

JULY 2018

First GEO for Youth authors meeting UN Conference Centre, Bangkok, 25-27 June 2018



A selected group of authors met at the UN Conference Centre, Bangkok to scope out the work for drafting the derivative product, GEO for Youth. The purpose of the meeting was mainly to develop the storyline, structure and deliverables of the Global GEO for Youth, report, and agree on the work plan for its preparation as well as expose young upcoming scholars and integrated environmental assessment practitioners to the global science-policy process through interaction with multidisciplinary scientists from across the world. During the three-day meeting, authors were informed of the main elements of the Global Environment Outlook main report and how these can be linked up to the GEO for Youth derivative product. The GEO for Youth process is co-chaired by Dr. Nibedita Mukherjee and Mr. Charles Mwangi who are authors for the main global report. Mr. Mwangi and the Secretariat informed authors of the proposed process for creation of GEO for Youth and what is likely required from the authors over the next year. Finally, the Secretariat gave an overview of the approach within UN Environment for creating education materials or products.

The authors decided that the structure of the Global GEO for Youth should be different from the main report. It should focus on how earth and human systems are linked together and how actions within human systems can affect or be affected by earth systems. They also decided that the youth report should answer three main questions;

- What are the findings from the main Global Environment Outlook report that will affect Youth?
- What are the implications of these findings for Youth?
- What actions can Youth take to achieve a more sustainable world?

Through small discussion groups, authors gathered evidence from the main Global Environment Outlook chapters of the main findings in the areas of Air/Climate, Oceans/Freshwater, Land/Biodiversity and Cross-cutting issues. Based on these findings, authors tried to identify the implications for and actions that youth can take to take advantage of these implications such as start new careers and make behavioural changes. Authors also agreed several ways should be used to bring in ideas or content for specific areas. Initially, these efforts could focus on:

- Developing a questionnaire to obtain ideas about the jobs of the future that might contribute to achieving sustainability;
- Obtain descriptions and stories from key individuals and companies in these new sectors that will contribute to achieving sustainability;
- Develop a questionnaire to obtain ideas of personal behaviour change that could contribute to achieving sustainability; and
- Run a competition for visual authors.





The GEO for Youth report will be in an e-book format. Authors also considered that the e-book format might not be the only way the information from GEO for Youth should be presented. Efforts will be made to explore other media, including video, short clips, compelling infographics or other types of visuals and social media outreach using narratives and stories. The report intends to focus on the career opportunities that youth may have as well as the advantages and benefits of taking individual and collective actions to achieve sustainability.

The report will be politically and culturally neutral and focus more on creating demand for more sustainable behaviours. Using youth-appropriate language, extensive and interesting visuals as well as multimedia, the report will focus on positive actions that can be taken to achieve a more sustainable future by educating youth about the connection of their actions to the various human and earth systems. In the development of the report, authors will;

- Identify key advocacy, communication and educational material supporting the main report [GEO-6];
- Develop preliminary ideas on content for each chapter and section: narratives, data, indicators, case studies, etc.;
- Develop the work plan, timetable and drafting responsibilities; and
- Identify new potential authors.

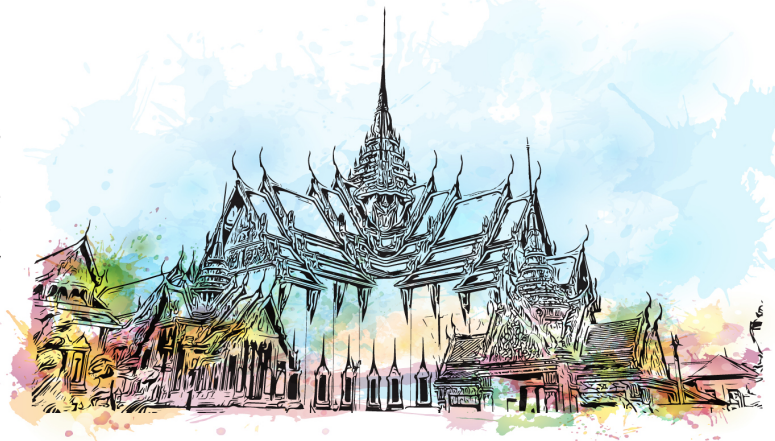
On the last day of the meeting an annotated outline was reviewed and approved by the authors. Authors were asked to contribute to various chapters and through this process, the author teams were formed. Structurally, the teams will be led by coordinating lead authors with the support of lead authors and contributing authors.

The outline is comprised of four main sections:

- An introduction to Earth and Human Systems, their interactions and impacts. This section is mainly a compilation of the findings from the main Global Environment Outlook report which will impact youth in the near to longer term. The chapter has sub-sections on Drivers of Environmental Change, Air/Climate, Oceans/Freshwater, Land and Biodiversity as well as Cross-cutting issues;
- The next chapter focuses on Sustainable Futures and how different these will be from the present. This chapter helps youth imagine these futures and target their actions towards achieving them;
- The next chapter focuses on the Opportunities presented by these new futures, particularly in the areas of jobs, prosperity and human health. This chapter is meant to be optimistic and present the new jobs and opportunities that a more sustainable future can offer; and
- Finally, the last chapter focuses on the individual actions that youth can take on a day-to-day basis that will lead to a more sustainable future (from empathy to action). The intent here is for youth to create demand for cleaner and greener products and behaviours, thus driving markets to respond to this demand.

To obtain the broadest possible input to the publication and to create awareness of its existence, a few outreach opportunities were decided upon that will also provide key data elements for the analysis and reach out to key stakeholder groups. These outreach opportunities include defining the jobs and opportunities of the future by conducting a webinar or circulating a questionnaire to key youth groups to find out which areas of employment they believe will help the world achieve greater sustainability. Once this list is compiled the authors will conduct interviews with key leaders in these new employment areas to obtain descriptions of the types of jobs these new sectors can offer. The authors also decided to conduct interviews with key thought leaders around sustainability to gather stories of how individual actions can lead to bigger systemic changes. These interviews will help populate the final chapter of the e-book.

The GEO for Youth report is expected to be launched during the International Youth Day in 2019 as the day bears significance for youth and will be an informative tool in demonstrating to the youth who constitute a significant group in the world population how their daily actions and choices could contribute to sustainability of the world.



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Meeting of the Policy Effectiveness Authors of the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook 13-15 June 2018



A selected group of the Policy Effectiveness authors met at the Freie Universität in Berlin to advance the drafting of several elements of the Policy Effectiveness chapters of the sixth Global Environment Outlook in preparation for the Intergovernmental review process that started on the 15 June 2018 and will run to August 2018.

The Free University was founded in West Berlin in 1948 with American support during the early Cold War period as a de facto western continuation of the Frederick William University, which was in East Berlin and faced strong communist repression. Its name refers to West Berlin's status as part of the Western «free world,» in contrast to the «unfree» Communist world in general and the «unfree» communist-controlled university in East Berlin. The Free University of Berlin is one of eleven German elite universities in the German Universities Excellence Initiative.

The meeting was organized by the Secretariat in response to the authors request to convey for a last face to face meeting to strengthen the quality of the assessment. The meeting represented a great opportunity for the authors, under the supervision and the guidance of three Coordinating Lead Authors to agree on the key messages of the different policy chapters in support of the environmental decision-making process.

From the high-level discussion that took place during the three days, some preliminary key messages emerged:

- The success/failure of each policy is context sensitive. Planning strategically, instead of delivering policies based on urgency, helps in achieving better outcome;
- There is no single accepted methodology to assess policy effectiveness. Efforts are ongoing to improve how effectiveness is assessed and several criteria may be taken into consideration to try to assess policy effectiveness at different governance levels;
- An ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of policies helps to achieve better result in the future;
- Policies focusing on systems have better transformative potential than policies addressing single environmental issues; and
- Opportunities for policy and governance innovation already exist and need to be considered if we are to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.



Know an Expert: Global Environment Outlook Author Profile



Dr. Andres Guhl is a Geographer from Colombia. He is currently a Faculty member at Universidad de los Andes in Bogota where he researches on coffee production systems, mountain environments, landscape transformations and land use dynamics, sustainability and human-environment relationships in different locations in Latin America, but mostly in his own country. He began his involvement with environmental assessments as a Millennium Ecosystem Assessment fellow back in 2003. Participating in the process was very interesting because it allowed him to work in interdisciplinary teams to analyze a wide range of environmental issues. As a result of this first experience, he became involved as a fellow in the [fourth edition of the Global Environment Outlook](#) process, working in the biodiversity chapter. He was also involved in the [fifth edition of the Global Environment Outlook](#) as a reviewer of the Land chapter (State and Trends). He later became involved in the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook as a Coordinating Lead Author of the land chapter (State and Trends) for the [Latin America and the Caribbean](#) regional assessment and later became a Coordinating Lead Author of the same chapter in the global report. Being part of the Global Environment Outlook process for quite some time has been interesting as he has experienced the struggle of the science-policy interface, and how policy responses usually lag behind environmental impacts. In other words, policies tend to be reactive rather than proactive. Furthermore, the different Global Environment Outlooks have highlighted the interconnectedness of socioecological processes and the need to address environmental degradation in an integrated and adaptive way. Despite the fact of having stated this for more than a decade, it is only now that policy makers and decision makers are starting to integrate this view. The interlinkages between the different Sustainable Development Goals can serve as a framework to address several targets simultaneously that contribute to a healthy planet for a healthy people.

New Team Member of the Global Environment Outlook



Yunting Duan is an Associate Expert at UN Environment's Science Division. She joined the Global Environmental Outlook Unit in May 2018. Before coming to UN environment, she was working at the Chinese Academy for Environment Planning as an assistant researcher for five years and her main area of expertise is environment economic policy. During that time, she worked for Ministry of Environment Protection temporarily from 2015 to 2017 and mainly dealt with trade and environmental issues. She was involved in projects such as China's green finance research, domestic environment policy planning, South-South cooperation policy research, Multilateral Environmental Agreement negotiations, etc. Yunting holds a Bachelor of Engineering in Building Environment & Facility Engineering and a Master of Science in Environmental Policy and Management from Bristol University.

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