

PROPOSAL FOR APPROVAL OF GEF WORK PROGRAM

RECOMMENDED DRAFT COUNCIL DECISION

The Council reviewed document GEF/C.7/7, *Proposal for Approval of GEF Work Program*, and approves the proposal presented therein.

INTRODUCTION

- i. At the Council meeting in October 1995, a Member circulated a proposal on ways to facilitate work program review. The Council requested the CEO to review the proposal, analyze its implications for the GEF and circulate a written proposal for consideration by the Members.
- ii. The following is a draft proposal prepared by the Secretariat on ways to facilitate work program review and approval. This proposal is based on an options paper that was circulated to the Council Members and Alternates for review and comment. The proposal takes into account the comments received on the options paper.

PROPOSAL FOR APPROVAL OF GEF WORK PROGRAMS

1. Paragraph 20 of the Instrument provides that the Council is responsible for the review and approval of GEF work programs. Cognizant of the fact that the Council meets in regular session twice a year, it is recognized that there is a need to provide a means through which work programs may be reviewed and approved in the period between regular Council meetings so as to expedite the operations of the GEF.

I THE COUNCIL AGREES THAT WORK PROGRAMS MAY BE REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY MAIL AS NECESSARY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

(1) Preparation of proposed work program

2. Proposed projects will be developed in accordance with the GEF Instrument and the project cycle.

3. As provided in the Instrument, the CEO determines the content of the joint work program to be reviewed and approved by the Council. In the period between regular Council meetings, the CEO may compile a proposed work program which would merit review and approval by the Council prior to the next meeting. Given past experience in preparing work programs, it is likely that there will be one to two proposed work programs prepared in the period between Council meetings. A pragmatic approach will be adopted that will place emphasis on the number and quality of project proposals as opposed to any fixed time schedule. The CEO will not include in a work program to be approved by mail any project proposal that raises new or significant policy issues that he considers should be discussed by the Council. Such proposals will be included in a work program presented for review and approval at a Council meeting.

4. For each proposed work program, the Secretariat will prepare an analytical cover note addressing the policy and programmatic issues illustrated by the proposed work program, its relation to GEF policies, including the operational strategy, and its cost effectiveness. In the cover note, the Secretariat will draw to the Council's attention any matter which might require the Council's special attention and/or guidance.

(2) Distribution by mail of the proposed work program

5. The CEO will distribute the proposed work program to Council Members, Alternates, and all those invited to GEF Council meetings in accordance with paragraphs 8 to 13 of the Rules of Procedure for the GEF Council [\(1\)](#). Consistent with current practice, the proposed work program will also be made available electronically (i.e., through the Econet and Worldwide WEB).

(3) Review, comment and approval

6. The CEO will invite the Council to review and approve the proposed work program. The CEO will also invite the Members to submit to the Secretariat any policy and technical comments that they may have on the work program within the same time period provided for approval.

Approval

7. Approval of the work program will occur in accordance with paragraphs 34 to 36 of the Council's rules of procedure for decisions without meeting, subject to the waiver and understandings described in paragraphs 8 and 9. These rules provide that:

(a) the CEO will transmit to each Member a proposed decision with an invitation to approve the decision on a no-objection basis;

(b) the Member will have a specified time period (a minimum of two weeks) to respond;

(c) at the end of the period the decision is approved unless there is an objection from a Member;

(d) if there is an objection received, the proposed decision will be referred to the next Council meeting.

8. The rules of procedure also provide that at least two-thirds of the Members must have replied to the CEO for a decision to be approved. Experience has shown that the requirement that a written response be received from at least two-thirds of the Members can be quite onerous for both the Council Members and the Secretariat. Therefore, it is agreed that for purposes of work program approval, this requirement will be waived and that no response from a Council Member will indicate that that Member has no objection.

9. Recognizing that under the Council's normal procedures for consideration of work programs at Council meetings Members are to have four weeks to review a work program prior to the meeting, it is agreed that the review period for approving work programs by mail will be four weeks.

10. In responding to the proposed decision, a Council Member may approve the work program, may object to the work program, or may object to a project proposal or proposals in the work program. If one or more Council Members object to a work program, the work program will not be approved, and it will be submitted to the Council for review at its next regular meeting. If one or more Council Members object to a project proposal or proposals within the work program, such project proposals will be deferred for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Council. The rest of the work program will be approved.

11. In responding to the proposed decision, it is important that Council Members be clear when they are formally objecting to a project proposal or the work program and when they are raising technical or policy issues for further consideration in the development of the project proposal (see paragraphs 12 and 13) but are not objecting to the project proposal or work program being further developed.

Comments

12. In commenting upon the proposed work program, a Council Member may inform the CEO that he/she has reservations about a policy matter raised by a project proposal or proposals in the work program, and he/she may request that those concerns be addressed in the further development of the proposal or proposals. The Member may also request that the Secretariat include in the programmatic note to be prepared by the Secretariat for the Council meeting (see paragraph 15) specific mention of the Member's policy concerns for discussion at the Council meeting.

13. On any project proposal included in the proposed work program, a Council Member may submit written technical comments to be considered by the Implementing Agency in the further development of the project proposal. The Secretariat will forward all written technical comments to the Implementing Agency concerned. The Secretariat will prepare a summary of technical comments received on the work program and circulate the summary to Council Members within three weeks of the deadline for comments. When sending a final draft project document to the CEO for endorsement prior to its approval by the Implementing Agency, the Implementing Agency will indicate in writing how, if at all, the Members' technical comments have been incorporated into the project's design. This information will highlight any significant changes that may have been made since the Council approved the project proposal within the work

program. The CEO will include this information with the final draft project document when it is circulated to the Council.

II. COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF WORK PROGRAM AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

14. As is present practice, the Council will consider a proposed work program and cover note at its regular Council meetings. As noted in paragraph 3, the CEO will include in the work programs to be considered at the Council meetings any project proposals that raise new or significant policy issues. An outline of the cover note to be prepared for work programs to be considered at Council meetings is attached as an annex to this document. A cover note will also be prepared for work programs that are to be approved by mail, but such cover notes will not need to address operational policy issues requiring special attention of the Council or to identify issues raised by the work program that might call for a review or elaboration of GEF policy, since project proposals that trigger such issues will not be included in work programs presented for approval by mail (see paragraphs 3 and 4). Technical comments on the work program may be submitted in accordance with the procedures described in paragraph 13.

15. In addition to the work program and its cover note, the Secretariat will prepare for Council's consideration at each Council meeting a separate note reviewing the programmatic evolution of GEF operations. This note will provide a basis for Council discussion of policy and strategic issues concerning GEF operations. The note will address trends, planning assumptions and policy issues arising from the continuing evolution of the work programs and their relationship to the operational strategy. It will discuss policy issues related to the work programs circulated over the preceding six months, including any policy issues raised by Council Members on the work programs circulated for approval by mail. The note will contain information on projects that have been endorsed by the CEO in the preceding six months as well as financial information on commitments and disbursements. The note will also contain a forward looking section that will highlight plans and expectations for development of the work program in the period leading to the next Council meeting.

ANNEX

OUTLINE OF COVER NOTE TO WORK PROGRAMS

1. Describe how work program fits within programmatic framework of operational strategy.
2. Identify how specific projects demonstrate implementation of, or respond to, specific principles, policies and decisions of the Council, such as:
 - (a) application of incremental costs;
 - (b) environmental, social and financial sustainability;
 - (c) cost-effectiveness of activities;

- (d) leveraging of additional resources;
 - (e) country-driven projects reflecting national priorities designed to support sustainable development;
 - (f) public involvement; and
 - (g) monitoring and evaluation.
3. Identify operational policy issues requiring special attention of the Council.
 4. Identify any issues raised by the work program that might trigger the need for a review or elaboration of GEF policy, including the operational strategy.
 5. Overview of financial commitments.
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Endnotes:

1. This includes the GEF focal points in all States participating in the GEF, the Implementing Agencies, the Trustee, STAP, the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its Multilateral Fund, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, and the designated GEF focal points for the NGOs.