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## GEF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND WORK-PLAN FOR GEF-5

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1. In 2011, the GEF celebrates twenty years of providing resources to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for generating global environmental benefits. The GEF's unique mission to support countries in safeguarding the global environment calls for the development of cutting-edge, innovative and experimental programs and projects, making it fundamental that processes and results are continuously tracked and analyzed, and lessons learned disseminated and incorporated in the next generation of activities.

2. During negotiations for the Fifth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-5), Participants requested that the GEF Council review a work-plan, prepared by the GEF Secretariat in consultation with the GEF Evaluation Office (GEF EO), the GEF Agencies, and Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), to: (i) implement the GEF Results-Based Management (RBM) framework; and (ii) to establish a GEF-wide Knowledge Management Initiative (KMI). The work-plan for implementing the RBM was reviewed and approved by the Council at its November 2010 meeting.

3. In December 2010, the Secretariat launched the KMI with the goal of ensuring that GEF knowledge, information and data are identified, captured, and shared in their entirety and developed as a strategic asset in a coherent and comprehensive manner.

## **THE GEF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

4. Until now the GEF has not had an explicit Knowledge Management (KM) strategy and for this reason many of the knowledge activities and products currently developed are often not "labeled" and seldom recognized as such. Indeed, this does not diminish the value and the positive results obtained so far. These activities (see Annex 3 for more details on the KM activities already under implementation) will continue during GEF-5 and will be integrated, and enhanced by the new KM activities and products.

5. Moreover, the GEF currently suffers from technical and resource constraint issues that can hamper the development of the KM strategy. The Secretariat is currently developing a new GEF IT strategy that aims at improving our technical platform and thus overcoming the current limitations.

6. In the meanwhile, in order to begin the implementation of the KM strategy, the GEF has considered focusing initially on the activities that will help to better design the new platform that will support GEF KM activities.

7. The overall context and rationale for the GEF KM strategy is outlined in Annex 1, while the document focuses on the work-plan for implementing KM in GEF-5.

## **GEF-5 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT WORK-PLAN**

8. The proposed work- plan outlines the Secretariat KM activities for GEF-5.<sup>1</sup> While several of the elements of this work-plan are resourced under the GEF RBM work- plan, there are others that require additional resources, as indicated under the description of each action.

9. The overall goal of the GEF KM is to strive to become an institution, methodically gathering knowledge and innovation arising from its own projects and programs as well as from its partners and clients in order to improve the design and effectiveness of environmental projects and programs around the world. For this purpose, this policy aims at facilitating the dissemination of related data, information and knowledge in order to promote and facilitate good practice and innovation, and influence policies with evidence-based arguments, contributing to position the safeguard of the environment as a global, regional and national priority for all stakeholders.

10. Two overall objectives are proposed to support this goal:

- (a) To learn methodically from projects and programs financed from its resources, as well as from its partners and clients; and
- (b) To share the data, information, and knowledge gathered with a wide range of stakeholders to promote innovation and best practice.

11. Through KM, the GEF will systematically use the knowledge gained from projects/programs, GEF Agencies, STAP, GEF EO and other sources to improve GEF's strategies and refine its corporate level strategic goals. A proper KM strategy will also help GEF staff to become more efficient in performing their daily tasks by facilitating access to organized and updated information and data.

12. Before starting the implementation of the work- plan, the GEF will undertake a preliminary GEF knowledge needs assessment and KM comparative analysis. The purpose of the study is to provide the GEF Network with information about the knowledge and learning needs of the GEF stakeholders and compare GEF KM practices with the ones currently in use among comparable organizations. The study will be key to validate and better refine the topics which the GEF KMI will focus on and the type of knowledge products will be developed. More specifically, the knowledge analysis will:

- a. Identify the current knowledge needs of the members of the GEF Civil Society Organizations (CSOs);
- b. Assess current learning practices, identify obstacles and weaknesses and propose solutions on how to overcome them;

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<sup>1</sup> The GEF EO and STAP have provided inputs and share the strategic approach for KM developed by the Secretariat. However, separate work-plans will be developed to present how they will contribute to the KMI.

- c. Compare the GEF KMI against the ones of comparable institutions with the goal of learning from their experiences, and identify the information and knowledge gaps that the GEF can contribute to fill;
- d. Expected Budget: US\$20,000  
Expected Resources: GEF, STAP, GEF Agencies' staff time.

**Objective 1: To methodically collect and compile lessons learned from projects and programs financed from GEF resources, as well as from its partners and client countries to improve their use and dissemination.**

13. The first step towards achieving this objective is to set up a system in GEF-5 that not only systematically captures lessons learned but that also allows for an analysis of useful lessons at the portfolio level. Over the past three years through the Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) exercise (2008-10), the Secretariat has reviewed over 1500 GEF Project Implementation Reports (PIRs). Through this annual exercise, it has become evident that lessons learned as reported through the PIRs on an annual basis do not address the types of questions that will help inform better project design or contribute to a better understanding and analysis of the GEF's overall portfolio, focal area portfolios, or focal area sub-portfolios. More importantly, the information generated typically does not provide quantitative analysis as to whether global environmental benefits are being achieved.

14. As a financing mechanism that helps achieve regional and global environmental benefits, the GEF promotes innovative programs, supports institutional policy transformation, targeted research, and seeks to achieve sustainability and the ability to be replicated through its investments. The results, experiences and lessons learned from projects should focus on how and whether these are being achieved.

15. With the extensive experience gathered through the AMR exercise and in order to improve the quality and utilization of lessons learned at the project/program level, the Secretariat is proposing to undertake the following actions over the course of GEF-5.

*Action 1.A: Reform of the AMR Process*

16. As proposed in the Annual Monitoring Report submitted for discussion at the May 2011 Council meeting (GEF/C.40/04) the Secretariat is developing a reformed AMR process that includes means to improve reporting on lessons learned. Instead of collecting lessons learned on an annual basis, the Secretariat will analyze in collaboration with the GEF Agencies and STAP, lessons learned from projects/programs only twice during the life cycle of a project: at mid-term and project closure. In addition, the lessons will be more targeted and tailored to relevant focal area objectives, along with learning questions as outlined further below. Details of how lessons will be captured, utilized, and made available to external and internal parties will be discussed in collaboration with the GEF Agencies and STAP as part of the AMR reform process.

17. Expected Budget: None  
Expected Resources: GEF, STAP, GEF Agencies staff time.

*Action 1.B: Design of Focal Area Lessons-Learned Questions*

18. To extract lessons that are focused and relevant to the GEF's focal area strategies, specific questions will be designed. In coordination with STAP and the focal area task forces, each focal area will develop key measurable and testable questions. Tracking tools that track progress toward outcome indicators will be submitted along with any specific lessons learned at mid-term and project completion.

19. Each GEF focal and multi-focal area, jointly with STAP, and their respective task forces, will refine their learning questions, and develop thematic reviews that can identify emerging lessons in order to reach a better understanding of the underlying assumptions and data collection methodology. A two-year work-plan will be developed to outline how a combination of desk studies, lessons from the AMR, STAP and task force consultations, and missions will be utilized to answer the questions. The work-plan will also identify the most adequate channels and opportunities to disseminate the findings.

20. Expected Budget: To be determined (covered by RBM and STAP budget)  
Expected Resources: GEF, STAP, and GEF Agency staff time

**Objective 2: Share data, information, and knowledge gathered with a wide range of stakeholders to promote innovation and best practice**

21. Robust information management and data storage and retrieval systems have been identified by GEF staff and external stakeholders as necessary not only to improve business effectiveness, but also to develop better knowledge products and processes.

22. While actions taken up to date have overcome some limitations (improved Project Management Information System (PMIS) and new corporate website launched in 2010), much remains to be done to adequately respond to the information needs of GEF staff, partners and clients, and other stakeholders. In order to properly support these demands, the Secretariat is proposing the following actions to undertake over the course of GEF-5.

*Action 2.A: Develop a GEF Knowledge Platform: The GEF Environmental Portal*

23. GEF's exclusive partnership and focus on the environment, its diverse structure,<sup>2</sup> and the experience of working with multiple implementing agencies make the organization uniquely positioned to capture data, information, good practices and lessons learned on cross-cutting issues and across organizational boundaries.

24. The GEF will create a publicly accessible knowledge platform with easy-to-retrieve information, data and lessons learned both at the project-level and at the portfolio-level. The main goal is to collect and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data, relevant to global

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<sup>2</sup> GEF structure offers the possibility of integrating operational/practical knowledge, coming from the implementation – GEF Agencies, monitoring – GEF Secretariat – and GEFEO – of GEF portfolio of projects, with scientific and technical knowledge distilled through STAP's advice to the GEF on its strategy, programs and projects.

environmental benefits, and be able to track progress on specific topics of strategic importance for the GEF.

25. Far from duplicating other existing similar initiatives, the GEF portal will aim at providing information related to cumulative impact of GEF-funded projects. The platform will use the latest technology available to enhance data mining from outside sources and from past projects, as well as to collect data and information from projects currently under review and implementation.

26. GEF internal and external stakeholders will be encouraged to use as well as to contribute to the body of knowledge. The GEF Environmental Portal along with other knowledge activities and products will enable interaction among stakeholders, with the long-term goal of contributing to the coordination of efforts to address global environmental problems and improve our understanding of these issues.

27. In order to develop and populate the GEF Environmental Portal, the Secretariat will undertake the following activities:

- (a) Identify key indicators and topics, and make sure they are embedded in the project design as well as in the current reporting and tagging system. The preliminary knowledge study (paragraph 12) will provide key inputs for this activity;
- (b) Build an information repository of past projects, using data mining tools to retrieve desired data from the existing GEF database to produce reports of key corporate and focal and multi-focal areas indicators;
- (c) Map existing sources of information and establish partnerships to integrate and reciprocally exchange data and information to increase exposure and accessibility;
- (d) Design the information architecture to be integrated with the new IT platform for the GEF.

28. Expected budget: US\$150,000 (The expected budget covers data retrieval and the development of content and of the web interface, but does not include major changes to the current GEF PMIS. If the new/improved GEF PMIS is unavailable when we start data collection, the data will be temporarily compiled in another database that will be later automatically imported.

Expected resources: GEF staff time, IT and Graphic consultants

*Action 2.B: GEF website is expanded, improved and enriched with knowledge products*

29. Launched in March 2010, the new GEF website has been successfully reorganized and now presents information about the GEF and its work in a more meaningful and friendly manner. It includes an extensive electronic library containing more than 3500 documents. However, the GEF website has some limitations; it is not fully integrated with the PMIS and some features originally planned are yet to be implemented (i.e. user profile-based pages). The following are the main improvements to which the GEF website should undergo:

- (a) Integrate the GEF PMIS with thegef.org website;
- (b) Develop the user-profile capability to allow some categories of users to easily retrieve information relevant to them;

- (c) Develop a knowledge platform for Focal Points to support Country Support Program activities;
- (d) Provide access to project information using Geographic Information System mapping;
- (e) Expand the multimedia section to include educational/knowledge material; and
- (f) Create a project information card that summarizes in one-page the GEF project activities, data, and main documents (to be completed by the project team). In an effort to collect and centralize more information from projects, the Secretariat will request each project to complete this on-line information card.

30. Expected Budget: US\$40,000 (covered by the Secretariat Operations and Business Strategy (GEF OBS) and External Affairs Team (GEF EXT) Budgets)  
 Expected Resources: GEF staff time, IT and Graphic consultants, GEF Agencies staff time.

*Action 2.C: New GEF knowledge products and outreach activities are developed*

31. Several activities and products are currently being developed to increase awareness concerning GEF's work on global environmental issues. However, these activities sometimes fall short in disseminating GEF knowledge and experience mainly for lack of specific products tailored to the needs of the different audiences.

32. For this reason, the Secretariat is proposing to create a series of knowledge products, that on the basis of the results of the preliminary knowledge study described earlier, will be tailored to the needs of GEF stakeholders helping the dissemination of GEF knowledge and improving the quality and usefulness of those activities already under implementation. The knowledge products will likely be disseminated using the existing communication channels – website, newsletter and social media- unless the findings of the knowledge study will suggest that the use of alternative solutions would be more appropriate. Among the products that will be developed by the Secretariat there will be a series of reports on “topics” of great interest for the GEF (such as technology transfer, environmental trust funds, etc.), a new series of project highlights incorporating lessons learned, reviews of lessons learned at portfolio level, a series of video interviews with GEF staff and guests to comment on global environmental issues, and instructional videos. This action shall be planned and developed in close coordination with the GEF EXT.

33. Expected Budget: US\$80,000.  
 Expected Resources: GEF staff time.

*Action 2.D: GEF /GOOGLE partnership*

34. As part of a GEF Poznan Technology Transfer Dissemination Initiative, the GEF and Google are considering in collaborating a partnership to create web-based products on a GEF-Google platform. The platform itself is a technology that can be accessed globally, containing elements such as major useful data sets and methodologies for the GEF, a toolkit for multiple environmental benefit Measuring, Reporting, and Verification system (MRV) to be co-developed, and tasking satellite sensors to collect data for vulnerable or at-risk regions or population centers.



35. The initiative contributes to addressing a key element of the Cancun Agreement on Technology Mechanism, related to the identification and dissemination of analytical tools and best practices to support planning. The resulting working prototypes of the web-based platform will be presented at the Climate Change Conference of Parties (CoP) in Durban in 2012, focusing on forest carbon estimation and multiple global environmental benefits primarily utilizing data from pilot projects in Africa. This initiative will show a successful GEF-Google private-public partnership; tools that will help countries with projects and GEF with portfolio monitoring, and highlight the use of spatial data for KM purposes.

36. This is a pilot initiative. If the results achieved are satisfactory, the GEF will explore the possibility to expand its collaboration with Google to other areas.

37. Expected Budget: To be determined.  
Expected Resources: GEF staff time.

## ANNEX 1 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### **The Knowledge Management Initiative**

1. Over the past twenty years, the GEF has funded over 2700 projects in 165 developing countries and countries with economies in transition, representing a wealth of knowledge, lessons, and information collected. In December 2010, the GEF launched the preparation of an approach for a Knowledge Management Initiative (KMI) which aims at formalizing the experiences and lessons learned from previous and ongoing GEF projects, making them publicly available and easily accessible to GEF staff and all other GEF stakeholders, with the objective of mainstreaming them into the design of new projects and programs, and thus improving their effectiveness.
2. The KMI is a joint effort of the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Evaluation Office (GEF EO), the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), and the GEF Agencies. Its goal is to ensure that knowledge, information and data on global environmental issues tackled by GEF are identified, captured, and shared, in their entirety and in a coherent and comprehensive manner, becoming a common strategic asset.
3. The proposed strategy acknowledges and builds upon the GEF's need to contribute to improving - and to interacting as a valued partner in - the design and effectiveness of global environmental projects. The GEF is planning to do so by connecting and empowering staff, partners and clients and by providing access to critical knowledge through outreach, knowledge dissemination and capacity building.

### **What is Knowledge Management?**

4. *Knowledge Management (KM)* is the set of specific actions developed (gathering data, analyzing processes, results and personal experiences, capturing and sharing lessons learned) so that the knowledge of an individual or an institution reaches, in a timely manner, the largest number of people who can benefit from it.
5. KM is often confused with information management or communication. While the boundaries among these sectors are blurred and their competencies often overlap, it is useful to clarify the differences:
  - a. *Data* are facts, observations, or measures recorded but not put into any meaningful context (i.e. a single musical note could be a fair visualization of what data is);
  - b. *Information* is data arranged in a systematic way to yield order and meaning (i.e. a series of notes arranged into a tune can represent what information is);
  - c. *Information Management* is the collection and management of information from one or more sources and the distribution of that information to one or more audiences;
  - d. *Knowledge* is the capability to act and take an informed decision based on the information available (i.e. a musician is able to play a tune thanks to his knowledge for playing an instrument); and

- e. *Communication* is the act of exchanging thoughts, knowledge, messages, data or information, through speeches, signals, writing, or behavior.
6. *KM and communication are complementary activities.* They use similar instruments and processes, and often involve the same actors. Both contribute synergistically to disseminate knowledge and improve coordination, increasing the effectiveness and impact of projects. The integration of KM with communication activities allows a substantial reduction in costs and generates products that are consistent, more valuable and relevant for the different audiences, and avoids duplication of efforts while enhancing the effectiveness of both.
7. *Documentation does not always imply writing.* In an effort to make the GEF KM system up-to-date and more accessible, the GEF welcomes different ways of documenting projects and processes, including video and audio material, photo reportage and stories.

### **Why is Knowledge Management Important for the GEF?**

8. *Improve GEF Effectiveness and Efficiency.* Through KM, the GEF will systematically use the knowledge gained from different projects/programs, GEF Agencies, STAP, the GEF EO and other sources to improve GEF's strategies and refine its corporate-level strategic goals, in order to become a more effective and efficient institution to benefit the countries it serves.
9. *Accountability.* As an organization that uses public funds, the GEF is accountable for maximizing the impact of the resources available. The KM efforts, by capturing and sharing lessons learned, will contribute to enable the GEF to ultimately deliver its mission and achieve global environment benefits.
10. *Unique Positioning.* As a partnership of 182 countries dedicated to the protection of the global environment, the GEF has funded over 2700 environmental projects in 165 developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The exclusive focus of GEF on environment, its own structure<sup>3</sup> and the experience of working with multiple implementing agencies makes the organization uniquely positioned to capture good-practices and lessons learned, expanding the GEF catalytic effect in knowledge sharing, innovation, partnerships and institutional and individual capacity building.
11. *Streamline working processes.* By making lesson-learning and capacity-building a conscious and habitual process within the institution, the GEF is trying to encourage its staff, partners and clients to reflect on and analyze their experiences, capturing valuable insights. Sharing those experiences can help to a) improve personal and institutional performance, b) avoid repeating past mistakes, c) recognize good practices that can be replicated elsewhere, d) identify common issues and challenges, e) make GEF work more relevant, effective and accessible, and finally f) influence policy and strategic thinking by rooting these in evidence.

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<sup>3</sup> GEF structure offers the possibility of integrating operational/practical knowledge, coming from the implementation – GEF Agencies, monitoring – GEF Secretariat – and GEF EO – of GEF portfolio of projects, with scientific and technical knowledge distilled through STAP's advice to the GEF on its strategy, programs and projects.

12. The current strategy has been developed by the GEF KM task force. Coordinated by the GEF Secretariat, the task force includes the GEF EO, STAP and GEF Agency representatives. The task force in the future will be acting as a steering committee overseeing and guiding the implementation of the KM strategy.

13. The responsibility of implementing the work-plan outlined in this document will fall on the Secretariat which will coordinate the entire Initiative and will be in charge of designing, implementing and monitoring the different activities.

### **The Role of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel**

14. The principal interest of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) in the GEF's KMI is ensuring that the best available science and technological advances are integrated into program design and implementation. Many of the GEF implementing agencies have considerable internal scientific and technical capacity, and the GEF Secretariat itself has also invested significantly in internal scientific capacity. More formally, and recognizing the unique challenges posed by the GEF Mission with respect to global environmental benefits, STAP was formed during the Pilot Phase of GEF in order to ensure independent operational and strategic scientific advice to the GEF Council, the Secretariat, and the Implementing Agencies.

15. STAP's principal contribution to the GEF's KMI is through analysis of the best available science and applied research. Key scientific and technical challenges affecting arrays of projects in particular focal areas are identified in partnership with the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and research initiatives are undertaken to identify solutions or new approaches. This approach facilitates the structured analysis of existing data both within and across thematic areas of GEF intervention, helps to assemble this data into comprehensive and useful information assets, and ultimately leads to the creation of knowledge products providing key recommendations to the GEF Council and Secretariat, the GEF Agencies, and country policy-makers. In addition to improving program delivery on the ground, the results of these initiatives test fundamental assumptions embedded within the GEF focal area strategies or learning objectives, as well as inform the development of future GEF policies and programs.

16. Access to data generated through GEF-funded initiatives, particularly the data related to global environmental benefits, is central to STAP's contribution to the above. STAP has observed that data generated on project level on incremental changes to global environmental benefits are often not standardized or collected in a manner which is scientifically verifiable. In projects where this data is being collected in this fashion, it is typically not easily available for analysis. STAP considers that any effective KM strategy must include an agreed framework for project-level data collection on Global Environmental Benefits, comprise a strategy for full life cycle management of these data and information assets as an obligation of GEF funding, and finally ensure that these assets are available for analysis more broadly to the scientific community.

### **The Role of the GEF Evaluation Office**

17. The GEF EO is committed to ensuring that evaluations provide the basis for GEF-wide learning, to transform evaluative knowledge into action, innovation and change within the GEF partnership and to the broader environment community. The GEF Monitoring & Evaluation

(M&E) Policy, originally approved in 2006 and revised in 2010 by the GEF Council, states that one of the objectives of M&E in the GEF is to “promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners, as a basis for decision making on policies, strategies, program management, projects, and programs; and to improve performance.”

18. KM of evaluations in the GEF has the following objectives:

- a. Link evaluative learning with decision-making through a formal feedback loop between evaluation findings and management activities to ensure systematic use of the results and outputs of the GEF projects for the improvement of planning and subsequent activities;
- b. Disseminate evaluative findings, lessons and recommendations more broadly to further the attainment of global benefits;
- c. Build evaluation capacity among the GEF partnership to reinforce and establish the skills and commitment to conduct and use evaluation on the corporate and country levels.

19. *Linking evaluative knowledge with decision-making:* The GEF EO has a well-established feedback mechanism with the GEF Council. As a part of this Strategic Framework, the GEF EO plans to continue working with the key GEF stakeholders, including the GEF Council, the Secretariat, STAP and GEF Agencies to ensure timeliness and ownership of evaluation findings and recommendations. The activities include stakeholder consultations at the planning of evaluations and discussions of the draft reports. They also include continuous use of monitoring of management response to evaluations as a formal learning mechanism. In addition, GEF EO will introduce new knowledge products to enhance learning uptake at various levels:

- a. Project level: GEF EO will explore the opportunity to establish prizes for projects with the highest level of achievement in M&E and possibly other aspects based on terminal evaluation reviews;
- b. Portfolio and Focal Area level: GEF EO will utilize terminal evaluations and other evaluations and studies conducted within the GEF partnership and beyond to undertake synthesis studies and to formulate good practices and lessons learned on the portfolio and focal area level, and the level of project clusters. Subjects will be chosen taking into account GEF learning objectives and strategic priorities;
- c. Corporate and Policy level: GEF EO will continue to provide evaluative evidence to the Secretariat, STAP and GEF agencies at the time when strategies, policies, programs and guidelines are revised. GEF EO will ensure to remain at arm-length in the actual development of the policies but will limit its participation to providing evaluative evidence and evaluation summaries as necessary.

20. *Disseminate evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations more broadly:* GEF EO will employ an enhanced proactive dissemination policy to include various GEF stakeholder groups. GEF EO will establish a subscription database and will balance dissemination of printed and electronic copies of evaluations and related knowledge products. GEF EO will explore use of webinars and social media as an innovative way to communicate evaluation planning, process and findings to the key and a broader group of stakeholders. The evaluation publications will be translated into other languages whenever possible: all evaluation summaries (Signposts) will

continuously be translated into French and Spanish and the country portfolio evaluations – into local languages if it is feasible. GEF EO will expand its outreach to stakeholders such as academia, practitioners working on environmental issues and the media. All these activities are planned to broaden learning from evaluations and to assist the global community in finding effective ways in attaining global benefits.

21. *Building evaluation capacity:* GEF EO will take an active role in helping national stakeholders to strengthen their capacity to implement portfolio monitoring and contribute to evaluations. To continue to do so, the GEF EO will continue taking part in the Expanded Constituency Workshops organized by the Secretariat for national stakeholders, share good practices in monitoring and evaluation. If Evaluation of the National Capacities Self-Assessment Program identifies evaluation capacity as an issue, a Full-Sized (FSP) or Medium-Sized project (MSP) may be developed to support evaluation capacity development. GEF EO will continue developing the Community of Practice on Evaluation of Climate Change and Development, its existing multi-partner initiative aimed at building evaluation capacity in the countries of the Global South and strengthening South-North and South-South cooperation on evaluation methodologies and identification of good practices from evaluations.

22. *Coordinating evaluative work in GEF partnership to ensure inter-agency learning and better use of resources:* Evaluations Offices in the GEF are united into two different inter-agency groups: UNEG and ECG. There is no common platform for exchange of information and work planning between these evaluation offices in a systemic way. GEF EO will continue using inter-agency meetings to work on common perspectives that include exchange of good practices, evaluation methods, coordination of joint evaluations and work plans between the offices among other issues.

## ANNEX 2 - GEF RESOURCES AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

1. A structured organization for implementing the GEF Knowledge Management (KM) work-plan along with a GEF staff capacity building plan is of critical importance for the overall success of the Knowledge Management Initiative (KMI). For this reason, during the initial phase, the Secretariat will strongly invest in creating an enabling environment for a GEF knowledge culture to develop and flourish.

### 2. **Institutionalizing Knowledge Management**

- a. Establishment of a KM working group with a clearly identified budget and resources to facilitate the coordination, planning and implementation of the knowledge strategy;
- b. Development of procedures and guidelines to define knowledge products and activities and how they need to be carried out;
- c. Establishment of incentives for the GEF staff to actively participating in knowledge activities:
  - i. Public acknowledgement of individual contribution;
  - ii. KM activities as part of the work-plan of each of the GEF employees, and as such evaluated in the Overall Performance Evaluation (OPE);
  - iii. Terms of Reference of GEF employees include the production and sharing of knowledge as part of the responsibilities and deliverables.

### 3. **Building Knowledge Management Capacity**

- a. Familiarize the GEF staff with the KM strategy;
- b. Training for improving skills to organize, store, share and use knowledge;
- c. Standardizing GEF staff's behavior: automation of KM processes and embedding them in systems already in use.

## ANNEX 3 - MANAGING KNOWLEDGE AT THE GEF – CURRENT PRACTICE

1. The following is a list of the major knowledge- sharing activities currently implemented by the Secretariat:
  - a. **Country Support Program (CSP):** Strengthen the capacity of GEF Focal Points to effectively carry out their mandates for supporting global environmental programs in their countries and constituencies;
  - b. **Interagency Meetings and Task Forces;**
  - c. **Development of methodologies and tools** for assessing, monitoring, and measuring global environmental benefits (i.e. Data collection for carbon emission reduction, Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands);
  - d. **IW:LEARN:** Building a knowledge sharing platform and developing partnerships to strengthen project design capacity, disseminate lessons learned at a global level, enhance dialogue, efficiency and effectiveness of GEF International Water (IW) projects.
  - e. **GEF Brown Bag Lunch (BBL) Series:** Share knowledge and information among GEF staff on issues closely related to the programmatic and operational activities of the Secretariat. Disseminate information concerning GEF activities with the environmental community in Washington D.C.
  - f. **Operational Trainings:** Training for new GEF staff to strengthen its capacity to provide a clear understanding of the institution’s mission, goals and mode of operation.

### **Tacit Knowledge**

2. In the GEF, as in any other organization, tacit knowledge represents a significant part of the knowledge that is generated and accumulated but that does not take shape and is not shared through planned and identifiable activities or products. Each time GEF staff interacts with colleagues during the design of a project, participates and contributes to international conferences and dialogues on environmental issues and mainstream environment protection into policy reforms, valuable knowledge and experience are developed. Sometimes, these processes are documented (email exchanges, Project Management Information System (PMIS), Back To Office Reports (BTORs)) even if in general they are not formally published or made available to external audiences. More often however, the knowledge remains tacit, retained in the heads of the staff. This type of knowledge when not made explicit loses its value for the GEF as well as for its partners and beneficiaries, especially with staff turnover.

### **Knowledge Processes**

3. The effectiveness of knowledge sharing depends on how efficiently and successfully the knowledge is processed internally and how quickly the organization capitalizes on it to improve the quality and the value of its work. Presently, the GEF does not have structured knowledge processes, except for the IW focal area, through IW:LEARN.



ANNEX 4 - CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE GEF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT  
INITIATIVE

1. The following strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis have provided a starting point for developing the current Knowledge Management (KM) Strategy. Systemic issues and limitations, lack of time and adequate resources, are some of the main challenges that need to be addressed while starting the implementation of this Strategy.

**Table 1. GEF Knowledge Management Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GEF is a data, information and knowledge- sharing platform by nature: it is a unique institution working with several development agencies and private sector, on a broad range of environmental issues in 165 developing countries and countries in transition;</li> <li>• Possibility to analyze environmental as well as project management/ implementation issues on a global scale that are transversal to agency problems;</li> <li>• The GEF funds innovative project and programs (Programmatic Approach, Technology Transfer);</li> <li>• Several knowledge management activities are currently underway, even if they are separate efforts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of proper IT solutions to support GEF’s staff data, information and KM needs;</li> <li>• Absence of resources explicitly dedicated to KM;</li> <li>• GEF staff has limited time to dedicate to activities that are perceived as accessorial;</li> <li>• Lack of a working process in which knowledge is embedded;</li> <li>• Terms of Reference for GEF staff do not identify any knowledge-based activities or products among the deliverables;</li> <li>• Lack of a standard methodology in data collection and therefore inaccuracy of the available data among agencies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of coordination partners’ knowledge initiatives;</li> <li>• Need for strategic knowledge (technical and operational) for improving the quality of project design at a very early stage;</li> <li>• Need for better donors and projects coordination within the countries and the regions;</li> <li>• Innovative tools and means of communication are available to reach out to a broader audience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To become just another initiative “out there” that is theoretical and not practical;</li> <li>• Becoming “invisible” in the midst of different voices of stakeholders working to protect the environment;</li> <li>• Develop a body of knowledge that does not carry a value added for the users;</li> <li>• Unable to overcome the limitation of non-implementing projects making it difficult to collect information and knowledge on the ground.</li> </ul>

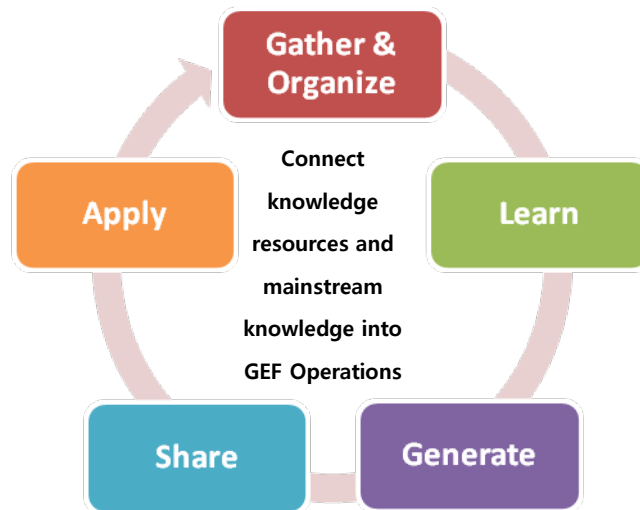
## ANNEX 5 - GEF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

1. The following are the main principles to be adopted as the foundation upon which to build the GEF Knowledge Management (KM) strategy:
  - a. *Relevance.* KM must be firmly rooted in the GEF core competencies and build on existing assets. It has to be embedded in its work processes and linked tightly to its main products. Ultimately, the KM strategy should respond to the knowledge needs expressed by the different stakeholders.
  - b. *Change Management and Incentives.* While appropriate technology is essential, a key to successful KM is the culture and mindsets across the GEF network. A committed leadership that values, analyzes, creates and encourages the creation of knowledge, its dissemination and use, is therefore critical, along with the right mix of incentives. It is fundamental to get a buy-in from all focal area task force teams as well as all GEF Secretariat staff levels before deploying the KM strategy. Concerns of employees doing things a new way need to be addressed at an early stage as well as knowledge sharing behavior and activities need to be encouraged.
  - c. *Capitalize on project and staff knowledge.* The Knowledge Management Initiative will try to harvest knowledge and information generated by GEF projects to enable the GEF to take better strategic decisions at a portfolio and institutional level. It will also try to capitalize the asset represented by the highly qualified staff, encouraging them to allocate some of their time to contribute to KM activities.
  - d. *Quality assurance:* An agile quality assurance process needs to be put in place in order to guarantee that knowledge products comply with the GEF standards. However, it will be necessary to ensure that cumbersome layers of approval for contributing or accessing information are not added to the work-flow.
  - e. *Participation, Inclusion and Synergy:* Partners and key GEF stakeholders need to be part of the Initiative by helping in shaping the strategy and contributing to its implementation. This will help the overall success of the KMI and will contribute to enrich local and global knowledge. Moreover, actions taken together by different stakeholders can lead to a multiplication of the expected results and impact.
  - f. *Flexibility.* The KM strategy, as any strategy, is a live document that should adapt to the changes and unforeseen events that may occur during its implementation.

## ANNEX 6 - GEF KNOWLEDGE PROCESS

1. The GEF will follow a 5- step approach that will help the development and mainstreaming knowledge into the GEF operations.

**Fig.2: GEF 5-step Knowledge Process**



- a. *Gather and Organize.* GEF staff identifies, collects and organizes relevant data, information and knowledge available (internally and externally), contributing to build an updated and systematized body of knowledge accessible online to all GEF staff and partners;
- b. *Learn.* Learning is regarded as a crucial component of the Strategy as it supports the development of internal capacity and contributes to the cultural and operational changes needed to become a “knowledge facility”. Improving technical knowledge as well as soft skills is deemed necessary. Special emphasis should be made at creating/improving staff capacity to understand and use tools and media available for KM;
- c. *Generate.* New knowledge products will distill and present in a coherent manner the knowledge generated separately by the Secretariat, the GEF EO and STAP. This step aims at allowing users to understand more clearly what the GEF experience brings to the discussion of environmental issues. Knowledge-Base, guidelines, methodology for gathering data and information, identification of operational or management issues and possible solutions are example of products;
- d. *Share.* GEF staff share GEF generated knowledge with partners and beneficiaries in a mutual exchange of ideas and information. Key actions for this step are seminars, conference, brown bag lunches, establishment of new or strengthening of existing communities of practice, blogs and online discussions and any other dissemination/communication activity; and

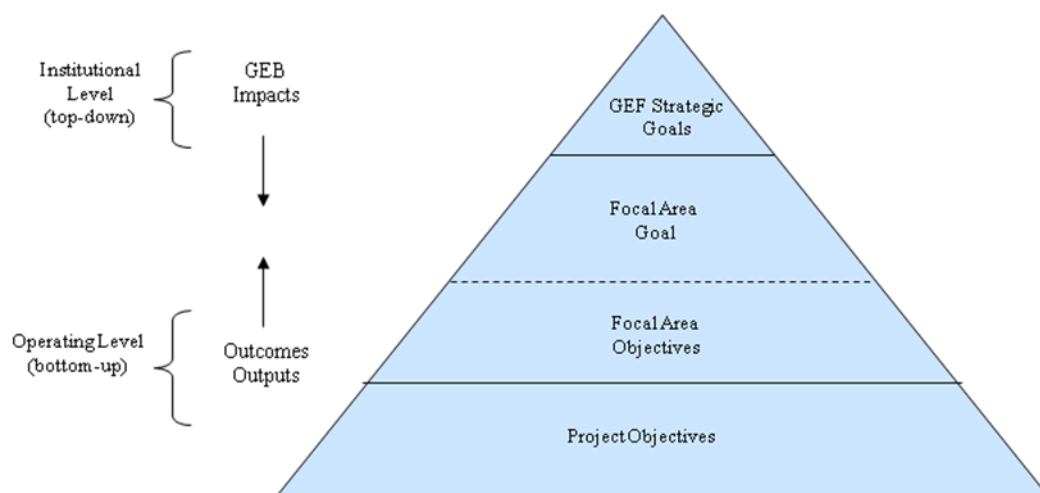
- e. *Apply*. This step concludes the KM process and seeks to enhance GEF effectiveness. Evidence-based results and lesson learned through the KM activities will inform strategies and policies at project level - both at national and regional – and institutional level - for the next replenishment period.

2. These steps will be developed as needed and will not necessarily follow a given order. However, it is important to underline that each step aims at mainstreaming knowledge into the GEF operations and connect available knowledge resources.

## ANNEX 7 - GEF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

1. Knowledge management (KM) is a central piece of the GEF's Results Based Management (RBM) framework. Given the governing structure of the GEF, its role as a financial mechanism for several global environmental conventions, and the project-driven nature of GEF operations, the RBM framework is structured as a two-way process, combining a top-down and a bottom-up approach. The top-down process relates to the establishment at the institutional level of an overarching goal, focal area goals, and focal area objectives, as approved by the GEF Council. The GEF must also act upon the guidance from and be accountable to the Conferences of the Parties (CoP), which sets policies, program priorities, and eligibility criteria for International conventions.<sup>4</sup> The bottom-up process relates directly to the building blocks of the system, the projects. Individual projects should reflect the strategies of each of the focal areas, which in turn should address the overall goals of the GEF (see Fig.3)

**Fig.3: Results Based Management at Different Organizational Levels**

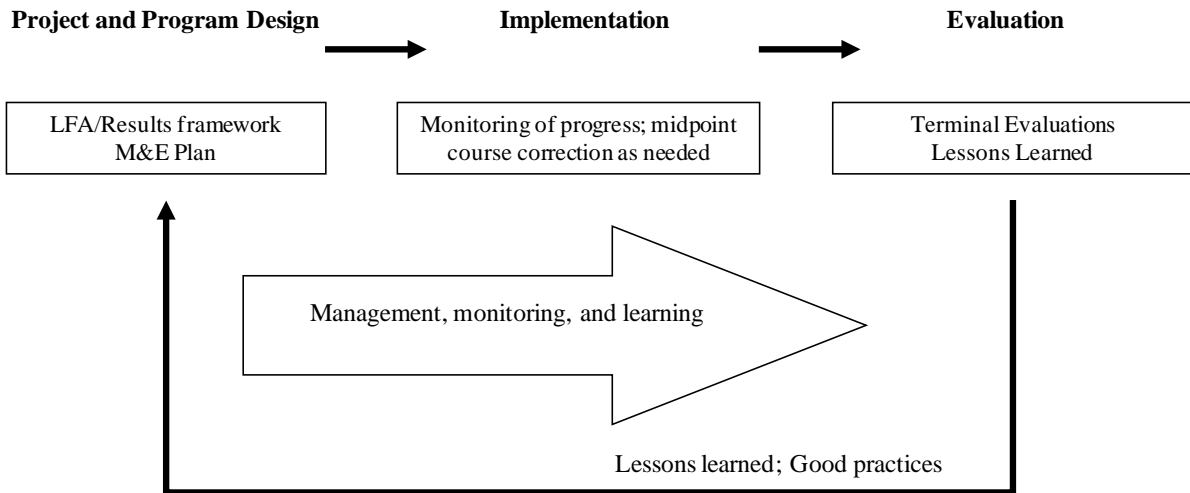


2. The KM strategy is embedded in this top-down/bottom-up approach. At the heart of GEF's KM strategy is the incorporation of knowledge and learning into the project cycle. At a project/program level, results are tracked during implementation and evaluated upon project completion. It is important that the three major phases in a project or program's evolution are linked: (a) project/program design; (b) implementation; and (c) evaluation. Breaking down the project cycle into these three phases, highlights the learning and management aspect of the RBM framework (see Fig. 4).

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<sup>4</sup> GEF Instrument, paragraph 6.

**Fig.4: Tracking Results<sup>5</sup>**



At the highest level, the KM strategy will focus on how to systematically use knowledge gained from projects/programs, GEF Agencies, STAP, the GEF EO and other sources to improve GEF's focal area strategies and refine GEF's corporate level strategic goals.

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from the World Bank's *Results Focus in Country Assistance Strategies*, July 2005, p. 13