



## SUMMARY OF THE UNEP GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: 16-17 SEPTEMBER 2010

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Regional Consultation for Asia and the Pacific took place in Bangkok, Thailand on 16 and 17 September 2010. The regional consultation brought together 47 participants comprising representatives from UN agencies, government departments, research and academic institutions, regional and sub-regional organizations, and development banks from Asia and the Pacific region.

This regional consultation was the fourth in a series of seven regional consultations being undertaken by UNEP as part of the preparation for the production of the fifth GEO (GEO-5). The principal output of these consultations is a final report for each regional consultation, containing the outcomes of the meeting including all key recommendations, regional priorities, agreed goals and key target audiences.

The Asia and the Pacific regional consultation took place in plenary, with discussions focusing on: the priority environmental issues and challenges to be the focus of the regional chapter of GEO-5; associated internationally agreed goals for these regional environmental priorities; and policy gaps related to these environmental priorities. The consultations resulted, *inter alia*, in agreement on regional priority environmental issues and challenges as follows: climate change, environmental governance, biodiversity, freshwater, and chemicals and waste.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GEO-5 REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

The UNEP Global Environmental Outlook was launched in 1995 in response to a request by the UNEP Governing Council for a comprehensive report on the state of the world environment. The GEO is a process of conducting a global integrated environmental assessment to deliver the best available scientific findings to policy makers and provide them with sufficient information to effectively respond to environmental challenges. The output of the GEO process is an assessment report of the state and trends of the global environment.

UNEP has so far produced four GEO reports. GEO-1, published in 1997, provided a comprehensive overview of the state of the world's environment and showed that although significant progress had been made in confronting environmental challenges in both developing and industrialized regions, there was still a need to pursue environmental and associated socio-economic policies vigorously.

GEO-2000, which was published in 1999, concluded that if current trends in population and economic growth, and consumption continued, the natural environment would be increasingly stressed.

GEO-3 was published in 2002 and provided an overview of the main environmental developments over the past three decades demonstrating how social, economic and other factors contributed to the changes that had occurred. It highlighted increasing poverty and concluded that the world was characterized by four major divides threatening sustainable development: the environmental divide; the policy divide; the vulnerability gap; and the lifestyle divide.

GEO-4, published in 2007, assessed the state of the global atmosphere, land, water and biodiversity, as well as the human dimensions of environmental change, and presented scenarios and policy options for action in the context of environment for development. It issued an urgent call for action in dealing with persistent and urgent environmental problems, such as climate change, that undermine human wellbeing and development.

GEO-5 was requested by the 25th session of the UNEP Governing Council, held in February 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya. Although GEO-5 will provide an analysis of the state and trends of the global environment, it will differ from previous GEO reports by shifting from assessing priority "problems" to include

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The *UNEP GEO Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Tomilola "Tomi" Akanle and Kunbao Xia. The Editor is Anna Schulz <anna@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists (HTML and PDF format) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11A, New York, New York 10022, United States of America.

assessment of priority solutions. It aims to, *inter alia*, provide a scientific analysis of selected environmental challenges and the solutions available to address them, including their economic, environmental and social costs and benefits. GEO-5 will also have a strong regional emphasis. The report will be published in 2012 to coincide with the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (the Rio+20 Conference) and one of the objectives of the GEO-5 assessment is to address the themes of this Conference.

The GEO-5 report will consist of three major parts: an assessment of the global state and trends of the environment; regional policy analyses; and potential opportunities for action at the global level. Seven regional consultations are part of the GEO-5 production process. The dates and locations of these regional consultations are: September 2 in Washington DC, USA; September 6 to 7 in Panama City, Panama; September 9 in Ottawa, Canada; September 16 to 17 in Bangkok, Thailand; September 20 to 21 in Nairobi, Kenya; September 23 to 24 in Geneva, Switzerland; and October 4 to 5 in Bahrain. The overall aim of these consultations is for stakeholders and the UNEP Secretariat to agree on priority environmental issues and challenges within each region and select internationally agreed goals that are directly related to these regional environmental priorities in order to develop the regional components of the assessment.

#### **FIRST GLOBAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

The First Global Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Consultation on GEO-5 was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 29 to 31 March 2010, and marked the start of the GEO-5 process. The aim of the consultation was for governments and other stakeholder groups to discuss, agree on and adopt the objectives, scope and process for GEO-5. The Consultation adopted seven objectives for GEO-5, which include: providing a comprehensive, integrated and scientifically credible global environmental assessment to support decision-making processes at appropriate levels; strengthening the ongoing process of capacity building for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to conduct environmental monitoring and assessments at all levels; and strengthening the policy relevance of GEO-5 by including an analysis policy option case studies to identify promising policy options to speed up achievement of internationally agreed goals such as the Millennium Development Goals and those in multilateral environmental agreements.

As part of the GEO-5 process, the Consultation also established a High-Level Intergovernmental Advisory Panel to, *inter alia*, identify relevant goals for Part 1 of the GEO-5 report.

#### **FIRST MEETING OF THE HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY PANEL**

The Panel met from 28 to 30 June 2010 in Glion, Switzerland. It identified and agreed on the internationally agreed goals to be analyzed as part of the GEO-5 process, to identify gaps in their achievement and to frame the regional policy assessment. The Panel also provided high-level strategic advice to guide chapter authors when evaluating the gaps in achieving these goals and identifying the policy options for speeding up their achievement.

#### **NORTH AMERICA REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS**

Two regional consultations were held for the North America region, in Washington DC, USA and Ottawa, Canada on 2 and 9 September 2010, respectively. At each of these consultations, participants selected three environmental challenges, together with related internationally agreed goals. The environmental challenges and goals selected by the Washington DC regional consultation were: land use, with the goal of developing and implementing integrated land management and water-use plans that are based on sustainable use of renewable resources and on integrated assessments of socio-economic and environmental potentials, contained in paragraph 40(b) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002; environmental governance, with the goal of advancing the concept of a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication in order to address current challenges, contained in Section 13 of the Nusa Dua Declaration, which was adopted by the 11th Special Session of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum in 2010; and freshwater, with the goal in paragraph 26(c) of the JPOI, of improving the efficient use of water resources and promoting their allocation among competing uses in a way that gives priority to the satisfaction of basic human needs and balances the requirement of preserving or restoring ecosystems and their functions.

At the Ottawa regional consultation, participants selected: climate change, with the goal of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, contained in Article 2 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992; environmental governance, with the goal in paragraph 40(b) of the JPOI; and freshwater, with the goal in paragraph 23 of the UN Millennium Declaration, UN General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 2000, which requires the development of water management strategies that promote equitable access and adequate supplies, at the regional, national and local levels in order to end the unsustainable exploitation of water resources.

These selections are the independent outcomes of the two North America regional consultations and are not the final selection of regional environmental priorities and related internationally agreed goals for the North America region. The UNEP Secretariat, in consultation with the chairs of the two regional consultations, will reconcile these outcomes and prepare a harmonized report for North America, containing one final selection of priorities and goals.

#### **LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION**

The Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Consultation was held in Panama City, Panama, from 6 to 7 September 2010. Participants at the consultation selected a set of regional environmental challenges, together with a set of internationally agreed goals for these challenges, as follows: biodiversity, with the goal of adopting measures relating to the use of biological resources to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on biological diversity, contained in Article 10 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), adopted in 1992 by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee; climate

change, with the goal in Article 3, paragraphs 1-3 of the UNFCCC, referring to the protection of the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind; freshwater, with the goal in paragraph 26(c) of the JPOI; seas and oceans, with the goal of promoting the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems, and their natural resources, contained in the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity adopted by the second Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 1995; soil, land use, land degradation and desertification, with the goal in paragraph 40(b) of the JPOI; and environmental governance, with the goal in paragraph 5 of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, which provides for collectively advancing and strengthening the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development - economic development, social development and environmental protection.

## **REPORT OF THE GEO-5 REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

### ***OPENING OF THE MEETING***

Monika MacDevette, Chief, Capacity Development Branch, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), opened the meeting on Thursday morning. She highlighted differences between the Fifth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-5) and previous GEO reports, stating that in addition to identifying priority environmental challenges GEO-5 will also highlight policy solutions. She added that GEO-5 will be policy-oriented, focus more on regional issues while not losing sight of the global environment and also address the science/policy interface.

Anna Stabrawa, Regional Coordinator, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UNEP, emphasized that GEO-5 will focus on regional perspectives and explained that the purpose of these regional consultations is to ensure that regional and national perspectives are reflected in the report. She said that GEO-5 will also undertake an assessment of policies and solutions for addressing the environmental challenges identified.

### ***ORGANIZATION OF WORK***

Vivek Saxena, Ministry of Environment and Forests, India, and Somrudee Nicrowattanayingyong, Thailand Environment Institute, were elected as Co-Chairs of the meeting. Participants then adopted the meeting agenda.

### ***PRESENTATION ON THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING***

Matthew Billot, Head, GEO Unit, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP, outlined the expected outcomes from the meeting, including: selection of three to five environmental issues and challenges of regional priority; selection of three to five internationally agreed goals for the selected regional environmental issues and challenges; identification of policy gaps in achieving the selected goals; and identification of policy options that could help speed up achievement of the goals. He said the meeting will also address the development and production of the regional chapter in the GEO-5 report.

Billot then presented the background, scope, objectives and process of GEO-5. He outlined the broad scope of GEO-5 as follows: an assessment of the state and trends of the global environment; policy options for regions; challenge scenarios and transformative policies; and global responses.

In the ensuing discussion, participants discussed: the expected length of the regional chapters; the methodology for undertaking the policy assessments; and the need for effective outreach and communication. Some participants highlighted the importance of considering and addressing the drivers of environmental challenges and one noted the need for evidence-based policy options and scenarios. Noting that GEO-5 would be relevant to policy makers in all sectors, one participant suggested that the report should also contain an analysis of the impacts of various environmental issues on specific sectors.

### ***PRESENTATION ON PRIORITY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC***

Presenting on priority environmental issues and challenges in the region, Stabrawa explained that a questionnaire had been sent to all GEO-5 partners and stakeholders, covering priority environmental issues in Asia and the Pacific, and that 39 responses had been received. She reported that from these responses climate change, freshwater, air pollution and air quality, biodiversity, and environmental governance emerged as the environmental challenges generally considered the most important of the 10 issues identified in the questionnaire.

Stabrawa reported further that respondents had also identified some effective policies for addressing environmental issues, including: integrated policies and master planning, such as in watershed management; pricing and market-based instruments, such as payment for ecosystem services and cap-and-trade systems; diversification such as in water supply and transportation systems; crop insurance schemes in the agriculture sector; community-based and participatory approaches; and resource use efficiency. She outlined some of the counterproductive policies identified, such as: fragmented, outdated, duplicative or contradictory legislation; perverse subsidies for energy, water or fertilizer use; promotion of monoculture; exclusion of main stakeholders from resource management; and lack of management and enforcement of policies.

In the subsequent discussion, several participants highlighted the importance of aligning developmental and environmental goals, noting that improved food security and sustainable development should be achieved within the context of preventing environmental degradation. One participant suggested that the regional chapter should focus on best practice examples of action on environmental issues, which should then be included in the chapter as policy options. Another suggested that the chapter should include an examination of how multilateral environmental agreements are implemented in the region.

### ***DISCUSSION AND SELECTION OF PRIORITY REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR GEO-5***

Participants were invited to identify the priority environmental challenges to be analyzed in the regional chapter of GEO-5. Several participants expressed reluctance to select specific challenges or issues, highlighting that most of

these are cross-cutting and that environmental governance, for instance, is an overarching issue and therefore different from the other environmental issues. One participant underlined that the Pacific small island developing states (SIDS) have agreed on their priority environmental challenges and proposed including in the regional chapter, a section on Pacific SIDS and the particular challenges they face.

Some said that climate change should be taken as a priority for the region, but that the focus should be on its impact on the environment, so as to avoid duplication with other fora. One participant suggested selecting more than five priority issues if necessary and the Secretariat clarified that while the regional chapter will focus on the issues selected, this does not mean that other issues would be ignored or that they are not important.

Through a voting process, participants selected the following as the five regional priority environmental challenges: climate change; environmental governance; biodiversity; freshwater; and chemicals and waste.

Some participants suggested selecting only three priority regional environmental challenges and supported selecting only climate change, biodiversity and environmental governance. Others preferred selecting five priority challenges. The meeting decided to propose all five challenges to the drafting authors and to highlight the special importance of the first three challenges. The final decision on the number of priority challenges could then be made by the regional chapter working group, which is to be established to draft the regional chapter of GEO-5. The number of priority challenges selected would depend on the availability of time and resources, as well as the scope of the policy assessment to be undertaken in the regional chapter.

#### **DISCUSSION AND SELECTION OF INTERNATIONALLY AGREED GOALS FOR THE REGION RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES SELECTED**

Billot introduced this session, noting that the High-Level Intergovernmental Advisory Panel had decided on a set of internationally agreed goals for each environmental challenge. He explained that the focus of this session was for participants to select one of these internationally agreed goals per regional environmental priority. He then invited participants to select only one goal per theme and to give the reasons for their selections.

On **climate change**, most participants emphasized that all aspects of climate change, including mitigation, adaptation, capacity building and finance, are important. Some participants supported Article 2 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which requires stabilization of greenhouse concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, noting that this is the broadest of the available options. Others preferred Article 3, paragraphs 1-3, *inter alia*, because of its reference to the precautionary principle and coverage of both developed and developing countries. This Article requires countries to protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. It further requires developed countries to take the lead in combating climate change, and provides that the specific needs

and special circumstances of developing countries should be given full consideration. Finally, it requires countries to take precautionary measures to anticipate, prevent or minimize the causes of climate change and mitigate its adverse effects. One participant noted the need to identify time frames within which the selected goals should be achieved.

By voting, participants selected Article 3, paragraphs 1-3 of the UNFCCC as the regional goal for climate change for GEO-5, while also recognizing the importance of the goals in Article 2 of the UNFCCC, the Bali Action Plan and the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development.

On **environmental governance**, some participants expressed their reluctance to select any of the identified goals, saying they were either not appropriate or not strong enough. Several stressed that governance should go beyond the issue of environmental governance and should also include issues such as trade. One participant noted that governance covers institutions, laws and norms, as well as processes. Other participants expressed support for paragraph 5 of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, which provides that countries assume a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development – economic development, social development and environmental protection – at the local, national, regional and global levels. By voting, the meeting selected paragraph 5 of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development as the regional goal for environmental governance for GEO-5.

On **biodiversity**, participants highlighted the need to consider the issues of species and habitat loss, invasive species, forests and biodiversity and traditional knowledge. Many expressed support for Article 1 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), noting that it is the broadest of the available options. This article, *inter alia*, contains the objectives of conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. Some participants identified difficulty with selecting just one of the goals listed. One participant said the chapter authors should be encouraged to consider any goal that is selected within its entire context and not in isolation, pointing out that the various options are provisions taken from balanced international agreements. Participants then voted and selected Article 1 of the CBD as the regional goal for biodiversity for GEO-5.

On **freshwater**, participants underlined the importance of supply and demand, policy, efficiency, access, and prevention and control of pollution. They also highlighted the need to preserve both the quantity and quality of water resources. By voting, they agreed to adopt paragraph 26(c) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) as the regional goal for freshwater for GEO-5. This refers to improving the efficient use of water resources and promoting their allocation among competing uses in a way that gives priority to the satisfaction of basic human needs and balances the requirement of preserving or restoring ecosystems and their functions. They also agreed that paragraphs 25(d) and 7(a) of the same agreement should be taken into consideration by the authors of the regional chapter. These paragraphs contain the goals

of intensifying water pollution prevention to reduce health hazards and protect ecosystems, and of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015, respectively.

On *chemicals and waste*, many participants noted that these are two different, though related issues and preferred adopting two separate goals. Several noted that paragraph 23 of the JPOI contains the overarching goal of sound management of chemicals throughout their lifecycle and of hazardous wastes for sustainable development and the protection of human health and the environment. They, however, also stressed the importance of the goal in paragraph 22 of the same agreement, which refers to the prevention and minimization of waste. Because they were unable to select more than one goal per environmental priority, parties voted to select paragraph 23 but agreed to request the chapter authors to also take account of paragraph 22 during the policy assessment.

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE POLICY ANALYSIS PROCESS**

On Friday morning, Matthew Billot, UNEP, presented an overview of the policy analysis process, explaining that the purpose of the policy assessment is to conduct a cost and benefit analysis of the policy options available to help speed up achievement of the selected internationally agreed goals. He underscored that the costs and benefits of policy options would not be limited to economic costs and benefits, but would include: social, economic, political, environmental and displacement costs; private sector response; market forces; time lag; legislation; enforcement and monitoring; financial support; and regional agreements and priorities. Billot then explained the process for conducting the policy assessment, which will include a production meeting to be held in November 2010, to be attended by coordinating lead authors from the various regions and UNEP staff. The methodology to be used for the policy assessment will be presented at this production meeting. Billot explained that the creation of a new methodology is not envisaged. Rather, the methodology to be used will comprise elements from existing policy assessment methodologies. Existing methodologies, such as strategic environmental assessment and cost-benefit analysis, will be considered, and relevant elements from them adopted. Following this production meeting, an assessment framework and guidance for the regional chapters would be designed. The outcome of the policy assessment would be the selection of three to five policies per selected internationally agreed goal.

### **DISCUSSION OF POLICY GAPS, SUCCESSES AND PROMISING POLICIES**

Co-Chair Vivek Saxena invited participants to identify policy gaps, successes and promising policies for meeting the selected goals. Participants asked questions and made comments on the methodology and criteria for identifying such policy gaps, successes and policies. Some participants noted that policy development processes are not well coordinated, that policy adoption is not recorded at the national level, and therefore that it is difficult to identify gaps and successes at the national level. Several participants pointed out that some countries would be sensitive to an international analysis of their policy gaps. Many stressed the need for a cost-benefit analysis of policies, but noted that there are no widely-accepted methodologies for such analysis.

One participant asked if GEO-5 would support or conduct new research on policy gaps, successes and options, in particular, in relation to environmental services that do not have market value. Another participant highlighted the need for policies that are easily transferred and adopted by countries. Regarding the identification of policies, one participant noted that countries within the region have divergent social and political systems, and that it would be difficult to identify policies that could be replicated across countries within the region. Pointing out that various sub-regional groupings, such as the Greater Mekong Subregion and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, have adopted sub-regional policies, she encouraged considering policies at the sub-regional, rather than at the regional level. Another participant added that although there were no regional policies, there may be a need for regional policies on issues that impact the region as a whole. Billot highlighted the need to: identify gaps; screen policies at the local, national and global levels; and develop a database of effective policies. He encouraged participants to start by identifying policy gaps, noting that there would still be opportunities later, such as through the chapter working groups and other meetings, to identify promising policies to achieve the selected goals.

Participants were then invited to identify policy gaps under each of the environmental challenges selected.

On *climate change*, participants identified lack of: clear goals and indicators; understanding of the different types of stakeholders and their needs; synergy among policies; understanding of environmental concerns; mechanisms within policies for achieving policy goals; effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; and institutional capacity to ensure effective implementation of policies. On specific policies that could be used to achieve goals but do not exist, or are not common, in the region, participants identified: phasing out fossil fuels and promoting carbon neutrality; renewable energy mandates; energy efficiency and building retrofits; household carbon caps and allowances; removal of perverse subsidies; climate proofing infrastructure; financial transfer mechanisms; policies related to mass transport and private vehicle transport; and carbon pricing, such as environmental taxes and cap-and-trade emission trading schemes.

On *environmental governance*, participants highlighted the importance of: strengthening environmental institutions; decentralization; mainstreaming policies; capacity building for environmental governance at the provincial and sub-provincial levels; public participation and involvement of communities and non-governmental organizations in decision making; coordination among government agencies; the role of the private sector and industries; and adequate incentives. In relation to governance and management of water resources, some participants underscored the need for a cross-sectoral approach. Regarding policy gaps and problems relating to environmental governance, participants, *inter alia*, identified: lack of political will; corruption; lack of policy coherence at national and sub-regional levels; policy gaps in urban planning; and lack of access to justice and information.

On *biodiversity*, one participant noted that none of the existing policies take account of the economic value of ecosystem goods and services. Noting that ecosystems do not always exist solely within national boundaries, he noted the

lack of regional or sub-regional policies covering ecosystems that span more than one national boundary. Another participant said that many policies focus on ecosystems without adequate consideration of the needs, roles and stewardship functions of the communities that rely on the ecosystems. Other gaps identified include lack of: consideration of land use change issues and the role of traditional knowledge; consideration of the drivers of biodiversity loss such as invasive species; equitable access to benefit sharing and compensation of local communities for the use of their traditional knowledge; consideration of costs and benefits; adequate data and financial ability to acquire required data; green economic growth indicators; understanding of the pressures placed on biodiversity by developmental issues such as tourism and transport; and integration of biodiversity policies into development policies.

Participants encouraged further consideration of: payment for ecosystem services or eco-compensation policies; genetically-modified organisms; marine biodiversity issues beyond coral reef issues; bio-security; impact of climate change and disasters on biodiversity; education for biodiversity protection; bio-piracy issues; and conservation of endangered species and prevention of species loss. Examples of success stories were also given, such as Vietnam's biodiversity law and China's task force on ecosystem services. One participant suggested requesting the chapter authors to undertake more research in this area, saying that there was insufficient time to fully consider and identify all policy gaps and success stories at this meeting.

Regarding *freshwater*, participants highlighted the importance of: water security and efficiency; rural water use technologies such as irrigation technologies; and achieving the Millennium Development Goal on freshwater. Regarding policy gaps, participants identified lack of policies on: integrated watershed management; efficient water management such as irrigation; water pricing; water harvesting; policies linking water and climate change issues; coordination in managing watersheds; and an international water regime. Participants further discussed: the relationship between energy and water; ground water and sediment management; sharing of costs and benefits between upstream and downstream users of water resources; proper management of floods and flood plains; promoting traditional water management systems; proper management of wetlands; and harmonizing water standards across the region.

On *chemicals and waste*, participants underscored: the principle of reuse, reduce and recycle; and the need to consider reduction of waste at the design stage. Several policy gaps were identified by participants, including: eco-labeling; use of waste for energy generation; education programmes on the management of chemicals and waste; incentives, both monetary and non-monetary; economic instruments; and consideration of the role of local governments in the management of chemicals and waste. Several participants also expressed their concern about the shipment of large quantities of e-waste and other hazardous wastes to the region. In response to comments about the scope of this environmental issue, Billot clarified that GEO-5 will focus on the environmental impact of chemicals and waste.

## GEO-5 PROCESS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Matthew Billot, UNEP, presented on the following aspects of the GEO-5 process: chapter working groups; the regional nomination process in October; the production schedule for GEO-5; and outreach. Monika MacDevette, UNEP, presented on the capacity building aspect of the GEO-5 process.

On *chapter working groups*, Billot outlined that chapter working groups for the region will be established. These will comprise 15-20 experts, with appropriate skill, geographical and gender balance, and will be made up of two coordinating lead authors, with the rest being lead or contributing authors. The two coordinating lead authors will first be selected and they will provide input into the selection of the other members of the chapter working groups. The experts to be selected will be nominated through the regional nomination process.

On the *regional nomination process*, Billot explained that the nomination for members of the regional chapter working groups starts from this regional consultation and will be open for 30 days, until late October 2010. The nominations are to be made via the UNEP GEO website. He urged, however, that recommendations should be made as soon as possible to enable timely arrangements to be made for the selected experts to attend the first production meeting to be held sometime in November 2010. He also informed participants that GEO-5 has a new webpage, which will be used as the main communication tool in the GEO-5 process.

On the *production schedule*, Billot outlined that this will commence with the first production meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for November 2010 in Cairo, Egypt, and conclude with the publication of the GEO-5 report in 2012 as an input to the Rio+20 Conference.

On *outreach*, he identified the target audiences for GEO-5 as: the UNEP Governing Council; other UN agencies; decision makers at all levels; policy makers; and ministries other than the ministries responsible for the environment. The methods to be used for the outreach would include greater accessibility to the findings and different forms of media. The methods would be designed early in the GEO process with external support, and will be cost effective.

Regarding *capacity building*, MacDevette explained that existing capacity building networks, training tools and methodologies will be used as the foundation for the capacity building aspect of the GEO process. These existing tools and methodologies include: the Drivers-Pressure-State-Impact-Responses framework and integrated environmental assessment training manual and networks; fellowship support; collaborating centers; new partner institutes; and policy analysis within UNEP and with partners. She added that stakeholders will also be requested to provide feedback regarding what other forms of capacity building should be provided.

In the following discussion, participants noted the usefulness of technology tools such as webinars and the need to include the general public as one of the target audiences. Responding to a question about financial support to participate in the chapter working groups, Billot explained that UNEP is seeking to raise funds from different sources.

## CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY AND CLOSING REMARKS

Summarizing the meeting, Co-Chair Saxena said the meeting had successfully identified five priority environmental issues for the regional chapter of GEO-5, selected one internationally agreed goal for each of these priorities, and discussed policy gaps and possible policies for meeting the goals. He noted that a report of the meeting would be produced, which will include the recommendations and conclusions of the meeting.

Underscoring the importance of the GEO-5 process, Young-Woo Park, UNEP Regional Director and Representative for Asia and the Pacific, affirmed that it had been a very successful meeting. He expressed thanks to the participants for their active participation and contribution, and pledged UNEP's full support for the GEO-5 regional process.

Co-Chair Saxena declared the meeting closed at 4:03 pm.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**UNEP GEO-5 Regional Consultation, Nairobi:** The aim of the consultation is to agree on priority environmental issues/challenges and their related internationally agreed goals in the Africa region. **dates:** 20-21 September 2010 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** GEO Unit, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP **phone:** +254 20 762 4546 **email:** matthew.billot@unep.org **Internet:** [http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO\\_Meetings.asp](http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO_Meetings.asp)

**Millennium Development Goals Summit:** This high-level plenary meeting is being convened by the UN General Assembly to discuss accelerating progress to achieve all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, taking into account progress made through a review of successes, best practices, lessons learned, obstacles and opportunities, leading to concrete strategies for action. **dates:** 20-22 September 2010 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Pragati Pascale, UN Department of Public Information **phone:** +1 212 963 6870 **email:** pascale@un.org **Internet:** <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/>

**UNEP GEO-5 Regional Consultation, Geneva:** The aim of the consultation is to agree on priority environmental issues/challenges and their related internationally agreed goals for Europe. **dates:** 23-24 September 2010 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** GEO Unit, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP **phone:** +254 20 762 4546 **email:** matthew.billot@unep.org **Internet:** [http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO\\_Meetings.asp](http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO_Meetings.asp)

**VI Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED6):** This gathering of ministers of environment and of development is an agenda-setting forum to assess the state of sustainable development in the region, identify regional perspectives and priorities, and decide on actions in response to imperatives posed by global and regional environment challenges. **dates:** 27 September to 2 October 2010 **location:** Astana, Kazakhstan **contact:** Shao Li, Official Secretariat of MCED6, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific **phone:** +(6 62) 288 1234 **email:** lis@un.org **internet:** <http://mced6.org/en/>

**UNEP GEO-5 Regional Consultation, Bahrain:** The aim of the consultation is to agree on priority environmental issues/challenges and their related internationally agreed

goals for West Asia. Discussions will also be held on the development of the regional chapter and on the GEO-5 process. **dates:** 4-5 October 2010 **location:** The Kingdom of Bahrain **contact:** GEO Unit, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP **phone:** +254 20 762 4546 **email:** matthew.billot@unep.org **Internet:** [http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO\\_Meetings.asp](http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO_Meetings.asp)

**First GEO-5 Production Meeting:** The meeting will take place after selection of coordinating lead authors, lead authors, contributing authors and reviewers, and will discuss the details related to the production of the GEO-5 report. **dates:** November 2010 (tentative) **location:** Cairo, Egypt **contact:** GEO Unit, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP **phone:** +254 20 762 4546 **email:** matthew.billot@unep.org **Internet:** [http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO\\_Meetings.asp](http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO_Meetings.asp)

**UNFCCC COP 16 and COP/MOP 6:** The 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the UNFCCC and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 6) will be held in Mexico. **dates:** 29 November - 10 December 2010 **location:** Cancún, Mexico **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** 49-228-815-1000 **fax:** 49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc **internet:** <http://unfccc.int> and <http://cc2010.mx/en/>

**UNEP GC-26/GMEF:** The 26th session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF) will address major and emerging environmental policy issues, and approve the budget and work programme for the 2012-2013 biennium **dates:** 21-25 February 2011 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jamil Ahmad, Secretary of the UNEP Governing Council **phone:** +254-20-7623431/7623411 **fax:** +254-20-762-3929 **email:** jamil.ahmad@unep.org **internet:** <http://www.unep.org>

**Intergovernmental GEO-5 Meeting:** The meeting will review and endorse the GEO-5 Summary for Policy Makers. **dates:** February 2012 **location:** to be confirmed **contact:** GEO Unit, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP **phone:** +254 20 762 4546 **email:** matthew.billot@unep.org **Internet:** [http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO\\_Meetings.asp](http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO_Meetings.asp)

**GEO-5 Launching:** GEO-5 will be launched as an input to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). **dates:** June 2012 **location:** to be confirmed **contact:** GEO Unit, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP **phone:** +254 20 762 4546 **email:** matthew.billot@unep.org **Internet:** [http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO\\_Meetings.asp](http://www.unep.org/geo/GEO_Meetings.asp)

## UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE

**DEVELOPMENT (UNCSD):** Under UN General Assembly resolution 64/236, which was adopted on 24 December 2009, UNCSD will aim to secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development, assess the progress and implementation gaps in meeting already agreed commitments, and address new and emerging challenges. The Conference will include the following themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development. **dates:** 2012 **location:** Brazil **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **fax:** +1-212-963-4260; **e-mail:** dsd@un.org **internet:** <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/rio20/>