



# Global Environment Facility

GEF/C.33/Inf.7  
March 20, 2008

---

GEF Council  
April 22-25, 2008

## FOCAL AREA STRATEGIES AND PROPOSED STRATEGIC PROGRAMS FOR GEF-5: PROCESS PROPOSAL

## BACKGROUND

1. At the outset of GEF-4, the GEF Secretariat led a process for revising the six focal area strategies, taking into account the cross-cutting issues of sustainable forest management and sound chemicals management. This was a direct response to the policy recommendations for the fourth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund. The revision also followed the strategic elements of the Sustainability Compact for a New GEF presented by the CEO to Council in December 2006.
2. In order to ensure a broad and consultative revision process, the CEO established six Technical Advisory Groups ('TAGs', on biodiversity, climate change, sustainable land management, international waters, sustainable forest management, and sound chemicals management) and a Strategy Advisory Group (SAG), an overarching coordinating group chaired by the CEO. Each TAG was composed of external experts, selected from among nominations by the Council Members, a representative from the relevant convention secretariats, a member of STAP, and a member from the GEF Secretariat, who served as technical secretary and convener of the TAG. Working drafts of the focal area strategies and minutes from the meetings of the advisory groups were posted on the GEF website throughout the process. Comments to the working drafts were received from GEF partners throughout the process. In particular, Council Members were invited to provide comments to the draft strategy papers at several stages of the process.
3. Council approved the revised focal area strategies and proposed strategic programs for GEF-4 in September 2007, almost one year into the fourth replenishment period. Each of the strategy papers contained a long term strategy consistent with the priorities set by the fourth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, adjusted in accordance with the guidance provided by Council. Each strategy furthermore contained proposed strategic programs for GEF-4. As a step towards a more programmatic approach, strategic programs were developed in support of the long term objectives for the strategies. These strategic programs define the GEF's focus during GEF-4. The strategic programs were selected and defined in view of their importance, urgency and cost-effectiveness from a global environment perspective. The long term objectives together with strategic programs that are redefined for every replenishment period comprise the focal area strategies and replace the previous structure of operational programs and strategic priorities.
4. A major effort by the TAGs was to align the focal area strategies with the emerging Results Based Management (RBM) Framework for the GEF, in order to direct the strategies towards tangible global environmental benefits and to enable adequate reporting on the implementation of the strategies. The RBM Framework presented to Council in June 2007 (GEF/C.31/11) operates at three levels (institution level, focal area programmatic level, and project level) consistent with GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. The Technical Advisory Groups have primarily contributed to the content of the RBM Framework at the focal area programmatic level.
5. Council decided that the development of strategies (focal area strategies, cross-cutting strategies and an overarching strategy) for GEF-5 should be given more time and completed well before the replenishment of GEF-5, so that the revised strategies can provide a basis for the

replenishment negotiations. This implies that the strategy process for GEF-5 should start mid 2008 and be concluded by mid 2009. With a better timed process, more effort could be put into the development of an overall GEF strategy that would specify the results at the institutional level, i.e. GEF's overall goals and mission. The process would also allow further development and streamlining of the focal area strategies, which include results frameworks. This could also lead to further exploration of cross-cutting issues and synergies and co-benefits between the focal areas.

## **PROPOSED STRUCTURE AND FORMAT OF FOCAL AREA STRATEGIES FOR GEF-5**

6. It is proposed to build on the structure and format developed for the focal area strategies for GEF-4, i.e. relatively brief strategy papers (maximum 10 pages) for each focal area (and for a limited number of cross-cutting areas) presenting the following elements:

- (a) Long term *strategic objectives* for the focal area (or cross-cutting area). The focal area strategies for GEF-4 were born with the long term objectives agreed during the GEF-4 replenishment. For GEF-5, there is the possibility to re-adjust the long-term objectives as necessary in view of past experiences and recent guidance from the Conferences of the Parties.
- (b) *Strategic programs* for GEF-5 defining the GEF's strategic focus in GEF-5 and selected in view of their importance, urgency and cost-effectiveness from a global environment perspective, as well as from the priorities identified by countries. They should build on the strategic programs from GEF-4, however, there should be room for new programs to respond to emerging global challenges. Also, the operational guidelines for managing programmatic approaches were improved during GEF-4. The definition of strategic programs for GEF-5 should support the continued transition towards a greater use of programmatic approaches in the GEF.
- (c) A *results framework* for each focal area (or cross-cutting area) supporting the further development of results based management (RBM) in the GEF. The results framework would include expected impacts related to each of the long-term strategic objectives and expected outcomes related to each of the strategic programs.
- (d) Measurable *indicators* for the expected impacts and outcomes, allowing monitoring and evaluation of progress towards achievement.
- (e) An *indicative provisional allocation* of GEF-5 funds and expected co-financing towards the strategic programs, allowing sufficient flexibility for countries' prioritization and for uncertainties regarding co-funding sources.

7. In addition to the separate strategy papers for focal areas and cross-cutting areas, it is proposed to prepare an overarching strategy paper for GEF-5 presenting the overall long-term GEF vision and the GEF-5 mission and explaining how these are supported by the strategies for

the focal areas. The overarching strategy paper could also explore cross-cutting issues such as integrated approaches among the biodiversity, land degradation and international waters focal areas and climate change adaptation measures. These opportunities for integrated approaches cut across the subject of natural resources management. Moreover, specific targeting of regions and measures may multiply global benefits that result from several coordinated GEF interventions.

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH THE 5TH REPLENISHMENT OF THE GEF TRUST FUND**

8. Discussions on the replenishment process for GEF-5 are expected to begin in November 2008. The development of focal area strategies for GEF-5 should inform the replenishment process and vice versa. In order to optimize the interaction between the two processes, it is proposed to set the following milestones for the strategy process:

- (a) For the 1st replenishment meeting, the strategy process will propose adjusted long-term strategic objectives and will identify proposed strategic programs for GEF-5.
- (b) For the 2nd replenishment meeting, the strategy process will describe expected outcomes of each of the strategic programs.
- (c) For the 3rd replenishment meeting, the strategy process will describe preliminary indicators for the long term objectives and strategic programs.
- (d) For the 4th replenishment meeting, the strategy process will describe final indicators and provisional allocation of GEF -5 funding and expected co-funding among the strategic programs.

9. Similarly, the replenishment process will provide guidance for the development of the focal area strategies as agreement on policy recommendations and allocation of GEF resources for GEF-5 is reached.

#### **ADVISORY GROUPS**

10. Technical advisory groups (TAGs) will be established for each of the following focal/cross-cutting areas: biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, international waters, chemicals, sustainable forest management (including REDD driven approaches), and possibly a group exploring connections between natural resources management and climate change, including adaptation. Each TAG will be composed of three external experts, selected from among nominations from Council Members, a representative from the secretariat of the relevant convention, a member of STAP, and a member from the GEF Secretariat, who will serve as the technical secretary and convener of the TAG. Each TAG will draft a strategy paper for their respective area.

11. A Strategy Coordination Group (SCG) will be established, composed of two members from each TAG and a member from the GEF Secretariat, who will serve as the technical secretary and convener of the SCG. The SCG will report to the CEO. The SCG will facilitate the

flow of information and ideas between the TAGs, in order to achieve harmonized and complementary strategies for the focal and cross-cutting areas. The SCG will also draft an overarching strategy paper for GEF-5.

12. The advisory groups will primarily work by correspondence and telephone conferences. Joint meetings of the TAGs and the SCG will be convened in Washington 2 – 3 times during the process.

#### **INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS**

13. In order to ensure an open and inclusive process, all working material, draft strategy papers, minutes of meetings and comments from stakeholders will be made accessible on the GEF website throughout the strategy development process.

14. Key stakeholders will be invited to comment on draft strategy papers at several stages of the process. In particular, comments will be solicited from Council Members and from the GEF Agencies. The time frame for this process is much longer than the revision of the GEF-4 strategies, and thus will allow for a better and broader involvement of stakeholders. Council will have the opportunity to discuss and provide guidance to the strategy development at several stages of the process.