



46TH GEF COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

TUESDAY, 27 MAY 2014

On Tuesday morning, participants convened in plenary to conclude consideration of GEF Council agenda items, including: appointment of the Director of the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) and other business. The Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF) and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) meeting also took place in the morning. In the afternoon the closing plenary of the GEF Council convened. The Civil Society Forum convened throughout the day.



The dais during the closing of the 46th GEF Council Meeting. L-R: Robert van den Berg, GEF Secretariat; Co-Chair Juha Pyykkö, Finland; Naoko Ishii, GEF CEO and Chairperson; and William Ehlers, GEF Secretariat.

APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE IEO

The GEF Council adopted a decision appointing Juha Uitto (Finland) as the new Director of the GEF's Independent Evaluation Office.

OTHER BUSINESS

GEF Project Agencies Accreditation: Ramesh Ramankutty, GEF Secretariat, introduced the item (GEF/C.46/CRP 01) *Progress Report on Pilot Accreditation of GEF Project Agencies*, observing that Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)

and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) had received approval from the Accreditation Panel to progress from Stage II to Stage III and that GEF Council was requested to approve initial grant ceilings for IUCN and DBSA.

Several Council members called for a strategic discussion on the accreditation process for new Project Agencies during the next Council session. Naoko Ishii, GEF CEO and Chairperson, acknowledged the ambiguity of past decisions taken by the Council on this matter and the need to agree on a timeline for the accreditation process. She said the issue would be considered during the next Council meeting. The Council adopted the decision.



Juha Uitto (center), Finland, was appointed as the new Director of the GEF's Independent Evaluation Office.



Marit van Zomerén, Netherlands





A view of the plenary during the last day of the GEF Council meeting

Dates for future sessions: The Council agreed to convene the fall session of the GEF Council meeting in 2015 from 20-22 October 2015.

LDCAF/SCCF MEETING

Ishii opened the meeting and invited Bhuban Karki, Under Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Nepal, to make opening remarks on behalf of the Chair of the LDC Group under the UNFCCC. He noted that, except for South Sudan, the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) process had been completed for the LDCs. He expressed satisfaction with the national adaptation plan process but observed that financing was a major issue. He noted that the LDCAF had grown but additional contributions are needed to address the urgent needs of LDCs, as well as for meeting the estimated cost of full NAPA implementation.

In her introductory remarks, Ishii stressed that it was “critical to avoiding locking in a development pathway that leaves us more vulnerable in the future,” noting that both adaptation and mitigation are urgently required.

Ishii observed that GEF-6 places emphasis on integrating adaptation in key policies, plans and decision-making processes. She noted that, on an operational level, greater private sector engagement would be explored particularly on risk transfer and insurance. Ishii noted that gender inequality may leave women less able to cope with climate change impacts and highlighted proposed strategies including: a gender sensitive vulnerability assessment; improved budgeting to identify activities to address women’s adaptation needs; and improving women’s participation in project development and implementation. She said it was important to recognize that the adaptation programme is built on a solid foundation, is performing well and delivering benefits across regions and sectors. She emphasized the need to maximize complementarities and synergies with other players and instruments, noting that the GEF remains well placed to respond to urgent adaptation needs of vulnerable developing countries and that it can do more to capture and disseminate knowledge to enhance adaptation globally.

The Council then adopted the agenda (GEF/LDCAF.SCCF.16/01/Rev.01).

GEF PROGRAMMING STRATEGY ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE FOR THE LDCAF AND SCCF

Robert Dixon, GEF Secretariat, introduced the item (GEF/LDCAF.SCCF.16/03), *GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCAF and SCCF*. He highlighted three strategic objectives: reducing vulnerability of people, livelihoods and physical assets; strengthening institutional and technical capacities for effective climate change adaptation; and integrating climate change adaptation into relevant policies, plans and associated processes.

He observed that demand for LDCAF and SCCF resources remains high and recent progress demonstrates the absorptive capacity of recipient countries.

During the ensuing discussion, Council members welcomed the strategy’s focus on mainstreaming adaptation and the prominence given to gender considerations. Several Council members called for strategic thinking on the GEF’s role within the evolving climate finance architecture. Another Council member recommended that the Secretariat further engage with recipient countries to enhance absorptive capacities.

The CSO Network welcomed the strategy saying it should also aim to plan for risk and build resilience. He called for consideration of the form and function of private sector engagement under the strategy.



Robert Dixon, GEF Secretariat



Caroline Leclerc, Canada



Frank Fass-Metz, Germany

One Council member called for additional categorization between LDCs and upper middle-income countries to enable access to funds for countries which are currently ineligible for LDCF assistance. He also highlighted that serious land degradation in eastern and northern Africa compounds climate change impacts.

The Council adopted the decision.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LDCF AND SCCF

Dixon introduced the item (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/04) *Progress Report on the LDCF and SCCF*. On the LDCF, he noted that, during the reporting period of October 2013 to April 2014, cumulative pledges increased by US\$100.32 million to end-February to reach US\$879.12 million, of which 94 per cent had been paid. He observed that demand nonetheless continues to exceed available resources. In relation to the SCCF, he noted that during the reporting period cumulative pledges increased by US\$2.16 million to reach US\$333.10 million by end-February, of which 90 per cent had been paid. The Council adopted the decision.

FY13 ANNUAL MONITORING REVIEW (AMR) FOR THE LDCF AND THE SCCF

Dixon introduced the item (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/05) *FY13 Annual Monitoring Review for the LDCF and the SCCF*. He noted the report provides analysis of the performance of the active portfolio of adaptation projects under the LDCF and the SCCF, as well as considering issues around gender mainstreaming and stakeholder engagement. He noted the GEF Secretariat received project implementation reports (PIR) for 39 LDCF projects, with

funding commitments of US\$134.98 million as at June 30, 2013, with US\$632.79 million in confirmed co-financing. Of these 39 projects, 92 per cent received an implementation progress (IP) rating of moderately satisfactory (MS) or higher. He also noted that under the SCCF, the GEF Secretariat received 20 PIRs and one Terminal Evaluation. Total SCCF funding commitments towards these 21 projects amounted to US\$94.29 million as at June 30, 2013, with US\$588.52 million in confirmed co-financing. Under the SCCF, 90 per cent received an IP rating of MS or higher.

In the ensuing discussion, Council members welcomed the report providing an assessment of the Funds' projects' results for the first time. They also welcomed the use of socio-economic indicators assessing the number of people directly affected by projects, as well as reporting on gender. Several Council members called for additional reporting in future on cumulative achievements. The Chair noted the strong support for the AMR process and the Council adopted the decision.

WORK PROGRAM FOR THE SCCF

Dixon introduced the item (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/06), *Work Program for the SCCF*. He noted that the program consists of a single full-sized project requesting a project grant of US\$4.366 million and an Agency fee of US\$0.415 million, and that co-financing for the project is US\$99.7 million. He noted that this project represented 71% of available resources and that demand continues to exceed supply. The Council adopted the decision.

PROGRESS REPORT AND FY 2015 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE IEO UNDER THE LDCF AND SCCF

Anna Viggh, IEO, introduced the item (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/ME/01), *Progress Report and FY 2015 Work Program and Budget for the IEO under the LDCF and the SCCF*.

She outlined the IEO's proposed activities for the coming fiscal year, including in relation to the growing workload of evaluations of the LDCF and SCCF projects, as the portfolio matures, and development of monitoring and evaluation guidelines. The Council adopted the decision.



Lars Roth, Sweden



Anna Viggh, IEO



Lloyd Pascal, Dominica

FY15 ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR THE LDCF AND THE SCCF

Dixon introduced the item (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/08), *FY15 Administrative Budget for the LDCF and the SCCF*. He outlined the proposed budget and noted that it represented expected resource needs for operationalizing planned FY15 activities for the two funds. The Council adopted the decision.

ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE LDCF AND THE SCCF AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE 2013

Robert van den Berg and Viggh, introduced the item (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/ME/02), *Annual Evaluation Report for the LDCF and the SCCF and Management Response 2013*. Van den Berg noted that this was the first such report and presents an assessment of the terminal evaluations of completed LDCF/SCCF projects submitted in fiscal year 2013. He further noted future reports, as more projects are completed and evaluated, would represent a substantial assessment of the funds' achievements. Viggh then outlined the report's findings, including that the completed projects show progress in addressing a number of themes deemed beneficial to overall project success including involvement of local stakeholders in the decision making process, inclusion of a focus on gender issues, and greater dissemination of information to the public. She also noted the report's findings that projects often lack a focus on monitoring and evaluation.

Dixon introduced the item (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/ME/03), *The Management Response to the Evaluation Report* notably that the GEF Secretariat agrees with the report's conclusions. A Council member welcomed the first evaluation report and noted that he looks forward to such reports being prepared in future on a regular basis, noting the sample size at this stage is small. The Council adopted the decision.

OTHER BUSINESS

The US indicated that it is planning, subject to congressional approvals, to pledge a further US\$25 million for LDCF and US\$10 million for SCCF. Finland announced that it would make an annual contribution of EUR 1.6 million for LDCF and EUR 0.9 million for the SCCF.

JOINT SUMMARY OF THE CHAIRS AND CLOSING

Council Members received a draft Joint Summary of the Chairs for both the GEF Council meeting and the LDCF/SCCF meeting, which included the decisions they had adopted during the meetings.

Several Council members noted that they wished the meeting's formal record to register their concerns that the GEF-6 replenishment process had not taken account of their requests and, in the case of SIDS, had not reflected their vulnerability, which was recognized under the UNFCCC and other UN bodies. The GEF Council adopted the proposed Joint Summary of the Chairs for the GEF Council after discussion and clarification. The Joint Summary of the Chairs for the LDCF/SCCF was also adopted.

Co-Chair Pyykko thanked Ishii and the GEF Secretariat for support during the meeting. Reflecting on discussions, Ishii noted that over three days an important transition from GEF-5 to GEF-6 had been made and observed that GEF2020 is a living document, providing a reference point for future discussion. She said the need to seriously reflect on the future of the GEF had been confirmed and that it is important for the GEF family to come together and work coherently. The GEF Council closed at 2:06pm.

SUMMARY REPORT: The IISD RS combined summary report of the GEF Council meeting and the GEF Assembly will be available on Sunday, 1 June 2014.



L-R: Naoko Ishii, GEF CEO and Chairperson, and Co-Chair Juha Pyykkö, Finland, at the end of the meeting