

## The Global Environment Facility

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From Rio to New Delhi

*A Guide for NGOs*

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The Global Environment Facility From Rio to New Delhi: A Guide for NGOs

## Acronyms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COP	Conference of the Parties
FCCC	Framework Convention on Climate Change
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
IA	Implementing Agency
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSG	Medium-Size Grant
NGO	Nongovernmental Organisation
ODS	Ozone-Depleting Substance
OP	Operational Programme
OS	Operation Strategy
PDF	Project Preparation and Development Facility
SGP	Small Grants Programme
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Board
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

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## Foreword

As an international funding mechanism approving hundreds of millions of dollars in grants each year, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) presents a tremendous opportunity to address some of the most urgent environmental problems threatening human prosperity and survival, including: global biodiversity loss, climate change, ozone depletion, and the degradation of the world's oceans and other international waters. The potential of the GEF is vast. However, much of this potential is yet to be realised. NGOs have cited various reasons for this: the cumbersome institutional structure of the GEF, the need for greater transparency and involvement of civil society at all stages of the GEF "project cycle," lack of progress in mainstreaming global environmental objectives into the overall lending portfolios of the GEF's Implementing Agencies, and the need for more effective monitoring and evaluation of GEF resources.

The GEF's immense potential and its problems have resulted in what seems to be an ambiguous relationship between the NGO community and the GEF. It is disturbing that in recent years, we have seen a gradual waning of NGO interest and involvement in the GEF process. Some of us are "burnt out" and have become sceptical about the GEF's ability to improve its operations. However, in assessing whether or how to be involved in the GEF process, the NGO community needs to consider such factors as:

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- the GEF is probably here to stay and will likely continue to approve hundreds of millions of dollars in grants each year for projects related to issues we care deeply about;
- some recent developments, such as the opening of a medium-size grants (MSG) window and the expansion of the small grants programme (SGP) should create much greater opportunities for NGOs to access GEF funding; and
- NGOs have already demonstrated an ability to help catalyse improvements in the GEF (e.g., helping to create the MSG window, helping to shape the GEF Operational Strategy).

This NGO Guide is intended to help re-energise the interest of NGOs around the world in the GEF process, and to stimulate their involvement in such areas as: policy advocacy, evaluation and monitoring, and project implementation. This guide is a revision of *To: Nani G. Oruga: An NGO Guide to the Global Environment Facility*, which was produced by Shana Mertens of Climate Network Europe and IUCN—The World Conservation Union at the beginning of 1996. Subsequent changes in GEF policies, programmes and activities, combined with new opportunities for NGO participation (particularly the upcoming GEF Assembly in New Delhi in April 1998), demanded an update. We have revised portions of the original text and have added many new sections. We hope this guide is useful for you and your colleagues, and appreciate any feedback on how this guide has been used or could be improved in the future.

The authors greatly appreciate contributions to this guide by: Peter Hazelwood, Liliana Hisas, Korinna Horta, Jane Jacqz, Christine Lottje, Jennifer Morgan, Robin Round, Scott Smith and especially Alexandra Bezeredi. Shana Mertens deserves significant credit for having prepared the text of the original Guide, which provided the foundation for this updated version. Many thanks to Rohit Burman and Helena Olivás for their constant support from the beginning and their willingness to work with us through timelines, trials and tribulations.

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## Section I : The Global Environment Facility – Pieces of the Pulzze

### *Chapter One Orientation—How Do I Use This Guide?*

“This guide is intended as a tool to catalyse a more active NGO role in the GEF, encouraging more NGOs, for example, to become involved in implementing GEF projects and advocating more effective GEF policies and decisions.”

#### **1. WHY SHOULD NGOs CARE ABOUT THE GEF?**

Why should NGOs care about the Global Environment Facility (GEF)? Cutting through the thousands of pages of official GEF documents, the simple answer is this: The GEF could have—and some say already is having—profound impacts on issues that NGOs care deeply about. The GEF is an international funding mechanism, approving hundreds of millions of dollars in grants each year to address the most urgent environmental problems facing humanity, including: climate change, biodiversity loss, ozone depletion and degradation of the world's oceans and international water bodies.

Without question, NGOs have widely divergent views on the utility and effectiveness of the GEF. While some major problems with the GEF have largely overshadowed its successes, NGOs involved in the GEF process seem to agree that the institution does have tremendous potential (see Box 1.1). The GEF is still relatively young with the “jury still out” as to whether it will achieve its objectives over the long-term. Many scenarios are possible. For example:

- GEF funds could be expanded and spent much more effectively, allowing the GEF to play an instrumental role in catalysing long-term solutions to the world's critical environmental problems.

- GEF funds could be largely squandered, with significant adverse social impacts, while having little or no success in so-called *mainstreaming* of environmental concerns within governments and international agencies, such as the World Bank.

One thing we do know. NGOs have a critical role to play in strengthening the effectiveness of the GEF and shaping its future.

### Box 1.1 Existing and Potential Strengths of the GEF

NGOs participating in the GEF process have identified a number of existing and potential strengths where the GEF can deliver the greatest impact in protecting the global environment.

**Mainstreaming.** The GEF is designed to “mainstream” global environmental concerns into the regular project portfolios and programs of the three GEF “Implementing Agencies” (IAs), the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.

**Forging new ground.** The GEF provides increased opportunities for NGO input into the policy-making process and for NGO participation in project implementation.

**Leveraging.** GEF projects generally require co-financing from host governments, the IAs, multilateral development banks, bilateral agencies and/or other funding sources. Thus, the GEF is able to secure or “leverage” additional funds for project implementation.

**Innovative financing.** The GEF is to include innovative financing options to improve longterm sustainability, the disbursement process for smaller projects, country-driven objectives, etc. These options include national trust funds and small- and medium-scale enterprise funds.

**Technology.** The GEF can serve as a tool to promote widescale use of new technologies, such as solar energy technologies.

**Catalysing new and innovative activities.** The GEF can identify and support new, innovative activities, which generally are not covered by traditional development assistance, such as ecotourism.

**NGO project funding.** NGOs can receive funds from the GEF for developing and implementing projects.

**Multilateralism.** The GEF provides a tangible example and model for how international environmental problems can be addressed through multilateral cooperation. In addition, the success or failure of the GEF will impact other multilateral processes.

**Strengthening international conventions.** The GEF helps countries to fulfill their obligations under international agreements such as the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions, and the Montreal Protocol.

**National policy changes.** Access to and use of GEF funds can promote important policy reforms at the national level.

## 2. WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE?

This guide is intended as a tool to catalyse a more active NGO role in the GEF, encouraging more NGOs to become involved in implementing GEF projects and advocating more effective GEF policies and decisions. The guide is an update of an earlier version (*To: Nani G. Oruga: An NGO Guide to the GEF*) and includes a much sharper focus on NGO advocacy around the GEF process and ways in which NGOs involved in field-level activities can “plug in.”

## 3. WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE?

The GEF is sometimes described as the most complex—and dynamic—international institution addressing environmental issues. This is a user-friendly guide to help NGOs understand the GEF as an institution and a process. The guide avoids GEF jargon whenever possible, and provides clear, simple explanations of these terms, along with concrete examples. The guide provides much of the information in stand-alone formats (e.g., boxes, tables and bulleted lists), allowing readers to find information quickly.

### Box 1.2 Opportunities for NGO Participation in the GEF: A Summary

There is a spectrum of NGO views on the GEF and a wide variety of ways to be involved. Some NGOs prefer to stay at arm's length (or further) and comment on its activities; others participate very closely in a variety of GEF-related activities. Often the different strategies can complement each other. Below is a list of some specific categories of activities and targets for NGO participation.

**Projects.** NGOs can become *directly* engaged in the development and implementation of GEF-supported projects, including:

- participating in planning meetings with government officials to design new projects;
- commenting on drafts of project proposals; and
- coordinating or implementing specific aspects of funded projects.

**Advocacy.** NGOs can also play an important advocacy role around the GEF process (e.g., helping to shape GEF policies and priorities). Target areas for such advocacy include:

- **Project funding.** Decisions to fund (or not fund) proposed projects is a key step in setting GEF priorities and, in effect, setting unofficial but *de facto* GEF policies.
- **Project development.** The types and focus of projects developed will reflect priorities and key policy issues at the *national* level.
- **Formal GEF policies.** The Council adopts formal policies (see Chapter 2) that influence GEF funding priorities, as well as the GEF process more generally.
- **Operational Strategies and Operational Programmes.** These two centerpieces of GEF policy (see Chapters 3–7) will be updated periodically.
- **Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of GEF performance.** The ongoing M&E program has important implications for GEF policy- and priority-setting, and overall effectiveness (see Chapter 9).
- **National appropriations.** Donor governments are required to appropriate funds committed to the GEF during replenishment. Fulfillment of these commitments is a major area of concern.

The overview presented in this Guide is general in nature, and throughout the text there are references to official GEF and NGO documents that can provide further detail on specific subjects. Relevant documents are cited in the form: **GEFDOC #3**, where the number corresponds to a specific document in the list of GEF publications in Annex I.

Section I of the guide (Chapters 1–9) provides background on the GEF. Section II (Chapters 10–13) outlines specific ways NGOs can participate in the GEF (see also Box 1.1). Finally, a set of annexes provide additional information for NGOs interested in getting more involved, including lists of relevant publications and contacts. The back page contains an NGO accreditation form for being added to the GEF Secretariat's mailing list and participating as an "NGO delegate" to GEF Council meetings.

### Box 1.3 GEF Information on the Internet

An excellent source of additional information is the GEF's Web site at: <http://www.worldbank.org/html/gef>

## Chapter Two Background—The GEF In a Nutshell

### 1. WHAT IS THE GEF?

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a financial mechanism that provides grant funds to developing countries for projects covering four "focal areas": climate change, biodiversity, international waters and ozone depletion. The three institutions carrying out the GEF's work, known as Implementing Agencies (IAs), are the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). A Secretariat for the GEF coordinates communication and project

approval with these agencies, and liaises with the GEF's governing bodies (Council and Assembly) composed of member governments.

Funding from the GEF is limited to so-called "recipient countries", which qualify for technical assistance grants from UNDP or loans from the World Bank. A number of international agreements help guide the GEF's work in the focal areas, with the exception of international waters. To be eligible for funding a country must be party to the relevant treaty:

- **Biodiversity**—Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- **Climate change**—Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC)
- **Ozone**—Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Parties to the CBD and FCCC have adopted the GEF as their financial mechanism, although this is currently an interim arrangement for the CBD. Both conventions have provisions for financial assistance to help eligible parties meet their obligations. In regards to the Montreal Protocol, the GEF provides funds for countries in transition (i.e., Central and Eastern European countries), which are not eligible under the Montreal Protocol's own financial mechanism.

One of the key aspects of GEF funding is that it does not usually cover the full cost of projects; assistance is limited to financing only the costs of achieving global environmental benefits. These *incremental costs* support activities that extend beyond national priorities.

Currently, GEF project proposals must be endorsed by the recipient country government to ensure that they are *country-driven* (i.e., based on national priorities). Funding for projects ranges from Small Grants (up to US \$50,000) to Medium-Size Grants (from US \$50,000 to US \$1 million) to Full Project Grants (US \$1 million and more).

#### Box 2.1 The GEF in a Nutshell

**GEF mission.** The GEF finances measures to achieve global environmental benefits in the areas of climate change, biodiversity, international waters and ozone layer depletion.

**Focal areas.** The GEF finances projects in four focal areas: biodiversity, climate change, international waters and ozone layer depletion.

**Implementing Agencies (IAs).** The organisations primarily responsible for carrying out the work of the GEF: The World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

**Incremental costs.** The difference in cost between a project with global environmental benefits and an alternative project without such global benefits.

**Types of grants.** There are three major types of grants: Small Grants (under US \$50,000), Medium-Size Grants (US \$50,000 to US \$1 million), and Full Project Grants (more than US \$1 million).

**Operational Strategy.** An overall strategic "roadmap" for guiding GEF funding and related activities.

**Operational Programmes.** Established in each focal area, these are frameworks for designing, implementing and coordinating a set of projects to achieve global environmental objectives.

**Project cycle.** The sequential steps a project goes through (from conceptualisation to project completion). The main phases are: project identification, GEF Council approval, Implementing Agency approval, and project implementation and completion.

**Enabling activities.** A category of activities funded by the GEF, designed to (i) help developing countries meet their reporting requirements under the Biodiversity and Climate Change Conventions, (ii) achieve a basic level of information to enable policy and strategic decision-making, and (iii) undertake national planning to identify priority activities.

**Pilot Phase.** This refers to the initial trial period of the GEF (between 1991 and 1994).

## 2. A GEF HISTORY—HOW DID THE GEF COME ABOUT?

The GEF emerged from the concern over global environmental issues expressed predominately by industrialised countries in the late 1980s. Numerous ideas for financing response measures to address major environmental problems were proposed by various governmental and nongovernmental institutions. The GEF, initially proposed by France and supported by Germany, was the one that finally received the necessary political and financial support. More than a year of negotiations ensued before the GEF was officially established in October 1991. Initially, it was created as a three-year experiment: the GEF Pilot Phase. The Pilot Phase, which ended in mid-1994, included project funding totaling US \$735 million.

Further support for the GEF came from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in 1992, and the Climate and Biodiversity Conventions, with their provisions for financial mechanisms. Donor governments hoped to avoid a proliferation of new funding mechanisms, and therefore stressed that one “facility,” administered by existing institutions, serve the various global environmental conventions.

The speed at which the GEF Pilot Phase was established, as well as the reasons behind its swift creation, generated a number of criticisms and problems:

- **Institutional arrangements.** During the Pilot Phase, the GEF administration was located within The World Bank, which led to tensions between the Bank and the other IAs. Environmental NGOs argued that GEF funds would give a false appearance of environmental benefits (or “greenwash”) to the Bank’s environmentally unfriendly projects, because of the close association of the GEF with the Bank. This would allow the Bank to avoid the fundamental changes needed to mainstream environmental concerns in its lending.
- **Governance structure.** The complicated governance structure made it difficult to distinguish a clear line of responsibility or accountability for decisions. NGOs were particularly concerned about lack of transparency and the need to see how and why decisions were being made at all levels of the GEF, from policy to projects.
- **Global vs. local.** Many NGOs and developing countries were critical of the focus on the global environment, when there were so many pressing local and national environmental concerns.
- **Top-down approach.** Because of the pressure to allocate funds quickly, many projects were developed in a top-down fashion that did not reflect national priorities. For example, projects already under development by IAs were modified to be eligible for GEF funding. NGOs and others argued that projects needed to be country-driven (i.e., based upon the priorities and interests of the host country) in order to secure long-term interest and sustainability.

Toward the end of the GEF’s Pilot Phase, governments started discussions on whether the GEF should be continued in a more permanent form, and if so, what changes might be needed. Governments commissioned the independent evaluation of the GEF, and the results were presented in December 1993, six months before the end of the Pilot Phase. (**GEFDOC #27**; See Chapter 9)

With the end of the Pilot Phase, governments started negotiations to restructure the GEF, based on the results of the *Independent Evaluation*. In March 1994, negotiations were concluded. The resulting agreement (generally referred to as *the GEF Instrument*, **GEFDOC #22**) included key institutional changes, universal membership, and greater transparency and democracy in the governance arrangement. Generally, NGOs supported the restructuring of the GEF, stressing a number of critical areas where the GEF provides additional values for global environmental protection.

## 3. HOW IS THE GEF ORGANISED?

After the Pilot Phase, the structure or organisation of the GEF was revised and set out in the GEF Instrument (**GEFDOC #19**). It should be noted that this organisation is not rigid, but remains flexible as the GEF Secretariat, IAs and other GEF-related entities seek to improve coordination and

communication. Below is a description of the major actors in the GEF process as outlined in Diagram 2.1, and further contact information is available in Annex II.

**The Assembly** consists of all countries participating in the GEF, currently about 155. Any country may participate, with the expectation that developed countries will provide some financial contribution. The Assembly meets every three years to review policies and operations of the GEF, and can take decisions to amend *The GEF Instrument*. The next Assembly meeting will be in New Delhi in April 1998.

**The Council** is the main governing body, meets twice a year and makes decisions about policy and operational matters taking into account decisions by the Assembly. As the financial mechanism for the Biodiversity and Climate Change Conventions, the Council is obliged to follow the guidance provided by the governing bodies (Conferences of the Parties—COPs) of these conventions. The Council must also report back to the COPs on activities carried out under the financial mechanisms. The GEF is not the financial mechanism for the Montreal Protocol, but it still cooperates with its COP.

The Council consists of representatives of 32 members derived from “Constituency Groups” of countries. The Council includes 18 members from “recipient countries” (six for Africa, six for the Asia/Pacific region, four for Latin America and the Caribbean, and two for countries in transition) and 14 from non-recipient (developed) countries. Each Council member serves for three years, or until a new member is appointed by the constituency.

To date, all Council decisions have been taken by consensus. If a vote were ever necessary, it would be tallied on a country rather than constituency basis, using a double majority system (i.e., a majority of donors and a majority of countries is needed for a proposal to pass).

**The Secretariat** supports and coordinates all major functions of the GEF. It is headed by a chief executive officer (CEO), who reports to the Council and the Assembly. The Secretariat is located in the offices of the World Bank in Washington, D.C., but in practice is independent from the Bank.

**The Implementing Agencies (IAs)** are responsible for developing projects for GEF funding and implementing them through designated executing agencies in the specific country or region. The IAs include The World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The IAs also provide input on policies and programmes, and are accountable to the Council.

The IAs work closely with executing agencies (through individuals called “task managers”), which are responsible for the day-to-day operations of individual projects. Executing agencies can be government bodies, other UN agencies, NGOs, universities, etc. The IAs are expected to administer projects within their areas of competence; for example, the World Bank specialises in investment projects, UNDP in technical assistance projects, and UNEP in targeted research and enabling activities, as well as international waters projects. In practice, there is some overlap among the IAs.

**The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP)** is a group of 12 internationally recognised experts whose main role is to provide advice on GEF policies, operational strategies and programmes. It may review selected projects but does not examine each one. Many of STAP's members have project as well as purely scientific expertise, and the current STAP has better coverage of social issues than during the Pilot Phase. The STAP maintains the Roster of Experts, and all projects must be reviewed by someone on this list.

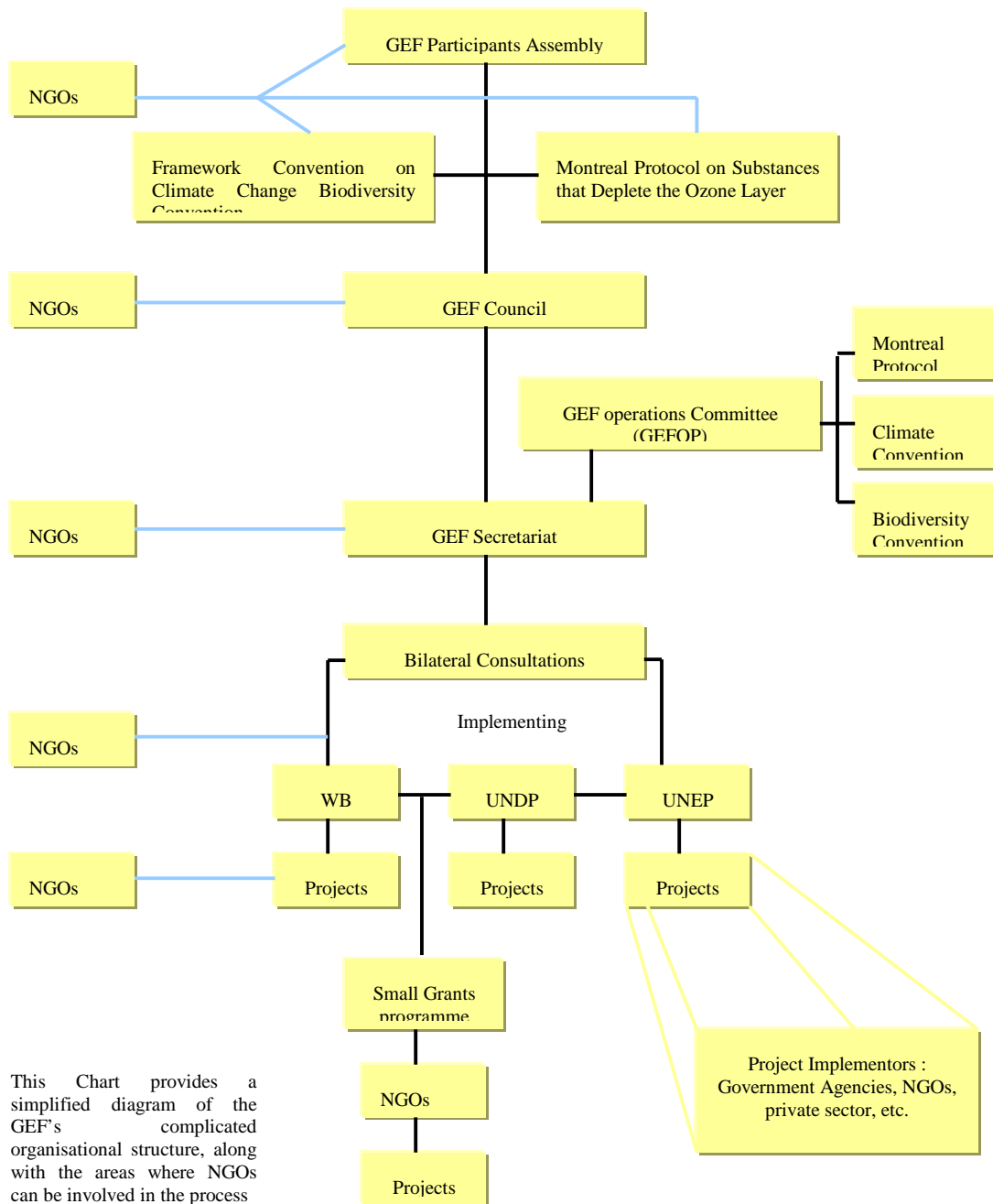
**The GEF Operations Committee (GEFOP)** is the forum through which the Secretariat discusses major policy issues with other actors in the GEF “family.” It consists of representatives of the Secretariat, IAs and the STAP. As necessary, representatives from the relevant Convention Secretariats participate. Originally, the GEFOP reviewed all projects under consideration, but the workload (number of projects) became so burdensome that the project review process was simplified and is now based on monthly meetings (“bilaterals”) between representatives of the Secretariat and each IA. The project review process is still cumbersome and time-consuming, and the GEF is currently discussing how to improve the GEFOP and bilateral review process.

**Nongovernmental organisations (NGOs)** are now able to participate in Council meetings as observers. NGOs can also participate in a wide range of project and policy activities under the GEF process (see Chapters 10–12).



**The Trustee** for the GEF Trust Fund is the World Bank. The role of the World Bank as trustee is independent from its role as an IA. As the trustee, the Bank helps with fund-raising, accounting and financial management of the fund. The reason for this arrangement was to avoid having to create a new financial bureaucracy and independent legal structure. (The trustee was let out of Diagram 2.1 to help simplify the illustration.)

**Diagram 2.1 GEF Organisational Chart**



## 4. KEY GEF POLICIES

The GEF Council approves policies specifying rules and procedures related to GEF funding and operations.

**Incremental costs.** The policy on incremental costs defines the concept, describes how such costs relate to project selection, and details the elements to be taken into account in calculating incremental costs. Projects must have positive incremental costs if they are to receive GE support. Simply put, incremental costs are the difference in costs between a project with global environmental benefits and one without. **(GEFDOC #21)**

**Land degradation activities.** The land degradation policy is designed to address this cross cutting issue through the climate change, biodiversity and international waters focal areas. The policy establishes principles for projects addressing land degradation, guidelines for project eligibility and a list of project priorities. **(GEFDOC #4 & #5)**

**Monitoring and evaluation (M&E).** The M&E policy is designed to ensure ongoing, systematic monitoring of GEF projects and periodic assessments of GEF performance. This is coordinated by an M&E unit established within the Secretariat. Additionally, each IA has its own M&E procedures, which they are supposed to apply to their GEF projects. Unfortunately, this has not been as thorough as desired by NGOs.

**Public involvement.** This policy outlines the need for public involvement in GEF projects covering information dissemination, consultation and stakeholder participation. This policy combines the provisions on participation contained in The GEF Instrument, as well as the policies and procedures of the GEF's IAs. During the GEF's Pilot Phase, it was heavily criticised for lack of public participation in its projects, as well as lack of documentation on levels of participation. The criticisms also targeted the absence of operational guidelines on how public involvement will be incorporated into the project cycle. **(GEFDOC #9 & #14)**

**Targeted research.** This policy recognises emerging needs for information and goal-oriented research to provide information, knowledge and tools that improve the effectiveness of GEF projects and programs. The policy outlines some criteria for GEF funding of such research activities, and calls for further guidance and prioritisation of information needs from the Conferences of the Parties to the CBD and FCCC. **(GEFDOC #5 & #6)**

### Chapter Three Programming—Funding Priorities and Guidelines

#### 1. OVERVIEW OF THE GEF “PORTFOLIO”

Combined, the projects funded through the GEF are referred to as the overall GEF “portfolio”. Box 3.1 contains some key statistics summarising the portfolio.

Specific summary data has not been compiled on (i) the number of NGOs serving as executing agencies for GEF projects or implementing discreet project components; and (ii) the total amount of GEF funds received by NGOs to date. However, it is estimated that NGOs have received roughly 20% of total funds disbursed through the GEF to date— approximately US \$100 million. Of notable concern, is the proportion of funds disbursed to the total amount approved; as such, less than one-third of approved funding has reached the project level.

#### Box 3.1 The “Big Picture”—The Overall GEF Portfolio at a Glance

Total # of full projects approved for funding	332
Total amount of approved funding	US \$1.57 billion
Total amount of funding disbursed	US \$475 million
• Total disbursed by UNDP	(US \$216 million)
• Total disbursed by UNEP	(US \$241 million)
• Total disbursed by the World Bank	(US \$17 million)
Total # of Small Grants Program (SGP) projects	973

Total amount of approved GEF funding for SGP	US \$39 million
Total amount of SGP funds disbursed	US \$17 million
Note: Figures include GEF activities from the beginning of the Pilot Phase (1991) to June 1997.	

## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The Operational Strategy (OS; **GEFDOC #12**) has three basic parts:

- a *policy framework* that lays out principles and general considerations that apply to all GEF projects;
- a general description of *programming of GEF operations*; and
- separate *Operational Strategies for each of the four focal areas* (covered in Chapters 4–7).

The OS serves four general purposes, providing:

- a view of the GEF's long-term direction;
- a framework for allocating GEF resources;
- a way of integrating the guidance from the related Conventions; and
- a statement of GEF operational objectives related to funding and monitoring and evaluation activities.

In short, the OS helps to focus the GEF portfolio so that it has maximum effect. The OS, as a strategy rather than a rule book, does not include very specific details on such matters as criteria for project selection.

### Box 3.2 Ten Operational Principles for Developing and Implementing the GEF Work Programme

1. For purposes of the financial mechanisms for the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions, the GEF will function under the guidance of, and be accountable to, the Conferences of the Parties (COPs; i.e., the governing bodies) of the two conventions. For financing in the ozone focal area, GEF policies will be consistent with those of the Montreal Protocol and its amendments.
2. The GEF will provide new and additional grant and concessional funding to meet the agreed incremental costs of measures to achieve agreed global environmental benefits.
3. The GEF will ensure the cost-effectiveness of its activities to maximise global environmental benefits.
4. The GEF will fund projects that are country-driven and based on national priorities designed to support sustainable development, as identified within the context of national programmes.
5. The GEF will maintain sufficient flexibility to respond to changing circumstances, including evolving guidance of the COPs and experience gained from monitoring and evaluation activities.
6. GEF projects will provide for full disclosure of all nonconfidential information.
7. GEF projects will provide for consultation with, and participation as appropriate of, the beneficiaries and affected groups of people.
8. GEF projects will conform to the eligibility requirements set forth in paragraph 9 of *the GEF Instrument*.
9. In seeking to maximise global environmental benefits, the GEF will emphasise its catalytic role and leverage additional financing from other sources.
10. The GEF will ensure that its programmes and projects are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.

(GEFDOC #12)

### Box 3.3 Strategic Considerations for Designing All GEF Activities

GEF activities will be designed to:

- Be consistent with national priorities and, where appropriate, regional initiatives.
- Strive to ensure the sustainability of global environmental benefits.
- Reduce the risk caused by uncertainty.
- Complement traditional development financing.
- Facilitate effective responses by other entities to address global environmental issues.
- Be environmentally, socially and financially sustainable.
- Avoid the transfer of negative environmental impacts between focal areas.

(GEFDOC #12)

### 3. THE GENERAL PART OF THE OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The general part of the OS, which applies to all projects, has two major elements:

- a set of 10 *operational principles* for developing and implementing the GEF's work programme (see Box 3.2); and
- a set of seven *strategic considerations* for designing all GEF projects (see Box 3.3).

### 4. PROGRAMMING OF GEF OPERATIONS

This section of the OS states that GEF operations (or funds) will be programmed in three broad, interrelated categories:

- Operational Programmes;
- Enabling activities; and
- Short-term response measures.

**Operational Programmes** (OPs) are frameworks for designing, implementing and coordinating a set of similar projects within a GEF focal area, which together contribute to achieve a global environmental objective. Ten initial OPs are listed in the Operational Strategy (see Box 3.4). A significant percentage of GEF funding will be allocated to Operational Programmes.

#### Box 3.4 List of 10 Initial Operational Programmes by Focal Area

<b>Biodiversity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arid and semi-arid ecosystems</li><li>• Coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems (including wetlands)</li><li>• Forest ecosystems</li><li>• Mountain ecosystems</li></ul>
<b>Climate change:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removing barriers to energy conservation and energy efficiency</li><li>• Promoting the adoption of renewable energy by removing barriers and reducing implementation costs</li><li>• Reducing the long-term costs of low greenhouse gas emitting energy technologies</li></ul>
<b>International waters:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Waterbody-based program</li><li>• Integrated land and water (multiple focal area)</li></ul>

• Contaminant-based programme

**Enabling activities** help to provide countries with a foundation for responding effectively to global environmental problems. The activities include: inventories, compilation of information, policy analysis, and developing strategies and action plans. Enabling activities may fulfill reporting requirements under the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions, provide information so that policy and strategic decisions can be made, or assist planning that identifies priority activities within a country. Depending on the activity, either the agreed full cost or agreed incremental cost could be funded by the GEF. A significant percentage of GEF funding will be allocated to enabling activities.

**Short-term response measures** do not correspond to enabling activities, nor any of the existing operational programmes. Such measures yield short-term benefits at a low cost, and are of sufficiently high priority to merit funding consideration. One example would be urgent measures to conserve highly endangered species. Only a small percentage of GEF funding will be allocated to short-term response measures.

## 5. FOUR TYPES OF GRANTS

To complicate matters a bit further, there are four types of grants allocated through the GEF: PDF (planning) Grants, Full Project Grants, Medium-Size Grants and Small Grants.

**PDF Grants.** Various types of planning grants are available through the Project Preparation and Development Facility (PDF). These PDF grants are used to support the short-term preparation of full project proposals for inclusion in GEF work programmes. Three categories of PDF grants include: Block A (up to US \$25,000), Block B (up to US \$350,000), and Block C (up to US \$1 million).

**Full Project Grants.** These grants are for longer-term projects costing more than US \$1 million. They are mainly provided to governments under the incremental cost approach. However, NGOs and other nongovernmental entities are eligible for consideration as executing agencies, provided that the host government endorses the project. (See Chapter 8)

**Medium-Size Grants (MSG).** These grants are for longer-term projects costing between US \$50,000 and US \$1 million. Medium-sized projects must be based on the national priorities of the countries in which they are to be conducted. Accordingly, they must be endorsed by the government or governments concerned and must reflect the GEF's operational policies and principles. NGOs played an instrumental role in creating this new GEF window, which was formally established by the Council in 1997. It is expected that NGOs will be the executing agencies for a significant percentage of these grants. (See Chapter 10)

**Small Grants.** A Small Grants Programme (SGP) was launched in 1992 by UNDP and provides grants up to US \$50,000 to community-based organizations and NGOs for activities that address local problems related to the GEF focal areas. The programme is active in 33 countries and will be expanded to 46 countries. (See Chapter 10)

The GEF Secretariat is considering options for other *financing modalities*, which are the ways that the GEF can disburse its funds for projects. Currently, the GEF can only provide grant funding, but the GEF Secretariat is exploring other types of funding, such as concessional or contingent loans. These types of funding would help start projects with negative incremental costs, but which need financing. Concessional financing is a repayable loan with below market interest rates, while contingent financing is a normally repayable loan, but under specified contingencies, all or part of which may be forgiven. For example, the former could be used for energy efficiency projects, while the latter would be useful when there are certain types of risks.

## Chapter Four The Biodiversity Focal Area

### 1. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Biodiversity loss is caused primarily by the degradation and fragmentation of “natural” areas; the introduction of alien species; and over-exploitation of biological resources. The GEF has developed a specific Operational Strategy for Biodiversity to address these causes, which is closely linked to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). (GEFDOC #12; See Box 4.1) A centerpiece of the strategy is to support representative ecosystems of global importance and country-driven biodiversity priorities and to integrate biodiversity conservation into national sustainable development. The strategy also emphasises *in situ* (i.e., within its natural surroundings) activities within and adjacent to protected areas, as well as sustainable use of biodiversity, guided by close monitoring of harvesting impacts. Where possible, biodiversity will be integrated into the climate change and international waters focal areas, as well as the cross-sectoral GEF policies for land degradation.

The Operational Strategy for Biodiversity outlines three categories of activities that will be funded through the GEF: (i) operational programmes; (ii) enabling activities; and (iii) short-term response measures.

**Operational Programmes.** Ecosystem-based operational programmes for long-term biodiversity protection and sustainable use will account for the bulk of GEF funding in the biodiversity area. Other considerations that will guide the development of activities in each operational programme are: underlying causes of biodiversity loss, stakeholder involvement and targeted research. (See Section 2)

**Enabling activities.** These activities—being emphasised in this early stage of the GEF—prepare the foundation for the design and implementation of effective response measures and generally cover planning and capacity building (e.g., preparation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, implementation reports under the CBD, and assessments of biodiversity resources and threats).

**Short-term response measures.** These are activities that respond to urgent biodiversity needs (e.g., critical ecosystems under immediate threat) and/or meet the following criteria: cost-effective, high demonstration value, high degree of threat, important opportunity and high likelihood of success.

#### Box 4.1 The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at a Glance

The GEF serves as the “interim” financial mechanism of the CBD—a legally binding agreement committing 169 governments to take action to stem the worldwide loss of biological diversity (the variety and variability of all living organisms and the ecosystems of which they are a part). The convention’s objectives are (i) conservation of biodiversity; (ii) sustainable use of its components; and (iii) fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from genetic resources. The CBD requires parties (governments that have ratified) to take a holistic, ecosystem approach, rather than a sectoral approach, to biodiversity conservation. It links biodiversity to food security, economic development, ethics and human survival.

*All parties* are required to implement a wide range of measures, such as:

- adopting national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
- establishing systems of protected areas;
- adopting incentive measures to promote conservation and sustainable use;
- restoring degraded habitats;
- conserving threatened species and ecosystems;
- minimising or avoiding adverse biodiversity impacts from the use of biological resources;
- respecting, preserving and maintaining knowledge, innovations and practices of local and indigenous communities; and
- ensuring safety related to biotechnology products (“biosafety”).

*Developed country parties* are also required to provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries, and to facilitate technology transfer.

## 2. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The four operational programmes for biodiversity are designed around ecosystem types:

**Arid and semi-arid ecosystems.** These projects, which primarily will be carried out in Africa, use integrated approaches to the conservation, sustainable use, and rehabilitation of dryland and endemic arid ecosystems.

**Coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems (including wetlands).** These projects target: coral reefs, mangroves, lakes, rivers and estuaries, along with other critical aquatic areas, with particular attention to the needs of tropical islands, integrated coastal area development and regional cooperation.

**Forest ecosystems.** These projects involve establishing and strengthening systems of conservation areas, and demonstration and development of sustainable use methods in forestry. Projects will focus primarily on tropical and temperate forest ecosystems that are at risk.

**Mountain ecosystems.** These projects target mountain ecosystems such as those in Meso-America, the Andes, Himalayas, Indochinese peninsula and East Africa. The programme will support sustainable land use of mountain slopes, linking mountains to lowlands with corridors and cooperative management of mountains and river basins.

### Box 4.2 The GEF's Biodiversity Portfolio at a Glance

(This table provides key statistics summarising the current biodiversity portfolio.)

Total allocated funding	\$597 million
% of total GEF funds allocated to biodiversity work program	38.0%
Total projects approved for funding	156
• # of global projects	(5)
• # of regional projects	(11)
• # of national projects	(140)

*Source: GEF Quarterly Operational Report, June 1997. Aggregate figures for total funds disbursed in each focal area were not available at time of printing.*

### Box 4.3 A Sampling of Biodiversity Projects Funded by the GEF

**Patagonia Coastal Zone Management Programme for Biodiversity Conservation (Argentina).** With US \$5 million in GEF allocations, this project aims to conserve globally significant Patagonian marine and coastal biodiversity (such as marine mammals) through implementing the protected areas programme of the Patagonian Coastal Zone Management Plan and by demonstrating the feasibility of "biodiversity-friendly" production practices and methods.

**A Highly Decentralized Approach to Biodiversity Protection and Use: The Bangassou Dense Forest Project (Central African Republic).** With US \$2.5 million in GEF allocations, and US \$1 million in co-financing, this project will test highly decentralised and participatory approaches (e.g., community-based management, policy and tenure reforms) for sustainable management of the Bangassou Dense Forest—an area of particularly high species and ecosystem diversity.

**Final Consolidation and Conservation of Azraq Wetlands and Dana Wildlands Project (Jordan).** With US \$2 million in GEF allocations, and US \$1 million in co-financing, this project aims to develop strategies to protect two key ecosystems—addressing challenges posed by tourism and associated development—and to strengthen the capacity of a national NGO with a biodiversity and protected area mandate.

**Conservation and Sustainable Use of Medicinal Plants (Sri Lanka).** With US \$4.5 million in GEF allocations, and US \$21 million in co-financing, this project will design and implement a medicinal plants conservation program, which includes support for research, monitoring, community organising and the development of improved sustainable marketing strategies.

**Terra Capital Biodiversity Fund (Regional—Latin America).** With US \$5 million in GEF allocations, and US \$50 million in co-financing, this project supports the establishment of a fund to make equity/quasi-equity investments in Latin American companies that sustainably use or protect biodiversity.

### 3. SUMMARY OF THE BIODIVERSITY PORTFOLIO

**The Pilot Phase.** During the GEF Pilot Phase, biodiversity projects financed a wide range of activities, including: support for protected areas, conservation training and education, species inventories, conservation and development, sustainable forestry techniques, gene banks and arboreta. *The Independent Evaluation (GEFDOC #27; see Chapter 9)* stated that the biodiversity investments in the Pilot Phase tended to be haphazard and that many may make only marginal contributions to conserving biodiversity.

Examples of activities that could be funded through the GEF:

- Development of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including formulation of legislation and policy measures.
- Institutional strengthening and coordination of ministries.
- Creation of protected areas.
- Strengthening of protected area management and related infrastructure.
- Technical training for assessing, managing and monitoring biodiversity.
- Maintenance of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities.
- Public awareness and environmental education on biodiversity issues.
- Strengthening of technical and social research capacity on biodiversity.
- Targeted research on species, ecosystems and the use of biodiversity.
- Transboundary and transnational biodiversity conservation efforts.
- Establishment of environmental or conservation trust funds.
- Ex-situ (i.e., outside its natural surroundings) conservation programmes.
- Restoration and rehabilitation of critical degraded ecosystems.
- Promotion of alternative livelihood options consistent with the CBD, such as ecotourism and non-timber forest products.
- Programmes supporting the sustainable use of biological resources.
- Activities related to resource tenure and ownership issues, including for indigenous and local communities.
- Capacity building for biodiversity mapping.
- Programmes to promote benefit-sharing from the use of biological resources.

### 4. NGO PERSPECTIVES

Some of the key NGO perspectives related to the biodiversity portfolio include:

**More innovative projects.** Some NGOs have expressed concern that GEF biodiversity projects have focused too heavily on traditional conservation approaches (e.g., protected areas) and need more emphasis on innovative approaches (e.g., supporting market transformation, sustainable use models, alternative livelihood activities and addressing underlying causes).

**GEF as a catalyst in mainstreaming biodiversity.** Many NGOs feel that GEF biodiversity projects involve putting a “green” gloss on development that is environmentally unsound, rather than making biodiversity a central consideration in development. NGOs generally would like to see a stronger



GEF role in catalysing the integration of biodiversity conservation into the regular activities of the GEF Implementing Agencies and governments (so-called *mainstreaming*). Many NGOs have cited projects in the regular lending portfolio of the World Bank as counter-productive to GEF grants in the *same* country. Some examples include World Bank commercial forestry loans to the Congo, Laos and Poland, which seem to support unsustainable timber harvesting and threaten biodiversity.

**Underlying causes of biodiversity loss.** Many NGOs assert that lasting solutions to biodiversity conservation problems require addressing underlying causes covering difficult policy and poverty-related issues, with the meaningful involvement of all stakeholders. They stress that conflicts and policy disagreement surrounding natural resources and tenure are not likely to be resolved without the informed consent, participation and empowerment of civil society, local communities and indigenous peoples.

**Global benefits and incremental costs.** Many NGOs have asserted that these two concepts are not particularly applicable to biodiversity projects, since few biodiversity benefits are recognised as global *per se*, creating difficulties in identifying incremental costs. Many NGOs have also cited problems in reconciling the country-driven approach mandated by the CBD and the achievement of global biodiversity benefits, as required by the GEF Instrument.

**Ecosystem approach.** While the ecosystem programmatic approach has been welcomed generally, it has received a variety of criticisms. Some NGOs are not pleased that land degradation (deforestation and desertification) and the underlying causes of biodiversity loss are not tackled more explicitly with reference to the Convention on Desertification. Other NGOs question the choice of the four priority ecosystems listed above. Some NGOs have suggested complementing the ecosystem approach with parallel programmatic approaches (e.g., landscape, habitat or thematic approaches). A landscape approach would allow for an overall land and natural resource use strategy for a continuum of natural to intensively managed ecosystems. A habitat approach would be based on a species conservation strategy that would include all of the ecosystems necessary for that species to survive. Thematic approaches could include developing programmes on: collaborative or participatory management; economic incentives and alternative livelihoods for conservation; indigenous knowledge and peoples; wild and domesticated biodiversity components; underlying causes of biodiversity loss; or other areas.

**Prioritisation.** Some NGOs have emphasised the need to prioritise ecosystems at a global, rather than just a national, level. Global prioritisation would promote the protection of biodiversity “hot spots” and “megadiversity centres” with high endemism, species richness and levels of threat or vulnerability. Other NGOs question the ability to define globally representative ecosystems and are concerned that the current GEF approach may focus too much on global priorities rather than national ones.

**CBD COP guidance.** NGOs seem to have mixed views as to whether the CBD COP should provide more detailed guidance to the GEF, and what the priorities of such guidance might be. For example, should the COP provide more detailed guidance on ways in which the GEF could support sustainable use or benefit sharing? What would such guidance entail?

## Chapter Five The Climate Change Focal Area

### 1. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Climate change is being caused primarily by the emission of certain greenhouse gases (GHGs) from the burning of fossil fuels, and by the reduction of GHG “sinks” which remove these gases from the atmosphere. The GEF has developed a specific Operational Strategy for Climate Change to address these causes, which is closely linked to activities under the Climate Convention. (**GEFDOC #12**; See Box 5.1) A centerpiece of the strategy is to strike a balance between investments that achieve permanent reductions in GHG emissions over the long-term and “short-term response measures” which deliver an immediate reduction, but do not necessarily produce a shift to an environmentally friendly energy base. The Operational Strategy outlines three categories of activities to be supported through the GEF:

**Enabling activities.** These activities—being emphasised in this early stage of the GEF—prepare the foundation for the design and implementation of effective response measures, and generally cover

planning and capacity building (e.g., institutional strengthening, training, research, education and implementation reports).

**Adaptation activities.** These activities include, for example, dike and sea wall construction to avoid flooding associated with climate change-induced sea level rise and severe storms. The Conference of Parties (COP) to the Climate Convention has recognised that small island states and other countries with low-lying coastal areas are particularly vulnerable to these impacts, and has provided guidance to the GEF on funding adaptation activities. Because of contentious issues around infrastructure costs associated with adaptation, for now, the GEF will only fund *planning* for adaptation.

**Mitigation measures (short- and long-term).** Measures for reducing GHG emissions over the long-term will generally involve (i) removing barriers to the adoption of climate-friendly, commercially available technologies (e.g., price distortions, lack of information, low management capabilities and regulatory barriers/biases); and (ii) reducing the costs of promising technologies, making them more economically viable. While the operational strategy recognises that long-term reduction of emissions will require the use of technologies that avoid emissions (such as renewable energy technologies), it also allows for funding of “short-term” fossil fuel projects (such as supply-side efficiency or coal-to-gas conversion projects). Criteria for these projects are: cost effectiveness (only projects whose cost per tonne of carbon not emitted is below a certain ceiling would be eligible); likelihood of success; and whether they are country-driven (e.g., included in national climate change plans).

## 2. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The three operational programmes for long-term mitigation of climate change are:

**Removing barriers to energy conservation and energy efficiency.** These projects cover, for example: developing demand-side management programmes; encouraging supportive legal, regulatory and policy changes; and establishing and strengthening integrated resource planning.

**Promoting adoption of renewable energy by removing barriers and recurring implementation costs.**

These projects cover, for example: on- and off-grid photovoltaic installations, combustion of agricultural residues to generate heat and power, methane control technologies for waste disposal and wind power.

### Box 5.1 The Climate Change Convention at a Glance

The GEF serves as the financial mechanism of the Climate Convention—an international agreement committing 168 governments to work together to address the problem of climate change (e.g., by limiting their emissions of greenhouse gases [GHGs], such as carbon dioxide [CO<sub>2</sub>], methane, and nitrous oxide [N<sub>2</sub>O]). The ultimate objective is: “stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human) interference with the climate system.” The convention emphasises that developed countries are mainly responsible for historic and current emissions and must take the lead in combating climate change. It recognises that the first priority of developing countries must be their own economic and social development and that their share of total global emissions will rise as they industrialise.

All parties must submit information about the quantities of GHGs they emit and about their national “sinks” (notably forests and oceans). Also, all parties must carry out national programmes for mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects, and strengthen scientific and technical research and systematic observation related to the climate system. Finally, all parties are obligated to promote development and diffusion of relevant technologies and to undertake educational and public awareness programmes about climate change and its likely effects.

Developed country parties must adopt specific policies to (i) return their levels of GHG emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000 and (ii) protect and enhance their greenhouse gas “sinks” and “reservoirs”. At the upcoming December 1997 meeting in Kyoto, Japan, Parties will likely adopt binding targets and timetables for reducing their GHG emissions. One proposal being discussed is for developed countries to reduce their emissions by 15% compared with 1990 levels by the year 2010. Developed countries must also transfer—to developing countries—financial and technological resources above and beyond what is

already available through existing development assistance, and help developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change to meet adaptation costs.

**Reducing the long-term costs of low greenhouse gas-emitting technologies.** These projects cover for example: solar-thermal power generation, advanced biomass power, fuel cells and advanced fossil fuel technologies. It is expected that through learning and economies of scale the manufacturing costs of these technologies will become commercially competitive.

### 3. SUMMARY OF CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

**The Pilot Phase.** Pilot Phase projects included investments in and technical assistance for biomass, wind energy, solar photovoltaics, carbon sequestration, energy efficiency, fuel conversion and supply-side efficiency. Some research projects were also funded during the Pilot Phase, examining, for example, methane emissions from rice fields and alternatives to slash and-burn agriculture.

#### Box 5.2 The GEF's Climate Portfolio at a Glance

(This table provides key statistics summarising the current climate change portfolio.)

Total allocated funding	US \$608 million
% of total GEF funds allocated to climate change work program	38.7%
Total projects approved for funding	104
• # of global projects	(13)
• # of regional projects	(6)
• # of national projects	(85)

*Source: GEF Quarterly Operational Report, June 1997. Aggregate figures for total funds disbursed in each focal area were not available at time of printing.*

#### Box 5.3 A Sampling of Climate Projects Funded by the GEF

**Efficient Industrial Boilers Project (China).** With US \$32 million in GEF allocations, and \$68 million in co-financing, this project aims to reduce GHG emissions by adapting high-efficiency foreign technologies to local conditions for small- and medium-size, coal-fired industrial boilers.

**Solar Thermal Electric Project (India).** With US \$49 million in GEF allocations, and US \$196 million in co-financing, GEF funds will help finance construction and operation of a grid-connected 140 MW solar-thermal/fossil fuel hybrid power plant in Rajasthan.

**Renewable Energy Small Private Power (Indonesia).** With US \$4 million in GEF allocations, and US \$137 million in co-financing, this project will catalyse the introduction of private sector, grid-based renewable energy projects into the national power company's network.

**Klaipeda Geothermal Demonstration Project (Lithuania).** With US \$7 million in GEF allocations, and US \$11 million in co-financing, this project helps to finance construction of a demonstration geothermal plant to provide hot water to the Klaipeda district heating system.

**Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change (Regional—Caribbean).** With US \$6.3 million in GEF financing, this project encompasses a set of enabling activities to cope with climate change (especially sea rise), which include strengthening regional monitoring capacity, identification of particularly vulnerable areas, development of an integrated management framework for response and adaptation to climate change, training and capacity building, and information sharing.

*The Independent Evaluation (GEFDOC #27; see Chapter 9) was rather critical of the climate change portfolio during the Pilot Phase, particularly with regard to the strategies and criteria for selecting projects. One of the principal objectives of this focal area was to develop a menu of technologies that offered the greatest possible emissions reduction at the lowest cost. However, the political need for a geographical balance in funding projects undercut a focus on countries with the highest emissions. Another difficulty was that rigorous application of the incremental cost criteria prevented some support for important activities, such as energy efficiency projects.*

Examples of activities that could be funded through the GEF:

- Programmes to promote efficient energy production, distribution and/or consumption.
- On- and off-grid photovoltaic installations.
- Combustion of agricultural residues to generate heat and power.
- Methane control programs for waste disposal.
- Wind, solar, hydro and geothermal power demonstration projects.
- Programmes to improve demand-side planning for electricity generation.
- Carbon sequestration activities.
- Programmes to reduce market barriers to advanced energy sources (e.g., biomass power, fuel cells, advanced fossil fuel technologies).
- Technical training related to renewable and high efficiency technologies.
- Programmes to raise public awareness of climate change issues.

#### 4. NGO PERSPECTIVES

Some key NGO perspectives related to the climate change portfolio include:

**Funding for fossil fuel projects.** Some NGOs believe that the GEF should not fund any activities involving fossil fuels, especially coal. Others argue that developing countries should be able to use their own natural resources but should use them as sustainably as possible through technology transfer and financial assistance. NGOs were generally disappointed in the removal of a sentence from the final version of the Climate Operational Strategy that stated, "The emphasis will be on renewable energy, and support for applications of fossil fuel technologies will be relatively modest."

**Transport sector programme.** NGOs were generally disappointed in the decision not to create an operational programme on reducing emissions in the transport sector. However, the GEF Secretariat is working on such a programme.

**Social costs and energy pricing policies.** Some NGOs have expressed concern regarding the social costs of changes in energy pricing policies supported by the GEF. Even small energy price increases can have significant adverse social impacts for citizens in developing countries.

**Targeted research.** NGOs have proposed that one particularly important area of research and analysis should be macroeconomics and other key factors influencing investment in climate unfriendly technologies (e.g., multilateral development banks, and private, foreign direct investment).

**Catalyst for changes in other processes.** NGOs have expressed concern that the Operational Strategy does not clearly articulate how the GEF should catalyse changes in other processes (e.g., multilateral, national and private sector initiatives, particularly those of the World Bank).

**NGO participation.** In general, NGOs seem relatively satisfied with the level of participation in climate projects. Examples of country-driven projects with reasonably good participation include the Jamaica Demand-Side Management Demonstration Project; the Peruvian Project on Technical Assistance to the Centre for Energy Efficiency; and the Electricity, Fuel and Fertiliser from Municipal and Industrial Organic Waste in Tanzania: A Demonstration Bio-Gas Plant for Africa.

## Chapter Six The International Waters Focal Area

### 1. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

International waters—in the context of the GEF—refer to oceans enclosed or semi-enclosed seas and estuaries, as well as rivers, lakes, groundwater systems and wetlands with trans boundary drainage basins or common borders. International waters are threatened by a number of factors, such as: land and

ship-based sources of pollution, land degradation, over exploitation of living aquatic resources and alien species introductions.

The GEF has developed a specific Operational Strategy for international waters to address these factors. (**GEFDOC #12**) The strategy is particularly noteworthy for its comprehensive and integrated approach toward solving environmental problems in international waters; it recognises that the global water cycle links watersheds, airsheds, estuaries, and coastal and marine waters, moving pollutants and organisms across boundaries. Given this comprehensive approach international waters projects often address objectives in the climate change and biodiversity focal areas (e.g., carbon sequestration or ecosystem restoration respectively). A centerpiece of the Operational Strategy is to catalyse more comprehensive, cooperative, ecosystem-based approaches by countries to managing international waters and their drainage basins (including interactions between land and water).

The Operational Strategy stresses the need to assist groups of countries in:

- *understanding the environmental concerns* related to their international waters;
- *cooperating* in addressing these concerns;
- *building institutional capacity* to use comprehensive approaches; and
- *implementing measures* to address priority problems, such as:
  - land-based sources of surface and groundwater pollution;
  - land degradation affecting international waters;
  - physical and ecological degradation of international waters;
  - unsustainable exploitation of living resources;
  - ship-based sources of chemical washings; and
  - alien species introductions.

The international waters focal area—unlike the other three GEF focal areas—is not guided by a specific convention. There are, however, numerous global and regional treaties concerning discrete geographic areas or thematic aspects of international waters that GEF projects are supposed to take into account.

## 2. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The three operational programmes under the international waters focal area are:

**Waterbody-based programme.** These projects focus on preventing degradation or restoring the health of a specific international waterbody, such as a river, lake, coastline, groundwater reservoir or sea. Such projects in freshwater basins could entail: establishing an industrial toxics pre-treatment programme; wetland restoration; and tradable pollution discharge permit systems to control non-point source, land-based pollution in degraded watersheds. In large marine ecosystems, projects might include various coastal area management measures, such as coastal use zoning plans and pollution prevention measures.

**Integrated land and water multiple focal area programme.** These projects focus on the integration of land and water resource management to address the degradation of international waters. However, projects also include those that address the objectives of other GEF focal areas, or those that are aimed at groups of small island developing states. Three categories of projects include:

- *Integrated international waters and land degradation projects.* Priorities for these projects would be rehabilitation of damaged catchment areas and adoption of sustainable land-use systems, such as agro-forestry or reforestation projects. Other activities associated with projects under this category are: improving watershed and catchment management; sustainable land-use and conservation systems; and changes in sectoral development and economic policies.

- *Projects that meet objectives of other focal areas, but are not necessarily related to land degradation.* Most of these projects would relate to biodiversity, covering, for example, unique coastal areas, wetlands and coral reefs. Funding is most promising when projects entail imminent threats and present immediate steps that could be taken to prevent environmental damage.
- *Small island developing state projects.* These projects—involving groups of island states—could entail: integrated freshwater basin/coastal zone management on each island of the group; activities integrating marine, freshwater, biodiversity, climate change and land degradation aspects; sustainable management of regional fish stocks; tourism development; protection of water supplies; addressing land and marine-based sources of pollution; and addressing vulnerability to climate change.

**Contaminant-based programme.** These projects focus on ship-based pollution and specific persistent pollutants found in water systems and transported over long distances (e.g., mercury, dioxin, PCBs, persistent organic pollutants [POPs] and certain pesticides). Some projects will provide regional or global technical support for capacity building (e.g., information on contaminants to monitor, monitoring techniques, data analysis, information sources and means for involving the public in decision-making). Demonstration or pilot projects may be tested in this programme.

Often, countries or groups of countries wishing to develop international waters projects will need to first formulate so-called “Strategic Action Programmes” that would form the basis for deciding what types of projects to develop and the amount of GEF financing needed. Developing these Strategic Action Programmes could involve: (i) environmental analysis of transboundary waters; (ii) identification of key social and economic factors; (iii) establishment of clear priorities and baselines; and (iv) estimates of incremental (additional) costs resulting from achieving “global” benefits.

### 3. SUMMARY OF INTERNATIONAL WATERS PORTFOLIO

**The Pilot Phase.** During the Pilot Phase, the GEF funded 12 international waters projects; most of them were marine-related projects, while two focused on lakes and one dealt with a river ecosystem (the Danube). Several of the projects are related to management of ship-generated waste; and others focus on environmental management and biodiversity conservation.

*The Independent Evaluation (GEFDOC #27)* was critical of the international waters portfolio during the Pilot Phase. The main problems identified were:

- lack of a clear strategy;
- failure to recognise that international waters “form a dynamically linked integrated whole with waters under national jurisdiction”;
- failure to recognise that the major threat to international waters is mainly from land-based activities;
- failure to recognise that “mismanagement of biological resources [is] a major threat to the environmental integrity of international waters”; and
- underfunding of freshwater projects.

#### **Box 6.2 The GEF's International Waters Portfolio at a Glance**

(This table provides key statistics summarising the current international waters portfolio.)

Total allocated funding	US \$177 million
% of total GEF funds allocated to international waters work program	11.2%
Total projects approved for funding	18
• # of global projects	(1)
• # of regional projects	(13)
• # of national projects	(4)

*Source: GEF Quarterly Operational Report, June 1997. Aggregate figures for total funds disbursed in each focal area were not available at time of printing.*

Examples of activities that could be funded through the GEF:

- Industrial toxics pre-treatment programmes.
- Wetland restoration.
- Implementation of tradable pollution discharge permit systems for control of land-based pollution in degraded watersheds.
- Joint research on critical ecological processes for large marine ecosystems.
- Integrated coastal area management planning exercises.
- Programmes to promote fishing practices for sustainable management of regional fish stocks.
- Sustainable coastal tourism programmes.
- Rehabilitation of degraded catchment areas for international river systems.
- Improving watershed management for transborder inland seas.

#### Box 6.3 A Sampling of International Waters Projects

*Sample projects funded by the GEF:*

**Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania).** With US \$35 million in GEF allocations, and US \$43 million in co-financing, this project aims to address major threats facing the Lake Victoria ecosystem, including overfishing, eutrophication and algae levels, pollution and invasive exotic species, such as the water hyacinth.

**Water and Environmental Management in the Aral Sea (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan).** With US \$12 million in GEF allocations, and US \$60 million in co-financing, this project aims to address causes of water overuse and pollution in the Aral Sea Basin, and to support the sustainable management and future development of its natural resources by formalising and implementing the first stage of a regional strategic action plan.

**Developing the Danube River Basin Pollution Reduction Program (Regional).** With US \$4 million in GEF allocations, and US \$3.6 million in co-financing, this project aims to foster sustainable environmental management and control of the Danube River Basin.

## 4. NGO PERSPECTIVES

Some of the key NGO perspectives related to the international waters project portfolio include:

**Overly broad scope.** With very limited GEF resources allocated to international waters, and with no single convention to guide it, concerns have been raised by some NGOs that this focal area is—no pun intended—without focus and at risk of trying to do everything while achieving nothing.

**Focus of objectives.** Objectives for international waters are defined in terms of climate change and biodiversity, rather than identifying specific objectives related to water resources. Strategic and operational elements are also vague.

**Definition of key terms.** Critical areas and concepts are not included in the Operational Strategy, such as aquatic (in addition to marine) ecosystems, integrated watershed management (in addition to coastal), and preventive and non-structural approaches.

**Insufficient funds.** The amount of funding allocated to the international waters focal area was minimal and has since been fully allotted. Thus, there is currently no possibility of funding new projects.

## Chapter Seven The Ozone Depletion Focal Area

### 1. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Ozone depletion is caused primarily by the atmospheric release of ozone depleting substances (ODS)—particularly chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)—used in such applications as: refrigeration and air conditioning, aerosols, solvents and foams. The GEF has developed a specific Operational Strategy for Ozone to address this issue, which is closely linked to the Montreal Protocol. (**GEFDOC #12**; See Box 7.1)

The Operational Strategy—built around the specific requirements and provisions of the Montreal Protocol—is designed to support short-term measures to phase out ODS. The strategy stresses support for country programmes that address the production and consumption of ODS. The GEF will provide assistance for preparing these programmes if a country does not yet have one.

The Operational Strategy outlines several criteria for funding of short-term ODS phaseout measures:

- cost-effectiveness;
- high likelihood of success;
- adequate country integration; and
- use of non-toxic ODS substitutes.

Additionally, the GEF will fund conversion to technologies with the least impact on global warming that are “technically feasible, environmentally sound and economically acceptable,” in order to “avoid transfer of negative environmental impacts between focal areas.” (**GEFDOC #12**)

The Strategy also calls for initial emphasis on projects that:

- achieve the greatest reduction of ODS at lowest cost;
- comply with the Montreal Protocol;
- enable complete phaseout of ODS in entire sectors or countries; and
- provide benefits in other GEF focal areas.

#### Box 7.1 The Montreal Protocol at a Glance

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer is a legally binding international agreement committing over 160 countries to phase out key ozone depleting substances (ODS). The protocol mandates specific, quantitative targets (and associated timetables) for eliminating the production and consumption of these substances, with different schedules for developed and developing countries. A “Multilateral Fund”—jointly administered by the World Bank and UNEP—serves as the financial mechanism to assist developing country parties in fulfilling their commitments.

The GEF is used to *complement* the Multilateral Fund—providing assistance to (i) Central and Eastern European countries ineligible for Multilateral Fund support (i.e., if they exceed a threshold of 0.3 kg per capita of ozone depleting emissions); and (ii) developing countries that are eligible for Multilateral Fund support, provided GEF assistance is used for projects *not* eligible under the Montreal Protocol.

#### Box 7.2 The GEF's Ozone Portfolio at a Glance

(This table provides key statistics summarising the current ozone portfolio.)

Total allocated funding	US \$111 million
% of total GEF funds allocated to ozone work program	7.0%
Total projects approved for funding	11
• # of global projects	(0)
• # of regional projects	(1)
• # of national projects	(10)



Source: GEF Quarterly Operational Report, June 1997. Aggregate figures for total funds disbursed in each focal area were not available at time of printing.

## 2. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Because of the short deadlines for phaseout of ODS mandated in the Montreal Protocol and its amendments, operational programmes for ozone depletion were not developed. All proposed projects will be considered under criteria for short-term response measures.

## 3. SUMMARY OF OZONE PORTFOLIO

**The Pilot Phase.** During the Pilot Phase, the GEF funded a very limited number of ozone projects. Consequently, the *Independent Evaluation (GEFDOC #27)* paid minimal attention to the ozone portfolio, given the limited number of projects in the focal area. The main problem identified was:

### Box 7.3 A Sampling of Ozone Projects Funded by the GEF

**Phase-out of Ozone Depleting Substances (Poland).** With \$6 million in GEF allocations, and US \$14 million in co-financing, this project aims to eliminate annual consumption of approximately 1,000 metric tonnes of weighted ozone-depleting potential through phase-out of CFCs in three refrigeration sub-projects, two sub-projects in foam-blowing industries and one in the medical aerosol industry.

**Phase-out of Ozone Depleting Substances (Russian Federation).** With US \$35 million in GEF allocations, and US \$22 million in co-financing, this project aims to eliminate annual consumption of approximately 11,000 metric tonnes of weighted ozone-depleting potential through replacing CFCs with hydrocarbon aerosol propellants and other alternatives in three refrigeration enterprises.

**Ozone Depleting Substances Reduction (Slovak Republic).** With US \$3.5 million in GEF allocations, and US \$2.5 million in co-financing, this project will eliminate annual consumption of 280 metric tonnes of weighted ozone-depleting substance potential through phasing out the use of CFCs in two refrigeration/freezer enterprises.

**Monitoring and Research Network for Ozone and GHGs in the Southern Cone (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay).** With US \$1.9 million in GEF financing, this Pilot Phase project is designed to improve data availability in the region through the establishment of three or four monitoring stations.

- **Overlap.** GEF activities seemed to overlap with those supported by the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund. Generally, this concern has been resolved by focusing GEF funds on countries with economies in transition, which are ineligible for support through the Multilateral Fund.

Examples of activities that could be funded through the GEF:

- Monitoring of ODS emissions.
- Development of country programmes to reduce ODS emissions.
- Specific ODS phaseout activities in various industrial sectors.
- Application of alternative production technologies for refrigeration, foam blowing and other areas.

## 4. NGO PERSPECTIVES

Some of the key NGO perspectives related to the GEF's ozone portfolio include:

**Environmentally inappropriate technology.** NGOs have criticised the GEF for violating its own Operational Strategy by transferring adverse environmental impacts between focal areas (i.e., by substituting ozone depleting technologies with technologies that contribute to climate change, the GEF is substituting one environmental problem with another).

Also, some NGOs have criticised the World Bank for promoting the proprietary, expensive and inappropriate technology of northern chemical companies without reaction or comment from the GEF Council. For example, in a proposed Slovak Republic project, a technology (HFC-134a) was selected because the joint venture partner had substantial experience with the substance. This is despite the fact that HFC-134a is a potent greenhouse gas. Alternatives to HFC-134a—which are cost-effective, non-proprietary and have significantly lower global warming potentials—are available. The project would have been approved if an NGO had not publicly confronted the Bank and the GEF Council by pointing out the policy violation.

This incident points to wider and more fundamental NGO concerns that GEF structures, designed to ensure project appropriateness and consistency with the GEF mandate (e.g., GEF Operations Committee, Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit) are either insufficiently independent and/or inadequately empowered to prevent powerful interests from promoting inappropriate technologies.

**Transitional substances.** Many NGOs have been critical of the short-term approach of the GEF's Ozone Operational Strategy because it funds the use of substances that deplete the ozone layer, although to a lesser extent than the substances they replace. These substances, deemed “transitional,” will necessitate a second conversion at additional cost at a later date as required under the terms of the Montreal Protocol. However, the GEF does not require those promoting transitional substances to cost out the second conversion. By effectively ignoring the future costs of transitional technologies, their use can be falsely justified on cost-effective grounds.

Some NGOs believe that vested interests in the GEF are attempting to use the flawed short-term cost-effectiveness criteria to shut out more environmentally appropriate, widely available and non-proprietary alternatives. These technologies may be more expensive initially but over the longer term become much more cost-effective.

## Chapter Eight Project Cycle—From Conceptualization To Completion

### 1. OVERVIEW

The May 1995 Council meeting reviewed and approved a project cycle, outlining a standard set of procedures for GEF-financed projects and the roles and responsibilities of project participants. (**GEFDOC #11**) The project cycle will be kept flexible to deal with differences among projects and will be reviewed periodically to make necessary changes identified through monitoring and evaluation activities (see Chapter 9).

The GEF project cycle reflects the major project requirements set out in *the GEF Instrument* (**GEFDOC #22**). These requirements state that projects should:

- be cost-effective;
- be country-driven and based on national priorities;
- include disclosure of nonconfidential information;
- consult with and participation of major groups and local communities; and
- cooperate with other international organisations, including NGOs.

The project cycle here deals with full projects, whereas Small and Medium-Size Grants have slightly different cycles. (**GEFDOC #1 & #3**)

The project cycle has three main phases encompassing six steps. The first phase covers project identification to approval by the GEF Council; the second covers Council approval to Implementing Agency approval; and the third covers project start up, implementation, and completion.

## 2. STEPS IN THE PROJECT CYCLE

### *Phase 1: From project concept to council approval*

#### *Step 1: Project concept identification and preparation*

#### *Step 2: Inclusion of project in proposed work programme for consideration by the GEF Council*

As a first step, this phase involves the development of ideas into project proposals that meet national and local priorities and are eligible for GEF funding. This is usually coordinated by national operational focal points, usually a person or office in a relevant government department who liaises with the GEF on all projects. The responsibilities of the focal point during this phase are to:

- act as the principal contact point for all GEF activities and communications;
- review proposed project ideas and concepts, taking into account their consistency with national programmes and priorities, the country's participation in the relevant conventions, etc.; and
- facilitate broad-based, as well as project specific, consultations, involving all major stakeholders groups. (A full project proposal must list all the consultations that have been undertaken with major groups and local communities.)

During this first step, the Implementing Agencies (IAs) work with the national operational focal points to develop project ideas and prepare project proposals.

Once a potential project has been identified, it usually needs further preparation before a full project proposal can be developed. Funding to assist with project preparation is available through the GEF Project Preparation and Development Facility (PDF), which has three funding thresholds, known as "blocks." Block A funds (up to US \$25,000) would be available at very early stages of project identification. Block B (up to US \$350,000) would be used for completing project proposals and preparing necessary supporting documentation. Finally, Block C funds (up to US \$1 million) would be used in large scale projects to complete technical design and feasibility studies. Each block has its own documentation requirements and approval levels. (**GEFDOC #16**)

Once a full project proposal has been prepared and received government endorsement, then an expert chosen from a list approved by the GEF's Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) must review the project from a scientific and technical perspective. GEF Secretariat staff then meet with each IA to review its projects (the meetings are termed "bilaterals"), and provide a recommendation to the GEF's chief executive officer (CEO) as to which should be included in a proposed "work programme" for submission to the Council. The Council considers four proposed work programmes per year: two at Council meetings and two between meetings. Approval of the work programme by the Council, does not necessarily mean that the projects are ready to be implemented and that the funds will be released immediately. Council approval, rather, is a green light for further preparation.

During Council meetings, Council members are asked to limit their comments on proposed work programmes to GEF programming and associated policy issues that particular projects might raise. The intention is to avoid detailed discussions in Council meetings on the technical aspects of each project, leading to inefficient micro-management by the Council. However, Council members are invited and encouraged to submit comments of a technical nature directly to the Secretariat. Most projects in proposed work programmes are approved by the Council. If serious problems with a project are raised by Council members, a project is typically removed from the work programme, at least temporarily.

### *Phase 2: From Council approval to Implementing Agency approval*

#### *Step 3: Preparation of final draft project document*

#### *Step 4: Chief Executive Officer endorsement and project approval*

As a third step, once a project is on the work programme, a final draft project document is prepared by the relevant IA, taking into account the Council's comments. The draft is then circulated to Council

members. As a fourth step in the project cycle, if there are no objections, the CEO endorses the project, and the IA and recipient country government can give their final approval of the project document. At that point, an agreement is negotiated with the host country and funds can be disbursed to implement the project.

### *Phase 3: From project approval to project completion*

*Step 5: Project implementation*

*Step 6: Project completion and final evaluation*

Most of the actual project implementation is undertaken by the *executing agency* in the host country. The executing agency could be a government ministry, another U.N. agency, or an NGO. Often, components of the project are subcontracted to NGOs for implementation. The IA supervises and monitors implementation of the project and reports progress to the GEF Secretariat on a semiannual basis. The Secretariat organises a *Project Implementation Review* of all GEF projects, and the results are submitted to the Council. (See Chapter 9) Once a project is completed, the IA prepares a final evaluation report, addressing the project's performance and assessing whether it has achieved its objectives. Guidelines for final project evaluations across all IAs are being prepared by the GEF Secretariat on the basis of the monitoring and evaluation policy, approved by the Council.

At this stage (or earlier), the STAP may identify projects for scientific and technical review. These might include projects that are highly innovative, have significant elements of risk, cover more than one focal area, or may have serious scientific and technical problems.

## **Chapter Nine GEF Effectiveness—What's Working And What's Not Working**

### **1. THE PILOT PHASE AND THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION**

Much criticism was leveled at the GEF Pilot Phase for its lack of a coordinated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism. Effective M&E helps to: avoid problems, correct problems before they become too serious and identify lessons for future application. Ultimately, M&E is critical to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of GEF resources.

In 1992, GEF participants requested the *Independent Evaluation* to assess progress and identify problems within the Pilot Phase. The evaluation was conducted by three separate teams, one from each GEF Implementing Agency (IA). Also, an independent experts panel was formed to provide guidance, guarantee an independent evaluation and channel input from the NGO community. The final report (published in 1994) of the *Independent Evaluation* provided a detailed assessment of the GEF's institutional structure, decision-making structure, project cycle and relationship with NGOs and local stakeholders. (**GEFDOC #22**)

Key recommendations raised in the evaluation include:

#### **Mission and objectives:**

- Clearly articulate the GEF mission.
- Develop programme objectives and strategies.

#### **Programme management:**

- Reform leadership, management and organisational relationships.
- Clarify and establish clear lines of accountability.
- Establish a permanent mechanism for identifying lessons and promoting their application.

#### **Relations with Implementing Agencies:**

- Establish common guidelines for management of GEF operations by IAs.

- Undertake an independent review of IAs' capacity.
- Improve participation at the country and community levels.

**NGO involvement:**

- Establish mutually beneficial collaboration with NGOs.

**Project review and approval:**

- Ensure that strategies and program guidelines are in place before program initiatives are undertaken (with funds from the replenishment).

Many of the key issues identified by the evaluation were addressed during the negotiations to restructure the GEF (and finalise *the GEF Instrument*, **GEFDOC #27**), which were conducted in parallel with the evaluation. For example, *the GEF Instrument* adopted by governments in 1994 provides a clearer governance structure and the basis for developing an operational strategy, containing a clear mission statement, programme objectives, strategies, etc. Finally, a key recommendation of the *Independent Evaluation* was the establishment of a permanent M&E system within the GEF Secretariat, which was approved by the GEF Council in May 1995.

## 2. ONGOING MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) UNDER THE GEF

In October 1996, the GEF Council requested a major evaluation of accomplishments and overall performance of the GEF to be available at the GEF Participants Assembly in April 1998. This evaluation includes three studies:

- the Project Implementation Review,
- the Study of Overall GEF Performance and
- the Study of Project Lessons.

The studies are being supervised by the GEF's M&E coordinator.

**Project Implementation Review (PIR).** IAs and the GEF Secretariat annually undertake PIRs to (i) examine the status of implementation and goal-attainment for GEF projects; (ii) identify portfolio strengths and weaknesses; and (iii) distill and disseminate the lessons learned from GEF programs. The PIR was conducted using the reporting formats of the IAs with some agreed upon reporting guidelines. Generally, IAs prepare a brief report for projects one year or older, identifying implementation progress, prospects for attaining objectives and recommended actions to respond to any problems. Many NGOs see the self-monitoring activities by IAs as welcome and necessary but not as a substitute for rigorous independent evaluations.

**Overall GEF Performance.** Scheduled for completion in early 1998, the Overall GEF Performance study will focus on the following four areas:

- *provision of resources* (e.g., are GEF funds leveraging other resources? What is the efficacy of financing incremental costs?);
- *country level coordination issues* (e.g., are GEF resources helping governments to fulfill their obligations under the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions?);
- *institutional issues and procedures* (e.g., how well are the institutions involved in the GEF coordinating and communicating their activities? Is the GEF encouraging mainstreaming of environmental concerns into the programs of the GEF IAs); and
- *programming efforts* (e.g., are Council decisions and guidance from the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions being operationalised effectively? How effective is the project selection process, especially in regards to identifying systems for learning and replicating promising approaches?).

The study will also include an annex to document and assess the GEF's follow-up to the recommendations from the 1994 *Independent Evaluation* of the Pilot Phase. (**GEFDOC #27**) Information on GEF projects collected in 16 countries will provide the basic inputs for analysis. An Expert Advisory Panel has been formed to review the work of this study (as well as the study on Evaluation of Lessons Learned described below) and to assure that the final report is comprehensive and independent.

**Evaluation of Lessons Learned.** In conjunction with the Overall GEF Performance Study, the Evaluation of Lessons Learned will assess the experience of projects approved during the Pilot Phase to determine what factors have been most important to their success or failure. Building on the PIRs and information from documents and interviews with GEF and IA staff, as well as NGOs, the study team has already identified three priority lessons during the first phase of the project:

- Considerable effort/time must be devoted to building partnerships and understanding among project implementors and communities.
- Coordination of local activities by individual projects with national policies and priorities is necessary to ensure that linkages between local efforts and global environmental benefits can be made and sustained.
- Involvement of private businesses and other organisations engaged in economic activities in the design and implementation of projects can help ensure the project efforts are sustained, which often requires innovative approaches.

The second phase of the study will focus on these three lessons, examining the experience of selected Pilot Phase projects to better understand their dynamics.

### 3. NGO PERSPECTIVES

NGOs have advocated the need for independent evaluations of the GEF's overall performance, as well as evaluations of specific project lessons. For many NGOs, systematic monitoring and evaluation of GEF projects and dissemination of results has been too slow and has not contributed enough to the international learning process on how to address global environmental problems. As such, many feel that the current studies should start with the results of the 1994 *Independent Evaluation* as a departure point or baseline from which to assess the ability of the GEF and IAs to respond to initial criticisms. (**GEFDOC #27**) However, the studies' inception report and terms of reference only included one line regarding use of the *Independent Evaluation*. Additionally, many NGOs have stressed that to maintain their independence the study teams should report directly to the GEF Council, as opposed to the GEF's senior M&E officer.

NGOs have stressed a number of areas for the focus of the three current M&E studies:

#### **GEF structure:**

- Restructuring and problems with the governance system.
- Barriers within IA policies (for example, the World Bank will not develop GEF projects that are not in line with its Country Assistance Strategy).
- IAs' (in)ability to mainstream GEF goals into their overall portfolios.

#### **IA monopoly:**

- Necessity of developing projects through one of the IAs.
- Alternatives to the existing IAs within the project cycle for project development and implementation.

#### **Stakeholder input:**

- Role of public involvement and information disclosure throughout the project cycle.

#### **Procurement reform:**

- Restrictions on NGO involvement.

#### **Incremental costs:**

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- Utility as a formula for project eligibility.

### Efficiency and cost-effectiveness:

- Efficiency throughout the GEF organisational structure and within projects.

### Project size:

- Appropriate project size for national structures and local organisations.
- Exploration of national environmental funds.

### Portfolio balance:

- Role of IA priorities and geopolitics.
- Alleged caps on the number of Medium-Size Grants to be accepted by IAs.
- Underrepresentation of sustainable use in the biodiversity portfolio.

### Strategic leverage:

- Utility of large investments vs. smaller grants to catalyse innovative approaches building on local momentum and capacities.

### Quality assurance:

- Selection of baseline data and information for M&E.
- Need for systematic quality control.
- Responsibility of IAs for quality data and monitoring.

### Replenishment:

- Need for rigorous independent evaluations as a critical component for discussion of replenishing GEF funds.

### Information access and disclosure:

- Access to information at the country and project levels that is translated into local languages to enable effective grassroots participation.

## Section II : Opportunities for NGO Action in the GEF Process

### *Chapter Ten NGOs & Projects—How Can I Get Directly Involved in GEF Projects*

#### 1. OPTIONS FOR NGO INVOLVEMENT

NGOs can be involved in GEF projects in a number of ways, including as an observer, advisor, monitor, evaluator, executing agency (implementor) and critic (see Box 10.1).

There are some steps that NGOs in all countries could take to begin participating GEF projects in their country (see Box 10.2).

#### **Box 10.1 Options for NGO Involvement in GEF Projects**

**National project selection and development.** NGOs can influence the selection of projects by governments and GEF Implementing Agencies (IAs) and help to define the roles available to NGOs during the entire project cycle (see Chapter 8). This entails keeping informed about projects being proposed in a country and providing input into project preparation, design and implementation. NGOs can provide both informal or formal technical and policy advice or be subcontracted as partners in project development. Additionally, NGOs can provide technical or social assessments of project proposals under consideration.

**Implementation.** NGOs can play a variety of roles in project implementation, including assistance with preparatory studies and surveys, input into the design process, serving as a subcontractor to an executing agency to complete portions of GEF projects and serving as the primary executing agency. In such roles, NGOs can perform a number of tasks ranging from on-the-ground fieldwork to technical analyses to outreach and public awareness activities.

**Monitoring and evaluation (M&E).** NGOs can provide independent assessments of project performance based on existing GEF guidelines for M&E and other criteria. Some examples of areas that NGOs could address include: the extent to which implementing organisations have consulted with the relevant stakeholder groups, whether projects are implemented according to GEF operational guidelines and the degree to which IAs have reformed existing projects outside their GEF portfolios. Such assessments can be circulated to the organisations implementing the project, the national GEF focal point, local IA offices, other NGOs and even the GEF Council through the NGO consultation process (see Chapter 11).

#### **Box 10.2 Basic Steps for NGO Involvement in GEF Projects**

1. Identify and meet with the GEF National Operational Focal Point (within the government) and officials based in local IA offices.
2. Arrange a meeting between NGOs and the national focal point and IA representatives.
3. Choose a preferred role—from critic to implementing partner (see Box 10.1).
4. Develop and discuss policy or project priorities with the IAs.
5. Coordinate with NGOs, government officials, IA representatives and others to further these policy and project ideas.
6. Implement, monitor and evaluate GEF projects in your country.

## **2. BEGINNING THE DIALOGUE**

Getting involved in GEF projects depends on a number of factors, such as people, timing and opportunities, as well as “GEF politics” in Washington. As a first step, you could contact your designated GEF National Operational Focal Point for information on GEF-related initiatives either underway or in the pipeline for the country. A meeting of interested NGOs and this focal point would provide a valuable opportunity to ascertain information about existing or planned projects and governmental priorities for GEF projects. This might also be a useful opportunity to establish a national contact group to serve as a regular forum for GEF-related dialogue.

Meetings with staff from the local IA offices can provide further information and advice, including general GEF materials, information on existing or planned projects, etc. If there is not a satisfactory response, NGOs have, in the past, sent complaints to the GEF Secretariat and IA headquarters. Judging by previous experiences, there could be a lot more in the project pipeline than the GEF National Operational Focal Point knows about. Often, even the IA country office staff are unsure what types of projects the GEF has decided to fund. Information flow from the GEF Secretariat and Council often takes time to reach in-country IA staff and focal points.

## **3. GETTING INVOLVED IN GEF PROJECTS**

With this background, NGOs can become more involved in specific projects, through work on project selection and development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. As GEF projects evolve from the preparatory to implementation phase, a number of opportunities for NGO involvement may arise. Beyond preparatory studies and surveys, for which an IA may contract an NGO, the actual project may offer interesting opportunities for executing certain components that coincide with NGO priorities. Obviously, the more NGOs play a role in project design, the more likely it is that appropriate budget lines and activities are included for NGO participation. In planning your involvement, remember that one NGO is weaker than two, three or four that work and lobby together as a group. Similarly, a number of NGOs



could play differing roles for the same project, from independent critic to project implementor. Also, look for NGOs in other countries working on similar types of GEF projects, and solicit information from them regarding their experiences.

If providing critical independent perspectives about a GEF project is the preferred role, then the following considerations may be helpful:

- Ensure that IAs provide all available information and documents;
- organize and collaborate with other NGOs or an umbrella group so that criticisms are not easily dismissed; and
- coordinate with an international NGO network to help ensure that the review reaches the GEF Council (e.g., through an NGO-GEF Consultation or GEF Council meeting in Washington, D.C.; see Chapter 11).

#### 4. SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZE GRANTS PROGRAMME: OPPORTUNITIES FOR NGO IMPLEMENTATION

The Small and Medium-Size Grant windows present some of the best opportunities for NGO implementation of GEF projects.

**Small Grant Projects.** UNDP oversees a Small Grants Programme (SGP) for projects costing up to US \$50,000. The SGP is designed exclusively to support projects implemented by NGOs—particularly community-based organisations. (GEFDOC #3) SGPs currently operate in 33 countries with plans for expansion to 13 more during 1997–98. (See Box 10.3) These programmes are managed by National Coordinators—either an NGO representative or an official based in the local UNDP office. National Coordinators are supported by National Selection Committees composed of other NGO representatives, as well as government and UNDP representatives. The latter two act as observers but participate as requested by the Committee's NGO members. These National Selection Committees review and approve Small Grant Project proposals for inclusion in the national GEF/SGP work programme.

The principal objectives of the SGP are to:

- demonstrate community-level strategies and technologies that can contribute to reducing threats to the global environment if they are replicated over time;
- draw lessons from community-level experience and support the spread of successful community-level strategies and innovations among community groups and NGOs, host governments, the GEF, development aid agencies and others working on a larger scale; and
- build partnerships and networks of local stakeholders to support and strengthen the capacities of community groups and NGOs to address environmental problems and promote sustainable development.

##### Box 10.3 Countries with GEF Small Grants Programmes

**Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mauritius, Senegal, Zimbabwe

**Arab States and North Africa:** Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia

**Asia and Pacific:** India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand

**Europe and countries in transition:** Poland, Turkey

**Latin America and Caribbean:** Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago.

In 1997–98 the programme is being extended to Albania, Bhutan, Guatemala, Indochina (Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam), Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Tanzania, Uganda and the Palestine Authority. To find out more about the GEF-UNDP SGP and the National Selection Committees in your country, contact

your local UNDP office. For information that is not region specific and concerns policy issues, you may contact SGP headquarters at UNDP. (See Annex II)

To get involved in a Small Grant Project (presuming that an SGP is operating in the country), NGO representatives could either be nominated to serve on the National Selection Committee and/or develop an SGP project idea and proposal (the average grant ranges from US \$20,000 to US \$30,000). SGP proposals should be consistent with the GEF's objectives and fall under one of the four focal areas. Projects could include the following types of activities: community-based assessment and planning; pilot demonstration projects; capacity development; monitoring and analysis; and dissemination, networking and policy dialogue. The SGP has been allocated US \$39 million (which includes the Pilot Phase) from the GEF Trust Fund. (For more information consult the guidelines in **GEFDOC #3**)

**Medium-Size Projects (MSP) Programme.** The April 1997 GEF Council Meeting approved a Medium-Size Projects Programme (MSP), supporting projects in the range of US \$50,000 to US \$1 million, with procedures to expedite the proposal review process. Governments, local community organisations, NGOs and academic institutions are eligible to apply. MSPs must (i) be based on the national priorities of the country in which they are to be conducted, (ii) coincide with the GEF's operational strategy and operational programmes, and (iii) be endorsed by the host country or countries. For more information consult the guidelines in **GEFDOC #1** and *De-Mystifying the GEF: A User's Guide to Getting Funding for Biodiversity and International Waters Projects* by Jeff Griffin.

As IAs have just started receiving MSP applications, there is little information yet to evaluate how NGO proposals will be received. As of August 1997, the World Bank had about six MSP projects under preparation (three of which received additional project development funds); UNDP was still establishing its operations regarding the MSP (but had several projects under preparation); and UNEP has about 10 projects under preparation. The Secretariat has forwarded two UNEP proposals to the GEF Council, including a project on public participation in Latin America and the Caribbean and one on protection of the monk seal.

## **Chapter Eleven NGOs & Policy—How Can I Participate In GEF Policy-And Priority-Setting**

### **1. OPPORTUNITIES FOR NGO ADVOCACY: AN OVERVIEW**

Within the GEF process, there are many advocacy opportunities for NGOs to contribute substantively to policy- and priority-setting. To better understand these opportunities, it is useful to consider (i) the major *substantive target areas* for advocacy (see Box 11.1 and Sections 2–6 below); and (ii) the major processes involved (see Box 11.2).

#### **Box 11.1 Substantive “Target Areas” for NGO Advocacy.**

**Project funding.** Decisions to fund (or not fund) proposed projects is a key step in setting GEF priorities and—in effect—setting unofficial, but *de facto*, GEF policies. For example, these decisions determine what *types* of projects should be funded, what *level* of funding should be allocated to specific projects or focal areas, and whether certain countries or regions should be priorities for funding.

**Project development.** Individual governments take the lead in developing project proposals for GEF funding consideration. The types of projects developed, and some specific aspects of projects, will reflect priorities and key policy issues at the *national* level (see Chapter 10).

**Formal GEF policies.** The Council adopts formal policies that have an important influence on GEF funding and the GEF process more generally (see Chapter 2).

**Operational Strategies and Operational Programmes.** These two centerpieces of GEF policy will be periodically updated (see Chapters 3–7).

**Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of GEF performance.** The ongoing M&E program, housed within the GEF Secretariat, has important implications for GEF policy- and priority-setting.

**National appropriations.** Donor governments are required to appropriate funds committed to the GEF during replenishment negotiations. NGOs in GEF donor countries can work with government officials and members of parliament to help ensure that such funds are appropriated.

### Box 11.2 Processes for NGO Advocacy

In terms of the substantive areas for advocacy listed in Box 11.1 above, NGOs could participate in three relevant processes:

**National government decision-making process.** Through direct meetings, individual and jointly signed letters, and other avenues, NGOs can provide input into decisions by their national governments related to the target areas in Box 11.1. For example, prior to a GEF Council Meeting, NGOs can seek to mobilise governmental support for—or *opposition to*—proposed projects, based in part on whether such projects are built on sound or poorly conceived policy.

**GEF Council decision-making process.** NGOs can provide input into decisions by the GEF Council through communications with several or all GEF Council members before official Council decisions. Also, NGOs can prepare individual or joint interventions (i.e., verbal statements) to be presented during formal GEF Council meetings. If, for example, a new social policy or revised Operational Strategies for climate change and biodiversity were to be considered at a future Council meeting, NGOs could work in advance to help shape them.

**GEF Secretariat implementation process.** The GEF Secretariat implements Council decisions and, more generally, supports all GEF activities. NGOs could contribute to important Secretariat activities that have at least indirect policy implications. For example, NGOs can provide input to the Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator on M&E activities and can send comments to the Secretariat on drafts of new GEF policies.

**Implementing Agency policy process.** IAs are required to mainstream GEF objectives into their regular (non-GEF) portfolios and programs. NGOs can monitor and evaluate the process of mainstreaming, as well as advocate development of policy reforms and other actions to catalyse such mainstreaming.

## 2. PROJECT FUNDING

NGOs can contribute to decisions by individual governments and the GEF Council on whether to fund proposed projects. Individual NGOs, possibly in collaboration with other NGOs, will determine which policies and criteria are of particular importance for supporting or opposing a proposed project. Some relevant considerations include:

**Thematic emphasis within focal area.** What should the thematic emphasis be for projects in each focal area? For example, should biodiversity projects emphasise sustainable use versus conservation? Should climate projects emphasise renewable energy sources versus more efficient fossil fuel use?

**Prioritisation.** Should the size of individual grants (and totals of grants awarded) reflect the relative importance of a country (or region) in relation to the focal areas? For example, should larger grants go to (i) countries that are biodiversity “hot spots” or “megadiversity” countries, such as Brazil, Papua New Guinea and Madagascar; or (ii) countries with high potentials for future emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and ozone depleting substances (ODS), such as China and India?

**Underlying versus direct causes.** Should the emphasis be on projects that address underlying causes of problems, as opposed to direct (proximate) causes? Should all funded projects address—at least to some degree—underlying causes?

**Public involvement.** Was there adequate public (stakeholder) involvement in the planning phase of the proposed project, and does the project include an effective role for civil society in implementation? For example, does a proposed international waters project on integrated coastal zone management involve the relevant coastal communities and artisanal fisher groups?

**Social impacts.** What are the potential social impacts of the proposed project? For example, what are the employment and income implications of a proposed energy efficiency project? What are the land tenure implications for local and indigenous communities of a proposed project to establish a new protected area?

Another funding issue for NGOs to consider is procurement-reform. Procurement is the way in which project funds, once approved, are delivered by the GEF IAs to the executing agency. NGOs have generally criticised this process as inefficient and time-consuming. The situation is especially difficult for NGO executing agencies that do not have financial resources to “front” the money for project activities and then receive reimbursement. Such criticisms are being addressed through the Medium-Size Grants Programme, and a GEF task force is also looking into the issue.

### 3. FORMAL GEF POLICIES

NGOs can help shape formal GEF policies, including strengthening existing policies and catalysing the adoption of new policies.

**Strengthening existing policies.** Several policies have been formally adopted by the Council (see Chapter 2). NGOs could catalyse reviews of these policies and help formulate revisions to strengthen them. Some illustrative examples of such revisions that have been proposed by various NGOs in the past include:

- *Incremental costs.* Ensure that countries with “environmentally progressive” baseline activities are not penalised.
- *Financing modalities.* Allow for concessional or contingency loans in targeted areas.
- *Monitoring and evaluation (M&E).* Require a more unified M&E system, covering all levels of the GEF; keep under periodic review the effectiveness of the current IA structure of the GEF.
- *Public involvement.* Require that all projects entail specific and documented forms of stakeholder participation, and set out operational guidelines for public involvement throughout the project cycle.

**Catalysing new policies.** NGOs could catalyse new GEF policies. Some options that may be worth considering include:

- Social policy;
- Indigenous peoples policy;
- Procurement (disbursement of funds) policy for IAs;
- Capacity building and training policy; and
- Trust fund policy.

### 4. OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES (OS) AND OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES (OP)

The OS and OP are viewed as “living documents” and will be periodically updated, based on experience gained, further guidance from the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) to the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions, technological advances and other developments. NGOs can play an important role in this process by proposing and advocating needed revisions.

**Operational Strategies.** There will be opportunities for NGOs to raise and advocate (i) issues previously debated, but rejected, during the formulation of the current OS; and (ii) new issues that might be incorporated into the OS. Examples of issues raised by various NGOs in the past include:

- *Climate:* the need for greater emphasis on promoting renewable energy sources;
- *Biodiversity:* the need for greater emphasis on sites of high biodiversity value, and on sustainable use of biodiversity;
- *International waters:* the need to identify priorities; and

- *Ozone*: the need for greater emphasis on CFC substitutes that are not ozone-depleting substances and do not have high greenhouse gas potential.

**Operational Programmes.** There will be opportunities for NGOs to advocate revisions to existing OPs and to advocate new programs. Examples that have been raised by various NGOs in the past include:

- *Climate*: adding a new transport programme under the climate focal area;
- *Biodiversity*: adding an equitable benefit—sharing programme under the biodiversity focal area.

## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) OF GEF PERFORMANCE

NGOs can help shape the terms of reference (TOR) for M&E studies, and participate directly in such activities (see Chapter 9). Examples of NGO involvement in the three M&E studies initiated in 1997 include:

- Several NGOs met with the GEF M&E coordinator and followed up with written comments, to provide input into the TOR.
- NGOs in various countries are being interviewed to ascertain their perspectives on specific GEF projects examined in these studies.
- An NGO representative is serving on a small International Advisory Panel for these studies.
- NGOs have met with and provided input to the teams and expert advisory panel for the studies on the GEF's overall effectiveness and lessons learned from project experience.

## 6. NGO PARTICIPATION IN GEF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Since the GEF Council makes many of the formal decisions related to the areas discussed above, NGO policy advocacy efforts involve active participation in Council meetings. Ten NGOs are allowed to participate as “observers” at Council meetings (eight from developing countries and two from developed countries). Travel grants, awarded through an NGO self-selection process and funded by the GEF Secretariat, are available to help ensure at least limited representation from developing countries (see Chapter 13). Travel grant recipients (“NGO delegates”) must be accredited with the GEF, which involves a very simple process (see accreditation form inserted on the back page of this guide). GEF-accredited NGOs will receive background documents for future Council meetings and other information on GEF activities.

**NGO activities.** There are a number of activities undertaken by NGOs around GEF Council meetings, some involving information-sharing and networking, while others are more advocacy-oriented. These activities include:

- **An NGO strategy session** two days before the Council meeting, to discuss concerns, strategies and positions on various agenda items; to begin developing NGO statements for presentation to the Council; etc.
- **An NGO-GEF consultation** the day before the Council meeting, providing a forum for exchanging views, positions and concerns with government officials and representatives of the GEF Secretariat and IAs. NGOs present case studies, outlining concerns and perspectives on specific GEF projects in their regions.
- **Presentation of statements** (“interventions”) during official sessions of the Council meeting, detailing NGO views on various agenda items. NGOs generally agree that short interventions with a few well-chosen points, backed by good examples, have a greater impact than those that voice more general concerns.
- **Lobbying Council members** often involves private discussions “in the corridors” before official agenda item discussions. Such lobbying is generally more effective if groundwork is

laid well before Council meetings (e.g., communications with Council members as they prepare their position papers at home).

- **Writing a report of the results** of the Council meeting. NGOs will often cover specific issues of interest during the Council meeting and write reports on these issues. The international focal point (see Chapter 13) usually integrates these into one summary report, which is distributed widely to the international NGO community.
- **Serving on official government delegations** is an arrangement that is usually worked out well ahead of time with relevant government officials

## Chapter Twelve NGOs & Other Processes—How Can I Participate In Other Processes And Institutions Closely Related To The GEF

### 1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT RELATED PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS?

While many processes and institutions overlap with the GEF, a few are particularly important for NGOs to monitor and participate in:

- The GEF Implementing Agencies (IAs): the World Bank, UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
- The intergovernmental processes under the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions

### 2. HOW CAN NGOs INFLUENCE AND PARTICIPATE IN THESE PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS?

**GEF Implementing Agencies.** As noted in Chapter 2, the GEF was designed to help mainstream global environmental benefits in the programmes of the IAs. NGOs can play an important role in this regard through monitoring whether this is in fact happening, and advocating needed policy reforms and actions within these institutions. More specifically, NGOs could monitor and evaluate the degree to which the IAs' non-GEF loans, programs and policies are consistent with and supportive of GEF objectives (for one specific example, see Box 12.1). NGOs could help to catalyse new initiatives within these institutions, such as biodiversity enterprise trust funds and special climate change programs for energy sector loans. Also, NGOs could work to strengthen existing policies of the IAs, or advocate new policies. For example, the World Bank currently has no biodiversity policy *per se*.

**Intergovernmental processes under the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions.** Through watchdog and advocacy efforts, NGOs can monitor and help shape decisions by the governing bodies (Conference of the Parties—COP) of the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions that are directly relevant to the GEF. These decisions include:

#### Box 12.1 The GEF and the World Bank's Inspection Panel

In 1994, a still little known office opened its doors in Washington, D.C. It houses the World Bank's Inspection Panel, whose sole mandate is to listen to people who may have been negatively affected by Bank-financed projects that have not complied with Bank policies and rules. While the Resolution which created the Inspection Panel does not refer explicitly to the GEF, the World Bank's General Counsel established that World Bank GEF activities should not be shielded from the Inspection Panel's scrutiny.

The establishment of the Independent Inspection Panel represents an unprecedented break-through in promoting the accountability of the World Bank to the people who are its intended beneficiaries—the poor in developing countries. The World Bank's Board of Directors established the panel, after nearly a decade of work by NGOs in many countries that painstakingly documented how Bank-financed projects often lead to severe environmental and social problems.

Environmental projects (e.g., GEF projects) are often hamstrung by the same kind of problems that make many development projects fail. These can include a lack of meaningful consultation with people affected by the project and the development agency's focus on making big loans to governments rather than preparing high quality projects. Well-intentioned projects to protect biodiversity, for example, may single-mindedly focus on biological data and ignore the complex socio-economic and political situation in a project area. For example, local communities are often blamed for environmental degradation, when a

more careful analysis would reveal that threats from financial investments and governmental policies are far more substantial.

Until the establishment of the Inspection Panel, local people had little recourse when their own governments were not responsive to their plight. Today, when World Bank and GEF financing is involved in a project causing environmental and social harm, affected people can turn to the Inspection Panel. Any group of two or more people in the borrowing country who are, or fear that they may be, negatively affected by a World Bank project can send a complaint to the Inspection Panel. Technically, this group of people would have to state which World Bank policy or procedure is not being followed (e.g., information disclosure and environmental impact assessment policies).

In such cases, local people, or the NGOs that work with them, may address their complaint with a request for investigation to the Inspection Panel. The Inspection Panel will then examine the case and decide whether to recommend a full investigation to The World Bank's Board of Directors, which retains ultimate decision-making power.

For more information, contact:

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(Prepared by Korinna Horta, Environmental Defense Fund)

- **COP reviews of GEF effectiveness.** The COPs will periodically review the effectiveness of the GEF as the financial mechanism for their conventions. NGOs can (i) help shape how these reviews are conducted (e.g., what specific criteria and indicators are used in the review), by working with governments to help formulate terms of reference; and (ii) work with the Convention Secretariats as they conduct these reviews.
- **COP guidance to GEF.** The COPs provide guidance to the GEF on strategy, policy, programmes and eligibility. NGOs can work with governments to help formulate proposals for such guidance and to incorporate these ideas into formal decisions by the COP. NGOs can also work with GEF Secretariat staff on documents outlining how the GEF could operationalize COP guidance.

## **Chapter Thirteen NGO Networking—How Can I Get Involved in NGO Networking Efforts?**

### **1. THE GEF-NGO NETWORK**

NGOs have organised themselves into an experimental network of regional NGO contact points on the GEF—the GEF-NGO network. Established in 1995, its primary purposes are to:

- facilitate selection of recipients of travel grants to GEF Council meetings;
- gather NGO input into the GEF process, including its Council meetings; and
- disseminate information on the Council meetings, major GEF developments and GEF projects.

Currently the GEF-NGO network is structured around 13 contact points in five regions (Africa/Middle East, Asia, Latin America/Caribbean, Europe and North America) and a central contact point (currently based at IUCN's Washington, DC, office). Contact information for the NGO focal points and other NGOs active in the GEF are listed in Annex III.

**Central contact point.** The role of the central contact point is to:

- liaise regularly with the regional contact points and the GEF Secretariat on issues relating to NGO participation in the GEF;
- gather NGO input into GEF policy documents;
- coordinate NGO activities around Council meetings; and

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- coordinate selection of travel grant recipients through the regional contact points. (See Chapter 11)

**Regional contact points.** The main tasks of the regional contact points are to:

- provide notification of GEF-NGO Consultations and GEF Council meetings, and distribute relevant documents to NGOs in their region;
- coordinate selection of regional travel grant recipients and notify the central contact point of the recipients;
- liaise with the central contact point;
- collect, coordinate and provide brief reports on regional concerns, GEF projects, etc., relevant to upcoming GEF meetings; and
- report back to NGOs in their region on each GEF Council meeting and on current policy and project issues.

To join the GEF-NGO network, contact the regional contact point in your area of the world. (See Annex III)

## Annex I : List of publications

### *Note on Availability:*

The enclosed list contains a number of documents from the GEF, its Implementing Agencies (IAs) and NGOs, which may be useful for more detail on issues raised in this Guide. GEF documents are available from a number of sources, including: their Web site (<http://www.worldbank.org/html/gef/>), national GEF focal points or local IA offices, the GEF Secretariat and the IA headquarters. For NGO materials contact the institution listed in the citation. Annexes II and III provide additional contact information for the key individuals and major institutions working around the GEF.

### *General GEF documents*

*GEF Quarterly Operational Reports.* These provide brief descriptions of all GEF projects and their status, as well as statistics on allocation of GEF funds. They also contain a list with the names and addresses of all GEF Secretariat and IA staff, including the task (project) managers, as well as a list of published documents. If you are accredited to the GEF, you will receive the reports automatically.

*GEF Council Meeting Documents.* These include policy documents for GEF operations; information documents reporting to the Council on specific aspects of GEF activities; and the proposed Work Programme, containing all project proposals up for review. After each meeting, a summary (Joint Summary of the Chairs) is published, which lists the meeting's decisions and main points. Documents are denoted in the form GEF/C.6/2, which corresponds to the sequential set of documents (in this case, #6) and the document number within that set (#2).

*GEF Working Papers.* These papers provide more specific information on methodological approaches, and scientific, technical, policy and strategic matters. Some of these are listed below, and complete listings are included in the *GEF Quarterly Operational Reports*.

*Project Documents.* These contain specific information on projects, such as objectives, activities, implementation plans and budgets. They are not usually published by the GEF until after a project has been negotiated and approved. However, it is often possible to get drafts of these project documents, as well as technical annexes, from IA staff.

### *GEF publications of interest to NGOs*

GEFDOC # & publication

1. GEF. July 1997. Global Environmental Facility: Medium-sized Project Kit.



2. GEF. July 1997. Progress Report: Study of GEF Project Lessons.
3. GEF. June 1997. The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme.
4. GEF. April 1997. Follow-up Action to the STAP Workshop on Land Degradation. Council Meeting (GEF/C.9/6).
5. GEF. April 1997. Joint Summary of the Chairs: GEF Council Meeting, April 30 – May 1, 1997. Council Meeting (GEF/C.9/9/Rev.1).
6. GEF. April 1997. Principles for GEF Financing of Targeted Research. Council Meeting (GEF/C.9/5).
7. GEF. April 1997. GEF Operational Programs.
8. GEF. March 1997. Terms of Reference: For Study of GEF's Overall Performance.
9. GEF. October 1996. Framework and Work Program for GEF's Monitoring, Evaluation and Dissemination Activities. Council Meeting (GEF/C.8/4).
10. GEF. June 1996. Public Involvement in GEF-Financed Projects.
11. GEF. March 1996. The GEF Project Cycle.
12. GEF. 1996. Operational Strategy.
13. GEF. October 1995. Engaging the Private Sector. Council Meeting (GEF/C.6/Inf.4).
14. GEF. May 1995. General Requirements for a Coordinated GEF-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System. Council Meeting (GEF/C.4/6).
15. GEF. February 1995. Criteria for Selection of NGOs to Attend/Observe Council Meetings and Information on NGO Consultations. Council Meeting (GEF/C.3/5).
16. GEF. February 1995. The Project Development and Preparation Facility. Council Meeting (GEF/C.3/6).
17. GEF. 1995. Capacity Building Requirements for Global Environmental Protection. J. Ohiorhenuan & S. Wunker. Working Paper #12.
18. GEF. 1995. Incremental Costs for Biodiversity Conservation. D. Pearce & S. Barrett. Working Paper.
19. GEF. 1995. The Restructured GEF: Questions and Answers.
20. GEF. November 1994. Rules of Procedure for the GEF Council.
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23. GEF. 1993. First Time Round: Creating the Global Environmental Facility. H. Sjoberg. Working Paper #10.
24. UNDP. April 1997. NGO Participation in UNDP/GEF Projects.
25. UNDP. October 1996. NGO Participation in UNDP/GEF Projects.
26. UNDP. Annual. The GEF Small Grants Programme (GEF/SGP) Country Progress Reports.
27. UNDP/UNEP/World Bank. 1994. Global Environmental Facility: Independent Evaluation of the Pilot Phase.
28. UNEP. May 1996. Report of the Consultative Meeting Between NGOs and UNEP/GEF.
29. World Bank. April 1997. The World Bank Group and the Global Environment Facility.

30. World Bank. 1995. Implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity: Toward a Strategy for World Bank Assistance. Environment Department Papers, Biodiversity Series Paper #14.

### NGO Papers

Ad Hoc NGO Working Group. 1997. *Partners or Hired Hands? Procurement Reform for Effective Collaboration between NGOs and Multilateral Institutions: The Case of the Global Environment Facility*. Contact: The Nature Conservancy.

Aggarwal-Khan, Sheila. July 1997. *Promoting Coherence: Towards an Effective Global Environment Facility*. Contact: Netherlands Committee for IUCN (Plantage Middenlaan 2B, 1018 DD Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Tel: +31-20-626.1732; Fax: +31-20-627.9349; E-mail: [mail@nciucn.nl](mailto:mail@nciucn.nl) ).

Annis, Sheldon. March 1996. *Promoting Partnership between UNDP-GEF and NGOs: An Agenda to Improve Existing Practices*. Contact: S. Annis (Tel: +1-617-631.9431; Fax: +1-617-631.5413; E-mail: [annis@bu.edu](mailto:annis@bu.edu) ).

Birdlife International. June 1996. *The Global Environment Facility: A Briefing for Birdlife International Partner Organisations*. Contact: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Bowles, Ian & Glenn T. Prickett 1994. *Reframing the Green Window: An Analysis of the GEF Pilot Phase Approach to Biodiversity and Global Warming and Recommendations for the Operational Phase*. Contact: Conservation International.

Climate Network Europe. 1995. *Getting the Right Mix: Participation in GEF Climate Change Projects*.

GEF-NGO Working Group. February 1996. *Promoting Strategic Partnerships between the GEF and the NGO Community*. Available as GEF Council Meeting Document (GEF/C.7/Inf.8).

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Mittermeier, R. A. & I. Bowles. May 1993. *The GEF and Biodiversity Conservation: Lessons to Date and Recommendations for Future Action*. Contact: Conservation International.

Reed, David. *The Global Environment Facility: Sharing Responsibility for the Biosphere*. Contact: WWF International Policy Office.

Wells, Michael. March 1996. *NGO Participation in World Bank GEF Projects: A Report for the GEF-NGO Working Group*. Contact: M. Wells (Tel: +47-32-841542; Fax: +47-32-840827; E-mail: [michaelw@sn.no](mailto:michaelw@sn.no) ).

Wolf, A. and D. Reed, 1993. *The Global Environmental Facility: Incremental Cost Analysis in Addressing Global Environmental Problems*. Contact: WWF International Policy Office.

WWF International. *The Southern Green Fund: Views from the South on the Global Environment Facility*. Contact: WWF Conservation Policy Division (Ave du Mont-Blanc, CH-1196, Gland, Switzerland; Tel: +41-22-364.9111; Fax: +41-22-364.5829; E-mail: [postmaster@wwfnet.org](mailto:postmaster@wwfnet.org) ).

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**ANNEX III: NGO CONTACTS**

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The GEF-NGO Network is an experimental network of regional NGO focal points and central contact points interested in the GEF. It coordinates NGO self-selection of delegates to biannual GEF NGO Consultations; coordinates policy- and project-specific inputs to the GEF Council; and facilitates information dissemination and dialogue about the GEF with NGOs in five regions, covering the world.

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**NGO ACCREDITATION FORM**

1. NGOs desiring to be accredited to the GEF for purposes of receiving documentation, participating in NGO consultations and attending Council meetings, may apply to the GEF Secretariat for this purpose.
2. All applications must be signed by the chief executive officer or an authorised senior official of the NGO and must be accompanied by information on the organisation's competence and relevance to the work of the GEF.
3. On the basis of the information provided in this form, the CEO of the GEF will accredit any NGO that has fulfilled the above requirements.
  - Name of organisation .....
  - Date of establishment .....
  - Address of principal office .....
  - Telephone/fax/email .....
  - Purpose of organisation .....
  - Country or countries in which organisation is active .....
  - Particular areas of the GEF to which organisation's competence and relevance pertains
  - Information on programmes and activities of organisation in areas that are relevant to the GEF and country/ies in which they are carried out
  - Members of governing body of organisation and their country of nationality

In respect to membership organisations:

- Description of membership, indicating total numbers and their geographical distribution

Please attach copies of:

- Annual reports
- Financial statements

Name and signature of CEO/senior official of NGO

(please print and sign) Please attach additional sheets if required.