



GEF/GBFF.03/04  
December 07, 2024

---

3<sup>rd</sup> GBFF Council Meeting  
December 20, 2024  
Virtual Meeting

**Agenda Item 04**

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ADVISORY GROUP(S) AND AUXILIARY  
BODY FOR THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK FUND**

**Recommended Council Decision**

The Council, having considered document GEF/GBFF.03/04 Progress Report on the Advisory Group(s) and Auxiliary Body for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, approves the document and requests the Secretariat to:

- (i) Make provisions to implement the modifications to the Terms of Reference for the GBFF Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Contributors
- (ii) Report to the Fourth GBF Fund Council on progress made on the Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Contributors and the Auxiliary Body.

**Contents**

**Introduction ..... 1**

**Progress on the Advisory Group on Non-Sovereign Participants ..... 1**

    Establishment of the Advisory Group ..... 1

    Composition of the Advisory Group ..... 2

    Summary of Comments Received on Advisory Group Composition and Due Diligence ..... 2

    Proposed Modifications on the Terms of Reference ..... 3

**Progress on the Auxiliary Body ..... 4**

    Establishment of the Auxiliary Body ..... 4

    Composition of the Auxiliary Body ..... 5

**Annex I: Members of the Auxiliary Body for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund ..... 6**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. At its second meeting, the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) Council approved the decision regarding the Terms of Reference for Advisory Group(s) and Auxiliary Body for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (Decision GBFF 5/2024).<sup>1</sup>
2. Paragraphs 8 to 28 of the approved Council document present the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Participants, including its composition, modalities of work, timeline, and cost implications.
3. Paragraphs 29 to 47 of the approved Council document present the Terms of Reference for the Auxiliary Body, including its composition, modalities of work, timeline, and cost implications.
4. The Council requested the Secretariat to make provisions to establish the Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Participants and the Auxiliary Body, and to report to the Third GBFF Council on progress made on their establishment.
5. This report provides an update on the progress made on the establishment of the Advisory Group(s) and Auxiliary Body for the GBFF since the second GBFF Council.

## **PROGRESS ON THE ADVISORY GROUP ON NON-SOVEREIGN PARTICIPANTS**

6. The objective of the Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Participants is to provide technical advice to the GBFF Council and the Secretariat on the engagement of non-sovereign contributors in the support of the implementation of the GBFF objectives and the support of the implementation of the Programming Directions of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, as requested by the GBFF Council. Specifically, the Advisory Group may provide advice and recommendations on relevant agenda items deliberated at each Council.

### **Establishment of the Advisory Group**

7. Paragraph 15 of the Terms of Reference document states that all non-sovereign contributors to the GBF Fund may join the Advisory Group on a voluntary basis. Each non-sovereign contributor has an option to become a member of the Advisory Group upon acceptance by the Trustee of its contribution after successful completion of the due diligence review of the contributor.
8. The Province of Quebec has become the first non-sovereign contributor to the GBFF on October 25, 2024. The Province of Quebec also confirmed its interest to become a member of

---

<sup>1</sup> GEF, 2024, *Terms of Reference for Advisory Group(s) and Auxiliary Body for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund*, Council document GEF/GBFF/02/04.

the Advisory Group with the Secretariat on November 30, 2024. With confirmation by the first non-sovereign contributor, the establishment of the Advisory Group becomes effective.

### **Composition of the Advisory Group**

9. Paragraph 14 of the approved Council document on the Terms of Reference states that “The Council may decide to modify the Advisory Group composition to include non-contributors that may have relevant expertise and insights to inform the Advisory Group deliberations and the Council. The Council may decide on the categories of additional members and their selection and due diligence process from the third meeting of the GBF Council.”

10. Based on the above, on October 16, 2024, the GEF CEO requested the Council to provide inputs on the composition of the GBFF Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign participants, in particular on the categories of additional non-contributing members that may have relevant expertise and insights. Furthermore, the GEF CEO invited suggestions on the due diligence process for including non-contributing members.

### **Summary of Comments Received on Advisory Group Composition and Due Diligence**

11. This section presents a summary of comments received from five constituencies on the composition of the Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Participants in response to the request from the GEF CEO. It includes suggestions received on the categories of potential non-contributing members and the due diligence process.

12. There were divergent views among constituencies; some supported the inclusion of non-contributing members in the Advisory Group, noting that this could help attract potential non-sovereign contributors. An emphasis was placed on ensuring that these members possess relevant expertise and practical experience in areas aligned with the GBFF’s mission, private sector involvement, and innovative financing. Other constituencies expressed reservations, suggesting that the focus should remain on securing additional contributors before expanding the Advisory Group’s composition to include non-contributing members.

13. Comments received included the following categories of non-contributing Participants to be considered for potential inclusion in the Advisory Group:

- Private sector representatives, including companies and industry organizations such as consortia and federations, with expertise or relevance in biodiversity;
- Philanthropic organizations focused on biodiversity;
- Sub-national public bodies with close geographical, economical, or cultural ties with GBFF recipient countries and/or a track record of positive biodiversity action;
- Experts in conflict-of-interest prevention and management;

- Experts in private resource mobilization for biodiversity, including innovative financial mechanisms; and
- Academics, scientists, and experts in research institutions with specialized expertise in biodiversity finance and resource mobilization, and private sector engagement in biodiversity management.

14. It should be noted that the Advisory Group can call on the GBFF Council observers as needed. The GBFF observers include: private sector; philanthropic and conservation organizations; Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs); women, and; youth. It is therefore suggested that the Advisory Group call on the relevant observers groups instead of designating additional non-contributing member categories, to ensure streamlined representation and provision of inputs, and to minimize duplication.

15. The GEF CEO and Chairperson also requested comments on the due diligence process. In this regard, one constituency highlighted that members of the Advisory Group and their respective organizations should be checked for any past involvement in activities harmful to biodiversity, such as deforestation, hunting, or fossil fuel proliferation, or unacceptable behavior, such as forced or child labor, racial or other forms of discrimination, or sexual harassment. The same constituency indicated that any such activities or behavior identified must be formally explained by the member or organization, including ways to prevent future transgressions, and that the Council retains the final authority to determine whether the explanation provided is sufficient.

### **Proposed Modifications on the Terms of Reference**

16. The categories of additional non-contributing members to be considered by Council for the modification of the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Participants are as follows:

- Sub-national or regional public institutions: This category seeks institutions with established partnership with GBFF recipient countries and/or with demonstrated experience in supporting biodiversity action in GBFF recipient countries. Upon selection for the Advisory Group, each institution will be requested to designate a representative.
- Experts in resource mobilization for biodiversity and/or conservation finance: This category is for individuals with relevant expertise, including innovative financial instruments, private sector finance, and domestic, bilateral, and multilateral support.

17. The GEF Secretariat will solicit nominations for the agreed categories of non-contributing members from constituencies, to be submitted by Council members. The nominations should clarify relevant expertise and/or experience as recognized by the nominating constituency.

18. The due diligence of the additional non-contributing members will be carried out based on information to be submitted with nominations, which may be complemented with additional information sought by the Secretariat. Such information may include explanations on their involvement in activities related to biodiversity management, conformity to social/environmental safeguards, and adherence to professional behavior standards. The specific information and format to be provided will be further clarified in the nomination solicitation to be prepared by the Secretariat. The Council has the authority to determine if the submitted information is sufficient to appoint non-contributing members to the Advisory Group.

19. For each new category of non-contributing members, up to two persons may be selected to serve on the Advisory Group, taking into consideration a balance between developing and developed countries, as well as regional and gender balance.

20. The Secretariat will assess the nominations, including information provided for due diligence. The Secretariat will present the recommended members for Council approval. Council approval will be sought as decision by mail.

21. The first Advisory Group meeting may be organized prior to the fourth GBFF Council meeting in June 2024.

22. Non-contributing members will serve the following terms: from April 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2028, from July 1, 2028 to December 30, 2030.

## **PROGRESS ON THE AUXILIARY BODY**

23. The Auxiliary Body is established to provide technical advice and recommendations to the GBF Fund Council in a comprehensive and independent manner. As stated in the Terms of Reference document, advice and recommendations concern the implementation of the Programming Directions of the GBFF. Specifically, the Auxiliary Body may provide such advice and recommendations on items deliberated at each GBFF Council.

### **Establishment of the Auxiliary Body**

24. The Secretariat made provisions to establish the Auxiliary Body, following the second GBFF Council meeting.

25. On September 23, 2024, the GEF CEO requested each GEF constituency that includes developing countries to nominate up to two experts per constituency for the first term of the Auxiliary Body (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2026). Constituencies were requested to provide their nominations by October 31, 2024. As per the Terms of Reference, experts were to be nominated by interested countries that declare to have areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services. Each country may have one expert per term.

26. A number of constituencies requested extensions to submit their nominations. The GEF CEO issued reminders on November 8, 2024.

27. As of December 4, 2024, nominations have been received from eight constituencies out of the twenty constituencies eligible to submit nominations, with a total of eleven members nominated.

28. The Auxiliary Body is expected to meet virtually twice a year, prior to each GBFF Council meeting, to discuss and develop advice/recommendations on Council agenda items and to respond to specific Council requests.

29. The Secretariat has informed all Constituencies that the first Auxiliary Body meeting will take place on December 10, 2024, prior to the third GBFF Council. During the first meeting, the Auxiliary Body is expected to select two Co-Chairs amongst its members, with due considerations for gender and regional balance.

### **Composition of the Auxiliary Body**

30. Annex I presents the full list of experts nominated, as of December 4, 2024.

31. Other interested constituencies are invited to nominate their experts for the first term as soon as feasible.



## ANNEX I: MEMBERS OF THE AUXILIARY BODY FOR THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK FUND

List as of December 4, 2024

Constituency	Member Name	Nationality	Position
Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan	Mr. Sino Tohirzoda	Tajikistan	Head of NDC Secretariat, Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of Tajikistan
	Mrs. Vera Voronova	Kazakhstan	Executive Director, Association for the Conservation Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK/Birdlife in Kazakhstan)
Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay	Ms. María Laura Tomebesi	Argentina	Head of the Directorate of Water and Aquatic Ecosystems at the National Secretariat for Environment and Sustainable Development
	Mr. Dario Mandelburger	Paraguay	Director General of Biodiversity Protection and Conservation at the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Türkiye	Mr. Muhammed Hakan Çakmak	Türkiye	Agriculture and Forestry Expert
Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela	Ms. Andrea Cruz Angón	Mexico	Coordinator for the Alignment of Mexico's National Biodiversity Strategy with the Global Framework and National Goal setting
China	Mr. Xu Jing	China	Professor Engineer at Chinese Academy of Environmental Sciences (CRAES)
Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo	Mr. Kwasi Appeaning Addo	Ghana	Professor at the Department of Marine and Fisheries Sciences, University of Ghana <sup>2</sup>
Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia	Mr. Mohammed Salim	Egypt	Director of Nature Conservation Sector at Egyptian Environmental Affair Agency

<sup>2</sup> Subject to final confirmation by the Council member.

Constituency	Member Name	Nationality	Position
	Mr. Mohamed Ali Ben Temessek	Tunisia	Director of Ecology and Natural Ecosystems, Ministry of Environment – General Direction of Environment and Quality of Life
Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Mr. Khorommbi Mathibe	South Africa	Chief Director of the Biodiversity Economy and Sustainable Use Section of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment