

OPERATIONAL PROGRAM NUMBER 9
INTEGRATED LAND AND WATER
MULTIPLE FOCAL AREA OPERATIONAL PROGRAM

GUIDANCE

9.1 Guidance for this Operational Program (OP) comes from the GEF Council in the Operational Strategy. While there is no single convention that provides guidance, such as with the other GEF focal areas, an intricate web of conventions and action programs may provide an initial basis for countries to collaborate. Operational Programs in the International Waters (IW) focal area provide a planning framework for the design, implementation, and coordination of different sets of GEF IW projects that can achieve particular global environmental benefits. Through different OPs, emphasis is placed on various kinds of interventions and certain types of projects that can lead to implementation of more comprehensive approaches for restoring and protecting the international waters environment.

9.2 The Integrated Land and Water Multiple Focal Area OP is broader in scope than the Waterbody-Based OP. While projects still are aimed at achieving changes in sectoral policies and activities as well as in leveraging donor and regular Implementing Agency (IA) program participation, these projects focus on integrated approaches to the use of better land and water resource management practices on an area-wide basis. The goal is to help groups of countries utilize the full range of technical, economic, financial, regulatory, and institutional measures needed to operationalize sustainable development strategies for international waters and their drainage basins. Global benefits often are produced in other GEF focal areas by these projects, and the cross-cutting issue of land degradation is an important element. With this more area-wide focus, and with biodiversity considerations often included in project objectives, more proactive interventions aimed at the protection of international waters with important biodiversity are common. In addition, projects addressing linkages among the coastal zone, oceans, climate change, and international waters may also provide multiple focal area benefits. Prevention of damage to threatened waters is stressed in this OP while remediation of damaged systems is more often stressed in the Waterbody-Based OP.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

9.3 The long-term objective of the program is to achieve global environmental benefits through implementation of IW projects which integrate the use of sound land and water resource management strategies as a result of changes in sectoral policies and activities that promote sustainable development.

9.4 Short-term objectives of the program include:

- (a) undertake a series of international water projects, in several development regions, that address the cross cutting issues of land degradation and include a focus on Africa;
- (b) assess the usefulness of the Strategic Action Program (SAP) concept for IW projects with multiple focal area benefits in: facilitating collaboration among IA's and countries; leveraging the involvement of regular IA programs and donors; and serving as a logical framework for M&E;
- (c) derive lessons learned in testing workable mechanisms to improve community, NGO, stakeholder, and interministerial participation in planning, implementing, and evaluating projects in this OP, especially as they relate to the special needs of Small Island Developing States; and
- (d) develop projects in two or three areas of threatened marine waters in close cooperation with Operational Programs in the climate change and biodiversity focal areas and with the coastal/marine priority of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

PROGRAM SCOPE

9.5 While the Waterbody-based OP focuses on the ecological status of transboundary waterbodies and on the narrow, prescriptive measures necessary to address the top priority transboundary concerns, Operational Program Number 9 focuses on area-wide interventions that typically involve integrated management of land and water resources. Like Operational Program Number 8, projects in this OP are often multi-country in nature, but unlike Operational Program Number 8 they often focus on preventive measures to address threats rather than remedial, highly capital-intensive measures. In addition, global benefits in multiple focal areas are often associated with projects in this OP. Consequently, close cooperation with Operational Program Number 1 (arid and semi-arid zone ecosystems) and Operational Program Number 2 (coastal, marine, wetlands) is important. Interactions between the oceans and climate are frequently reflected in the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of marine systems. Collaborating nations that desire to address sustainable protection of their coastal zone resources may often wish to examine linkages with climate as part of their marine ecosystem project.

9.6 With components devoted to the cross cutting issue of land degradation, and the special conditions and needs of Small Island Developing States, projects in this OP often involve determining what sectoral changes are needed to achieve the goals of sustainable development as well as what type nature of measures are needed to ensure

that the ecological carrying capacity of the waterbody is not exceeded. Consequently, with these considerations and the area-wide nature of interventions, community involvement and stakeholder participation become especially important in this OP. In addition, projects often involve processes that link biodiversity protection or climate change considerations into the thinking of sectoral managers (water engineers, agricultural officials, tourism development organizations, etc.) to ensure that sectoral policies and activities are modified to address sustainability and to protect aquatic/marine ecosystems.

9.7 As with the Waterbody-Based OP, the process of formulating a SAP may be useful to help provide a focus for setting priorities among countries, determining baseline and additional actions for addressing the priorities, and leveraging other forms of assistance. Single country projects may be appropriate if world-class biodiversity of habitat conditions warrant priority and, as part of project preparation, undertaking the equivalent of a SAP may be useful.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

9.8 Similar to GEF expectations with regard to the Waterbody-Based OP, IW projects in Operational Program Number 9 will normally require a long-term commitment on the part of governments, IAs, donors, and the GEF to leverage the intended sectoral changes -- to address the root causes -- of complex environmental problems in this focal area. Because land degradation resulting in damage to the water resources in one nation often occurs upstream in another nation, political commitments on the part of neighboring countries to work together, establish factual priorities, and decide on joint commitments for action need to be nurtured. Collaborative processes are fostered through SAP formulation. Project Development Facility funds may be utilized by participating countries as part of project preparation to pull together the array of reasonable baseline and additional actions needed to solve the priority problems.

9.9 The GEF can be a catalyst for action to bring about the successful integration of improved land and water resource management practices on an area-wide basis. But the complexity and far-reaching nature of the issues will result in the GEF being only a small part of the necessary multi-country, multi-stakeholder effort. Active involvement of donors and built-in consideration by IA regular programs are also expected. Similar to the Waterbody-Based OP, development of or strengthened multi-country institutional arrangements are often appropriate measures for support, and countries should ensure financial sustainability of these arrangements to ensure that the expected outcomes can be achieved. This may be years after the GEF project has been completed.

9.10 Expected outcomes of this program include reduction of stress to the international waters environment in selected parts of all five development regions

across the globe through participating countries making changes in their sectoral policies, making critical investments, developing necessary programs, and collaborating jointly in implementing land and water resources protection measures. Achievement of the program objectives listed herein may be considered as an expected outcome of the programming in this OP as would be increased global environment benefits in several focal areas. Since the GEF is in an active learning mode in this focal area, periodic stocktaking and review of lessons learned will be programmed.

9.11 Key assumptions are that:

- (a) over time, the full range of technical, economic, financial, regulatory, and institutional measures necessary to protect the international waters environment would have been taken by collaborating countries to accompany the leveraged development assistance of regular programs of the implementing agencies, international co-funding of investments, and private sector action;
- (b) participating recipient and donor countries would have committed funding for needed baseline and some additional actions; and
- (c) countries will have put into practice lessons that have been learned.

PROGRAM OUTPUTS

9.12 The outputs of this program include a representative number of IW projects as part of a land degradation component, a Small Islands Developing States Component, and a multiple focal area component. Different considerations, elements, and interventions may be characteristic of projects addressing these situations consequently, three distinct components are required for programming to ensure balance and to generate the global environmental benefits in different focal areas.

9.13 Outputs from individual IW projects in this OP include:

- (a) a comprehensive transboundary environmental analysis identifying top priority multi-country environmental concerns;
- (b) a strategic action program consisting of expected baseline and additional actions needed to implement an integrated approach to land and water resources management;
- (c) country commitments to implement expected baseline and additional actions;

- (d) documentation of stakeholder participation to determine expected baseline and additional actions to be implemented as well as community involvement in the project;
- (e) implementation of measures related to integrated management of land and water resources that have incremental costs and that can generate global environmental benefits in several focal areas; and
- (f) indicators related to the international waters project and subsequent actions following project completion (process indicators, stress reduction indicators, an environmental status indicators).

9.14 Key assumptions include:

- (a) implementing agencies will cooperate with each other and participating countries, according to their comparative advantages; and
- (b) barriers to adoption of integrated approaches to land and water management can be overcome through the projects or with the assistance of regular programs of agencies.

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

9.15 The OP relies on cooperation among Implementing Agencies as part of specific projects as well as a significant commitment from Implementing Agencies to target regular development assistance programs to the international waters project area along with the GEF. The Implementing Agency commitments to action (including regular agency programs such as capacity building and lending) and individual country commitments to baseline and additional specific actions are often contained in Strategic Action Programs developed with GEF assistance. Different types of activities characterize each component of Operational Program Number 9 as follows:

Land Degradation Component

9.16 A special linkage exists between land degradation in dryland areas and management of both surface and groundwater resources in transboundary drainage basins. Rehabilitation of damaged catchments, adoption of sustainable land use systems, and integration of water resources management and land management practices are priorities for both transboundary basins and ecologically important multiple country dryland settings. Opportunities will be sought for deriving global environmental benefits in other focal areas, such as climate change and biodiversity,

with sound water resources management measures and revegetation initiatives being important elements of international waters projects that address this cross-cutting issue.

9.17 Improved watershed and catchment management, sustainable land-use and conservation systems, as well as sound sectoral development and economic policies are essential to addressing transboundary water-related environmental concerns related to land degradation. Especially in dryland regions, land degradation can be linked with changes in climate and river flow regimes and with the overuse of water resources by sectoral activities such as agriculture. This can also result in degraded subsurface water supplies, some of which have transboundary implications. Support for preparation of water resources management strategies by riparian countries, for a transboundary dryland basin is a common characteristic of these projects to provide a basis for harmonization of sectoral water uses among basin countries in an environmentally sustainable manner. This often requires commitments to reduce water withdrawals in dryland basins so that sufficient quality and quantity of water are provided to sustain the international waters environment and its ecological diversity.

9.18 SAP formulation projects are encouraged as first steps of projects in this component. Water resources management strategies are integral elements of these SAPs, because of the processes involving multicountry commitments to environmentally sustainable water use in these dryland basins. While projects are sought worldwide, an initial emphasis will be placed on Africa and on close cooperation with the GEF arid and semi-arid ecosystems OP.

Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Component

9.19 With their special conditions and needs, SIDS require more integrated approaches to improved land and water management in order to address threats to their water resources. In particular, projects in this component stress integrated freshwater basin - coastal area management as key elements to ensure a sustainable future for these island states. As noted in the GEF Operational Strategy, activities are typically targeted to six major issues SIDS have in common (coastal area management and biodiversity, sustainable management of regional fish stocks, tourism development, protection of water supplies, land and marine-based sources of pollution, and vulnerability to climate change). Regional groups of SIDS often share access to marine resources and experience common water-related environmental problems (for example, saltwater intrusion into groundwater supplies as a result of rising oceans) or stocks of fish being depleted by foreign fishing fleets that can be addressed through the GEF in the context of altering sectoral activities on each island state to meet sustainable development goals. SIDS share common environmental problems and solutions to those problems that reflect the partnership between their representative regional organizations and the capacity and institutional building needed on each island state to more comprehensively address these problems. The transboundary issues then involve

international cooperation among sovereign island states as well as transborder issues among the many islands of individual states as they utilize measures to protect their water resources.

9.20 The GEF helps facilitate the analysis of environmental problems and the setting of specific priorities for modifications of sectoral policies and activities that might be needed on particular islands. The GEF also helps strengthen regional approaches to joint management and helps leverage needed investments. Processes similar to SAP formulation may be appropriate for regional groupings of SIDS. Close linkages to the biodiversity focal area and the climate change area are evident.

Multiple Focal Area Component

9.21 GEF projects integrating several focal areas have the potential to multiply global benefits from GEF interventions. For example, wetland restoration and protection initiatives can provide benefits for both biodiversity protection and water quality improvement. Biodiversity protection and carbon sequestration have linkages and important roles in restoring damaged transboundary basins. In areas with globally significant biodiversity concerns, especially unique wetlands, coastal areas, and coral reefs, multiple focal areas projects might be appropriate for addressing current and anticipated threats in order to correct or prevent environmental damage. If the unique ecosystem lies mostly in one country, a single country project would be appropriate aimed at sectoral policies and activities needed to ensure that sustainable development can occur. Likewise, joint IW/biodiversity projects aimed at certain endangered aquatic/marine species that cross borders are appropriate for this component.

9.22 Various linkages with the climate change focal area exist as well. As part of an international waters project, innovative technologies, information systems, and simulation modeling may be utilized to build predictive capabilities to improve environmental management. Some additional activities might provide significant value-added for countries in managing coastal zones by incorporating possible changes in climate scenarios in these predictive tools. Benefits in several focal areas may then result from sectoral interventions based on the IW project.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

9.23 All three IAs are normally involved on a task force for project preparation with environmental ministries of each participating nation. This is because each IA has a comparative advantage, something additional, and unique to bring to the table with its regular programs. Formulation of a SAP is the responsibility of the collaborating governments and national/regional stakeholders. SAP formulation provides an opportunity for IAs to support country initiatives according to the IA's comparative

advantage and to bring their regular programs to bear where needed. While multiple IA involvement is not mandatory, it will be encouraged. It is though SAP formulation that baseline and additional priority actions are identified.

9.24 Stakeholder involvement and participation of different sectoral ministries in each recipient country constitute important elements of GEF activities concerning international waters. Stakeholder involvement will differ at each level of planning and administration. Participation of these various stakeholders (including the private sector) within and across countries can improve the quality, effectiveness, and sustainability of projects. However, there is a need to identify the key stakeholders through a stakeholder analysis, or social assessment, as well as the levels at which their involvement will be critical and creating the means to ensure their effective participation. Linkage through computer-based networks is promising. Networking among stakeholders and government organizations can foster broad involvement in planning and implementing GEF international waters projects and should help to improve the quality, public awareness, and scientific basis of international waters projects. These technological innovations promote transparency among cooperating nations regarding key information, encourage broader participation by stakeholder groups within country and across countries, and provide a basis for evaluation. Interministerial coordination is essential so that actual changes can be made in sectoral activities.

RESOURCES

9.25 With potential linkages among focal areas, judicious GEF programming may have a synergistic effect on global benefits. Consequently, the 3-year resource requirements for the OP will exceed the requirements in other operational programs (\$90 - 105 million) in international waters.