

Summary Report
Dialogue with Multilateral Environmental Agreement Secretariats and GEF
Held at the margins of 53rd GEF Council
27 November 2017

Overview

The GEF Secretariat organized a dialogue with Secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) at the margins of the 53rd GEF Council. The session provided an opportunity to discuss key outcomes of recent Conferences of the Parties (COPs) and guidance/decisions to be taken into consideration for the remaining GEF-6 period and GEF-7 replenishment to facilitate the implementation of the Conventions. The dialogue also explored private-public sector financing opportunities of relevance to the Conventions, and considerations for integrated programming and addressing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in GEF-7. The dialogue also provided an opportunity to learn from the proposed Rio Conventions Project Preparation Facility, which the Executive Secretaries of CBD, UNCCD, and UNFCCC called to establish in a joint press release on 13 November 2017.

The following MEA representatives participated in the dialogue:

- *Mr. Rolph Payet*, Executive Secretary, BRS Secretariat
- *Ms. Amy Fraenkel*, Director, Mainstreaming, Cooperation and Outreach Division, CBD Secretariat
- *Ms. Claudia ten Have*, Senior Programme Coordination Officer, Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
- *Mr. Melchiade Bukuru*, Chief, UNCCD Liaison Office

The participants of the dialogue included various GEF Council members/country representatives and representatives of the GEF Secretariat. Other attendees included representatives from the GEF Independent Evaluation Office and GEF Agencies.

Dialogue on Recent COP Outcomes and Implications

Mr. Gustavo Fonseca, GEF Director of Programs, opened the session followed by brief presentations from each of the representatives of the Convention Secretariats.

Mr. Rolph Payet presented key aspects of the work of the GEF that are instrumental for addressing chemicals and waste priorities. He mentioned the need to include chemicals in the GEF-7 proposed integrated programming such as the use of pesticides on the proposed food security Impact Program (IP) and the use of flame retardants in building materials, as well as waste minimization and emissions of POPs, mercury and e-waste on sustainable cities IP. Regarding private-public sector financing opportunities, key barriers to integrate the private sector into such a complex industry were brought to attention. Mr. Payet also highlighted the importance of building

platforms with the private sector to facilitate their engagement, which may be suggested to Parties on forthcoming COP meeting

Ms. Claudia ten Have presented highlights of the first Minamata COP, held in September 2017. These included the adoption of 21 technical and operational decisions and items on capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer. In addition, the guidance to the GEF was adopted and the establishment of the Specific International Programme. The Programme of Work for the Secretariat will start implementation from January 2018. On the next steps, Ms. ten Have discussed several items already in motion, including setting up the governing board for the International Programme and preparing for COP 2.

Mr. Melchiade Bukuru presented the important work of the GEF presented at the 13th UNCCD COP, held in September 2017 in China. Among the COP decisions of relevance, he highlighted the adoption of a new strategy of the convention compatible with the 2030 Agenda, particularly 15.3 on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN). Of note in the new strategy is a specific strategic objective on drought. The COP also adopted a decision on collaboration with the GEF and amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the GEF Council and the COP. In addition, the COP adopted a decision on gender equality and women empowerment for enhanced and effective implementation of the convention. Mr. Bukuru thanked the GEF for organizing the MEA dialogue, as it provides an opportunity to exchange information and facilitate coordination/cooperation.

Ms. Amy Fraenkel presented the outcomes of the decisions from the 13th CBD COP, held in December 2016, including the four-year framework and additional guidance on the financial mechanism, synergies among MEAs, as well as SBSTTA 21 role on mainstreaming, among others. The second Subsidiary Body meeting in December 2017 is expected to recommend COP 14 potential policy options for mainstreaming sectors and feature decisions related to the financial mechanism, and other key issues to the strategic plan ending in 2020. Regarding public private partnerships, Ms. Fraenkel also noted ongoing discussions around the need to increase sustainable financing for biodiversity, and cited the work of the GEF on commodities as having similar goals. To this end, she stressed the importance of coherence among the work being done.

Question and answer session

On the question of private sector linkages with land degradation sector and with the LDN fund, Mr. Bukuru emphasized the need for private sector investment to achieve the LDN target by 2030. He also mentioned a meeting with ministers of member states to be held in New York in June 2018 to discuss integrated approaches under the SDGs, and invited the GEF Secretariat to participate.

Marine litter and micro plastics is an emerging issue, and discussions touched on how the issue may be addressed in GEF-7. The GEF Secretariat responded plastics are being addressed already in GEF-6 per COP guidance through the improvement of waste management and plastic segregation, and as re-designing plastic materials through the green chemistry program. There is also a new project with international waters looking at the new plastics economy. The GEF is working with colleagues to see how to continue to address this issue in GEF-7.

One the question of progress on mainstreaming of genetic biodiversity resources, Ms. Fraenkel indicated the lack of capacity of this topic in all sectors. The COP decision calls for collaboration with FAO, World Trade Organization, and others. There has already been collaboration through liaison groups and attendance of meetings. Ms. Fraenkel also summarized ongoing work on COP 14 planning, including mining and manufacturing as sectors of mainstreaming relevance.

Regarding the Minamata COP 1 outcome, implications of the deferred decision of the MOU between the Convention and the GEF were discussed. *Ms. ten Have* underscored the role the GEF had already played in a very tangible way to support the Convention including the access to funding for Minamata Initial Assessments and the GEF Gold program. She explained that while the MOU was not agreed during COP 1, the legal requirement per the Convention is for guidance to be agreed and decided upon, which was achieved. She shared the intent of the Secretariat to come to a resolution by COP 2, taking into consideration discussion and request from Parties at COP1. The GEF Secretariat clarified that the issue may be discussed further with the engagement of the GEF Legal Counsel during the Relations with the Conventions session during the Council meeting.

Update on Proposed Rio Conventions Project Preparation Facility

Representatives of the Rio Conventions Secretariats were invited to discuss the proposed concept announced in a joint press release of 13 November 2017. Mr. Bukuru and Ms. Fraenkel briefly introduced the concept, stating it reflected action on a priority raised by the Parties to address synergies across implementation at the national level of the three Rio Conventions. It was noted that the concept envisioned leveraging funding from different sources including but not limited to the GEF, and that informal discussions about the concept had taken place with the GEF Secretariat. Several participants requested further information on the rationale for the facility, its expected operational structure, possibility to address additional Convention priorities, and the timeline for future engagement on the matter. Mr. Bukuru and Ms. Fraenkel indicated that the proposal is in an early stage, with a timeline of about a year for further development and consultations adding that the PPF was still a work in progress.

Way Forward and Wrap Up

The meeting adjourned with appreciation for participants' active engagement and informal discussion.