

Co-Chairs' Foreword

What is the Outlook for humanity? This sixth *Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6)* shows clearly that our species now stands at a crossroads. It can choose a challenging but navigable path towards a new golden age of sustainable development as envisaged by the United Nations' Agenda 2030 in which human hunger and poverty are consigned to history through the sustainable use of Earth's resources and the natural environment that leaves no-one behind. Or it can continue with current trends and practices, which will lead to a losing struggle against environmental disruptions, which threaten to overwhelm large parts of the world.

GEO-6 clearly identifies the problems that have to be addressed if this latter outcome is to be avoided. But it also points to the solutions to these problems, to ways in which the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be realised and Earth's air, biodiversity, oceans, land and freshwater restored to health, to the incalculable benefit of Earth's people: Healthy Planet, Healthy People, the title of *GEO-6*.

GEO-6 makes clear that achieving the SDGs will require a transformation in human lifestyles and productive activities: our industry, agriculture, buildings, transport and the energy system which powers them. This necessary transformation over the coming decades represents an enormous economic opportunity to those countries, policy makers and businesses who show the enterprise and innovative spirit to put in place the technologies, social practices and institutions that can make sustainable development a reality.

As co-chairs of the sixth *Global Environment Outlook* we have overseen the work of the tireless authors and experts who have contributed to this analysis. The scientific integrity of the process has been monitored by the Scientific Advisory Panel. The High Level Group helped us to find the language that can communicate to policymakers. The Secretariat provided the staying power to ensure that the entire process moved smoothly. Some States provided the necessary funding, encouraged us and hosted some of our meetings. We feel that the *GEO-6* has gathered the evidence to show what needs to be done, and what can be done. We respectfully present it to the world's decision makers, and ask them to face and address these challenges, for all of our sakes and future generations.




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