



Global Environment Facility

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GEF Council
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Agenda Item 6

RELATIONS WITH CONVENTIONS

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed Document GEF/C.19/5, *Relations with Conventions*, takes note of the developments of relevance to the GEF within the various international agreements and welcomes the continuing collaboration between the GEF and the Conventions. More specifically, the Council:

- (a) requests the Secretariat to submit to the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change *The First Decade of the GEF, Second Overall Performance Study*, as an input to the second review of the financial mechanism which is to be discussed at that meeting; and
- (b) agrees to amend the eligibility criteria for GEF's initial assistance for enabling activities in the context of the *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants* to include developing countries and countries with economies in transition that are party or signatory to the Convention.

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INTRODUCTION

1. This document reports on developments of interest to the GEF within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants that have occurred since the GEF Council meeting in December 2002. The document also includes information provided by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals relevant to the mandate of the GEF.

2. The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is taking place in the Hague from April 8-20, 2002. An addendum will be prepared prior to the Council meeting in order to inform the Council of relevant decisions that meeting.

I. CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-7)

3. SBSTTA-7 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) took place from November 12-16, 2001, in Montreal, Canada. Delegates considered issues concerning forest biodiversity, institutional and socio-economic enabling environments, agricultural biodiversity, incentive measures, indicators, and environmental impact assessment. The recommendations of the meeting will be submitted to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties for its consideration.

Meeting of Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change

4. The meeting of Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change was convened in Helsinki, Finland, January 21-25, 2002. The meeting reviewed: a) existing information on the inter-linkages between biological diversity and climate change; and b) existing approaches and tools that would facilitate application of scientific advice for integration of biodiversity considerations in the implementation of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

5. The meeting agreed on an overall strategy with a view to influencing both the CBD and UNFCCC. Forest, land use and energy were identified as key issues. However, the main focus of the joint effort will be on forests, consistent with the decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. The meeting agreed on the preparation of documents on existing inter-linkages and approaches; establishment of a review process; organization of two additional review meetings; and requests for financial and secretariat supports.

6. As the institution operating the financial mechanisms for both conventions, the GEF is well placed to contribute to strategic discussions on the interlinkages between biological diversity and climate change. Representatives of the GEF participated in the Helsinki meeting and are expected to contribute to the continuing work on this matter.

The Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Article 8(j) and related Provisions

7. The second meeting of the ad hoc working group on Article 8(j) and related provisions was held in Montreal, Canada, February 4-8, 2002. A GEF presentation on GEF project preparation was organized on February 5, in collaboration with the Implementing Agencies and the CBD Secretariat. The presentation was attended by approximately 100 representatives of indigenous groups and other participants.

8. The GEF was asked to continue to apply its public involvement policy to support the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in GEF projects. The GEF was also invited to provide assistance to developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and Small Island Developing States, and to indigenous and local communities in establishing registries of traditional knowledge and developing strategies for the protection of traditional knowledge with a view to enabling indigenous and local communities to take advantage of existing intellectual property rights systems.

Workshop on Forests and Biological Diversity

9. The GEF participated in the Workshop on Forests and Biological Diversity which was organized jointly by the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) (January, 2002 in Accra, Ghana). The workshop was attended by representatives of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The meeting aimed at sharing experiences and facilitating synergies between the elements for an expanded work programme on forest biological diversity of the CBD and the multi-year programme of work and plan of action of the UNFF. The workshop identified a general basis for collaboration and some immediate actions that would greatly increase collaboration between the UNFF, CBD and members of the CPF.

II. UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Review of the financial mechanism

10. In Decision 3/CP.4, the Conference of the Parties decided, in accordance with Article 11.4 of the Convention, to review the financial mechanism every four years, on the basis of the guidelines contained in the annex to the decision or as they may subsequently be amended, and to take appropriate measures. In order to prepare for such a review at the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties in October 2002, the UNFCCC Secretariat consulted, at the outset of the process, with the GEF Secretariat concerning the review processes, documentation and inputs from the GEF. Among other sources of information, *The First Decade of the GEF, Second Overall Performance Study* has been shared with the UNFCCC Secretariat as an important input for review.

Consultations with countries on operational guidelines for funding National Adaptation Plans of Action

11. As requested by the Council in December 2001 the GEF Secretariat organized consultations with representatives from least developed countries (LDCs) and developed countries on draft operational guidelines for expedited GEF funding for the preparation of National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs). The consultations were held in Arusha at the kind invitation of the Government of Tanzania and were also attended by the Implementing Agencies, UNITAR, and the UNFCCC Secretariat. More details are contained in document GEF/C.19/Inf.7.

III. UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

12. The GEF Secretariat attended the Forum on the Implementation of the UNCCD Preparatory to the World Summit on Sustainable Development that was convened by the UNCCD in Praia, Cape Verde, March 5-8, 2002. The Forum met as a technical committee and at a Ministerial Level.

13. The Ministerial Message that the ministerial meeting agreed to forward to the World Summit on Sustainable Development includes the following two paragraphs concerning the GEF:

“We, Ministers, Heads of Delegations...invite the Johannesburg Summit to:

“*Take note* of the various decisions adopted by the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in order to strengthen financial support of the GEF to the implementation of the UNCCD, and express the wish that the GEF Assembly, considering the need for new and additional financial resources will be able to amend the instrument of the GEF to include land degradation (desertification and deforestation) as the fifth focal area; and

“*Take note also* of the appeal launched by Ministers of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean during the various regional meetings preparatory to the Johannesburg Summit, held respectively in Nairobi, Phnom Penh and Rio de Janeiro, whereby the GEF Assembly schedule to take place in Beijing, China, in October 2002, is invited to identify the GEF as a financial mechanism of the Convention.”

14. The technical committee of the meeting adopted a number of recommendations, among which is the following concerned with the Preparatory Process of the WSSD:

“3. The initiative of each individual country is necessary. The participation of UNCCD focal points in this process must be encouraged. In addition to the initiatives taken by the COP, country Parties are urged to give immediate priority to the UNCCD in the various forums of the preparatory process for Johannesburg Summit and in other structures such as those of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development (ICFfD), the World Summit on Food Security and the forums of other conventions.”

15. With regard to Partnership and Funding, the technical committee recommended:

“25. Continue, within the framework of the GEF, to adopt enabling measures for combating desertification, with the hope of mobilizing additional resources for land degradation (deforestation/desertification) while encouraging the simplification of methods for the disbursement of various GEF funds aimed at solving the same problems.

26. Additional funding resources and investments should be mobilized without delay through the Global Mechanism by earmarking the financial flows from bilateral development agencies, private foundations, development funds and the private sector.”

IV. THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

16. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants was adopted on May 22, 2001, and opened for signature on May 23, 2001. The signature period will expire on May 22, 2002. As of April 5, 2002, there are 125 signatories and 5 Parties to the Convention.

17. At its meeting in May 2001, the GEF Council approved the *Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*, as an early response for assisting developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement measures to fulfill their obligations under the Convention. The Guidelines stipulate that in order to be eligible to receive GEF enabling activity assistance, a country must be a signatory to the Convention. Since the signature period is due to shortly close, the Secretariat of the Convention believes that a number of states will accede to the Convention without signature. Therefore, it is recommended that the eligibility criteria for enabling activity assistance in accordance with the initial guidelines be amended to include developing countries and countries with economies in transition that are party or signatory to the Convention.

V. UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS

18. The GEF, as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), attended the second United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) which was held in New York (March, 2002). A key event at the meeting was a dialogue between the Ministers responsible for Forests and the Heads of the CPF. The GEF was represented by its CEO and Chairman and was one of the respondents on the item of the dialogue that focused on “financing for sustainable forest management”.

19. Eminent forest and development experts took part in the GEF Forest Roundtable, held on March 11, 2002, in the margins of the UNFF meeting, to explore strategic options to advance the conservation of natural forests. The Chairman's summary from the roundtable discussion was shared with the UNFF delegates at a briefing session on March 12, 2002. The UNFF itself adopted a ministerial statement which will be forwarded to the World Summit on Sustainable Development to reiterate the importance of forests.

VI. INFORMATION ON OTHER INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS

20. At its meeting in November 2000, the Council encouraged the Secretariat to include in its reporting information relevant to the GEF received from other international environmental conventions, such as the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitats (Ramsar), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)². The following information has been submitted for purposes of this paper.

VII. CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS (CMS)

21. The 23rd Meeting of the Standing Committee took place December 13 - 14, 2001, in Bonn, Germany. It focused on the preparations for CMS COP7 on September 18-24, 2002, in Bonn and the second Meeting of the Parties of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement on September 25-27, 2002. It also addressed matters related to synergies and cooperation with other conventions, including joint work programmes with the Convention on Biological Diversity and Ramsar Convention, memoranda of understanding with the World Heritage Convention and CITES. Active collaboration has also taken place with organizations such as Wetlands International, BirdLife International and IUCN.

22. The Standing Committee also reviewed the implementation of the Strategic Plan (2000-2005), and progress achieved with the Information Management Plan, including the discussion of a new and practical format for national reports. The Working Group on Performance Indicators is pursuing a pioneering role in assessing the effectiveness of the Convention.