

# DRAFT REPORT

## GEF-NGO CONSULTATION

May 18, 2004  
Washington, DC

*This is a summary of the discussions and NGO discussions during the GEF-NGO Consultation meeting, that took place on May 18, 2004, in Washington DC. .*

The GEF-NGO Consultation meeting was chaired by Rajen Awotar, from Maudesco (Mauritius), representing the NGOs; and Dr. Bonizella Biagini, NGO Coordinator representing the GEF Secretariat.

Mr. Leonard Good, CEO and Chairman of the GEF, opened the meeting, mentioning that since the last meeting, he has been traveling, which gave him a more direct experience with the GEF, NGOs and projects. Mr. Good has visited South Africa, Algeria, Japan, China, Peru and participated of the CoPs of the CCD and CBD Conventions, and continues to learn.

For the last months, the GEF has been particularly focusing on the Performance Based Allocation Framework, which is a very serious issue; and the Terms of Reference for the OPS3.

On behalf of the NGOs, Liliana Hisas, from Fundacion Ecologica Universal (Argentina) summarized and introduced the issues and concerns discussed among NGOs during the Preparatory Meeting of the previous day.

Ms. Hisas listed the key issues NGOs wanted to present and discuss:

1. Civil society participation – divided into three main concerns: (a) policy level, (b) program level, including concerns on IAs at the country level, and (c) information dissemination.
2. Program on Protected Areas, approved by CoP 7 of the CBD in Kuala Lumpur. We recognize this is an important program, and would like to see the GEF follow the guidance of the CoP.
3. Performance based Allocation: NGO concerns focus on ex-ante allocations, and thus we would like to make sure that NGOs with capacity and experience in this issue are consulted.
4. Medium-Sized Projects (MSPs): we are very encouraged to have the Action Plan before us, and would appreciate your support to have a pilot program agreed and presented by November to Council.

Lastly, on behalf of the GEF-NGO Network, Ms. Hisas thanked Mr. Good and the GEF Secretariat for including the paragraph for increased funding for NGOs in the Corporate Budget for FY05.

Mrs. **Khadija Razavi**, from CENESTA (Iran), presented the issue on Rethinking the status of Civil Society in GEF Policies. Mrs. Razavi thanked the GEF Secretariat for giving us the opportunity to express ourselves and being able to collaborate with GEF Council. As the implementation of GEF projects is entered to force, we wish to ask GEF Secretariat to take a lead as he already took for our NGO Network and we are grateful for, to rethink the Status of Civil Society in the GEF policies as a partner in the GEF Council and not just as an observer. This is for having a balanced decision making for at the end having a balanced implementation and monitoring and evaluation in the process of GEF Policies. Since our comments and suggestions are not included in the process of GEF Council meeting, our presence in the Council as a representative of the Civil Society with a solid institutional status could help to have more incentives for reaching more capacity building and being involved with an approach of ownership and common property. Thank you in advance on behalf of GEF-NGO Network

Mrs. **Esther Camac**, from Asociacion Ixacavaa (Costa Rica) requested the GEF for a policy in Indigenous Peoples, including: consultations on Monitoring and Evaluation studies; a specific study on Indigenous Peoples in the GEF, mechanisms for access to information that are appropriate for Indigenous Peoples. She also urged UNDP and UNEP to work with Indigenous Peoples.

Responding to a request of the NGO network, **Mrs. Clemencia Vela** explained the technical constraints for complying with CBD's objectives in cases where (a) GEF funds are used for co-financing loans, (b) where GEF proposals are required to be linked to a country's loan portfolio and (c) where proposals originate within the IA. Some problems cited included: (i) projects may not be selected or designed to tackle CBD key priorities; (ii) projects tend to lack local ownership thus risking their sustainability; (iii) project performance and implementation may be affected because both have to adjust to the implementation time table of the activities financed by a loan.

In his response, Mr. Good said that in reference to the proposal for a policy to give NGOs a partner status in Council, he would have to raise the issue in the Council. He also mentioned that Council sees observers as participants. Going to the next step is pretty serious, and he did not think Council will receive the proposal with enthusiasm. Mr. Good suggested that a medium-approach would be better, and he committed to make some consultations to see what Council members thought.

On the issue on Indigenous Peoples, Mr. Good said that the World Bank has clear policies, as well as UNDP and UNEP. We have to do something, as there are various policies and the reality on the ground is different.

Mr. Delfin Ganapin, Global Manager of the Small Grants Programme (SGP) said that efforts are being made to involve Indigenous Peoples direct access to SGPs.

Regarding the IAs, Mr. Good said that the GEF has 3 IAs and 7 Executing Agencies. He acknowledged that some IAs make loans and seemed to agree that constraints and problems mentioned have to be analyzed by the Secretariat: “We should study all, and see where we are, so that we can evaluate what we can do”. He also invited the representatives of the IAs to respond.

Mr. Frank Pinto, Executive Coordinator of the UNDP-GEF Unit, said that previously many proposals were originated by the UNDP but its staff is not permitted to design or propose projects. Proposals have to originate at the country level. He recommended NGOs to work with their governments to develop proposals together.

Rohit Khanna, Operations Officer, World Bank-GEF Coordination, said that the Bank has no policy that requires GEF grants to be associated to loans.

Mr. Good addressed the issue on MSPs, saying that two of the issues presented on the Action Plan needed Council approval –the proposals to raise the PDF A ceiling and the no-objection endorsement. It is also a good idea to follow the model of the Development Marketplace for a Pilot Program.

On the PBA, Mr. Good said that if NGOs feel left over, it could be true. However, the GEF has been very pressed to even have a constructive dialogue on this issue.

Mr. Djimingue Nanasta, from ENDA (Senegal) asked if the GEF considered including NGOs in the support program for Focal Points.

Mr. Good explained that the Support Program for Focal Points will be extended for one more year, and it will be more or less the same as the current program. There is no connection between the OFP and the Conventions Focal Points. We will see how NGOs can be built into the process.

On the issue of Information Dissemination, Mr. **Joth Singh**, from the Caribbean Conservation Association – CCA (Barbados) presented a case for the GEF-NGO Network to produce an NGO Guide to the GEF. It was suggested that there was a pressing need to get understandable information on the GEF mechanism to NGOs in developing countries. The GEF-NGO Network recognized the good work being done through the GEF secretariat to disseminate information on the GEF. However, we believe that the information is still not in a form which will allow developing world NGOs to contribute fully to the aspirations of the GEF. We also recognize the excellent document prepared by the IUCN on an “NGO Guide to the GEF”. This document is now outdated since many changes have occurred with the GEF mechanism since the publication of this guide. The GEF-NGO Network proposes a partnership with the GEF Secretariat to produce an updated NGO guide to the GEF. We have developed a draft proposal to this end. We propose that the expertise within the Network be utilized to prepare the information and compile the document. We will then require the information to be translated into selected languages, printed and disseminated. We suggest that the GEF Secretariat provide the financial resources to the GEF-NGO Network to undertake this task and ask for your consideration in this regard.

Mr. Good fully agreed with the proposal submitted. He advised that if the Network was best placed to undertake this task then it should be done through the network. He was provided information by Mr. Hutton Archer of the GEF Secretariat who advised that the issue of an NGO Guide was being addressed.

Mr. Joth Singh thanked Mr. Good for his concurrence with the need for the Guide and also to acknowledge the attempts to have it produced through the Secretariat. He reiterated that it was critical that the Guide be developed by NGOs for NGOs. He suggested that the GEF-NGO Network felt so strongly about the need for the guide to be developed by NGOs that the network was willing to seek out funds from elsewhere to produce the document.

Mr. Hutton Archer, Team Leader, Communication and Outreach from the GEF Secretariat, intervened to indicate that he had already engaged in discussions with members of the GEF-NGO Network to produce the guide. He advised that this discussion took place at the last GEF Council meeting in November 2003. He advised that his intention was to use the GEF-NGO Network to produce the guide and was awaiting a proposal from the Network to this end.

Mr. Archer was thanked for his intervention and for the commitment given at this meeting to work through the GEF-NGO Network. Joth Singh informed him that he was unaware that this discussion had taken place previously with some members of the network. He committed on behalf of the Network to providing the required proposal to the GEF Secretariat.

Mr. **Konrad von Ritter**, from The Nature Conservancy – TNC (USA) made an intervention on the CoP 7 of the CDB results and the Protected Area Program of Work<sup>1</sup>.

Mr. Good agreed that Protected Areas have been and should continue to be a priority for the GEF.

Lastly, Mr. Joth Singh on behalf of NGOs complimented the GEF Secretariat on proposing the Strategic Priority “Piloting an Operational Approach to Adaptation”, as part of its programme to provide assistance to address adaptation to the impacts of climate change. He suggested that most stakeholders have now recognized the critical importance to move speedily to assist developing countries in this regard. He noted that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) were particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. On behalf of the NGOs present, he expressed full support for the initiative and the funding mechanism proposed, particularly the proposed allocation to the Small Grants Programme (SGP).

Mr. Good thanked the audience, urging NGOs to continue the dialogue.

The next agenda item on Performance Based Allocation Framework was introduced by Mr. Ramesh Ramankutty, Team Leader, Operations Coordination from the GEF Secretariat.

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<sup>1</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

Mrs. **Yoko Watanabe**, from the World Wildlife Fund – WWF (USA) made an intervention on behalf of the NGOs<sup>2</sup>.

Mr. Ramankutty responded that in the case of indicators, we will try to use indicators known by the public. We can not develop new indicators, given the complexity of the issue, even if we have double the staff we have now. We have to take indicators from other sources. We are interested in working with NGOs. We need help on this issue.

The Action Plan to Respond to the Recommendations of the Medium-Sized Projects Evaluation was the next item on the agenda, presented by Mrs. Lily Hale, from the GEF Secretariat. Mrs. Hale presented a summary of the MSP Working Group discussions, which started in July 2003. There are three issues that need Council approval: the proposal for the no-objection endorsement, the PDF A raised ceiling and the new proposal for expedited MSPs.

On behalf of the NGOs, Yoko Watanabe, from WWF-US made an intervention<sup>3</sup>.

Mrs. Hale said that there is still a lot of work ahead.

Mr. Martin Gutierrez, from Pronatura (Mexico), raised two concerns: (a) that the capacity built during the development and execution of an MSP is passed from one NGO to another; and (b) that NGOs can access to a continuation of an MSP.

Mrs. Hale responded that once the project is finalized, and the Monitoring and Evaluation is completed, an NGO may consider developing another MSP.

The Monitoring and Evaluation issues –Report of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, and the Terms of reference for the third Overall Performance Study of the GEF—followed.

Mr. **Jesus Cisneros**, from the IUCN Mesoamerica Regional Office (Costa Rica), made the intervention on behalf of the NGOs<sup>4</sup>.

Mr. Rohit Khanna encouraged NGOs to see the IAs Reports to have a real sense of what is going on. We have to be cautious on elapsed time, as it is based on a small number of proposals.

Three case study were presented by NGOs:

1. Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the biosphere reserve of Bosque Mbracayú, by Nancy Cardozo, from Fundacion Moises Bertoni (Paraguay).
2. Biodiversity Conservation in the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve, by Pati Ruiz Corzo, from Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda del Sur (Mexico)<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

<sup>3</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

<sup>4</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

3. Private Land Mechanisms for Biodiversity Conservation in Mexico, by Martin Gutierrez from Pronatura AC (Mexico)

The discussion on the Small Grants Programme followed. A presentation was made by the GEF SGP Global Manager, Mr. Delfin Ganapin.

Mr. Ganapin explained that the SGP is operating in 73 countries, and is expanding to 10 more countries per year. In 2003, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Yemen, Fiji and Samoa have joined the SGP; and in 2004 there are already countries identified for appraisal. On the climate change focal area, the SGP will be supporting adaptation projects. The SGP is also forming a new partnership with the CBD so that the lessons learned from the community level are taken into consideration by the Convention.

Mr. **Joth Singh** requested information on the following areas:

- The regional approach utilized for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. He recalled the visit of Mr. Ganapin to the Caribbean earlier in the year when discussions ensued on the regional model being utilized within the specified countries.
- Whether the ceiling on GEF/SGP had been increased and to what level if in fact it was increased.
- The criteria used to select new countries for increased coverage of the SGP. He referred to Mr. Ganapin's presentation where it was indicated that in the Caribbean Jamaica was to be added to the program in 2004, and Cuba in 2005. He advised that Guyana had also applied and therefore was curious as to what criteria were being used for selection.

The Global Manager, Mr. Ganapin responded as follows:

- The experience with the regional approach in the Caribbean was not very successful and since GEF has always encouraged nationally driven programs the move was to convert to national programs. The Caribbean regional programme currently consist of 10 countries. However, he advised that in the Caribbean context a mixture of the regional and national strategies will be utilized. Where there were very small economies, consideration was being given to smaller grouping of countries instead of individual country programs.
- A decision has not been made on the proposed increase in the ceiling in the SGP. He suggested that some parties were concerned that increasing the ceiling would decrease the involvement of community groups which was the principal target of the SGP. He advised that this issue was to be discussed at the SGP Workshop planned to be held in Mexico in June 2004.
- The criteria used for selecting countries included readiness of the countries to engage in the program, need, and the attempt to achieve some geographic spread.

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<sup>5</sup> See brief of Case Study presentation in the Compilation of NGO interventions

He advised that because of the recent focus on Small Island Developing States that currently there is an attempt to include more continental states.

Mr. **Andras Krolopp**, from CEEWEB (Hungary) asked about the eligibility of Hungary and Poland, in light of the newly European Union.

Mr. Ganapin responded that guidance will have to come from the Council.

Yoko Watanabe asked about the criteria for partnerships, such as the initiative with the CBD and the UNESCO Heritage program.

Mr. Ganapin said that the regional approach is difficult, as country-ownership is complicated as the “base” for these kind of initiatives is in one country. Another complicated issue is the Steering Committee, as it has participants from 10 countries.

Also, Mr. Ganapin stressed that the SGP works with civil society organizations. The SGP changed its rules to have a majority of civil society organizations in the National Steering Committees (NSC). Mr. Ganapin invited the GEF-NGO Network to get more involved in the NSC.

The next items in the agenda were the Corporate budget FY05 and the Review of fee system.

**Mr. Rex Horoi**, from FSP International (Fiji) made the intervention on behalf of the NGOs on the Corporate budget FY05<sup>6</sup>; **INTERVENTION PENDING** while Mr. Joth Singh intervened on the Review of fee system<sup>7</sup>.

Ramesh Ramankutty responded by explaining that, on the Corporate Budget, there has been an increase of 13%, including: 3% inflation; 5% for more staff; and 5% for Council meetings.

As for the Fee Based System, Mr. Ramankutty informed the meeting that this process of revising the fee system has now been on-going for some time. He indicated that Council was presented with a parametric method for determining fees which was rejected. Council advised that the process needed to be simplified as was consistent with an overall agenda to simplify the GEF process. He advised that a number of simulations were investigated by the GEF Secretariat. However, none were acceptable to the IAs and EAs. In explaining that it was not expected that IAs and EAs would not tend towards the FSPs, it was highlighted that decisions on projects were made at the country office level and not at headquarters level. Hence project selection based on potential to earn fees for the IAs and EAs was not an issue. He informed that the percentage fee calculated after inclusion of the costs included in the corporate budget would result in an average fee of 14%. On the issue of the simplified GEF process that was a prerequisite for the IAs to accept the lower overall % fee, it was indicated that this was being worked on.

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<sup>6</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

<sup>7</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

The document Elements for Strengthening National Focal Points and Enhancing Constituency Coordination in GEF Recipient Countries was the following item discussed.

On behalf of the NGOs, Mr. **German Rocha**, from Instituto Biodiversidad (Colombia) made the intervention<sup>8</sup>.

Ms. Funke Oyewole, Country Relations and Capacity Building from the GEF Secretariat, strengthened that the goal of the program is to expand, taking into consideration the results of the review developed.

Mr. Frank Pinto mentioned that this Program has been problematic, as Operational Focal Points did not want to make the reports.

Following the agenda, Mr. Dave Todd, Senior Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist from the GEF Secretariat gave an update on the Local benefits study.

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific And Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of the GEF was the next item discussed. Mrs. Khadija Razavi made the intervention on behalf of the NGOs<sup>9</sup>.

In its response, the GEF Secretariat explained that the document is based on the various documents of the Council on what should STAP do. It tries to clarify what STAP should be doing. Some issues considered included:

1. to include civil society organizations: we did include them, but we take into consideration the concerns raised
2. Roster of experts give the GEF a scientific and technological support.
3. Targeted research.

Also, a meeting was held in Durban, South Africa, on this issue, involving Indigenous Peoples and local groups.

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Director of the UNEP Division of GEF Coordination, mentioned that before the Durban meeting, a session was held between the STAP Chair and NGOs.

The last item on the agenda was NGO concerns on GEF support on capacity building (including GEF Support for Capacity Building in Biosafety). Mrs. Razavi represented the NGOs by making the intervention<sup>10</sup>.

Mrs. Patricia Bliss-Guest, Team Leader, Corporate Affairs, from the GEF Secretariat, responded by mentioning that there is a paper on Public Participation for Capacity Building developed by UNEP. Also, that the Article 23 of the Cartagena Protocol specifically addresses public participation. The UNEP-GEF initiative on capacity building is a national

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<sup>8</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

<sup>9</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions

<sup>10</sup> See Compilation of NGO interventions



awareness process. The project is doing efforts to involve the public. It is also a tool –a clearinghouse mechanism for biosafety.

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif said that a website for this project will be uploaded shortly. It includes a toolkit for stakeholder involvement.

The meeting was closed at 5 pm, by the Chair and the Co-Chair, who thanked for the interventions and valuable discussions.

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