

SUMMARY OF THE 52ND MEETING OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY COUNCIL: 22-25 MAY 2017

The 52nd meeting of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council convened in Washington, DC, US, from 23-25 May 2017, at World Bank headquarters. Representatives of governments, international organizations and civil society organizations (CSOs) attended the three-day meeting, which also included the 22nd meeting of the Council for the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). The meetings were preceded by a consultation with CSOs on 22 May.

Naoko Ishii, GEF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chairperson, and Philipp Knill (Germany) served as Co-Chairs for the meetings. The Council considered agenda items on, inter alia: the GEF 2020 Strategy; the seventh replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-7); the proposed policy on ethics and conflict of interest for Council members, alternates and advisers; and the updated vision of the GEF relationship with the civil society.

The Council discussed, among others, the report of the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), relations with the Conventions and other international institutions, the Work Program, and tackling global environmental challenges through the integrated approach pilot (IAP) programs. Council members heard presentations by the Executive Secretaries of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), as well as the Principal Coordinator of the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, relating to GEF activities in support of their respective multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

The LDCF/SCCF Council convened for its 22nd meeting on 25 May, and considered: a progress report on the Funds; 2016 annual monitoring review of the Funds; the 2016 LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report; SCCF program evaluation and management response; the Funds' 2018 administrative budget; and the 2018 Work Program and budget for Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) under the LDCF and SCCF.

At the conclusion of the meetings, Council members reviewed and approved the Joint Summary of the Co-Chairs for the GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council meetings. The GEF Council approved a Work Program comprising 30 project concepts and one programmatic framework, with total resources amounting to US\$246.8 million.

This summary highlights the discussions and decisions reached at the 52nd meeting of the GEF Council and the 22nd meeting of the LDCF/SCCF Council.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GEF

The GEF was created in 1991 as a result of mounting concern over global environmental problems and in an effort to formulate financing responses to address these problems. The GEF operated in a pilot phase within the World Bank until mid-1994. Negotiations that restructured the GEF into a permanent, separate institution were concluded at a GEF participants' meeting in Geneva in March 1994, where representatives of 73 countries agreed to adopt the GEF Instrument. The GEF organizational structure includes an Assembly that meets every four years, a Council that meets twice a year, a Secretariat and the STAP. The IEO was created in 2003. The GEF Assembly has convened five times: 1-3 April 1998 in New Delhi, India; 16-18 October 2002 in Beijing, China; 29-30 August 2006 in Cape Town, South Africa; 25-26 May 2010 in Punta del Este, Uruguay; and 28-29 May 2014 in Cancun, Mexico. The organization's main decision-making body is the GEF Council, which is responsible for developing, adopting and evaluating the GEF's operational policies and programmes. It comprises 32 appointed Council members, each representing a constituency group of countries, most of which are composed of either donor or recipient countries. The GEF is funded by donor nations, which commit money every four years through a process called the GEF replenishment. Since its creation in 1991, the GEF Trust Fund has been replenished by US\$2.75 billion (GEF-1), US\$3 billion (GEF-2), US\$3.13 billion (GEF-3), US\$3.13 billion (GEF-4), US\$4.34 billion (GEF-5) and US\$4.43 billion (GEF-6). The GEF serves as a financial mechanism for a number of MEAs, including the: CBD, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Stockholm Convention on POPs, UNCCD and Minamata Convention on Mercury. The GEF also

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(L-R): **Baljit Wadhwa**, GEF IEO; **Lucy Mulenkei**, Chair, IPAG; Session Co-Moderators **Fiu Mataese Elisara**, RFP Pacific, GEF CSO Network, and **Patricia Turpin**, RFP Caribbean, GEF CSO Network; **Yoko Watanabe**, SGP Global Manager; **Tanyaradzwa Mundoga**, GEF Council Member, Zimbabwe; and **Olga Speranskaya**, IPEN

funds activities in the areas of sustainable forest management, international waters and ozone layer depletion. The GEF administers the LDCF and the SCCF, which were established by the UNFCCC, and the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund, which was established by the CBD. The GEF Secretariat also hosts the Board Secretariat of the Adaptation Fund established by the parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC. GEF funding has been channeled to recipient countries through “GEF Agencies,” which, as of May 2017, include the: UN Development Programme (UNDP); UN Environment; World Bank; Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO); UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); African Development Bank; Asian Development Bank; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; Inter-American Development Bank; International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); World Wildlife Fund, Inc.; Conservation International; International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); Development Bank of Southern Africa; Brazilian Biodiversity Fund; Chinese Foreign Economic Cooperation Office; Development Bank of Latin America (CAF); and West African Development Bank. Summaries of IISD RS coverage of past GEF Council and Assembly meetings can be found at: http://www.iisd.ca/process/trade_invest_in_sd.htm.

GEF COUNCIL CONSULTATION WITH CSOs: A GEF Council Consultation with CSOs took place on Monday, 22 May 2017, in Washington, DC. The CSO consultation included a dialogue with Naoko Ishii, GEF CEO and Chairperson, and discussions about the road towards GEF-7, and enhancing the relationship between the GEF and civil society. For IISD RS’ summary of the proceedings, see: <http://enb.iisd.org/gef/council52/22may.html>.



GEF CEO and Chairperson **Naoko Ishii**

REPORT OF THE 52ND MEETING OF THE GEF COUNCIL

On Tuesday, 23 May, Naoko Ishii, GEF CEO and Chairperson, opened the 52nd meeting of the GEF Council. Highlighting environmental degradation continuing at a rapid pace, she emphasized that businesses now recognize environmental risk among the top five risks both in terms of likelihood and impacts. Noting that the green energy revolution “seems to have reached the point of no return,” Ishii stressed the GEF’s role in helping achieve momentum in key economic systems which drive environmental degradation. She identified the need to ensure that the GEF remains institutionally fit to support countries in “making transformations reality,” including by addressing biodiversity loss through landscape interventions, putting economic sectors on a low-carbon trajectory and integrating the chemicals agenda throughout the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Congratulating Council members on the entry into force of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in less than three months, Ishii said that “together we’ll make mercury history.”

Philipp Knill (Germany) was elected Co-Chair for the 52nd meeting of the GEF Council.

The Provisional Agenda (GEF/C.52/02/Rev.01) was adopted without amendment.

UPDATE ON GEF2020

On Tuesday, Naoko Ishii provided an update on the GEF 2020 Strategy, which has been discussed annually since its approval in 2014. She highlighted: best practices on the ground; and the GEF’s role in the “niches” of the global environmental finance architecture, including supporting blended finance to catalyze behavioral changes in the private sector in the area of natural resources management, funding pilot activities in energy efficiency and supporting enhanced climate action through the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). She stressed revised GEF policies on institutional efficiency and gender issues.

In the ensuing discussion, many Council members welcomed progress on the GEF 2020 Strategy. Several members stressed the need for GEF 2020 to better align with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. One Council member suggested that the GEF’s best contribution to the SDGs is to help governments achieve full implementation of the GEF Conventions.

Council members supported the GEF’s efforts to find complementarities with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and called for deeper coordination between the GEF Secretariat and the GCF Board.

On institutional efficiency, a member cautioned against engaging with more actors, stressing the need for the GEF to respond to countries' demands first. Several Council members called for further efforts to institutionally mainstream gender issues.

UPDATE ON GEF-7 REPLENISHMENT

Naoko Ishii presented the Co-Chairs' summary of the first meeting for GEF-7 held in Paris, France, from 28-30 March 2017. She underlined the need for an ambitious strategy to ensure that the GEF remains relevant and helps countries transform their economic systems while reaching their national development goals. Ishii said the Impact Programs should address environmental degradation and be consistent with MEAs and country preferences. She explained that country allocation will remain, with greater flexibility being provided by removing focal areas.

On country allocation, many Council members supported the continuation of the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR). One Council member said that STAR should have at least 50% of the budget, while another called for 55%. Flexibility on focal areas was supported by many. A Council member requested simplification of the allocation formula.

Many Council members supported continuation and expansion of the Small Grants Programme (SGP), noting that it provides predictability and allows for planning. A Council member proposed enabling direct voluntary contributions to the SGP. Another emphasized complementarity between the SGP and larger projects. The GEF-CSO Network proposed that the GEF apply SGP post-project monitoring mechanisms to medium- and large-scale GEF projects.

Several Council members noted the need to engage the private sector. A Council member said the GEF should focus primarily on public programmes. Two Council members called for special consideration to be given to vulnerability of small island developing States (SIDS).

Council members also highlighted issues including, among others: revision of implementation arrangements; support for country offices; ensuring that funds allocation reflects the mandates from MEAs; taking gender into account; simplified CSO participation; country ownership; and capacity building.

PROPOSED POLICY ON ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS, ALTERNATES AND ADVISERS

On Tuesday, Council Co-Chair Knill introduced the Proposed Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Council Members, Alternates and Advisers (GEF/C.52/04), including the Terms of Reference (ToR) for an ethics committee, and the Steps Taken to Enhance the GEF's Transparency, Accountability and Integrity Policies and Practices (GEF/C.52/Inf.11), inviting comments on both documents.

Peter Wisner, US, for the Ad-Hoc Working Group of interested Council members established to produce a draft policy, suggested that the Council adopt the proposed policy and appoint members of the ethics committee now, at the 52nd meeting of the GEF Council, so that the committee could then review additional proposals by Transparency International that were not included in the draft policy.

Several Council members supported the draft policy and the establishment of the ethics committee at the 52nd GEF Council meeting. One Council member expressed concern over government



Philipp Knill, 52nd GEF Council Co-Chair, Germany

representatives disclosing confidential information. Another called for distinguishing among Council members, alternates and advisers.

A Council member questioned the need for a conflict of interest policy. Knill responded it was time for the GEF Council "to catch up with other institutions" and have a conflict of interest policy of its own.

Describing the draft policy as a "confirmation of Council members' integrity," the GEF-CSO Network said it sends a strong message of transparency and accountability. On steps taken to enhance the GEF's transparency, one Council member suggested that provisions on money laundering be added under fiduciary standards.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Council adopted the decision and agreed that the newly established Ethics Committee will: take into account Council members' comments made during the session on the proposed policy as well as on steps taken to enhance the GEF's transparency; and consider Transparency International's further recommendations and report back to the Council in November 2017. The Council also agreed that this information will be reflected in the highlights of the session to be prepared by Council Co-Chair Knill.

Following informal consultations, on Thursday morning, the Council elected members of the Ethics Committee. Peter Wisner, US, will chair the Committee. The other Committee members are: Laura Camila Bermudez Wilches, Colombia; Josceline Wheatley, UK; Rachna Ramsurn, Mauritius; and Ayelen Maria Ghersi, Argentina.



Council members **Peter Wisner**, US, and **Josceline Wheatley**, UK



Council members following the presentation by Ishii updating the Council on GEF 2020

Decision: The Council approved the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Council Members, Alternates and Advisers and the ToR for the Ethics Committee. The Policy, which seeks to ensure that conflicts of interest are identified and managed in a way that ensures accountability as well as broad public trust and confidence in the decision making and operations of the Council, includes provisions on, inter alia: conflicts of interest; transparency and disclosure; the procedure when a conflict of interest arises; employment by the Secretariat; and gifts and entertainment. The ToR for the Ethics Committee contains provisions on the Committee's purpose, membership, roles and responsibilities, and meetings.

UPDATED VISION OF THE GEF RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CIVIL SOCIETY

On Tuesday, the Council addressed the GEF relationship with civil society. Council Co-Chair Knill stressed that the goal is “not only to envision an updated relationship, but how to implement it.”

Kees Rade, the Netherlands, introduced the Progress Report of the Ad-Hoc Council Working Group on GEF and Civil Society (GEF/C.52/Inf.12). Among the conclusions, he highlighted: the crucial role of civil society for the GEF's work; the fact that CSOs' role has “evolved out of operational needs rather than a strategic vision”; the lack of interaction with CSOs at the local level; and the need for clear rules of CSO engagement. He defined the primary purpose of CSO engagement as: to help achieve the GEF's goals; to advise; and to disseminate information on, and build awareness of, the GEF at local level. He noted challenges to CSO participation in some countries, and emphasized the lack of communication between national focal points and local-level organizations.

The GEF-CSO Network emphasized the need to strengthen CSO engagement at the national level, including through an update of the public involvement policy and implementation of the decision to have all GEF operational focal points (OFPs) organize yearly meetings with national CSOs. She said the Network operates on a voluntary basis, and highlighted inadequate funding.

A Council member said the modality for GEF-CSO engagement should reflect the GEF's unique portfolio and breadth of activities. Another member said engagement should also benefit those countries where CSOs have less capacity.

Council Co-Chair Knill said the Working Group will incorporate feedback from Council members and present an updated vision to the 53rd meeting of the GEF Council for consideration and approval.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL

On Wednesday, Rosina Bierbaum, Chair, STAP, presented the Report of the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (GEF/STAP/C.52/Inf.01/Rev.01). She highlighted good practices in IAPs, including: systems thinking; stakeholder engagement; knowledge management, monitoring and learning; and program management. On Multi-Focal Areas (MFAs), she noted that project identification forms (PIFs) are improving through better incorporation of Theories of Change (ToC) and integration at the site and country level.

Bierbaum introduced A Review of the Science of Integrated Approaches to Natural Resource Management (GEF/STAP/C.52/Inf.02) and identified opportunities for the GEF to promote innovation, including through financial products, technology, business models, market transformation and policies. Among emerging challenges, she stressed: sustainable consumption and production for food systems and plastics; environmental security; and emergence of novel “entities,” such as nanomaterials, synthetic biology and new chemicals.



STAP Chair Rosina Bierbaum

She outlined STAP's ongoing work on developing guidance and methods to assess socio-economic impacts of protected areas and climate risks of GEF projects.

In the ensuing discussion, a Council member urged STAP to focus on bringing innovation to the GEF's core areas of work. Several Council members supported work on cost-efficiency of GEF interventions. Two Council members underlined the need for flexibility in integrative approaches to consider local contexts.

Council members also: highlighted overlaps between STAP and the IEO; and asked STAP to develop focal area programmatic recommendations, and to include sand and dust storms as an emerging issue. One Council member requested further elaboration on the poverty and environment links research.

SEMI-ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT MAY 2017 AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

On Wednesday, Juha Ilari Uitto, Director, IEO, presented the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the Independent Evaluation Office: May 2017 (GEF/ME/C.52/01/Rev.02), which summarizes key conclusions from nine evaluations, including on programmatic approaches, focal areas, gender mainstreaming and transformational change, completed between October 2016 and May 2017. Uitto emphasized that child projects under programmatic approaches performed better than stand-alone projects in terms of effectiveness and efficiency.

Highlighting progress on the GEF's engagement with the private sector, Uitto noted a "mismatch" in expectations. He said that the GEF considers the involvement of the private sector as a "catalyzing factor" for addressing environmental degradation, while the private sector expects the GEF to play a role in



Juha Ilari Uitto, Director, IEO

transforming regulatory environments to encourage sustainable business investment.

Regarding results-based management, Uitto raised concerns over the lack of clear articulation of ToC in terms of setting measurable indicators and tools for monitoring and evaluation. He highlighted progress on developing safeguard policies in recipient countries. Uitto noted existing gaps among different focal areas on human rights, biodiversity offsets and application of prior informed consent.

Francoise Clottes, GEF Secretariat, highlighted the key points from the Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the Independent Evaluation Office (GEF/ME/C.52/02), including the need for: more long-lasting and larger-scale projects



Francoise Clottes, GEF Secretariat

to generate greater outcomes; strengthening monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management; and incorporating lessons learned into future program design.

On evaluation of programmatic approaches, several Council members called for the Secretariat to enhance efficiency and transparency of the program selection process.

On evaluation of the GEF's engagement with the private sector, several members raised concerns regarding operational barriers to private sector engagement, the GEF Secretariat's capacity to engage with the private sector and the lack of private sector involvement in project planning.

Many Council members stressed the need for monitoring and evaluation across MFAs.

The GEF-CSO Network encouraged the GEF Secretariat to consult with CSOs on revising the GEF's policy on minimum standards on environmental and social safeguards.

Council members also exchanged views on: chemicals and waste; land degradation; updates on the impact of GEF support on national laws and policies on the environment; the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6); knowledge management; and gender mainstreaming.

Decision: The Council endorsed the recommendations of the evaluations contained in the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: May 2017, including on: chemicals and waste; land degradation; programmatic approaches in the GEF; the GEF's engagement with the private sector; impact of GEF support on national environment laws and policies; GEF support for transformational change; results-based management; environmental and social safeguards; and gender mainstreaming in the GEF.

RELATIONS WITH THE CONVENTIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

On Wednesday, Council Co-Chair Knill opened the session, which was moderated by CEO and Chairperson Ishii. Ishii underscored integration of the SDGs in the GEF's work.

Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary, UNCCD, said a US\$300 million public-private Impact Investment Fund for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN Fund) will be active by the end of 2017. She underscored synergies between land degradation, climate change and biodiversity, as well as "transversal" issues, such as gender, indigenous peoples and land rights. Barbut stressed the importance of STAR allocation to enable implementation of UNCCD programs.



Applause following the conclusion of the GEF

Jacob Duer, Principal Coordinator, Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, outlined the impacts of mercury on human health and the environment. He said the upcoming first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Minamata Convention will address guidance to the GEF. Duer conveyed expectations that the GEF strategy will facilitate access and coordination at the national level, responding directly to COP guidance and parties' needs.

Cristiana Paşca Palmer, Executive Secretary, CBD, shared the outcomes of CBD COP13 held in Cancún, Mexico, in December 2016, which emphasized biodiversity in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism. She called for raising the profile of biodiversity, including through demonstrating synergies with climate change, food security, peace and stability, and urban development. Palmer outlined consolidated guidance from the CBD to the GEF around the cluster areas of mainstreaming biodiversity, addressing direct drivers to protect habitats and species, and enabling policies.

Rolf Payet, Executive Secretary, Stockholm Convention on POPs, said global levels of POPs are declining. He outlined priority areas of the Stockholm Convention's guidance to the GEF, including: developing alternatives to POPs; eliminating POPs such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs); continued need for DDT due to lack of affordable and effective alternatives; unintentionally produced POPs; and enhanced support and technical assistance. He called for the GEF to play a strategic role in reduction of electronic, POPs and micro-plastics waste. Payet also emphasized the need for the GEF to improve access modalities and support co-financing.

Some Council members suggested that the GEF Secretariat prepare a compilation document with all the requests from the Conventions. A Council member highlighted the need for the Conventions to prepare consolidated guidance. Another questioned the scientific basis of the financial needs estimates by some of the Conventions. A Council member sought clarification regarding joint projects with the GCF and the Adaptation Fund. Another stressed the need to include in GEF-7 land degradation and an Impact Program on arid areas.

Many Council members underscored synergies and complementarity among different Conventions. Noting increased referencing of the SDGs, one Council member said the GEF's "primary role" is to help the MEAs achieve their mandate and warned against "realigning" the GEF mandate "towards the SDGs."

Gilbert Bankobeza, Montreal Protocol, offered to share experiences with the Minamata Convention and other MEAs.

Decision: The Council welcomed the Secretariat document on Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions (GEF/C.52/03) and requested the GEF to continue working with recipient countries to reflect guidance and national priorities in GEF programming and activities.

GEF BUSINESS PLAN AND CORPORATE BUDGET FOR FY18

The Council discussed this issue on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

On Tuesday, Peter Lallas, GEF Secretariat, introduced the GEF Business Plan and Corporate Budget for FY18 (GEF/C.52/06), underlining a focus on efficient delivery of core work as set by the Council. He highlighted an increase in the World Bank's recovery rate; a budget request for the CBIT; the costs of the fifth GEF Assembly; and full use of budgeted funds.

Edward Mountfield, World Bank, explained that the recovery rate increase from 50% to 70% of staff salary derives from the World Bank Board mandate to recover all costs from trust funds. He emphasized that the change is not an increase in benefits, but "passing through the true costs" for existing staff benefits. Juha Ilari Uitto, IEO, noted the cyclical nature of the IEO's expenditures and that the IEO had zero budget growth from GEF-5 to GEF-6.



Peter Lallas, GEF Secretariat

Some Council Members said the Secretariats of the GEF, STAP and the IEO should absorb the increased recovery rate costs. This was opposed by others who said those costs should be absorbed by the main fund. Some proposed that the Secretariats absorb some of the extra costs as a gesture of “good will.” A Council member requested that the GEF do an analysis of its actual benefit rates. Another suggested that the GEF request the World Bank to apply the new rate for the next replenishment, to avoid burdening replenishment negotiations.

The Council also discussed expenditures related to the upcoming fifth GEF Assembly to be held in 2018.

A draft decision was circulated on Wednesday afternoon and approved by the Council on Thursday morning.

Decision: The Council, acknowledging efforts by the Secretariat, the IEO and Trustee to partially offset costs implied by the Revised World Bank Recovery Rate, approved the budget for fiscal year 2018 of US\$35.157 million, including the GEF Secretariat, STAP, Trustee and the IEO. The Council also approved US\$20,790 administrative budget for the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund (NPIF), as well as US\$930,270 for the CBIT.

WORK PROGRAM

On Tuesday, Gustavo Fonseca, GEF Secretariat, introduced the Work Program for the GEF Trust Fund (GEF/C.52/05/Rev.01). He said the Work Program comprises 30 projects and one programmatic framework, proposed in accordance with the GEF 2020 Strategy and the GEF-6 Programming Directions Framework, and focuses in particular on biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, and chemicals and waste focal areas, with benefits for SIDS and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), among others. He noted that the total GEF resources proposed amount to US\$248.8 million. Many Council members welcomed the proposal. Several members raised concerns about, inter alia: the lack of clear selection criteria for the SGP; the need for reconsideration of eligibility requirements for countries graduating from LDC status; the lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation mechanism for managing projects; and the need for detailed guidelines for co-financing projects with other donor agencies.



Gustavo Fonseca, GEF Secretariat (right), presenting during the LDCF/SCCF Council meeting

On specific issues and projects, several members said that further review by Council members is required to endorse the Work Program, specifically on projects related to chemicals and waste, and energy efficiency.

On chemicals and waste, one Council member cautioned about the tendency of the GEF to focus on projects related to POPs as opposed to other issues, such as mercury.

Several members also urged for articulating cost-sharing in co-financing projects between the GEF and other donor agencies.

One Council member called for integrating GEF projects’ contributions into the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement into the selection criteria. Another underlined that funding sources for the SGP should be further diversified.

The Council adopted a decision on Wednesday afternoon.

Decision: The Council approved the Work Program for GEF Trust Fund comprising 30 projects concepts and one programmatic framework. The total resources approved for the Work Program amount to US\$246.8 million and include GEF project financing and Agency fees. The Work Program is comprised of the Program Framework Document and PIFs.

The Work Program includes: a regional programmatic approach involving an Environmental Health and Pollution Management Program in Africa; 13 global, regional and country-level MFA projects; three projects on biodiversity; five climate change-related projects; four on international waters; two on land degradation; and three on chemicals and waste.

TACKLING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES THROUGH THE INTEGRATED APPROACH PILOT PROGRAMS

On Wednesday the Council heard updates on IAPs on cities, deforestation and food security, among others.

Ede Jorge Ijjasz-Vasquez, World Bank, said that the main objective of the IAP on sustainable cities is to support a value chain of urban development through peer learning and knowledge sharing.

Xueman Wang, World Bank, shared early lessons from ongoing projects, including the need for: better integration of the “two tracks” of the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC) and city-level projects; identifying investment opportunities in the supply chain; and ensuring effective coordination among donor agencies.

Andrew Bovarnick, UNDP, highlighted that the IAP, in its work on taking deforestation out of commodity supply chains, will create a community of practice and be meaningful and impactful for other focal areas. He shared lessons learned from the IAP, including: the need for sufficient time investment for good planning; the importance of balancing top-down and bottom-up approaches; and the lack of efficient coordination among partners. He said that the global launch of the commodities IAP is scheduled to take place in September 2017 in New York, US, prior to the UN General Assembly.



Andrew Bovarnick, UN Development Programme



A view of the dais during the presentation of **Margarita Astralaga**, IFAD

Margarita Astralaga, IFAD, described progress on the IAP on fostering sustainability and resilience for food security in Sub-Saharan Africa. She underlined several key enablers for scaling up multi-benefit interventions, including: collective program design through stakeholder consultations; ensuring coherence at country and regional levels; and developing tracking tools and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. She noted that the IAP will be formally launched in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in the first week of July 2017.

In the ensuing discussion, several Council members called for further work on IAPs' measurable results, such as levels of private sector mobilization, and for analysis of gender mainstreaming, project impact on regulatory reforms and program coordination. One member underlined the need for considering replicability of the IAPs.

A Council member queried why the SIDS are not represented in any of IAPs. Astralaga noted that the IAP programs are open to all countries.

The GEF-CSO Network called for further consideration of indigenous peoples' land rights, particularly in the commodities IAP program. Bovarnick said that sub-national platforms for local and indigenous peoples' participation will soon be established.

OTHER BUSINESS

On Thursday, William Ehlers, GEF Secretariat, informed the Council that the decision on the dates of the 55th meeting of the GEF Council will be mailed to Council members.

On social and environmental safeguards, several Council members stressed the importance of having a codified set of guidelines and policies in a single document that all stakeholders working across the partnership could easily access. A Council member underscored the need to make the guidelines user friendly and communicate them to external stakeholders. Another member proposed having the guidelines updated regularly.

A Council member, noting Transparency International's report, proposed, and the Council adopted, a decision on safeguards and fiduciary standards.

Decision: The Council requested the Secretariat to prepare a plan to review the GEF's Social and Environmental Safeguards. The Council also requested the Secretariat to present a rationale and a plan to review the GEF's Fiduciary Standards.

REPORT OF THE LDCF AND SCCF COUNCIL MEETING

On Thursday, Naoko Ishii, GEF CEO and Chairperson, opened the 22nd meeting of the LDCF/SCCF Council, noting that LDCF/SCCF funds make a critical contribution to implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. She noted that the completed LDCF/SCCF review calls for more efforts to strengthen the GEF adaptation program as a whole.

Gebu Jember Endalew, Ethiopia, LDC Chair in the UNFCCC process, urged further contributions to the LDCF and SCCF to address climate change impacts in LDCs.

The Provisional Agenda (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/02) was adopted without amendment.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LDCF AND SCCF, AND FY16 ANNUAL MONITORING REVIEW OF THE LDCF AND SCCF

On Thursday, Gustavo Fonseca, GEF Secretariat, presented the Progress Report on the LDCF and the SCCF (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/03/Rev.01) and the FY16 Annual Monitoring Review of the LDCF and SCCF (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/04). He said that 51 LDCs have accessed the LDCF to prepare National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), and that the SCCF supports projects in 47 countries. Fonseca elaborated on the progress and expected outcomes of the Funds, including on: pledges and disbursements; types and numbers of projects endorsed and approved; and project performance and results.

Many Council members supported the work of the LDCF and SCCF. Several members highlighted issues related to the large pipeline of projects, including prioritization of projects and the risk of projects becoming obsolete before being implemented. Fonseca explained that existing practice requires project updates for projects that have been in the pipeline for over a year, in order to ensure they stay up-to-date.

Many members and the GEF-CSO Network urged donors to consider additional contributions to the LDCF.

Council members also highlighted, *inter alia*: project delays; gender mainstreaming; using the GEF Corporate Scorecard for LDCF projects; ensuring financial sustainability of projects at the planning phase; and engaging the private sector. A Council member highlighted that engagement of the private sector should not be a conditionality for projects.

Decisions: The LDCF/SCCF Council welcomed the Progress Report on the LDCF and SCCF, and took note, with appreciation, of the progress made under the Funds.

The LDCF/SCCF Council welcomed the FY16 Annual Monitoring Review of the LDCF and the SCCF and appreciated the progress made in reporting portfolio-level performance, results and lessons learned under the Funds. The Council welcomed the overall finding that 95% and 94% of LDCF and SCCF projects under implementation in fiscal year 2016, respectively, were rated in the satisfactory range for their progress towards development objectives.

LDCF/SCCF ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT 2016

On Thursday, Anna Birgitta Viggh, IEO, presented the LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report 2016 (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/01). She highlighted recommendations from the review, including: addressing significant discrepancies in project data from the GEF Secretariat's Project Management Information System; securing predictable and adequate GEF financing to LDCF and SCCF programs; and outreach. She highlighted that all the LDCF/SCCF-supported projects are linked to implementation of NAPAs. She noted that a limited number of projects did not contain a gender mainstreaming policy, in particular due to the lack of the reporting requirements in the past.

One Council member requested that the GEF Secretariat prepare a proposal linking the LDCF/SCCF programs to the proposed Work Program under GEF-7. Council Co-Chair Knill responded



Anna Birgitta Viggh, IEO

that the GEF Trust Fund does not have a “full mandate on adaptation measures,” and identified the need to assess synergies between the LDCF/SCCF programs and other multilateral funds, including the GCF.

A Council member called for clarifying the comparative advantage of the LDCF and SCCF over other climate funds, including the GCF, noting that NAPA implementation support is the “main adaptation instrument” in LDCs. He stressed that cooperation among these funds should be strengthened.

Council Co-Chair Knill proposed, and the Council agreed, not to take a decision on the Annual Evaluation Report as the Secretariat will continue to work on the evaluation annually.

The LDCF/SCCF Council welcomed the report's conclusions.

PROGRAM EVALUATION OF THE SCCF AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Viggh introduced the Program Evaluation of the SCCF (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/02).

Fonseca presented the Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the SCCF (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/03). He highlighted the Secretariat's future priorities, including: ensuring the diversity of the LDCF/SCCF programs while focusing on projects with multiple benefits; further engaging with donors in securing resources; and increasing the Funds' public outreach.

Decision: The Council took note of the conclusions contained in the Program Evaluation of the SCCF and the Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the SCCF, and endorsed recommendations to focus on innovation, enhance financial predictability and upgrade project management information systems, taking into account the Management Response.

FY18 ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR THE LDCF AND THE SCCF, AND FY18 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE IEO UNDER THE LDCF AND THE SCCF

Gustavo Fonseca, GEF Secretariat, presented the FY18 Administrative Budget for the LDCF and the SCCF (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/05).

Juha Ilari Uitto presented the FY18 Work Program and Budget for the IEO of the GEF under the LDCF and SCCF (EF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/04.Rev.1), reminding the Council that the IEO operates on a multiannual budget.

The Council adopted the budgets as presented.

Decisions: The LDCF/SCCF Council approved the proposed budget for the GEF Secretariat, STAP and the Trustee as follows: US\$1,044,509 (GEF Secretariat); US\$128,000 (STAP); and US\$301,000 (Trustee), from the LDCF.

The LDCF/SCCF Council approved an annual budget of US\$73,000 for the IEO for fiscal year 2018 for the proposed work program, with US\$34,000 from the LDCF and US\$39,000 from the SCCF.

JOINT SUMMARY OF THE CHAIRS AND CLOSING

At the end of the Thursday morning session, Council members received a draft Joint Summary of the Co-Chairs for the GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council meetings, both of which included the decisions they had adopted during the meetings. Co-Chair Knill noted that comments made in relation to the conflict of interest policy and the Ethics Committee will be reflected in his highlights of the session. The Council then adopted both the Joint Summary of the Chairs for the 52nd meeting of the GEF Council and the 22nd meeting of the LDCF/SCCF Council.

In closing, Co-Chair Knill thanked participants for their spirit of collaboration. GEF CEO and Chairperson Naoko Ishii thanked Council members and CSO representatives for their input and a rich discussion, and closed the meeting at 12:22 p.m.



UPCOMING MEETINGS

G20 Summit: The 20 Heads of State and Government and top-level representatives of international organizations will gather in Hamburg, Germany, under the motto of Germany's G20 Presidency 'Shaping an interconnected world.' The Summit seeks to make progress on realizing the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change. **dates:** 7-8 July 2017 **location:** Hamburg, Germany **www:** https://www.g20.org/Webs/G20/EN/Home/home_node.html

High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2017: The fifth High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), convening under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), will take place from 10-19 July 2017. The theme of the session will be 'Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world.' During the first week, participants will engage in in-depth review of a number of SDGs, including: SDG 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere); SDG 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture); SDG 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages); SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); SDG 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation); SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development); and SDG 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development). The second week will include a three-day ministerial meeting taking place from 17-19 July 2017. The HLPF is expected to adopt a Joint Ministerial Declaration of the HLPF and ECOSOC High-level Segment and the report of the HLPF on 19 July 2017. Subsequently, the ECOSOC High-level Segment is expected to adopt the Ministerial Declaration on 20 July 2017. **dates:** 10-19 July 2017 **location:** New York, US **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

UNCCD COP 13: During the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), along with the 16th session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the

Convention (CRIC 16) and the 13th session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST 13), UNCCD Parties are expected to adopt the Strategic Framework that will guide action under the Convention from 2018-2030, among other decisions. **dates:** 6-16 September 2017 **location:** Ordos, China **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **e-mail:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** <http://www2.unccd.int/cop13>

72nd Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 72): The 72nd Regular Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 72) will open at UN Headquarters on 12 September 2017. The general debate will start on 19 September 2017. **dates:** 12-25 September 2017 **venue:** UN Headquarters **location:** New York, US **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/>

First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury: The first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 1) to the Minamata Convention on Mercury will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, following the Convention's entry into force on 16 August 2017. **dates:** 24-29 September 2017 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention **phone:** +41-22-917-8511 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **e-mail:** mercury.chemicals@unep.org **www:** <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Negotiations/COP1/tabid/5544/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

18th Meeting of the Board of the GCF: The 18th meeting of the Board of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) is scheduled to take place from 3-5 October 2017. **dates:** 3-5 October 2017 **location:** TBC **contact:** GCF Secretariat **phone:** +82-32-458-6059 **e-mail:** info@gcfund.org **www:** <http://www.greenclimate.fund/home>

30th Meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board: The Adaptation Fund is supervised and managed by the Adaptation Fund Board, which is composed of 16 members and 16 alternates. The World Bank serves as trustee of the Adaptation Fund on an interim basis. **dates:** 10-13 October 2017 **venue:** UN Campus **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-458-7347 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240 **www:** https://www.adaptation-fund.org/events/30th-adaptation-fund-board-meeting/?instance_id=4

POPRC-13: The Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC) is a subsidiary body to the Stockholm Convention established for reviewing chemicals proposed for

listing in the annexes of the Stockholm Convention. **dates:** 22-26 October 2017 **location:** Lazio, Italy **contact:** Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention Clearing House **phone:** +41-22-917-8271 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **www:** <http://chm.pops.int/TheConvention/POPsReviewCommittee/OverviewandMandate/tabid/2806/Default.aspx>

UNFCCC COP 23: The 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 23) to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will be organized by Fiji and held in Bonn, Germany. The conference will also include the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 13), the second part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1-2), and the 47th sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). **dates:** 6-17 November 2017 **location:** Bonn, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **e-mail:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/cop-23-bonn/>

Joint 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the 29th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol: The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer was adopted in 1985 and entered into force on 22 Sep 1988. In 2009, the Vienna Convention became the first convention of any kind to achieve universal ratification. The Convention seeks to promote cooperation by means of systematic observations, research and information exchange on the effects of human activities on the ozone layer and to adopt legislative or administrative measures against activities likely to have adverse effects on the ozone layer. The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was designed to reduce the production and consumption of ozone depleting substances in order to reduce their abundance in the atmosphere. The Montreal Protocol was agreed on 16 September 1987 and entered into force on 1 January 1989. **dates:** 20-24 November 2017 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** Vienna Convention Secretariat **phone:** +254-20-762-3851/3611 **fax:** +254-20-762 0335 **www:** <http://ozone.unep.org/en/meetings>

53rd Meeting of the GEF Council: The meeting will be preceded by the GEF CSO Consultation, on 27 November. The GEF Council is the main governing body of the GEF. It is comprised of 32 Members appointed by constituencies of GEF member countries (14 from developed countries, 16 from developing countries and 2 from economies in transition). The Council, which meets twice annually, develops, adopts and evaluates the operational policies and programs for GEF-financed activities. It also reviews and approves the work program (projects submitted for approval). On the final day, the Council will convene as the Council of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), also at the same location. **dates:** 28-30 November 2017 **location:** Washington, DC, US **contact:** GEF Secretariat **www:** <https://www.thegef.org/council-meetings>

5th GEF Assembly: The GEF Assembly, which meets every four years, will be held in conjunction with the 54th meeting of the GEF Council. **dates:** June 2018 (TBC) **location:** Da Nang, Viet Nam **contact:** GEF Secretariat **www:** <https://www.thegef.org/council-meetings/assembly>

GLOSSARY

CAF	Development Bank of Latin America
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBIT	Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF-6	sixth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund
GEF-7	seventh replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund
GPSC	Global Platform for Sustainable Cities
IAP	Integrated Approach Pilot
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IP	Impact Program
LDCs	least developed countries
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MFA	Multi-Focal Area
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
OPS6	Sixth Overall Performance Study of the GEF
OPF	Operational Focal Point
PIF	Project Identification Form
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGP	GEF Small Grants Programme
SIDS	small island developing States
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNIDO	UN Industrial Development Organization