



GEF/C.40/03
April 19, 2011

GEF Council Meeting
May 24 – 26, 2011
Washington D.C.

Agenda Item 5

RELATIONS WITH THE CONVENTIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having considered document GEF/C.40/03, *Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions*, welcomes the report and requests the GEF network to continue to work with recipient countries to reflect the guidance and national priorities in their GEF programming and activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document reports on developments of interest to the GEF Council under the following multilateral environmental conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol). The document also provides information on relations between the GEF Secretariat (the Secretariat) and other international conventions and institutions.

Highlights reported include:

- (a) Current status of the preparations and submissions to the CBD Secretariat of the Fourth National Biodiversity Reports. A brief report on joint activities implemented by the CBD Secretariat and other partners including GEF-5 strategic objectives and decisions of the tenth Conference of the Parties (COP10).
- (b) A brief progress report on implementation of the reporting requirements defined by the UNCCD and its new Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS) and a list of activities of the GEF Secretariat providing inputs including outcomes of a joint retreat held between UNCCD and GEF Secretariats on 4 January, 2011.
- (c) Progress of National communications and a brief report on activities and reports submitted to the 16th session of the UNFCCC COP, describing project activities, and a response and proposed actions of the Secretariat to the COP 16 decisions.
- (d) A brief report on activities and contributions to different international expert meetings including participation to the COP16 and details on staff secondment from the Secretariat to the Transitional Committee for the design phase of the Green Climate Fund and participation in a meeting of Least Developed Countries (LDCF).
- (e) Progress reports of the Secretariat submitted to the 6th session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for the Stockholm Convention. A report on the summary of the 2nd session of the INC and the First meeting of the Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) Elimination Network Thematic Group.
- (f) A progress report of the Adaptation Fund Board (AFB) including approval of new projects and accreditation of National Implementing Entities (NIE) during its twelfth meeting held in Cancun, Mexico, on December 14-15, 2010 and thirteenth meeting of the AFB and its Committees that took place on March 16-18, 2011 in Bonn, Germany.
- (g) A brief report on participation of events organized by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

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1. This document reports on developments of interest to the GEF occurring since the GEF Council meeting in November 2010 within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol). The report also provides information on GEF Secretariat (the Secretariat) relations with other conventions and institutions.

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Ratification

2. From November 2010 until May 2011 there were no new countries who became Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity or to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

National reporting

3. As of April 2010, the CBD Secretariat received 164 fourth national reports in their final version and 9 fourth national reports in advanced drafts. Reports can be found at <http://www.cbd.int/reports/search/?type=nr-04>

Meetings and events

4. The GEF Secretariat and the CBD Secretariat held a retreat on Thursday, January 27, 2011 in Mont Tremblant, Canada to discuss themes of mutual interest, post-Nagoya Protocol. The agenda included follow up to decisions emanating from COP10 including GEF support to reporting requirements of the Parties, the revision of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and opportunities for enhanced collaboration between the two Secretariats. The retreat resulted in commitments on the part of both the Secretariats to work together in order to accelerate the implementation of the new Strategic Plan of the CBD agreed at COP10 and plans to make the retreat an annual occurrence.

5. The CBD Secretariat took advantage of the GEF Extended Constituency Workshop for Central Africa held from 15 -17 February in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo to provide an update on results from COP10 to the GEF focal points.

6. The Secretariat staff visited the CBD Secretariat on February 24, 2011 to follow up on issues raised at the January retreat. The GEF Secretariat agreed to collaborate with the CBD Secretariat through a coordination committee to ensure coherence between support provided by the CBD and the GEF to countries to revise their NBSAPs. The Secretariat provided inputs to the discussions underway at the CBD to implement decision X/3 and X/26 and will continue to do so at the request of the CBD.

7. The Secretariat staff attended the Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation and Capacity Building Workshop on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD-Plus), including Relevant Biosafety Standards from March 15-18,

2011 in Singapore. The workshop aimed to support Parties to the CBD in the Asia-Pacific region which are in the process of planning or implementing activities to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. During the REDD-Plus update session on biodiversity and social benefits in REDD-Plus, the Secretariat presented the GEF-5 SFM/REDD-Plus strategy and financing opportunities for SFM projects. The workshop will be followed by regional workshops for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

Ratification

8. From November 2010 until May 2011 there were no new countries who became Parties to the UNCCD.

Reporting

9. The UNCCD launched a new Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS), which was approved by the Conference of the Parties (decision 12/COP.9) as a basis for reporting by all Parties and other entities including the GEF. The PRAIS provides a web-based portal for all reporting entities to directly enter data and information based on the following five Operational Objectives and two priority areas in the UNCCD 10-Year Strategy:

- a) Operational objective 1 - Advocacy, awareness-raising and education;
- b) Operational objective 2 - Policy Framework;
- c) Operational objective 3 - Science, technology and knowledge;
- d) Operational objective 4 - Capacity building;
- e) Operational objective 5 - Financing and technology transfer;
- f) Financial flows for the implementation of the UNCCD;
- g) Best practices in the implementation of the UNCCD.

10. In 2010, 113 reports were uploaded on the PRAIS portal, including reports from affected (89) and developed (12) country Parties, United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations (1), as well as civil society organizations (11) which were invited for the first time to report to the Conference of the Parties.

11. The new reporting system under the UNCCD was established with the support of the UNEP-implemented project (Enabling paradigm shift on monitoring and assessment within the UNCCD), which was funded by the GEF, the European Commission and other bilateral donors.

12. The Secretariat submitted its report on time, focusing primarily on performance indicators that are consistent with activities under the Land Degradation Focal Area, which has hitherto served as a window for the role of the GEF as a financing mechanism. The report mainly contributes to the performance indicators for Operational Objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5 based on applicability and source of data. In addition to the performance indicators, the GEF Reporting Template also includes a *Standard Financial Annex*, a *Programme and Project sheet*, and a

section on *SLM Best Practices*. The GEF report will be based on data aggregated at portfolio level from activities in the Land Degradation Focal Area.

13. During the next biennium, the PRAIS system will undertake a review of performance and impact indicators for which capacity development is required to enable Parties to comply with the reporting guidelines. Parties at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) will decide on how enabling activities provided by the GEF will enhance their capacity to provide standardized information that will be compared across regions and time.

Meetings and events

14. The Secretariat participated in the 2nd Special Session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST-S2) and 9th Session of the Committee for Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC9) of the UNCCD held on from February 16 -25, 2011 in Bonn, Germany. The CST –S2 addressed four major items in its deliberation: assessing outcomes of the first Scientific Conference held at COP 9 in Buenos Aires; progress on refinement of indicators for impact assessment; knowledge management and preparations for the second Scientific Conference – with two important recommendations related to the GEF. The first recommendation was concerning measures to strengthen the UNCCD as a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification/land degradation and mitigation of effects of drought, including possible links to the new Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). This will in turn enhance a closer integration of sustainable land management priorities and potentially strengthen a knowledge base for financing global environmental benefits in production systems, which is a key priority for GEF activities under the Land Degradation Focal Area.

15. The second important CST recommendation was a more direct reference to the need for alignment between the GEF portfolio level indicators and the UNCCD set of impact indicators as a means to further enhance reporting by Parties and other entities. The ongoing involvement of the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) in the iterative process for refinement of the UNCCD set of impact indicators was acknowledged by Parties, with a view to harmonizing objectives and methodologies for collecting and reporting on indicators. The GEF Land Degradation Focal Area cluster will continue working through the Inter Agency Task Force to further strengthen portfolio level monitoring of GEF investments based on the indicators.

16. The CRIC was mainly focused on reviewing the global synthesis of reports submitted by Parties through the new PRAIS, which was developed with support of the GEF. The synthesis included reports from 101 country that submitted before the deadline (an additional 40 reports submitted by the Parties after the deadline were not included). In general, the Parties welcomed the new system and synthesis as a very positive step for reviewing implementation of the Convention. There were concerns raised on the process and the quality of data submitted by countries, which some Parties considered as grounds for exercising cautiousness in interpreting the results. They emphasized the need for greater scientific rigor in defining the indicators and parameters for reporting. Affected country Parties also advocated for increased support and capacity to strengthen the reporting process at national level, including refinement of

methodologies, and streamlining the inputs from civil society and local level stakeholders whose role in combating desertification remains fundamental to implementation of the Convention.

17. Of the 134 paragraphs in the CRIC 9 report adopted by Parties, 15 were directed towards the recommendations for harnessing the GEF as a financial mechanism of the Convention. Overall, the Parties expressed great appreciation for GEF in the context of increasing support for the UNCCD mandate as well as activities in the Land Degradation Focal Area. Apart from the concerns about "imbalances" in support provided between regions, there was a genuine awareness of the critical role that GEF financing plays in implementation of the Convention. As a result and in addition to the usual call for increased allocation of resources to the Land Degradation Focal Area, there was also a call for further improvements in accessing GEF resources by Parties. The major highlight was a call for Parties to take full advantage of the STAR toward implementing the Convention and its 10-Year Strategy. The Parties also welcomed the Land Degradation Focal Area set-aside funds for enabling activities under the Convention, and called for a "simplified procedure to access" the resources.

18. Prior to the CST and CRIC meetings, the GEF and UNCCD Secretariats held a one day retreat on January 4, 2011, with Mr. Luc Gnacadja, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD and Mrs. Monique Barbut, the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the GEF, serving as co-hosts. The overall objective of the retreat was to jointly discuss and clarify key aspects of the GEF-5 policies and programs as they related to supporting the implementation of the Convention by country Parties affected. The retreat resulted in adoption of a Joint Action Plan which includes a set of recommendations for strengthening collaboration between the UNCCD and the GEF Secretariats in order to advance the implementation of the Convention and its 10-year Strategy by Parties. The recommendations fall into the following five categories:

- *Actions at advocacy and awareness raising levels* to further enhance recognition of the land agenda by key stakeholders and increase investment in sustainable land management globally, including the effective use of GEF resources;
- *Actions at policy level* to facilitate stronger engagement by the GEF in UNCCD processes, as well as in building synergies with the other Conventions;
- *Actions at country level* to facilitate planning and programming of resources for sustainable land management;
- *Actions at project appraisal level* to strengthen the role of the UNCCD Secretariat in the GEF project cycle, including more effective monitoring of GEF resource utilization by Parties;
- *Actions on monitoring and assessment of implementation* to enhance the quality and standards of reporting, including the possibility of linking knowledge management activities between the GEF and UNCCD Secretariats.

19. Several immediate actions emerging out of these were directly linked to CST/CRIC9, including a communication from the GEF CEO and Chairperson to the UNCCD COP Bureau on

GEF 5 reforms and recent amendment to the GEF instrument formally recognizing the GEF as a financial mechanism. A second important action was the joint hosting of an Expert Meeting and Ministerial Consultation on the Great Green Wall Initiative and Lake Chad held on February 18-19 in Bonn, Germany, which brought together nearly 100 representatives of experts and representatives from the 11 countries, GEF Agencies, bilateral and multilateral agencies, sub-regional organizations, international organizations, and civil society organizations. The two-day meeting produced a strategic direction from a GEF Program on the GGWI and Lake Chad, which was backed by a Declaration of Ministers from all 11 countries.

20. The joint action plan has also resulted in a series of publications and awareness raising materials as well as work relating to harmonized indicators and gender issues. The plan is monitored jointly and will assist involved institutions to provide relevant and focussed advice and services to Parties.

UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Ratification

21. From November 2010 until May 2011 there were no new countries who became Parties to the UNFCCC.

National reporting/National Communications

22. 14 national communications from non-Annex Parties were submitted between November 2010 and January 2011.

http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/items/2979.php

23. 39 members of Annex I Parties have submitted their fifth national communications by the 16th session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP). Annex I Parties were requested to submit a fifth National Communications to the secretariat by 1 January 2010 (decision 10/CP.13).

http://unfccc.int/national_reports/annex_i_natcom/submitted_natcom/items/4903.php

Reporting to COP/Decisions of COP/MOP

24. The Secretariat prepared and submitted its report to the 16th session of the UNFCCC COP. This report describes project activities approved by the GEF and summarizes the GEF's response to Convention guidance during the reporting period from 1 September 2009 to 30 June 2010. This report can be retrieved at the following link:

http://www.thegef.org/gef/GEF_Report_UNFCCC_COP16

25. The Secretariat prepared and submitted its report on the implementation of the Poznan Strategic Program on Technology Transfer to the 16th session of the UNFCCC COP. The report, which summarizes the progress made in carrying out the Poznan Program, can be retrieved at the following link: http://www.thegef.org/gef/GEF_Report_UNFCCC_COP16_Poznan_Program

26. The COP adopted a decision requesting an assessment of the Special Climate Change Fund, in order for the GEF to include in its report to COP17 information on the implementation of paragraphs 2 (a-d) of decision 7/CP.7. The GEF response is presented in the table of Convention decisions and GEF responses. The decision text can be retrieved at the following link:

http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop_16/conference_documents/application/pdf/20101204_cop16_ccf.pdf.

27. The COP adopted a decision providing further guidance for the operation of the LDCF. The GEF response is presented in the table of Convention decisions and GEF responses. The decision text can be retrieved at the following link:

http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop_16/conference_documents/application/pdf/20101204_cop16_ldcf.pdf. Further to this decision, the SBI requested the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) to discuss with the GEF and its agencies on several issues as summarized in the table of Convention decisions and GEF responses. The SBI further requested the LEG to communicate the outcomes of these discussions to Parties through the report of the LEG to the SBI at its thirty-four session. The conclusions of the SBI are contained in document FCCC/SBI/2010/L.27, which can be retrieved at the following link: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/sbi/eng/127.pdf>

28. Response and proposed actions of the Secretariat to the 16th COP decisions

Decision	GEF Sec Actions
Agenda Item 7(a): Financial Mechanism of the Convention	
<p>7(a)(i) – Fourth review of the financial mechanism Request to the GEF: To continue improving its modalities to increase responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency of its support. It also decided that the GEF should continue to provide support for the implementation of adaptation activities, as well as other areas, and report on the steps taken in this regard to the COP.</p>	<p>The GEF will continue to improve its modalities through GEF-5 reforms.</p> <p>The GEF will continue to provide support for adaptation activities through LDCF and SCCO, and report on the steps taken to the COP.</p>
<p>7(a)(ii) – Report of the GEF to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the GEF Called on the GEF: To complete its reforms as early as possible and give full information to countries on the implications of the reforms.</p>	<p>Through the Extended Constituency Workshop and Constituency meetings, the GEF is providing updates and necessary information to the countries on the current reforms.</p>
<p>7(a) (iii) – Assessment of the Special Climate Change Fund Requested the entity entrusted with the operation of the Special Climate Change Fund to include in its report to COP 17</p>	<p>The Secretariat will include in its next report to the UNFCCC a section on the activities implemented under the four financing windows of the SCCF (a-d).</p>

information on the implementation of paragraphs 2(a-d) of decision 7/CP.7.	
Agenda Item 7(f): Article 6 of the Convention	
Urged the GEF: As an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention, to increase access to funding for Article 6 related activities.	The GEF provides financing for public awareness activities through project activities, so that public awareness is integrated in each GEF project.
Agenda Item 4(d): National communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: Provision of financial and technical support	
Invited the GEF: (a) To provide detailed, accurate, timely and complete information on the most recent GEF Council related to the national communications of non-Annex I Parties, in accordance with Article 11 of the Convention, especially on modalities and procedures established by the GEF to ensure that financial resources are provided, in an efficient and timely manner, to meet the agreed full costs incurred by all developing country Parties in complying with their obligations under Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Convention.	The GEF through its regular reporting to the SBI and the COP, will continue to provide detailed, accurate, timely and complete information on the most recent GEF Council decisions related to national communications
(b) To continue to provide information, ensuring that it is detailed, accurate, timely and complete, on its activities relating to the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties, including information on the dates of approval of funding and the disbursement of funds and to provide information on the approximate date of submission of the national communications to the secretariat, for consideration by the SBI at its thirty-fourth session.	The GEF through its regular reporting to the SBI and the COP, will continue to provide continue to provide information, ensuring that it is detailed, accurate, timely and complete, on its activities relating to the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties,
Agenda Item 5(d): Least Developed Countries Fund	
Further to the decision adopted by the COP, the SBI requested the LEG to discuss with the GEF and its agencies, ways to further improve access of funds from the LDCF, the disbursement of funds, the design of implementation strategies for NAPAs using a programmatic approach, ways to best communicate co-financing requirements under the LDCF, and remaining challenges	In response to this guidance, the GEF Secretariat has developed user-friendly guidelines to facilitate access to the LDCF. These guidelines are available both in hard copy and the GEF's website. GEF representatives continue to participate in all LDC and LEG meetings to solidify the ongoing relationship with the LDC Parties.

faced by least developed Parties in working with GEF agencies, during the first meeting of the LEG in 2011.	
Agenda Item 8: Development and transfer of technologies	
The SBI noted, inter alia, the report of the GEF on the progress made in carrying out the Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer. The SBI also noted that the GEF should align its long-term programme on technology transfer following the outcome of the AWG-LCA negotiations.	The GEF is fully aligning its long-term programme on technology transfer following the outcome of the AWG-LCA negotiations.

Meetings and events

29. The Secretariat participated in the Sixth Meeting of the Expert Group on Technology Transfer, held on 19 - 20 November 2010 in Bonn, Germany.
30. The Secretariat participated in the 16th session of the UNFCCC COP, the 6th of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), the 33rd session of the SBI, the 33rd session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), the fifteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP), and the thirteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA), held in Cancun, Mexico from 29 November to 10 December 2010.
31. The Secretariat seconded staff to UNFCCC in March 2011 to support the work of the Transitional Committee for the design phase of the Green Climate Fund. The Secretariat will also participate in the first meeting of the Transitional Committee for the Green Fund, to be held in spring of 2011.
32. The Secretariat also participated in the LDC meeting hosted by the Nepali government in Kathmandu, Nepal on October 2010, where the newly finalized NAPA report was presented, as well as in the LEG meeting held in Lilongwe, Malawi on March 15-17, 2011.
33. The Secretariat has participated in the sixteenth session of the AWG-KP and the fourteenth session of the AWG-LCA held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 3 to 8 April 2011.
34. The joint retreat between the UNFCCC and the GEF will be held in Washington, DC, in May or June 2011. The main objectives of the retreat are to exchange information and discuss elements and implications of the Cancun Agreements, with a special focus on finance and technology mechanism. Also, both parties will discuss progress of the national communications-related activities and other items of mutual interest.

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Ratification

35. From November 2010 until April 2011, Montenegro has ratified the Stockholm Convention. The status of ratifications can be retrieved at:

<http://chm.pops.int/Countries/StatusofRatifications/tabid/252/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

National reporting

36. Article 15 of the Convention requires each Party to the Convention to report to the COP on the measures it has taken to implement the provisions of the Convention and on the effectiveness of such measures in meeting the objectives of the Convention. For the first reporting round, the Secretariat has received 48 national reports (including 1 from EU) and for the second reporting round, as of 11 April 2011, 74 national reports (including 1 from EU). The national reports can be retrieved at:

<http://chm.pops.int/Countries/NationalReports/tabid/751/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Reporting to COP

37. As the financial mechanism of the Stockholm Convention on POPs, the GEF submits a report on its activities at each COP. As of April 2011, all reports on GEF activities have been provided prior to each COP of the Stockholm Convention. Two other reports on GEF activities in support of early convention implementation and the 6th session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for the Stockholm Convention have been submitted respectively.

Meetings and events

38. The First Meeting of the Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) Elimination Network Thematic Group on Maintenance of PCB-containing Equipment was held in February 2011, back in back with the Regional Capacity Building Workshop on the Environmentally Sound Management of POPs Wastes and PCBs for Spanish-speaking countries in Central America and the Caribbean in Panama. The GEF provided countries with policy and guidance on projects and programs to phase out PCBs and POPs in general and got feedback from countries on what their challenges are in implementing POPs programs especially PCBs.

39. The Fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention is to be held 25-29 April 2011 at the CICG in Geneva- Switzerland. A face-to –face meeting of the POPs Task Force is scheduled for 24 April 2011 in Geneva, back –to –back with the COP. GEF CEO will take part for the first time in a Stockholm Convention COP. She will address the plenary at the opening session and will chair a financial forum at lunch time on Monday 25 APRIL.

MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON SUBSTANCES THAT DEplete THE OZONE LAYER

Meetings and events

40. The sixty third Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Multilateral Fund (MLF) for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol is scheduled from 4-8 April in Montreal. The role of the GEF at the ExCom meetings is to interact with donors and recipients and the Fund Secretariat on policy guidelines and funding criteria to better serve the Countries with Economies in Transition (CEITS) and ensure a consistent approach with the MLF.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Adaptation Fund Board

41. The Adaptation Fund Board (AFB) held two meetings during the Reporting period: the twelfth meeting was held in Cancun, Mexico at the premises of the Universidad del Caribe, on December 14 -15, 2010. This was the first time that the Board assembled outside of Bonn, back to back with the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP). This meeting was the first at which the Board engaged in a dialogue with civil society. In addition, the thirteenth meeting took place in Bonn, Germany at the premises of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) premises, on March 16 -17, 2011, where the new chairs and vice-chairs assumed their roles. Both meetings were preceded by the meetings of the two AFB Committees: the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) and the Ethics and Finance Committee (EFC).

42. Following the recommendations by the Accreditation Panel (AP), the AFB decided not to accredit three applicant national implementing entities (NIE). The AFB also took note of the practical difficulties the AP was encountering in recommending accreditation of government ministries, and the need for the applicants to identify a specific unit within the Ministry, with required responsibility and accountability for implementing AF projects.

43. The AFB adopted the *Guidelines for Designated Authorities to select NIE*, developed by the AP and decided to accredit the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as a multi-lateral implementing entity (MIE), joining the ranks of six other multi-lateral agencies accredited by the Board to implement projects.

44. During the reporting period, the AFB approved five projects for funding:

- a. **Nicaragua (UNDP):** Aimed at reducing risks and vulnerability based on flooding and droughts in the Estero Real watershed by introducing agro-ecological practices, and participatory watershed management in highly vulnerable rural communities of the area. Total funding amount: US\$ 5,500,950.00.
- b. **Pakistan (UNDP):** Addresses the risks of glacial lake outburst floods in Northern Pakistan through the building of technical capacity and awareness-raising. Total funding amount: US\$ 3,906,000.00.

- c. **Ecuador (WFP):** Planned to reduce climate induced vulnerability and food insecurity of communities and ecosystems in the most vulnerable cantons of Pichincha Province, and the basin of the Jubones River. Total funding amount: US\$ 7,449,468.00.
- d. **Eritrea (UNDP):** The project aims at enhancing the resilience of rural communities to climate change by supporting the development of physical structures such as sub-surface and micro-dams, complemented by awareness programs and mechanisms to generate and disseminate information on agricultural practices. Total amount: US\$ 6,520,850.00.
- e. **Solomon Islands (UNDP):** Strengthen ability of communities in the island nation to make more informed decisions and manage likely climate change driven pressures on food production and management systems. Total funding amount: US\$ 5,533,500.00.

45. In addition, project concepts were endorsed for Cook Islands, El Salvador, Georgia and Maldives (UNDP). A direct access concept for Uruguay, submitted by the Uruguayan NIE ANII, was also endorsed. The AFB further approved the first project formulation grant (PFG) for assisting Uruguay to prepare its fully developed proposal.

46. Taking into consideration the concerns expressed by AFB members on the number of projects submitted through MIEs, the AFB decided that the cumulative budget allocation for funding projects submitted through MIEs should not exceed 50% of the total resources available in the trust fund for funding decisions at the start of each session.

47. The AFB appointed its officers for the period of office starting at the thirteen meeting:

- AFB Chair: Ms. Ana Fornells de Frutos (Spain, Annex I)
- AFB Vice-Chair: Mr. Luis Santos (Uruguay, GRULAC)
- PPRC Chair: Mr. Hans Olav Ibrekk (Norway, WEOG)
- PPRC Vice-Chair: Mr. Jeffrey Spooner (Jamaica, GRULAC)
- EFC Chair: Mr. Mirza Shawkat Ali (Bangladesh)
- EFC Vice Chair: Ms. Iryna Trofimova (Ukraine, Annex I)
- AP Annex I member: Ms. Kate Binns (UK, WEOG)

48. At the end of each meeting the AFB engaged in a dialogue with representatives of the civil society.

49. Other decisions approved by the AFB that deserve to be mentioned are:

- Project Formulation Grants (PFG) to be made available to NIE (flat rate of US\$ 30,000). The AFB will continue reviewing the question of PFG for MIEs;
- Approval of a standard legal agreement between the AFB and the implementing entities;
- Request to the AFB secretariat to develop an overall knowledge management strategy for the AF to be presented at the fourteenth meeting;
- The AFB agreed to set a cap per country of US\$ 10 Million;

➤ A cap of 9.5% of the project budget for execution costs was also agreed upon;

50. The AFB started discussing its evaluation framework and the draft guidelines for project/programme final evaluations, prepared by GEF Evaluation Office (EO).

51. Furthermore, the Act of Parliament that confers legal capacity to the AFB in Germany entered into force on February 8, 2011. The Board has since used the recently approved standard legal agreement with the implementing entities for the projects approved for funding at its eleventh and twelfth meetings that were still pending.

52. Following the latest approvals, the resources available for funding decisions in the AF Trust Fund amount to US\$ 168.5 Million, expected to increase to US\$ 334 Million by the end of 2012. The CERs sales have generated revenues of US\$ 138.16 million and the total cash contributions amounted to US\$ 85.59 million. In terms of pledges for further contributions, Australia has offered AU\$ 15 million and the Brussels Capital Region Euros 1 million.

53. The AFB also decided to hold its meetings paperless. From the next meeting onwards, the AFB will only use electronic documents and hard copies will only be made available to AFB members upon request. The implementation of this decision will eliminate 200.000 pages of paper annually, equivalent of US\$10,000.

54. The fourteenth meeting of the AFB and its Committees will take place in Bonn, Germany on June 20 - 22, 2011.

UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS

55. The Secretariat participated in the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF9), which took place from 24 January to 4 February 2011 in New York, USA. Over 700 participants attended the two-week session to address the International Year of Forests, forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication and means of implementation for sustainable forest management. Delegates also attended a two-day High-Level Segment, which took place on 2-3 February. The Parties adopted a Ministerial Declaration as well as an Omnibus Resolution on Forests for People, Livelihoods and Poverty Eradication. The various commitments made in support of the Forum's work included the reaching of a decision on forest financing at the 10th session of the Forum in 2013. The importance of highlighting the economic, social and environmental benefits of forests to people and the contributions of sustainable forest management to the themes and objectives of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) was also recognized. In relation to this, the Declaration will serve as a contribution of the Forum to that Conference in 2012. The GEF CEO gave a speech at the official launch of the International Year of Forests, in which she addressed the recent development in the field of international forest financing. In addition, the Secretariat reported on GEF activities related to forest financing during a High-Level dialogue with the Heads of member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

56. The Secretariat participated in the annual meeting of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), held on January 30, 2011 in New York, USA. The CPF is a voluntary

arrangement among 14 international organizations and secretariats with substantial programs on forests. The mission of CPF is to promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forest and strengthen long term political commitment to this end. One main objective of CPF is to support the UNFF and its member countries. CPF provides major inputs to the UNFF and other important international forest dialogues, including the Conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification. It produces joint statements and papers on key forest issues on the international agenda. At its annual meeting, representatives from CPF member organizations discussed their contributions to the UNFF9 High-Level Segment, the International Year of Forests, the outcome of Forest Day 4 as well as other planned and ongoing CPF initiatives.