

62nd GEF Council Meeting
June 21 - 23, 2022
Washington D.C

Agenda Item 05

**GEF-8 INTEGRATED PROGRAMS LEAD AGENCY
TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SELECTION PROCESS**

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having considered GEF/C.62/05, GEF-8 Integrated Programs Lead Agency Terms of Reference and Selection Process, agrees with the proposed process for the selection of Lead Agencies and asks to be updated on the process at its next meeting.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The GEF-8 Integrated Programs will follow the *Programmatic Approach* modality of the GEF Project Cycle.¹ As defined in the GEF Project Cycle Policy, a *Program* is a longer-term and strategic arrangement of individual yet interlinked projects that aim at achieving large-scale impacts on the global environment.² Programmatic approaches are a potentially powerful tool to leverage more results from GEF engagement. They facilitate: (i) engagement on typically complex and evolving upstream drivers of change; (ii) generation and use of project-learning; (iii) regional cooperation; (iv) South-South exchange; (v) partnership-building and programmatic co-financing; and (vi) institutional change and scale-up.

2. The focus on interlinkages between projects to achieve impactful outcomes requires that the program is led by a *single* GEF Agency. The Lead Agency is responsible for delivering on all aspects of the program — from development of the Program Framework Document (PFD)³ for inclusion in a biennial work program, to establishing a governance framework that ensures that the “whole of the program is greater than sum of the parts,” to overseeing “program-level” outcomes that amplify global environmental benefits and influence systemic change, and responsibility for “program-level” monitoring and reporting. The specific functions and responsibilities of a Lead Agency are presented in Annex 1. For each Integrated Program (IP), the functions are supported through the *global platforms*, which are designed and funded as “Coordination Child Projects” outside of participating countries’ STAR allocations. This allows the selected Agency to focus on achieving coherence and consistency across child projects under the program, and in some cases, other relevant stand-alone GEF projects outside the program.

3. In accordance with the GEF-8 Programming Directions document,⁴ and building on the lessons learnt from the GEF-6 Integrated Approach Pilot and the GEF-7 Impact Programs,⁵ the GEF Secretariat will facilitate a consensus-building process to identify a Lead Agency for each of the Integrated Programs. Because of the critical need to influence transformational change in the key economic systems targeted by each of the IPs, a Lead Agency must demonstrate strong capabilities on many fronts. This includes their comparative advantage to coordinate the program, willingness to work with participating countries and other GEF Agencies, ability and track record of engagement with the private sector to achieve development goals, and facility to contribute significant co-financing to the program through their own institutional funding and by leveraging additional public and private resources at scale. More importantly, the Lead

¹ In its 47th Council meeting in October 2014, Council approved the paper *Improving the GEF Project Cycle*, [GEF/C.47/07](#), including a proposed programmatic approach modality.

² Annex 7, Para 1 of the *Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy*, [GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01](#)

³ In some cases the Lead Agency may be required to prepare an *Addendum* to add countries to a program for which a PFD was already submitted and approved by Council.

⁴ *GEF-8 Programming Directions*, [GEF/R.08/29/Rev.01](#)

⁵ *Management Response to: Formative Evaluation of the GEF Integrated Approach to Address the Drivers of Environmental Degradation*. [GEF/E/C.60/09](#)

Agency must demonstrate capability to deliver on Program-level objectives by coordinating the entire set of child projects designed under the program.

II. CRITERIA FOR LEAD AGENCY

4. Agencies willing and interested in the Lead role for each of the IPs are required to submit written proposals to the GEF Secretariat, which will review them based on the following criteria: *recognized leadership* (global or regional); *capability of convening stakeholders from all relevant sectors*; *capability of leveraging own resources*; *capability of engaging with the private sector and mobilizing their investment*; *capability of accessing key decision makers in recipient countries*; and *recognition for knowledge innovations*.

Recognized Leadership

5. The Lead agency should demonstrate its capability as a recognized leader and expert in the specific issues targeted by the IP for which it is expressing interest. Such expectations should reflect what is considered as most critical for developing a robust and transformative program. A summary of these critical aspects for each of the IP is provided in Annex 2. These should also enable agencies to establish or propose how they would approach the design of an IP towards achieving transformative change in line with the *Healthy People, Healthy Planet* framework.

Capability of Convening Stakeholders from all Relevant Sectors

6. The Lead Agency will also need to have the power to convene world and global leaders as well as stakeholders from all sectors relevant to the IP-specific agenda. This is critical for helping to foster productive and innovative dialogues as well as creating new solutions along the pathway to transformative outcomes for the targeted economic system. The Lead Agency must possess a “systems” vision and credible track record of action demonstrating execution of this vision.

Capability of Leveraging Own Resources

7. In line with the GEF’s Updated Co-Financing Policy⁶ and overall GEF-8 ambition, the Lead Agency is required to leverage, through its own investments and programming, co-financing amounts that reflect its commitment towards the IP-specific agenda. The co-financing amount should be mostly as investments mobilized. Weighed against the challenge of transforming the key economic systems, these leveraged resources must be significant enough that when combined with the resources of the GEF they are considered sufficient to accomplish essential goals across the entirety of the program.

⁶ Updated Co-Financing Policy, [GEF/C.54/10/Rev.01](#)

Capability of Engaging with the Private Sector and Mobilizing Their Investment

8. In addition to contributing their own public resources as co-financing, the Lead Agency will be required to crowd-in and mobilize meaningful investment and action from private sources. The Lead Agency must demonstrate capability to engage in meaningful relationships with private sector companies and financiers that operate in the appropriate IP space. It should attest to an established track record of mobilizing private sector financing at scale for development purposes, and history of catalyzing action from private companies leading to positive environmental outcomes.

Access to the Key Decision Makers in Recipient Countries

9. The Lead Agency must demonstrate access to a broad range of key decision makers from relevant ministries in a considerable number of recipient countries. This should include not only line ministries with authority over technical areas (e.g. Forestry, Agriculture, Environment, Urban Development, etc.), but also those ministries responsible for national budget and planning processes (e.g. Finance, Investment, Planning, etc.), and cross-sectoral integration and coordination authorities and agencies.

Recognition for Knowledge Innovations

10. The Lead Agency must have an established track record in creating and mobilizing knowledge innovations that help countries make informed decisions about transforming key economic systems. This will include capability to engage with scientific and technical institutions operating globally as well as those associated with regions and countries.

III. LEAD AGENCY SELECTION PROCESS

11. At the start of GEF-8, all 18 GEF Agencies will be given the opportunity to express interest in taking a role as Lead Agency for one or more IPs in accordance with the criteria. The process will enable Agencies to demonstrate their capability to carry out the responsibilities associated with the role, including comparative advantage to coordinate the program, and willingness to work with participating countries and other GEF Agencies. The Lead Agency selection process will be done simultaneously for all eleven (11) IPs.

12. Prior to issuing a call for proposals, the GEF Secretariat will organize a briefing session for all agencies to present and discuss the selection criteria and expectations. Agencies are expected to use the criteria as guidance for their proposals and are free to use any format they deem appropriate. In developing the proposals, agencies should take into consideration the following aspects that will serve as the basis for assessment by the GEF Secretariat:

- Demonstrate institutional strength / comparative advantage, including track record of achievements relative to the IP-specific agenda,

- Propose a compelling vision and approach for the IP, including how the global platform in synergy with the child projects will be used to engage key stakeholders, achieve coherence and consistency in delivery, and influence systemic change, and
- Clarify approach to mobilizing resources and leveraging investment, including existing or planned initiatives that could be potentially harnessed for the IP.

13. In preparing the proposal, an agency should feel free to consult or engage with other agencies. If such consultations result in an interest for a joint or “co-lead” proposal, then one agency must be designated to serve as *de facto* lead subject to the criteria for Lead Agency outlined in this note. While the value-add of a co-lead proposal will not be ignored, a designated lead is necessary to minimize risk of dispersing overall accountability for the program. The designated lead in a “co-leadership” arrangement is therefore accountable for carrying out all the functions described in Annex 1.

14. Proposals for Lead Agency should not exceed ten (10) pages but can be accompanied by annexes or relevant resources. A GEF Secretariat technical team will review proposals submitted for each IP and rate them based on a standard template (see Annex 2). If necessary, the teams will follow-up with individual agencies to seek clarification on their proposal submission. Once the assessments are completed, the GEF Secretariat will prepare a brief report to accompany announcements of the Lead Agency selections.

IV. TIMELINE

15. The following [TENTATIVE] timeline will be followed for selection of the Lead Agencies:

- **30 August 2022** – *Terms of Reference and Criteria for Lead Agency* of IPs circulated to all agencies and a consultative meeting organized to discuss and clarify any concerns.
- **30 September 2022** – Deadline for Agencies to submit proposals for Lead Agency role to the GEF Secretariat. The GEF Secretariat will review and rate proposals and make a final selection for each IP.
- **30 October 2022** – The GEF Secretariat will notify agencies on outcomes of the selection process and prepare a briefing note for the Council Meeting in December.

ANNEX 1: ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEAD AGENCY

1. The Lead Agency is critical for ensuring that the program operates in a space that enables the GEF financing to harness existing efforts by a wide range of entities including development partners, private sector, and other financing institutions. This will ensure that the program influences transformational change beyond what is possible with the limited resources, while at the same time crowding-in diverse partners and initiatives to maximize potential for impact.

2. The specific functions and associated responsibilities of the Lead Agency fall into the following three categories:

1. Program Development and Administrative Role

- *Preparation and Submission of PFD* - The Lead Agency, along with other participating Agencies and in consultation with relevant country institutions and other relevant partners, prepares a PFD. The Lead Agency submits the PFD to the Secretariat for review on a rolling basis.
- *Revision and Resubmission of PFD* - The Lead Agency re-submits an Addendum or revised PFD for Council approval prior to the PFD Commitment Deadline if the following are requested: (a) an increase in proposed utilization of country STAR allocations for Child Projects; and / or (b) an increase in GEF resources for the Program.
- *Design and submission of the Coordination Child Project* - A key innovation for GEF-8 is ensuring that the coordination child project, which supports the global platform for each IP, will be designed alongside the PFD to ensure that Lead Agency roles and responsibilities are fully supported from the outset after PFD approval. This project will establish and anchor all program-level priorities including the theory of change and program results framework, which would then guide design of all country child projects.
- *Monitoring and Reporting*⁷ - Lead Agencies are required to submit reports related to the approved PFD to the GEF Secretariat. At completion or at near completion of the program, or at a time-milestone given in the PFD, the Lead Agency should evaluate the program. The Lead Agency is expected to submit a yearly report on the status of the entire program within one year after Council approval of the PFD and every year thereafter. The report should highlight program-level activities and achievements that go beyond those of the individual Child Projects as presented in Project Implementation Reports (PIRs). It should include progress towards program-level outcomes, major milestones achieved through overall program implementation, and engagement in regional or global fora as a means towards advancing the overall program goal.

⁷ Annex 9, Para 11 of the *Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy*, [GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01](#)

2. Technical Assistance Role

- *Review and selection of Country Expressions of Interests (EOIs) in the program* - The Lead Agency, in consultation with the GEF Secretariat, will review all country EOIs in the program, and make the final recommendations based on established criteria for the inclusion of participating countries in an Integrated Program.⁸
- *Inputs on design of Country Child Projects*: The Lead Agency and the GEF Secretariat will work closely together on facilitating and guiding other participating GEF Agencies during development of country-child project proposals, to ensure coherence and consistency with the overall program framework. The Lead Agency will also provide upstream feedback and input on drafts of the child project proposals before submission to the GEF Secretariat for CEO Endorsement.

3. Program Coordination and Oversight Role

- *Program Governance* – The Lead Agency, through the global platform or “coordination child project” is responsible for establishing a governance mechanism that: a) ensures effective coordination “within” the program for achieving coherence and consistency, and b) connects the program “externally” to other relevant initiatives / platforms that are playing a critical role in advancing the IP-specific agenda. This responsibility is key to ensuring that the GEF investment is appropriately embedded within the wider context for influencing systems transformation through the IP.
- *Program Coordination* - The Lead Agency implements the associated global / regional child project and / or the coordination mechanism that monitors and ensures coherence among all child projects included in the program, while also being responsible for facilitating collaborative engagement by all GEF agencies and relevant entities (institutions, networks, etc.) participating in the program.
- *Program Integration* - The global / regional child project is critical for linking the country-specific child projects to a “knowledge platform” that will facilitate learning and exchange between countries. The platform will also create a “space” for countries to access innovations, tools and good practices; seek technical assistance on relevant thematic aspects. This includes providing training and capacity development opportunities, establishing standards for monitoring and assessment of outcomes, and creating communities of practice on key thematic issues.

⁸ Para 24 and 34, *Project and Program Cycle Policy*, [OP/PL/01](#)

ANNEX 2: IP SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR RECOGNIZED LEADERSHIP

Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes

- Demonstrated leadership in one of the three priorities targeted under the program: Amazon Basin, Congo Basin, and Critical Forest Biomes (Indo-Malaya and Mainland Asia, Mesoamerica region and Guinean forests of West Africa)
- Convening power for all relevant sectors, as well as specific stakeholders from relevant sectors to the IP agenda, notably from the private sector, CSO, Indigenous People, etc.
- Solid track record of transformative actions to safeguard and sustainably use tropical forests: creation and effective management of protected areas, sustainable forest management, integrated approaches to tackle drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.
- Evidence of experience with developing and supporting ambitious policies to support forest conservation, halt deforestation and restore the integrity of forests in developing country regions.
- Strong capacity for multi-stakeholder convening, coordination and knowledge management issues specific to the targeted biomes, including a clear approach to build on experience with relevant existing GEF programs (Amazon Sustainable Landscapes and Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes).

Blue and Green Islands

- Experience in one (or preferably more) SIDS sub-regions with a demonstrated commitment to working with SIDS, including evidence of promoting knowledge sharing and learning with plans to ensure continuity beyond GEF-8.
- Deep knowledge and experience in the areas of ecosystem valuation, natural capital accounting and related fields and their application in national planning processes (terrestrial and marine)
- Solid track record with supporting multiple types of nature-based solutions and their implementation.

Circular Solutions to Plastic Pollution

- Commitment to a circular economy approach and public-private sector partnerships
- Evidence of thought leadership with regard to the challenges to reducing plastic pollution and the government policies, businesses practices, and consumer behavior need to tackle these challenges.
- Close partnerships with global initiatives that foster knowledge sharing, including the Global Plastic Action Partnership, the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, and others.

Clean and Healthy Ocean

- Evidence of thought leadership towards advancing the nutrient pollution agenda at global and regional levels.
- Solid track record in supporting countries at global or regional level with analysis needed for the preparation and implementation of nutrient pollution strategies, including the ability to effectively engage with and obtain buy-in from political decision makers including in the ministries of Finance, Environment, Energy, Natural Resources, etc. when preparing and implementing plans and strategies.
- Demonstrated understanding specific to cost-benefit analysis and how coordinated action on nutrient pollution may offer multiple benefits for the environment, health, and the economy.

Ecosystem Restoration

- Evidence of leadership towards advancing the ecosystem restoration agenda at global and regional levels.
- Solid track record in supporting countries at global or regional level in the preparation and implementation of restoration initiatives.
- Active involvement in the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration and engagement with relevant partnership platforms.
- Evidence of the ability to effectively engage with and obtain buy-in from political decision makers including multilateral environmental agreements that have goals related to ecosystem restoration.

Elimination of Hazardous Chemicals from Supply Chains

- Experience in supply chain management as it relates to chemicals and waste.
- Leadership in textiles, fashion, construction at the global level.
- Demonstrated leadership of major chemicals and waste programs.
- Close partnership with global initiatives on fashion and construction.
- Ability to put together multi-disciplinary teams to manage complex supply chains.

Food Systems

- Demonstrate an explicit focus on food systems at the global scale as part of its overall operation, including track record of engagement with supply chains of major commodities, food crops, livestock and aquaculture.

- Evidence of agency's approach to mobilizing and working with diverse stakeholders as a means of transforming food systems, including private sector entities involved in food supply chains.
- Demonstrated involvement with relevant global / regional fora, including platforms and initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable food systems through integration of horizontal (landscape) and vertical (supply/value chain) dimensions.
- Strong capacity for multi-stakeholders' coordination and knowledge management at global scale on food systems, including a clear approach to build on experience with the following GEF programs: Resilient Food Systems, Good Growth Partnership, and Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR).

Greening Transportation Infrastructure Development

- Successful experience working across ministries and securing political commitments while supporting countries in the development and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks, plans, and guidelines that create enabling conditions for sustainable large-scale transportation infrastructure in the sub-sectors of roads, railroads, and ports.
- Demonstrated capacity in project implementation with the public and private sector to prevent and mitigate indirect and direct negative impacts on biodiversity caused by road construction, railroad construction and ports.
- Demonstrated experience in assessing and incorporating ecosystem service and natural capital values into infrastructure sector planning to address both infrastructure impacts and dependencies at a landscape or greater scale.
- Demonstrated experience in supporting participatory approaches for developing sustainable infrastructure with diverse stakeholders, including the private sector, communities, academia, and civil society organizations.
- Successful experience supporting mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations in key productive sectors such as agriculture, forestry, tourism, and extractive industries (mining, oil, gas) that have significant terrestrial footprints and catalyzing action from private companies leading to positive environmental outcomes.

Net-Zero Nature Positive Accelerator

- Evidence of a solid track record in supporting countries at global or regional level with socio-economic analysis needed for the preparation and/or implementation of long-term decarbonization strategies.
- Demonstrated understanding - and preferably a solid track record of projects - related to the interlinkages between climate mitigation policies/investments and biodiversity conservation, including but not limited to, the AFOLU sector.

- Evidence of leadership in the knowledge management of the topic of deep decarbonization and nature-positive development.

Sustainable Cities

- Evidence of thought leadership in advancing urban sustainability agenda and applying an integrated and systems-based approach to tackle environmental degradation challenges in cities globally.
- Proven track record of working with national governments and city leadership towards raising ambition for action to tackle climate change, loss of nature and pollution (e.g. hazardous waste, air and water pollution, etc.) in cities.
- Evidence of experience of working across multiple governance levels and sectors in the urban context along with deep in-house expertise and experience in urban planning, capacity building, financing, and technology/infrastructure solutions to deliver global environmental benefits at scale.
- A clear approach to build on the existing Sustainable Cities programs and leverage their knowledge platforms and networks to accelerate sustainability action in the overall portfolio of cities and beyond.

Wildlife Conservation for Development

- Evidence of having a global scope and reach with significant positive past performance in facilitating and supporting global wildlife conservation and counter trafficking programs.
- Demonstrated capability to effectively engage with and obtain buy-in from political decision makers including in the ministries of finance, environment/natural resources, health, agriculture, tourism and police, customs and other enforcement agencies etc.
- Demonstrated capacity to engage national project teams, governments, non-governmental and international organizations and enable global, regional and national cooperation for wildlife conservation, illegal wildlife trade, wildlife-based economies and human-wildlife-animal health.

ANNEX 3: GENERIC TEMPLATE FOR ASSESSMENT OF LEAD AGENCY PROPOSALS

Review Criteria and Questions	Qualitative Assessment	Score ⁹ HIGH = 3, MODERATE = 2, LOW = 1
INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTH / COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE		
1. Does the agency clearly articulate its strengths/comparative advantages as relevant to the IP?		
2. Did the agency clearly demonstrate how its strengths/comparative advantage will be deployed toward effectively delivering the IP objectives ?		
3. Did the agency demonstrate capability and commitment toward convening relevant stakeholders and partners that are critical for the IP agenda?		
PROGRAM DESIGN FRAMEWORK		
4. Is proposed framework in line with the IP strategy in the GEF-8 programming directions document?		
5. Does the proposal include a clear vision of how global/regional Child Project will be linked with country investments ?		
6. Does the agency propose a clear vision for the global/regional Child Project that will help catalyze the needed systems change?		
7. Does the agency provide a clear and valid explanation of the role of private sector and how to involve them in the IP?		
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND INVESTMENT LEVERAGE		
8. Does the proposal include a clear vision for expected finance to be mobilized across the IP? Is the vision clear and are the estimates realistic?		
9. Does the agency provide clear and realistic estimates, type (i.e., leveraged investment and others) and source of co-financing ?		
10. Does the agency vision include capability of leveraging its own resources for the IP?		
TOTAL SCORE		

⁹ **3-HIGH** = Strong evidence provided; **2-MODERATE** = Some evidence provided; **1-LOW** = Limited evidence provided.

Summary Recommendation:

- 1) Does the overall proposal provide adequate evidence and justification for the agency to be considered as Lead for the IP?
- 2) If yes, are there areas that warrant follow-up discussion if necessary to strengthen the case?
- 3) If no, what aspects make it unlikely for the agency to assume this role?