

GEF Council
May 25–27, 2014
Cancun, Mexico

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE
ANNUAL COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION REPORT 2014**

(Prepared by the GEF Secretariat)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Secretariat welcomes the *Sixth Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report* (ACPER) that provides a synthesis of the evaluative evidence contained in the Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPEs) and Country Portfolio Studies (CPSs) conducted in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. These include two CPEs, one conducted in Tanzania and one in Eritrea, and one CPS conducted in Sierra Leone.
2. The Secretariat appreciates the work and analysis in this report, but has difficulty understanding how the project reviews related to some of the conclusions and recommendations. Nevertheless, the following are our responses to the conclusions and recommendations.

RESPONSE TO CONCLUSIONS

3. The Secretariat is pleased to note that the GEF support has played an important role in creating the enabling framework for developing environmental policy and laws in the three countries under review. Indeed, such foundational support creates the stage for countries to pursue sustainable development. It is interesting to note that positive results at completion have been achieved beyond foundational support, leading in some cases to progress towards impact.
4. The Secretariat notes the conclusion that promoting livelihood activities through community-based approaches seems to improve the likelihood of sustainability. The issue of language being a barrier for wider dissemination of project-derived lessons is one to be brought to the attention of the country operational focal points.
5. The Secretariat is pleased to note that, except for a few exceptions, GEF support is relevant to countries' environmental priorities as well as sustainable development needs. We note the unevenness in ownership across the three portfolios.
6. The issue of over-ambitious project objectives causing implementation overruns is acknowledged. We note with concern that the results M&E and mechanisms for coordination were mixed across the three portfolios. The Secretariat will take into account this issue in project-related work going forward.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

7. 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 *GEF Small Grants Program Implementation Arrangements*, presented at this Council meeting.
8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Translating and/or summarizing is obviously needed to reach the full potential of the project 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.