

A Word from the Global Environment Outlook Co-chairs and Vice-chairs

The Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is the United Nations Environment flagship assessment that draws on the full breadth of available scientific knowledge in order to identify and explain the environmental challenges facing humanity, how we are acting to address these challenges and what the possibilities are for a more sustainable future. Five editions of the Global Environment Outlook have been produced since 1997, each showing the progress, or lack thereof, made on protecting and restoring the global environment. Now, at a critical time for environmental protection, it is important to revisit our development approaches to make them consistent with protecting and restoring our environment while taking equity issues into account. With this in mind, and with several global environmental agreements having recently been reached, the sixth Global Environment Outlook aims to monitor the implementation of the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

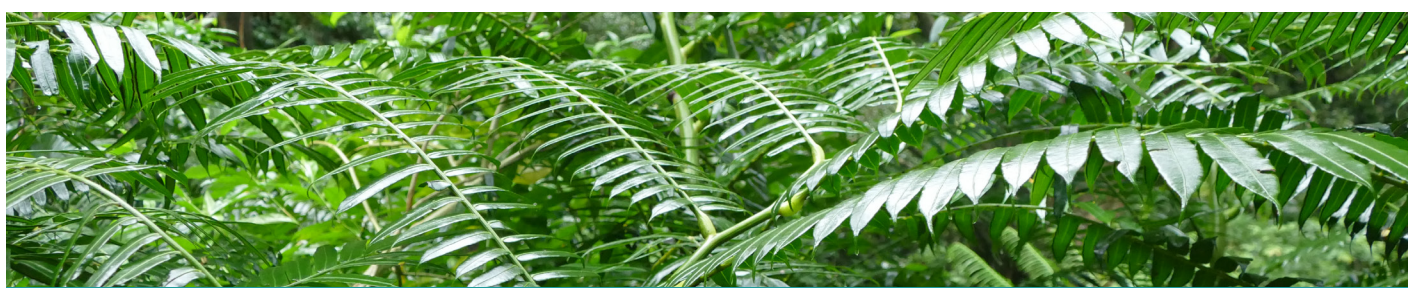
As co-chairs and vice-chairs of the sixth Global Environment Outlook, we feel it is important to provide our initial thoughts on the direction that this flagship environmental report should take. We see three clear objectives that the report needs to fulfill in order to support governments, businesses and society to achieve a more environmentally sustainable world:

- **Communicate a clear and simple message about:**
 - The state of global environment,
 - The different policies and actions to improve the environment that have been tried and whether they have worked, and finally
 - The different ways forward that could deliver the transformation in human uses of the environment that are envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals;
- **Link the analysis in the report to the global commitments that countries have already agreed to, including among others:**
 - Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals
 - The Paris Agreement on climate and its Nationally Determined Contributions
 - The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
 - The Aichi biodiversity targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity
- **Place the sixth Global Environment Outlook as the starting point in a series of world environmental reports that will help countries track their progress towards the goals they have agreed to.**

To do this, and for the messages in the report to be accepted by as broad a community as possible, the Global Environment Outlook must first be based on the best available science and analysis, and the strongest evidence, of where we are today. The report must also use the best independent expertise possible. Finally, the report must provide a clear set of options that governments, businesses and society could adopt to change the path that we are on.

We feel strongly that the Global Environment Outlook comes at a time when transformational change on environmental issues is both necessary and possible. We see some very positive signs where governments, businesses and society are taking steps towards improving our environment for future generations. The Global Environment Outlook can build on these positive actions and inform governments, businesses and society on the best ways to strengthen and accelerate these actions so that we can move more quickly towards a healthy planet with healthy people.

Written by Co-chairs Prof. Ekins and Prof. Gupta and vice co-chairs Dr. Bemigisha and Dr. Jiang Kejun.



The sixth edition of the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO-6) Announces Vice Co-chairs



Dr. Jane Bemigisha



Dr. Jiang Kejun

Highly accomplished scientists Dr. Jane Bemigisha and Dr. Jiang Kejun have been nominated as vice co-chairs of the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6), the world's most comprehensive assessment of the state of the global environment. Dr. Jane Bemigisha, an expert in Environmental systems monitoring and analysis, is the executive director of Environmental Surveys Information, Planning and Policy Systems International Ltd (ESIPPS Ltd.) which has its headquarters in Kampala, Uganda. She will lead in the areas

of environmental policy and sustainability. Dr. Jiang Kejun, who began research on climate change in 1993, is the director of Energy Research Institute (ERI) in China. He will provide leadership and guidance in the areas of climate change, energy development and conservation and environmental policy. The vice co-chairs will act together with the co-chairs Prof. Ekins and Prof. Gupta in providing a link between the Global Environment Outlook advisory bodies, the United Nations Environment Secretariat and the authors who will be drafting the assessment. Their role and that of the co-chairs will help the assessment maintain scientific integrity and provide findings which will be relevant for environmental decision makers.

First Global Authors Meeting, 20-24 February 2017

The highly anticipated first global authors meeting of the Global Environment Outlook will take in Frascati, Italy (near Rome) from the 20th to the 24th of February 2017. The meeting will be hosted at the European Space Research Institute (ESRIN) facilities. The meeting will be graced by senior officials from the Italian environment ministry, UN environment's Chief Scientist as well as a group of well-known environmental journalists.

Meeting Structure

The meeting will cover a full 5 days, with opening ceremonies and author orientation on Day 1, interaction between the author and Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) advisory bodies on Day 2, and finally Days 3-5 will focus on drafting of chapters in order to finalize the zero-order draft of the first eight chapters of the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6).

In parallel to the authors meeting the High-level Intergovernmental and Stakeholder Advisory Group (HLG) and the Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) will conduct planning meetings during the middle 3 days, while the Innovative Outlooks Group will mainly focus on brainstorming on new methods and tools for Global Environment Outlook (GEO)-type outlooks and develop a work plan for the Outlooks component of the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6). Global Environment Outlook Fellows will attend all five days of the meeting and focus on research support for the Global Environment Outlook author teams.



The sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook will feature a unique component where authors will address 10 cross-cutting issues¹ across 5 environmental themes (Air, Freshwater, Oceans/Marine, Land and Biota) in order to ensure coherent analysis of these issues across the environmental themes and also create a direct link with the Sustainable Development Goals. To provide guidance and leadership, the Global Environment Outlook co-chairs and vice-chairs will circulate amongst the drafting groups to observe and provide thoughts on the overarching themes and focus areas of the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook. Co-chairs and vice-chairs will be active participants in the discussions of the drafting teams, while the UN Environment Secretariat will provide administrative and technical support. Substantive support will be provided by UN Environment content experts.



¹ Chemicals and Waste; Culture, Education and Society; Human health; Climate impacts; Energy; Resource use; Polar regions; Environmental disasters; Food and Gender

Why Italy and ESRIN?

Italy has historically been deeply involved in space activities and the 20th century has confirmed this tendency by hosting several international forums especially focused on Earth and human protection. In 1964 Italy positioned itself as the third country in the entire world to have a satellite in orbit, "San Marco I" and the first country to experiment with sea launches from the oceanic platform "San Marco" in Kenya from 1966 to 1988. The Italian Space Agency (ASI), working closely with related national industries, represents today a key contribution to Research and Development in space in the international context.

The European Space Research Institute (ESRIN) known as the European Space Agency (ESA) Centre for Earth Observation is one of the five European Space Agency's specialized centers situated in Europe. Located in Frascati, a small town 20 km south of Rome in Italy, the European Space Research Institute (ESRIN) was established in 1966 and first began acquiring data from environmental satellites in the 1970s. Earth Observation data has grown in importance as more and more international and national agencies recognize the many uses to which it can be put. Satellites for Earth observation keep a constant watch over the Earth and the data they provide help to safeguard the planet in which we live. Since 2004, the European Space Research Institute (ESRIN) has been the headquarters for the European Space Agency's Earth Observation activities. Dr. Aschbacher, the Head of the European Space Research Institute (ESRIN), is also the Director of Earth Observation.



Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA) Guidelines Update

A full scientific and technical review of the Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA) guidelines, by our community of Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) reviewers, ended on the 13th of January 2017. The drive for updating the Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA) guidelines means that Integrated Environmental Assessment will now be more policy relevant, interactive and understandable by the general public. Also, the more traditional Drivers-Pressures-State-Impacts-Response (DPSIR) model for conducting Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA) will be replaced by a more holistic and fluid assessment approach which recognizes that clear separation between these concepts is no longer possible. The Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA) community will also strive for more indicators-based assessments to provide the ability of near-real-time tracking of environmental impacts and responses.

The draft is currently undergoing improvement by addressing the valuable comments that were provided by reviewers. After this, it will be ready for a six-month road-test which will be launched at the first author's meeting of the sixth edition of the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO-6) assessment at Frascati, Italy.

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