

Approved Selection Criteria for Representatives of Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to Participate in GEF Council Meetings

Background

In December 2017 at its 53rd meeting, the GEF Council approved an : [Updated Vision to Enhance the Civil Society Engagement with the GEF](#) (*Updated Vision*)ⁱ. This includes an updated set of objectives and principles to provide an overall guide to this engagement. At an operational level, the document focuses in particular on certain key elements of this engagement related to enhanced engagement during GEF Council meetings and includes guidance for civil society participation in the GEF Assembly.

CSO Representation at Council Consultations and Meetings ¹

As per the decision **approved by Council** in November 2017 contained in the *Updated Vision*, the **GEF Secretariat** will be responsible for the selection of sponsored CSOs for Council consultations and meetings to ensure that CSO representatives are sharing the voices of CSOs from the field, while maintaining robust engagement on policy issues. This selection will be done in a transparent manner, based on clear criteria and in consultation with the CSO Network, Operational Focal Points (OFPs), the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG) and the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) to establish a comprehensive list of CSOs from which to draw those to be sponsored to attend the Council Meetings...” ².

The approved [Updated Vision document](#) contains basic criteria for the selection of civil society and IPLC representatives to be sponsored to attend any future Council meetings.

1. CSO participation at Council Meetings will focus on sharing the voices of communities and other stakeholders in the field, while still maintaining robust engagement on policy issues. For this reason, Council will invite two groups of CSOs to its biannual meetings: 1)

¹ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.53.10.Rev_.01_CS0_Vision_o.pdf

² Ibid. Paragraphs 49 to 57.

regional CSO representatives and 2) local CSOs with expertise in a technical or geographic area, as per Council recommendations during the previous meeting. It is expected that, together, these representatives will possess knowledge of the GEF as well as project specific insights that will add value to Council consultations and discussions.

2. The GEF secretariat will be responsible for the selection of sponsored CSOs for Council consultations and meetings to ensure that CSO representatives are sharing the voices of CSOs from the field, while maintaining robust engagement on policy issues. This selection will be done in a transparent manner, based on clear criteria and in consultation with the CSO Network, Operational Focal Points (OFPs), the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG) and the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) to establish a comprehensive list of CSOs from which to draw those to be sponsored to attend the Council Meetings. The Working Group suggests that two groups of CSOs will be sponsored to attend the biannual Council Meetings: regional CSO representatives and local CSOs with experience in a technical or geographical area. In addition, other CSOs, including international NGOs whose work is of relevance to the GEF, are welcome to attend the meetings as self-sponsored participants.
3. The selection from meeting to meeting will aim to (i) include those CSOs presenting on the selected topic for the CSO consultation; (ii) track, to the extent possible, the Council Meeting Agenda; (iii) enable a healthy rotation of CSO representation that balances the needs of inclusion, expertise and opportunities for in-depth discussions with participants; (iv) foster engagement by local and national-level CSOs, as recommended in the IEO evaluation. The CSOs invited should be able to provide input to the GEF Council in relevant areas where the perspectives from CSOs are most valuable regarding programming, project execution and policy formulation.
4. The number of sponsored CSOs invited to each Council Meeting will be a streamlined number of individuals, depending on the agenda and budget. The Secretariat will strive for a balanced representation of local and regional CSO at each Council Meeting, and appropriate representation from women's and Indigenous Peoples groups. Other CSOs, including international NGOs, will be welcome to attend the Consultations and present on the topics as appropriate as well as observe the Council meetings as self-sponsored participants.
5. At every meeting, except the first meeting following the endorsement of this document's recommendations, half of the CSOs invited to attend should have attended a GEF Council Meeting in the past. This will help build knowledge of the GEF's governance process that can then inform CSOs interventions and presentations during the meetings.

6. Basic criteria for selection of regional CSO representatives for participation at Council meetings are:
 - (a) Member of a well-established not-for-profit, non-governmental organization (CSO);
 - (b) CSO's alignment with the GEF's mission;
 - (c) Experience with GEF projects, or projects similar to those the GEF funds;
 - (d) Demonstrated relations to other Networks of CSOs or coordination capacity with other civil society organizations at the regional level;
 - (e) General knowledge of the GEF's work, past and present

7. Basic criteria for selection of local CSO representatives for participation at Council meetings are:
 - (a) Member of a well-established not-for-profit, non-governmental organization (CSO);
 - (b) CSO's alignment with the GEF's mission;
 - (c) Demonstrated relations to other Networks of CSOs or coordination capacity at the local or national level;
 - (d) Experience engaging with or implementing GEF projects at the local or national level
 - (e) Desire to engage more actively in GEF projects in their country

8. Additional criteria may be considered depending on the topics of the consultations and the agenda of the Council meeting.

9. Before the selection, the Secretariat will circulate the potential participants to the CSO Network for information and comment related to relevance or expertise. Based on this process, the Secretariat will select the sponsored CSOs to participate in the Council meeting. Self-funded CSOs will continue to be welcome to attend the CSO consultations and GEF Council Meetings.

Regarding additional criteria cited under point 8 above, the GEF Secretariat will prepare a questionnaire for applicants in order to assess the relevance of their experience in the topics of the Consultations and the respective Council agenda.



GEF Secretariat (August 2018)