



Consultation - The Global Environment Facility's Support To The Enhanced Transparency Framework

Date: Thursday, June 8, 2023

Time: 13:00 to 14:30 CEST

Venue: [Club Lounge](#), Main Building of the World Conference Center Bonn (WCCB), Bonn, Germany

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

The GEF Secretariat organized the consultation on the GEF's support to the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) to respond to guidance from the fourth Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (paragraph 10 of decision 8c/CMA 4), provide an update on the status of the GEF support to Parties for the implementation of the ETF, and enable sharing of information and early lessons between Parties regarding the initial experiences with BTR support and preparation.

Invitations for this in-person event were sent out by the GEF Secretariat to GEF Council Members, National UNFCCC Focal Points and GEF National Operational Focal Points. The event was attended by 45 participants plus the GEF Staff, including 31 representatives from countries, seven representatives from Agencies, five representatives from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and two representatives from non-government organizations (NGOs).¹

Opening remarks

The consultation was opened by Filippo Berardi, Climate Change Focal Area Coordinator at the GEF Secretariat and moderator of the event. Chizuru Aoki, Lead Environmental Specialist at the GEF Secretariat, provided welcoming remarks. Ms. Aoki set the stage by explaining the event aimed to provide updated information on what the GEF has done so far, the modalities of support, and how countries can receive support to prepare their Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) in a timely manner. Ms. Aoki also emphasized the GEF Secretariat's intention to use this consultation as an opportunity to further foster outreach with countries regarding the available financial support to prepare BTRs, given

¹ The agenda of the consultation and the presentations mentioned in this summary are available at: <https://www.thegef.org/events/consultation-gef-support-enhanced-transparency-framework>

the proximity of the December 31, 2024 deadline to submit the first BTRs, and considering that not all eligible countries have requested support from the GEF to prepare their first BTR.

Update on the ETF

Mr. Jigme, Manager of the Transparency Unit with the UNFCCC Secretariat, provided an updated and overview of the ETF in the run-up to COP28. Mr. Jigme highlighted the importance of submitting the first BTRs by December 31, 2024, in the context of the implementation of Paris Agreement. On the negotiation side, he provided an overview of the discussions related to the implementation of the ETF. He also mentioned the work being done by the UNFCCC Secretariat related to the reporting tools and the showcasing of these tools later this year. Regarding the training program for technical experts, he mentioned more than 500 experts registered in the first round of training, 90 of which already passed the first round of examinations. He also mentioned that the next round of examinations will occur later this year.

GEF support under the ETF

Filippo Berardi delivered a presentation with an overview of the support provided by the GEF to countries under the ETF. This includes (1) the support for the preparation of reports, such BTRs, and NCs; (2) the support provided by the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT); and (3) the global support provided by the CBIT Global Support Program (CBIT-GSP). Mr. Berardi finished his presentation, highlighting that resources available from the GEF to support the ETF increased by more than 30% in the current Eighth Replenishment Cycle of the GEF (GEF-8), as compared to the previous cycle. Also, since July 2022, the cost structure for BTRs was revised upwards following CMA guidance, and it is now possible to bundle the preparation of two BTRs and one NC under a single enabling activity project.

First round of questions and answers

After the first round of presentations, the moderator opened the floor for discussion among participants. Two participants asked questions:

A representative from Switzerland asked the GEF Secretariat if the requests from the countries that haven't requested support to prepare their first BTR would be expedited or non-expedited. Moreover, as a GEF Council member, she asked if there was anything the GEF Council could do in this regard. The GEF Secretariat clarified that it is currently recommending to all countries to select the expedited approval modalities (one-step), considering the proximity to the December 31, 2024, deadline. The GEF Secretariat added that most of the BTR requests received during GEF-8 have consisted of one-step expedited enabling activity projects which combine support for BTR1, BTR2, and NC, all of which have been approved in less than three months.

The GEF Secretariat explained that measures to expedite the project cycle will be considered at the 64th GEF Council Meeting on June 26 to 29, 2023, including streamlined project approval procedures to be adopted in the context of the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), which could be replicated in the GEF Trust Fund to expedite the project cycle of enabling activity projects. Since enabling activity projects are considered low-risk projects, the GEF Council could assess the possibility of approving all Enabling Activities through the one-step project approval process.

In addition, the GEF Secretariat also highlighted that it is actively working with UNFCCC Secretariat, Agencies, and the CBIT-GSP to conduct outreach events and reach out to countries that are yet to request BTR support from the GEF.

A representative from Georgia asked about the timeframe to request the second BTR, after the completion of the first BTR, and if there are any special requirements. The GEF Secretariat added that if a country has an ongoing BTR project, it can already submit a request to support the subsequent BTR (combined with an NC, if applicable) and receive the corresponding resources from the Implementing Agency once it submits its ongoing BTR to the UNFCCC. The GEF Secretariat further clarified that CBIT also supports second-phase CBIT projects once the terminal evaluation of the first CBIT project is submitted. This is relevant because second CBIT projects are expected to build on the lessons learned from the first CBIT projects.

Challenges, Experiences, and Lessons Learned in Implementing the ETF

The GEF Secretariat invited representatives from three developing countries to share their experiences, lessons learned, and challenges in implementing the ETF.

Ms. Ezra Christopher, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at the Antigua and Barbuda Department of Environment, provided an overview of their updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system. Antigua and Barbuda plans to submit their fourth NC and first BTR by 2023 and 2025, respectively. Ms. Ezra highlighted challenges related to ETF implementation, including sourcing local consultants, data availability, and streamlining institutional arrangements. Regarding lessons learned, she mentioned establishing MOUs with relevant institutions, continuously engaging with stakeholders, and building a GHG inventory team.

Mr. Reagan Chunga, Project Coordinator of CBIT, NCs, and BTRs at the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Namibia, provided an overview of his country's experience in reporting and highlighted the establishment of a National Climate Change Policy. Namibia is currently preparing its fifth National Communication and first BTR. Their CBIT project, which they expect to finish this year, has built capacities related to the IPCC 2006 guidelines and software, formalized institutional arrangements through MOUs, developed tools and templates for data collection, established a data repository, and contributed to the revision of the NDC. Mr. Chunga highlighted challenges related to ETF implementation, including the engagement of a wider group of stakeholders, limited staff and financial resources to have a dedicated team for ETF, concerns about data confidentiality by the private sector, and weak legislation. Regarding lessons learned, Mr. Chunga reflected on the relevance of institutional memory by consolidating a dedicated team, stakeholder engagement at all levels, and political buy-in. Namibia will seek support from the GEF for a second CBIT project to further strengthen capacity and institutional arrangements related to the ETF.

Ms. Undarmaa Khurelbaatar, Coordinator of the Fourth NC and second Biennial Update Report (BUR2) at the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia, provided an overview of the updated NDC. Mongolia plans to submit its fourth NC and second BUR by 2023 and its first BTR by 2024. Mongolia finalized its first CBIT, which focused on the Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector and supported the BUR development process. Ms. Khurelbaatar highlighted challenges related to ETF implementation, including inadequate institutional arrangements, lack of technical capacities and equipment for reporting, an ad-hoc or project-based approach, and the lack of Tier 2 emission factors. Regarding lessons learned, she pointed out the relevance of strategic collaborations with academic and research institutions in ETF-capacity building, as well as the significant participation of women in training activities. Mongolia will seek support for a second CBIT project to address other sectors building on the experiences from the first CBIT project on the AFOLU sector.

Second round of questions and answers

A representative from Nigeria pointed out that the institutional arrangements of Antigua and Barbuda seem simple, while Nigeria's are very complex, making coordination challenging. The speakers above shared their views and perspectives on institutional arrangements for the ETF and reflected on differences between each country. Speakers also emphasized the relevance of MOUs with relevant institutions to ensure collaboration and cross-sectoral coordination.

A Yemen representative asked the GEF Secretariat if it is possible to support the establishment of MRV systems. The GEF Secretariat underlined the country-driven approach of CBIT projects and the diversity of its portfolio. The GEF Secretariat further clarified it is possible to support the establishment or strengthening of MRV systems and the ETF.

Representatives from Agencies, including UNDP and FAO, provided a brief overview of their work related to the ETF, highlighted the relevance to improving coordination, and recognized progress achieved in this regard.

Closing remarks

The GEF Secretariat closed the meeting, thanking partners and speakers for sharing their experiences and perspectives and participants for the constructive dialogue. The GEF Secretariat further elaborated that the consultation outcomes would be reported to the UNFCCC following the CMA 4 guidance.