

# The seventh edition of the Global Environment Outlook

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Briefing to the Multidisciplinary Scientific Expert Advisory Group (MESAG)

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First in-person MESAG meeting  
14 March 2023, Bangkok, Thailand

# Objectives of the presentation

- Discuss how GEO-7 will build on GEO-6 findings and UNEP's MTS
- Explain the GEO-7 process so far:
  - [UNEA Resolution 5/3](#),
  - [GEO procedures document](#),
  - [GEO-7 scoping document](#),
  - [GEO-7 timeline](#)
- Address any questions about the GEO-7 process

# Three key points about GEO



## UNEP's flagship intergovernmental and expert-led integrated environmental assessment.

- Viewed by Member States as the foundation of UNEP's science-policy interface.
- Must be politically legitimate, policy relevant and scientifically credible.
- Commitment of MS to GEO is strong, as demonstrated by 2 years of work by Member States on the future of GEO.



## GEO should underpin UNEA decisions and our next MTS.

- Findings in GEO are meant to support major global policy decisions, negotiations, major shifts in thinking.
  - E.g. The types of decisions that established the Paris Agreement or those for the post-2020 biodiversity framework.



## GEO is more flexible than IPCC/IPBES.

- Can assess policy effectiveness (what is working, what isn't).
- Can look at systemic policy solutions that achieve social and economic outcomes, because of its integrated approach.
- Can develop innovative outlooks/foresight approaches which explain more of the 'how to' rather than the 'what if'.
- Can perform risk assessment, scenarios and outlooks on different social/economic issues.

GEO-7 people are the secret ingredient



**UN**   
environment  
programme

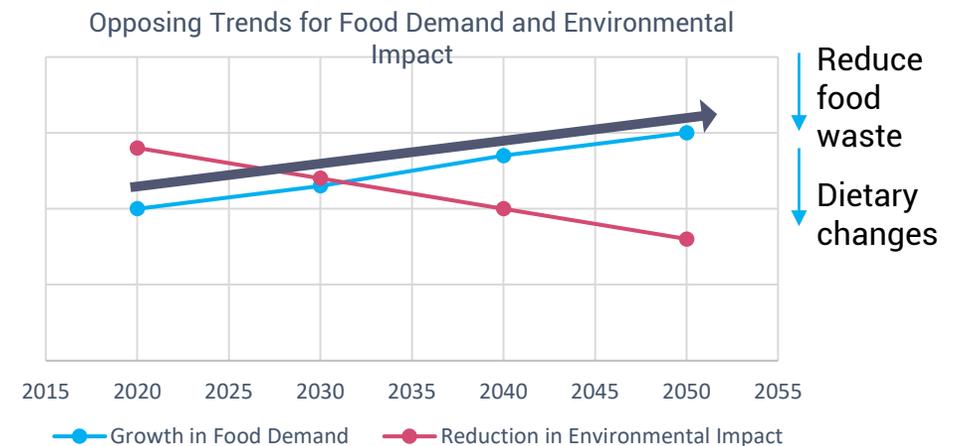
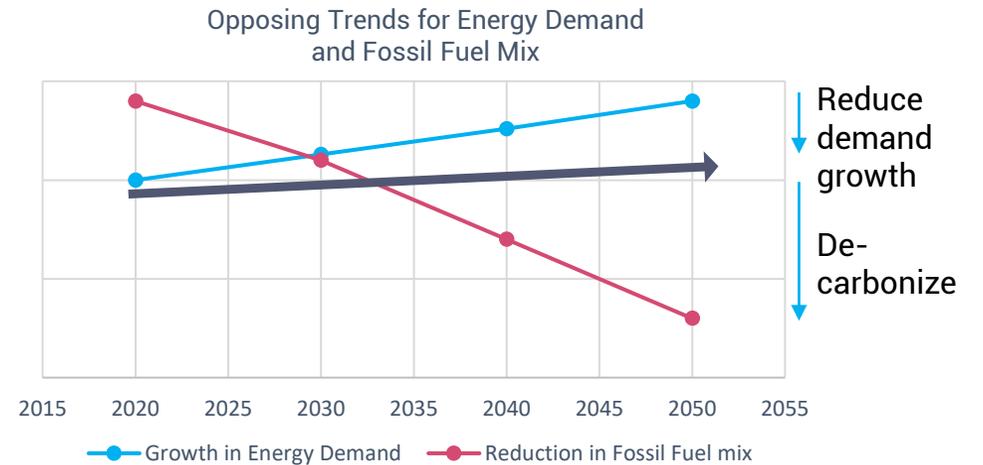
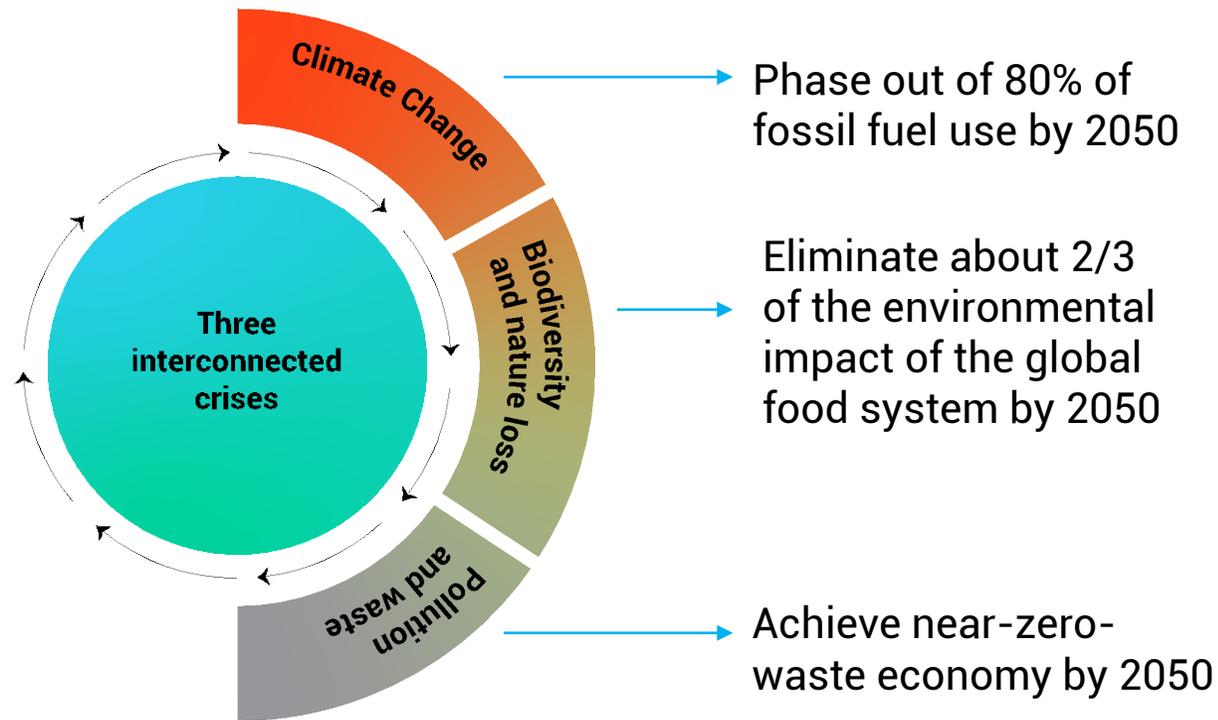
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=e2gS-xvVFJ8&t=0s>

# Policy findings from GEO

- Used case studies and outcomes indicators to **assess effectiveness of current policies in reaching environmental goals.**
- Assessed five individual case studies across five environmental themes. **25 Global North and Global South environmental policies assessed.**
- Policies that try to conserve or clean up the environment **cannot keep pace with the rate of environmental degradation we see today.**
- Must **address the larger systems or root causes of environmental degradation**, transforming these to reach environmental goals.
- Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement case study, **only 7 or 41 areas of concern cleaned up in a 20 year time span.**
- With current policies, **none of the environmental SDGs will be achieved by 2030.**
- With current policies, **biodiversity and climate targets will not be achieved**
- Must **transform the energy, food and waste systems, to stabilize the climate and create a nature rich (biodiverse) and near-zero-waste (circular) world by 2050.**

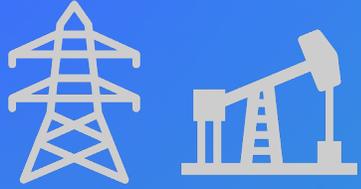
# GEO messages helped inform UNEP's MTS

- Chapter 22 of GEO-6 provides pathways to achieve politically agreed targets (e.g. Paris, Aichi, SDGs)
- More would be needed to achieve science-based targets.





# GEO-7 can be the solutions-oriented



**How can we phase out 80% of fossil fuel use by 2050?** IEA pathway to net zero is a start, but what are the impacts on other environmental issues, society, economies? What gains will we realize (e.g. better health, energy security, energy access, better jobs, etc.)?

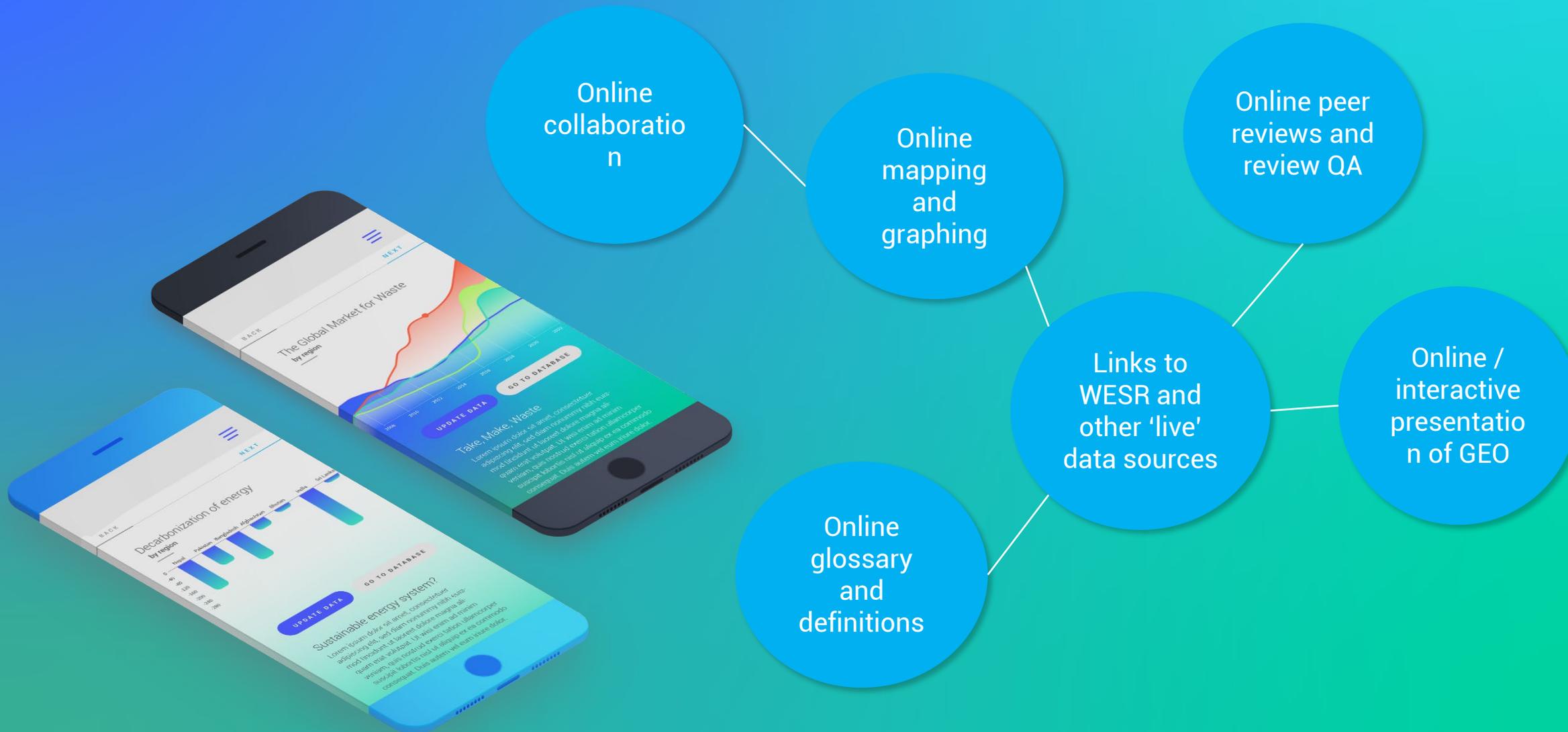


**How can we reduce the environmental impact of the food system by 2/3 by 2050?** Food waste and dietary changes are a good start, but how do we incentivize these? What changes can be made in food production that will have a high impact? What gains will we realize (e.g. better health and nutrition, food security, water security, more rural employment, etc.)?



**How do we create a near-zero-waste, fully circular economy by 2050?** Should particular sectors be focused on first (e.g. battery storage, electrified cars)? What gains will we realize (e.g. geopolitical stability, end the resource curse, end conflict minerals, end landfilling, more stable jobs, etc.)?

# GEO-7 will be digital



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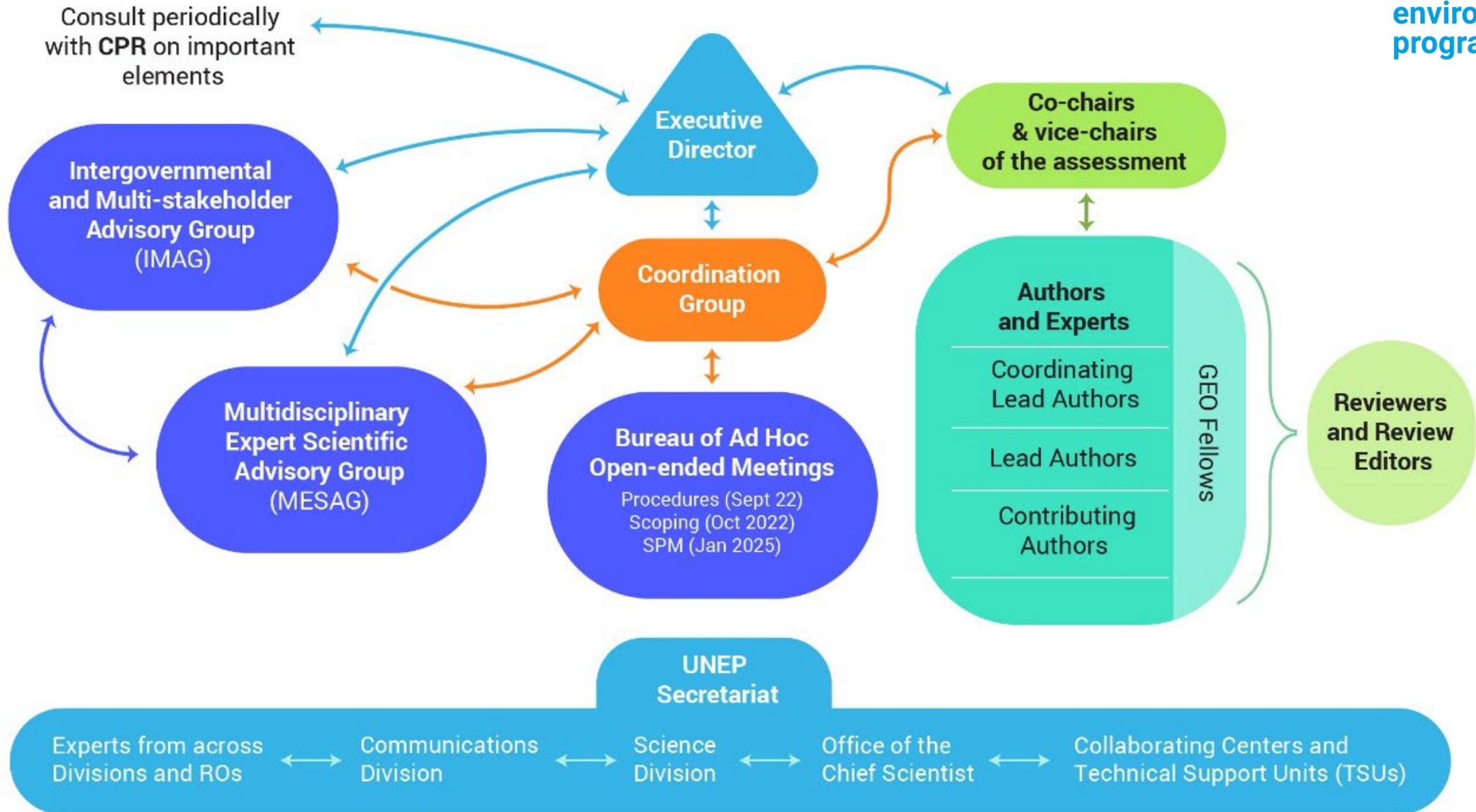
More 'new' graphics and maps

Online 'live' data sources will be used

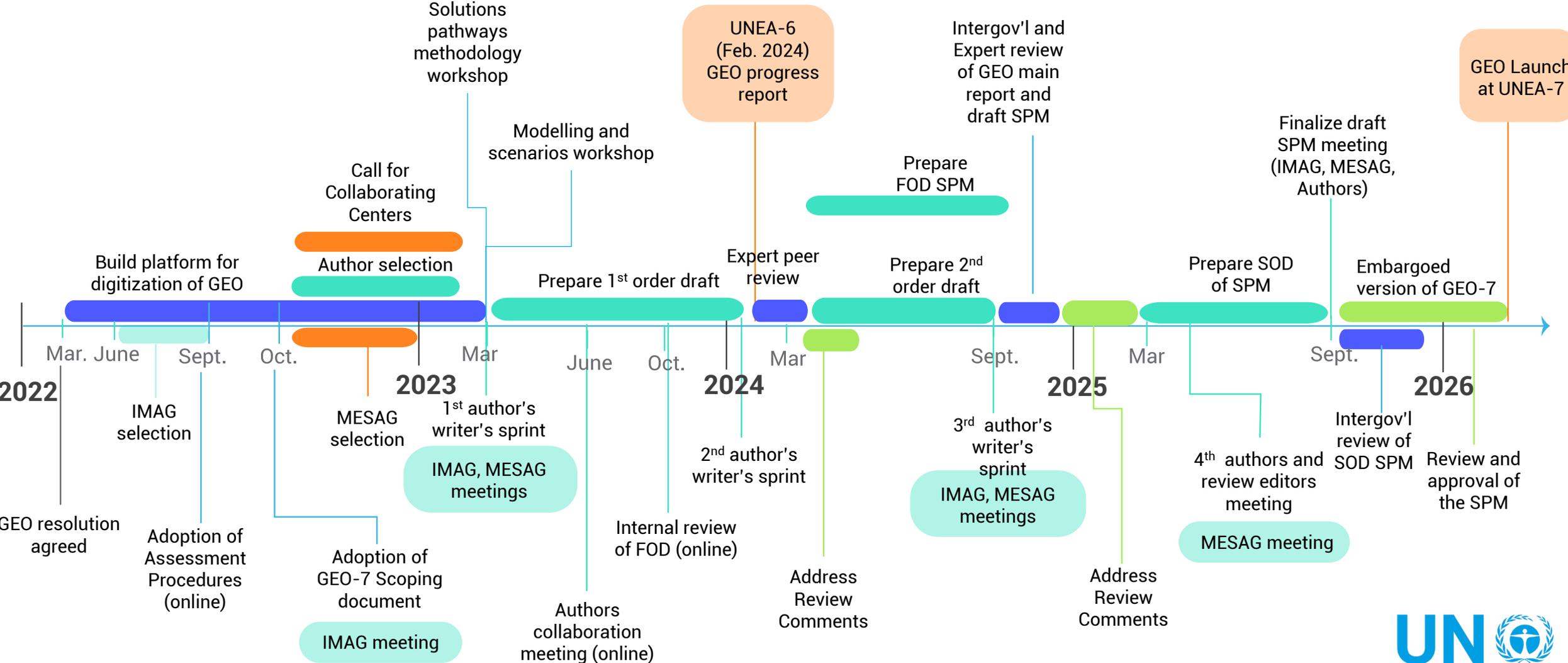
Presented as a 'live GEO'. Proof of concept already developed... <https://geo6.gridw.pl/5/facts>

# GEO-a process of collaboration and co-creation

With governments, stakeholders, outside experts and expertise from across the house



# GEO-7 Timeline



IMAG = Intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder advisory group, MESAG = Multidisciplinary expert scientific advisory group, SPM = Summary for policy makers, FOD= First order draft, SOD = Second order draft, AHOM = Adhoc Open-ended Meeting



# Progress on GEO-7 process

- [Assessment procedures document](#) for GEO adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> Ad Hoc Open-ended Meeting in September 2022
- [Scope, annotated outline, workplan and budget](#) for the GEO-7 adopted in October 2022
- GEO-7 [Intergovernmental and Multistakeholder Advisory Group \(IMAG\)](#) established in since September 2022
- GEO-7 [Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group \(MESAG\)](#) established since January 2023
- Call for [nomination of GEO-7 experts](#) (authors, review editors and fellows) closed by 31<sup>st</sup> January with more than 600 nominations
- Call for [expressions of interest for collaborating centers](#) closed by 31<sup>st</sup> January with 41 institutions
- Presently the [1<sup>st</sup> GEO-7 Authors meeting](#) (13-17 March,2023) is ongoing and the [Solutions Pathways and Methodology Workshops](#) (8-10 March,2023) just concluded



Thank you!  
Comments, questions?