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February 13, 2023

**GEO-7 Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) Meeting Summary,
January 25, 2023**

Important Note: In order to make our calls more efficient and effective, members of the GEO-7 Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) are encouraged to keep their verbal interventions to a maximum of 3 minutes each. Members are encouraged to mute their telephone lines when they are not speaking to minimize background noise.

The Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) met at its third virtual call to discuss GEO-7 progress and plan next steps for the advancement of its work. Agenda items included:

1. Received updates and discuss the constitution of GEO-7 Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG) membership.
2. Review, discuss and advice on the proposed first list of GEO-7 authors and GEO-fellows.
3. Receive updates and discuss expression of interest process for GEO collaborating centers
4. Any Other Business

On these agenda items the IMAG decided:

- The IMAG thanks the secretariat for the process of selecting MESAG members. IMAG is satisfied with the manner in which its advice and recommendations have been addressed in selection of MESAG members and does not have any further advise on the Executive Director on the proposed membership. The Secretariat should proceed and seek appointment of the proposed MESAG members from the Executive Director.
- The IMAG welcomes the update on nomination of GEO-7 authors and fellows. The deadline for nominations is 31st January and IMAG members will continue to encourage nominations through their networks.
- The update on the first list proposed for the authors is useful to provide a picture of the status and where gaps are. An augmented list of the first proposal will be shared with the IMAG 1st February for commenting by Close of Business 6th February.
- The IMAG noted concern of the potential influence of the current geopolitical issues in the eastern European region and urges vigilance to ensure that the GEO process remains an expert focussed process and product void of political influence.
- An update on the expression of interest for collaborating centres is welcomed by the IMAG. The IMAG will continuously receive feedback on modalities that have been agreed upon on how to prioritize and engage with collaborative centres. Further, local and regional expertise will be considered in selecting the centres to ensure inclusion of participation in the GEO process.
- When an agreement is envisaged with the selected collaborating centres, IMAG members will be invited to advice on the content of the MOUs that relate to scientific information for regions.
- An IMAG planning meeting will be conducted on 14th of February to discuss in detail the agenda of the upcoming Bangkok meeting.

Rapporteur	Signature
Rafael Monge	

Summary of the meeting

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

Updates and discussion on the membership of the GEO-7 Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG)

The meeting started with a presentation by the Secretariat on the Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG) selection, constitution and updated membership. There were 179 nominations received from the MESAG nominations. Of these nominations, 34 were from Member States, 59 from the UNEP accredited major groups and stakeholders while 86 nominations were received from the Experts group category. The secretariat prepared the first proposal of potential MESAG members and shared with the IMAG and co-chairs of the assessment for advice. The Secretariat had then received advice on the proposed MESAG membership list and based on the feedback, had revised the proposal to include 13 nominees from Member states, 6 nominees from the UNEP accredited major groups and stakeholders and 11 nominees from the Experts group. This revised proposal was supported by IMAG and co-chairs of the report with one IMAG member advising against proposed selection of one nominee from the Asia Pacific group because of lack of sufficient expertise to function in the MESAG. The Secretariat had then replaced the nominee with another candidate from the same group and of the same gender to ensure regional and gender balance while ensuring appropriate expertise as advised by the IMAG member. All key fields of expertise needed for the MESAG were therefore covered by the revised proposal while also achieving gender and geographical balance as requested by the resolution. The Secretariat believes the list is now final and ready for submission to the Executive Director for appointment.

On this issue the IMAG thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and for accommodating its advice on the revised proposed MESAG selection. The IMAG does not have any other advice on the proposed MESAG list and the Secretariat should proceed to provide this proposal to the Executive Director for appointment.

Review, discussion, and advice on the proposed first list of GEO-7 authors and GEO-Fellows

The secretariat was invited to present the status of the proposed first list of authors and fellows for GEO-7. A detailed presentation was made by the secretariat highlighting that based on input from the Co-chairs of the assessment, a revised list of authors had been produced and shared with the IMAG. This was mainly an information item because the nomination process was still open to January 31, 2023. The proposal consists of a number of candidates who wish to be Coordinating Lead authors (CLA) from the nomination portal. The proposed list was derived from the annotated outline that was approved at the scoping meeting. The Secretariat then presented each chapter in detail with the corresponding proposed experts selected. A list of fellows was also presented. IMAG members were reminded that from the scoping meeting, GEO Fellows will support authors on citations and references, graphics and data as well as writing portions of the chapter if needed. Normally at least one fellow per chapter is needed but at the time of the call only 7 fellows had been nominated and proposed. The Secretariat hopes to send out a reminder on Fellow's nomination.

On this issue, the IMAG thanked the secretariat for the extensive work done so far in identifying potential authors for the respective chapters. The IMAG also noted gaps in nominating highlighting gender imbalance in the nominated pool as well as a shortage in GEO Fellows. Further, IMAG appreciated the synthesis and format of the proposal presented by the Secretariat noting that they will be identifying gaps and encourage nominations or nominate appropriate experts needed. The Secretariat welcomed the possibility of encouraging more nominations that will provide a wider pool of experts to select from and ensure regional and gender balance.

The IMAG also requested for an elaboration on the type of content and analysis planned for the regional chapters of the GEO-7 report. In elaborating, the Secretariat reminded the IMAG that at the scoping meeting a decision to use UN regions for this analysis was made. There will therefore be about 17 sub regions used as defined by the IPBES in their regional assessments and adding in North America and other regions. The goal is to have the analysis done in the 20 or so sub regions that will be defined. The IMAG noted this as an ambitious and challenging exercise, but also potentially fascinating and impactful analysis. IMAG further voiced a concern about the proposed first authors for the Eastern European group in light of the ongoing geopolitical issues in the region. On this issue, the need to refrain from political interference in GEO was emphasised since this is an expert-led scientific process. Two coordinating lead authors have been proposed to lead each chapter to ensure diversity of perspective and avoid such biases. The two CLAs are also proposed to ensure gender balance in each chapter leadership. The Secretariat was urged to ensure that GEO is not used as a political tool.

The IMAG decided that the Secretariat will continue to analyse the nominations that come up to the deadline and provide an augmented list of the first proposal for consideration by the IMAG. IMAG members will therefore receive the updated first list of auteurs on 1st February and will provide their comments up to 6th February on the proposed augmented list of authors. IMAG members will share their feedback to the Secretariat through an email copying co-chairs of the IMAG. IMAG members will also continue to encourage nominations in their networks to help fill the gaps currently available in the author teams.

Updates and discussion on expression of interest process for GEO collaborating centres

The Secretariat presented the list of collaborating centres that had expressed interest for GEO. The nomination process for collaborating centres was opened at the same time with the experts nominations and was extended to 31st January 2023. At the time of the IMAG call, 21 organizations and institutions had expressed interest as collaborating centres for GEO through a dedicated nomination portal. The Secretariat had a number of calls to clarify issues with some of the interested institutions so there is a possibility that more institutions will express interest by the deadline. The Secretariat then presented the breakdown of the 21 candidates for collaborating centres, indicating their interested area of collaborating for GEO and their scope of work. Key documents are also required for each collaborating centre to ensure a thorough assessment on each candidate at the end of nomination process.

On this issue, IMAG sought clarification on the engagement of private institutions or organizations expressing interest for collaborating in GEO seeking to know how due diligence procedure for those institutions will be conducted. The Secretariat highlighted that UNEP has an internal partnership portal, which would be used to organize Memoranda of understanding, small scale funding agreements and large-scale funding agreements. The partnership portal allows UNEP's corporate services division to do a full legal review. It requires that corporation documents, annual reports and various other documents are submitted for the institution. In the case of private sector entities, the due diligence review includes a full analysis by the partnership panel which is not only the deputy executive director, but the director of UNEP's Cooperate Services Division. Therefore a full review will be conducted to whether any private sector partner is appropriate to work with UNEP.

IMAG further sort clarification on whether all institutions who express interest will be taken for GEO-7 or whether only a number will be accommodated. On this issue the Secretariat submitted that earlier GEOs were mainly produced by collaborating centres. There was therefore a wide network of collaborating centres already established for those particular GEOs and it's only since GEO-4 where independent authors were involved in producing GEO directly. The Secretariat is returning to the collaborating centre model as per the resolution which requested the Secretariat to seek interest in collaborating centres. Modalities of how many collaborating centres will be needed and how much to accommodate is still under consideration and the Secretariat is having internal discussions with the legal department as to how many MOU's can possibly be accommodated and decide what's feasible.

On this issue IMAG decided that it would continuously receive feedback on modalities that have been agreed upon on how to prioritize and engage with collaborative centres. Further, local and regional expertise should be considered in selecting the centres to ensure inclusion of participation in the GEO process. When an agreement is envisaged with the selected collaborating centres, IMAG members should be invited to advice on the content of the MOUs that relate to scientific information for regions.

Any other business

- IMAG received an update on the preparation for the authors and IMAG meeting in Bangkok. IMAG members should have confirmed their participation for the meeting with the Secretariat travel team. There are some security checks being conducted by the government of Thailand for people coming from outside and those security checks take a little bit longer. Unfortunately, the Asia Pacific Office in Bangkok cannot influence the Thai Government with respect to visa issuance. IMAG members are encouraged to make visa arrangements as soon as possible.
- The IMAG call scheduled for February 14 will be converted to a planning call for IMAG members to discuss an agenda for their Bangkok meeting. There will be a bit some overlap (probably half day) with the MESAG to discuss how the two advisory groups would like to work together going forward. The Coordination Group consisting of the chairs of the IMAG, the chairs of the MESAG and the Chairs of the assessment will also meet. Feedback on the draft agenda (to be circulated) is welcomed from IMAG members.

Having no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 16h23 (EAT).

Action items

- The Secretariat will prepare a written summary of the meeting.
- The Secretariat to share augmented list of the first proposal of authors on 1st February 2023 for IMAG feedback by 6th February 2023.
- IMAG members to send feedback on the first proposal augmented list by CoB 6th February 2023. Comments to be sent through email to Secretariat copying IMAG co-chairs
- The Secretariat to send out a draft agenda for the Bangkok meeting for IMAG comments.
- IMAG to meet on 14th February 2023 to mainly discuss the agenda of the Bangkok meeting.
- IMAG members to continue sharing the Experts and Collaborating centers nominations request within their networks and to follow-up with their respective governments in case they are planning to nominate before the deadline.

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
Mr TOGHRUL FEYZIYEV	Advisor, International cooperation division of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan	Eastern European Group
Dr Marek Haliniak	General Counsellor in the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Department of Strategy and Analysis, Poland	Poland	Eastern European Group
Mr Rafael Monge	Director - National Center of Environmental Information (CENIGA) Ministry of Environment and Energy; Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Latin American and Caribbean Group
Mr Arthur EIJIS	Policy coordinator Natural Resource Management & Sustainable Land Use - Ministry of Infrastructure & water management, department of International Affairs	Netherlands	Western European Group
Dr Lisa Eriksson	Policy evaluation and analysis; Sustainable Development Department; Swedish Environmental protection agency	Sweden	Western European Group
Ms Claudia Kabel	German Environment Agency (UBA), academic staff member, International Sustainability Strategies, Policy and Knowledge Transfer	Germany	Western European Group
Ms Christina Komorski	Director, Information & Indicators Division, Sustainability Directorate, Environment and Climate Change Canada	Canada	Western European Group
Dr Keri Holland	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 Dušica Pešević	Associate Professor, University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Eastern European Group
Mr. Miroslav Havránek	Director of the Czech Environmental Information Agency	Czechia	Eastern European 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
Dr Salla Rantala	Development Manager, Environmental Policy Centre, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)	Finland	Western 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
Names	Gender	Nationality	Major Group
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
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
Dr Thuraya AL Sariri	Assistance Director General of Nature Conservation at MECA- Oman	Oman	Asia and the Pacific 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
Dr Jerome Lugumira Sebadduka	Natural Resources Management Specialist (Soils and Land Use), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Uganda	Uganda	African Group
Ms Yi Huang	Professor, School of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Peking University, China	China	Asia and the Pacific Group
Ms Gillian Stanislaus	Environmental Programme Officer, Environmental Management Authority (EMA)	Trinidad & Tobago	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 Thomas Chali	Senior Policy Advisor on Environmental Conservation and Natural Resources Management in Tanzania	Tanzania	African Group
Names	Affiliation	Nationality	Major Group
Ms. Djatougbe Aziaka	President and founder of welfare Togo; co-facilitator of UNEP NGO major group	Togo	Non-governmental organization
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. Zahra Abu Taha	Recycling officer at ZATARI refugees camp, Oxfam	Jordan	Children and youth
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