

54th GEF Council Meeting
June 24 – 26, 2018
Da Nang, Viet Nam

Agenda Item 19

**COUNTRY SUPPORT PROGRAM
IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR GEF-7**

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/C.54/04, Country Support Program Implementation Arrangements for GEF-7, approved the proposal for the Secretariat to execute the Country Support Program according to the procedures contained therein.

The Country Support Program will include the following elements, funded by the GEF Trust Fund, with a total allocation of US\$21 million, to be allocated for each activity as specified below:

- (a) GEF National Dialogues: US\$1.7 million;
- (b) GEF Workshops: US\$13 million
- (c) GEF Constituency Meetings: US\$5 million;
- (d) GEF Introduction Seminars: US\$1 million; and
- (e) Pre-Council meetings for Recipient Country Council Members/Alternates: US\$0.3 million.

The Council directed the Trustee to set aside US\$21 million in GEF Trust Fund resources for use by the Secretariat to fund these activities.

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BACKGROUND

1. The Country Support Programme (CSP) was developed with the objective of providing all recipient countries with assistance and capacity building to make better use of the resources available through the GEF, including support for programming. It was based on activities carried out by UNDP since GEF-2 and in GEF-5 the Council decided that the GEF Secretariat would manage the program.

2. Since 2010 the CSP has expanded the services it provides and the number of beneficiaries has grown:

Expanded Constituency Workshops: 6,425 participants

Constituency Meetings: 1,850 participants

National Dialogues: 2,600 participants

Introduction Seminars: 485 participants

Pre-Council Meetings (since 2014): 110 participants.

3. During GEF-7, the GEF Secretariat will refine the strategy to contribute to the objectives of GEF-7. In so doing it will continue to work with the GEF Agencies, Focal Points, Civil Society, and other stakeholders through the CSP. The various components will provide an opportunity to explain the GEF-7 approach and to assist countries in developing their GEF-7 programming, including the participation in Impact Programs.

COUNTRY SUPPORT PROGRAM

4. The CSP will have the following components: (i) GEF National Dialogues; (ii) GEF Workshops; (iii) GEF Constituency Meetings; (iv) GEF Introduction Seminars, and; (v) Pre-Council meetings for Recipient Country Constituencies. This document provides a more detailed proposal for operationalizing these components.

GEF National Dialogues

5. GEF National Dialogues will be a flexible tool that will allow the Secretariat to provide support to countries at the domestic level. The primary goal, especially the first year, will be to assist recipient countries to decide how best to make use of the resources available through the GEF. National Dialogues will provide the means to engage relevant national stakeholders and line ministries in the planning process to identify national priorities for GEF support, as well as to develop ideas for new projects. They will serve to better understand GEF-7 strategies and policies and to take decisions on participation in the various Impact Programs. Previously, this programming activity was part of the priority setting tool, National Portfolio Formulation Exercise.

6. In addition, National Dialogues will continue to be a strategic tool to promote the integration of global environment concepts into national strategy and policy formulation, accounting, and regular procedures. A broad array of stakeholders at the national and local levels, including line ministries and civil society, can discuss and better comprehend how protecting the global environment is essential to national interests and how to reflect it in daily work. These dialogues will engage further key players in the country's public and private financial architecture to participate in discussions on ways to catalyze public and private sector financing for the environment.
7. GEF National Dialogues will be available to all countries at the request of the respective Operational Focal Point and will represent the single flexible tool for environmental discussions at the national level.
8. When planning the dialogues, the GEF Secretariat will work in close collaboration with the Operational Focal Points' offices.
9. The proposed allocation of US\$1.7 million for these dialogues is based on an estimated average of ten dialogues a year.

GEF Workshops

10. GEF Workshops will be flexible tool for multilateral capacity building and the rolling out of the GEF-7 approach, including the Impact Programs. The CSP will organize meetings and workshops, of variable composition, to facilitate work on the development of the Impact Programs, as well as on regional projects and initiatives and other issues, based on thematic and geographic areas, as may be necessary. Financial support will be available for a limited number of country participants, depending on the defined agenda.
11. During GEF-5 and GEF-6, the GEF Secretariat organized 13 Expanded Constituency Workshops a year. The purpose of these was to keep the GEF Focal Points, convention focal points and other key stakeholders, including civil society, abreast of GEF strategies, policies, and procedures. In addition, they were meant to provide a space to analyze, in depth, the various aspects of GEF work, to provide an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience, and to encourage collaboration. Working with partners has enabled these workshops to provide more specific training on the art of knowledge exchange and best practices in project management. The ECWs served to initiate cooperation with the Green Climate Fund, an example of which was the participation of a GCF regional representative at one of these workshops. During GEF-7, that cooperation is expected to deepen through coordination of events and participation at each other's workshops.
12. During GEF-7, the Secretariat will continue to organize 13 ECWs a year with up to eight participants per country (GEF Focal Points, four Convention Focal Points, and two civil society representatives).

13. The proposed allocation of US\$13 million for this item is based on the estimated cost of holding 13 ECWs and an average of five additional meetings a year.

GEF Constituency Meetings

14. During GEF-7, Constituency meetings will continue to be the main instrument for the Council Members to engage their Constituency members in preparing for decision making at the GEF Council. Each Constituency may request two meetings per calendar year, to be held prior to Council meetings. Constituency members will be able to discuss Council documents and draft decisions so that their Council Member and Alternate are better informed to represent members' positions at Council meetings. Constituency members may also discuss implementation of GEF projects, share lessons learned, invite GEF Agencies to report on work in the Constituency, and to handle constituency governance issues. In addition, Constituency meetings will provide an opportunity to further explain GEF-7 strategies, policies, and procedures.

15. Constituency Meetings will be organized at the request of the Council Member, who will be responsible for preparing the agenda and chairing the meeting. GEF Political and Operational Focal Points from each constituency will be financially assisted to attend the meetings.

16. The proposed allocation of US\$5 million is based on the estimated cost of travel to two meetings a year by Political and Operational Focal Points.

GEF Introduction Seminars

17. During GEF-7, these seminars will continue to provide pertinent information and training to new GEF Agency staff, Convention Secretariat staff and selected stakeholders about GEF-7 strategies, policies, and procedures. They aim also to reach out to other audiences that may be critical to the success of the GEF, particularly line ministries, the media, those from other organizations that are part of the current financial environmental architecture, and from the private sector, where possible. These events will be organized once a year in Washington, D.C. The proposed allocation of US\$1 million would cover four meetings during GEF-7.

Pre-Council Meeting for Recipient Country Constituencies

18. During GEF-6, GEF Council Members and Alternates from recipient constituencies had the opportunity to meet in order to discuss Council issues prior to each GEF Council meeting. This has increased their capacity to understand their respective positions and views. It also has afforded them the opportunity to share concerns, receive clarifications from the Secretariat, and develop common positions. During GEF-7, these meetings will continue to be supported by the CSP. The proposed allocation for this activity is US\$0.3 million to cover the additional expenses above the regular financing provided for Council Members and Alternates to participate in the Council.