

Global Environment Facility
Policy, Partnerships and Operations Unit

Main Findings of the Country Support Program Survey
Participants' Perspectives on CSP Activities during GEF-7

July 2020

CONTENTS

- Introduction and overview 1**
- 1. Identifying survey respondents..... 4**
- 2. The value of participating in CSP events..... 5**
 - Expanded Constituency Workshop 5
 - National Dialogues..... 8
 - Constituency Meetings..... 9
 - Pre-Council Meeting..... 9
 - Introduction Seminars10
- 3. The CSP’s role in Strengthening Knowledge of the GEF.....11**
 - Increasing knowledge through CSP activities.....11
 - Continuously enhancing the effectiveness of CSP activities13
 - Improved country programming through the implementation of tools during CSP activities14
 - Continuous support beyond CSP activities through engagement with the Secretariat16
- 4. Enhancing country coordination with Agencies.....17**
- Conclusion and way forward18**

- Appendix**
 - CSP questionnaire.....19

BOXES AND FIGURES

- Box 1. Key CSP activities aim specific objectives and target defined types of participants 2
- Box 2. In the words of CSP participants—Satisfaction with CSP activities..... 5
- Box 3. In the words of CSP participants—Suggestions for the future.....13
- Box 4. In the words of CSP participants—Contribution to country programming improvements16

- Figure 1. 521 respondents indicated their region and role in the GEF..... 4
- Figure 2. Respondents overwhelmingly find ECWs useful..... 5
- Figure 3. Focus on ECWs’ usefulness by region..... 6
- Figure 4. Focus on ECWs’ usefulness by type of participants..... 7
- Figure 5. Participants indicated they find ECWs relevant to their needs 7
- Figure 6. ECW participants identified ways to improving ECWs in the future..... 8
- Figure 7. Respondents found National Dialogues useful to attend..... 8
- Figure 8. Participants rate high the value of National Dialogue for their country..... 9
- Figure 9. Participants find Constituency Meetings useful to prepare Council documents and discuss projects ... 9
- Figure 10. Respondents find Pre-Council Meetings useful to their Constituency.....10
- Figure 11. Participants find Introduction Seminar useful.....10
- Figure 12. Twice as many participants understand well the GEF after participating in a CSP event11
- Figure 13. Participants have gained much knowledge by participating in CSP events.....11
- Figure 14. Participants note the good quality of information exchanges.....12
- Figure 15. Participants ranked a better understanding of the GEF and project preparation as key benefits12
- Figure 16. Participants suggest ways to enhance the effectiveness of CSP events13
- Figure 17. Two-thirds of respondents apply some of the concepts and tools made available by the GEF14
- Figure 18. Participants have adopted good practices as a result of participating in CSP events15
- Figure 19. Participants indicate CSP’s contribution to improvements in country programming15
- Figure 20. Participants indicate receiving satisfactory services from the Secretariat when reaching out.16
- Figure 21. Relationship with GEF Agencies has improved over time.....17
- Figure 22. Respondents note an improved use of good practices when working with Agencies17

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Mid-way through GEF-7, over 66 events led by the Country Support Program took place face-to-face since June 2018. In March 2020, the program started leveraging IT tools to continue engaging countries during the COVID-19 outbreak. Against this backdrop, the CSP team launched a survey to listen to participants in the activities it supports. The survey examines participants' satisfaction and views of the support provided and assesses how well the Country Support Program has contributed to increasing individual knowledge of the GEF and helping countries make better use of GEF resources, including support for programming. It polled 1300 participants who joined face-to-face events during GEF-7 on how well they think the Country Support Program tackles these issues. The survey also helped capture participants' views on improving support in the future. It is part of a broader retrospective assessment of the CSP in GEF-7.

Standard evaluation forms conducted at the completion of some of the CSP events provide data on the quality of the presentations, discussions and facilitation, as well as real-time feedback on satisfaction with the event. These have proved invaluable to the CSP team in adjusting event design and have helped shape the support delivered over time. Yet, they do not provide means for a retrospective assessment of the impact of these activities. This survey, conducted for the first time on this scale, fills this gap—it complements existing data sources by providing CSP-wide information on participants' opinions about the program.

The questionnaire design allows for quantitative benchmarking, and possible tracking of progress over time. It includes 27 core questions and consists of five main parts covering demographic information, CSP events' usefulness and relevance, knowledge of the GEF, impact of CSP events in countries and constituencies, and country ownership and relationship with GEF Agencies.

The questionnaire includes single-choice, multiple-choice and scale questions, while also allowing for a qualitative exploration to ensure a nuanced understanding of the program's impact. Respondents provided more detailed textual descriptions, when prompted at the end of pre-determined lists or when respondents indicated low appreciation in multiple choice questions. The questionnaire was first piloted at the February 2020 Expanded Constituency Workshop held in Kenya and then refined.

Implemented online, the survey ran from May 4, 2020 until May 29, 2020, and was offered in English, French, Russian and Spanish. It reached a response rate of 33 percent and an additional 7 percent of targeted population answered only to the demographic questions, bringing the total number of respondents to 523. Survey results also include over 1200 text responses. 73 percent of the respondents completed the survey in full.

The survey results demonstrate countries are more and better equipped to program new activities, with the knowledge and tools gained during CSP events. The evidence provided makes clear that respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the support they receive from participating in CSP activities and the impact this has on their work. They also point to areas where the support can be enhanced and to the need to learn more and benefit even further from joining CSP activities. Here is a snapshot of key findings:

- *Nearly 75 percent respondents indicated CSP activities have contributed to improving country programming.* They shared a series of examples highlighting how the CSP is helping improve country programming in concrete ways: stronger ownership, more inclusive process, better domestic advisory capacity and improved coordination with Agencies.
- *The relationship between countries and Agencies has improved as a result of participating in CSP activities.* Two-third of respondents have adopted good practices as a result of their participation

in CSP activities: early dialogue on project ideas, discussion on policy requirements and regular updates on project status.

- *A total of 65 percent of respondents apply concepts, tools and good practices made available during CSP activities in their day-to-day practice.* OFPs & PFPs, and Agencies now join national steering committees to discuss GEF programming the most. Europe and Central Asia indicated more than other regions the adoption of good practices in managing results and co-financing.
- *Twice as many participants understand the GEF well or very well after joining CSP events.* This includes better knowledge around project development, GEF programming priorities, policies and guidelines, as well as evaluation.

Some of the findings are specific to each CSP activity. Box 1 presents a snapshot of the audience and objectives of the CSP's key activities.

Box 1. Key CSP activities have specific objectives and target defined types of participants

Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECW). These events allow to discuss and review GEF policies, procedures and priorities, and to share experiences from GEF projects and their integration within national frameworks. They involve countries from a given constituency, with national delegations comprising: GEF National Focal Points, Convention Focal Points and other key stakeholders, including civil society. Agencies are also invited to join ECWs.

National Dialogues. Held at the request of GEF Operational Focal Points, National Dialogues bring together government representatives, non-governmental/civil society organizations, communities, research institutions and the private sector, as well as partners and agencies. They provide an opportunity to discuss environmental policies and strategies; national positions in Multilateral Environmental Agreements; and GEF programming matters.

Constituency Meetings. These meetings are organized by and at the request of the Council Member with technical and logistics support by the GEF Secretariat. They are open only to GEF Focal Points of the constituency's member countries. Council members may invite other participants as necessary, including GEF Agencies and other resource persons.

Pre-Council Meetings. On the eve of each Council Meeting, Pre-Council Meetings aim to discuss Council documents and Constituency's draft decisions. They include only Council Members and Alternates.

Introduction Seminars. These are held once a year to train new GEF Agency staff, as well as new country focal points, on GEF history, structure, operations, strategies, policies and procedures. They also include representatives from the CSO Network.

Headline results by type of CSP activities are as follows:

- *Over 95 percent of respondents found Expanded Constituency Workshops very relevant or relevant to their needs.* Participants indicated the following as most useful: improved understanding of programming priorities, knowledge on operations and priorities, and networking opportunities provided during these meetings and holding bilateral meetings with the GEF Secretariat
- *More than 90 percent of respondents found National Dialogues valuable or very valuable to them.* The opportunity to discuss programming priorities, national environmental policies and project implementation were ranked as most useful features of National Dialogues.
- *Most participants in Constituency Meetings find these events very useful to attend to discuss Council documents.* They also value these events to explain strategies and policies, as well as to

discuss GEF projects and share lessons. Four out of every five participants in *Pre-Council Meetings* find these events helpful to develop common positions ahead of Council meetings.

- *All respondents deemed Introduction Seminars as very useful or useful to learn about how the GEF works, its policies and procedures.* They also valued the opportunity to meet other OFPs, Agency colleagues and GEF Secretariat staff.
- When asked what they wanted more of, respondents indicated the need to focus more on project design and portfolio oversight, supported by discussions on case studies and good practice examples. They also indicated the need for more face-to-face bilateral meetings with the Secretariat and to share more information ahead of CSP events.

This report follows the general structure of the questionnaire. It provides a comprehensive overview of the results, disaggregated by geographical region and participant type. The survey questionnaire is provided as an appendix to this note. This survey will feed into a broader assessment of the results of the Country Support Program in GEF-7.

1. IDENTIFYING SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Respondents to the survey come from the four regions out of where the GEF operates. Over a third of the respondents (37 percent) indicated being from Africa, 28 percent from Asia and the Pacific, 24 percent from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 11 percent from Europe and Central Asia. The number of respondents vary across regions, with Asia reaching a response rate of close to 100 percent.

Operational Focal Points (OFPs) and Political Focal Points (PFPs) combined represent 20 percent of the respondents, with Convention Focal Points accounting for another 17.5 percent, Civil Society Representatives for 40 percent and GEF Agency representatives for 6 percent. About half of the remaining 16.5 percent of “Other” respondents indicated they are government representatives, typically working in support of OFPs or PFPs. presents the role of each respondent in the GEF partnership sorted by geographical region.

Figure 1. 521 respondents indicated their region and role in the GEF
Distribution of responses by region and respondents’ role in the GEF Partnership



Note: each dot represents a respondent.

The Country Support Program uses various tools to reach different audiences and meet different objectives. When asked which type of event they attended, 408 respondents indicated they joined Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs). Respondents also mentioned their participation in National Dialogue (162), Constituency Meetings (126), Introduction Seminars (121) and Pre-Council Meetings (53). In subsequent parts of this report, analysis related to each specific event only include the respondents who confirmed their participation in the said event type.

2. THE VALUE OF PARTICIPATING IN CSP EVENTS

This section examines how participants find CSP events suitable to their needs. It asks what participants think about the event’s usefulness, value and relevance. Questions are specific to event types and focus on various benefits and reasons why events were useful. Respondents were also provided with the opportunity to express their satisfaction with the CSP program. Overall, results show wide appreciation for CSP events. Box 2 includes some of the most telling testimonials.

Box 2. In the words of CSP participants—Satisfaction with CSP activities

Select quotes in response to the question “Is there anything else you would like to share about GEF CSP events?”

“CSP activities are a great way to learn or refresh one’s memory about the functioning of the GEF (policies, procedures), to exchange directly with Secretariat staff and countries, and to learn lessons from and identify opportunities for collaboration with other GEF partners.”

“I have participated once in this program, and for me it was revealing to know the organization of the GEF, its processes, how it works, the types of projects, etc. I finally made sense of what it takes to make a project work. It was also nice to know projects that were developed in other countries and this gave me inspiration so the same would take place in my country.”

“CSP events are really good. I now have greater clarity on how the GEF operates and learned lessons from countries. These has positively impacted my work.”

“Seeing directly some very successful projects (e.g. Upper Tana water project) as part of a CSP activity gave a lot of inspiration about what the GEF wants to happen.”

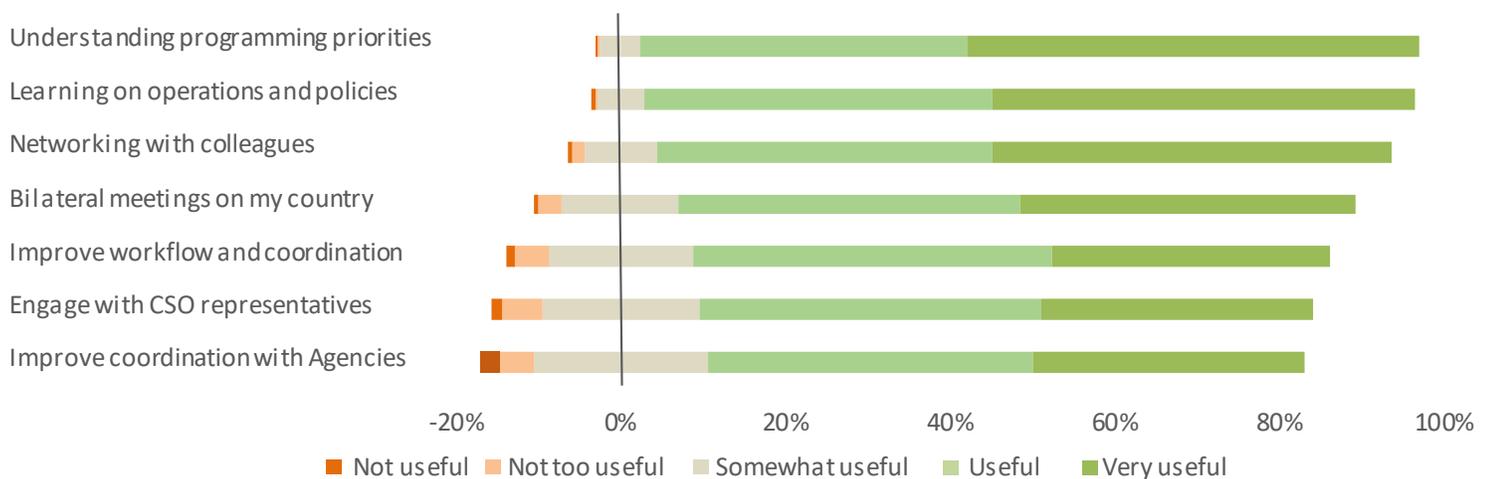
“Overall, I think CSP events are a great initiative. Countries have big rotations in staff and these moments help to raise clarity about the GEF, how it works, and opportunities for funding. It also creates a strong ‘GEF community’. I think the project design exercises are excellent.”

Expanded Constituency Workshop

When it comes to ECWs, over 75 percent of all respondents valued almost all of the components of these events as useful or very useful. Participants found most useful the focus on programming priorities, followed by learning on operations and policies, and opportunities to network and hold bilateral meetings between a country and the GEF Secretariat (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Respondents overwhelmingly find ECWs useful

Distribution of responses to the question “Please rate the reasons why attending the ECW(s) was useful”



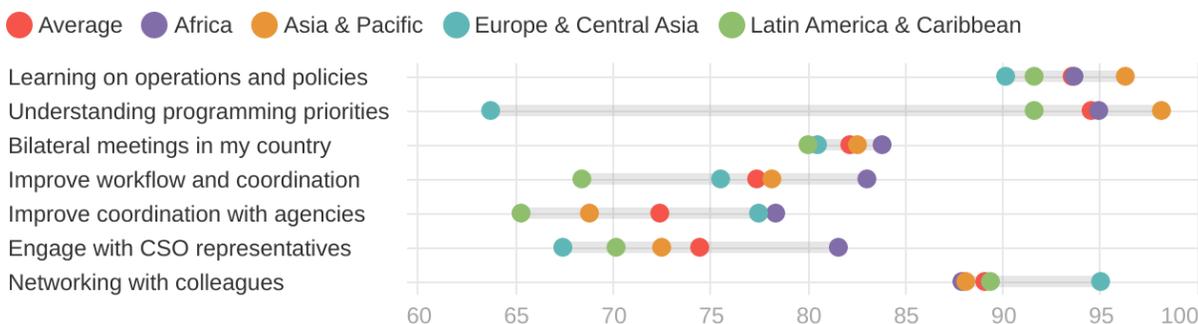
Respondents also provided additional reasons as to why they find ECWs useful. They highlighted that ECWs provide a venue for learning good practices on project design and implementation from peers in the same region. Participants also value ECWs as an outlet to better understand GEF’s programming priorities and resource allocation at the country level. The ability to directly interact with GEF Secretariat staff was also brought forward by a couple of respondents, as was the importance of engaging with staff in charge of local project sites.

Participants who rated ECWs as not too useful indicated the limited workshop duration prevented from exploring topics and exchanging among participants in more depth. They also noted that minimal consultations took place with participating countries in shaping the ECW agenda. Respondents also indicated that not enough time was provided to hear from CSO representatives.

ECW usefulness by geographical region. Because ECWs are held across constituencies, identifying different viewpoints across regions matters (see Figure 3). For example, Latin America found less useful the attention on improving workflow and coordination across the partnership, compared to others. Conversely, respondents from Africa found the focus on engaging with CSO representatives in ECWs more useful than other regions.

Figure 3. Focus on ECWs’ usefulness by region

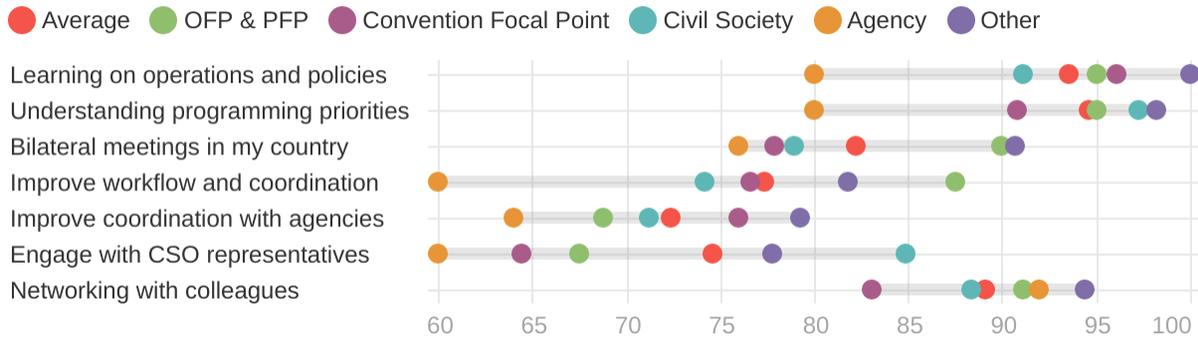
Percentage of respondents by region who responded Useful or Very useful to the question “Please rate the reasons why attending the ECW(s) was useful”, presented on a scale from 60% to 100%



ECW useful by participant type. Each participant in ECWs plays a key role in the GEF Partnership. Given their role in coordination and programming, it is worth noting OFPs and PFPs found ECWs useful to learn from operations, programming priorities and as an opportunity to hold bilateral meeting, but less so to engage with CSO representatives. Meanwhile Agencies rated the overall usefulness of ECWs on average lower than other participants did (see Figure 4). Agencies are also invited to join these events and are not part of country delegations. They may be responsible for the coordination of GEF activities or of a specific GEF-financed project. Improving workflow and coordination was ranked particularly high among OFPs and PFPs.

Figure 4. Focus on ECWs' usefulness by type of participants

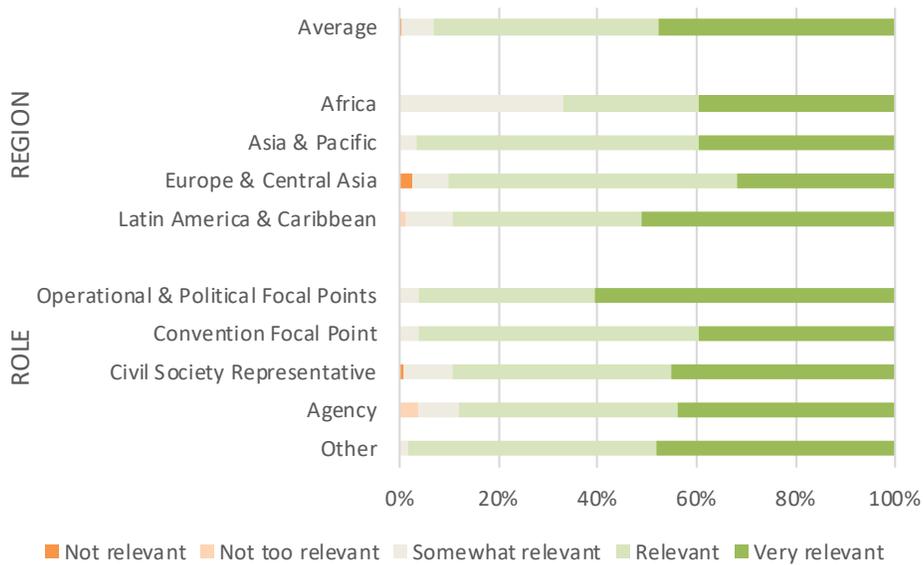
Percentage of respondents by role in the GEF Partnership who responded Useful or Very useful to the question "Please rate the reasons why attending the ECW(s) was useful", presented on a scale from 60% to 100%



Assessing the extent to which participants found ECWs relevant to their needs is key to ensure the CSP program keeps meeting the priorities and needs of country representatives. Figure 5 indicates that about 90 percent participants consider ECWs as relevant and very relevant to their needs. A comparison across regions show that that Latin America & the Caribbean found ECWs to be most relevant to their needs. Among the various roles in the GEF partnership, OFPs and PFPs found ECWs most relevant.

Figure 5. Participants indicated they find ECWs relevant to their needs

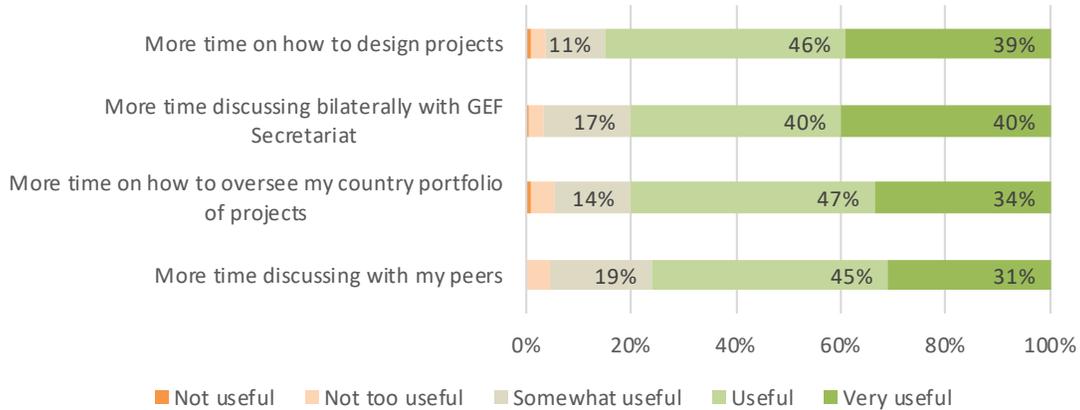
Distribution of responses to the question "Do you find the ECW workshops relevant to your needs?"



ECW areas of enhancement going forward. Respondents pointed to areas of improvements for ECWs (see Figure 6). 85 percent of them indicated as useful or very useful the need to place more attention on how to design projects. And 80 percent of respondents noted the same interest in discussing bilaterally as a country with the GEF Secretariat, as well as on understanding how to oversee their portfolio of ongoing projects.

Figure 6. ECW participants identified ways to improving ECWs in the future

Distribution of responses to the question “How would you change the ECW activities in the future?”



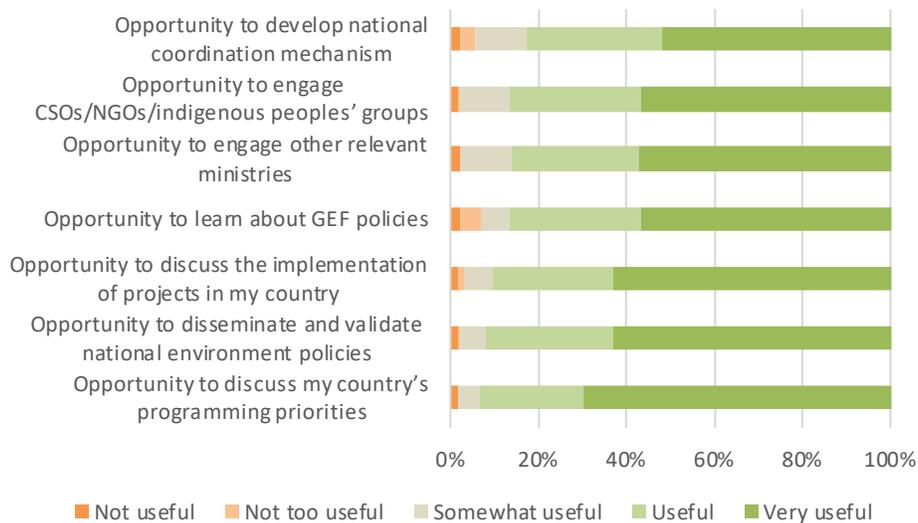
Respondents also added their own suggestions to enhance ECWs further. They stressed the need to add presentations on individual country performance and coordination with Agencies, and bilateral discussions with the GEF Secretariat. Participants also underlined the importance of sharing examples of good and innovative practices from their region, as well as discussing the delivery of global environmental benefits at the local level in more detail. They also expressed the need to invite more participants from the civil society and the private sector. Because of the timing of the survey, several respondents noted the importance of discussing areas that consider the COVID-19 pandemic.

National Dialogues

At the country level, participants deemed National Dialogues useful to attend. They particularly valued the opportunity to discuss programming priorities—one of the core objective of these events—as well as to disseminate and validate national environmental policies, and to discuss project implementation (see Figure 7). They also indicated that these events provide a platform to engage stakeholders, such as CSOs, but also representatives across ministries.

Figure 7. Respondents found National Dialogues useful to attend

Distribution of responses to the question “Please rate the reasons why National Dialogues were useful to attend”

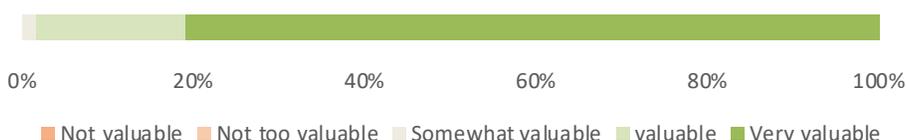


In addition, respondents underlined how much National Dialogues help create a sense of country ownership of GEF-funded activities and projects. These events also promote awareness and transparency in programming GEF resources at national level by bringing together various types of country stakeholders. In one instance, a participant however noted that the National Dialogue s/he joined took place only to validate Government decisions, rather than to make the decision together. Respondents also indicated that this type of Government-led event provided little room for CSO involvement.

Altogether, every 4 out of 5 participants in National Dialogues found these events very valuable, and not a single participant indicated the event as not valuable (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Participants rate high the value of National Dialogue for their country

Distribution of responses to the question “Please rate the value of the National Dialogue(s) for your country”

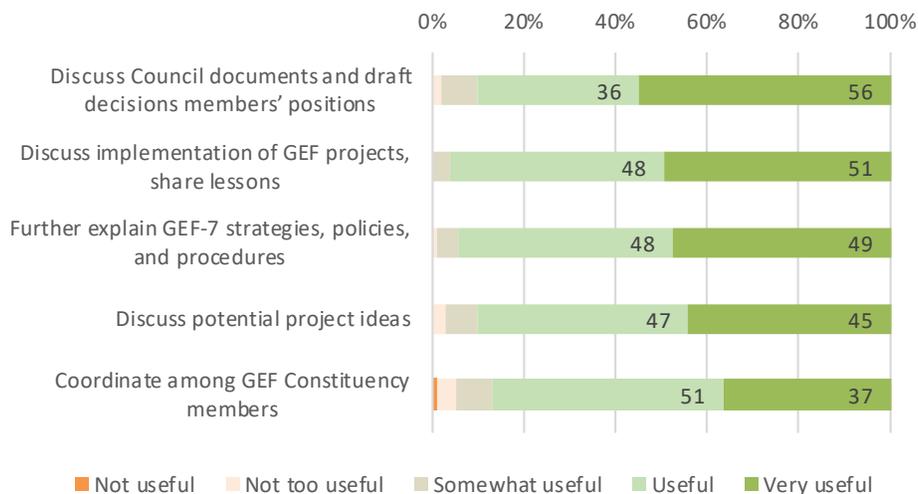


Constituency Meetings

Participants indicated, as reported in Figure 9, that discussing Council documents and drafting constituency decisions, as well as discussing the implementation of GEF projects are the two main reasons why they find Constituency Meetings useful. This confirms the role of Constituency Meetings to help Constituency representatives organize themselves, particularly in the run up to Council meetings.

Figure 9. Participants find Constituency Meetings useful to prepare Council documents and discuss projects

Distribution of responses to the question “Please rate the reasons why Constituency Meetings were useful to attend”



Participants also stressed that Constituency Meetings provided an opportunity to encourage Council members to rise to the needs of member countries, as well as to strengthen synergies in implementing conventions.

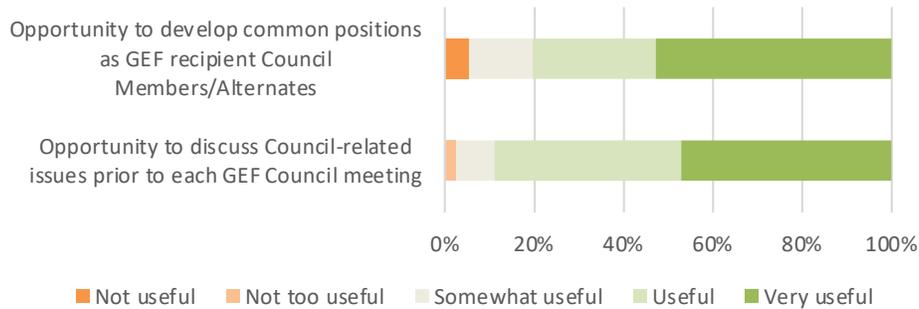
Pre-Council Meetings

Respondents emphasized that discussing Council-related issues on the eve of each Council meeting was useful or very useful as well as using these events to develop common positions. Because the number of participants in these meetings is limited to Council Member and Alternates, the number of respondents

to questions related to this type of event was low. However, their responses make for an accurate account of their views on these events: on average, more than 90 percent found Pre-Council Meetings as useful or very useful to their Constituency.

Figure 10. Respondents find Pre-Council Meetings useful to their Constituency

Distribution of responses to the question “Please rate the value of Pre-Council Meeting for Recipient Country Constituencies”

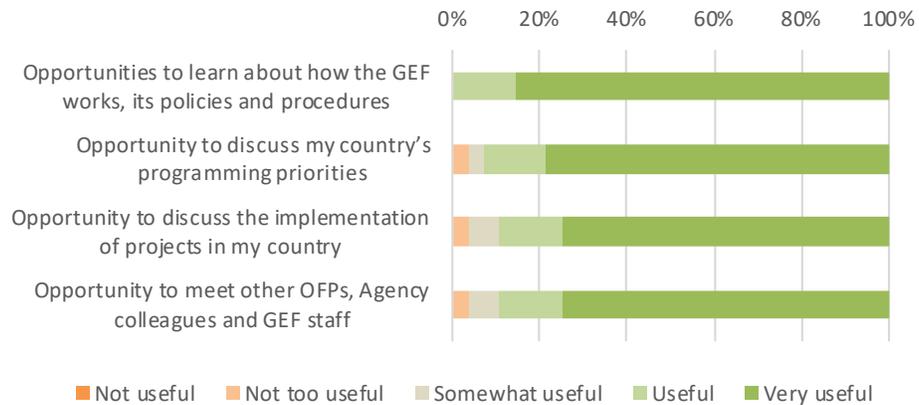


Introduction Seminars

By providing information to newcomers in the GEF partnership, Introduction Seminars are most valued by participants because they help new OFPs, PFPs and Agencies’ to staff learn about GEF policies and procedures, as well as to discuss programming priorities and the implementation of projects (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Participants find Introduction Seminars useful

Distribution of responses to the question “Please rate the reasons why Introduction Seminars were useful to attend”



3. THE CSP’S ROLE IN STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE OF THE GEF

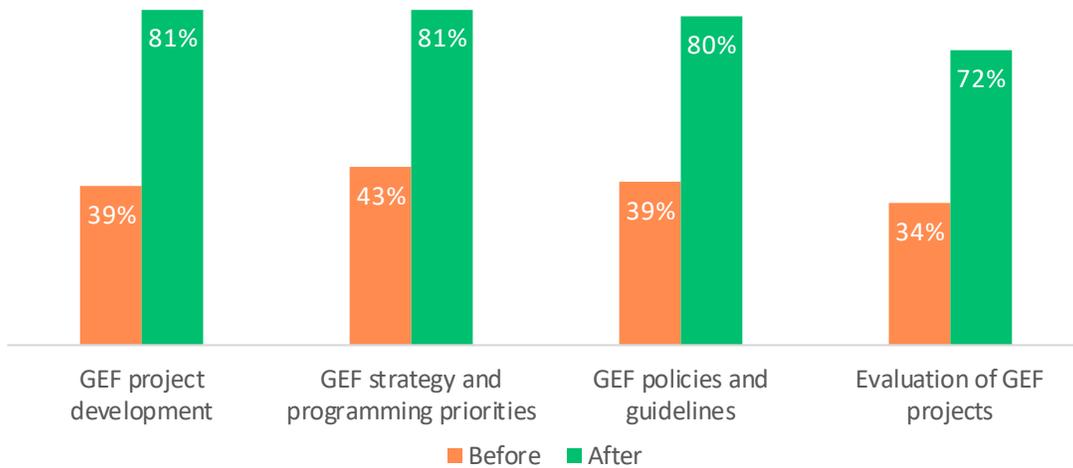
Strengthening countries’ capacity is at the center of CSP activities. Its various events provide participants with the knowledge and tools to fully participate in the GEF partnership and make better use of GEF resources, as well as with an opportunity to learn from one another. Respondents indicated they benefit very much from their participation in CSP events and suggested areas of enhancement.

Increasing knowledge through CSP activities

To build the capacity of participants, the CSP helps share knowledge on topics of relevance to their role in the GEF partnership. Figure 12 highlights that twice as many participants indicated that they understand the GEF well or very well after attending CSP events. This is true for developing new projects, as well as for understanding GEF priorities and policies, and evaluation work.

Figure 12. Twice as many participants understand the GEF well after participating in a CSP event

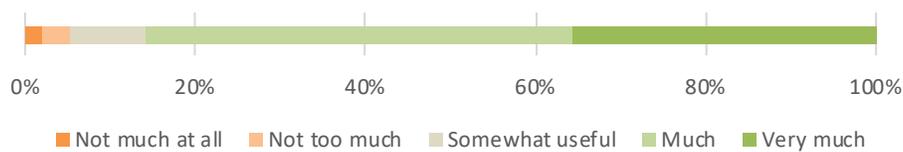
Percentage of respondents who responded Good or Very good to the question “How would you rate your level of understanding of GEF before and after attending a GEF CSP event”



Altogether, over 80 percent of participants learned much or very much in joining CSP events. This data, highlighted in Figure 13, is an indication of the effectiveness of the CSP program which aims to build capacity of countries participating in the GEF Partnership.

Figure 13. Participants have gained much knowledge by participating in CSP events

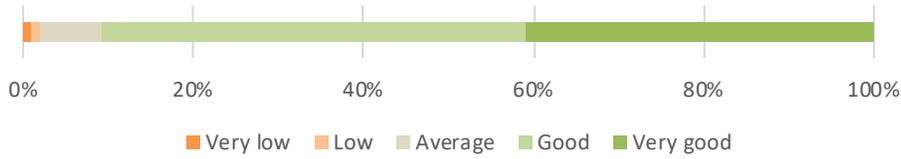
Distribution of responses to the question “Overall, to what extent has your knowledge of GEF increased as a result of participating in GEF CSP events?”



More than 90 percent of respondents also indicated, as noted in Figure 14, that they found the level of information exchanged during CSP events good or very good. This question covered both the level of information shared by the GEF Secretariat, as well as by participants themselves showing the value participants see in exchanging information with other participants.

Figure 14. Participants note the good quality of information exchanges

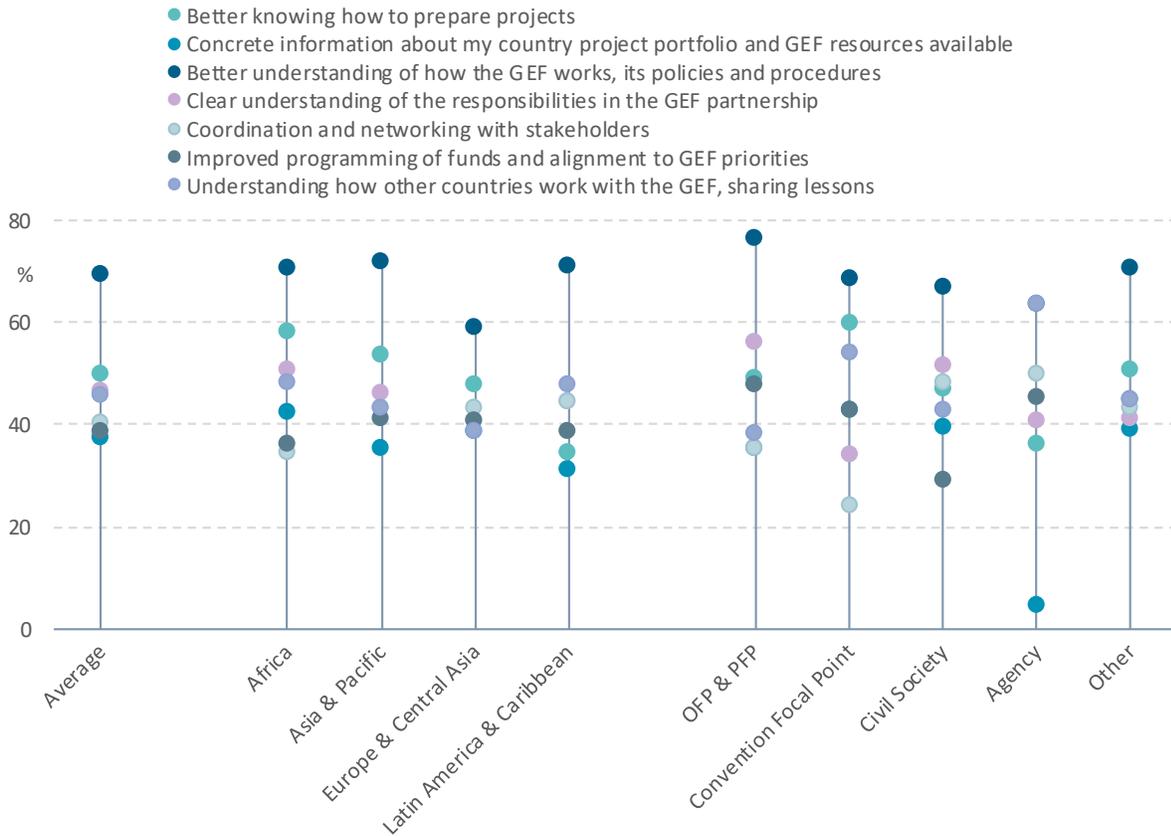
Distribution of responses to the question “How do you find the overall quality of the information exchanges in the course of GEF CSP events?”



On average, across the regions and types of role in the GEF partnership, 70 percent of respondents list gaining a better understanding of how the GEF works as the top benefit of CSP events (see Figure 15). This is followed by better knowing how to prepare projects and understanding the responsibilities in the partnership, though the order of importance among elements seen as key benefits varies across regions and type of respondents. For example, OFPs & PFPs, as well as Convention Focal Points, were the two categories of respondents that viewed how to prepare projects as the top benefit. And Latin America & the Caribbean indicated more than other regions that they see knowledge sharing across countries as a key benefit.

Figure 15. Participants ranked a better understanding of the GEF and project preparation as key benefits

Percent of respondents identifying each benefit as one of the top-three benefits of CSP events (ticking a maximum of three benefits was recommended)



Continuously enhancing the effectiveness of CSP activities

The CSP also polled participants on their thinking about ways to enhance the effectiveness of CSP events. Project design and portfolio oversight ranked highest, followed by discussing case studies and holding bilateral meetings with the GEF Secretariat (Figure 16). Participants also emphasized the need to prepare information customized to countries and sectors, to share more information ahead of events and to focus on hands-on exercises, rather than theoretical presentations.

Figure 16. Participants suggest ways to enhance the effectiveness of CSP events

Distribution of responses to the question “In what ways might the effectiveness of GEF CSP events be enhanced?”



Respondents also offered their suggestions to improve CSP events. These included providing more time for multi-country discussions on regional priorities and projects, as well as for good practice examples articulating the delivery of global environmental benefits at the local level. They also asked for more consultation in the lead up to CSP events to contribute shaping the agenda further. One participant also asked for more information on progress status by Agencies in countries.

Finally, participants took advantage of the space provided at the end of the questionnaire to add suggestions on the overall CSP program going forward (see Box 3). They provided constructive ideas on tools and practices to adopt in CSP activities to strengthen country programming, as well as to involve all stakeholders that are parties to a project development. Respondents also highlighted the need to share more good practices across countries from the same region and to learn from each other.

Box 3. In the words of CSP participants—Suggestions for the future

“If possible, CSP events should allow for individual Country session with the GEF. E.g. assessing the country's current portfolio of projects and possible areas the GEF can support.”

“GEF Secretariat should organize more webinars to share results about impacts of GEF-funded projects in STAR allocation areas.”

“I would like to see more regional events with opportunities for collaboration and shared learning.”

“I would like the CSP team to allocate time 30 minutes to have country national focal points and representatives to discuss with the GEF Secretariat. We might need to discuss issues that are specific to my country, which can't be addressed during plenaries.”

“I need a refresher training before the open dates of submitting a project proposal.”

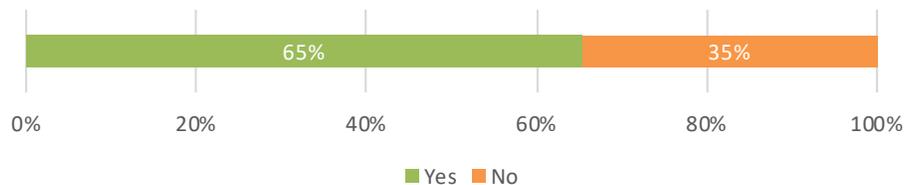
“We need more dedicated time for bilateral meetings between a country and the GEF Secretariat. I would also like to see more knowledge-sharing from projects, especially with regards to results, successful partnerships, private sector engagement.”

“There should more time, opportunities and support for CSOs and enhancing networking for more meaningful interactions with country representatives.”

Improved country programming through the implementation of tools during CSP activities
Capacity building to strengthen countries' ability to program GEF activities is at the center of CSP activities. Survey results demonstrate that respondents now use good practices and tools promoted during events. Altogether, 65 percent of respondents indicated they are now applying some of the concepts and tools made available by the GEF during CSP events (Figure 17). This finding shows how useful CSP events are to strengthen countries' capacity in dealing with GEF programming, policies and projects.

Figure 17. Two-thirds of respondents apply some of the concepts and tools made available by the GEF

Distribution of responses to the question "Have you applied some of the concepts and tools (made available by GEF during the CSP events, via correspondence or on its website) to your day-to-day practice?"



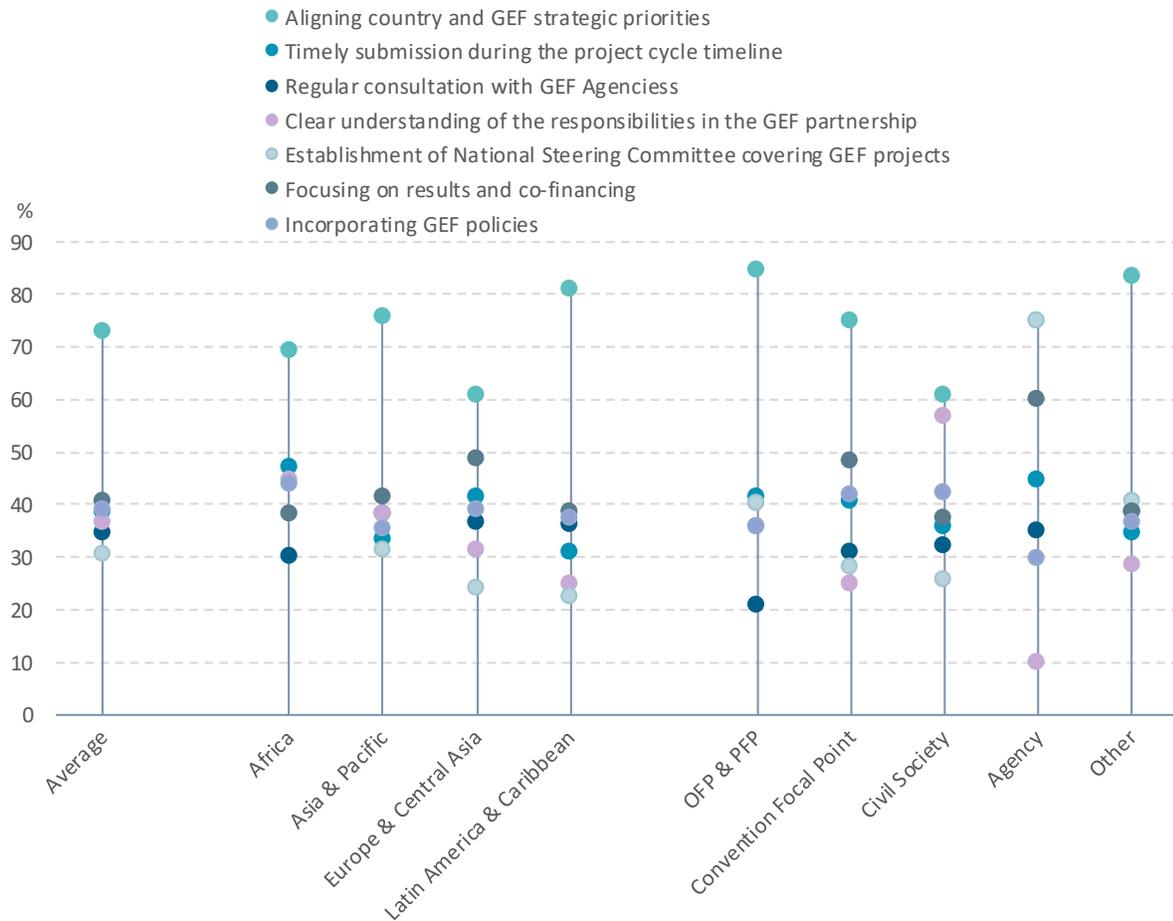
This finding is important because the CSP targets participants that are at the forefront of programming, including OFPs and PFPs. Different groups and regions have adopted different good practices. OFPs & PFPs, and Agencies adopted the use of National Steering Committees to discuss GEF programming the most. Europe and Central Asia indicated more than other regions the adoption of good practices in managing results and co-financing; a good practice also adopted by Convention Focal Points and Agency representatives. Overall, when provided with the opportunity to indicate up to three good practices adopted through their participation in CSP events (see Figure 18), respondents noted by far the alignment of country and GEF priorities as the good practice most adopted.

Additional comments from participants shed lights on specific concepts and tools they have adopted. These include:

- *Better communication.* Many of the examples revolved around the fact that countries interact better with Agencies, thanks to the additional knowledge on GEF policies and priorities.
- *National Steering Committee.* The setting up of a National Steering Committee was also adopted as a way to strengthen programming and management of GEF resources.
- *Use of Portal to find project data.* OFPs noted the fact that they now use the Portal to find data on project submission.
- *Application of policies and process.* Participants indicated they now apply policies well during project preparation, including ensuring stakeholder consultation and considering gender equality.
- *Ability to find information.* Participants also highlighted they now contact colleagues and the GEF Secretariat, as well as use the GEF online tool Kaleo to find information on the partnership.

Figure 18. Participants have adopted good practices as a result of participating in CSP events

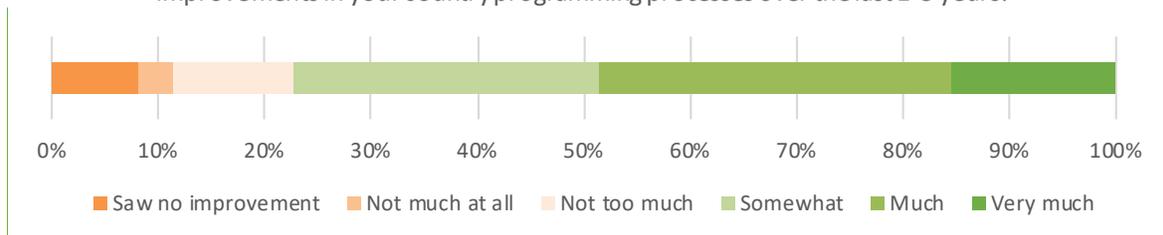
Percent of respondents identifying each good practice as one of the top-three good practices adopted thanks to participating in CSP activities (ticking a maximum of three good practices was recommended)



Nearly 75 percent respondents indicated CSP activities have contributed to improving country programming (see Figure 19) somewhat to very much. Less than 10 percent of the participants saw no improvement.

Figure 19. Participants indicate CSP's contribution to improvements in country programming

Distribution of responses to the question "To what extent do you believe that GEF CSP events have contributed to improvements in your country programming processes over the last 1-3 years?"



Participants also shared a series of examples highlighting how the CSP is helping improve country programming in concrete ways. Testimonials in Box 4 highlight this point.

Box 4. In the words of CSP participants—Contribution to country programming improvements

“As a result of greater understanding of the policies and procedures Guyana is now better equipped to develop projects. The OFP is involved to a greater extent in project development and country ownership of projects is enhanced.”

“The National Dialogue we held has helped reach a more transparent and more inclusive process in allocating STAR resources in my country.”

“Thanks to the ECW I attended, I can now understand how GEF resources flow and are used in my country’s portfolio. This helps me advise my OFP and the Minister of the Environment and her staff about how GEF projects would provide more effective environmental and socioeconomic impacts.”

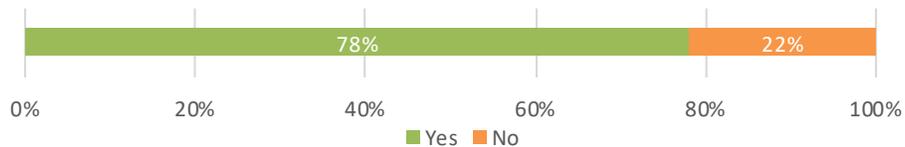
“Dialogue between my country and Agencies is easier and more effective now that both parties discuss project preparation and implementation with the same level of information.”

“We are better able to identify partners that have a comparative advantage in investing in specific focal areas and have the ability to provide additional financial support to add onto GEF financing.”

Continuous support beyond CSP activities through engagement with the Secretariat CSP staff support and responsiveness. Almost 80 percent of participants who contacted the GEF Secretariat were satisfied with the quality of the service provided (Figure 20). They added that they value the Secretariat’s open-door policy to address any requests from countries and do so in a timely manner with quality services, encouraging requests in formal and informal way. The Secretariat’s response effectiveness was mostly appreciated on questions related to the availability of resources and alignment of projects with GEF priorities. Good support was also noted in ensuring that event logistics took place effectively.

Figure 20. Participants indicate receiving satisfactory services from the Secretariat when reaching out

Distribution of responses to the question “If you contacted the GEF Secretariat staff with requests for information and advice, was your question answered fully and request satisfied?”



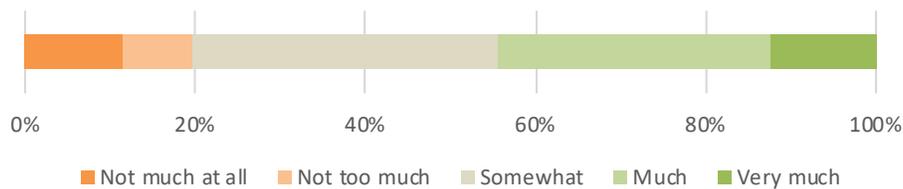
4. ENHANCING COUNTRY COORDINATION WITH AGENCIES

Agencies are at the core of the GEF Partnership. They implement projects and work with OFPs and PFPs in designing projects as well as during the project life. Yet, Agencies are not reaching all groups in the GEF Partnership in the same way. This section examines how well CSP participants work with Agencies and are improving the way they collaborate as a result of participating in CSP activities.

About half of the respondents saw an improvement in the relationship between Agencies and their countries through their participation in CSP activities (see Figure 21).

Figure 21. Relationship with GEF Agencies has improved over time

Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent do you believe your relationship with GEF Agencies has improved as a result of your participation and learning during GEF CSP events?”

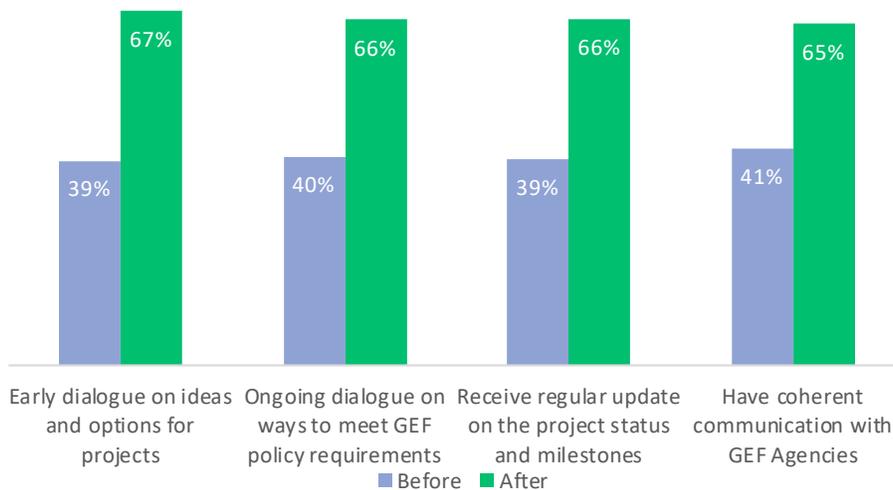


When asked to provide examples of improvements, respondents highlighted that more coordination meetings are now taking place and that countries appreciate receiving frequent updates from Agencies, particularly during the project design phase. A respondent noted that CSP events helped move from a distant relationship with limited interactions to one that is now a meaningful dialogue when designing projects. And the same is true for a civil society respondent who noted higher consideration toward CSOs from Agencies. Yet, few respondents also indicated they wished they would have more interactions with Agencies and that the government should be more involved and consulted during project design.

Improved use of good practices when working with Agencies. Participants noted a 50 percent increase in the use of good practices when working with Agencies after participating in CSP events (see Figure 22). This included sharing project ideas early on, keeping an ongoing dialogue around policy requirements and receiving regular updates.

Figure 22. Respondents note an improved use of good practices when working with Agencies

Percentage of respondents who responded Good or Very good to the question “How would you rate the application of the following good practices with Agencies *before* and *after* joining any GEF CSP event?”



CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

This survey provides the first large scale account of the results of the CSP activities in countries from the perspectives of participants. It helps understand how countries are more and better equipped to program new activities, with the knowledge and tools they need to work with the Secretariat and Agencies, as well as in terms of coordinating activities within a country with all relevant stakeholders.

As the evidence presented in this report makes clear, respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the support they receive from participating in CSP activities and the impact this has on their work, allocating GEF resources and implementing projects to generate global environmental benefits. They also point to areas where the support can be enhanced. Now, as much as ever, it is vital that the CSP continues to respond to what participants want to achieve through its activities.

The survey results demonstrate that participants are eager to learn more and benefit even further from joining CSP activities. Altogether respondents noted their level of knowledge significantly increased as a result of joining CSP activities. In addition, they confirmed using some of the tools disseminated during activities and provided concrete examples of how this contributes to enhanced country programming of GEF projects and programs.

The findings of this survey will feed into a broader assessment of the results of the Country Support Program in GEF-7, which will take into account additional lines of evidence. Together, they will provide a comprehensive assessment of the performance and impact of the program in supporting country programming capacity and engagement in the GEF Partnership.

Appendix — CSP questionnaire

I. Personal information

1. Which region of the world do you live in?
 - Africa
 - Asia
 - Caribbean
 - Europe
 - Latin America
 - Pacific

2. What is your role in the GEF Partnership? (Please check the ONE that fits you best)
 - Operational Focal Point (OFP)
 - Political Focal Point (PFP)
 - Convention Focal Point
 - Civil Society representative
 - GEF Agency
 - Other: [text]

3. What type of GEF CSP events have you participated in? (select all that apply)
 - Expanded Constituency Workshop (ECW)
 - Constituency Meeting
 - National Dialogue
 - GEF Introduction Seminar
 - Pre-Council Meeting

II. Participation in GEF CSP events

Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs) – skip Questions 4-7 if you have not attended these workshops

4. Please rate the reasons why attending the ECW(s) was useful:
(1=not useful; 3 = somewhat useful; 5 = very useful)
 - Learning on GEF operations and policies
 - Better understanding GEF programming priorities
 - Bilateral meetings and other opportunities to discuss my country's GEF activities and challenges
 - Improve workflow and coordination among country stakeholders (government, CSOs, etc.)
 - Improve coordination with GEF Agencies
 - Provide an opportunity to engage with civil society representatives
 - Networking opportunity with colleagues
 - Other: [text]

5. Do you find the ECW workshops relevant to your needs?
(1=not relevant; 3 = somewhat relevant; 5 = very relevant)

6. *[If you responded 1, 2 or 3:]* Could you please explain which of your needs are not adequately addressed by the ECWs? [text here]

7. How would you change the ECW activities in the future?

(1=not useful; 3 = somewhat useful; 5 = very useful)

- More time on how to design projects
- More time on how to oversee my country portfolio of projects
- More time discussing with my peers (OFF, CSO, etc.)
- More time discussing bilaterally with GEF Secretariat
- I would add a presentation on ...[text here]
- I would remove the presentation on ...[text here]
- Other (please explain): [text here]
- I would not change anything

Constituency Meetings – skip Question 8 if you have not attended these meetings

8. Please rate the reasons why GEF Constituency Meetings were useful to attend (1=not useful; 3 = somewhat useful; 5 = very useful):

- Opportunity to discuss Council documents and draft decisions, so that the Council Member and Alternate are better informed to represent members' positions at Council meeting
- Opportunity to discuss implementation of GEF projects, coordinate regional programs, share lessons learned
- Opportunity to discuss potential project ideas
- Coordinate among GEF Constituency members, including to organize the Constituency (executive session to discuss any Constituency issues, e.g., Council rotation arrangements).
- Opportunity to further explain GEF-7 strategies, policies, and procedures
- Other (please explain): [text here]

Pre-Council Meetings – skip Question 9 if you have not attended these meetings

9. Please rate the value of Pre-Council Meeting for Recipient Country Constituencies. (1=not valuable; 3 = somewhat valuable; 5 = very valuable)

- Opportunity to discuss Council-related issues prior to each GEF Council meeting
- Opportunity to develop common positions as GEF recipient Council Members/Alternates
- Other (please explain): [text here]

National Dialogues – skip Questions 10-11 if you have not attended these events

10. Please rate the reasons why National Dialogues were useful to attend

(1=not useful; 3 = somewhat useful; 5 = very useful)

- Opportunity to discuss my country's programming priorities
- Opportunity to disseminate and validate my country's national environment policies and strategies
- Opportunity to discuss the implementation of projects in my country
- Opportunity to learn about GEF policies
- Opportunity to engage other relevant ministries
- Opportunity to engage CSOs/NGOs/indigenous peoples' groups

- Opportunity to develop national coordination mechanism (e.g., steering/selection committee) in a transparent and inclusive manner
- Other [text here]

11. Please rate the value of the National Dialogue(s) for your country (1=not valuable; 3 = somewhat valuable; 5 = very valuable)

Introduction Seminars – skip Question 12 if you have not attended these events

12. Please rate the reasons why Introduction Seminars were useful to attend (1=not useful; 3 = somewhat useful; 5 = very useful)

- Opportunities to learn about how the GEF works, its policies and procedures
- Opportunity to discuss my country's programming priorities
- Opportunity to discuss the implementation of projects in my country
- Opportunity to meet other OFPs, Agency colleagues and GEF staff
- Other [text here]

III. Knowledge of the GEF

13. How would you rate your level of understanding of GEF BEFORE attending a GEF CSP event?

- GEF project development, approval processes and management ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- GEF strategy and programming priorities ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- GEF policies and guidelines ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- Evaluation of GEF projects ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low

14. How would you rate your level of understanding of GEF AFTER attending a GEF CSP event?

- GEF project development, approval processes and management ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- GEF programming priorities ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- GEF policies and guidelines ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- Evaluation of GEF projects ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low

15. Overall, to what extent has your knowledge of GEF increased as a result of participating in GEF CSP events? (1=not much at all; 3 = somewhat; 5 = very much)

16. How do you find the overall quality of the information exchanges in the course of GEF CSP events?
○ Very good ○ Good ○ Average ○ Low ○ Very Low

17. In your opinion, what are the top THREE benefits of GEF CSP event?

- Better knowing how to prepare projects
- Concrete information about my country project portfolio and GEF resources available
- Better understanding of how the GEF works, its policies and procedures
- Clear understanding of the responsibilities of the GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP), Agencies and GEF Secretariat
- Coordination and networking with stakeholders
- Improved programming of funds and alignment to GEF priorities

- Understanding how other countries work with the GEF, sharing lessons
- Other (please specify): [text]

18. In what ways might the effectiveness of GEF CSP events be enhanced? (select all that apply)
- More focus on the basics of designing GEF projects and managing a portfolio of projects
 - Production of country-specific and sector-specific information
 - More discussions on project case studies, availability of good practice briefs
 - Less theoretical presentations and more hands-on exercises, quizzes and games
 - More face-to-face bilateral meetings with the GEF Secretariat
 - More information shared ahead of CSP events
 - Other (please specify): [text]

IV. Impact of GEF CSP events

19. Please list three good practices you have adopted in designing and managing GEF projects as a result of your participation in GEF CSP events (select three choices):
- Aligning country and GEF strategic priorities
 - Timely submission during the project cycle timeline
 - Regular consultation with GEF Agencies
 - Regular meetings with civil society organization representatives
 - Establishment of National Steering Committee covering GEF projects
 - Focusing on results and co-financing
 - Incorporating GEF policies
 - Other (please explain): [text]
20. Have you applied some of the concepts and tools (made available by GEF during the CSP events, via correspondence or on its website) to your day-to-day practice?
- *[If yes:]* Could you please provide more details? [text]
 - *[If no:]* Could you please explain what prevented you from applying the concept and tools to your day-to-day practice? [text]

Country Ownership and relationship with GEF Agencies and GEF Secretariat

21. To what extent do you believe that GEF CSP events have contributed to improvements in your country programming processes over the last 1-3 years?
(1=not much at all; 3 = somewhat; 5 = very much) ○ Haven't seen improvements ○ N/A
22. If there have been improvements, in what ways? Do you have an example? [text]
23. To what extent do you believe your relationship with GEF Agencies has improved as a result of your participation and learning during GEF CSP events? (1=not much at all; 3 = somewhat; 5 = very much)
24. If there have been improvements, in what ways? Do you have an example? [text]
25. How would you rate the application of the following good practices with Agencies BEFORE joining any GEF CSP event?
- Early dialogue on ideas and options for projects ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low

- Ongoing dialogue on ways to meet GEF policy requirements ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- Receive regular update on the project status and milestones ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- Have coherent communication with GEF Agencies ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low

26. How would you rate the application of the following good practices with Agencies AFTER joining any GEF CSP event?

- Early dialogue on ideas and options for projects ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- Ongoing dialogue on ways to meet GEF policy requirements ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- Receive regular update on the project status and milestones ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low
- Have coherent communication with GEF Agencies ○ Very Good ○ Good ○ Fair ○ Low ○ Very Low

27. If you contacted the GEF Secretariat staff with requests for information and advice:

- Was your question answered fully and request satisfied? ○ Yes ○ No
- Could you please provide more details on the frequency and types of questions asked? [text]

V. Final comments

28. Is there anything else you would like to share about GEF CSP events (their strength and limitations, desired changes, lessons learned, or impact on your work)? [text]