



GEF/C.47/08
September 30, 2014

GEF Council Meeting
October 28 – 30, 2014
Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 08

THE COUNTRY SUPPORT PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/C.47/08, *The Country Support Programme Implementation*, approved the proposal for the Secretariat to execute the Country Support Programme according to the procedures contained therein.

The Country Support Programme will be comprised of the following elements, funded with a total allocation from the GEF Trust Fund of \$23 million, allocated across each activity as specified below:

- (a) Support for National Portfolio Formulation Exercises (NPFEs): \$2.4 million;
- (b) Multi-stakeholder dialogues: \$2 million;
- (c) GEF Workshops: \$12 million (ECWs 10 million; other workshops 2 million)
- (d) Constituency Meetings: \$5 million;
- (e) GEF Introduction Seminars: \$1.2million; and
- (f) Pre-Council Meeting for Recipient Country Council Members/Alternates: 0.4 million

The Council directed the Trustee to set aside \$23 million in GEF Trust Fund resources for use by the Secretariat to fund these activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This paper outlines the proposal for the GEF Country Support Programme (CSP) as a part of the Country Relations Strategy (CRS) during GEF-6. Based on the Programming Document approved by the Council at its 46th Meeting the CSP aims to provide targeted support to recipient countries, particularly with regard to building capacity of the country GEF focal points, Convention focal points and civil society as well as for resource programming.
2. The CSP will be comprised of the following elements:
 - (a) GEF National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFEs);
 - (b) GEF National Dialogues;
 - (c) GEF Workshops;
 - (d) GEF Constituency meetings;
 - (e) GEF Introduction Seminars;
 - (f) Pre-Council Meeting for Recipient Country Constituencies.
3. GEF NPFEs will continue to be voluntary and will not be a pre-requisite for obtaining GEF grants. The GEF Secretariat will support the cost of these exercises with up to \$30,000 for each interested recipient country government.
4. The Secretariat will facilitate GEF national dialogues in order to support the countries with determining and validating their environmental policies, strategies and national stakeholder cooperation approaches.
5. The CSP will also support GEF workshops, including Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs). In addition to the ECWs that keep focal points, convention focal points and civil society abreast of policies, procedures, project design and other topics of interest, other workshops or meetings of varying composition to consider regional projects and programs as well as other shared issues related to GEF objectives may be organized.
6. Additionally, Constituencies that wish to do so could hold up to two meetings per year, to discuss Council documents so that their Council Member and Alternate may better understand and represent countries members' positions at the Council meeting.
7. GEF Introduction Seminars will be offered once a year to benefit new GEF Partner Agency staff, Convention Secretariat staff, new GEF Focal Points and selected stakeholders on the GEF-6 strategies, policies and procedures.
8. Council and Alternate Members from recipient constituencies may meet the day before the Council Meeting to exchange views, positions and perspectives in relation to the Council documents and to receive clarification from Secretariat staff, as necessary.

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BACKGROUND

1. In GEF-5, the Council approved the reformed Country Support Programme (CSP) to be executed by the GEF Secretariat. The GEF-6 strategic approach to corporate programs considered the progress made in GEF-5 and incorporated the results of the evaluations done through OPS5.
2. During GEF-6, the GEF Secretariat will continue to work with the GEF Agencies, Focal Points and other stakeholders on the CSP as a part of the Country Relations Strategy (CRS).

COUNTRY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

3. The CSP is the main tool for carrying out the CRS and will have the following components: (i) GEF National Portfolio Formulation Exercises (NPFES); (ii) GEF National Dialogues; (iii) GEF Workshops; (iv) GEF Constituency Meetings; (v) GEF Introduction Seminars, and; (vi) Pre-Council meetings for Recipient Country Constituencies. This document provides more detailed proposals for operationalizing these components.

GEF National Portfolio Formulation Exercises

4. In GEF-5, forty two countries undertook the National Portfolio Formulation Exercise. These exercises helped those countries to address the pre-identification phase of GEF-5 support and they succeeded in creating capacity in countries to coordinate and program GEF interventions¹.
5. In GEF-6, the objective of this activity is to further help GEF Operational Focal Points to engage relevant national stakeholders and line ministries, in the planning process for developing national priorities for GEF support, including specific project ideas. This will promote national ownership and result in a document that will guide each participating country's programming of GEF resources (National Portfolio Formulation Document - NPDF). The expectation is that GEF Agencies will organize their support to countries for preparing and implementing projects and programmatic approaches around the resulting NPDF.
6. The NPFE will be optional, will not be a prerequisite for project funding and will build upon existing national development plans and strategies. The GEF Operational Focal Point is responsible for requesting the NPFE. GEF technical teams will be actively involved, as necessary.
7. The proposed allocation of 2.4 million for this activity covers the expenses of NPFES up to \$30,000 each for 80 countries. This includes the cost of holding necessary meetings/workshops including in-country travel, materials, and contracting consultants to facilitate the work.
8. Countries will be able to conduct such exercises in a flexible manner, taking into account national institutions, processes, and circumstances. The GEF Secretariat and the Agencies will provide support as requested by OFPs.

¹ See document GEF/ME/C.45/06, *Mid-Term Evaluation of the National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE)*.

9. It is expected that a final NPDF will be submitted to the GEF Secretariat no later than ten months after the start of the exercise. The GEF Secretariat will review the document and provide comments as appropriate.

10. As requested by the Council the process of undertaking NPFEs began during the last six months of GEF-5 and so far the following countries have initiated their NPFE: Antigua & Barbuda, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Cook Islands, Ghana, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Philippines, Senegal, and Togo.

GEF National Dialogues

11. GEF National Dialogues will continue to be a strategic tool for promoting the incorporation of the global environment concepts into national thinking, accounting and regular procedures. A broad array of national and local level stakeholders, including line Ministries and civil society, will discuss and understand how protecting the global environment is essential to the national interest and how to reflect it in daily work. These dialogues will further engage key players in the country's public and private financial architecture, in a discussion on the possible ways to catalyze public/private financing for the environment.

12. GEF National Dialogues will be available to all countries at the request of the OFP. All early National Dialogues are required to include a component that discusses GEF6 programming, similar to an NPFE.

13. When planning for the Dialogues, the GEF Secretariat will work in close coordination with the Operational Focal Point's office as well as GEF Partner Agencies.

14. The proposed allocation of \$2 million for these dialogues is based on an estimate that it will be possible to support an average of 8-10 dialogues each year. The average cost for each, based on GEF-5 costs is \$55,000 per dialogue.

GEF Workshops

15. In GEF-5, the GEF Secretariat organized thirteen Expanded Constituency Workshops each year. The purpose of these workshops was to keep the GEF national focal points, convention focal points and other key stakeholders, including civil society, abreast of GEF strategies, policies and procedures, to analyze in depth different aspects of the GEF work, to provide an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience with GEF projects, and to encourage coordination.

16. During GEF-6, the Secretariat will continue to organize ECWs with up to seven participants per country (GEF Focal Points, four Convention Focal Points and one civil society representative).

17. In addition, the GEF Secretariat, based on the need and in consultation with countries and Agencies, will design and organize other meetings/workshops of variable composition to facilitate work on, among others, trans-boundary collaboration; regional programming; specific projects and programs and other issues based on thematic and geographic areas. Developed countries will be invited to participate to promote a deeper understanding of shared issues and concerns. There will be financial support for a limited number of participants per country

depending on the defined agenda. This includes travel, accommodation, per diems, as well as all organizational expenses.

18. The proposed allocation of \$12 million for this item is divided into \$10 million, based on an approximate cost of \$150,000 per ECW, and an additional \$2 million, based on an additional variable cost for four/five additional meetings a year.

GEF Constituency Meetings

19. During GEF-5, the practice was to hold one constituency meeting per calendar year to discuss issues before the Council meeting. This restriction limited considerably their capacity to consult and coordinate before Council meetings.

20. During GEF-6, Constituency Meetings will continue to be the main tool for the Council Members to engage their Constituency members in the preparations for decision making at the GEF Council. Each Constituency may request two meetings per calendar year, one before each Council. Constituency members will be able to discuss Council documents and draft decisions so that their Council Member and Alternate may better understand and represent members' positions at the Council meeting. Constituency members may also discuss implementation of GEF projects, share lessons learnt and handle constituency governance issues.

21. The constituency meetings will be organized at the request of the Council Member, who will also be responsible for preparing the agenda and chairing the meeting. GEF Political and Operational Focal Points from each constituency will be funded to attend the meetings. The GEF Secretariat will be responsible for all logistical arrangements.

22. The proposed allocation of \$5 million includes the cost of logistics as well as the travel cost, accommodation and per diems for each national focal point to travel to two meetings annually.

GEF Introduction Seminars

23. During GEF-5, Familiarization Seminars were held once per calendar year. During GEF-6 the re-named GEF Introduction Seminars –whose purpose is to provide necessary information and training to new GEF Agency staff, Convention Secretariat staff, new GEF Focal Points and selected stakeholders on the GEF-6 strategies, policies and procedures— will continue to be organized by the GEF Secretariat. These Seminars will also reach out to other audiences that are critical for the GEF to succeed, particularly national line Ministries, media, as well as people from other organizations that are part of the current financial environmental architecture and the private sector, where possible. In GEF-6 these seminars will take place once a year in Washington, D.C. Financial support for participants for travel, accommodation, and per diem expenses will continue. The proposed allocation of \$1.2 million would cover four meetings during GEF-6.

Pre-Council Meeting for Recipient Country Constituencies

24. In previous replenishment cycles, Council and Alternate members from recipient constituencies have not had the opportunity to meet among themselves to discuss Council issues prior to the meeting. This has limited their capacity to understand their respective positions and views. Therefore, during GEF- 6, Council and Alternate members from recipient constituencies will be convened to meet in Washington, D.C. immediately prior to the Council

Meeting to exchange views, positions and perspectives in relation to the Council documents and to receive clarification from Secretariat staff, as necessary. The proposed allocation for this activity is \$0.4 million to cover the additional expenses above the regular financing provided for Council Members and Alternates to participate in the Council.