



GEF/LDCF.SCCF.10/5/Rev.2
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LDCF/SCCF Council
May 26, 2011
Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 6

THE SCIENCE OF ADAPTATION: THE ROLE OF STAP IN THE LDCF AND SCCF

Recommended LDCF/SCCF Council Decision

The Council, after having reviewed *The Science of Adaptation: The Role of STAP in the LDCF and SCCF* (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.10/5) approves the proposed formalization of an active STAP role in providing advice to the GEF in terms of its adaptation portfolio, funded through the LDCF and SCCF, and the addition of a new STAP panel member dedicated to providing advice to adaptation to climate change under the LDCF and SCCF.

1. Background

Background: Scientific Consensus on Climate Change Adaptation, Impacts and Vulnerability

1. Over the last decade, scientific understanding of climate impacts has dramatically increased awareness and concern for the need to respond to climate change. The publication of the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC in 2007 summarized the increasing scientific evidence of the observed increase in global average temperatures due to the increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations since the mid-20th century. In addition, the report emphasized the urgency of actions to avoid irreversible damage to human communities, development sectors and ecosystems based on the scientific consensus that, even if the international community commits to aggressively mitigate GHG emissions, climate change impacts will continue for many decades.
2. Continued scientific research is expected to increase the international community' understanding, with greater precision, of the impacts of climate change on earth systems, and particularly what these impacts mean for human societies and economies. Changes in temperature, however small, affect an enormous set of biophysical processes, many of which are complexly interlinked and/or poorly understood. For example, early results of research on impacts of climate change on the oceans suggest that even a +2°C temperature change would likely be catastrophic for much of marine life.
3. What is certain is that climate change is already having an adverse impact and that the most vulnerable countries and the poorest communities within developing countries will be the ones most adversely affected and least capable to respond to the effects of climate change.
4. With a growing pool of scientific knowledge on the impacts of climate change, as well as technically and socially viable adaptation solutions, it is of great importance that LDCF and SCCF operations are developed based on the consistent application of knowledge from state-of-the-art climate change science. In particular, a scientifically sound vulnerability and adaptation assessment is usually the first building block of a successful adaptation project.
5. This document proposes to formalize the role of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) in the adaptation program of the GEF, in particular in the operations of the LDCF and SCCF. The involvement of STAP is a positive step that the GEF can take to further improve quality of LDCF and SCCF-funded projects and programs since it will help to ensure that such projects and programs reflect the latest scientific thinking on adaptation, deepening the GEF's culture of quality and results.

Involvement of STAP in Adaptation Project Portfolios under the LDCF and SCCF

6. Based on the discussions and decisions of COP7, the GEF reported to the nineteenth meeting of the GEF Council and the eighth session of the COP that the operations of the funds will be based, among others, on the following principles¹:

- In operating the funds, the operational policies and procedures and governance structure of the GEF will apply to the operation of all the funds, unless the Conference of the Parties determines through guidance concerning the modalities for operating the funds that other arrangements should be made.
- Any additional operational policies that may be required for the operation of the funds will be brought to the Council's attention for review and approval as issues emerge in developing specific project proposals. Future Council decisions related to operational policies, procedures and the governance structure of the GEF, where appropriate, will be extended to the management of the new funds. This should serve to make operations as transparent and streamlined as possible.
- In operating the funds, the GEF will emphasize a culture of quality and results while continuously striving to improve its responsiveness to countries and to the guidance of the Parties and to make its processes more streamlined and efficient. Any additional streamlining of procedures to be applied specifically for purposes of one of the new funds will depend on factors such as emerging guidance, the size of the new funds and the size and nature of the projects they support.

7. For the past two decades the GEF has utilized the services of a scientific and technical advisory body, whose mandate is defined by the GEF Instrument. In particular, the GEF Instrument² specifies that "UNEP shall establish, in consultation with UNDP and the World Bank and on the basis of guidelines and criteria established by the Council, the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) as an advisory body to the Facility. UNEP shall provide the STAP's Secretariat and shall operate as the liaison between the Facility and the STAP." The Executive Director of UNEP appoints the STAP members — six members including a Chairperson — and seeks the GEF Council's approval for the STAP appointments.

8. As provided for in its current terms of reference³, the key points of STAP's current mandate are that:

- STAP shall provide objective, strategic scientific and technical advice on GEF policies, operational strategies, programs and on projects and programmatic approaches.

¹ GEF/C.19/6, *Climate Change Funds* document approved by the GEF Council in May 2002

² *Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility* (1994)

³ Document GEF/C.31/4, *Proposal of the Executive Director of UNEP on Enhancing the Impact of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel*, approved by the GEF Council in June 2007.

- STAP shall interact in a complementary manner with other relevant scientific and technical bodies, particularly with the subsidiary bodies of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.
- The STAP shall provide expert scientific advice to interagency task forces and bodies handling other GEF processes, when such advice is requested.

9. With respect to adaptation to climate change, the STAP has been involved in the initial discussions on adaptation financing under the GEF Trust Fund, e.g. in the recently completed ‘Strategic Priority on Adaptation’ (SPA). However, the role of the STAP has never been formalized with respect to the LDCF and SCCF, which are currently managing the GEF’s adaptation portfolio, in response to UNFCCC guidance.

10. As decided by the GEF Council in August 2006, the LDCF and SCCF follow the GEF operational policies and procedures of the GEF Trust Fund unless the LDCF/SCCF Council decides otherwise. Under the GEF Instrument, the STAP has a firmly established mandate with regard to the GEF Trust Fund, but to date, this mandate has not been effectuated for the LDCF/SCCF. Given GEF policies on administrative cost recovery, this will require an allocation from the LDCF and SCCF to cover STAP’s expenses for providing scientific advice on LDCF and SCCF projects and operations.

11. In order to assure that state of the art climate science is considered in a consistent way in LDCF and SCCF projects, policies and operations, and to apply the same standard of technical and strategic advice in the development of the funds, as is currently the case in the GEF Trust Fund (TF), it is proposed to formalize an active STAP role in providing advice to the GEF in terms of its adaptation portfolio funded through the LDCF and SCCF. In so doing, STAP would take on the following advisory responsibilities with the LDCF/SCCF Trust Funds:

- Review the scientific rationale and technical validity of all LDCF/SCCF full size projects in the context of climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation;
- Provide strategic advice on LDCF/SCCF strategies and policies as required;
- Advise on project or program development on a selective basis at the invitation of Agencies;
- Help design and implement approaches to test the Adaptation Learning Objectives; In conjunction with the Secretariat and Agencies, undertake analysis of at least one of these per year;
- Assist in developing impact and vulnerability profiles for global environmental benefits that can be applied across all three trust funds;
- Assist in further refining and increasing the precision of the Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool.

12. This paper recommends that the LDCF/SCCF Council provide a budget allocation to the STAP to support an additional panel member dedicated to provide advice on LDCF and SCCF-funded operations on adaptation to climate change. Given the inherently cross cutting nature of the work, the Adaptation Panel member would further draw on the expertise of the other STAP Panel members in delivering on this mandate.

Budgetary Implications

13. The STAP has requested \$157,000 to support the addition of a new STAP Panel Member who will be dedicated to providing advice on adaptation to climate change under the LDCF and SCCF. This request is illustrated in document GEF/LDCF.SCCF/10.5 “Administrative Budget of the LDCF and SCCF.”

Procedural Issues

14. STAP was established by UNEP under the provisions of the GEF Instrument, on the basis of guidelines and criteria established by the GEF Council, such as its current terms of reference. Following approval by the LDCF/SCCF Council of this proposal to enable STAP to provide scientific advice on LDCF and SCCF climate change adaptation operations, UNEP will prepare a revised terms of reference (TOR) for STAP to incorporate this change. The UNEP Executive Director will forward this terms of reference to the GEF CEO, who will forward it to the GEF Council for review and approval by mail.