

52nd GEF Council Meeting
May 23 – 25, 2017
Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 03

**RELATIONS WITH THE CONVENTIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having considered document GEF/C.52/03, *Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions*, welcomed the report and requested 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

1. This document provides the Council with an update on the activities of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in support of the following multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs): 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), the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol) and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The document also provides information on relations between the GEF Secretariat and other international conventions, institutions, and fora.

Highlights reported include:

- (a) CBD: Updates on the ratification of CBD protocols; on the submission of national reports; on the GEF's participation in the thirteenth Conference of the Parties (COP 13) and other events; and an annex with GEF's responses to decisions of the COP 13.
- (b) UNFCCC: Updates on the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1); on the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency; on the GEF Secretariat's participation in other UNFCCC meetings and events; on ratification and progress on National Communications and Biennial Update Reports; and an annex with GEF's responses to COP 22 decisions.
- (c) UNCCD: Updates on the revision of the Memorandum of Understanding between the UNCCD and the GEF Council and on the GEF Secretariat's participation in key events.
- (d) Stockholm Convention and Montreal Protocol: Updates on ratifications, national reporting, and on related meetings and events for the Stockholm Convention and the Montreal Protocol.
- (e) Minamata Convention: Updates on follow up action resulting from the seventh Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee (INC 7) and funding provided by the GEF in support of Minamata enabling activities.
- (f) GEF Secretariat engagements with the Convention secretariats in the GEF-7 replenishment process and activities to facilitate synergies in implementing MEAs towards sustainable development.
- (g) A summary of relations and activities associated with other international institutions, the Adaptation Fund, the UN Forum on Forests and the Green Climate Fund.

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INTRODUCTION

1. This document reports on action by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to support the implementation of decisions and initiatives within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol) and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The report also provides an update on the engagement of the Convention secretariats in the GEF-7 replenishment process, and information on the GEF Secretariat's relations with other institutions including the Green Climate Fund. The document covers the period of September 2016 to April 2017.

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Update Summary and COP 13 Outcomes

2. On December 2-17, 2016 in Cancun, Mexico, the CBD held its thirteenth Conference of the Parties (COP) meeting, the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from their utilization. The theme of the COP was 'Mainstreaming biodiversity for well-being' and the integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the plans, programs and sectoral/inter-sectoral policies with emphasis on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism sectors.

3. Agreements were reached at the COP on actions to integrate biodiversity in forestry, fisheries, agriculture, and tourism sectors and to achieve the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, as well as actions on specific themes including protected areas, ecosystem restoration, marine biodiversity, biodiversity and health, synthetic biology, and traditional knowledge, among others, and on strengthening capacity-development and the mobilization of financial resources.

4. Two key outcomes of the COP included the Ministerial Declaration, 'The Cancun Declaration on mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for well-being' and the 'Múuch'tambal Declaration'.

5. Guidance to the GEF was provided in Decision XIII/21 and included three main elements:

- (a) Four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities (2018-2022) which included three priority clusters, ten priorities across the clusters, and 17 outcomes;
- (b) Second determination of the funding requirement; and

- (c) Further guidance covering the following areas: ecosystem restoration, the Strategic Plan, Aichi Targets 11 and 12, sixth national report, cross-sectoral mainstreaming, traditional knowledge, Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. Responses by the GEF to this guidance are provided in Annex 1, Table 1.
6. The COP also recognized the role of the GEF in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by encouraging the GEF to continue and further strengthen integrated programming to harness synergy opportunities in implementing related MEAs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, in particular SDG 14 and 15.
7. Furthermore, the COP took note of the projected shortfall of resources due to exchange rate movements and the 51st GEF Council decision on this matter. The GEF was requested to continue its efforts to minimize the potential consequences of the projected shortfall, aiming to fulfil the relevant GEF-6 programming directions with a view to maintaining the level of support to recipient countries, and to consider exploring measures to mitigate possible risks, including currency risks, to avoid potential negative impacts on future replenishment periods.
8. The GEF Secretariat participated, as requested, in the negotiations on the financial mechanism, and led numerous outreach and capacity building efforts during COP 13. Specifically, the GEF Secretariat led and hosted the following four side events to highlight key strategic developments and encourage dialogue:
- (a) "Global Commons: Solutions for A Crowded Planet" discussed the scientific evidence for urgent action to avoid transgressing tipping points on a planetary level and put forward a call for a paradigm shift for global planetary stewardship;
 - (b) "GEF's Biodiversity Mainstreaming Journey" reviewed GEF experience in mainstreaming biodiversity and reported initial findings of an ongoing review of the portfolio undertaken by the GEF biodiversity team;
 - (c) "Synergies Across the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Towards Sustainable Development" addressed opportunities and barriers to promoting synergies and integrated agendas among the different MEAs; and
 - (d) "GEF Investments and Donor Coordination to Address the Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trade Crisis" presented the GEF-funded Program on Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT), and a study of funding in this area, entitled "The Analysis of the International Funding to address the IWT Crisis".
9. GEF Secretariat personnel participated in 25 other side events, workshops, and symposia including, inter alia, the "Mu'uchtambal Summit on Indigenous Experience: Traditional Knowledge and Biological and Cultural Diversity"; Guiding Principles and Business Management Recommendations for Application of the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) Standard by the Private Sector; Business and Biodiversity Forum; Global Island Partnership (GLISPA)

members meeting; Panorama Partnership Initiative; 5th Global Summit of Cities and Subnational Governments; Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Development and the SDGs: sharing and development of workable solutions; Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCA); Rio Conventions Pavilion (Forests and Forest Restoration, Protected Areas) and the Satoyama Initiative.

10. On December 10, 2017, GEF organized a project field trip to the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve in collaboration with the Mexican National Parks Authority (CONANP) to learn about GEF support to protected areas throughout Mexico and, in particular, Sian Ka'an. Participants included representatives and council members from Canada, Belgium, United States of America, Switzerland, Japan, United Kingdom, CBD Secretariat staff, and journalists.

11. Consultations for the GEF-7 replenishment started during this reporting period with engagement of the CBD Secretariat, including a bilateral between the GEF CEO and the CBD Executive Secretary, CBD participation in the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings and the first GEF-7 replenishment meetings, technical level consultations, and submission of written comments. They are summarized further below. Following the first replenishment meeting, the GEF Secretariat contacted the CBD Secretariat to outline opportunities for engagement and consultations on the GEF-7 strategy development, and requested continued engagement of the CBD Secretariat.

Ratifications and Accessions

12. The number of Parties under the CBD remains unchanged at 196 since the last Council meeting. Detailed information can be found at: <https://www.cbd.int/information/parties.shtml>.

13. The number of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety remains at 170. The list of signatories and ratifications may be found at: <https://www.cbd.int/information/parties.shtml#tab=1>. There are 37 Parties to the Cartagena Protocol that have deposited their instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession for the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Forty instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession by Parties to the Cartagena Protocol are required for the entry into force of the Supplementary Protocol, and detailed information may be found at: <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/parties/#tab=1>.

14. The total number of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession have increased to 96, since the last Council meeting, for the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, including Sweden, Swaziland, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Luxembourg, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Malta, Argentina, Antigua and Barbuda, Sao Tome and Principe, Qatar, and Angola. The list of signatories and ratifications for the Nagoya Protocol may be found at: <https://www.cbd.int/information/parties.shtml#tab=2>.

National Reporting

15. Since the last Council meeting, the CBD Secretariat has received two new national reports from Lithuania and Democratic People's Republic of Korea, making a total of 183 fifth national reports received as of April 4, 2017. The COP requested Parties to submit their fifth national report by March 31, 2014. The list of submissions received can be found at: <https://www.cbd.int/reports/>. In accordance with decision XIII/27, CBD Parties will submit their sixth national report by December 31, 2018.

16. As a result of NP-MOP decision 2/4 under the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Parties and Governments should submit their interim (first) national reports no later than 12 months before the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, in order to conduct the first assessment and review of the Protocol.

17. The CBD Secretariat has received eleven third national reports under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (Barbados, Bahrain, Guinea, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Guyana, Luxembourg, Mozambique, Pakistan, and Paraguay) since the last Council meeting. In CP-MOP decision VIII/14, the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, urged Parties that have not yet submitted their third national report to do so as soon as possible.

Additional Meetings and Consultations

18. Regarding the GEF-7 replenishment process, the GEF Secretariat engaged in consultations with the CBD Secretariat to reflect CBD priorities and COP guidance in the proposed GEF programming directions and policy as follows:

- (a) The CBD Secretariat personnel took part in the first GEF-7 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting on the programming directions, held on February 8-10, 2017, and follow-up bilateral discussions. Written comments have been submitted to the GEF Secretariat, to be considered for the revision of the programming directions document.
- (b) The GEF CEO visited the CBD Secretariat on March 24, 2017, and held a bilateral with the new CBD Executive Secretary to discuss the vision for the GEF replenishment with a renewed emphasis on impact.
- (c) The CBD Secretariat personnel took part in the first GEF-7 replenishment meeting, held on March 29-30, 2017, and associated bilateral discussion at the margins of this meeting.

- (d) Following the first replenishment meeting, the GEF Secretariat contacted the CBD Secretariat to outline opportunities for engagement and consultations on the GEF-7 strategy development, and requested continued engagement of the CBD Secretariat.

UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Update Summary

19. On November 4, 2016, the Paris Agreement entered into force. The first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1) took place in conjunction with COP 22 and CMP 12 in Marrakesh, Morocco in November 2016. At COP 22, the GEF highlighted its work to respond to COP 21 guidance received in Paris and efforts to support the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement. In particular, the GEF CEO launched the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT), during a dedicated segment at the Facilitative Dialogue on Enhancing Ambition and Support on November 16, 2016.¹ The Paris Agreement decision requested the GEF to establish and operationalize the CBIT for both the pre- and post-2020 period.
20. Eleven donors pledged some \$55 million to the CBIT Trust Fund at the official launch.² The first set of national projects approved by the GEF was announced to take place in Costa Rica, Kenya and South Africa. The approval of funding for a global co-ordination platform was also announced at the CBIT launch in Marrakech, to share lessons learned and engage with partners to enhance transparency. COP 22 welcomed the GEF Council decisions to establish the CBIT Trust Fund and to ensure that the CBIT support will be included in the seventh replenishment, complementing the existing GEF support.
21. At COP 22, Parties requested the GEF to take into account the entry into force of the Paris Agreement in its deliberations on the strategy for the seventh replenishment. Parties also called upon developed country Parties and invited other Parties that make voluntary financial contributions to the GEF, to ensure a robust seventh replenishment, in order to assist in providing adequate and predictable funding taking into consideration the Paris Agreement.
22. COP 22 guidance also encouraged the GEF to continue its efforts to encourage countries to align, as appropriate, their GEF programming with their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and to continue to promote synergies across its focal areas.
23. Parties at COP 22 also welcomed the support provided by the GEF for the process to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). Parties invited additional voluntary

¹ See GEF press release: <https://www.thegef.org/news/new-gef-fund-gives-boost-paris-agreement-implementation>

² See Joint Statement on the donor's pledge of \$55.3M USD to the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency: <https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/web-documents/CBIT-donor-statement-COP22.pdf>

financial contributions to the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund, recognizing the importance of the process to formulate and implement NAPs.

24. In the reporting period, Belgium, Japan, Sweden and the Walloon Region of Belgium pledged additional resources to the LDCF.³

25. The GEF Secretariat has engaged in consultations with the UNFCCC Secretariat on the GEF-7 replenishment since January 2017, to discuss and reflect GEF's support for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and COP guidance in the proposed GEF programming directions and policy, as described further below.

Ratifications and Accessions

26. During the reporting period, there were no new Parties to the UNFCCC. As of April 2017, there are 196 Parties to the Convention. On November 4, 2016 the Paris Agreement entered into force. By April 4, 2017, there were 197 signatories to the Paris Agreement, of which 141 Parties have also ratified the agreement. The status of signatures and ratifications can be found at: http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9444.php.

National Reporting and Contributions

27. The following is the total number of national communications submitted from non-Annex I Parties, as of April 4, 2017:

- (a) Initial national communications: **150**
- (b) Second national communications: **128**
- (c) Third national communications: **37**
- (d) Fourth national communications: **2**
- (e) Fifth national communications: **1**

28. Full details of reports submitted are available on the UNFCCC website at: http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/submitted_natcom/items/653.php.

29. A total of 36 first Biennial Update Reports (BURs) and five second BURs from non-Annex I countries has been submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat, as of April 4, 2017. Full details are available at: http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/reporting_on_climate_change/items/8722.php.

³ See document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/03, Progress Report on the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund.

COP 22 and Outcomes

30. With the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on November 4, 2016, CMA 1 was held on November 15-18, 2016 in Marrakesh, Morocco. The GEF CEO and delegation participated in these meetings and supported the negotiation process related to means of implementation of the agreement.

31. During the COP, the GEF gave interventions on GEF initiatives and achievements based on its annual report as well as an update on National Communications and Biennial Update Reports. The GEF delegation also participated in contact groups and other sessions as requested to provide briefings to Parties and to respond to questions on GEF activities, its support to Parties and its responses to COP guidance. Additional engagements include the following: High-level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance; President's high-level event on progress in advancing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs); the launch of the NDC Partnership; Gender Day; Collaborative Partnership on Forests meeting; and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) side event. The delegation also organized two official GEF side events on 'Implementing the Paris Agreement: What do countries need from the Financial Mechanism?'⁴ and on 'Transforming the Food System to Safeguard the Global Commons.'

32. At COP 22, the GEF CEO launched the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT), during a dedicated segment on CBIT at the Facilitative Dialogue on Enhancing Ambition and Support, on November 16, 2016.⁵ The launch event was organized to highlight how the GEF is supporting the implementation of the Paris Agreement promptly by establishing and operationalizing the CBIT in eleven months. Eleven donors pledged some \$55 million to CBIT, with others announcing their intention to contribute.⁶ The first set of projects approved by the GEF for implementation in Costa Rica, Kenya and South Africa was also announced by their Ministers, in addition to the approval of funding for a global co-ordination platform to share lessons learned and engage with partners to enhance transparency.

33. The GEF received guidance from COP 22 as well as conclusions of relevance from the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) 45. Table 2 in Annex I to this document contains the relevant decision paragraphs and specific guidance and conclusions provided to the GEF during COP 22 and SBI 44, along with GEF's response to date. Key decisions and COP outcomes are summarized below:

- (a) Parties requested the GEF to take into account the entry into force of the Paris Agreement in its deliberations on the strategy for the seventh replenishment and to consider lessons learned from past replenishment periods. Parties also called upon

⁴ See report by IISD: <http://enb.iisd.org/climate/cop22/enbots/14nov.html>

⁵ See GEF press release: <https://www.thegef.org/news/new-gef-fund-gives-boost-paris-agreement-implementation>

⁶ See Joint Statement on the donor's pledge of \$55.3M USD to the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency: <https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/web-documents/CBIT-donor-statement-COP22.pdf>

developed country Parties and invited other Parties that make voluntary financial contributions to the GEF, to ensure a robust seventh replenishment, in order to assist in providing adequate and predictable funding taking into consideration the Paris Agreement.

- (b) The COP requested the GEF in its seventh replenishment programming to continue to assist developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, in accessing resources in an efficient manner.
- (c) The COP encouraged the GEF to continue its efforts to encourage countries to align, as appropriate, their GEF programming with their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and to continue to promote synergies across its focal areas.
- (d) The COP took note of the projected shortfall of resources due to exchange rate movements and the 51st GEF Council decision, and requested the GEF to continue its efforts, as appropriate and as needed, to minimize the potential consequences of the shortfall for its support to developing countries, aiming to fulfil the relevant programming directions of GEF-6.
- (e) Parties at COP 22 also welcomed the support provided by the GEF for the process to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). Parties invited additional voluntary financial contributions to the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund, recognizing the importance of the process to formulate and implement NAPs.⁷
- (f) The COP welcomed the GEF Council decisions to establish the CBIT Trust Fund and to approve the CBIT programming directions, and to ensure that the support for CBIT will be included in the seventh replenishment, to complement existing support under the GEF, in accordance with decision 1/CP.21.
- (g) The COP welcomed the successful roll-out of the non-grant instrument pilot and encouraged further expansion of the pilot with a view to increasing the leverage and impact of the GEF financing.

34. The GEF will, in its report to COP 23, elaborate on the steps taken to fully implement the guidance provided. The report, covering the period from July 1, 2016 until June 30, 2017, is expected to be officially submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat in August 2017, upon approval by the GEF Council.

⁷ See document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/03, Progress Report on the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund.

Additional Meetings and Consultations

35. During the reporting period, the GEF Secretariat has engaged closely with the UNFCCC Secretariat in the GEF-7 replenishment process, including the following:

- (a) The UNFCCC Secretariat personnel participated in the first GEF-7 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting, held on February 8-10, 2017, and in follow-up discussions on the proposed Programming Directions and Policy.
- (b) The GEF CEO visited the UNFCCC Secretariat on March 16, 2017, and held a bilateral with the UNFCCC Executive Secretary to strengthen collaboration and to discuss the replenishment, including the proposed GEF-7 vision, alignment with the 2030 Agenda, engagement of the private sector, and climate finance complementarity.
- (c) The UNFCCC Secretariat personnel was present at the first GEF-7 replenishment meeting, held on March 29-30, 2017, and took part in associated bilateral discussions at the margins of the replenishment meeting.
- (d) Following the first replenishment meeting, the GEF Secretariat requested the UNFCCC Secretariat for continued engagement in the replenishment process.

36. The GEF Secretariat also arranged for a representative of the Secretariat of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to observe the first GEF-7 replenishment meeting. This was in response to a request from GCF Secretariat, to help facilitate the preparations for the GCF replenishment process in the future.

37. The GEF Secretariat also participated in the following meetings and provided updates on GEF programming, responses to COP guidance, review of the Financial Mechanism, thematic programming, and capacity building among other topics:

- (a) Fourteenth meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) on October 3-5, 2016 in Bonn, Germany;
- (b) Fourteenth meeting of the Board of the GCF on October 3-6, 2016 in Songdo, Republic of Korea;
- (c) NAP-Global Support Program Technical Advisory Group and Board meetings on December 5-7, 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand;
- (d) Fifteenth meeting of the Board of the GCF on December 12-16, 2017 in Apia, Samoa;
- (e) Least Developed Country Expert Group (LEG) regional workshop on NAPs for Anglophone Africa on February 27-28, 2017 in Lilongwe, Malawi;
- (f) International workshop on capacity building and the implementation of the Paris Agreement on March 1-2, 2017 in Rabat, Morocco;

- (g) Fifteenth meeting of the SCF on March 7-9, 2017 in Bonn, Germany;
- (h) Eleventh meeting of the Adaptation Committee on March 7-10, 2017 in Bonn, Germany;
- (i) Thirty-first meeting of the LEG on March 7-10, 2017 in Bonn, Germany; and
- (j) Fourteenth meeting of the Technology Executive Committee on March 28-31, 2017 in Bonn, Germany.

UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

Update Summary

38. During this reporting period, UNCCD-related activities focused on the implementation of decisions from COP 12 held in 2015, notably those related to the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), which is SDG target 15.3. Parties agreed at COP 12 to aim for LDN, and requested the GEF to support the voluntary LDN target setting. The COP invited the GEF to continue its support for the implementation of the Convention in light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular target 15.3.

39. The meeting of the Committee to Review the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 15) was held on October 18 -20, 2016, in Nairobi, Kenya. This special intersessional session allowed Parties, through interactive sessions, to discuss key elements for a new Strategy, findings from the optional reports and future modalities for reporting, and progress in delivering LDN targets for those Parties engaging in the LDN target setting exercise among others.

40. At the CRIC 15, GEF was invited to participate in the panel discussion of the interactive session on the Land Degradation Neutrality-Target Setting Program (LDN-TSP), which discussed ongoing achievements, the way forward, and in particular the potential for synergies with other conventions. The session created high interest and extensive questions and answers on this topic. The GEF reiterated its ongoing support and its readiness to support implementation of LDN targets in the future.

41. Parties to the UNCCD made pragmatic progress on the agenda items discussed and the final documents of the CRIC 15 convey a forward-looking attitude and focus on the implementation of the LDN concept. The documents summarizing parties' discussions on the six agenda items can be accessed at: <http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/the-bodies/The-CRIC/Pages/cric15-L-documents.aspx>

42. In follow-up of COP 12 decisions, the GEF Secretariat received and incorporated GEF Council comments on the amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UNCCD COP and the GEF Council, which was discussed at the 51st GEF Council. A revised draft was sent to the GEF legal counsel for a final check before submission to the UNCCD

Secretariat. The proposed amendments to the MoU are scheduled to be submitted to the COP 13, to be held in September 2017.

43. With the start of the GEF-7 replenishment process, the GEF CEO and the UNCCD Executive Secretary held a bilateral to discuss how the GEF aims to address the UNCCD agenda. GEF and UNCCD staff consulted multiple times on the replenishment in order to reflect UNCCD priorities and LDN in the proposed GEF programming.

Ratifications and Accessions

44. As of March 21, 2017, the UNCCD was ratified or acceded by 196 countries. Canada has acceded the Convention on December 21, 2016 and therefore re-joined as Party on March 21, 2017.

Additional Meetings and Consultations

45. The GEF Secretariat and the UNCCD Secretariat were engaged in various consultations for the GEF-7 replenishment, including the following:

- (a) The GEF CEO met with the UNCCD Executive Secretary on March 28, 2017, to discuss the alignment of the GEF-7 Programming Directions with CCD COP guidance, country ownership, and emerging priorities.
- (b) The UNCCD Executive Secretary also met with GEF personnel on February 7, 2017, and March 8, 2017, to discuss the draft Programming Directions document, and shared written comments.
- (c) The UNCCD personnel participated at the GEF-7 TAG meeting on 7-9 February 2017 to provide inputs on addressing the LDN and other recent COP guidance.

46. The GEF Secretariat has requested further continuous engagement of the UNCCD Secretariat in the replenishment process to ensure that COP guidance and emerging priorities are addressed adequately. In addition to guidance summarized above, Parties at COP 12 also invited donors to the GEF to consider providing in increased support to address country priorities relating to the implementation of the Convention in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular target 15.3, during the planning process for GEF-7.

47. On February 7, 2017, a GEF representative took part in the Tokyo International Symposium on Combating Desertification, which was co-organized by the UNCCD Secretariat, the Ministry of Environment of Japan, and Tottori University to discuss contributions to achieve LDN. The GEF intervention addressed GEF's support to the LDN target setting, emphasis on food security and integrated programming, and relevance on environment security.

48. At the margins of CRIC 15, GEF participated in a regional workshop on LDN target setting for additional countries. The number of countries that have committed to set voluntary targets has increased to a total of 105 countries.

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Update Summary

49. The GEF Secretariat's activities related to the Stockholm Convention focused on preparations for the eighth meeting of the Stockholm Convention (SR COP 8), held from 24 April to 5 May 2017. The GEF report to the COP was submitted to the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions in February 2017, following the GEF Council approval.⁸ The report summarized the GEF support to countries to implement the Stockholm Convention, and described how GEF has supported synergy to the implementation of the BRS Conventions and the support of the implementation of the Stockholm Convention by the GEF also supported the other two conventions.

50. The GEF Secretariat also provided inputs and comments on the effectiveness evaluation of the Financial Mechanism.

51. The GEF Secretariat and the BRS Conventions Secretariat engaged in regular consultations to solicit perspectives of the Chemicals-related Conventions and to discuss ways to address COP guidance and emerging chemicals priorities in the GEF-7 replenishment process, as summarized further in the following section.

Ratifications and Accessions

52. During the reporting period, Iraq joined the Stockholm Convention. The total number of ratifications amounts to 181 as of March 2017. The status of ratifications can be retrieved from the Stockholm Convention website:

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

National Reporting

53. Article 7 of the Stockholm Convention states that each Party shall develop and endeavour to carry out a plan for the implementation of its obligations under the Stockholm Convention, which needs to be transmitted to the COP within two years of the date on which this Convention enters into force. Article 7 also calls for a review and update of the plan on a periodic basis and in a manner specified by the Conference of the Parties. As of March 2017, the status of submission of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) and the NIP Updates are as follows:

⁸ The GEF report can be accessed from:

<http://www.brsmeas.org/2017COPs/MeetingDocuments/tabid/5385/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

<i>NIP Phase</i>	<i>Number of Parties that have submitted</i>
Initial NIP	163
NIP Update for COP 4 amendments	47
NIP Update for COP 5 amendments	40
NIP Update for COP 6 amendments	14
NIP Update for COP 7 amendments	3

54. The NIPs submitted online can be retrieved from the Stockholm Convention website: <http://chm.pops.int/Implementation/NIPs/Overview/tabid/565/Default.aspx>.

Additional Meetings and Consultations

55. GEF and Stockholm Convention staff engaged in various consultations for the GEF-7 replenishment reflect the implementation of the Stockholm Convention in future GEF programming, as summarized below:

- (a) Stockholm Convention Secretariat staff participated at the GEF-7 TAG meeting on February 7-9, 2017.
- (b) The GEF CEO and the Executive Secretary held a bilateral dialogue over the telephone on March 23, 2017, to exchange on the vision for GEF-7 and how the GEF-7 chemicals agenda and COP guidance may be addressed through cross-cutting and focused programs.
- (c) The Stockholm Convention Secretariat personnel took part in the first GEF-7 replenishment meeting held from 29 to 30 March 2017 and associated bilateral discussions. The GEF Secretariat requested continued engagement and consultations with the Stockholm Convention to ensure outcomes of COP 8 and other emerging priorities are reflected and addressed in the replenishment process.

56. The thirteenth COP meeting of the Basel Convention (BC COP-13), the eighth COP meeting of the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-8) and the eighth COP meeting of the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-8) were held on April 24 to May 5, 2017. The GEF Secretariat submitted the report of the GEF to the COP of the Stockholm Convention in February 2017, summarizing programming and responses to COP guidance.

57. GEF Secretariat personnel participated in the four regional preparatory meetings for the 2017 Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention COPs to update countries on the actions being taken by the GEF to implement the Stockholm Convention:

- (a) Asia-Pacific: March 6-8, 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand;

- (b) Africa: March 14-16, 2017 in Dakar, Senegal;
- (c) Central and Eastern Europe: March 21-23, 2017 in Riga, Latvia; and
- (d) Latin America and the Caribbean: March 28-30, 2017 in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

58. The SC COP-8 deliberated a number of documents of relevance to the GEF-7 replenishment to develop guidance to the GEF, including the following:

- (a) Second Effectiveness Evaluation of the Convention;
- (b) Fourth Review of the Financial Mechanism and the assessment of funding needs for the period 2018 - 2022 for the implementation of the Convention;
- (c) Memorandum of Understanding between the COP and the GEF and elements of guidance of relevance from the Rotterdam and Basel Conventions.

59. The Effectiveness Evaluation concluded that while the Convention is reducing the original twelve POPs, there is danger of Parties not being able to meet the PCB reduction targets due to continued widespread use of PCB and the slow pace of phase out. The evaluation also concluded that action on legacy POPs needs to be increased. The report further showed an increase in the emission of unintentionally produced POPs. Various recommendations from the evaluation were considered as inputs to guidance provided to the GEF.

60. The assessment of funding needs for the period 2018-2022 concluded that US\$4,373,233,324 is required from the financial mechanism to meet the obligations of developing country Parties and Parties with Economies in Transition.

61. The Fourth Review of the Financial Mechanism provided a number of recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of the mechanism including strengthening of the monitoring evaluation of the focal area.

MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

Update Summary

62. In support of countries in ratifying the Minamata Convention, and to take early action the GEF has provided funding to 100 countries to conduct their Minamata Initial Assessments and funding to 31 countries to conduct their ASGM National Action Plan as at March 31, 2017 in accordance with the guidelines approved by the 45th GEF Council.⁹

63. During the reporting period, the GEF Secretariat engaged closely with the Minamata Convention ad Interim Secretariat for the GEF-7 replenishment negotiations and consultations.

⁹ GEF/C.45/Inf.05/Rev.01

64. The Seventh Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC 7) of the Minamata Convention has transmitted the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the GEF and the future Conference of the Parties. The document was presented for consideration of the GEF Council at its 51st meeting in October 2016.¹⁰ The Council comments have been submitted to the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention ad interim for forwarding to the first COP of the Minamata Convention.

Signatures and Ratifications

65. The Minamata Convention on Mercury was opened for signature and ratification in October 2013. As of April 12, 2017, the Convention has 128 signatures, and 42 countries have deposited instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to the Convention. Burkina Faso is the most recent country to ratify the Convention. The Convention will enter into force 90 days after deposition of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. The status of signatures and ratifications can be found on the Minamata Convention website: <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Countries/tabid/3428/Default.aspx>.

Additional Meetings and Consultations

66. The GEF Secretariat engaged closely with the Minamata Convention ad Interim Secretariat in the GEF-7 replenishment process, as follows:

- (a) The Convention Secretariat staff participated at the GEF-7 TAG meeting on February 7-9, 2017.
- (b) The Executive Coordinator and GEF Chemicals team held consultations on 23 February 2017 and 29 March 2017 regarding priorities related to the Minamata Convention and Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and programming modalities.
- (c) The Interim Coordinator took part in the first GEF-7 replenishment meeting and associated bilateral discussions. Following the first meeting, the GEF Secretariat requested continued engagement and consultations.

67. There is an expectation that the first Conference of the Parties is to be held in September 2017.

MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON SUBSTANCES THAT DEplete THE OZONE LAYER

68. The GEF Secretariat did not participate in meetings of the Montreal Protocol and its Open Ended Working group during the reporting period, however the GEF Secretariat has

¹⁰ See document GEF/C.51/11.

provided information to both the Ozone Secretariat and the Multilateral Fund (MLF) Secretariat on activities that the GEF has been taking to implement the Montreal Protocol.

69. The GEF Secretariat also received three medium-sized projects and one full-sized project for initiatives to implement the Montreal Protocol in countries with economies in transition. In accordance with the arrangements between the GEF and the MLF, these projects were shared with the MLF Secretariat for their input into the review.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

70. The second meeting of the Executive Board of the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) took place on October 11-13, 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand.

71. The GEF was involved at the project screening stage and as an expert observer to the Executive Board to ensure that projects funded by the Special Program are not duplicating projects funded by the GEF. The Board approved seven projects at the meeting.

72. The second call for proposals was opened for four months commencing on February 22, 2017. The GEF has been requested by the Executive Board to be involved in the initial review of the projects for the second round.

ENGAGEMENT WITH CONVENTIONS TO FACILITATE SYNERGIES AND GEF-7 REPLENISHMENT

73. The GEF occupies a unique space in the global partnership for sustainable development by delivering global environmental benefits. GEF's contributions are anchored in its role as a/the financial mechanism for a number of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). Many global environmental challenges are interlinked and share common drivers. Biodiversity loss, climate change, ecosystem degradation, and pollution often share common drivers and may demand coordinated responses.

74. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as embodied in the SDGs, countries are also increasingly interested in pursuing integrated, cross-cutting opportunities for sustainable development. The GEF has received COP guidance related to SDGs from UNCCD in 2015 and from CBD in 2016, as summarized in above sections. Additional guidance on synergy and integrated programming has also been given by recent COPs, including UNFCCC and CBD in 2016. These guidance underscores the increasing need for the GEF to engage across the Conventions to ensure consistency and effectiveness on cross-cutting themes and to facilitate synergy.

75. The GEF Secretariat organized a 'Second Dialogue with MEAs and GEF' at the margins of the 51st GEF Council on October 24, 2016. The dialogue was opened by the GEF CEO and featured senior representatives of the MEA Secretariats. It included participants from the GEF

Secretariat as well as government representatives attending the GEF Council. The dialogue focused on the implications of SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for GEF programming to implement MEAs.

76. The dialogue also provided an opportunity to discuss MEA engagement in GEF Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs) beyond 2016, to enable a direct transmission of MEA guidance to inform ongoing and future country programming.

77. The GEF Secretariat, with participation from MEA secretariats, rolled out a new session on 'Facilitating synergies in implementing MEAs towards sustainable development' as part of GEF ECWs in 2017, which is being delivered at all ECWs to reach all GEF constituencies. With participation of personnel from the Convention Secretariats, the session provides an opportunity to discuss enhanced synergies to address MEA goals in line with sustainable development priorities, and to explore how the GEF support may help countries in this regard. The dialogue is the first coordinated effort to bring together all Convention-related stakeholders at ECWs, including the GEF operational focal points, the national MEA focal points, and representatives of the GEF Secretariat as well as the Convention Secretariats.

78. Regarding the GEF-7 replenishment, the GEF Secretariat has been engaged actively with the five Convention secretariats individually and collectively to ensure that the proposed GEF programming and policy directions address Convention priorities and recent COP guidance, and facilitate synergy towards greater effectiveness and impact.

79. Inputs from all MEAs have been sought on proposed initiatives to support integrated national planning for MEAs and SDGs, as well as initiatives and focal area strategies that are proposed based on national prioritization and Convention guidance.

80. As described in previous sections, consultations with the Convention secretariats have taken place at multiple levels, including bilateral dialogues between the GEF CEO and Convention heads, technical level bilateral discussions, engagement in various thematic discussions at the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting, participation in the first GEF-7 replenishment meeting, and written contributions on proposed Programming Directions.

81. Continued engagement of the MEA Secretariats is crucial and actively sought as the GEF Secretariat further articulates its *raison d'être* and the unique role of the GEF as a/the financial mechanism for multiple Conventions in the GEF-7 Programming Directions.

ADAPTATION FUND

82. The GEF has functioned, since 2008, as the interim secretariat for the Adaptation Fund Board. In November 2016 in Marrakech, Morocco, the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP12) decided to renew the interim institutional arrangement for an additional three years, from 30 May 2017 to 30 May 2020.

83. The CMA decided, at the second part of its first session in Marrakech, Morocco, that the Adaptation Fund should serve the Paris Agreement, following and consistent with decisions to be taken at the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, to be convened in conjunction with COP 24, and by the CMP that address the governance and institutional arrangements, safeguards and operating modality of the Adaptation Fund.

84. The Adaptation Fund Board held its twenty-ninth meeting on March 14-17, 2017 in Bonn, Germany. The GEF CEO was invited to address the meeting and, in her remarks, she applauded the significant progress that has been made by the Fund since her last visit to the twenty-seventh meeting in March 2016, particularly given the CMA decision that the Fund “should” serve the Paris Agreement and the achievement of the resource mobilization target of \$80 million in Marrakech. With its portfolio of \$417 million, which was substantial, and the upcoming celebration of its tenth anniversary, she suggested that it was a good moment for the Board to consider the future, particularly with reference to the Board’s consideration of the medium-term strategy for the Fund, and how that process could draw on the strategy work that had been done within the GEF. She also took the opportunity to outline the GEF’s new approach to its upcoming seventh replenishment.

85. The GEF CEO congratulated the new manager of the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat, Mr. Mikko Ollikainen, on his selection by the Board. He had previously worked at the Secretariat as Senior Climate Change Specialist.

86. The GEF Secretariat and the Adaptation Fund are continuing to collaborate on an ad hoc basis on joint events, project reviews and other matters as needed. For instance, following the approval of the Fund’s gender policy and action plan in March 2016, the GEF and the Adaptation Fund have started organizing collaboration on gender issues. The Adaptation Fund Board has approved 63 concrete projects amounting to \$417 million in total. As of March 17, 2017 funds available to support funding decisions were \$168 million.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Green Climate Fund

87. The GEF and GCF Secretariats engaged in several discussions to articulate practical steps to work together. The GEF CEO and GCF Executive Director held bilateral meetings in the margins of the UNFCCC COP 22 in November 2016 in Marrakesh, Morocco, and on the occasion of the GCF Executive Director’s visit to Washington, DC in March 2017. The discussions focused on enhancing complementarity in support of the Paris Agreement.

88. The GEF and GCF focal points met in the margins of the 51st GEF Council meeting in October 2016 and discussed a range of potential items for enhanced complementarity and coherence that may merit further in-depth consideration. During COP 22, technical climate staff of both secretariats, led by the GEF Director of Programs and the GCF Director of Country

Programming/Secretary to the Board, held a working session to discuss areas for potential cooperation. The following areas emerged:

- (a) Explore further a pilot for coordinated national strategy and project development - identify countries where GEF OFPs and GCF NDAs are identical to facilitate easier start-up conversations;
- (b) Conduct joint country missions to 5+ countries for national strategy/project development;
- (c) Organize joint outreach to GEF agencies/GCF international entities, as needed;
- (d) Consider mutual engagements in the GCF Structured Dialogue and GEF Expanded Constituency Meetings (ECWs);
- (e) GEF to support GCF in the annual Dialogue with Climate Finance Delivery Channels, as requested by the GCF Board, including suggestions on agenda and active participation;
- (f) GCF to support GEF on elements related to transparency of support for CBIT;
- (g) Convene small working groups on key topics, such as technology transfer, capacity building and NAPs;
- (h) Discuss fund-to-fund arrangements, also informed by small working group discussions on key topics; and
- (i) Collaborate with a view to potentially addressing parts of COP guidance jointly as financial mechanism at large.

89. GEF and GCF focal points followed up during a teleconference in February 2017. The GEF secretariat reiterated the invitation to the GCF to observe/participate in GEF ECWs during 2017. A GCF representative took part in the GEF ECW in Vietnam during the first week of April 2017, and provided an overview of the GCF and potential for synergy.

90. Upon request from the GCF Secretariat, the GEF Secretariat made arrangements to enable a GCF Secretariat staff to observe the first GEF replenishment meeting in March 2017 to help prepare for the GCF replenishment in the future.

91. The GEF took part in a meeting amongst secretariats of climate finance delivery channels, including the GEF, Climate Investment Funds, Adaptation Fund, and the GCF, in the side lines of the Spring meetings of the World Bank on April 20, 2017. The meeting, organized by the GCF in collaboration with the CIFs, was convened to discuss how to maximize opportunities for complementarity and coherence in the climate finance architecture, and to explore potential avenues of collaboration.

92. The GEF and GCF staff also continue to discuss items of mutual interest on an ad hoc basis, as needed.

UN Forum on Forests

93. The GEF Secretariat continued its participation in the formulation of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) Strategic Plan through part-taking in the UNFF Working Group and Special Session on January 16–20, 2017 in New York City as well as virtual follow-up meetings. The UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 provides a global framework for actions at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests and halt deforestation and forest degradation. At the heart of the Strategic Plan are six Global Forest Goals and 26 associated targets to be achieved by 2030, which are voluntary and universal. They support the objectives of the International Arrangement on Forests and aim to contribute to progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Paris Agreement adopted under UNFCCC and other international forest-related instruments, processes, commitments and goals.

94. GEF also participated in a Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) meeting at the margin of the Special Session on January 16 and another working meeting of the CPF and the related Global Forest Expert Panel on forest and water in Rome, Italy, 14-17 March, 2017. Responding to UNFF 11 resolution, the CPF is finalizing important tasks ahead of the next UNFF12 session, including its new policy document (multilateral memorandum of understanding) and a CPF work plan aligned with the new UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030.

95. The decisions taken by the Forum of relevance to the GEF, including GEF's responses to the substantial items, were presented in an Annex to the previous Council document on *Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions*.¹¹

¹¹ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting_documents/EN_GEF.C.50.09_Relations_with_the_Conventions_1.pdf

ANNEX I: GEF RESPONSES TO DECISIONS AND GUIDANCE OF THE CONFERENCES OF PARTIES OF THE CBD AND THE UNFCCC.¹²

Table 1: GEF’s Response to Guidance Contained in Decisions Adopted by CBD COP 13 Decision XIII/21

COP Decision	GEF’s Response
<p>A. Four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities (2018-2022)</p>	
<p><i>Adopts</i> the consolidated guidance to the financial mechanism, including the four-year framework of programme priorities (2018-2022) for the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, as contained in annexes I and II to the present decision, and <i>decides</i> to retire the previous decisions and elements of decisions, as related to the financial mechanism and limited only to those provisions related to the financial mechanism;</p> <p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility, the recipient and non-recipient Global Environment Facility participants, relevant global and regional partner organizations, and the Executive Secretary to promote a successful implementation of the four-year framework of programme priorities (2018-2022) for the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund;</p> <p><i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue and further strengthen integrated programming as a means to harness opportunities for synergy in implementing related multilateral environmental agreements as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15;</p>	<p>The GEF-7 Programming Directions and Policy Agenda document prepared for the first replenishment meeting March 28, 2017 to March 30, 2017 in Paris, France emphasized integrated programming to achieve synergies across the MEAs.</p> <p>Specifically, the GEF-7 biodiversity investment framework fully embodies an integrated approach to biodiversity management that comprehensively addresses the four-year framework of programme priorities (2018-2022) for the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, as contained in annexes I and II to CBD/COP/DEC/XIII/21. As currently formulated in the first draft of the GEF-7 Programming Directions, implementation of the GEF-7 Framework of Program Priorities from CBD COP-13 is supported through a series of eleven Impact Programs that seek to deliver impact at scale by addressing key underlying drivers of biodiversity loss as well as direct drivers/pressures. The Impact Programs are complemented by a series of biodiversity-specific investments that address particular elements of the biodiversity agenda. As a whole, they provide the most comprehensive strategic response in GEF’s history to the most</p>

¹² GEF’s responses to most recent COP guidance from UNCCD and Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on mercury were reported to the 50th GEF council, and can be found at: <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/relations-conventions-and-other-international-institutions-13>. GEF report to the eighth Stockholm Convention COP can be found at: <http://www.brsmeas.org/2017COPs/MeetingDocuments/tabid/5385/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

COP Decision	GEF's Response
<p><i>Notes</i> the initial assessment of the accreditation pilot, and <i>requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to consider improving its access modalities, including enabling the participation of a number of additional national agencies from developing countries, based on its own experiences, including the conclusions of this assessment, and taking into account the experience of other international financial instruments with relevant access modalities.</p> <p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to include information regarding the individual elements of the consolidated guidance, in particular the four-year outcome oriented framework of programme priorities, in its future reports to the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>prominent direct drivers/pressures of biodiversity loss.</p> <p>The GEF Council, at its 50th meeting in June 2016, having reviewed the Secretariat's analysis of the coverage and effectiveness of the GEF's network of 18 Agencies (GEF/C.50/07), and an evaluation of the expansion of the GEF Partnership carried out by the Independent Evaluation Office (GEF/ME/C.50/06), decided to reassess, at the end of the sixth replenishment period of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-6), whether to launch a process to accredit a limited number of additional Agencies. The Council agreed that this assessment should build on the findings of the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6), expected in September 2017, and take into account the criteria set out in the Secretariat's paper. Accordingly, the GEF stands ready to provide further information on this subject in its report to the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.</p> <p>The GEF will include this information in future reports to the Conference of the Parties.</p>
D. Second determination of funding requirement	
<p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to take the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as the expert team's needs assessment report into consideration in the process of the seventh period of replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund but also noting the limitations identified by the expert team.</p>	<p>During the GEF-7 replenishment process, all of this will be taken into consideration by the GEF-7 replenishment participants.</p>
E. Further guidance	

COP Decision	GEF's Response
<p><i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to consider joint financing, in partnership with other international financial instruments, of projects designed to achieve the objectives of more than one Rio convention;</p> <p><i>Takes note</i> of the projected shortfall of resources from sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility due to exchange rate movements, and the decision of the Council of the Global Environment Facility on item 6 of the agenda of the 51st meeting of the Council;</p> <p><i>Notes</i> the crucial role of the Global Environment Facility in the mobilization of resources at the domestic level and in support of the achievement of Aichi Targets, and <i>requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue its efforts to minimize the potential consequences of the projected shortfall referred to in paragraph 18 above for its support to developing countries, aiming to fulfil the relevant programming directions of the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility and with a view to maintaining the level of support to Global Environment Facility recipient countries;</p> <p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to consider exploring measures to mitigate possible risks, including currency risks, in order to avoid potential negative impacts on future replenishment periods for the provision of financial resources for all Global Environment Facility recipient countries, taking fully into account the provisions of paragraphs 5 and 6 of Article 20 of the Convention;</p> <p><i>Urges</i> the Global Environment Facility and its partners to support recipient countries in their efforts to identify and mobilize co-financing for its projects related to implementation of the Convention, including through public-private partnerships, as well as applying co-financing arrangements in ways that improve access, do not create barriers or increase costs for recipient</p>	<p>GEF will continue to seek and act on opportunities for joint financing to achieve global environmental benefits and achieve the objectives of multiple Rio conventions.</p> <p>The GEF will seek to minimize the consequences of the project shortfall consistent with GEF Council Decision GEF/C.51/04.</p> <p>During the replenishment negotiations, measures to minimize potential negative impacts on provision of financial resources will be discussed.</p> <p>GEF and its partners will continue to help identify and mobilize co-financing to support the implementation of GEF projects.</p>

COP Decision	GEF's Response
<p>countries to access Global Environment Facility funds;</p> <p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, in response to the concerns of the Parties on transparency of the process of approving Global Environment Facility projects, to include in its report to the Conference of the Parties, information regarding paragraph 3.3(d) of the Memorandum of Understanding.</p>	<p>GEF will include in its report to the Conference of the Parties information regarding 3.3 (d) of the Memorandum of Understanding.</p>
Ecosystem restoration	
<p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility and Parties in a position to do so and other donors, such as international financial institutions, including regional development banks, to provide support for ecosystem restoration activities, as well as monitoring processes as appropriate, and integrated where relevant into programmes and initiatives for sustainable development, food, water and energy security, job creation, climate change mitigation, adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and poverty eradication.</p>	<p>In GEF-6, the GEF supported “The Restoration Initiative - Fostering Innovation and Integration in Support of the Bonn Challenge” program with US\$ 53 million of GEF resources which leveraged US\$ 201 million of co-financing. The participating countries include: Cameroon, CAR, China, DRC, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sao Tome & Principe, and Tanzania.</p> <p>Additional initiatives to support ecosystem restoration will be explored and discussed during the GEF-7 replenishment negotiations.</p>
Strategic Plan	
<p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, and <i>invites</i> other development partners and donors in a position to do so, to continue to provide support in a timely manner, based on the expressed needs of Parties, especially for developing countries and, in particular, least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, for the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, in line with the strategy and targets for resource mobilization agreed to in decision XII/3.</p>	<p>During GEF-5 and GEF-6, virtually all GEF-eligible countries have received support to revise their NBSAP. During GEF-7, GEF will support the very few remaining countries that have not revised their NBSAPs. In addition, GEF will respond to any further guidance that may be directed to the GEF on NBSAP development during the GEF-7 phase.</p>
Aichi Targets 11 and 12	

COP Decision	GEF's Response
<p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies to facilitate the alignment of the development and implementation of protected area and other effective area-based conservation measures in its sixth and seventh replenishment periods with the national actions identified in national biodiversity strategies and action plans and, as appropriate, through the regional workshops for the achievement of Targets 11 and 12, with a view to facilitating the systematic monitoring and reporting of the results of those projects as they contribute to the implementation of the national action plans for the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12 and other related targets.</p>	<p>GEF will continue to support implementation of protected area projects in support of Aichi Targets 11 and 12 in support of priorities identified in the NBSAPs and other relevant planning documents.</p>
<p>Sixth national report</p>	
<p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, in the light of the revised guidelines for reporting under the Convention and its Protocols, to assess the required funding levels for national reporting, and provide financial support to developing countries accordingly in a timely and expeditious manner.</p>	<p>The GEF has undertaken an assessment of required funding levels for national reporting and will increase financial support for the 6th national report accordingly. Proposals for the 6th national report are already under preparation by UNDP and UNEP with an aim to submit them as soon as possible.</p>
<p>Cross-sectoral mainstreaming</p>	
<p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment <i>Facility</i> and other donor and financial institutions to provide financial assistance for country driven projects that address cross-sectoral mainstreaming when requested by developing country Parties, in particular the least developed among them and small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition.</p>	<p>The GEF will continue to support cross-sectoral mainstreaming, an area of the GEF portfolio that continues to increase relative to other conservation investment strategies prioritized by Parties.</p>
<p>Traditional knowledge</p>	

COP Decision	GEF's Response
<p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility, international financial institutions and development agencies and relevant non-governmental organizations, as appropriate and consistent with their mandates to consider providing financial and technical assistance to developing country Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, particularly women within these communities, to raise awareness and to build their capacity relevant to the implementation of the Rutzolijirisaxik Voluntary Guidelines for the Repatriation of Traditional Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Relevant for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity, and to develop, as appropriate, community protocols or processes for “prior and informed consent” or “free, prior and informed consent”, depending on national circumstances, or “approval and involvement”, and fair and equitable benefit-sharing.</p>	<p>GEF will support activities within relevant projects to respond to these capacity building requests.</p>
<p>Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety</p>	
<p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to provide finance in support of activities related to the Biosafety Clearing-House;</p> <p><i>Emphasizes</i> the importance of continuous and predictable support by the Global Environment Facility to eligible Parties to support their compliance with reporting obligations under the Protocol;</p> <p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to provide financial support to enable developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States among them, and Parties with economies in transition to further implement the Framework and Action Plan for Capacity-Building;</p> <p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to assist eligible Parties that have not yet done so to put in place a national biosafety framework and to make funds available to this end;</p>	<p>The GEF-6 biodiversity strategy includes Program 5 to support implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and support for all of these activities are provided under this program area in GEF-6. Programming directions and modalities to address priorities articulated from CBD COP 13 will be deliberated further during the GEF-7 replenishment process.</p>

COP Decision	GEF's Response
<p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to provide eligible Parties with financial resources to facilitate effective implementation of the programme of work on public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms, in the context of relevant project activities and within its mandate;</p> <p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to provide funding for capacity-building related to risk assessment and risk management in the context of country-driven projects;</p> <p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility:</p> <p>To continue to make specific funding available to eligible Parties to put in place their national biosafety frameworks;</p> <p>To continue to fund projects and capacity-building activities on issues identified by the Parties to facilitate further implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, including regional cooperation projects, such as those using regional and sub-regional networks to build capacity for the detection of living modified organisms, with a view to facilitating the sharing of experiences and lessons learned, and harnessing associated synergies;</p> <p>To ensure that the policy, strategy, programme priorities and eligibility criteria adopted in annex I to decision I/2 of the Conference of the Parties are duly followed in an efficient manner in relation to access and utilization of financial resources.</p>	
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing	
<p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to provide support to eligible Parties for interim national reports under the Nagoya Protocol.</p>	<p>Proposals for the interim national report are already under preparation by UNEP with an aim to submit them as soon as possible.</p>

Table 2: GEF's Response to Guidance Contained in Decisions Adopted by UNFCCC COP 22 and SBI 45 Conclusions

COP Decision/SBI Conclusion	GEF's Response
<p>Decision 5/CP.22, Review and report of the Adaptation Committee http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/cop22/eng/10a01.pdf#page=12</p>	
<p>Paragraph 5: <i>Noted with appreciation</i> the ongoing and planned collaboration between the Adaptation Committee and other constituted bodies and institutional arrangements under the Convention, including the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, the Technology Executive Committee, the Standing Committee on Finance, the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the Paris Committee on Capacity-building, in order to enhance the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans and actions, the implementation of the relevant mandates contained in decision 1/CP.21 and access by developing country Parties to adaptation finance, in particular from the Green Climate Fund, as appropriate;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Decision 11/CP.22, Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Global Environment Facility http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/cop22/eng/10a01.pdf#page=38</p>	
<p>Paragraph 1: <i>Emphasized</i> the need for the Global Environment Facility to consider lessons learned from past replenishment periods and to take into account the entry into force of the Paris Agreement in its</p>	<p>The GEF is committed to serve the Paris Agreement as its financial mechanism. Early steps taken include the establishment of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). The GEF Secretariat has also proposed to the GEF replenishment group through the draft programming directions for its seventh replenishment, an adequate and predictable resource flow</p>

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<p>deliberations on the strategy for the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund in order to continue to increase the effectiveness of its operations;</p> <p>Paragraph 2:</p> <p><i>Called upon</i> developed country Parties, and invites other Parties that make voluntary financial contributions to the Global Environment Facility, to ensure a robust seventh replenishment, in order to assist in providing adequate and predictable funding taking into consideration the Paris Agreement;</p> <p>Paragraph 3:</p> <p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention, in its seventh replenishment programming, to continue to assist developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, in accessing resources in an efficient manner;</p> <p>Paragraph 4:</p> <p><i>Also requested</i> the Global Environment Facility, as appropriate, to ensure that its policies and procedures related to the consideration and review of funding proposals be duly followed in an efficient manner;</p> <p>Paragraph 5:</p> <p><i>Took note</i> of the projected shortfall of resources from the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility due to exchange rate movements, and the decision of the Council of the Global Environment Facility on item 6 on the agenda of the 51st meeting of the council;</p>	<p>toward the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The GEF will provide further information on the replenishment process as it evolves.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF Secretariat has proposed to the GEF replenishment group through the draft programming directions for its seventh replenishment, to continue to assist developing countries, in particular LDCs and SIDS, in accessing resources in an efficient manner. The GEF will provide further information on the replenishment process as it evolves.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF is ensuring through its regular due diligence processes and strong governance model that its policies and procedures related to the consideration and review of funding proposals be duly followed in an efficient manner.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

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<p>Paragraph 6:</p> <p><i>Requested</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue its efforts, as appropriate and as needed, to minimize the potential consequences of the projected shortfall referred to in paragraph 5 above for its support to developing countries, aiming to fulfil the relevant programming directions of the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility;</p> <p>Paragraph 7:</p> <p><i>Welcomed</i> the decisions of the Council of the Global Environment Facility to establish the Trust Fund for the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency and to approve the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency programming directions, and to ensure that the support for the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency will be included in the seventh replenishment, to complement existing support under the Global Environment Facility, in accordance with decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 86;</p> <p>Paragraph 8:</p> <p><i>Also welcomed</i> the pledges made by several countries to make voluntary contributions to the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency and the signing of the first contribution agreement by a country and encourages others that have pledged to make voluntary contributions to finalize their contribution agreements;</p> <p>Paragraph 9:</p> <p><i>Requested</i> the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention, to continue providing in its annual</p>	<p>Noted. The GEF is working to minimize potential consequences of the projected shortfall referred to in paragraph 5 of Decision 11/CP.22. The Work Program presented to the Council for consideration at its 52nd meeting in May 2017 reflects this consideration.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF will provide in its annual report information on the establishment and operation of the</p>

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<p>reports, inter alia, information on the establishment and operation of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency, including its programming and implementation modalities, on the voluntary contributions pledged and provided,⁶ and on the implementation of decision 9/CP.18;</p> <p>Paragraph 10:</p> <p><i>Welcomed</i> the Global Environment Facility's continued engagement and coordination with the Climate Technology Centre and Network through the Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer and the regional technology transfer and financing centres, as well as actions taken by the Global Environment Facility in response to the recommendations by the Technology Executive Committee following the evaluation of the Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer;</p> <p>Paragraph 11:</p> <p><i>Urged</i> the Global Environment Facility and recipient countries to continue exploring with the Climate Technology Centre and Network ways to support climate technology related projects through country allocations of the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility;</p> <p>Paragraph 12:</p> <p><i>Requested</i> the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention, to take into consideration climate risks in all its programmes and operations, as</p>	<p>CBIT, including its programming and implementation modalities, on the voluntary contributions pledged and provided, and on the implementation of decision 9/CP.18. Information on these matters to date can be taken from the Progress Report on the CBIT as presented to the GEF Council for consideration at its 52nd meeting in May 2017.¹³</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF has been working with recipient countries to continue exploring with the CTCN to support climate technology related projects through country allocations of GEF-6. The GEF Secretariat participated actively in the 15th meeting of the Technology Executive Committee in March 2017, and provided further information to interested Parties as appropriate.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF has been taking into consideration climate risks in all its programs and operations, as appropriate, through the technical review process of projects and programs put forward to the GEF. A question on potential</p>

¹³ See document GEF/C.52/Inf.07, Progress Report on the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency.

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<p>appropriate, keeping in mind lessons learned and best practices;</p> <p>Paragraph 13:</p> <p><i>Encouraged</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue its efforts to encourage countries to align, as appropriate, their Global Environment Facility programming with priorities as identified in their nationally determined contributions, where they exist, during the seventh replenishment, and to continue to promote synergies across its focal areas;</p> <p>Paragraph 14:</p> <p><i>Welcomed</i> the conclusions of the “Program evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund” by the Global Environment Facility’s Independent Evaluation Office;</p> <p>Paragraph 15:</p> <p><i>Requested</i> the Global Environment Facility, as the operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention entrusted with the operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund, to continue to enhance capacity development in the least developed countries for the development of project proposals with a focus on identifying potential funding sources, both national and international, and enhancing long-term domestic institutional capacities;</p> <p>Paragraph 16:</p> <p><i>Encouraged</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to track, review and report on the sustainability of project outcomes from the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund;</p>	<p>risks that a proposed project or program may face is included in the review sheet for GEF funding requests, accordingly, and is applied to include risks resulting from climate change.</p> <p>The GEF is actively working with the replenishment group to ensure that NDCs and synergies across focal areas are reflected in GEF-7. The GEF will provide further information on the replenishment process as it evolves.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF has been consulting with the Chair of the LDC Group and relevant external stakeholders to ensure the guidance is implemented fully in its agreed form. Further information will be provided in the annual report of the GEF to the COP.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF Secretariat has been consulting with the GEF Independent Evaluation Office on the tracking of sustainability of project outcomes under the LDCF and SCCF and is working to implement this guidance fully. Further details will be provided in the annual report of the GEF to the COP.</p>

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<p>Paragraph 17:</p> <p><i>Welcomed</i> the initial assessment of the accreditation pilot and notes its conclusions;</p> <p>Paragraph 18:</p> <p><i>Requested</i> the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention, in light of the entry into force of the Paris Agreement, to continue streamlining project approval processes and providing enhanced support, including enabling activities, to developing country Parties, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, as appropriate, in the context of national climate strategies and plans;</p> <p>Paragraph 19:</p> <p><i>Welcomed</i> the successful roll-out of the non-grant instrument pilot and encourages further expansion of the pilot with a view to increasing the leverage and impact of Global Environment Facility financing;</p> <p>Paragraph 22:</p> <p><i>Also requested</i> the Global Environment Facility to include in its annual report to the Conference of the Parties information on the steps that it has taken to implement the guidance provided to it in this decision.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF has continued to provide funding for enabling activities in a streamlined fashion, in the context of national climate strategies and plans. The GEF is working to reflect this guidance also in GEF-7.</p> <p>Noted. The GEF Secretariat has proposed to the GEF replenishment group through the draft programming directions for its seventh replenishment, further expand the non-grant instrument pilot with a view to increasing the leverage and impact of GEF financing. The GEF will provide further information on the replenishment process as it evolves.</p> <p>The GEF will include in its annual report to the COP further information on the steps that it has taken to implement the guidance provided to it in decision 11/CP.22.</p>
<p>Conclusion on 'Matters relating to the least developed countries' http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/sbi/eng/l31.pdf</p>	
<p>Paragraph 5:</p> <p><i>[...] further welcomed</i> the efforts of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) secretariats, as well as other organizations, regional centres and networks in organizing special sessions related to the process to</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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<p>formulate and implement NAPs during the NAP Expo.</p> <p>Paragraph 11:</p> <p><i>[...] noted</i> that, as at 10 November 2016, 13 project proposals for the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) and for the process to formulate and implement NAPs that were previously technically cleared by the GEF, amounting to USD 87 million, had been approved by the GEF Council and were ready for implementation. An additional 35 technically cleared projects, seeking USD 231.4 million from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), have yet to be funded.</p> <p>Paragraph 12:</p> <p><i>[...] welcomed</i> the follow-up project under the LDCF of the NAP Global Support Programme for LDCs through which all LDCs that were not supported under the first project will have the opportunity to access one-to-one support for their process to formulate and implement NAPs tailored to their specific needs and circumstances.</p> <p>Paragraph 13:</p> <p><i>[...] noted</i> with appreciation the new pledges to the LDCF of EUR 24 million for the years 2016–2018 which were made during the LDCF/ Special Climate Change Fund Council meeting in October 2016.</p> <p>Paragraph 14:</p> <p><i>[...] urged</i> additional contributions to the LDCF and other funds under the Financial Mechanism, as appropriate, recognizing</p>	<p>The GEF, through the LDCF, has processed 17 projects for approval since COP 22, for a total LDCF funding volume of \$118.9 million and mobilizing an additional \$433.9 million in indicative co-financing, including in Lesotho, Uganda, Nepal, Malawi, Chad, Guinea, Liberia, Kiribati, Burkina Faso, Niger, Bangladesh, Niger, Mauritania, Burundi, Haiti, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.¹⁴ Further projects will be funded as additional resources become available under the LDCF.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

¹⁴ See document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/03, Progress Report on the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund.

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the importance of the full implementation of NAPAs and successfully undertaking the process to formulate and implement NAPs.	
Decision 6/CP.22, National adaptation plans http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/cop22/eng/10a01.pdf#page=14	
<p>Paragraph 8:</p> <p><i>Welcomed</i> the support provided by the Global Environment Facility for the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans.</p> <p>Paragraph 9:</p> <p><i>Noted with concern</i> that 12 funding proposals seeking to support elements of countries' work in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans were technically cleared by the Global Environment Facility but, as at 10 November 2016, were awaiting funding under the Least Developed Countries Fund;</p> <p>Paragraph 10:</p> <p><i>Encouraged</i> developed country Parties to contribute to the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund and invites additional voluntary financial contributions to the Least Developed Countries Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund and other funds under the Financial Mechanism, as appropriate, recognizing the importance of the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans;</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The GEF, through the LDCF, has processed 17 climate change adaptation projects for approval since COP 22, for a total LDCF funding volume of \$118.9 million and mobilizing an additional \$433.9 million in indicative co-financing, including in Lesotho, Uganda, Nepal, Malawi, Chad, Guinea, Liberia, Kiribati, Burkina Faso, Niger, Bangladesh, Niger, Mauritania, Burundi, Haiti, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Several of these projects also support National Adaptation Plan processes.¹⁵ Further projects will be funded as additional resources become available under the LDCF.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

¹⁵ See document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/03, Progress Report on the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund.