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September 19, 2023

**GEO-7 Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) Meeting Summary,
September 19, 2023**

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

1. Proposed changes to the GEO-7 Chapter Outlines and Structure
2. GEO-7 Budget
3. Review and approval of the updated new sub-regional country list
4. Review and progress on Supporting Services
5. Any other business

On these agenda items the IMAG decided:

- IMAG members are invited to provide additional comments on the GEO-7 Chapter Outlines and Structure by 10th of October 2023 close of business Nairobi time.
- The suggested chapter titles for the GEO-7 pathway chapters of 11-15 and for Outlooks 18-19 are simplified and provide consistency in the chapter outline.
- That the sub regional country list that's based off the M49 standard provides a clear and transparent rationale for the sub regional country groupings and approved the new sub regional country list.
- The Supported services workplan should be multiyear going beyond GEO-7 as it's a key pillar for the GEO process.
- The next IMAG meeting will be a joint meeting with MESAG in the week of 30th October 2023.

Rapporteur	Signature
Adele Roccato	

Summary of the meeting

The meeting was chaired by the co-chairs of the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG). The Co-chairs began the meeting by introducing the new IMAG members from Costa Rica.

Proposed changes to the GEO-7 Chapter Outlines and Structure

A briefing was provided by the Co-chair of the GEO-7 assessment on the proposal to restructure the GEO-7-chapter outlines and structure. The Co-chair explained that the proposal to change the order for the second half of the document in the following order (Chapter 9→Chapter 16→Chapter 17→Chapter 18 →Chapter 10 →Chapter 11-15 →Chapter 19-20 →Chapter 21) will make the narrative flow more logically.

IMAG noted that the structure does indeed tell the story better but inquired if the methodology chapters (chapters 10 and 16) could be annexed to avoid interrupting the story. However, it was further noted that the methodology will also be a guide for countries to find solutions for the environmental problems they

face. The GEO-7 Co-chair responded that the methodology chapters provide more information on how to develop solutions pathways and how the presented scenarios in the report are developed and by moving them to an annex the reader of the report could 'get lost' as the methodology chapters provide a philosophy for the chapters that follow. IMAG also noted the new proposed structure would mix up the 'responses' part of the DPSIR framework that GEO is using but it was explained that the proposed change would not alter what GEO intends to accomplish at the macro level. IMAG also noted the importance of the timeline when reordering the chapters as the Scenarios chapter looks into the future development. The Co-chair noted that the pathways chapters 11-15 will also look at a time sequence of between now and 2030, 2030 and 2040 and 2040 and 2050 therefore there's consistency in time sequencing with both the outlook and pathways chapters.

The GEO-7 Co-chair also noted the proposed changes to the chapter titles for the pathway chapters of 11-15 and for Outlooks 18-19. It was also noted that the Solutions pathways chapters incorporate elements of technological change, social change, and economic change.

IMAG welcomed the changes and agreed that the new suggested titles simplified and provided consistency to the titles. The IMAG decided that more written feedback on the proposed changes to the GEO-7 chapter structure and outlines could be shared with the Secretariat by 10th of October 2023 close of business Nairobi time.

GEO-7 Budget

A briefing was provided on the current GEO-7 budget situation while highlighting the various GEO activities as per the [GEO-7 timeline](#). The briefing indicated that most of the funding for the first two years has been secured and that there have been additional contributions from different Member States such as the European Union, China, the Netherlands and Germany. It was also noted that there have been unintended changes to the budget given the increased number of authors in the process which also now includes the ILK authors and the need to have authors included in authors meetings given they are making significant time commitments.

The Secretariat noted that there are ongoing discussions with the Executive Office to solve the budgetary situation so as to ensure that the GEO activities move ahead especially the second authors meeting that is planned for January 2024 which is critical in producing the first order draft of the report.

IMAG noted the challenges with the budget and looks forward to the resolution of that challenge and noted the importance of inclusion of authors in various activities. IMAG also noted that there could be an opportunity to engage on funding for the ILK process in GEO-7 with the U.S. envoy on Indigenous and local knowledge.

Review and approval of the updated new sub-regional country list

A briefing was provided on changes made to GEO-7's regional and sub-regional groupings. The Secretariat presented the two changes made to these groupings since the last call. The first change was with regards to dividing the broader UN Eastern European region into sub-regions, just as with the other UN regions. The secretariat took the sub-regional grouping suggestions from the M49 Standard and divided Eastern Europe into 4 sub-regions: Eastern Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe and Western Asia.

The second change was with regards to Western Europe and Other Groups where the Channel Islands (Guernsey, Jersey and Sark) were merged into Northern Europe. This was done straightforwardly as it made sense logically and geographically. Thus, the Western Europe and Other Groups region now has five sub-regions instead of the six sub-regions it had before the merging.

IMAG inquired on the rationale of the groupings in the Eastern European region given that some of the country groupings did not seem to match up either geographically or ecologically. The Secretariat noted that the groupings was to allow for statistical and political groupings that match the five regions that were agreed at the scoping meeting so that if there's a need to go to a sub-regional classification, there's a rationale of how countries are grouped based on a UN standard.

IMAG agreed and approved the list and noted the rationale of the changes and agreed that the M49 UN standard of sub regions provides a clear and transparent rationale that upholds the UN standard.

Review and progress on Supporting Services

A briefing was provided by the Secretariat on the status of the work on the Supporting Services. The secretariat shared that the sections of the work plan that are so far ready: the Background, the Introduction, the Anticipated approach for delivering the supporting services, the Broader benefits from the supporting services approach, Possible advice from IMAG on the Supporting Services for GEO, as well as a Proposed work plan for key priorities, showing a table with various ideas, tasks and activities speaking to Capacity Building, Knowledge Generation and Support for policy-making.

The secretariat explained that there are various proposed tasks to accomplish but are at the same time currently constrained based on budget, internal expertise, external expertise and capacities of the various collaborating centres GEO is currently working with. Thus, the secretariat has generated a theoretical list of tasks that can be accomplished, but the next step would be to do an analysis to narrow down the table of ideas/tasks to the ones that are actually feasible and achievable. In addition to matching the supporting services ideas to the various external support, the secretariat is also waiting for the results of the surveys that were sent to Member States inquiring on their particular needs.

IMAG noted that the workplan should be multiyear going beyond GEO-7 as it's a key pillar for the process. IMAG also noted the importance of ensuring that the Supporting Services work also involves the Collaborating Centres and the Secretariat pointed out that the survey results will help in cascading the findings to the work plans of the collaborating centres.

Any other business

- IMAG highlighted the possible overlap and interlinkages between GEO-7 and other potential initiatives such as OECD. The Secretariat pointed out that through the AGAD where other agencies such as IPBES, IPCC, EEA participate, there are regular quarterly calls to keep each other updated and the Secretariat is keeping an eye on these new developments to ensure coordination and complementarity.
- The Secretariat highlighted a proposal to have a joint IMAG MESAG meeting in end October, early November to discuss the Shanghai September workshop, the internal review of the zero-order draft, the internal review meeting and the first face to face meeting of the ILK authors.
- The Secretariat mentioned that it will send out a doodle for the joint IMAG and MESAG meeting for the week of 30th October.
- The Secretariat played a short video of the Shanghai meeting.

Having no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 18h29 (EAT).

Action items

- The Secretariat will prepare a written summary of the meeting.
- The Secretariat will share a doodle for the joint IMAG and MESAG meeting for the week of 30th October.
- IMAG members to send feedback on the proposed changes to the GEO-7-chapter structure

and outline by 10th of October close of business Nairobi time.

- The Secretariat to prepare the relevant information for the election of the IMAG rapporteur.

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
Ms. Christina Komorski	Director, Information & Indicators Division, Sustainability Directorate, Environment and Climate Change Canada	Canada	Western European Group
Dr. Marek Haliniak	General Counsellor in the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Department of Strategy and Analysis, Poland	Poland	Eastern European Group
Eng. Julieta Calvo	National Center for Geoenvironmental Information, Ministry of Environment and Energy; Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Dr. Thuraya AL Sariri	Assistance Director General of Nature Conservation at MECA- Oman	Oman	Asia and the Pacific Group
Mr. Thomas Chali	Senior Policy Advisor on Environmental Conservation and Natural Resources Management in Tanzania	Tanzania	African Group
Dr. Salla Rantala	Development Manager, Environmental Policy Centre, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)	Finland	Western European 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
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. Yi Huang	Professor, School of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Peking University, China	China	Asia and the Pacific Group
Ms. Claudia Kabel	German Environment Agency (UBA), academic staff member, International Sustainability Strategies, Policy and Knowledge Transfer	Germany	Western European Group
Mr. Miroslav Havránek	Director of the Czech Environmental Information Agency	Czechia	Eastern European Group
Ms. Gillian Stanislaus	Environmental Programme Officer, Environmental Management Authority (EMA)	Trinidad & Tobago	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Dr. Lisa Eriksson (Alternate)	Senior Advisor, Transport Analysis, and the Department for Outlook and Policy	Sweden	Western European Group
Ms. Margarita Guerra (Alternate)	Ministry of environment- Panama	Panama	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Major Group
Ms. Ruth Viola Spencer	Chair, Marine Ecosystems Protected Areas(MEPA) Trust	Antigua and Barbuda	Women
Ms. Djatougbe Aziaka	President and founder of welfare Togo; co-facilitator of UNEP NGO major group	Togo	Non-governmental organization
Mr. Prem Singh Tharu	Regional Programme Officer, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) under Environment Programme	Thailand	Indigenous peoples
Dr. Fabian Wagner	Dean, Capacity Development and Academic Training, IIASA, Austria	Germany	Science and Technology

Apologies

Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Region(s) of Representation
Dr. Modibo sacko	Vice President of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CONACILSS), Mali	Mali	African Group
Mrs. Dušica Pešević	Associate Professor, University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Eastern European 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
Dr. Jerome Lugumira Sebadduka	Natural Resources Management Specialist (Soils and Land Use), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Uganda	Uganda	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. 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
Ms. Meri Harutyunyan	Chief specialist of Strategic Policy Department, Ministry of Environment, Armenia	Armenia	Eastern European 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
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
Ms. Merylene Chitharai	Lan Manager at UKZN Howard College	South Africa	Faith-based groups
Ms. Ingrid Coetzee	Director, Nature & Health; ICLEI Africa	South Africa	Local authorities