

52<sup>nd</sup> GEF Council Meeting  
May 23 – 25, 2017  
Washington, D.C.

## **MANAGEMENT ACTION RECORD 2016**

(Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF)

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## MANAGEMENT ACTION RECORD 2016

1. The GEF Management Action Record (MAR) tracks the level of adoption, by the GEF Secretariat and/or the GEF Partner Agencies (together here referred to as GEF Management), of GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council decisions that are based on the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO) recommendations. The MAR serves two purposes: “(1) to provide Council a record of its decisions based on the evaluation reports presented by the GEF IEO, the proposed management actions, and the actual status of these actions; and (2) to increase the accountability of GEF Management regarding Council decisions on monitoring and evaluation issues.”<sup>1</sup> The MAR was first presented in APR 2005 and, thereafter, it has been prepared on an annual basis.

2. MAR 2016 tracks 11 decisions. These include 10 GEF Council decisions and one LDCF/SCCF Council decision. These decisions were based on GEF IEO recommendations from eight evaluations:

- a Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.42/03)
- b GEF Annual Impact Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.43/04)
- c GEF Annual Impact Report 2013 (GEF/ME/C.45/1)
- d Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014 (GEF/ME/C.46/05)
- e Semi-Annual Evaluation Report June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation (GEF/ME/C.48/02)
- f Evaluation of the GEF CSO Network (GEF/ME/C.50/02)
- g Annual Performance Report 2015 (GEF/ME/C.50/04)
- h Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02)

3. Of the eleven decisions that have been tracked, eight decisions had been tracked in MAR2015 – adoption of four of these was rated in MAR2015 whereas assessment of adoption had been deferred for four of these. Three new Council decisions – two new GEF Council decisions and one LDCF council decision – taken during the calendar year 2016 have been added.

### RATING APPROACH

4. For each tracked GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council decision that is reported on, self-ratings are provided by GEF Management on the level of adoption along with commentary as necessary. Ratings and commentary on tracked decisions are also provided by the GEF IEO for verification. The rating categories for the progress of adoption of Council decisions were agreed upon by the GEF IEO, the GEF Secretariat, and the GEF Agencies, through a consultative process. Categories are as follows:

- (a) **High:** Fully adopted and fully incorporated into policy, strategy or operations.

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1. <sup>1</sup> GEF Council, “Procedures and Format of the GEF Management Action Record.” GEF/ME/C.27/3., GEF Council November, 2005.

- (b) **Substantial:** Decision largely adopted but not fully incorporated into policy, strategy or operations as yet.
- (c) **Medium:** Adopted in some operational and policy work, but not to a significant degree in key areas.
- (d) **Negligible:** No evidence or plan for adoption, or plan and actions for adoption are in a very preliminary stage.
- (e) **Not rated:** ratings or verification will have to wait until more data is available or proposals have been further developed.
- (f) **N/A:** Not-applicable (see commentary).

5. The Council decisions may be graduated or retired from the MAR because of one or more of the following reasons:

- (a) **Graduated** due to high or, where appropriate, substantial level of adoption of Council decision
- (b) **Retired** as the Council decision has become less relevant, or subsequent Council decisions have made high level of adoption of the decision difficult, or further progress on adoption of the decision is likely to be slow and long drawn. An automatic reason for retirement would be if a decision has been reported on in the MAR for five years.

The GEF IEO keeps track of the reasons for removing a decision from the MAR.

### **Comparison of Management and IEO Ratings**

6. Of the 11 council decisions that are being tracked, all were rated for level of adoption. The table below provides a comparison of ratings provided by the Management and IEO for these decisions. Ratings provided by the Management and GEF IEO converged for eight of these decisions. Of the three remaining decisions, for two the ratings diverged and for one only GEF IEO provided the overall rating for adoption.

7. The two decisions where the rating diverged pertain to GEF's work in the South China Sea, and to the endorsement of recommendations from the LDCF Program Evaluation. In both these cases the Management rated adoption as 'substantial' whereas the GEF IEO rated it as 'medium'. In the first case, the GEF IEO assessed that the regional programs often do not include a dedicated coordination budget for the program, or coordination arrangements embedded in the program, which was one of the areas for action. In the second case, IEO's rated the adoption to be lower because the remaining work necessary to create a mechanism for promoting predictable financing of the LDCF, monitoring compliance with gender mainstreaming in projects, and to upgrade GEF's PMIS had not been accomplished. Adoption of one decision, pertaining to recommendations from the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, was rated overall as substantial by the IEO, whereas the Management did not provide an overall rating – although it did provide separate ratings for the four recommendations endorsed in the decision.

Table 1: GEF Management and GEF IEO ratings of adoption of Council decisions assessed for MAR 2016.

		High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Number of Management ratings
<b>Management ratings</b>	High	1	—	—	—	1
	Substantial	—	4	2	—	6
	Medium	—	—	3	—	3
	Negligible	—	—	—	—	-
	Not Rated	—	1	—	—	1
<b>Sum of GEF IEO ratings</b>		1	5	5	—	11

**Note:** Highlighted cells show agreement between GEF Management and GEF IEO ratings. Values to the right of highlighted cells represent higher ratings by Management than those provided by the IEO, except in cases where a rating of “not rated or possible to verify yet” is given.

#### **GEF Council Decisions with Adoption Rated ‘High’ or ‘Substantial’**

8. The level of adoption was rated to be substantial or high for six of the 11 rated decisions. These decisions pertained to six different evaluations submitted to GEF council.

9. Adoption of the Council’s decision based on ACPER 2012 that South-South cooperation activities should be enabled was rated substantial. The Management reported that within the GEF-6 portfolio, all three Integrated Approach Pilots and the majority of the nine programs endorsed advance South-South exchange through built in knowledge management components. The GEF IEO agreed with the Management’s assessment.

10. Adoption of the decision based on the AIR 2013, which requested the Secretariat to continue to include an emphasis on tackling barriers to broader adoption in a comprehensive way, and to further strengthen it in proposals for GEF-6, was rated substantial. The Secretariat outlined several measures taken to ensure that projects and programs track barriers to broader adoption in a comprehensive way, such as strategic engagements with GEF recipient countries in GEF-6 through NDI, NPFE and ECWs, and a focus in many projects and programs on delivering multiple benefits. The IEO agrees with the assessment and notes the increased focus on integrated activities at scale has addressed the Council’s decision.

11. The Management and IEO were in agreement on level of adoption of both decisions based on the ACPER 2014, with the first rated as high, and the second rated as substantial. The first decision requested the secretariat and agencies to pay greater attention to national knowledge exchange and promote dissemination of data and information in relevant national languages. GEF Management reports that knowledge exchange has been promoted by implementing GEF Knowledge Days and by publishing a results-focused planning guide for the GEF partnership in English, French and Spanish. The GEF IEO acknowledges this progress. The second decision called for the Secretariat to explore and pursue the use of established SGP country programs as service providers to implement community level activities for FSPs and MSPs. GEF Management rated level of adoption as substantial and noted that during the reporting period a new project endorsed in Uganda included a SGP component, in addition to proposals noted in MAR 2015, and that several GEF-6 projects under development have SGP involvement, and GEF IEO agreed with the Management’s assessment.

12. The Council decision on the evaluation of the GEF CSO Network to set up an ad-hoc working group of Council Members to develop and updated vision of the relationship between GEF and civil society, and to report back to Council in 2017, was rated substantial. GEF Management reports that an Ad-Hoc Working Group of Council Members has developed a draft vision and action plan for Council Review.

13. Adoption of the decision on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes was rated overall as substantial, with the four specific recommendations assessed as well. The first recommendation, that GEF should ensure that its support targets areas rich in globally important and significant biodiversity, has been addressed through GEF's adoption of the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) standard for GEF protected area projects that seek to establish new projected areas, and adoption is rated high. The second recommendation, that GEF should address socioeconomic conditions that ensure local community commitment to biodiversity protection, is rated substantial, due to the ongoing application of safeguards and STAP guidance. The third recommendation, that GEF's develop a more reliable and practical monitoring system to track and assess results at the portfolio level, was rated medium. It was reported that some progress was made in streamlining the GEF monitoring system during GEF 6, but Annual Performance Report 2015 and GEF IEO's recent review on RBM, which covered this topic, found limited progress on this front. The final recommendation, that GEF Should invest in understanding what works and why, was rated substantial, due to the ongoing work undertaken by the Secretariat on understanding what works and why through portfolio reviews and dissemination of results, and the development of guidance for best practices by both the Secretariat and STAP.

#### **Decisions with Medium level of Adoption**

14. The level of adoption of five decisions from four separate evaluations was rated as medium. Adoption of the Council decision based on the ACPER 2012, which requested the secretariat to reduce the burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects, was rated medium. GEF Management reports that consolidated tracking tools have been developed and applied across the three IAPs and acknowledged there is still scope to further reduce the burden of monitoring, especially for MFA projects and programs. The Management further reports that proposed programming directions and policy agenda for GEF-7 include a proposal to introduce an enhanced corporate results framework to capture relevant global environmental benefits across GEF-financed activities, and that a new PMIS system would facilitate more efficient aggregation of and reporting on indicators. The GEF IEO agrees with the Management's assessment that there has been limited progress in adoption of this decision.

15. Adoption of the Council decision based on the AIR 2012, which requested the GEF to take into account findings and recommendations of the evaluation when screening proposals for funding in the South China Sea, was rated medium due to a lack of emphasis on coordination in regional programs.

16. Adoption of the council decision based on the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report from June 2015 section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, which requested the Secretariat and UNDP to continue upgrading the SGP Country Program, and to revise the criteria for selection of countries, was rated medium. The GEF Management notes that process of upgrading is underway with six additional countries upgraded in GEF-6, and that its approach to upgradation of country programs will be developed and presented to Council in 2018. The GEF IEO assessed the progress so far to be limited because the criteria for selection of countries has not yet been revisited.

17. Adoption of the council decision on the 2015 APR, which endorsed the recommendation that GEF reassess its approach to tracking tools for GEF-7, and assess the burden and utility of its biodiversity

tracking tools and other alternatives, was also rated medium. GEF Management notes progress on consolidating tracking tools for the three IAPs, and the proposal for an enhanced corporate results framework in GEF-7. The GEF IEO assesses that significant progress may take place once the GEF-7 proposals take a concrete shape. However, so far the progress has been limited.

18. Finally, adoption of the council decision on the program evaluation of the LDCF, which endorsed the three recommendations of the GEF IEO, was rated as medium overall. The three recommendations were that the GEF Secretariat should explore and develop mechanisms to ensure predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the fund, that GEF Secretariat should make efforts to improve consistency regarding understanding and application of GEF gender mainstreaming policy and Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF and that GEF Secretariat should ensure that data in PMIS is up to date and accurate. The Management rates level of adoption of this decision as substantial, while IEO provides a rating of medium for the first and second recommendations, and negligible for the last. The Management notes that the Secretariat has made an effort to report to LDCs on available resources under LDCF, that the Secretariat has ensured that any incoming funding requests under the LDCF reference the GEAP as a minimum criterion to be fulfilled before technical clearance, and that the Secretariat has further initiated work to correct, verify and update relevant LDCF project data as part of the overall upgrade of the GEF PMIS. GEF IEO notes the efforts made by the Secretariat to report on available resources and the pipeline under the LDCF, and encourages the secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism to promote predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the SCCF. The IEO notes that Secretariat should monitor compliance with reference to GEAP and the quality of analysis, and that work on upgrading GEF PMIS has not resulted in a clear picture of progress towards improving quality of information.

### **Graduated Decisions**

19. Four decisions have been graduated from the MAR, three of which are rated substantial, and one high, by IEO. The first decision on ACPER 2014, which requested the secretariat and agencies to pay greater attention to national knowledge exchange and promote dissemination of data and information in relevant national languages, is rated high and is graduated.

20. The three other graduated decisions that rated substantial are:

- (a) The decision on ACPER 2012 that South-South cooperation activities should be enabled,
- (b) The decision on AIR 2013 that the Secretariat continue to include an emphasis on tackling barriers to broader adoption in a comprehensive way, and
- (c) The decision on ACPER 2014 that the Secretariat should explore and pursue the use of established SGP country programs as service providers to implement community level activities.

### **Retired Decisions**

21. The Council decision based on the review of the GEF IEO 2012 Annual Impact Report, which requested the GEF to take into account findings and recommendations of the evaluation when screening proposals for funding in the South China Sea, is retired from the MAR although level of adoption is rated as medium. The decision has been tracked for five years. Due to changes in programming landscape more progress on adoption of this decision is unlikely.

22. A comprehensive list of all council decisions tracked by MAR with final GEF IEO ratings is provided below.

Table 2: Council decisions, final GEF IEO ratings, by MAR year

Rating at Exit: Final Rating at Graduation or Retirement from MAR							
MAR	High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Not Rated/ Possible to Verify Yet	Not Applicable	Total
2005	5	15	7	3	-	-	30
2006	5	1	-	-	-	-	6
2007	7	8	-	-	2	-	17
2008	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
2009	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
2010	9	3	4	3	-	2	21
2011	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2013	5	1	1	1	2	-	10
2014	4	2	6	1	1	-	14
2015	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
2016	1	3	1	0	0	0	4
<b>Total</b>	49	35	19	8	5	2	117

#### Decisions which IEO will continue to Track

23. Six of the 11 decisions presented in MAR 2016 will continue to be tracked, as these have not been fully adopted and further progress in adoption is possible. Of these, adoption of four of the decisions was rated medium. These are:

- (a) The first decision based on the ACPER 2012, which requested the secretariat to reduce the burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects.
- (b) The Council decision based on the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report from June 2015 section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, which requested the Secretariat and UNDP to continue upgrading the SGP Country Program
- (c) The council decision on the 2015 APR which endorsed the recommendation that GEF reassess its approach to tracking tools for GEF-7, and assess the burden and utility of its biodiversity tracking tools
- (d) Adoption of the council decision on the program evaluation of the LDCF, which endorsed the three recommendations of the GEF IEO

24. Two further decisions will continue to be tracked although level of adoption was rated substantial, as further progress on adoption is possible. These are:

- (a) The Council decision based on the Evaluation of the GEF CSO Network to set up an ad-hoc working group of Council Members to develop and updated vision of the relationship between GEF and civil society

- (b) The Council decision based on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, for which further adoption is possible in two of the recommendations.

25. Details of the Council decisions tracked by MAR2016, along with the Management and GEF IEO's assessment of progress and ratings on adoption of the decision have been provided in table 3.

Table 3: Adoption of Council Decisions

1.a Council decision based on Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.42/03).

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
1	June 2012	The burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects should be reduced to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects.	The Secretariat has had many discussions with Agencies related to recommendation two “The burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects should be reduced to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects.” It should also be noted that using tracking tools for multifocal area projects was only introduced in GEF-5, so it may be premature to draw this conclusion at this time. Furthermore, one should remember that these new tools are required only three times during the life of the project, a very reasonable requirement: at CEO endorsement, mid-term, and project completion. Additionally, for multifocal area projects, the Secretariat does not require the full set of tracking tools be applied. Rather, as the language in paragraph 86 suggests, the tools should only be completed for the “essential focal area indicators that need to be monitored throughout multifocal area projects.” There are currently no multifocal area projects under implementation that require tracking tools from more than one focal area.	Decision on Agenda Item 8: The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.42/03, “Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012,” document GEF/ME/C.42/04, “Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012,” and having taken note of the two Country Portfolio Evaluations in Nicaragua and OECS (GEF/ME/C.42/Inf. 02) requested the Secretariat: 2) To reduce the burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects.	<b>Medium:</b> There was a reduction of indicators in each of the FA tracking tools in GEF 6, completed in July 2015. This has also led to some reduced burden on MFAs. However, we believe that much more can be done and are working towards a much more streamlined approach with fewer indicators in GEF 7. GEFSEC is currently working towards much more streamlined tracking tools for MFAs and IAPs.	<b>Medium:</b> GEFIEO acknowledges the reduction of indicators in each of the focal areas tracking tools in GEF-6 (including the SFM focal area). We are also aware of GEFSEC efforts in making the tracking tools more user friendly, which is a good complement to the reduction of indicators. The recently launched pilot on tracking tools for multifocal programs, being tested in the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program on SFM, the Coastal Fisheries Initiative and the Illegal Wildlife Trade program) is definitely a step in the right direction too. However, this decision refers specifically to tracking tools of multifocal projects, which burden must be comparable to that of single focal area projects. Here, GEFIEO takes note of GEFSEC ongoing work on designing guidelines for multifocal projects, which includes the discussion on a more integrated way of tracking results in multifocal projects, to reduce the burden on multifocal projects.	<b>Medium:</b> Further to the self-assessment carried out as part of the 2015 MAR, consolidated tracking tools have been developed for and applied across the three IAPs, although there is still scope to further reduce the burden of monitoring, particularly of other MFA projects and programs. Looking forward, the Secretariat’s proposed programming directions and policy agenda for GEF-7 include a proposal to introduce an enhanced corporate results framework to capture all relevant global environmental benefits across all GEF-financed activities, using a limited number of carefully selected core indicators. Based on the Secretariat’s proposal, each project or program would have to report data against applicable core indicators at concept stage, at CEO Endorsement/ Approval, during implementation and at completion. The new Project Management Information System (PMIS) would facilitate a more efficient aggregation of and reporting on expected and actual results across those indicators.	<b>Medium:</b> GEFIEO acknowledges the work started on consolidating tracking tools and applied to the three IAPs, and agrees with the Secretariat that more efforts in that direction are needed going forward.  GEF IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.

### 1.b Council decision based on Council review of Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.42/03).

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
2	June 2012	South-South cooperation should be enabled as components of national, regional and global projects where opportunities for exchange of technology, capacity development and/or sharing of best practices exist.	The Secretariat takes note of recommendation three that "South-South cooperation should be enabled as components of national, regional and global projects where opportunities for exchange of technology, capacity development and/or sharing best practices exist." The Secretariat agrees as is stated in paragraph 89 that enabling South-South cooperation should not be in the form of funding from GEF project financial resources to those Southern countries providing South-South support.	Decision on Agenda Item 8: The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.42/03, "Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012," document GEF/ME/C.42/04, "Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012," and having taken note of the two Country Portfolio Evaluations in Nicaragua and OECS (GEF/ME/C.42/Inf.02) requested the Secretariat: 3) To enable South-South cooperation activities as components of national, regional and/or global projects where opportunities for exchange of technology, capacity development and/or sharing of best practices exist.	<b>Medium.</b>  IFAD comment: A key priority for operational effectiveness is South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Strategic approaches already developed will be consolidated under the IFAD 10 period.  FAO update: SSC continues to be an organizational priority and a key element in FAO's programmes and projects.  World Bank comment: 'Medium'. South-south collaboration and other forms of knowledge exchange that serve as 'glue' for projects/programs tend to be under-funded or not funded. To encourage more systematic embedding of S-S cooperation/knowledge exchange in project/program design, we recommend integrating implementation of this recommendation into the design of the GEF-6 Knowledge Management Strategy and Work Plan, and budgeting for this through some form of funding from GEF grants.	<b>Deferred.</b> The Council decision is a directional decision. This decision will be revisited for the next comprehensive evaluation of the GEF.	<b>Substantial:</b> An analysis of the GEF-6 portfolio suggests that the three IAPs and the vast majority of the nine programs contain built-in knowledge management components, which, amongst other deliverables, advance South-South exchange for the purpose of synthesis and experienced based learning. Concrete activities include knowledge transfer that support: investments and sustainability initiatives; other networks for collaborative engagement, tapping into and complementing existing efforts; and financial institutions. Such activities underpin long-term, systematic engagement within the core intervention areas and enables the GEF and its sweep of partners to maximize impact per dollar invested, thereby advancing transformational impact across areas which yield substantial GEBs. In addition, all CIBIT projects contain South-South components (CBIT PMIS codes and PIFs can be found via the following link: <a href="https://www.thegef.org/projects?[]=field_p_trustfundname:791">https://www.thegef.org/projects?[]=field_p_trustfundname:791</a> )	<b>Substantial:</b> the GEF IEO acknowledges the progress made on this decision, demonstrated by the three IAPs and other projects where there is greater scope for enabling South-South cooperation. Although more can and should be done to facilitate greater south-south cooperation, the GEF Management 's efforts so far indicate they have adequately addressed the GEF Council's decision.  This decision is therefore <b>graduated</b> from the MAR.

### 1.c Council decision based on the GEF Annual Impact Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.43/04).

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
3	Nov. 2012	[This Council Recommendation comes from a complete reading of the report (GEF Annual Impact Report 2012), and is not linked to any individual GEF IEO recommendation]	[No direct response given to this Council decision, as it was not linked to a specific GEF IEO recommendation].	<p>Decision on Agenda Item 11: The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.43/04, "GEF Annual Impact Report 2012", and document GEF/ME/C.43/05, "Management Response to the GEF Annual Impact Report 2012", took note of the considerable achievements of GEF support to the South China Sea and adjacent areas including, amongst others, that in 21 of 26 cases where comparative data could be obtained, GEF has supported initiatives that reduced environmental stress and improved or maintained socioeconomic conditions.</p> <p>Given the important contributions that GEF support has made to addressing regional transboundary concerns, and the role of the GEF as a critical player in the region, as noted by the report, the Council requested the Secretariat to:</p> <p><b>1) Take into account the findings and recommendations of this evaluation when screening future proposals submitted for GEF funding in the South China Sea and adjacent areas, most notably:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when choosing areas for expansion, that the conditions conducive to broader adoption are present in those areas;</li> <li>• that the distinctive competencies within the GEF partnership are more fully drawn on to mainstream transboundary environmental concerns among sectorial ministries</li> <li>• that systems for managing risks and trade-offs are specified;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Medium:</b> The project mentioned in MAR13 (Scaling up the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia), has subsequently been CEO Endorsed in May 2014. The project is designed to catalyze actions and investments at the regional, national and local levels to rehabilitate and sustain coastal and marine ecosystem services and build a sustainable coastal and ocean-based economy in the East Asian region. To do so the project will build linkages between sustainable development of river basins, coastal and marine areas and local, national and regional investment processes. Further, the project will support enabling policies, institutional arrangements and legal environments to scale up IMC implementation on the ground, coupled with mobilization of broader technical and investment support. Finally, the project will deliver a self-sustaining, country-owned, regional mechanism governing and</p>	<p><b>Deferred.</b> The IEO will carry out this assessment as part of the planned evaluation on programmatic approaches. This evaluation will assess the extent to which recommendations remained relevant and the progress made towards the recommendations.</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b> The project "Scaling up the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA)" seeks to reduce pollution and rebuild degraded marine resources in eight countries (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam) that share six large marine ecosystems and related catchment areas. It aims to catalyze actions and investments at the regional, national and local levels to rehabilitate and sustain coastal and marine ecosystem services and build a sustainable coastal and ocean-based economy in the East Asian region. Through partnerships and integrated coastal management (ICM), PEMSEA has made significant strides in operationalizing sustainable development and ecosystem-based management in coastal and marine areas. The roll-out of ICM programs in 2016 has brought the total coastline under ICM to about 17 percent, thus generating important, positive environmental outcomes across more than 31,000 km of coastline and to more than 146 million people.</p> <p>As reported in the 2016 PIR, the PEMSEA participating countries continue to develop and implement national policies, legislation and programs contributing to various aspects of sustainable coastal and ocean development. As a means to assess social, economic and environmental performance of ICM programs, 29 local governments have initiated or completed their State of Coasts (SOC) reports.</p>	<p><b>Medium:</b> The evaluation on programmatic approaches found that while 37 of 38 assessed programs have some form of coordination, only 8 of them have a dedicated coordination budget allocated from the program itself, and only two have specified coordination arrangements embedded in the program, with an allocated budget as part of the program cost. Regional programs, often implemented by single Agencies, attached less importance to coordination, reflecting what are often substantial</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that more attention is given to the support of actions that address regional environmental goods and services;</li> <li>• that cash and in-kind co-financing for regional services provided by GEF projects reach sustainable levels by project end;</li> <li>• that adequate coordination and management of risks within the GEF partnership be given attention.</li> </ul>	<p>managing LMEs and coastal waters, rebuilding and sustaining ecosystems services and reducing the impacts of climate change on coastal populations in the East Asian Seas region.</p>	<p>At the regional level, a regional SOC report focusing on the blue economy theme has also been initiated in collaboration with various international/regional organizations and academic/ learning institutions. The regional SOC report aims to highlight the value of the coastal and marine ecosystem and its sustainability as a crucial dimension of economic development.</p> <p>Specialized trainings and capacity building initiatives were also undertaken in various sites with support from ICM Learning Centers and PEMSEAs regional centers of excellence. The PEMSEA Network has also expanded with a new Non-Country Partner (IPIECA), establishment of PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers, the EAS Sustainable Business Network, as well as the continues growth of the PEMSEA Network of Local Governments now with 45 local government members.</p> <p>All these efforts contribute to meeting the SDS-SEA targets. With the adoption of the SDS-SEA 2015 and regional post-2015 targets by the PEMSEA countries through the Da Nang Compact, the implementation of the SDS-SEA now takes into account and contributes to meeting new developments and commitments at the regional and international level including the UNFCCC, Sendai Framework for DRR, Rio+20s The Future We Want, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the UN SDGs.</p>	<p>budget constraints in this area. The other points in this decision have not been assessed, and are not addressed by the management response.</p> <p>This decision has been tracked for five years. As GEF moves into the new replenishment cycle, the programming landscape is likely to change, therefore the decision is <b>retired</b> from the MAR.</p>
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### 1.d Council decision based on GEF Annual Impact Report 2013 (GEF/ME/C.45/1)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
4	Nov. 2013	The current focus on interventions that tackle barriers to broader adoption in a comprehensive way should be continued and where necessary further strengthened in GEF-6.	The GEF Secretariat appreciates and welcomes the acknowledgement that the shift towards tackling broader adoption in a more comprehensive way is visible in GEF-5 projects. The GEF Secretariat agrees that this effort should be continued especially toward ensuring a quicker progress toward impact. The GEF Secretariat looks forward to the final report of OPS5 on how to further strengthen the ongoing effort. The GEF Secretariat also agrees with the conclusion on the continued need to tackle barriers to broader adoption in a comprehensive way.	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.45/1, "Annual Report on Impact", and document GEF/ME/C.45/2, "Management Response to the Annual Report on Impact," notes the considerable achievements of GEF support to Climate Change Mitigation in China, India, Mexico and Russia. It notes that in several projects progress toward impact was slowed down by barriers to change that were not fully included in project design and implementation. However, it is also noted that the current portfolio of mitigation support has shifted towards tackling broader adoption in a more comprehensive way in mitigation support in GEF-5. The Council requests the Secretariat to include this emphasis and where necessary further strengthen it in the proposals for GEF-6.	<b>Substantial:</b> GEF 6 strategies encourage Agencies to use comprehensive approaches to tackling market barriers. More multi-focal area (MFA) projects are under development in GEF-6 than in GEF-5. Guidance and support through NDI and NPFE are supporting the submission of projects which address drivers and causes of global environment degradation, and stress strategies to remove barriers to generating global environment benefits.	<b>Deferred.</b> Reporting on this decision will be deferred till the next comprehensive evaluation.	<b>Substantial:</b> Strategic engagement with GEF recipient countries early in GEF-6 through NDI, NPFE, and ECW has contributed to a very strong set of programs and projects that take comprehensive approaches for addressing drivers, tackling market barriers, and generating global environmental benefits. In addition, after COP21 the GEF Secretariat ensured that candidate projects are directly aligned with countries Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. Many of the programs and projects in GEF-6, including the Integrated Approach Pilots (IAPs), are delivering multi-focal area benefits across land degradation, biodiversity, and climate change mitigation benefits as reflected in the GEF-6 corporate scorecard. Single focal area climate change mitigation programs and projects also emphasize comprehensive approaches that promote private sector engagement and broader adoption of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other low-carbon technologies.	<b>Substantial.</b> Secretariat's increased focus on integrated activities at scale and through more attention to addressing barriers has helped in addressing the Council's decision. The decision will be <b>graduated</b> .

### 1.e Council decision based on GEF IEO Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014 (GEF/ME/C.46/04)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
5	May 2014	The GEF should pay greater attention to national knowledge exchange and promote dissemination of data and information in the relevant national languages.	The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation to support national knowledge exchange and dissemination of data. As set out in the proposed Country Relations Strategy presented in the GEF-6 Programming document, the Secretariat will facilitate the organization of National Dialogues and National Portfolio Formulation Exercises that, among other things, are also meant to support knowledge exchange among key stakeholders at national level. Additionally, the Secretariat will also organize regional workshops to train participants on the GEF-6 focal area strategies and policy reforms; facilitate trans-boundary collaboration; discuss regional programming; address integrated approaches; and other issues based on thematic and geographic areas. These workshops will be one of the vehicles to improve the knowledge sharing between the GEF and its partners and encourage south-south knowledge exchange. Though the Secretariat cannot be responsible for the translation of project documents into national languages, it recognizes the importance of having accessible documents, in the sense that they are publicly available to the countries in their national languages and clear enough to be useful for key stakeholders. The Secretariat will raise this important issue in the relevant dialogues and processes going forward. Translating and/or summarizing is obviously needed to reach the full potential of the project	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.46/04, "Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," document GEF/ME/C.46/05, "Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," ... requested the Secretariat and the Agencies: 2) To pay greater attention to national knowledge exchange and promote dissemination of data and information in the relevant national languages.	<b>High</b> As indicated in the GEF-6 programming document, a number of countries' have been organizing NPFs or National Dialogues where stakeholders have been able to discuss issues of common interest, exchange information and reach understanding on how best to utilize the resources available from the GEF. The cycle of ECWs has also begun with good results in terms of interaction among delegations leading to exchanges of information on many levels. Different delegations have informed about or made available copies of their publications aimed at dissemination among national stakeholders.	<b>Deferred.</b> The decision is directional in orientation. The GEF IEO will track this when it assesses the KM activities for the next comprehensive evaluation of the GEF.	<b>High:</b> The Secretariat has continued to promote knowledge exchange at the national and regional levels.  In 2016, the Secretariat designed and implemented GEF Knowledge Days, a regional KM initiative, as an integral component of Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECW). GEF Knowledge Days are peer-to-peer knowledge exchange events that expose ECW participants to successful GEF projects in the field and enable them to experience and learn about key project components while discussing lessons and good practice approaches directly with project managers, beneficiaries and sponsors. The Secretariat, in collaboration with GEF agencies and OFPs, organized 13 Knowledge Days in 2016, reaching more than 1,000 participants from 120 countries. Exit surveys have revealed that GEF Knowledge Days have been well received by participants, and this KM initiative is being replicated in 2017.  The Secretariat has also designed and published, in collaboration with the WBG and other GEF agencies, the Art of Knowledge Exchange: A Results-Focused Planning Guide for the GEF Partnership. This guide/toolkit is available in English, French and Spanish and it highlights tools and techniques of effective knowledge exchange and showcases a variety of GEF case studies and examples of successful knowledge exchange in GEF projects, as well as lessons learned from implementing these initiatives for enhanced global environmental impact. The guide was	<b>High:</b> GEF IEO acknowledges the progress made on national knowledge exchange in English, French and Spanish. The decision will be <b>graduated</b> .

			and promote greater accessibility of information, and therefore, the Secretariat would encourage countries to include appropriate actions among the knowledge and communication activities of the baseline project.				launched to an audience of 90 participants from 10 countries in Southern Africa during the ECW held in Swaziland in February 2017. It was well received and is being scaled-up globally throughout 2017 during the Art of Knowledge Exchange Training Sessions, delivered, in collaboration with WBG, in English, French and Spanish (as appropriate) at all regional ECWs around the world.	
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### 1.f Council decision based on the GEF IEO Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014 (GEF/ME/C.46/04)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
6	May 2014	The GEF should explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programmes as service providers to implement community level activities for FSPs and MSPs.	The Secretariat concurs with the recommendation that the GEF should explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programmes as service providers to implement community-level activities of other GEF-financed full-sized projects and medium-sized projects. The Secretariat has included such a recommendation as part of the proposals in the Council paper on the <i>GEF Small Grants Program Implementation Arrangements</i> , presented at this Council meeting.	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.46/04, "Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," document GEF/ME/C.46/05, "Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," requested the Secretariat: 1) To explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programmes as service providers to implement community level activities for FSPs and MSPs.	<b>Substantial:</b> The use of SGP country programmes as delivery mechanisms continues to be explored and is being further explained and illustrated during the SGP consultations ongoing in parallel with the ECWs. Concrete proposals for SGP to serve as a delivery mechanism are under development in countries such as Mauritius, Ukraine, as well as in the joint UNEP/UNDP GEF IW-ECO regional project in the Caribbean which involves 8 SGP country programmes in the sub-region.	<b>Substantial:</b> GEF IEO acknowledges the concrete progress made in the adoption of this decision, demonstrated by the examples mentioned in Mauritius, Ukraine and the Caribbean, among others.  The IEO will verify actual implementation of such arrangements during GEF-6 in a larger number of cases.	<b>Substantial:</b> In collaboration with GEF partners, SGP continues to actively seek opportunities to increase synergy with larger GEF funded projects, and to enable scaling up and broader adoption of SGP's local innovations and experience.  During this reporting period, in addition to the countries that were reported in MAR 2015, a new project was endorsed in Uganda with a specific SGP component under the Food Security IAP.  There are several GEF-6 projects that are currently under development with SGP involvement.	<b>Substantial:</b> The IEO is aware of the SGP involvement in the Uganda child project belonging to the Food Security IAP. We are confident that further efforts are being and will be pursued in the direction of using established SGP country programs as service providers to implement community level activities for FSPs and MSPs.  The decision is <b>graduated</b> .

**1.g. Recommendation based on Council review of the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation (GEF/ME/C.48/02)**

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
7	June 2015	The GEF and UNDP should continue upgrading, building on strengths while addressing the weakness identified. The criteria for selection of countries for upgrading should be revisited.	<p>UNDP and CPMT, in consultation with the GEF Secretariat, will continue to refine operationalization of the upgrading policy. The Secretariat welcomes the four suggestions listed under this recommendation and will work with the GEF Secretariat to design and execute these recommended changes in GEF-7, in particular to ensure all around compliance with the SGP Operational Guidelines.</p> <p>The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation that upgrading remains voluntary for LDCs and SIDS and that changes to the process for accessing STAR funds by non-upgraded countries through the global project should be clear and agreed.</p>	<p>The Council, having reviewed GEF/ME/C.48/02, Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, and GEF/ME/C.48/03, Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, requests the Secretariat and UNDP to:</p> <p>(1) Continue upgrading the SGP Country Program, building on strengths while addressing the weaknesses identified by the evaluation. The criteria for selection of countries for upgrading should be revisited.</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b> The GEF and UNDP are continuing the process of upgrading, and 6 new countries will be upgraded in GEF 6 and separately funded through FSPs. These countries include Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. This will bring the total number of Upgraded SGP countries to 15, with the original 9 countries. The criteria for selection of countries follow what was laid out in the Council paper "SGP: Implementation Arrangements during GEF6".</p>	<p><b>Medium:</b> GEF IEO acknowledges the continuation of upgrading to six more countries, and looks forward to further verify the full adoption of this decision concerning the recommended building on strengths while addressing the weaknesses identified by the joint evaluation, and the revision of the criteria for selection of countries for upgrading.</p> <p>The Office will continue to track adoption of this decision.</p>	<p><b>Medium:</b> The process of upgrading is underway with six additional countries upgraded in GEF-6, with separate SGP FSPs financed through countries' STAR allocations and with co-financing from partners (including Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Thailand).</p> <p>Looking forward, an updated GEF SGP implementation arrangement paper for OP7 will be prepared and presented to the Council in 2018, while reflecting the IEO's recommendations and lessons learned from OP5 and OP6.</p>	<p><b>Medium:</b> GEF IEO acknowledges the progress made in upgrading to more countries. New countries have been added to the list of upgraded countries, however the upgrading criteria has yet not been revisited. This remains an area for improvement. This will be tracked in the next MAR.</p>

**1.h Council decision on the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015 (GEF/ME/C.49/02), section on Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes**

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
8	October 2015	Rec 1: GEF should ensure that its support targets areas rich in globally important and significant biodiversity.	Rec 1: The Secretariat and Agencies agree with Recommendation 1 that GEF should continue to ensure that GEF support be targeted to globally significant sites with high biodiversity values, which has been a fundamental criterion for project eligibility since the inception of the GEF. Global biodiversity value will remain the main criterion for prioritization. When choosing between potential sites of clear global biodiversity value, additional factors such as climate change vulnerability and ecological impacts of climate change may be taken into account, but these will be secondary and only after the global importance criterion is met.	The Council, having reviewed the section on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, in the “Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: October 2015,” and GEF/ME/C.49/02, “Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015”, takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation, endorses the recommendations and requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations, including recommendation 4.	<b>Rec. 1: High.</b>  Key action:  1.1. Ongoing: Ensure that Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) criteria established in the GEF-6 BD strategy are applied using available geospatial information and technology. GEF Secretariat has already arranged for full access to the (KBA) database and GEF program managers can now assess whether GEF investments are being directed towards Key Biodiversity Areas as stipulated in the GEF-6 biodiversity strategy and are approving all investments only when these criteria are met. Agencies are being reminded by GEFSEC of the need to identify how projects meet this criterion. GEFSEC also attended the first meeting of the KBA Partnership and will work with the Partnership to facilitate implementation of the KBA standard within the GEF portfolio.	<b>Substantial:</b> The acquisition of the KBA database and its use in assessing future project sites is a critical step in ensuring that globally important biodiversity are being targeted by GEF support. This will be an ongoing effort that needs to be tracked over a longer period to assess whether or not these new objective and geospatial-based criteria will decrease the number of GEF-supported sites in less biodiversity-rich areas. As part of implementing the Council decision, the Secretariat will also need to continually integrate the most relevant scientific criteria in site selection that will have an impact on GEF investments, such as climate change vulnerability.  The extent of use of the KBA and other appropriate scientific criteria, and its effect on the selection of sites for GEF support will be tracked in next year’s MAR.	<b>High:</b> GEF protected area projects that seek to establish <u>new</u> protected areas must demonstrate that the new protected areas meet the KBA standard. The standard was formally approved by IUCN at the World Conservation Congress in 2016. The application of the standard is consistent with the GEF-6 biodiversity strategy.  For projects that seek to improve management of existing protected areas, consistent with historical practice, projects must demonstrate that the biodiversity within the protected areas meet the global significance test as demonstrated by scientific evidence.	<b>Substantial</b>  Rec 1 High: The KBA has been adopted as a standard by a global partnership that the GEF is part of. Its effect on the selection sites will not be measurable until a sufficient number of new projects has been approved and implemented.  This recommendation will not be tracked in MAR.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
8 (cont)	October 2015	Rec 2: GEF should address socioeconomic conditions that will ensure local community commitment to biodiversity protection.	<p>Rec 2: The Secretariat and Agencies are committed to ensure that GEF protected area projects are designed and implemented in a way that results in shared benefits among the intended beneficiaries. The Secretariat and Agencies are committed to continuing to apply the GEF Environmental and Social Safeguards, as well as those of the Implementing Agencies, to help achieve this end.</p> <p>The Secretariat and Agencies will aim to exploit opportunities within its protected area portfolio to further develop the evidence base to better predict the factors that influence whether protected area projects have positive or negative impacts on livelihoods and benefits.</p>	<p>The Council, having reviewed the section on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, in the "Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: October 2015," and GEF/ME/C.49/02, "Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015", takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation, endorses the recommendations and requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations, including recommendation 4.</p>	<p><b>Rec 2: Substantial.</b></p> <p>Key actions:</p> <p>2.1 Ongoing: Application of the GEF Environmental and Social Safeguards.</p> <p>2.2 Ongoing: The Secretariat and Agencies will aim to exploit opportunities within its protected area portfolio to further develop the evidence base to better predict the factors that influence whether protected area projects have positive or negative impacts on livelihoods and benefits. The GEF biodiversity strategy provides funding through the biodiversity focal-area set aside to support the implementation of experimental and quasi-experimental design that may be used to support this kind of analysis.</p> <p>2.3. Ongoing: GEF is working with STAP to finalize operational guidance on how to design protected area projects so that they generate evidence on what works and under what conditions with regards to improving livelihoods and how to most accurately measure and monitor socio-economic benefits through field-tested methods such as: 1) Detailed livelihood surveys; 2) Social assessment of protected areas (SAPA); and 3) Financial value chain method. Aim is to have operational guidance document produced and in use by July 2016.</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b> The Secretariat is making significant progress through collaboration with STAP to better assess socioeconomic outcomes in relation to GEF-supported PAs.</p> <p>The completion of use of the guidance in project proposals will be tracked in the next year's MAR.</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b></p> <p>2.1 Ongoing: Application of the GEF Environmental and Social Safeguards</p> <p>2.2 Ongoing: The Secretariat and Agencies will aim to exploit opportunities within its protected area portfolio to further develop the evidence base to better predict the factors that influence whether protected area projects have positive or negative impacts on livelihoods and benefits. No projects, however, have taken advantage of the opportunity to support the implementation of experimental and quasi-experimental design that may be used to better understand the impacts of protected areas on livelihoods.</p> <p>2.3 STAP is finalizing operational guidance on how to design protected area projects so that they generate evidence on what works and under what conditions with regards to improving livelihoods and how to most accurately measure and monitor socioeconomic benefits.</p>	<p>Rec 2 Substantial: Guidance to measure socioeconomic benefits has been tested and is planned to be mainstreamed into GEF operations. However, there are several areas for improvement. GEF IEO's study on GEF's environmental and social safeguards- for OPS 6- found that the Secretariat has not developed guidance for reporting on safeguard-related issues during project implementation. Application of safeguards and STAP guidance will continue to be tracked.</p>

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
8 (cont)	October 2015	<p>Rec 4: The GEF should develop a more reliable and practical monitoring system to track and assess results at the project and portfolio levels.</p>	<p>Rec 4: The Secretariat and the Agencies agree that basic information on GEF support to PAs (where, what and when) that is currently collected through project documents and the biodiversity tracking tools must be more easily available for informational and analytical purposes.</p> <p>We acknowledge that recent advances in geospatial technology, and the availability of global and local databases provide opportunities to significantly improve results monitoring and reporting. Notwithstanding its proven utility both within and outside of the GEF, we agree with the evaluation that the METT has shortcomings particularly with regards to monitoring biodiversity outcomes and condition within protected areas and to address that we improved the METT for application in GEF-6 and incorporated more objective and data driven assessments of protected area outcomes and biodiversity condition.</p>	<p>The Council, having reviewed the section on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, in the "Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: October 2015," and GEF/ME/C.49/02, "Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015", takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation, endorses the recommendations and requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations, including recommendation 4.</p>	<p><b>Rec.4: Medium</b></p> <p>Key Actions:</p> <p>4.1 Ongoing: The GEF is evaluating the feasibility and infrastructure requirements necessary to have all projects submit shapefiles of the location of the project investment. GEF is Also currently assessing how to geo-locate the backlog of PA projects and other land-based or ocean-based projects.</p> <p>4.2 Ongoing: GEF is evaluating various options on how to use of geospatial technology for project and portfolio monitoring.</p> <p>4.3 Ongoing: GEF is currently developing an online system for completing tracking tools which will make the data collected easier to analyze.</p> <p>4.4 In response to the IEO suggestion that GEF streamline the Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) reporting requirements to focus on information that can be used in conjunction with existing global datasets and geospatial data to perform meaningful analyses on management effectiveness and biodiversity impacts at a global level, the GEF has already streamlined the METT for GEF-6 but will undertake further analysis with global experts on streamlining the METT for GEF-7.</p> <p>4.5 Ongoing: GEF is taking an active role in the KBA partnership. The Partnership aims to facilitate the implementation of the KBA standard globally and brings together leading NGOs, many of whom are specialized in biodiversity data management, as well as other partners (users of biodiversity information, managers, protected area</p>	<p><b>Medium:</b> The Secretariat has begun to invest in both human resources and infrastructure to integrate more geospatial technology into project proposal assessment and monitoring. The effectiveness of requiring Agencies to submit useful geospatial information at project submission will need to be tracked over the next year. The usefulness of the streamlined METT, including the online system, will likewise need to be assessed.</p> <p>The Secretariat's membership in the KBA partnership will facilitate partnerships with institutions that manage global monitoring databases. Partnerships at the national level will need to be identified as much as possible by project submission, and tracked over the course of the project to ensure that data collected and monitoring systems funded by GEF projects are managed by sustainable research institutions. The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.</p>	<p><b>Medium:</b></p> <p>4.1 The Secretariat is evaluating the feasibility and infrastructure requirements necessary to have all projects submit shapefiles of the location of the project investment going forward. The Secretariat is also currently assessing how to geo-locate the current portfolio of protected area projects and other land- or ocean-based projects.</p> <p>4.2 Ongoing: GEF is evaluating various options on how to use of geospatial technology for project and portfolio monitoring.</p> <p>4.3 GEFSEC has started to work towards an agreement on a limited number of core indicators for GEF-7. GEFSEC currently aims for 25 Core Indicators. Each project or program, at the portfolio level, will have to report data on those Core Indicators that are applicable. The new Project Management Information System (PMIS) will only capture the data on Core Indicators from GEF-7 onwards. The GEFSEC will capture both, data on expected and achieved results.</p>	<p>Rec 4 Medium:</p> <p>As reported, some progress was made in streamlining the GEF monitoring system during GEF 6. GEF IEO's recent review on RBM also found limited progress on this front. GEF IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision for another year.</p>

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			We will explore further refinement of the METT as we approach GEF-7.		authorities, etc.) This is the first action in response to the IEO suggestion that GEF establish partnerships with agencies that specialize in biodiversity data management to facilitate GEF support to biodiversity, particularly with regards to the data supply and management. Given that the KBA criteria are part of GEF funding decisions for our support to protected areas, this partnership should help with GEF implementation of the standard within the protected area portfolio. GEF will continue to identify and develop these kinds of partnerships going forward.		4.4 GEF is applying the streamlined METT in GEF-6.  4.5 GEF continues to participate in the KBA partnership.	

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8 (cont)	October 2015	Rec 5: GEF should invest in understanding what works and why.	The Secretariat and Agencies agree that GEF partners, including the Independent Evaluation Office, the Secretariat, STAP, and the Agencies should jointly exploit opportunities to generate evidence and deepen understanding on what works, for whom, and under what conditions across the entire realm of biodiversity management options. We believe this could be anchored in GEFSEC's work on strengthening the GEF partnership and on knowledge management efforts also underway in GEF-6.	The Council, having reviewed the section on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, in the "Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: October 2015," and GEF/ME/C.49/02, "Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015", takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation, endorses the recommendations and requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations, including recommendation 4.	<p><b>Rec 5: High</b></p> <p>Key Actions:</p> <p>5.1 Ongoing: The GEF is currently working with STAP on a number of these issues already, including developing operational guidance on how to design protected area projects so that they generate evidence on what works and under what conditions with regards to improving livelihoods, as well as further analysis of biodiversity impacts resulting from GEF's biodiversity mainstreaming investments.</p> <p>5.2 Ongoing: IEO made specific suggestions on developing a better understanding on how to catalyze the changes needed for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use to take place at a large scale <b>and</b> how to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in ways that produce multiple environmental and socioeconomic benefits. We believe that biodiversity mainstreaming strikes at the core of these two issues. GEF is working with STAP to contribute to the overall understanding of mainstreaming as it applies to biodiversity and provide concrete examples of how it can be operationalized in GEF projects. Concrete outputs from this work will be:</p> <p>a) Brief conceptual paper on mainstreaming, which will define it economically and include</p> <p>a) a categorization of mainstreaming approaches building on the determinants identified in the 2014 STAP publication and</p> <p>b) suggestions for priority areas for guidelines which may result in one or more "how to guides" on a specific aspects of mainstreaming such as CBNRM, sustainable use, policy development, zoning/district planning, stewardship, biodiversity mapping, etc.). This will begin with developing a</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b> The Secretariat is making progress through collaboration with STAP to better assess effective socioeconomic conditions in relation to GEF-supported PAs and biodiversity impacts resulting from mainstreaming investments. The Secretariat is developing a tool to categorize the different mainstreaming approaches that GEF has been supporting and analyze which ones are most effective in improving biodiversity. The results are intended to provide guidance on where to focus future investments in mainstreaming.</p> <p>The results of these efforts and their use in project proposals by Agencies will be tracked in next year's MAR.</p>	<p><b>High:</b></p> <p>5.1 Ongoing. STAP is finalizing operational guidance on how to design protected area projects so that they generate evidence on what works and under what conditions with regards to improving livelihoods and how to most accurately measure and monitor socio-economic benefits.</p> <p>5.2 GEF conducted its own analysis of completed biodiversity mainstreaming projects to inform future GEF strategies and project designs and to clarify GEF's theory of change on biodiversity mainstreaming. Results were synthesized in this publication: <a href="http://www.thegef.org/site/default/files/publications/GEF_MainstreamingBiod_11_28.16.pdf">http://www.thegef.org/site/default/files/publications/GEF_MainstreamingBiod_11_28.16.pdf</a> which was circulated widely in the GEF partnership, and presented at a side event at CBD COP-13. Based on this publication, GEF will work with STAP to produce operational guidelines for project designers on biodiversity mainstreaming including methods and approaches to improve project monitoring and measuring outcomes of biodiversity mainstreaming investments.</p>	<p>Rec 5 Substantial:</p> <p>The Secretariat has taken on a more active and systematic role in understanding what works and why through its own portfolio reviews, with results disseminated through publications. This is an ongoing function that is expected to make further progress as the Secretariat and STAP invest more resources in knowledge management, as observed through meetings and studies to develop guidance for best practices across the GEF partnership.</p> <p>This decision will not be tracked in the MAR.</p>

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					<p>rationale for tools that can be used to internalize costs and benefits.</p> <p>b) Consider how the GEF can practically measure whether or not biodiversity actually benefits from a 'mainstreaming' action through identification, development and testing of appropriate indicators (e.g. could measure soil fertility, carbon, soil cover, etc.) Possibly use a 'trophic level' approach.</p> <p>The work with STAP will begin in earnest in FY 2017; however, GEFSEC has begun preliminary work on this topic and has consulted with the IEO on the design of an analysis of determinants of successful biodiversity mainstreaming with the aim of producing an analysis to be shared at COP 13.</p>			

### 1.i Council decision based on the Evaluation of the GEF CSO Network (GEF/ME/C.50/02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
9	June 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<p>Recommendation 1: A contemporary vision for the CSO Network be created within the new GEF architecture. The vision should inter alia a) clarify the Network's role, b) set out a shared understanding amongst all parts of the Partnership of the Network's contribution in guarding the global commons and c) identify a modality to finance Network activities.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The GEFSEC and CSO Network should develop clear rules of engagement which guides cooperation and communications. These could be adjusted as needed.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: The CSO Network should continue to build itself as a mechanism for strengthening civil society participation in the GEF at the global, regional and national levels, paying particular attention to: membership development, capacity building and value-added working relationships across the Partnership.</p> <p>Recommendation 4: The CSO Network should strengthen its governance, with particular attention to: annual work plans, cooperation with IPAG, terms for the Network's Regional Focal Points and the complaints process.</p>	<p>The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation that a new vision should be developed for the GEF CSO Network within the GEF Partnership. The Secretariat looks forward to collaborating with the CSO Network and other partners to develop that vision.</p> <p>Regarding the recommendation to the GEFSEC and CSO Network to develop clear rules of engagement that guide cooperation and communications, the Secretariat is pleased to report that cooperation with the new management of the Network has been strengthened through more frequent formal communication and participation of the CSO Network representatives in various task forces and working groups, including the one on public involvement. The Secretariat will assess jointly with the CSO Network regarding whether additional mechanisms are needed to further enhance cooperation.</p>	<p>The Council, having reviewed GEF/ME/C.50/02, Evaluation of the GEF Civil Society Organization (CSO) Network, and GEF/ME/C.50/03, Management Response to the Evaluation of the GEF Civil Society Organization Network, decides to set up an ad-hoc working group of interested Council Members to develop an updated vision of the relationship between the GEF and civil society, and a plan to achieve it, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and report back to the Council at its first meeting in 2017. The Council encourages the CSO Network to establish a working group that includes balanced representation of CSO Stakeholder views, to interact with the Council Working Group on a new, updated vision for the Network, including governance, policies, guidelines and cooperation mechanisms.</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b></p> <p>Recommendation 1: An Ad-Hoc Working Group of interested Council Members has developed a draft vision and action plan for Council review (document GEF/C.52/Inf.13).</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The Council, at its 51st meeting in October 2016, and having reviewed document GEF/C.51/09/Rev.01, <i>Recommendations of the Working Group on Public Involvement</i>, "[requested] the Secretariat to present an updated policy on stakeholder engagement and access to information for consideration at its 53rd meeting in [November] 2017." (Joint Summary of the Chairs: 51st GEF Council Meeting, October 25–27, 2016). The Secretariat, in close collaboration with the multi-stakeholder Working Group on Public Involvement, has launched consultations on the updated Policy. The updated Policy presents an opportunity to further clarify how affected and interested stakeholders, including CSOs, will be engaged in GEF operations and governance.</p> <p>Recommendations 3 and 4 are directed to the CSO Network rather than the Secretariat and Agencies.</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b></p> <p>An Ad-Hoc Working Group of interested Council Members has prepared a progress report on their work thus far including a draft proposed vision for the CSO Network and plans to operationalize that vision. The progress report will be the basis for consultation at the 52nd meeting in May 2017 with the Working Group established by the CSO Network for this purpose.</p> <p>The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.</p>

### 1.j Council decision based on the Annual Performance Report 2015 (GEF/ME/C.50/04)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
10	June 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	The GEF needs to reassess its approach to tracking tools for GEF-7. It should also assess the burden and utility of its biodiversity tracking tools and other alternatives.	The Secretariat notes the report's recommendation that the GEF needs to reassess its approach to tracking tools for GEF-7. The Secretariat agreed with the findings of the evaluation that significant progress has been made in meeting the OPS-5 recommendation that the tracking tools be simplified and the reporting burden on Agencies be reduced.	The Council, having reviewed GEF/ME/C.50/04, Annual Performance Report 2015, and GEF/ME/C.50/05, Management Response to the Annual Performance Report 2015, takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation and endorses the recommendation.	<p><b>Medium:</b> See #1 above.</p> <p>Further to the self-assessment carried out as part of the 2015 MAR, consolidated tracking tools have been developed for and applied across the three IAPs, although there is still scope to further reduce the burden of monitoring, particularly of other MFA projects and programs. Looking forward, the Secretariat's proposed programming directions and policy agenda for GEF-7 include a proposal to introduce an enhanced corporate results framework to capture all relevant global environmental benefits across all GEF-financed activities, using a limited number of carefully selected core indicators. Based on the Secretariat's proposal, each project or program would have to report data against applicable core indicators at concept stage, at CEO Endorsement/ Approval, during implementation and at completion. The new Project Management Information System (PMIS) would facilitate a more efficient aggregation of and reporting on expected and actual results across those indicators.</p> <p>A unified results architecture based on a system of core indicators could contribute towards reducing the burden of monitoring across the GEF as a whole, clarifying expectations, simplifying communication, and improving the quality, completeness and timeliness of information captured at the project level.</p>	<p><b>Medium.</b></p> <p>Some progress in terms of reduction of burden is evident in the proposal described in Secretariat's response. In the coming year, when the proposal will take a concrete shape, it will be possible to fully assess the progress in adoption of the Council decision. MAR will continue to track this decision</p>

## 2.a Council decision based on the Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2016	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2016
11	June 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<p>Recommendation 1: The GEF Secretariat should explore and develop mechanisms that ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the Fund.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The GEF Secretariat should make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: The GEF Secretariat should ensure that the data in the Project Management Information System is up to date and accurate.</p>	<p>The Secretariat appreciates the findings of the report and agrees with the GEF IEO that enhancing financial predictability can improve the effectiveness of the LDCF. The Secretariat notes that the means to address this need falls within the purview of the donors of the fund.</p> <p>In line with the GEF Gender Equality Action Plan the Secretariat will continue to work to ensure that LDCF projects mainstream gender, noting that gender performance of the LDCF portfolio has improved considerably. As part of the overall upgrade of the GEF project management information systems, the Secretariat will also endeavor to correct, verify and update the relevant LDCF project data.</p>	<p>The LDCF/SCCF Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02, Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund, and GEF/LDCF.SCCF/20/ME/03, Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund, took note of the conclusions of the evaluation and endorsed the recommendations taking into account the Management Response.</p>	<p><b>Substantial:</b> Since the adoption of the Council decision, donors have increasingly put an emphasis on enhancing the predictability of financing under the LDCF, exemplified by Belgium's three-year commitment made at the 21<sup>st</sup> LDCF/SCCF Council meeting in October 2016. The Secretariat has also made an effort to report to LDCs on available resources under the LDCF, and on the precise number of projects and resources requested in the pipeline of technically cleared projects, in its presentations at the LDC Expert Group (LEG) side event during the Marrakesh Climate Change Conference on November 8, 2016 and at the 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the LEG on March 7-10, 2017 in Bonn, Germany. The GEF Secretariat also continues to inform GEF Agencies and recipient countries upon request.</p> <p>With respect to GEAP, the GEF Secretariat has ensured that any incoming funding requests under the LDCF explicitly reference the GEAP as a minimum criterion to be fulfilled before technical clearance. As a result, projects that were technically cleared in the period since the Council decision are expected to carry out a Gender Gap Analysis during project preparation, and prior to CEO Endorsement/ Approval.</p> <p>The Secretariat has further initiated work to correct, verify and update relevant LDCF project data as part of the overall upgrade of the GEF project management information systems.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>Rec. 1 Medium: Efforts made by the Secretariat to report on available resources and the pipeline under the LDCF are welcome. The IEO encourages the Secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism to promote the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the LDCF.</p> <p>Rec. 2 Medium: It is encouraging that projects that have been technically cleared in the past year are expected to carry out a gender gap analysis during project preparation prior to CEO Endorsement/ Approval. The Secretariat should monitor compliance with this and the quality of the analysis. The issuance of guidance on the implementation of the gender mainstreaming policy would be helpful.</p> <p>Rec. 3 Negligible: While work is progressing on the upgrade of the GEF project management information system it has not resulted in a clear picture of progress towards improving the quality of information.</p> <p>The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.</p>