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PROGRESS REPORT ON KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

1. In June 2015, the Council welcomed the document GEF/C.48/07/Rev.01, *GEF Knowledge Management (KM) Approach Paper*, on the GEF's potential added value on knowledge management, outlining key challenges and opportunities, and proposing a guiding framework for KM, including a set of proposed KM products and activities. Since then, the Secretariat has been undertaking a number of steps towards implementing a KM framework for the GEF Partnership over the GEF-6 period and beyond.

2. As articulated in the paper, the purpose of KM in the GEF context is to facilitate and enable the capture, exchange and uptake of knowledge within and beyond the GEF Partnership with two key objectives:

- (a) to inform global, regional and national policy dialogues on options and approaches to reverse the course of environmental degradation, and
- (b) to improve the impact of GEF-supported projects and programs.

IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE

3. Since the last Council meeting, a comprehensive 6- month KM work program was developed for FY16 building towards the preparation of a detailed KM implementation plan for the GEF Partnership in FY 17-18, with clear targets, roles and budgets, in line with the objectives and deliverables outlined in the KM Approach Paper. Under this work program, several KM initiatives were initiated and implemented by the Secretariat, including:

- a pilot exercise to capture and analyze lessons learned/best practice from completed GEF projects - based on agency reports and terminal evaluations,
- a pilot "Ask the Expert" tool on-line to create a Knowledge Base on GEF operations in an effort to more effectively address the operational knowledge needs of GEF countries, agencies and other partners, enabling access to (and exchange of) both tacit and explicit knowledge within the Partnership,
- a regional "GEF Knowledge Day" targeting recipient country stakeholders, within the context of the GEF's Extended Constituency Workshops (ECW), including a country KM survey to capture country perspectives, learning workshops around key project management principles and knowledge-rich field visits to GEF financed or GEF relevant projects as well as knowledge products such as learning passports, videos, photo galleries and publications to capture and share lessons from projects,
- an expert assessment of the existing GEF Knowledge Asset captured and stored in various forms throughout the Partnership,
- an audit of the KM readiness/maturity, knowledge needs and knowledge flows and key learning questions across the Partnership, including our agencies and member countries,

- KM focused “brown bag lunches” (BBLs) and seminars, inviting partners and like-minded institutions to share their KM related experiences and insights,
- a number of new GEF publications, including the *From Coast to Coast: Celebrating 20 Years of Transboundary Management of Our Shared Oceans*, a wide-ranging collection of stories, focusing on science-based management and governance of shared transboundary marine ecosystems. This new publication was launched during Oceans Day, held on the sidelines of the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris.
- close engagement between the KM and RBM teams to help specify the scope of GEF’s improving RBM framework.

OUTCOMES:

4. **Internal Capacity Building:** The GEF Secretariat plays a critical role in GEF knowledge management as a key knowledge hub, a knowledge broker and a facilitator of knowledge flow and exchange across the GEF Partnership. In order to enable the Secretariat to effectively serve in this role, a *KM Work Stream* was established within the Policy, Partnership and Operations Unit of the Secretariat and it became functional in September 2015. The goal of this work stream is to lead the implementation of the KM framework across the GEF Partnership in collaboration and consultation within the Secretariat and with GEF stakeholders.

5. **Establishment of the KM Advisory Group:** In accordance with the KM Approach Paper, the KM Advisory Group was established in October 2015, consisting of representatives from interested members of the GEF Partnership including GEF Agencies, STAP, IEO, CSO network, countries and the Conventions. The Group serves as an informal vehicle for collaboration and consultation on the implementation, planning and execution of the new KM approach across the GEF Partnership. It supports the KM Agenda and will function as a sounding board for KM initiatives and proposals in order to achieve the objectives set forth in the KM Approach Paper.

6. The KM approach of the GEF intends to build on past and current KM efforts at the Secretariat as well as throughout the GEF Partnership. Many GEF partners (including GEF agencies, member countries, IEO, STAP, CSOs, etc.) have relevant KM initiatives already underway and significant KM systems in place. These include UNEP-Live and C4D of the WBG, among others. In implementing the KM approach, it will be very important to take full advantage of, link with and leverage these existing efforts. Accordingly, the KM Advisory Group of the GEF would serve as a knowledge exchange platform where GEF partners can come together to learn from and leverage each other’s KM efforts, towards building links with each other’s systems. It is envisaged that the Group would stay in touch virtually and hold face-to-face meetings twice a year, following Council meetings, and that there would be smaller task forces formed within the KM Advisory Group, as needed, in order to undertake specific collaborative KM initiatives that Group members would identify and agree to pursue.

7. **Secretariat KM Survey:** An internal KM survey was conducted in February 2016 in order to understand and incorporate staff perspectives into the design of an internal KM work program which will help integrate knowledge generation, use and dissemination more systematically into the way the Secretariat operates. The survey was designed to understand the perceptions of the Secretariat staff regarding the value and importance of KM in their day to day work, to analyze the level of staff engagement and satisfaction with current GEF knowledge products, partners and channels, and to identify the knowledge needs of the Secretariat in serving the GEF Partnership. The findings of the survey have also been incorporated into the overall KM Audit.
8. **Regional GEF Knowledge Days:** In March 2016, a pilot GEF Knowledge Day was designed and successfully implemented in Trinidad and Tobago in the context of the Caribbean ECW, with 85 participants from 17 countries. The Knowledge Day combines various learning and knowledge exchange activities that target country stakeholders, including a country KM survey to capture country perspectives, targeted learning workshops around key project management principles, and knowledge-rich field visits to GEF financed or GEF relevant projects. Knowledge products such as learning passports, videos, photo galleries and publications to facilitate learning and sharing have been developed for use during and after the GEF Knowledge Day. An article and a video capturing various aspects of the Pilot Knowledge Day held in Trinidad and Tobago is available on the GEF website at <http://www.thegef.org/news/trinidad-conservation-and-education-hand-hand>.
9. Based on the Pilot and taking into consideration the feedback from the participants, the regional GEF Knowledge Day is being replicated, in a customized format, as a critical component of all ECWs around the world. By the end of May 2016, the GEF Knowledge Day Pilot will have been replicated in seven other ECWS with more than 600 key stakeholders from 73 countries participating in total: Trinidad (17), Montenegro (8), Thailand (14), Argentina (9), Guatemala (8), Sierra Leone (8), and Senegal (9). By the end of December 2016, a total of 13 ECWs will have been organized, each with a Knowledge Day component. This will encompass approximately 146 countries and over 1000 participants, including GEF Operational and Political focal points, UN Convention Focal points, Civil Society and GEF agencies and Convention secretariats, will have participated in knowledge exchange around GEF projects in the field.
10. **Country KM Surveys:** In order to capture the perspective of recipient country counterparts and stakeholders, a KM survey is being conducted during each ECW, asking the participants to convey their views regarding their GEF-relevant knowledge needs, their views on existing GEF knowledge products, and their suggestion on how to improve knowledge flow between GEF stakeholders, especially among recipient countries. To date, KM surveys have been were conducted in 8 ECWs, capturing perspectives from 83 countries. The country survey findings have been incorporated into the KM Audit.
11. **GEF Knowledge Asset Assessment:** Undertaken in partnership with IUCN, a GEF partner agency, this assessment is designed to document data/knowledge generation, capture, storage and flows across the GEF partnership in the context of the GEF project life cycle (with a focus on

full and medium sized projects). It also aims to identify priority knowledge needs of the GEFSEC and GEF Partners as well as possible options for collaboration and joint efforts across the GEF partnership. To achieve these goals, an effort has been made to (a) compile a knowledge asset inventory for GEF projects, including project data submitted to the GEF at various stages of the project lifetime as well as knowledge products that have been created using project funding, (b) document priority knowledge needs of the Secretariat and GEF Partners through interviews with key stakeholders, and (c) identify possible options for collaboration and joint efforts across the GEF partnership. The findings of this assessment feed into the KM Audit.

12. **Partnership-wide KM Audit:** Building on the findings of the internal KM survey and the Knowledge Asset Assessment, a comprehensive Knowledge Audit and Current State Analysis was undertaken. This audit identified and analyzed existing systems for GEF relevant knowledge capture, collection, storage and sharing within the Secretariat and throughout the GEF Partnership by reviewing existing collateral as well as by conducting interviews with various stakeholders, including GEF Agencies, STAP, IEO, CSO network, countries and the Conventions. The findings of this audit will be synthesized in a report and presented to the KM Advisory Group. The findings will also inform the development of the KM Implementation Plan.

13. **Pilot Extraction of Lessons, Integration into the Project Information Management System (PMIS) and Synthesis:** Since its establishment, the GEF has received more than 5,500 project proposals from developing countries to address global environmental issues. Of this number, GEF has approved and funded to closure close to 1,400 projects. To date, sharing the lessons and good practices that emerge from completed GEF projects has been difficult because this information has not been a reporting requirement and no mechanism has been in place to systematically capture and make it available. Therefore, it has not been possible to easily access project lessons and good practice information within the GEF Partnership through the PMIS or by the general public through the projects portal on the GEF website.

14. To address this issue, a pilot exercise was undertaken to design and test a system that allows capture, aggregation, search and synthesis of lessons and good practice from projects during implementation and upon completion. GEF's portfolio of completed Multi-focal Area (MFA) projects were reviewed as the initial focus. A *Knowledge Capture Template* was created and used to extract lessons from terminal evaluation reports that were submitted by GEF agencies for each project. Extracted lessons were then entered into the new knowledge fields created in PMIS for each project. Extracted lessons were aggregated and analyzed, and a synthesis report was prepared based on findings. A number of knowledge products (such as lessons notes, videos to highlight best practice, etc.) can be generated and shared widely based on the findings presented in this report.

15. The Secretariat intends to explore a possible expansion of this pilot exercise to the rest of the completed GEF project portfolio and conduct a similar extraction, inputting, analysis and synthesis exercise in all focal areas of the GEF. In addition, based on the recommendations of this pilot exercise, the Secretariat will work with GEF agencies to see if the Knowledge Capture Template can be used at key stages of project implementation (such as annually or at mid-term

review and completion) to consistently extract lessons and good practice from projects and input this information directly into the PMIS. In fact, this is a feature that is being considered for inclusion in the PMIS Upgrading Exercise that is currently underway.

16. **Pilot Kaleo “Ask the Expert” Tool:** The Secretariat has identified “Kaleo” as an innovative online technology to more effectively address the knowledge needs of GEF countries, agencies and other partners by enabling access to (and exchange of) both tacit and explicit knowledge within the Partnership. All kinds of GEF related questions arise across the GEF Partnership on a regular and repetitive basis, and it would be more efficient if GEF stakeholders and the public could find the correct (and verified) answers and supporting documents at their fingertips. With GEF Kaleo, they will be able to have access to those answers and documents anywhere, anytime.

17. Kaleo is a simple and user-friendly automated “question and answer platform” designed to get verified answers to questions (as well as supporting documentation including links and audio-visual materials) as efficiently as possible. It will be administered by the Secretariat and be accessible through a small search-bar widget that will plug directly into the GEF’s existing applications and portals such as the GEF website – giving the public access to an evolving and ever-growing GEF Knowledge Base. Kaleo answers can contain text, links to documents, videos, photos, commentary, etc. If no answer is found in the existing GEF Knowledge Base in response to a question, then Kaleo will route the question to the most appropriate “designated” expert at the Secretariat or within the GEF Partnership who can best answer that question. The response from that expert will then be verified internally and then posted. It will also be stored in the system for reuse over and over again – with an expiration date so that all knowledge stored with the GEF Knowledge Base (and accessed through Kaleo) stays fresh and up-to-date.

18. Currently, the Secretariat has a one-year contract with Kaleo, Inc. to service questions regarding GEF operations (policies and procedures, project cycle, etc.), as a pilot. If this pilot is found to be successful by the end of 2016, the Secretariat would consider expanding Kaleo service to other areas of the GEF.

19. **New Publications/Knowledge Products:** In the past 6 months, the following publications/knowledge products have been produced by the Secretariat (with a number of additional videos and books scheduled to be produced in May 2016):

Titles (as of April 31, 2016)	Media	Publication Date	Author
Beyond the Sustainable Development Goals	Video	Nov-15	GEF
GEF Integrated Approach Pilot: Taking Deforestation out of Commodity Supply Chains	Book	Nov-15	GEF
UNFCCC: Conference of the Parties Guidance and GEF Responses 1995 - 2014	Book	Nov-15	GEF
GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, Least Developed Countries Fund, Special Climate Change Fund	Book	Nov-15	GEF
GEF Integrated Approach Pilot: Fostering Sustainability and Resilience for Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa	Book	Nov-15	GEF
GEF Integrated Approach Pilot: Sustainable Cities	Book	Nov-15	GEF

Behind the Numbers 2015: A Closer Look at GEF Achievements	Book	Nov-15	GEF
The GEF and Climate Change - Catalyzing Transformation	Book	Nov-15	GEF
GEF Innovations in Blended Finance: A Summary	Book	Dec-15	GEF
From Coast to Coast - Celebrating 20 years of Transboundary Management of our Shared Oceans	Book	Dec-15	UNDP-GEF- UNU-IWL
Burning Bright: UNDP and GEF in the Tiger Landscape	Book	Apr-16	UNDP-GEF
Trinidad: Conservation and Education Hand in Hand	Video	Apr-16	GEF
25 Years of GEF: Dominican Republic	Video	Apr-16	GEF
25 Years of GEF: Bahamas	Video	Apr-16	GEF

20. **IT Upgrade:** KM has been an important consideration in the ongoing redesign of the website and the GEF's intranet, as they constitute two key tools for information sharing, knowledge dissemination and learning. A relaunched website, driven by the GEF's Communication team, provides an improved platform for knowledge sharing. A new Intranet for the GEF Secretariat provides an internal platform for knowledge transfer. The ongoing redesign of the PMIS to develop a new "GEF Online" platform has high potential to improve knowledge systems. It is envisaged that PMIS, upgraded to serve the KM needs of the GEF partnership, will substantially improve the stock of information that can be captured from projects and will play a key role in project based data analysis and knowledge generation.

NEXT STEPS

21. The Secretariat will lead the preparation of a more detailed KM Implementation Plan for the GEF Partnership (with clear targets, roles and budgets) that builds on the assessments and pilots above. This may include further specificity on the design of a GEF Partnership-wide KM system/platform, a forward publications plan including in-depth technical studies conducted jointly by GEF partners, a detailed plan for a GEF knowledge products repository and document management system, development of GEF communities of practice, and a Partnership-wide awards program for best practice.