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Agenda Item 9

COUNTRY OWNERSHIP OF GEF PROJECTS: ELEMENTS FOR STRENGTHENED COUNTRY-LEVEL COORDINATION AND OWNERSHIP, AND GREATER OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/C.12/8, *Country Ownership of GEF projects: Elements for strengthened country level coordination and ownership and greater outreach and communication*, approves the proposed elements for an action plan to strengthen country level coordination and a strategy for greater outreach and communication, subject to the comments of the Council. The Secretariat, in consultation with the Implementing Agencies, is requested to proceed to prepare and, where possible to implement, activities necessary to achieve those elements.

The Secretariat is also invited to include in the proposed corporate budget for FY00, to be considered by the Council at its meeting in May 1999, administrative resources necessary to carry out the activities foreseen under the elements of the action plan and strategy.

The Secretariat is also requested to contact the GEF Participants inviting them to consider the designation of one focal point for purposes of the GEF.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Council, at its meeting in March 1998, endorsed the policy recommendations of the second GEF Replenishment Report as a statement of the Council on actions to be undertaken by the GEF to maximize its effectiveness and impacts, while respecting the prerogatives of the governing bodies of the Implementing Agencies. Among the policy recommendations is the following:

“Participants stress that GEF activities should be country-driven and that country ownership is key to the success of GEF projects. To achieve this, GEF activities should be based on national priorities designed to support sustainable development and the global environment. Participants underscore the need for concerted efforts to advance recipient countries’ knowledge of the global environment and of the GEF, to facilitate country access to GEF financing and country ownership of GEF-financed projects, to strengthen national focal points, and to facilitate coordination at the country level. Participants recommend that the Council requests the Secretariat, in consultation with the Implementing Agencies, to review country level relations, including capacity building, training, outreach and information sharing, and prepare for Council approval an action plan to strengthen country-level coordination and to promote genuine country ownership of GEF-financed activities, including active involvement of recipient countries and interested stakeholders. The action plan should also address: (i) the need for the Implementing Agencies to assist countries in identifying and implementing policies in support of the global environment; and (ii) means through which the Secretariat may work with the Implementing and Executing Agencies and other entities to strengthen the financial and institutional sustainability of GEF-funded activities, and to better promote the use of local, national and regional expertise.”

2. The Council also requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the Implementing Agencies, to prepare for Council review and approval at its meeting in October 1998, an action plan and timetable for responding to the recommendations of the *Study of GEF’s Overall Performance* and other evaluation reports.

3. This paper proposes elements for an action plan to strengthen country-level coordination and to promote genuine country ownership of GEF-financed activities together with elements for a strategy for greater outreach and communication which targets GEF’s multiple constituencies. In preparing this paper, the Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies took into account the *Study of GEF’s Overall Performance* and the *New Delhi Statement of the First GEF Assembly*, as well as the experience of the Implementing Agencies and the Secretariat. The Council is invited to review and

comment on the proposed elements. While it is recognized that country-level coordination is integrally linked with outreach and communication, since a priority target for outreach and communication is the stakeholders in recipient countries, this paper is organized in two parts to facilitate review of the elements proposed for each objective. In reviewing the proposed elements, the Council is invited to keep in mind the close linkages and interdependence among the elements proposed for the action plan to strengthen country level coordination and the outreach strategy.

4. On the basis of the Council's discussions, the GEF Secretariat, in cooperation with the Implementing Agencies, will undertake activities to advance those elements supported by the Council, including incorporation of administrative resources necessary for carrying out such activities in the proposed corporate budget for FY00 to be considered by the Council at its meeting in May 1999.

PART I. ELEMENTS TO STRENGTHEN COUNTRY-LEVEL COORDINATION AND TO PROMOTE COUNTRY OWNERSHIP OF GEF FINANCED ACTIVITIES

5. It is fully recognized at the outset that *country level coordination is primarily a concern and prerogative of recipient countries, and GEF's role will mostly be in the form of facilitation of processes a country undertakes for these purposes.*

A. COUNTRY LEVEL COORDINATION

6. Effective coordination should assist countries to better utilize GEF resources and more effectively participate in decision-making on GEF matters. It should also serve to bring together the mutually complementary processes of the GEF, its Implementing Agencies and the Conventions the GEF serves. The importance of country level coordination has been recognized since the earliest days of the GEF, and was firmly established as policy in the GEF Instrument and the project cycle approved by Council in May, 1995. Recipient countries have set some coordination processes in motion, as the *Study of GEF's Overall Performance* notes, and the GEF has confirmed the importance of country coordination and ownership through such initiatives as the GEF focal point system, project development workshops, publications and other outreach activities, and its policy on public participation in projects. Yet even as the coordination process is taking root and experience is being gained, the increasing scope and range of GEF projects, rapidly evolving GEF procedures, and gathering momentum in the Conventions and their nascent Protocols is making the task more demanding.

7. An action plan to support countries in this respect does not require path breaking new ideas so much as consolidation of experience gained globally for appropriate use at the country level, awareness of enhanced coordination needs, and timely support to overcome initial logistical constraints.

GEF focal points

8. Country level coordination is the primary responsibility of the GEF country focal points. To date, recipient countries have been invited by the GEF to nominate two focal points: a *political* focal point and an *operational* focal point. In broad terms, political focal points are responsible for coordination matters related to GEF *governance* while operational focal points are charged with coordinating GEF *operational* matters within the country, including the assurance of country drivenness of projects.¹ In inviting countries to nominate operational focal points, they were requested to nominate a focal point in their capitals, in view of the nature of their functions. By the end of June 1998, 96 recipient countries had nominated operational focal points, with approximately two-thirds of the focal points being located in environment ministries or other ministries with environmental responsibilities.

9. There is limited information on how the two kinds of focal points have organized their coordination functions or what constraints they may have experienced. While the operational focal point function of endorsing projects for GEF funding has become increasingly well-established, the same does not appear true for other activities. The *Overall Performance Study* sampled 10 countries and found that although most focal points undertake some coordination of GEF-related activities, it is mostly on an informal basis and not systematic or institutionalized.² The *Study* lists a number of reasons for this inactivity, including lack of clarity on mandate, terms of reference, and functions, institutional and budgetary constraints, information bottlenecks or closed loops confined to governments, and the lack of user-friendly information (e.g. in local languages) about the GEF. One clear symptom of the lack of clarity about focal point roles is the nomination by some countries of up to three operational or two political focal points, making as many as 4 or 5 GEF focal points in one country.

10. A focal point's role is not made any simpler by the forces of rapid change at work in the GEF process itself. GEF procedures and policies have evolved rapidly in the years since its restructuring. The Climate Change and Biodiversity Conventions provide on-going guidance that influences GEF policies and programs. Each convention has its own focal point, and often there are additional issue-specific focal points. A closer consultation with focal points of the conventions and the GEF focal point would encourage a fuller understanding of the linkages between the GEF and the conventions and contribute to more support for the implementation of the conventions. The number of players at the country level who are now involved in GEF matters, some more directly than others, has increased greatly over the past few years. Consequently, the coordination role of GEF focal points has acquired far greater dimensions than originally envisaged. Better coordination at the country level should contribute to efforts to make the GEF project cycle more expeditious.

GEF Focal Points and Constituencies

¹ For details about relative functions of the two kinds of focal points, please refer to document GEF/ C.8/ Inf. 5, presented to Council in October, 1996, pages 1-3.

² OPS, paragraphs 92 and 93 and Table 3.

11. Another area of growing concern among GEF Participants is the need for communication and coordination of GEF focal points among countries, notably in the context of constituencies and representation in the GEF Council. Constituency consultations, where held, have no agreed format, agenda or frequency. Council Members have expressed concern about the challenges of communication among constituents on a regular basis. An opportunity to organize constituency meetings was offered to Council Members during the GEF Assembly; members of 12 multi-country constituencies used the opportunity to meet with their respective Council Members. Several Participants expressed their satisfaction at having the opportunity to meet among themselves, in some cases for the first time. They also pointed out that this initiative strengthened their sense of ownership of the GEF, and in particular of their constituency. They indicated that these meetings allowed them to exchange views on ways to improve the coordination in their constituency, and therefore to strengthen the capacity of their respective Council Members and Alternates to represent them in the GEF Council.

Principles and aims of country level coordination

12. It is suggested that the following principles guide activities to promote strengthened country level coordination and the country focal points:

- a. build on existing initiatives and experiences gained over the past few years by the countries themselves and the institutions that have been involved in the GEF “business”;
- b. as in all other GEF approaches, aim at cost-effectiveness as a key criterion in delivery of GEF support; and
- c. view GEF support within a finite time frame, without ignoring long term sustainability issues.

13. Since country level coordination must remain *country* organized and executed, GEF support to the process should focus on the following elements :

- a. gather and disseminate information on best practices based on country experiences;
- b. promote awareness at the country level about the scope/ range of GEF activities, institutional linkages and stakeholders;
- c. identify constraints in effective coordination that could be addressed through GEF support; and
- d. seek Council agreement for GEF support and its mode of delivery.

14. The following elements are proposed to promote better country level coordination.

Element I. Gather and disseminate information on best practices based on country experiences

15. The findings of the *Study of GEF's Overall Performance* concerning focal points and country coordination are based on a small sample of recipient countries, and though they provide valuable insights into the functioning of the focal point system, wider consultation is clearly needed to determine ways to make it more effective. As a first step, the Secretariat has solicited the views of all GEF Participants on the subject through the preparation and distribution of a questionnaire. Participants have been requested to complete the questionnaire by September 15, 1998. It is expected that an initial analysis of the responses to the questionnaire will be made available at the Council meeting in October.

16. The goal of the questionnaire is to gather information about how the GEF focal point system is working, and what GEF assistance might strengthen the operations of the focal points. It is also expected that the questionnaire will assist in identifying successful experiences and models for countries to consider when seeking to better coordinate their GEF involvement.

17. If necessary as a follow-up to the survey currently being undertaken, the Secretariat may also undertake further country level consultations to supplement the information provided through responses to the questionnaire. Particular attention would be given to countries that have established effective coordination procedures, in order to collect and disseminate information about best practices as quickly as possible.

18. The Secretariat would disseminate examples of best practices in country level coordination as widely as possible for appropriate use by GEF recipient countries. Where feasible, representatives from countries providing examples of effective coordination mechanisms will be invited to share their experiences with others through the GEF outreach activities.

Element II. Evaluate the responsibilities and functions of the focal points

19. In the light of the experience gained in executing focal point responsibilities and the expanding scope of those responsibilities, it seems increasingly difficult to distinguish between *governance* and *operations* coordination. One question that the Council is

invited to consider is whether it would be advisable to bring these functions together under one focal point for each country. The advantages of an integrated focal point would appear to be :

- a. recognition of the interdependence between policies of the GEF and its operations;
 - b. a sharper, more comprehensive definition of the functions and responsibilities of the GEF focal point;
 - c. creation of a single point of contact, on all GEF related matters, for internal and external institutions;
 - d. more direct links between the focal point and the GEF Council, its documentation and its decision-making process, and between the focal point and the Council Member/and other Constituency members;
 - e. cost effectiveness in GEF efforts in communication, information dissemination and consultation; and
 - f. cost-effectiveness in extending GEF support for coordination.
20. As many as nine recipient countries have integrated focal points. Fourteen others have multiple operational and political focal points, but with one agency/ person common to both categories.³

Element III. Provide support to strengthen the country focal points

21. Country level coordination would be meaningless if information and awareness needs of the stakeholders involved are not met. The GEF outreach and communication activities proposed in part II of this paper aim to satisfy the information needs of countries on a continuous basis.

22. Further consideration needs to be given to the feasibility of providing support and services to assist the country focal points in carrying out their coordination responsibilities. Such support and services could also be extended to Council Members in order to assist them to communicate with country focal points within their constituencies on issues related to Council activities.

³ The figures in this paragraph are from information available within the GEF Secretariat before responses to the focal point survey were received.

23. Important criteria in the selection of a delivery vehicle will be ease of access, sustainability and cost-effectiveness. One proposal would be to provide support in the form of services, e.g. through field offices of the Implementing Agencies or other appropriate organizations. There may be an opportunity to build upon the initiatives some UNDP Country Offices have already taken to support country-level, GEF-focused coordination activities. It should also be borne in mind that while the GEF may usefully play a catalytic role in strengthening country level coordination, this role cannot extend indefinitely. Support through regular GEF projects may be a longer term solution for countries where support needs to be continued, but effective strengthening of national capacity should minimize such cases.

24. The Council is invited to exchange views on this issue in order to guide the Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies in the further development of proposals on this matter.

B. COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

25. The *Study of GEF's Overall Performance* makes an important distinction between *country drivenness* of GEF projects, which determines the extent to which projects arise from the country's own priorities, and *country ownership* of projects which determines the interest and enthusiasm with which countries support GEF projects. Within the ambit of country level coordination, both these concerns focus directly on GEF projects, and their immediacy and significance for recipient countries is obvious. In fact, it can safely be assumed that one of the most prominent features of coordination at the country level will be the preparation and execution of GEF projects.

26. Of direct concern to the issue of country ownership is the GEF policy for *Public Involvement in GEF-Financed Projects* that was approved by the Council in April 1996.⁴ This comprehensive policy framework has been complemented by strong emphasis in the GEF monitoring and evaluation activities on the effectiveness of public involvement activities in GEF projects through the annual project implementation reviews, facilitation of exchange of best practices, and analyses of lessons learned for incorporation in future project design. Another useful tool for enhancing stakeholder participation is the 'logical framework' approach to the planning and design of projects, which facilitates

⁴ Public Involvement in GEF-financed Projects, 1996. The policy includes the following main principles: a) effective public involvement should enhance the social, environmental, and financial sustainability of projects; b) responsibility for assuring public involvement rests within the country, normally with the government, project executing agency or agencies. The Implementing Agencies should be supportive to this end; c) public involvement activities should be designed and implemented in a flexible manner, adapting and responding to recipient countries' national and local conditions and to project requirements; d) to be effective, public involvement activities should be broad and sustainable. The Implementing Agencies will include in project budgets, as needed, the financial and technical assistance necessary for recipient government and project executing agencies to ensure effective public involvement; and, e) public involvement activities will be conducted in a transparent and open manner. All GEF-financed projects should have full documentation of public involvement activities.

communication and articulation of stakeholder interest through a democratic and participatory process. The GEF has incorporated the logframe methodology in project preparation and the process is being strengthened through training.

27. The Implementing Agencies have been actively involved in developing and implementing the policy on public involvement in project identification, design, implementation and execution, and have incorporated the principles of the policy into their own institutional environment.⁵

28. The *Study of GEF's Overall Performance* expresses considerable satisfaction with the comprehensive framework that the GEF and its Implementing Agencies have adopted with regard to stakeholder participation. The question now is : what more needs to be done to strengthen country drivenness and country ownership? At a general level, there is no doubt that the outreach and communication activities proposed in this paper should enhance awareness and information, and strengthened country-level coordination should include wider consultative and participatory processes. Of particular relevance to the issue of country ownership are proposals to increase participation of national and regional experts in GEF activities (see paragraphs 50 and 51 below). It is proposed that the Secretariat work with the Implementing Agencies and STAP to devise means to enhance the contribution of local and regional scientific and technical experts and other consultants in GEF projects.

29. In addition, the following activities could usefully be pursued.

Element IV . Countries should be encouraged to clearly identify their national priorities and programs concerning the global environment.

30. In consultations with recipient countries, the Implementing Agencies should encourage countries to identify their national priorities and programs relating to the global environment within the context of their own development plans and priorities, with a particular focus on areas where GEF assistance is possible.

⁵ UNDP's decentralized structure facilitates its emphasis on access to GEF information and active stakeholder involvement in GEF project. UNDP has published *Promoting Partnership between UNDP-GEF and NGOs: An Agenda to Improve Existing Practices* and an impressive catalogue of *NGO Involvement in the UNDP GEF Portfolio*. Extensive training efforts have been launched for UNDP field staff to fully understand GEF procedures and play a more informed role in the project cycle.

UNEP adopted a policy on public availability of information on GEF operations in 1993, and in 1994, approved a policy on public participation in its GEF operations. Together, the two policies provide for transparency, stakeholder consultation and stakeholder involvement in implementing GEF projects.

The World Bank provides very detailed guidelines and periodic training to its field offices and task teams to promote programs encouraging public involvement in GEF projects. In July, 1996, it issued *Guidelines for Using Social Assessment to Support Public Involvement in World Bank-GEF Projects*. Also, it has initiated a series of clinics to train task managers and teams working on World Bank –GEF projects and to exchange information on methods and experiences in public involvement in each of the focal areas.

31. Countries should also be encouraged to finalize their national reports and communications to the Conventions. GEF enabling activities are financing activities to assist a large number of countries to prepare their national communications, and it is expected that these reports will facilitate a better integration of national priorities, Convention provisions and decisions, and GEF projects.

Element V. Development of indicators of country ownership

32. As recommended in the *Study of GEF's Overall Performance*, it is proposed that the Secretariat work with the Implementing Agencies to develop quantitative and qualitative indicators of stakeholder involvement at different stages of the project cycle and to document best practices of stakeholder participation in GEF projects.

PART II: ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGY FOR GREATER OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

33. Using lessons learned from the GEF's past and continuing activities, it is proposed that a strategy be adopted to improve the communication flow between the GEF and its multiple stakeholders through a series of country-level outreach activities reinforced by multilingual learning material, the best use of print and electronic technologies, media coverage and supportive events at the local, regional and international levels. It is expected that a comprehensive strategy as proposed in this paper will serve to integrate the diverse initiatives that have been undertaken to date, and that those involved in implementing the strategy will seek to incorporate the lessons learned from earlier activities during the progressive implementation of the strategy. Such past and on-going initiatives include outreach activities of the GEF Secretariat, the Implementing Agencies, and the Convention Secretariats, together with a few project activities that have been undertaken to extend the reach of communication on global environmental issues, such as the UNDP/UNEP Global Environmental Citizenship project. In implementing this strategy, the GEF Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies will seek opportunities to link GEF outreach activities with those of interested collaborators and stakeholders. In particular, the GEF will explore and promote synergies to be gained through building upon the ongoing work of, among others, governments, convention secretariats, other international, regional and bilateral bodies and NGOs.

Objectives and Audiences

34. The objectives of a GEF outreach and communication strategy should be:
- a. to enhance awareness of the GEF: its mission, institutional structure, policies, operations and procedures;

- b. to strengthen national capacity to develop GEF-financed activities thereby promoting country ownership of such activities;
 - c. to promote the active involvement of multiple constituencies in GEF activities, including NGOs, experts and community groups at the local and regional level;
 - d. to disseminate good practices and lessons learned from GEF activities; and
 - e. to support country-level coordination.
35. Constituencies that should be reached through the activities of an outreach and communication strategy include:
- a. GEF focal points;
 - b. other relevant government officials/departments, including focal points within government for relevant conventions;
 - c. other stakeholders, including NGOs and community groups;
 - d. STAP roster experts in recipient countries and other representatives of scientific and academic communities;
 - e. private sector; and
 - f. media.

Element VI: GEF country workshops

36. During the past three years, over 40 project development workshops were carried out by the GEF's Implementing Agencies. The *Study of GEF's Overall Performance* recognized the program's value and recommended its continuation and expansion. A lesson emerging from the workshops is that direct communication of key information to national stakeholders through targeted, participatory training courses and workshops is the most cost-effective way of building genuine understanding of the GEF and related emerging issues and opportunities.

37. It is proposed that the Council approve a project that would enable the Implementing Agencies, in cooperation with the GEF Secretariat, to build upon the experience gained in organizing the project development workshops by implementing a three-year program which would result in the organization of 50 GEF country workshops for recipient countries requesting such assistance and information. A project proposal for this activity is included in the work program before the Council for approval (document GEF/C.12/3).

Element VII: Public Information Material

38. Clearly written, user-friendly support material will be prepared in English, French and Spanish to help enhance awareness of the GEF. It is proposed that this material include:

- a. Project fact sheets;
- b. Fact sheets and guidelines for each operational program;
- c. Fact sheets and guidelines on alternative pathways of receiving funding: PDF's, small grants program, enabling activities, medium sized projects, larger projects; and
- d. Fact sheets on policies relevant to project development: i.e., incremental costs and public participation.

39. The material will be provided in both hard copy and electronic form and will be accessible through the GEF home page (www.gefweb.org). Work will also be undertaken to maintain an up-to-date, more user-friendly GEF home page.

Element VIII: Project-based or issue workshops to be organized at meetings of the Conventions, and when warranted, at subsidiary bodies and other convention meetings. Where feasible, field visits to GEF projects will also be organized for representatives attending the meetings.

40. Displays, workshops, field visits and other similar activities arranged by the GEF within the framework of meetings of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change have proved very effective outreach opportunities and help to reinforce the linkages between the GEF and the global environment conventions. Workshops have taken several forms: project presentations by GEF project directors, presentations on enabling activities, issue-focused presentations and question and answer open houses. It is proposed that these activities continue and that the presentations also take place during meetings of the conventions' subsidiary bodies and preparatory regional meetings when it is determined that such a presentation will add significant value to the understanding of the GEF, its activities, and its relationship to the convention concerned.

41. It is also proposed that similar presentations be made at meetings of the Conference of Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification as well as other international meetings of relevance to the mission of the GEF.

Element IX. Contribute to GEF monitoring and evaluation activities concerning the preparation and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned

42. The GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Unit currently produces, in collaboration with the Implementing Agencies,:

- a. evaluation studies, such as the recently completed *Study of GEF's Overall Performance*, and *Study of GEF Project Lessons*;
- b. annual *Project Implementation Reviews*;
- c. a series of *GEF Lessons Notes* summarizing lessons learned from GEF and other relevant projects; and
- d. monitoring and evaluation guidelines and procedures, including indicators to measure the performance of GEF's operational programs.

The monitoring and evaluation publications are available in English, French and Spanish. They are distributed at GEF meetings, at meetings of the global environment conventions, to project managers and designers in Implementing Agencies and executing agencies, and to other interested organizations and individuals. Most are also available electronically on the GEF home page.

43. Within the ambit of the outreach and communication strategy, the current distribution of monitoring and evaluation publications will be further enhanced by more specifically targeting different stakeholders or groups of stakeholders, including promoting the reports through professional journals and the mass media. For example, the GEF Secretariat will regularly disseminate reports to Council Members and Alternates, GEF Focal Points, Convention Focal Points, NGOs, and the international media. Similarly the Implementing Agencies will distribute relevant reports more proactively to their staff, both in headquarters and in field offices, as well as to their networks, constituencies and partners. GEF country focal points will be invited to distribute the reports to local stakeholders, including NGOs, local communities, the private sector, and national media outlets. In addition, the Secretariat will explore the use of technologies to facilitate the electronic dissemination of monitoring and evaluation products and to promote dialogue and structured learning based on the experience gained in GEF and similar activities.

Element X: NGO targeted outreach

44. NGOs individually and through their networks, have been active advocates for the GEF and valuable players in its activities since its inception. Since many NGOs are positioned close to the grassroots, they can accomplish significant country-level outreach on behalf of the Facility. The New Delhi Statement recognized the valuable role that NGOs can play in promoting country ownership of GEF projects. It is proposed that the GEF's relationship with NGOs be further strengthened by:

- a. seeking continued accreditation to the GEF of NGOs with a view to attracting much greater numbers and a more equitable geographical distribution of NGOs participating in the GEF family;
- b. fostering NGO outreach at the country level through increased efforts to broaden NGO participation in in-country GEF outreach activities;
- c. working through field staff of the Implementing Agencies to promote regular consultations with NGOs and national focal points in developing and implementing projects;⁶ and
- d. packaging information specifically for NGO audiences and ensuring its wide dissemination.

Element XI. Strengthen information dissemination on project proposals, implementation and impacts to local, national and international audiences

45. Experience has shown that one of the most effective tools for communicating the mission and goals of the GEF is through the sharing of experiences gained through actual projects and their impacts. This experience is usually most effectively conveyed by those directly involved in project development and execution. This outreach role of project personnel and affected stakeholders is not always fully recognized at the project design stage, and consequently, the opportunity for project personnel to contribute to the GEF outreach effort is not always fully realized. It is proposed that a project support communication component be identified within all future GEF projects. Projects should contain outreach components and resources to communicate to a wide audience the project's objectives, activities and results, and in particular for:

- a. consultations and outreach to local communities, NGOs and other stakeholders (consistent with the GEF policy on public involvement);
- b. project staff to participate in outreach within country and internationally;
- c. preparation of material for the general public; and
- d. preparation of material for media, including videos.

46. As the focus of projects within each operational program shifts from demonstration to dissemination of lessons learned and facilitation of replication, there will be a need for increased outreach on project lessons. Much of the operational information

⁶ Most UNDP Country Offices and World Bank Resident Missions have assigned staff whose responsibilities include NGO liaison and outreach. Both UNDP and the World Bank are committed to making a significant effort to strengthen the role of these NGO liaison officers in promoting the GEF and its activities.

to be disseminated will be concerned with technology or scientific and technical issues specific to a focal area. Dissemination of this information will be enhanced by the elements proposed in this paper as well as through specific projects or project activities aimed at facilitating replication of lessons learned in earlier GEF-financed activities.

Element XII: Promote coverage of GEF activities in the local, regional and international media

47. Mass media coverage can contribute to building awareness and support for the GEF by giving prominence to key issues, highlighting key actors and showcasing projects. Such coverage should be systematically encouraged at the project level, at the national level, and internationally, including through: the production, placement and distribution of written, radio and television material on GEF projects and activities; the involvement of Implementing Agency field staff in local and national media outreach; the establishment and maintenance of a roster of journalists for the targeted release of information on a regular basis; and workshops, field visits and training seminars on the GEF for journalists to be organized in collaboration with the relevant implementing and executing agencies.

Element XIII: Information to encourage private sector to contribute to GEF activities

48. Defining and promoting mutual interests between the private sector and other GEF stakeholders will be the subject of more in-depth work by the Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies. In support of efforts to promote greater private sector involvement in the GEF, the outreach and communication strategy should include activities specifically targeted to the private sector audience. In this regard, it is proposed that a series of guides and guidelines, designed and written for use by the private sector, be produced. The GEF and its mission should also be promoted within sectoral industry associations and global industry associations.

Element XIV: Through STAP, build stronger relationships and networks with the global scientific community, especially with national scientists and scientific institutions in recipient countries

49. GEF activities clearly should draw upon the knowledge and experience of the wider scientific community. There is a need to reach out to the scientific community in order to reflect the best science in GEF's operational activities and to promote greater country ownership of GEF projects. Several of the elements referred to above will enhance outreach to national scientists and scientific institutions in recipient countries, for example inclusion in GEF country-level outreach activities of representatives from the scientific community and the development by STAP of public information material on scientific issues relevant to the GEF. STAP could also contribute to efforts to increase participation of national and regional experts in GEF activities. At its meeting in September 1998, STAP will discuss proposals as to how STAP may best contribute to the mobilization of the wider scientific community and build stronger relations and networks with that community. These proposals will be brought to the attention of the Council for its review. UNEP is also prepared to make an important contribution to broadening the GEF outreach to the scientific community by utilizing its long standing collaboration and partnership with international scientific bodies.

Element XV. Increase participation of national and regional experts in GEF activities

50. The selection of experts to assist in project preparation and implementation is primarily the responsibility of the recipient country in consultation with the Implementing Agencies. For example, World Bank operational policies and procedures encourage the use of national consultants and further provide that the role of the World Bank should be limited to ensuring that the recipient country follows the competitive and transparent procedures laid down in the Bank's *Guidelines for the Selection and Employment of Consultants*.

51. It is expected that the activities to be undertaken by STAP to strengthen the network of national scientists and scientific institutions in recipient countries will contribute significantly to the efforts of the countries and the Implementing Agencies to increase the participation of national and regional experts in GEF activities by providing up-to-date information and data on local and regional experts who could assist in preparing and implementing GEF-financed projects. It is also expected that outreach activities at the country level will lead to a greater awareness on the part of both the national focal points and the Implementing Agencies of experts who are interested in GEF activities and the issues addressed by the GEF, and that such experts will be better informed of opportunities to participate in project preparation and implementation. The UNDP Country Offices and World Bank Resident Missions together with the national focal points should also be encouraged to promote actively the identification of national and regional experts to participate in GEF activities. For example, an Implementing Agency could seek out national experts for consultancies and participation through contacts during the project identification stage.

CONCLUSION

52. The Council is invited to consider the elements proposed in this paper for enhanced country level coordination and for strengthening outreach and communication about the GEF and its activities. Based on the comments made by the Council, the Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies will develop these concepts further and begin to prepare concrete activities to implement a strategy that incorporates those elements supported by the Council. Administrative resources necessary to carry out activities during the next fiscal year will be included in the proposed corporate budget to be reviewed by the Council at its meeting in May 1999.