permanent Representatives briefing to consider supporting the full translation of the GEO-7 main report.

IMAG inquired as to whether the comments received from Member States during the SOD review will be worked through to produce a version that is ready for negotiation in November to which the Secretariat indicated that there were still discussions as to what the best format could be to display the incorporated comments in the working version noting that a third order draft will not be produced but a second order draft with comments.

Supporting Services: The Secretariat noted that the Malawi's National State of Environment and Outlook Report FOD was released for review in December 2024. Together with the collaborating centre, and the Regional and National Assessments unit, the Secretariat is strategizing on the best way of supporting authors in addressing the comments. It was also highlighted that the Secretariat participated in a workshop to kick off the development of the Pakistan National State of Environment Outlook (NSEOR) in December 2024. The Secretariat provided a training on the GEO methodology in collaboration with Regional and National Assessments Unit. The Secretariat expects this work to continue with the support of the UNEP Regional office in Asia Pacific to support Pakistan to develop their own most updated version of this report.

List of Participants

Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Region(s) of Representation
Dr. Leila Bendifallah	Professor, M'hamed Bougara University, Algeria	Algeria	African Group
Ms. Anna Mampye	Director: State of Environment Information in the Branch, Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment	South Africa	African Group
Mr. Takashi Otsuka	Director of Knowledge and Communications, Strategic Management Office, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Hayama, Japan	Japan	Asia and the Pacific Group
Dr. Marek Haliniak	General Counsellor in the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Department of Strategy and Analysis, Poland	Poland	Eastern European Group
Ms. Claudia Kabel	German Environment Agency (UBA), academic staff member, International Sustainability Strategies, Policy and Knowledge Transfer	Germany	Western European Group
Mr. Arthur EIJS	Policy coordinator Natural Resource Management & Sustainable Land Use - Ministry of Infrastructure & water management, department of International Affairs	Netherlands	Western European Group
Ms. Gillian Stanislaus	Environmental Programme Officer, Environmental Management Authority (EMA)	Trinidad & Tobago	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Dr. Toral Patel-Weynand	Director of the Southern Research Station at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service	United States	Western European Group
Ms. Neyra Herrera	Chief of Environmental Statistics; ministry of environment- Panama	Panama	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Mrs. Dušica Pešević	Associate Professor, University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Eastern European Group
Ms. Christina Komorski	Director, Information & Indicators Division, Sustainability Directorate, Environment and Climate Change Canada	Canada	Western European Group
Eng. Julieta Calvo	National Center for Geoenvironmental Information, Ministry of Environment and Energy; Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Ms. Yi Huang	Professor, School of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Peking University, China	China	Asia and the Pacific Group
Dr. Lisa Eriksson (Alternate)	Senior Advisor, Transport Analysis, and the Department for Outlook and Policy	Sweden	Western European Group
Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Major Group
Dr. Fabian Wagner	Dean, Capacity Development and Academic Training, IIASA, Austria	Germany	Science and Technology
Ms. Ruth Viola Spencer	Chair, Marine Ecosystems Protected Areas (MEPA) Trust	Antigua and Barbuda	Women
Mr. Prem Singh Tharu	Regional Programme Officer, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) under Environment Programme	Thailand	Indigenous peoples
Ms. Ingrid Coetzee	Director, Nature & Health; ICLEI Africa	South Africa	Local authorities

Apologies

Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Region(s) of Representation
Dr. Thuraya AL Sariri	Assistance Director General of Nature Conservation at MECA-Oman	Oman	Asia and the Pacific Group
Dr. Salla Rantala	Development Manager, Environmental Policy Centre, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)	Finland	Western European Group
Mr. Miroslav Havránek	Director of the Czech Environmental Information Agency	Czechia	Eastern European Group
Ms. Margarita Guerra (Alternate)	Ministry of environment- Panama	Panama	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Dr. Modibo Sacko	Vice President of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CONACILSS), Mali	Mali	African Group
Dr. Keri Holland (Alternate)	Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of Environmental Quality in the Bureau of Oceans, International and Scientific Affairs at the U.S. Department of State	United States	Western European Group
Mrs. Rolenas Baereleo	Principal Officer, Biodiversity and Conservation; Department of Environmental protection and Conservation (DEPC), Vanuatu	Vanuatu	Asia and the Pacific Group
Mr. Silvio Albuquerque e Silva	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Brazil to UNEP; Embassy of Brazil in Kenya	Brazil	Latin American and Caribbean Group

Ms. Alexandra Gurgel Valente da Costa (Alternate)	Environment Analyst, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change	Brazil	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Mrs. Maha Maayta	Director of the Policy and International Cooperation, Ministry of Environment, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	Jordan	Asia and the Pacific Group
Mr. Toghrul Feyziyev	Advisor, International cooperation division of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan	Eastern European Group
Mr. Thomas Chali	Senior Policy Advisor on Environmental Conservation and Natural Resources Management in Tanzania	Tanzania	African Group
Dr. Jerome Lugumira Sebadduka	Natural Resources Management Specialist (Soils and Land Use), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Uganda	Uganda	African Group
Ms. Meri Harutyunyan	Chief specialist of Strategic Policy Department, Ministry of Environment, Armenia	Armenia	Eastern European Group
Mr. Kenset Amaury Rosales Riveiro	Coordinator, Information Unit, Environment and Climate Change; Ministry of Environment and Resources Natural Resources (MARN)	Guatemala	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Mr. Carlos Cordero Vega (Alternate)	Director of the Planning Secretariat of the Environment and Energy Sector, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Major Group
Mr. Jan-Gustav Strandenaes	Advisory board member of sustainability/environment governance project at the University of Stockholm	Norway	Non-governmental organization
Ms. Merylene Chitharai	Lan Manager at UKZN Howard College	South Africa	Faith-based groups
Ms. Djabatougbe Aziaka	President and founder of welfare Togo; co-facilitator of UNEP NGO major group	Togo	Non-governmental organization
Mr. Dominic Kailash Nath Waughray	Senior Advisor to the CEO World Business Council for Sustainable Development	India	Business and industry
Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf	Sustainability Research Program Director at Gulf Research Center (GRC)	Egypt	Science and Technology
Ms. Zahra Abu Taha	Recycling officer at ZATARI refugees camp, Oxfam	Jordan	Children and youth

