

COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION REPORT: TURKEY (1992-2009)

(Prepared by the GEF Evaluation Office)

1. Main Conclusions and Recommendations

1.1. Background

At the request of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council, the Evaluation Office conducts Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPE) every year. This year, Turkey and Moldova have been selected. CPEs aim to provide the GEF Council and concerned national Governments with an assessment of results and performance of GEF supported activities at the country level, and how GEF supported activities fit into the national strategies and priorities as well as the global environmental mandate of the GEF.

As stated in the Turkey CPE Terms of Reference (TOR) annexed to this report, Turkey was selected largely due to its large portfolio with a biodiversity and climate change emphasis and its uniqueness as a key partner country in major GEF regional international waters projects, as well as to ascertain the influence of the ongoing European Union (EU) accession process on the national environment and sustainable development agenda.

Based on the overall purpose of the GEF CPEs and their standard TORs, the evaluation of GEF support to Turkey had the following specific objectives:

- Independently evaluate the relevance and efficiency of GEF support in the country from several points of view: national environmental frameworks and decision-making processes, the GEF mandate and achievement of global environmental benefits, and GEF policies and procedures;
- Assess the effectiveness and results of completed and ongoing projects in each relevant focal area;
- Provide feedback and knowledge sharing to (1) the GEF Council on its decision-making process for allocating resources and developing policies and strategies; (2) the country on its participation in the GEF; and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF support.

Table 1.1

GEF Support to National Projects in Turkey by Focal Area

Focal area	GEF Support (million \$)	Cofinancing	Percentage of total GEF support in Turkey
Biodiversity	17.03	9.74	46.87
Climate change	11.64	34.72	32.02
International waters	7.00	38.11	19.27
POPs	0.47	0.00	1.29
Multifocal	0.20	0.06	0.55
Total	36.33	82.63	100

Note: these figures include two national components of global projects

Turkey's participation in the GEF started during the GEF pilot phase in 1992 with the preparation of the World Bank–implemented *In-Situ Conservation of Genetic Diversity* project (GEF ID 71, referred to in this report as the In-Situ Conservation project). Since then, Turkey has been involved in an additional ten national projects plus two national components of global projects (the Turkey GEF portfolio totals \$36.33 million, with \$82.63 million of cofinancing). As Table 1.1 shows, about 47 % of GEF funding in Turkey has gone to support projects in the biodiversity focal area, 32% to climate change, 19% to international waters and 1% to each of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and multifocal area projects. The level of cofinancing has been the largest for international waters (46%), followed by climate change (42%), and substantially lower for biodiversity (12%). In addition, Turkey participates in 14 regional and 6 global GEF projects, addressing international waters, biodiversity, and climate change.

1.2 Objectives, Scope and Methodology

The Turkey CPE was conducted between October 2009 and April 2010 by an evaluation team comprised of staff from the GEF Evaluation Office and consultants with extensive knowledge of Turkey's environmental sector. The methodology included a series of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and standardized analytical tools. Several sources of information from different levels (project, government, civil society, GEF Agencies, and so on) were the basis for the evaluation, both in Ankara and in regions where GEF projects operate. Triangulation and quality control were key elements at all stages. The quantitative analysis used indicators to assess the efficiency of GEF support using projects as the unit of analysis (e.g. analyzing the time and the cost of preparing and implementing projects). The evaluation team used standardized analysis tools and project review protocols and adapted these to the Turkish context. Projects were selected for field visits based on their implementation status, the project approach, accessibility, and time/resource constraints. A key – and innovative for CPEs – element in the methodology was an on-line survey, which was suggested during the opening workshop. Finally, a field verification of a project Terminal Evaluation Review (TER) and two Review of Outcomes to Impact (ROtI)¹ studies were undertaken for completed projects, in each case including a stakeholder consultation workshop.

The main focus of the Turkey CPE is the thirteen projects (11 national projects plus 2 national components of global projects) implemented within the boundaries of Turkey. In addition, 11 regional projects solely focusing on projects in the Black and Mediterranean Seas, mainly within the international waters focal area, were reviewed. These were selected because they had significant in-country involvement and they could be clustered into two regional programs.² Turkey Small Grants Programme (SGP) was also reviewed. A full assessment of the regional projects' aggregate results, relevance, and efficiency was beyond the scope of this CPE, given that only the Turkey components were assessed. National and regional project proposals under preparation were not part of the evaluation.

¹ GEF Evaluation Office recently developed the ROtI methodology, which is an innovative approach for assessing a project's progress towards impact through theory of change, a few years after project completion. It also developed guidelines for field verification of TER reports for use in its Annual Performance Reports.

² The complete list of national, regional and global projects is annexed to this report.

The following limitations were taken into account and addressed wherever possible while conducting the evaluation:

- As foreseen in the TOR, CPE is challenging, as there is not yet a GEF country program that specifies expected achievement through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets.
- The evaluation only assesses the contribution of GEF support to overall achievements and does not attempt to provide direct attribution. Again, this was also foreseen in the TOR.
- Many projects do not clearly or appropriately specify the expected impact and sometimes even the outcomes of projects. To overcome this, an electronic survey, a field verification of a project TER and two field ROTI studies were undertaken. In addition, triangulation of various sources was also undertaken through meta-evaluation analysis.

The evaluation team has managed to establish a clear and reliable set of data on projects and project documentation, despite inconsistencies, gaps, and discrepancies contained in the initial available data.

1.3 Conclusions

Relevance of GEF Support

Conclusion 1: GEF support has been relevant to Turkey's sustainable development agenda and its environmental priorities, with the exception of land degradation.

Since the early 1990s, Turkey has developed a set of national environmental laws and policies. These aim at improving protection of its biodiversity, conditions of international waters, and air quality and energy efficiency. GEF projects have been fully relevant to these developments, both supporting this framework and even helping to develop it, especially in the biodiversity sector. They have advanced policy and strategic development in areas such as biosafety and climate change policy. Overall they are responding to national needs as well as helping Turkey to fulfill its obligations to international environmental conventions.

GEF first successfully supported Turkey's efforts to conserve forest biodiversity in Gene Management Zones (GMZ) through the In-Situ Conservation of Genetic Diversity Project. This is one of the oldest GEF projects, approved during the GEF Pilot Phase. The Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management Project (the GEF II Project) came next, and adopted a different approach. Synergies were built among local livelihood incentives, local level development, and improved environmental management. This positive shift reflected both national priorities and the international emphasis on local level development. The GEF II project initiated nature protection in four different climatic regions in Turkey and these initiatives were replicated to nine other sites.

Climate Change started gaining importance in recent years, thanks to the Initial National Communication to the UNFCCC. This spurred the national dialogue around climate change in Turkey and gave origin to three full-size project proposals in energy efficiency. In addition, GEF has provided substantial support to marine international waters. This is in line both with the GEF mandate for global environmental benefits and with the Turkish environment and development agenda. Turkey recently signed the Kyoto Protocol and the Stockholm Convention.

There is, however, one major shortcoming, notably in the land degradation focal area. Despite being one of the most pressing environmental problems in Turkey, this has received almost no support from GEF.

There are some major sustainable development issues in Turkey in which GEF has not always been relevant, notably poverty alleviation and perhaps gender. Since, by definition, GEF focuses on global environmental benefits, it cannot always focus on these issues. However, there are exceptions even to this, particularly under SGP.

Conclusion 2: The GEF paved the way for implementing environmental aspects of the EU accession process. Turkish initiatives in this regard will now increase the sustainability of impacts started under GEF.

The prospect of EU accession has been a key initiator in the recent ongoing updating of Turkey's sustainable development and environmental agenda. Recently, in December 2009, the EU environmental chapter was opened.

GEF support was already in place before the EU accession process started, especially in the areas of biodiversity and international waters. GEF support has been the most relevant for biodiversity. Besides two successfully completed national full-size projects, it included an overwhelming majority of the SGP projects. The early start of SGP and In-Situ Conservation project positively contributed to Turkey ratifying the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) in December 1996 and entry into force of the Convention on February 14, 1997. Another key element is the government staff members who worked in GEF projects. This led to increased awareness and capacity building. Their increased expertise will now be available when it comes time to comply with EU accession requirements.

GEF has provided substantial support to marine international waters. This is in line with both GEF's mandate for global environmental benefits and the Turkish environment and development agenda. GEF contributed with eleven regional projects (GEF regional contribution of \$66 million) on the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Turkey's high involvement is demonstrated by the fact that the Black Sea Commission and Secretariat have been established in Istanbul. The Turkish national demonstration project of the Danube/Black Sea Strategic Partnership Investment Fund is the Anatolia Watershed Rehabilitation Project, ongoing since 2004 (GEF support of \$7 million). All these efforts contributed to Turkey's signature of the conventions on both the Black and Mediterranean Sea Protection. Hence, GEF helped Turkey, both from an institutional and capacity building point of view, to be ready to engage in the EU accession process. However, GEF has not received applications for support to transboundary river basins. This would have been in line with regional environment as well as sustainable development priorities.

The GEF, based in the United States and far from the EU, is perceived to have a neutral role as compared with the political process of the EU *Acquis Communautaire* in the region.

Conclusion 3: GEF support in Turkey has neither been fully nationally owned nor fully country-driven, but this has improved in recent years.

The evaluation found evidence of slow appropriation of a project's objectives by Turkish stakeholders. GEF comes along with an idea; it is not well understood, but over time support and understanding grows. Eventually national stakeholders (mostly government, but also civil society) take on the project, adapt it to their needs and context, and own and drive it.

GEF has positively contributed by speeding up development of treaty signatures and environmental legislation. This conclusion is supported by consultations with key stakeholders. The EU approximation process has certainly brought a renewed focus on global environmental benefits. Without GEF, there would not be a Biosafety law, the size of protected areas would have been smaller, and climate change would not have been given the priority it currently has.

Since the appointment of Prof. Dr. Hasan Z. Sarikaya as GEF Operational Focal Point of Turkey in 2004, the Externally Supported Projects Division (ESPD) under the Foreign Relations and EU Department of the MoEF, which coordinates all activities concerning externally supported projects, coordinates all GEF related activities, including monitoring at the country portfolio level. GEF project ideas are discussed in a GEF project evaluation committee consisting of 8-10 representatives from various departments of the MoEF. ESPD is organizing a series of workshops in seven Turkish provinces with wide participation of all stakeholders, including local government, civil society and the private sector. This demonstrates a more proactive ownership by Turkey. However, while ESPD has a good grasp on national projects, it has not yet been able to gather information on and coordinate GEF regional projects. Moreover, despite having excellent and continuous work relations with GEF agencies, it has not been able to promote an increased sharing of project information between them.

Efficiency

Conclusion 4: GEF agencies have worked in a complementary way. However, there are few synergies and little cross-agency learning. Recently the situation is improving.

World Bank and UNDP have been, by far, the two most important GEF Agencies in Turkey. Analysis of the project portfolio demonstrates that the World Bank facilitated GEF's entry into Turkey. The bank implemented three full-size projects, the last of which is still on going. These projects came from the first three GEF grant periods. UNDP has been active in Turkey since 1992 with SGP and international waters whose early regional projects related to the Black Sea. UNDP's involvement in national GEF projects evolved gradually, starting with an enabling activity in climate change in 2005. This was followed by a medium-size project in the Kure Mountains in 2008, a full-size project on Mediterranean marine protection in 2009, and three forthcoming projects on energy efficiency in 2010. Over time, the GEF national portfolio has shifted focus from biodiversity to climate change as well as from the World Bank to UNDP. Although with much smaller budgets, enabling activities have been implemented by UNEP, UNDP and UNIDO starting from 2005. Three enabling activities were implemented by UNEP, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the Biosafety legal framework development, and the ongoing National

Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA). UNIDO has implemented one enabling activity on POPs and is partnering with UNDP on the approved GEF energy efficiency in industry project.

In Turkey, GEF projects and GEF agencies often worked in a way that was complementary, rather than competitive. The national portfolio has smoothly shifted from the World Bank, as the main GEF agency since 1992 up to GEF-3, to UNDP in GEF-4. However, many GEF projects operate as islands, and there is little evidence of agencies being corporately involved in their GEF activities. There is limited evidence of GEF agencies following the GEF advocated catalytic approach whereby foundational activities should be followed by demonstration and later investment projects. For instance, in the biodiversity focal area, GEF support started with two full-size projects, whereas enabling activities did not start before 2005.

There is little evidence of either World Bank or UNDP country programs giving strong support to GEF issues outside of their GEF financed projects. More notably, until recently, UNDP was not involved in GEF projects implemented by the World Bank, and World Bank was not involved in GEF projects implemented by UNDP. This inefficiency can be seen as a missed opportunity, where these agencies could have learnt from each other concerning their experiences in GEF projects. GEF projects should happen in a catalytic way and there could have been more coordination and information sharing among the projects. Agencies could also have helped fill gaps or build bridges across issues from one agency to another.

The situation is gradually improving in the case of climate change and international waters. In preparing the three forthcoming full-size climate change projects both UNDP and the World Bank worked together. UNDP and the World Bank regularly initiated consultations with wide range of partners including relevant line ministries, the State Planning Organization (SPO), and UN sister agencies. Furthermore, the Turkish Government capitalized on the experiences of the climate change initiatives by developing a proposal to benefit from the Clean Technology Fund of the World Bank. Turkey was the first country to be awarded this loan agreement and to mobilize an additional \$100 million to support projects in the fields of renewable energy development and energy efficiency. During this process, several information sharing meetings were held between UNDP and the World Bank. GEF agencies involved in regional GEF-funded projects in international waters followed the GEF catalytic approach by first implementing foundation activities, demonstration and then investment. The final ‘investment’ stage is now ongoing with the national Anatolian watershed management project implemented by the World Bank.

Conclusion 5: The traditionally top-down approach to forest management in Turkey applied to nature protection and cases of insufficient coordination caused delays, which have decreased recently.

The first GEF biodiversity project was formulated and implemented in such a way that the project could succeed largely without people’s participation, namely by selecting GMZs in protected forests and state farm lands. The second, the GEF II project, seriously took up the challenge to involve local people in nature conservation and to include their needs and resources in the protected areas management plans. This turned out to be particularly challenging due to a lack of tradition of participation in Turkey. As a result, the project was severely delayed, and the project’s objectives had to be downscaled at the time of the project Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted in 2003, in order to make them achievable. Nevertheless, this resulted in

experience with the issue of local involvement in nature conservation, and today the situation is improving in Turkey, as demonstrated by the recent Kure Mountain and Marine and Coastal Protected Areas projects.

The evaluation often found during its field visits cases of insufficient coordination between government departments. In some cases there is institutional conflict and lack of clarity on respective roles and responsibilities in protected areas and natural resource management, as for example between the general directorates of forestry and nature conservation in the MoEF. Key government stakeholders stated that GEF introduced a collaborative working style between different Government Ministries and this was new to Turkey. However, these improvements in working style within government departments are not sufficient to completely address the issue.

Conclusion 6: The complexity of the GEF Activity Cycle has not been a barrier to project development in Turkey.

On the whole, and in comparison to other countries, Turkey has done remarkably well in getting projects through the GEF project cycle. National full-size projects (FSPs) took an average of 2.1 years to move from project entry to implementation – less than half the GEF global average of 5.5 years. Implementation phases have also been relatively quick: the In-situ Conservation project took 5.5 years and had no delays, whereas the GEF II project took 8.2 years to implement, a delay of 1.8 years, which is in line with the GEF global average. However, some stakeholders in Turkey – mainly related to the three recent full-size projects on climate change – expressed negative views of the GEF Activity Cycle in relation to previous projects. They experience long processing periods, leading to high transaction costs in terms of financial and human resource inputs, and a lack of clarity and information relating to delays.

The costs of project preparation are estimated at 3.3% of total GEF contribution, which translates into an average of around \$100,000 for FSPs. This corresponds to about one third of the amount officially available under the previous Activity Cycle.

The relatively short identification and design period kept the momentum high and maintained government commitment/engagement to projects, and probably eventually contributed to project success. However, as repeatedly highlighted in previous evaluations conducted by the GEF Evaluation Office including the recently completed 4th Overall Performance Study (OPS4), delays happen before projects enter the pipeline due to a long pre-filtering stage. Project idea development is the critical phase that takes a long time, and the majority of consulted national stakeholders agree on that.

Conclusion 7: There is little evidence that M&E is contributing to increased efficiency.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of GEF support in Turkey mostly happens at project level, and is mainly carried out by GEF agencies. Monitoring at the country portfolio level is performed by ESPD and focuses on national projects, but the division has no information on GEF regional and global projects in which Turkey participates. Project monitoring only concerns basic data (project title, agency and focal area; financial information; and project cycle dates (entry into pipeline, approval and start up, project objectives, outcomes, implementation progress), some of which is aggregated by focal area and agency. Other substantive data (actual achievements at completion and lessons learned) is not maintained.

M&E information does not always flow from GEF agencies to national partners and vice versa. This emerged clearly from interviews with key stakeholders both from agencies and national partners. On the national side, M&E information does not always circulate transversally among different ministries involved in GEF activities, and sometimes not even among different departments and divisions of the same ministry. ESPD is not explicitly mandated for M&E activities, nor has specific M&E skills to satisfactorily perform portfolio level M&E and/or supervise the execution of M&E tasks at project level. In compliance with the GEF M&E Policy, and as confirmed by respondents to the electronic survey, M&E activities are performed by GEF agencies. However, M&E information is not always shared across the GEF partnership at national level.

The GEF II Project managed to develop a good baseline and showed a satisfactory degree of adaptive management as a result of the MTR conducted in 2003. Also, the monitoring instrument introduced through this project –the protected area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) – proved successful and is being extended nation-wide to other Turkish protected areas. However, elsewhere in the portfolio, there is little evidence that M&E contributed to coherent project management decisions.

In general, it appears that M&E tasks have been performed mostly to comply with a reporting obligation. The SGP has limited staff resources and funding for M&E. In general full-size and medium-size projects have Progress Implementation Reports (PIR), MTR and Terminal Evaluations (TE). This is not the case for enabling activities, which have no M&E information and no completion reports. Perhaps an important opportunity to build national M&E capacity through involvement in GEF projects was missed.

Effectiveness of Results and Sustainability

Conclusion 8: GEF support to biodiversity in Turkey has contributed to achievement of significant results, including raising awareness and building capacity.

Overall, GEF support contributed to the achievement of results in the biodiversity focal area, despite the rather limited funding in relation to the needs in a country the size of Turkey. The proportion of land under some form of protection for nature conservation has increased from 4% to about 6% since 2000. In the long term, 10% could be taken under protection if all projected conservation programs were to be implemented.

The In-situ Conservation Project made important contributions, with impacts still relevant 12 years after the project closed. The GEF II project had a somewhat mixed record. On the one hand, the project certainly broke new ground, introducing new participatory approaches to protected areas management in Turkey. On the other hand, it faced challenges associated with people's participation and with government inertia vis-à-vis innovative approaches. Furthermore it faced real problems of poverty at local levels, and threats to conservation from tourism, road construction, forest extraction, grazing activities, water resource use, and other economic activities. This can be considered as evidence that the GEF II project was addressing the right issues, i.e. participatory approaches, livelihoods/biodiversity trade-offs, and vested economic interests. Nevertheless, these forces are much stronger than a project the size and duration of GEF II. The project effort to address these challenges has to be acknowledged as a positive result. Likewise, work on protected areas management plans and on developing participatory approaches to design and implement those plans has planted important seeds in the national capacity. This is demonstrated by the voluntary replication of the

participatory approach to wildlife areas management plans. The high number of successful SGP grants on biodiversity has also certainly contributed to these positive results.

In 2005, the GEF II project provided support and expertise to prepare a comprehensive draft law on the protection of nature and biological diversity. The draft law, prepared with wide stakeholders' consultation involving more than 2,500 people, was not passed in its initial format, and has been kept in stand-by since then. From informal consultations it has emerged that the law is again under consideration by the public institutions in the context of the recently signed EU environmental chapter. In parallel to the draft law on the protection of nature and biological diversity, a National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP) was prepared with enabling activity funding and completed in early 2007. Even though the NBSAP has received official support from all relevant institutions and has been formally approved by the minister of MoEF on 30 June 2008, it is not being implemented, possibly because the funds to implement it are not readily available. Together, the law and the NBSAP would provide a legal basis and strategic and actionable plan for nationally owned approaches to biodiversity conservation and a strategic basis for the subsequent GEF investment in biodiversity. The progress made in preparing these documents is countered by the challenge faced in getting the law approved and the NBSAP implemented. This again indicates that the GEF projects were pushing in the right direction and were technically sound. Despite these products have not yet been completely carried to their end, they are available and the country can use them.

As previously highlighted, thanks to the opening of the EU environmental chapter, these GEF supported products have been recently brought back to the national policy agenda. The NBSAP has been added to the national program within the EU harmonization efforts in Turkey. It may be that the strong political will behind the EU accession process helps to get the biodiversity law approved. That would be a further example of the positive reciprocal influence between GEF and the EU with GEF paving the way, building the capacity, providing pertinent technical support, and the EU providing a strong incentive for the country to complete this process.

The Biosafety enabling activity is another example of good GEF support with small funding. The main output was a draft national Biosafety law, prepared with the active involvement of more than 55 institutions, experts, and academia. Despite the fact that project funds were totally exhausted in 2007, Turkey continued the process using its own funds, showing high interest and active commitment to biosafety. The Biosafety Law has been approved by the Turkish National Assembly on 18 March 2010. This is a noticeable example of GEF making a difference; without GEF there would most probably not be a Biosafety law today.

Especially in biodiversity, the GEF has made important contributions to capacity development, in terms of building people's capacities in the public sector, raising awareness in society, improving communications amongst agencies, and strengthening institutional and policy frameworks.

Conclusion 9: GEF support of marine international waters projects has contributed to strengthening Turkey's commitments to global and regional cooperation to reduce the overexploitation of fish stocks and land- and sea-based pollution in the region.

GEF support has been a major contributor to Turkey's involvement in agreements for coordinated regional and international management of marine resources and has helped develop cooperative networks for coherent regional response and action. The international waters projects have also significantly improved

the scientific basis for regional prioritization of cooperative interventions in managing marine resources and land-based activities affecting these resources.

With the support of GEF international waters regional projects, Turkey has both helped to shape and become a signatory of protection treaties covering both the Black and Mediterranean Seas. Over the past fifteen years, the water quality of the Black Sea has improved considerably, mainly as a result of the collapse of the USSR and the subsequent closing down of livestock production units along the Danube River (Fox and Buijs, 2008). However, it is safe to say that the GEF support contributed to these positive changes. Under the coordination of the MoEF, Turkey prepared several studies related to the “Protocol for the Control of Land Based Pollutants” to protect the Black Sea (which is an annex to the Bucharest Convention). These studies and action plans, some of which prepared with GEF support, need now to be implemented. Turkey has also adopted the “Land Based Pollutants (LBS) Protocol” to protect the Mediterranean Sea (under the Barcelona Convention) with GEF support. In both the Black Sea and Mediterranean cases, all signatory party countries are required to prepare a national action plan against land based pollutants including the prevention measures packages, implementation, and time tables.

Conclusion 10: SGP has been a major success in Turkey, providing many examples of how to meet both global and local objectives.

Despite challenges, GEF has helped develop the concept of, and capacity for, local level natural resource management in Turkey. This has been one of the main results of the SGP and the small grants components in other GEF projects. Developing participatory natural resource management takes time, but Turkey is now firmly on the right path, although much work remains to be done. The potential of the SGP has been fully realized, specifically in exploring how best to build links between the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainable development at local level. The active and effective involvement of the SGP unit in the UNDP country office has played an important positive role in the successful implementation of the SGP.

The incorporation of separate small grants components in the GEF II Project and the Black Sea regional projects has helped making these projects a success. This inclusion responds to the need to provide incentives at local level when proposing environmental conservation activities, while at the same time, to respond to a considerable demand for small grants at local level in Turkey. Moreover, it is a good example of GEF projects learning lessons and adopting best practices from each other.

Conclusion 11: Results in other focal areas are limited, but in some cases, small funding has important catalytic effects.

Climate Change. The ROTI study of the Initial National Communication (INC) to UNFCCC confirmed that despite the small funds delivered, the results achieved vary from good to quite impressive. This crucial GEF supported enabling activity has been and is likely to be significant in shaping ongoing action, debate and future climate change policy, strategy, and planning decisions. This was accomplished by providing baseline data, including a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory and vulnerability assessments, and an analysis of options for mitigation and adaptation. The project also influenced “National Climate Change Strategy, Turkey is taking part in the solution” (2009). These are relatively major achievements for a small project.

As none of the three GEF climate change mitigation projects has become operational, to date there are no concrete results in increased energy efficiency.

Multifocal areas. The ongoing National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA), when complete, should provide a foundation for strategic decision making on capacity building, both across the GEF portfolio and more generally, as well as identifying the enabling conditions necessary to ensure effectiveness and sustainability of results.

Persistent organic pollutants. GEF provided a small amount of funds to develop a strategic and informed basis for analysis, prioritization, and action for dealing with the issue of POPs. This catalytic support was provided through the preparation of the first draft National Implementation Plan (NIP). In January 2010 Turkey became a party to the Stockholm Convention and it now has to finalize its NIP within the next two years. The NIP will include nine new chemicals in addition to the twelve originally covered in the first draft.

Land degradation. Land affected by desertification is one of the biggest problems in Turkey. A large majority of the country's soils are exposed to the risk of erosion in varying levels according to the World Desertification Risk Map. No national projects have addressed this issue besides 7 small grants under the SGP. The issue of land degradation is of major importance for Turkey and would have deserved much more attention during GEF-4, if sufficient funding would have been available. Turkey suffered the same fate of other countries with similar problems, like Egypt and Syria.

Ozone. There are no results in the ozone focal area, and Turkey is not eligible for GEF funding in this area.

1.4 Recommendations

Recommendations to the GEF Council

Recommendation 1: Increase focal points' involvement in M&E activities by sharing M&E information, supporting country portfolio level M&E, and providing M&E training.

Improved country portfolio level M&E, reporting, and basic recordkeeping for the country portfolio by the focal point mechanisms should be supported. Implementation of enabling activities should on completion be monitored and evaluated to provide an opportunity for comment and peer review by independent specialists based on the requirements and guidelines provided by the global conventions. The M&E function of SGP should be strengthened. Agencies should be encouraged to systematically involve focal points in M&E activities and share M&E information with them in a timely manner in order to ease country portfolio M&E by focal points.

Some M&E information and support for focal points is already provided by the GEF Country Support Program (CSP) through its website and through its sub-regional workshops, in which GEF Evaluation Office representatives usually run various sessions aiming at stimulating discussions on M&E issues. These activities should continue in GEF-5. In addition, provision of specific M&E training to the national focal point mechanism should be considered.

Recommendation 2: GEF Agencies should be encouraged to give stronger support to GEF issues outside the GEF supported projects in which they are involved, and promote up-scaling with partner governments.

The evaluation found little evidence of agencies being corporately involved in their GEF activities. The GEF should be seen as an opportunity for promoting global environmental benefits with the partner government at a scale that can make a difference. There is little evidence of either World Bank or UNDP country programs giving strong support to GEF issues outside of its GEF financed projects. As a result, many GEF projects operate as islands, or, as in the case of the Anatolia watershed management project, GEF funds are just used for a specific project component.

Given the comparatively small role the GEF can play, it has to be catalytic to ensure that any success will be replicated. The amount of GEF funding, compared with the major global environmental benefits it has been mandated to achieve, is clearly limited. Opportunities for further promoting with partner governments' environmental issues which go beyond GEF funded projects should be pursued whenever possible.

The recent positive developments in the climate change focal area indicate that when the GEF catalytic approach is properly pursued and implemented and when strategic information sharing between agencies occurs, positive multiplier effects can happen. This was the case when the Turkish Government capitalized on the experiences of the GEF supported climate change initiatives and developed a proposal to benefit from the Clean Technology Fund of the World Bank. UNDP is also going in this direction, working towards a national action plan for climate change and making an inventory of the adaptation needs of Turkey.

Recommendations to the Government of Turkey

Recommendation 3: The approval of national legal instruments should be completed and the implementation of national strategies and participatory protected areas management plans should start.

With the opening of the environmental chapter of the EU *Acquis Communautaire*, the approval and implementation of legal instruments, strategies and action plans, including the proposed law on the protection of nature and biological diversity, and the approved NBSAP are back on the policy agenda. National stakeholders should take advantage of this new momentum to complete the process of setting up a modern national biodiversity conservation framework that has been initiated and brought forward with GEF support.

This includes the approval, funding, and implementation of the participatory protected areas management plans prepared with support from the GEF. MoEF is encouraged to further replicate participatory natural resource planning and management to all protected areas nationwide. To do this, MoEF could take advantage of the numerous MoEF committed and experienced technicians who benefited from and participated in GEF-supported biodiversity activities over the years.

As the draft law on the protection of nature and biological diversity is still under discussion, one opportunity still exists to clarify any unresolved institutional issues and/or confusion of roles, attributions, and responsibilities over protected areas between MoEF departments. This includes a better differentiation between forest management and nature conservation roles and responsibilities in Turkish protected areas.

Recommendation 4: Formulate multi-focal area projects and programs reflecting the GEF-5 proposed ecosystem approach in order to further address land degradation issues.

The GEF has started from a strong focal area perspective, because it has been designed to serve as a financial mechanism of the UN Conventions and these are international institutions designed with a focal area approach. In recognition that problems are often related and need to be approached in a more holistic manner, and following increased attention for synthetic issues in convention guidance, multi-focal area projects have started to be proposed, approved and implemented in GEF-4, which are more in tune with an holistic approach to sustainable natural resource management. In GEF-5, it is proposed to move further in the direction of an ecosystem rather than a focal area approach. This proposed new policy directive encourages GEF partners to develop and implement projects and programs following a holistic approach, one in which natural resources (land, water, forests, minerals, and the biodiversity that characterizes them) are considered as interconnected in their contribution to generating global environmental benefits. As such, projects, programs and implementation strategies should seek synergies and connections between different GEF focal areas.

The inclusion of land degradation in the new System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR), which in GEF-5 will replace the RAF, will already allow Turkey to attempt to address land degradation issues in its future portfolio. However, land degradation funds will be small as compared to biodiversity and climate change.

This is why it is recommended to Turkey, while undertaking the voluntary National Portfolio Formulation Exercises (NPFE) that are proposed for GEF-5, to consider designing and submitting multi-focal area projects and programs which include land degradation components in synergy with climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation. A further funding window for addressing land degradation is related to transformative programs in Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), which is also proposed in GEF-5. These can be multi-focal projects or programs combining climate change, biodiversity and land degradation with a common goal of SFM. These transformative programs would be funded in addition to individual country allocations under the new STAR system.

Recommendation 5: Information sharing should be strengthened.

There is a need for better information sharing among various stakeholders in Turkey, including ministries, implementing agencies, but also with NGOs and the general public, through more inclusion and increased awareness raising. As a result, GEF funds would be used more efficiently and better results, with respect to global environmental benefits, would be reached.

The focal point mechanism should be in the driver's seat when it comes to promoting a more formalized and institutionalized sharing of information among GEF stakeholders at all levels. This strengthened role should go beyond the positive initiatives of awareness raising and training on GEF procedures that are currently being undertaken in Turkey's provinces and with local stakeholders. At national level, the GEF focal point mechanism should further facilitate and coordinate the sharing of information and project lessons learned between GEF implementing agencies.