



Ecologic Institute at the Global Environmental Governance Forum

News

In early July 2009, the Global Environmental Governance Forum drew a historic gathering of past, present, and future environmental leaders in the small Swiss town of Glion. The Forum gathered for the first time all five successive Executive Directors of the UN Environment Programme: Maurice Strong, the Secretary-General of the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and the Rio Earth Summit; Mostafa Tolba; Elizabeth Dowdeswell; Klaus Töpfer; and Achim Steiner, the current Executive Director. Maria Ivanova, a partner of Ecologic Institute, is Director of the Global Environmental Governance Project, which hosted the Forum. R. Andreas Kraemer and Susanah Stoessel of Ecologic Institute were also in attendance.

Other high-level environmental leaders spanning the last 40 years included: Gus Speth, Dean of the [Environment School at Yale](#); Mohamed El-Ashry who was the CEO of the [Global Environment Facility](#) from its inception until 2003; Yolanda Kakabadse, the newly elected President of [WWF International](#); and Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director-General of the [International Union for the Conservation of Nature](#).

Senior diplomats who have shaped today's international environmental laws and structures, and those currently working to reshape that system came together with a key group of young environmental leaders on the rise to discuss the original vision for the international environmental governance system and ways to recast it for the 21st century. "This meeting sought to inspire and foster a new wave of leadership in global environmental governance, drawing on the collective knowledge of several generations of environmental leaders," said [Maria Ivanova](#), Director of the [Global Environmental Governance Project](#), Professor at the [College of William and Mary](#). The meeting also sought to inject sound analysis, innovative concepts, and new vigour into the contemporary debate on international environmental governance reform.

Concluding four days of intense discussion, the group of emerging environmental leaders "set out their practical ideas on how to kick-start a deep change in the way the world economy works to prioritise human welfare through a long-lasting, sustainable approach to the use and preservation of our environment." The Forum laid the foundation for a network of international leaders in environmental governance who collectively recognized that, "We will need to be as radical in our thinking as the first generation of doers were, and take action through our networks, using new media and all the tools we have at our disposal." The words of William Ruckelshaus, first Administrator of the [US Environmental Protection Agency](#), sum up the closing sentiment of the meeting: "While the issues are complex and seemingly intractable, there are also many reasons for optimism. We have made important strides on environmental issues, and need to keep moving forward with new solutions."

The Glion meeting was hosted by the [Global Environmental Governance Project](#), a joint initiative of the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the College of William and Mary, in collaboration with the [Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center](#), the [United Nations Foundation](#), the [United Nations Environment Programme](#), the [United Nations](#)

[Institute for Training and Research](#), and the governments of Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

To learn more about the GEG Forum and the ongoing work of the GEG Project, visit the [website of the Global Environmental Governance Project](#).

Further Links:

- Ecologic Dinner Dialogue: [New Directions in Global Environmental Governance - Maria H. Ivanova](#)
- [New Partnership between Ecologic, Yale University and IDDRI](#)
- Ecologic Project: [InEG – Global Environmental Governance and International Environmental Regimes](#)
- Ecologic Project: [UNEP Round Table](#)
- Ecologic Project: [CSD 15 and UNEP - Supporting the German EU Presidency](#)
- Ecologic Project: [Towards a Stronger System of International Environmental Governance](#)
- Ecologic Publication: [A United Nations Environment Organization](#)
- Ecologic Publication: [Reforming International Environmental Governance: An Institutional Critique of the Proposal for a World Environment Organisation](#)
- Ecologic Publication: [Would a United Nations Environment Organization Help to Achieve the Millenium Development Goals?](#)

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Source URL: <https://www.ecologic.eu/2916>