



Global Environment Facility

GEF/C.27/3
October 18, 2005

GEF Council
November 8-10, 2005

Agenda Item 11

NOTE ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE THIRD GEF ASSEMBLY

Recommended Council Decision

The Council expresses its sincere appreciation for the generous offer of the Government of South Africa to host the Third GEF Assembly and agrees that the Assembly and associated meetings will be held in Cape Town, South Africa from August 27 - September 1, 2006.

The Council requests the GEF Secretariat to work with the Government of South Africa to make the necessary preparations for the organization of the Assembly. The Council recognizes that the Secretariat will include in its proposal for the FY07 corporate budget to be considered by the Council in June 2006 a proposed budget for the Assembly to be included in the budget as a special initiative.

The Council requests the Secretariat to circulate for Council approval by mail the provisional agenda for the Assembly, taking into account comments made at the Council meeting.

INTRODUCTION

1. The GEF Assembly is held every three to four years, after the completion of replenishment negotiations for the GEF Trust Fund. At the Council meeting in June 2005, an information document was submitted on the organization of the third GEF Assembly (document GEF/C.25/Inf.5) in which the Council was informed of initial proposals regarding the organization of the third Assembly. The Council also approved resources to cover the costs of Assembly related preparation activities to be undertaken in FY06.

TIMING OF THE ASSEMBLY

2. In document GEF/C.25/Inf.5 it was proposed that the third GEF Assembly be convened in 2006, after completion of negotiations on the fourth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund. It was also proposed that the Assembly be convened in the second half of 2006 since a host government had not yet been identified.

3. After the Council meeting, the Government of South Africa indicated an interest in hosting the meeting subject to clarification of the resources that would be required from the host government.

4. The GEF Secretariat initiated preliminary discussions with the Government of South Africa on the possible organization of the Assembly, and Cape Town was identified as a suitable venue for the Assembly. More specifically, it has been confirmed that appropriate facilities may be made available for the GEF Assembly and associated meetings from August 27 to September 1, 2006.

LOCATION OF THE ASSEMBLY

5. The first GEF Assembly was convened in Delhi, India, in March 1998. The second GEF Assembly was convened in Beijing, China, in October 2002. During the negotiations of the GEF Instrument, a “common understanding” evolved that the Assembly should be held in a developing country, recognizing that the Council would meet regularly at the seat of the Secretariat. This balance was considered one aspect of the North-South GEF partnership. The Assembly is as an important opportunity to enhance the GEF’s outreach to recipient countries and to underscore the importance of the GEF to them

6. Hosting the GEF Assembly in South Africa will provide a good opportunity to raise awareness of global environmental issues in Africa, and in particular, to showcase South Africa’s efforts to preserve its environment. An African location will facilitate enhanced participation by NGOs and other participants from the region. Supporting Africa is a high priority for the international community, and holding the Assembly for the first time in an African country will help to show GEF’s commitment to Africa, such as through its work with NEPAD to ensure that environmental sustainability is integrated into all efforts to assist Africa in its development.

7. Hosting the Assembly in a GEF recipient country also provides an opportunity for GEF Member Governments to visit GEF projects. South Africa has a good number of GEF projects which are easily accessible to the proposed conference site of Cape Town.
8. The Government of South Africa is politically committed and willing to finance a portion of the costs involved in hosting the meeting, and every effort will be made to ensure that the Assembly is organized in the most cost-effective manner possible. In preliminary discussions, the Government of South Africa and the Secretariat have been able to identify various in-kind contributions from the host Government that will serve to reduce the total cost of hosting the Assembly.
9. The Secretariat, with the assistance of the Government of South Africa, has provisionally identified the Cape Town International Convention Center (CTICC) as a venue for the meeting as well as the availability of hotel accommodations close to the Convention Center.
10. The Secretariat has worked closely with the Government to develop preliminary cost estimates for the South African contribution to the Assembly. These costs have been estimated at approximately \$US 1.15 million. Attached as Annex 1 is a tentative cost estimate for hosting the Third Assembly in South Africa.
11. The Government of South Africa has indicated that it will be able to contribute approximately \$600,000 in cash and in-kind contributions towards meeting the identified costs, but other donors would need to be identified to make up the shortfall of approximately \$550,000. The Secretariat is discussing the possibility of additional funding from one of the GEF donor countries and would invite other donors to consider making contributions to help defray the cost of Assembly. It is proposed that the Council agree that any shortfall in funding that may occur if bilateral donors do not make contributions to meet the shortfall of the host government costs be covered by an increased contribution from the GEF Trust Fund.
12. The Secretariat will report to the Council at its next meeting on the progress that has been achieved in planning the Assembly and will propose to the Council for its review and approval a detailed budget proposal for the organization of the Assembly.

Associated Meetings: Council and NGO Consultation

13. It is proposed that the Assembly be convened for three days, August 29-31. The Assembly will be preceded by an NGO consultation on August 27, 2006, and a Council meeting on August 28, 2006. The principal focus of the Council meeting will be to review the documentation prepared for the Assembly and to agree upon any additional recommendations and proposals it decides to present to the Assembly. Field trips to visit GEF projects will be organized on September 1.

Agenda

14. A provisional agenda for the third Assembly is annexed to this document (see Annex 2). The Council is invited to comment on the agenda with a view to approving a revised agenda by mail before the end of 2005.

Documents for the Assembly

15. At this early date, it is not possible to provide a definitive list of documents to be prepared for the Assembly. Nonetheless, drawing on the experience of the previous Assemblies, it can be forecast that the following documentation will be before the Assembly for its consideration:

- (a) Recommendations of the Council on matters before the Assembly¹
- (b) CEO's Report on the policies, operations and future development of the GEF
- (c) Report on the fourth replenishment of the GEF
- (d) Third Study of GEF's Overall Performance
- (e) Report on the GEF Trust Fund
- (f) Report on membership
- (g) Highlights of the work of STAP during GEF-3

STRUCTURE OF THE ASSEMBLY

16. It is proposed that the three-day Assembly combine plenary meetings and opportunities for constituency meetings, workshops, panel presentations and smaller information discussions. The items on the agenda will be addressed in plenary sessions, which will be held each of the three days of the Assembly.

Bureau of the Assembly

17. As provided in the Rules of Procedure for the GEF Assembly, the Assembly will elect a Chair and two vice-Chairs from among the representatives attending the Assembly. One vice-Chair will be a representative of a recipient country Participant, and one vice-Chair will be a representative of a non-recipient country Participant. The Chair and vice-Chairs will constitute the Bureau of the meeting. The CEO will serve as an ex-officio member of the Bureau.

Statements by Ministers or other High-level Heads of Delegation

18. The Assembly will be convened at a ministerial level, and Ministers and heads of delegation will be invited to address the Assembly.

19. Each delegation will be invited to submit to the Secretariat, for circulation to all delegations, a written statement of its views on the items on the agenda, and in particular on the

¹ A document will be proposed for Council review and agreement at its meeting in June 2006. This document will include proposed amendments to the Instrument already agreed upon by the Council at its meeting in November 2004.

CEO/Chairman's report on the policies and activities of the Facility and his recommendations for the future development of the GEF. Ministers and other heads of delegation will be invited to make an oral presentation of their country's views, which in view of time constraints, will be limited to 5 minutes. Statements by Ministers and other heads of delegation will begin on August 29, 2006.

Roundtable of Ministers and other High-level Heads of Delegation

20. A roundtable of the heads of delegation will be organized during the morning of August 31. The roundtable will provide an opportunity for heads of delegation to reflect upon emerging points of consensus from the delegation statements and general debate. These discussions will be reflected in the statement of the Assembly's conclusions to be prepared by the Chair and Vice-Chairs for endorsement by the plenary.

Statement of the Assembly's Conclusions

21. As noted above, the Chair and Vice-Chairs will prepare, for endorsement by the Assembly, a statement of the Assembly's conclusions which will be based on the views expressed by delegations in their statements. It is expected that the conclusions will take into account the recommendations the Council on the future development of the GEF, the report on the fourth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, the Third Study of GEF's Overall Performance and other studies before the Assembly meeting.

Panels, Workshops and Seminars

22. Panels, workshops and seminars will be organized in parallel with the plenary sessions. The Secretariat proposes to solicit views from a wide audience on ideas and themes for panels, workshops and seminars, including the Conventions, NGOs and the private sector.

NGOs

23. The GEF Council has approved procedures for accreditation of NGOs to the GEF. Accredited NGOs are regularly sent GEF documentation and notification of GEF Council meetings and NGO consultations. An NGO consultation will be organized just prior to the Assembly.

24. It is proposed that in addition to the NGOs that are already accredited to the GEF, procedures similar to those followed for the previous Assemblies would permit the accreditation of NGOs that are interested in attending the Assembly. Experience has shown that a large number of NGOs from the region in which the Assembly is held often request to observe the Assembly. NGOs are intended to include representatives of the nine major groups identified in Agenda 21: women; youth; indigenous peoples; non-governmental organizations; local authorities; trade unions, business and industry; scientific and technological community; and farmers. NGOs are also likely to be interested in participating in workshops, seminars and other informal meetings associated with the Assembly. NGOs may also wish to organize some workshops, seminars and exhibits.

Exhibition

25. The Assembly represents an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of, and communicate to a wider audience, the challenges of managing the global environment and the role that the GEF can play, for example, in offering developing countries assistance leading to integration of global environmental issues with their sustainable development goals and positive impacts on the ground. The Assembly also offers a chance to showcase GEF's work and achievements together with the work and achievements of its partners. This will be achieved through the workshops and seminars as well as an exhibition which will be open to exhibits by governments, organizations, NGOs and major groups and others interested in the global environment.

FY07 Budget

26. The FY07 budget for the Assembly is estimated at US\$2,163,970. These estimates will be kept under review during FY06 preparations, and a proposed budget will be submitted for final Council approval at its meeting in June 2006.

ANNEX I

Preliminary Estimate of Costs to Host the Third GEF Assembly and Associated Meetings		
Cape Town, South Africa, August 27 to September 1, 2006		
	Cost ZAR	Cost USD
<i>CTICC Costs:</i>		
1. Audio Visual	93,100.00	
2. Catering	1,743,753.00	
3. Furniture	183,867.00	
4. Information Technology	447,460.00	
5. Security - Additional	40,000.00	
6. Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment	598,124.00	
7. Venue Hire	1,458,387.00	
<i>Other Local Costs:</i>		
9. Local Personnel	115,200.00	
10. Security/Protocol	960,000.00	
11. Transportation	131,150.00	
Total	5,771,041.00	887,852.46
<i>Contingency 30%</i>	<i>1,731,312.30</i>	<i>266,355.74</i>
GRAND TOTAL	7,502,353.30	1,154,208.20

ANNEX II

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening Session
 - (a) Welcoming address by the host Government
 - (b) Welcoming address by the CEO/Chairman of the Facility
 - (c) Statements by the Heads of the Implementing Agencies
2. Election of the Chairperson of the Assembly
3. Election of Vice-Chairs
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Organization of work
6. Statement by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP)
7. Statements by the Representatives of Conventions
 - (a) Statement by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity
 - (b) Statement by the Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
 - (c) Statement by the Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
 - (d) Statement by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification Particularly in Africa
 - (e) Statement by the Executive Secretaries of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and its Multilateral Fund
8. Statements by Heads of the Executing Agencies collaborating under expanded opportunities
9. Statement by a Representative of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development
10. Statement by a Representative of Non-Governmental Organizations
11. Third Overall Performance Study of GEF
12. Policies, operations, and future development of the GEF – Report of the CEO/Chairman of the Facility
13. Statements by Representatives of GEF Participants
14. Report on the fourth replenishment of the GEF
15. Report on membership
16. Report on credentials
17. Amendment of the GEF Instrument
18. Chair's Summary
19. Closing of the Assembly