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December 19, 2019  
Washington, DC

**UPDATED INFORMATION NOTE  
ON  
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FUND SUPPORT  
FOR GRADUATING LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

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1. This document provides information to the end of November 2019 on support provided by the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) to graduating least developed countries<sup>1</sup> (LDCs). Specifically, a new section on *LDCF Support for Angola and Vanuatu* has been added, as well as a related additional Annex. According to the 2019 monitoring report of the United Nations (UN) Committee for Development Policy (CDP) for Angola and Vanuatu<sup>2</sup>, they remain scheduled to graduate from LDC status in February 2021 and December 2020, respectively. The GEF has made efforts in the GEF-7 period ending in June 2022 to ensure that both Angola and Vanuatu would have been able to fully utilize their LDCF country allocations prior to graduation.

#### **ELIGIBILITY FOR LDCF SUPPORT**

2. The LDCF was established at the seventh Conference of the Parties (COP 7) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), by decision 7/CP.7 from 2001, which states the following:

*Decides also* that a least developed countries fund shall be established, which shall be operated by an entity entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism, under the guidance of the Conference of the Parties, to support a work programme for the least developed countries. This work programme shall include, *inter alia*, national adaptation programmes of action in accordance with Section II, “Implementation of Article 4, paragraph 9, of the Convention”, of decision 5/CP.7;

3. Regarding eligibility for access to the LDCF, the GEF Council at its 19<sup>th</sup> meeting in April 2002 approved a document titled *Arrangements for the Establishment of the New Climate Change Funds* (GEF/C/19/6)<sup>3</sup>, which stated the following:

24. Eligibility: It is assumed that financing will be available to all Least Developed Countries as defined by the United Nations that are also party to the Convention. Currently, 49 countries have been designated as least developed countries, of which 46 countries are Parties to the UNFCCC. The list of LDCs is reviewed every three years by the UN Economic and Social Council.

4. Since the establishment of the LDCF, Timor Leste and South Sudan were added to the LDC list, in 2003 and 2012, respectively. They became eligible for LDCF support upon accession

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<sup>1</sup> It is an update to the document: GEF, 2018, [Information Note on Least Developed Countries Fund Support for Graduating Least Developed Countries](#), Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF25/Inf.06

<sup>2</sup> CDP, 2019, [Monitoring of Graduated and Graduating Countries from the Least Developed Country Category: Angola, Equatorial Guinea and Vanuatu](#), CDP2019/PLEN/5.

<sup>3</sup> GEF, 2002, [Arrangements for the Establishment of the New Climate Change Funds](#), GEF/C.19/6.

to the UNFCCC, which took place in October 2006 for Timor Leste and February 2014 for South Sudan.

5. Regarding eligibility to access the LDCF for National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) implementation projects, the GEF Council at its 28<sup>th</sup> meeting in May 2006 approved a document titled *Programming Paper for Funding the Implementation of NAPAs under the LDC Trust Fund* (GEF/C/28/18)<sup>4</sup>, which stated the following:

44. Proposals submitted for funding under the LDCF will be reviewed in light of agreed project criteria, drawn from the COP guidance. These criteria include country ownership; program and policy conformity; financing; institutional coordination and support; and monitoring and evaluation. For purposes of the LDCF, these criteria will be understood as follows:

(a) *Country ownership* includes two considerations: country eligibility and country drivenness. For a country to be eligible to receive funding for NAPA implementation under the LDCF, it should be an LDC Party to the UNFCCC that has completed its NAPA.

#### **TREATMENT OF LDCs THAT HAVE GRADUATED SINCE LDCF INCEPTION**

6. The LDCF is currently supporting 47 countries categorized by the UN as LDCs. Since the LDCF establishment, four LDCs that were eligible to receive LDCF support have graduated. They are: Cape Verde, Maldives, Samoa, and Equatorial Guinea.

7. The GEF Secretariat has taken the following practice with graduating LDCs, based on eligibility for support as agreed by GEF Council:

(a) If a country is classified as an LDC at the time of PIF approval by the LDCF/SCCF Council following technical clearance by the GEF Secretariat, the project is eligible to receive LDCF support;

(b) Projects already approved by the LDCF/SCCF Council prior to a country's graduation continue to be supported with agreed LDCF resources until completion.

8. During the very early stage of the LDCF operations, two PIF submissions were discussed with the GEF Secretariat prior to the graduation date. These were subsequently approved by the LDCF/SCCF Council and by the GEF CEO shortly after the graduation date, on an exceptional basis. They are summarized in Annex 1.

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<sup>4</sup> GEF, 2006, [Programming Paper for Funding the Implementation of NAPAs Under the LDC Trust Fund](#), GEF/C.28/18.

## UPCOMING LDC GRADUATIONS

9. The LDC status and graduation are informed by the UN CDP, which reviews development indicators in LDCs every three years. If a country scores adequately on two out of three of the development criteria for two consecutive triennial reviews, the CDP makes a recommendation on its graduation. The UN Economic and Social Council needs to endorse the CDP recommendation. The UN General Assembly takes note, which should be in the same year. The most recent triennial CDP Review<sup>5</sup> was conducted in March 2018, in which eligibility of the LDCs listed in Table 1 was considered.

**Table 1: Status of LDCs Considered for Graduation by CDP in March 2018<sup>6</sup>**

| LDC |                       | Status  |
|-----|-----------------------|---|
| 1   | Vanuatu*              | Scheduled to graduate on 4 December, 2020   |
| 2   | Angola*               | Scheduled to graduate on 12 February, 2021  |
| 3   | Bhutan                | Recommended for graduation by the CDP and endorsed by ECOSOC; General Assembly resolution forthcoming |
| 5   | Kiribati              | Recommended for graduation by the CDP; ECOSOC decision deferred to 2021                               |
| 5   | Nepal                 | CDP decision deferred to 2021   |
| 6   | Sao Tome and Principe | Recommended for graduation by CDP and endorsed by ECOSOC; General Assembly resolution forthcoming     |
| 7   | Solomon Islands       | Recommended for graduation by CDP and endorsed by ECOSOC; General Assembly resolution forthcoming     |
| 8   | Tuvalu                | Recommended for graduation by the CDP in 2012; ECOSOC decision deferred to 2021                       |

\*Scheduled to graduate during GEF-7.

## LDCF SUPPORT FOR ANGOLA AND VANUATU

10. The GEF made a particular effort in early GEF-7 to engage with Angola and Vanuatu, to ensure they would be able to receive LDCF support up to the \$10 million cap accessible by each

<sup>5</sup> UN CDP, 2018, [Committee for Development Policy: Report on the Twentieth Session](#), E/2018/33.

<sup>6</sup> UN CDP 2018, [The Least Developed Country Category: 2018 Country Snapshots](#).

LDC for the GEF-7 period<sup>7</sup> prior to graduation. As a result, Angola has already programmed \$10 million in LDCF resources, and Vanuatu will have done so upon Council approval of the December 2018 LDCF Work Program. Table 2 summarizes access to LDCF resources by these two LDCs. Annex 2 provides further information on the projects and programs submitted by Angola and Vanuatu in the GEF-7 period.

11. Angola opted to use all \$10 million of its available LDCF resources for GEF-7 towards a multi-trust fund (MTF) project<sup>8</sup> titled *Strengthening Climate Resilience and Biodiversity Management in Angola’s Conservation Areas*. A child project under the Global Wildlife Program, the project will mainstream climate change adaptation considerations in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management activities. This program was approved at the GEF and LDCF/SCCF Council Meetings in June 2019.

12. Vanuatu submitted two LDCF projects in GEF-7. The first was toward the LDCF-supported program, Climate-resilient Urban Development in the Pacific, for a \$2.5 million child project titled *Port Vila Integrated Urban Improvements Project*. The program was approved at the LDCF/DCCF Council Meeting in June 2019. Vanuatu has also submitted a \$7.5 million LDCF request toward the MTF project, *Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu – Phase II*. This has been submitted for approval by the GEF and LDCF/SCCF Councils to be held in December 2019.

**Table 2: Angola and Vanuatu: GEF-7 LDCF submissions and status as of end-November 2019**

| Country and graduation date   | Submitted PIF and status   | LDCF resources requested or approved  |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Angola</b><br/>12 February, 2021<br/><i>In-person consultations were held with the Angolan Ministerial delegation to the GEF in October 2018.</i></p> | <p>Child project under Global Wildlife Program, titled <i>Strengthening Climate Resilience and Biodiversity Management in Angola’s Conservation Areas</i> (multi-trust fund; World Bank)</p> | <p><b>\$10 million</b><br/>Program approved at June 2019 GEF Council Meeting, Angola project with LDCF support approved in June 2019 LDCF Council</p> |
| <p><b>Vanuatu</b><br/>4 December, 2020<br/><i>In-person consultations occurred with the</i></p>   | <p>i) Child project under the LDCF program, Climate-resilient Urban Development in the Pacific, titled <i>Port Vila Integrated Urban</i></p>   | <p><b>\$2.5 million</b><br/>Program approved at the June 2019 LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting.</p>  |

<sup>7</sup> Each LDC may access up to \$10 million in LDCF resources in GEF-7. For further information, please see GEF, 2018 [GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and the SCCF and Operational Improvements](#), GEF/LDCF.SCCF.24/03.

<sup>8</sup> Using LDCF and GEF Trust Fund (GEF TF) resources.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Vanuatu OFP at UNFCCC COP 24, and subsequently with the new OFP over email.</i> | <i>Improvements Project (Asian Development Bank; ADB)</i>   |   |
|  | ii) Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu – Phase II (multi-trust fund; United Nations Development Programme; UNDP) | <b>\$7.5 million</b><br>Submitted for approval to the December 2019 GEF Council Meeting |

**GEF SUPPORT TO GRADUATING LDCs**

13. Non-LDCs and graduated LDCs may submit proposals to the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), or consider using their STAR resources to formulate a project that will enhance climate resilience while generating global environmental benefits as defined in the GEF-7 Programming Directions document.

**ANNEX 1**

**LDCF Portfolio Overview for Graduated LDCs**

|   | <i>Project</i>   | <i>LDCF approval timeline</i>  | <i>LDCF grant (\$ million)</i> | <i>Status</i>  |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>CAPE VERDE:</b>                                |  |  |                                |  |
| Graduation date: <b>20 December 2007</b>          |  |  |                                |  |
| 1   | NAPA formulation   | 2003   | 0.22                           | Completed 2007   |
| 2   | NAPA Implementation: Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in the Water Sector in Cape Verde (ID 3581) | - Operational Focal Point (OFP) endorsement letter dated 19 December 2007<br>- PIF submission date: 27 Dec 2007<br>- Council PIF Approval date: 6 May 2008 | 3.69                           | Closed. Terminal evaluation completed in 2015 <sup>9</sup> |
| 3   | Member of 22-country global MSP: Technical Assistance to Francophone LDCs to Implement the UNFCCC8/CP8 Decision              | 2003   | 0.2                            |  |
| <i>Total for NAPA Implementation (Cape Verde)</i> |  |  | <b>3.69</b>                    |  |
| <b>EQUATORIAL GUINEA</b>                          |  |  |                                |  |
| Graduation date: <b>4 June 2017</b>               |  |  |                                |  |
|   | NAPA formulation   | 2012   | 0.22                           | Completed 2013   |
|   | No NAPA Implementation Projects  | N/A  | N/A                            | N/A  |
| <b>MALDIVES</b>                                   |  |  |                                |  |
| Graduation date: <b>1 January 2011</b>            |  |  |                                |  |
| 1   | NAPA formulation   | 2003   | 0.22                           | 2008   |

<sup>9</sup> The Terminal Evaluation for this project can be accessed at. <https://www.thegef.org/project/building-adaptive-capacity-and-resilience-climate-change-water-sector-cape-verde>

| <b>Project</b>                                  |  | <b>LDCF approval timeline</b>  | <b>LDCF grant (\$ million)</b> | <b>Status</b>   |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------|---|
| 2   | NAPA Implementation 1: Integrating Climate Change Risks into Resilient Island Planning (ID 3847)                           | 2009   | 4.6                            | Closed. Terminal evaluation completed in 2016 <sup>10</sup> |
| 3   | NAPA Implementation 2: Increasing Climate Change Resilience of Maldives through Adaptation in the Tourism Sector (ID 4431) | - OFP endorsement letter: 2 December 2010<br>- PIF submission date: 19 December 2010<br>- PIF approval by CEO: 3 June 2011 | 1.8                            | Closed. Terminal evaluation completed in 2017 <sup>11</sup> |
| <b>Total for NAPA Implementation (Maldives)</b> |  |  | <b>6.4</b>                     |   |
| <b>SAMOA</b>                                    |  |  |                                |   |
| Graduation date: <b>1 January, 2014</b>         |  |  |                                |   |
| 1   | NAPA Formulation   | 2002   | 0.22                           | 2005  |
| 2   | NAPA Implementation 1: Integrating Climate Change Risks into the Agriculture and Health Sectors in Samoa (ID 3358)         | 2007   | 2.0                            | Closed. Terminal evaluation completed in 2014 <sup>12</sup> |
| 3   | NAPA Implementation 2: Integration of Climate Change Risk and Resilience into Forestry Management (ID 4216)                | 2010   | 2.7                            | Closed. Terminal evaluation completed in 2016 <sup>13</sup> |

<sup>10</sup> The Terminal Evaluation for this project can be accessed at: <https://www.thegef.org/project/integrating-climate-change-risks-resilient-island-planning>

<sup>11</sup> The Terminal Evaluation can be accessed at: <https://www.thegef.org/project/increasing-climate-change-resilience-maldives-through-adaptation-tourism-sector>

<sup>12</sup> The Terminal Evaluation for this project can be accessed at: <https://www.thegef.org/project/integrating-climate-change-risks-agriculture-and-health-sectors-samoa>

<sup>13</sup> The Terminal Evaluation for this project can be accessed at: <https://www.thegef.org/project/integration-climate-change-risk-and-resilience-forestry-management-iccrifs>

| <i>Project</i>                               |  | <i>LDCF approval timeline</i> | <i>LDCF grant (\$ million)</i> | <i>Status</i>                      |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 4  | NAPA Implementation 3: Enhancing the Resilience of Tourism-reliant Communities to Climate Change Risks (ID 4585)                 | 2011                          | 2.2                            | Under implementation <sup>14</sup> |
| 5  | NAPA Implementation 3: Economy-wide integration of CCA and DRM to reduce climate vulnerability of communities in Samoa (ID 5417) | 2013                          | 13.4                           | Under implementation <sup>15</sup> |
| <i>Total for NAPA Implementation (Samoa)</i> |  |                               | <b>20.6<sup>16</sup></b>       |                                    |

<sup>14</sup> CEO Endorsement documentation for this project can be accessed at: <https://www.thegef.org/project/enhancing-resilience-tourism-reliant-communities-climate-change-risks>

<sup>15</sup> CEO Endorsement related information for this project can be accessed at: <https://www.thegef.org/project/economy-wide-integration-climate-change-adaptation-and-drr-reduce-climate-vulnerability>

<sup>16</sup> In 2014, the LDCF ceiling was \$20 million. Samoa therefore accessed the full amount available to it, prior to graduation.

## ANNEX 2

### Summaries of LDCF projects for Angola and Vanuatu in GEF-7

**Angola:** The World Bank MTF child project, *Strengthening Climate Resilience and Biodiversity Management in Angola's Conservation Areas*, which is part of the Global Wildlife Program (GEF ID 10200), will improve the management of targeted Transfrontier Conservation Areas and strengthen the resilience of local communities and ecosystems to climate change. The project aims to train communities and implement climate-resilient and conservation compatible activities that reduce vulnerability of populations by diversifying livelihoods through nature-based tourism. The child project in Angola will also strengthen local entrepreneurial skills and create economically and environmentally viable business opportunities. Drawing on indicative co-financing of \$25.8 million from the government, civil society and an IBRD loan, this project is expected to yield significant adaptation benefits, including: 60,000 direct beneficiaries (50 percent female); 35,000 hectares of land under climate-resilient management; and four policies/plans that will mainstream climate resilience. The LDCF share of this MTF is \$10 million for adaptation activities to take place in Angola.

**Vanuatu:** The Vanuatu child project, *Port Vila Integrated Urban Improvements* is part of the ADB program (GEF ID 10173), Climate-Resilient Urban Development in the Pacific. The program will address climate change risks to urban services, particularly water and sanitation, in the urban centers of four Pacific LDC SIDS: South Tarawa (Kiribati), Honiara (Solomon Islands), Funafuti (Tuvalu), and Port Villa (Vanuatu). Pacific SIDS are among the world's most vulnerable countries to adverse impacts of climate change. Urban areas tend to be on the coast and thus particularly exposed to climatic hazards, with population growth hindering traditional coping mechanisms and contributing new stresses— socio-economic and environmental—that increase vulnerability. The program will focus on institutional and investment activities that will deliver direct adaptation benefits to 250,010 people, train 400 people about climate risks and adaptation options, and support adaptation mainstreaming in three development policies and plans. Institutional measures will focus on enhancing the capacity to understand and plan for climate change in the water and sanitation sector, including modifications to standards and norms; improved awareness of climate change in the health and hygiene sectors; and incentives to include climate change and disaster risk management considerations in the urban sector. Investment measures will focus on activities such as: climate-resilient water supply to schools; water access; watershed management measures; enhanced resilience of waste management systems; flood protection works; and small-scale emergency shelters. The child projects will demonstrate synergistic coordination with GCF-financed and other baseline activities.

**Vanuatu:** The UNDP MTF project *Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu – Phase II* (GEF ID: 10415) seeks to deliver integrated approaches to community adaptation and the management of landscapes and protected and marine areas. Building on the lessons

learned from the first phase of the project, it will target all six provinces of this highly vulnerable LDC SIDS, focusing on the Area Council and local levels to support biodiversity surveys and management plans, measures to mitigate illegal and unsustainable species use, sustainable land management measures in priority locations, and climate-smart model farms. It will mainstream climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and LDN within national and local policies and decision-making processes. In addition, it will climate-proof selected water provision and public conveyance infrastructure, and evacuation facilities, in priority areas of the coastal zone. It will also support automated systems for real time monitoring of climate-related hazards and timely release of early warnings. Finally, it will build capacity of relevant stakeholders and ensure best practices are captured and shared. This project will bring 36,620 hectares of terrestrial protected area and 2,672 hectares of marine protected area under improved management for conservation, will restore 6,000 hectares of degraded land, bring 15,000 hectares of land under climate-resilient management, and directly benefit 272,459 people. This MTF project requests resources from the LDCF and biodiversity and land degradation focal areas.