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Agenda Item 12

**FOUR-YEAR WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET OF THE
GEF INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE – GEF-7**

(Prepared by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office)

Recommended Council Decision

Regarding the Four- Year Work program and Budget of the Independent Evaluation Office

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.56/03/Rev.01 the “Four Year Work Program and Budget of the Independent Evaluation Office”

- (1) Approves the annual IEO budget for fiscal year 2020 for a total of US\$6.22 million.
- (2) Approves the work program for GEF-7 including the preparations for the 7th Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 This four-year work program and budget presents the strategy and programming of all evaluations and other work of IEO proposed for the GEF-7 period. The work program has been developed to provide evaluative evidence pertaining to the major strategies approved in the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund and reflected in the GEF-7 Programming Directions. The work program contains both accountability-focused and developmental evaluations that will generate lessons for GEF programming. The evaluations will focus on the results, impact and performance of the GEF and will also evaluate key questions related to GEF strategies, including delivering multiple benefits through the impact programs, and addressing drivers of global environmental change. The evaluations have been developed strategically to build up to the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF. Furthermore, the work program proposes to update and further strengthen guidance and evaluation methodologies in key areas, including process evaluations of programs. The work program also emphasizes the need to strengthen knowledge management, learning and evaluation utilization.

2 The GEF-7 budget allocation agreed for IEO during the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF is US\$24.5 million. The budget includes salaries and benefits, operational costs, travel costs, consultants and advisory support, and publications. The GEF-7 budget envelope also reflects the commitment to tight management and strong efficiency factors throughout the cost structure, including implementing the efficiency measures associated with the Capital Increase Package negotiations of the World Bank, the GEF's host institution. The FY20 budget request for US\$6.2 million is aligned to, and consistent with this envelope, to enable the delivery of FY20 evaluation priorities within the framework of GEF-7.

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I. OVERVIEW

1. During GEF-7, the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) work program will continue to build on its past work, recognized for its independence and credibility.¹ The IEO will continue to provide feedback on the performance, results, and impacts of GEF support by focusing and organizing its work program around key evaluative issues, while enhancing the utility of the evaluations to the GEF partnership. Knowledge management activities will focus on greater dissemination of evaluation findings to promote learning across the GEF partnership and external stakeholders. An independent peer review of the IEO will further strengthen the evaluation approaches and processes, contributing to greater evaluation use and improved efficiency. The IEO will strive to remain at the forefront of evaluation approaches and methodologies, and it will contribute to creating and sharing knowledge through participation in evaluation communities, and dissemination events.

2. The role of evaluation is to look back and determine what was accomplished, how and why. But to remain relevant, evaluations must consider the current and future needs of those who will use the knowledge produced. Particularly important is that the evaluations address key strategic issues of the organization in a comprehensive and timely manner. Thus, while the IEO will continue to provide quality evaluations on the impacts, results, and performance of the GEF for accountability purposes, the GEF-7 evaluation work program will be organized around key issues derived from the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund and directly relevant to the GEF 2020 Strategy and beyond. The IEO will continue to report on impact from a comprehensive and systemic perspective. The IEO will deliver important findings and lessons to help refine the priorities contained in the GEF 2020 Strategy by organizing its work program around the following evaluative issues:

- (a) The extent, mechanisms, and conditions by which GEF support has identified and delivered integrated solutions and multiple benefits, with a special focus on the integrated approach pilots and the impact programs
- (b) The extent, mechanisms, and conditions by which GEF support has addressed drivers of environmental degradation
- (c) The performance of the GEF, institutional policies and practices of the GEF, and overall health and governance of the partnership.

3. The key strategic priorities and core operational principles contained in the GEF-7 Programming Directions are far-reaching topics and provide a framework around which the IEO can organize a comprehensive work program. Many of these topics are not completely new to the GEF. Given the GEF's longevity, there are sufficient past activities on which to design evaluations that can provide useful information that draw directly from GEF experience. The

¹ Report of the Second Professional Peer Review of the GEF Evaluation Function (GEF/ME/C.46/06).

overall approach presented in the GEF-7 strategy, which gives even more attention to the transformation of systems at scale through the continuation of the integrated approach pilots and the impact programs, is very much in line with the recommendations of the IEO in the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Overall Performance Studies (OPS4, OPS5 and OPS6). During GEF-6, the IEO work program addressed issues such as impact—within and across focal areas, drivers to environmental degradation, transformational change, value for money, multiple benefits through a spectrum of thematic evaluations, focal area studies and formative evaluations of the integrated approach pilots. The performance of the GEF partnership was evaluated by tracking portfolio results and assessing various efficiency, effectiveness, policy and governance dimensions critical to the functioning of the GEF as a system. This work provides a foundation on which to further develop the methods and data sets to address the GEF-7 strategic priorities and other emerging issues. Work will culminate in the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF, which will build on all evaluative evidence generated throughout the four-year period.

4. In addition to the evaluative work for the GEF Trust Fund, the IEO provides support at full cost recovery to the two adaption funds managed by the GEF: The Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). The evaluative work for these funds is submitted to LDCF/SCCF Council in the LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report. During FY20-23 the IEO will report on completed LDCF/SCCF projects, updates of the LDCF and SCCF program evaluations conducted during FY16-17, and special studies and other assessments, in line with the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation in the AER. The Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7) will also synthesize conclusions and evaluative evidence on adaptation to climate change.

II. REPORTING TO THE COUNCIL

5. The IEO will continue reporting to the Council by providing the overall Semi-Annual Evaluation Report (SAER) to every Council meeting as the main working document. The SAER will summarize all evaluation findings in the current period and provide a progress report on IEO work. It will also provide proposed Council decisions. The full evaluation reports, including the APR, will continue to be presented as information documents. The Evaluation Policy will be presented as a working document.

III. THE IEO FOUR YEAR INDICATIVE WORK PROGRAM

6. The Annex (Table 4) includes the indicative IEO work program for GEF-7. This section provides a brief description of the various evaluation themes. The proposed work program was developed by the IEO taking into consideration the inputs from Agencies and their evaluation units, and the GEF Secretariat. Sufficient flexibility is built in to respond to new and emerging issues that are of concern to the Council and GEF partnership.

IV. INTEGRATED APPROACHES AND IMPACT PROGRAMS

7. The GEF has, until recently, been organized around the focal areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, chemicals and waste. Consequently, it has tracked its results based on focal area indicators. Since GEF-5 there has been a shift towards programmatic approaches which seek to address the drivers of environmental degradation, and capture synergies and multiple benefits across the focal areas. The IEO conducted an evaluation of programmatic approaches and multiple benefits achieved through the multifocal area portfolio during GEF-6. In addition, a formative evaluation of the Integrated Approach Pilots was also included in OPS6 since the GEF - 6 negotiation document (GEF/C.46/07/Rev.01) mentioned evaluation of the IAPs at the end of GEF-6: “An evaluation of the Integrated Approach Pilots will be conducted and completed by the end of GEF-6.” The IEO will continue to conduct evaluations of relevance to these programs, such as the evaluation of GEF support to scaling up impacts. Toward the end of GEF-7, the IEO will build on the formative evaluation of the integrated approach pilots completed in OPS6. The projects under the three pilot programs which include the sustainable cities program, taking deforestation out of the commodity supply chains and food security pilot in Sub-Saharan Africa, which were approved in GEF-6, have been under implementation, and can therefore be evaluated. While assessing multiple benefits and the Integrated Approach Pilots, the IEO will also keep track of benefits and results in specific focal areas to meet the reporting requirements of the conventions.

Formative Review of Impact Programs

8. The GEF is supporting the implementation of three Impact Programs (IPs) that aim to produce multiple environmental benefits by comprehensively addressing the major drivers of environmental degradation to promote systemic change. These programs have been added to existing GEF funding modalities and a total of \$846 million (STAR+ set-aside) has been allocated to them for the GEF-7 period (GEF.C.54.19. Rev.03). The IPs aim to work with the recipient countries and in line with their national development priorities to support activities and deliver impact across the core thematic issues that the GEF is mandated to deliver. These IPs are designed to contribute to each of the Focal Area Strategies of the GEF corresponding to the global environmental agreements while concomitantly delivering multiple benefits across these agreements.

9. The following are the three Impact Programs (IPs) of the GEF:

- (a) Sustainable Cities Impact
- (b) Food Systems Land Use and Restoration Impact Program
- (c) Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program

10. Some elements of these Impact Programs were also included in the Integrated Approach Pilots. This formative evaluation will focus on the new projects approved in GEF-7, and focus on design, quality at entry aspects and the global projects before the first

replenishment meeting for GEF-8. To the extent possible, the evaluation will assess the value added of the IP approach.

V. ADDRESSING DRIVERS OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE: THEMATIC EVALUATIONS

11. The GEF 2020 Strategy and GEF-7 programming are based on the concept of the GEF addressing the drivers of global environmental change instead of tackling the symptoms. The IEO will evaluate and generate lessons from GEF operations so that we can inform this new strategy. Evaluations completed in FY19 will also feed into OPS7.

12. Evaluations assessing whether the GEF has addressed the drivers of global environmental change in its programming would be conducted through clusters of GEF projects addressing a common set of concerns and through focal area studies. Depending on the issues or concerns, these evaluations would be scaled at the country, regional, or global level. These evaluations will explicitly indicate the extent to which the activities being evaluated were designed to address drivers, so as not to unfairly hold those activities to standards to which they were not designed to meet. In GEF-6, some of these studies included GEF contributions to transformational change, focal area studies in international waters, land degradation, climate change, chemicals and waste, and biodiversity. Focal area studies and other topical evaluations which will be included in OPS7 include sustainable forest management, biodiversity mainstreaming and GEF interventions in international waters with a focus on fisheries, and will assess GEF strategies, and effectiveness and provide lessons for future interventions. Value for money analysis of GEF interventions in sustainable forest management to assess the carbon sequestration and socio-economic co-benefits using geospatial approaches will be conducted, which builds on the value for money analyses completed for the land degradation and biodiversity portfolios in GEF-6.

13. An evaluation of GEF engagement in fragile and conflict-affected situations will be conducted to assess conflict sensitivity in GEF strategy, project design, and implementation. Based on an assessment of the GEF Programming Directions and GEF projects in conflict-affected settings, the evaluation will consider the overlap of conflict situations and areas of conservation importance, the extent to which GEF projects in conflict-affected situations consider the conflict context in design and implementation, the extent to which GEF strategy and projects reflected convention guidance on conflict, and the implications of considering (or not considering) the conflict context in designing and implementing GEF projects.

14. Evaluations to assess GEF's impact on the private sector in OPS7 will include: an evaluation of the GEF-UNIDO Cleantech program which was a multi-country program designed to support the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in developing clean technologies and solutions that can deliver global environmental benefits (GEBs). A second evaluation will focus on GEF's interventions through supply chains in the various sectors, to assess the impact on small and medium enterprises in developing countries. For example, a process evaluation of the GEF GOLD program will assess the extent to which the use of mercury in artisanal gold mining is likely to be reduced based on program design and early implementation, and the ability of the program to work with governments to formalize the

sector, promoting miners' rights, safety and their access to markets. Recent developments in the non-grant instruments will be reviewed, and private sector initiatives will be reviewed in the context of the integrated pilots and impact programs.

15. As evident in the GEF-7 Programming Directions, the GEF is shifting towards engaging domestic financing to achieve economic goals through more environmentally sustainable means. With the Blue Economy concept becoming more mainstream in both environmental and economic sectors, the GEF promotes innovations under the international waters and other focal areas that aim to catalyze such engagement. The IEO will carry out mixed-methods impact evaluations on the extent to which GEF-supported innovations in three areas— sustainable fisheries, marine plastic pollution, and management of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) adjacent to Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) – have influenced behavior change among different groups of stakeholders. For example, the evaluation will look at how valuation tools such as natural capital accounting have been used to reform fisheries laws that provide harmful incentive structures and subsidies, and to adopt approaches such as integrated coastal management at a larger scale. These will include assessing the extent to which behavioral economics principles have been used in program design and implementation to influence change. The evaluation will focus on three groups of stakeholders: subsistence fishers, enterprises involved in fisheries and plastics, and decision-makers in local and national governments, and regional fisheries management organizations. A key aspect will be looking into how GEF creates economic and social incentives at different levels of program implementation for these stakeholder groups.

A review of the GEF medium sized project (MSP) modality and an evaluation of the Small Grants Program (SGP) will be conducted, as these are important modalities for GEF funding. The objective of the MSP modality is to promote rapid and efficient execution of smaller projects by simplifying processing steps together with review and approval procedures, and shortening the project cycle relative to GEF full-sized projects. This evaluation will provide evidence on the past GEF experience in designing and implementing MSPs as well as the effectiveness and results of MSP projects. The evaluation of the Small Grants Program will build on the previous evaluation conducted in 2014 and will address, for example, program changes in response to earlier recommendations, and the upscaling policy.

Strategic Country-Level Cluster Evaluations

16. The Strategic Country Cluster Evaluations (SCCEs) were introduced with the specific objective of assessing the multiple benefits of GEF support and whether GEF projects and portfolios in countries have addressed and are addressing the driving forces of global environmental change. Four SCCEs will be conducted during GEF-7—the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Cluster; the Least Developed Countries (LDC) Cluster, the African Sudano-Sahelian Biomes cluster and cluster of countries in South America, including for example, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, where GEF has had a long history of implementation. The selection of country clusters and special themes addressed are based on sufficient experience with GEF programming and the availability of a critical mass of projects.

The common themes include strategic issues such as sustainability, and resilience, and understanding the factors influencing the special situations within which these clusters operate, such as fragility. Such strategically selected SCCEs will provide useful lessons for GEF programming, including the new Impact Programs.

17. Country case studies are currently being conducted for three SCCEs, namely: (i) the African biomes SCCE, (ii) the LDCs SCCE, and (iii) the SIDS SCCE. The SCCEs share two overarching objectives: (i) to provide a deeper understanding of the factors contributing to and/or hindering sustainability of the outcomes of GEF support in the countries covered by each evaluation, and (ii) to assess the relevance and performance of GEF support towards these areas' main environmental challenges, from the countries' perspective. In addition, SCCEs will assess gender, resilience and fragility of the operational context, engagement with the private sector, and indigenous peoples as crosscutting issues, when applicable.

18. SCCE teams started working in Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, and Uganda for the African biomes SCCE (Mauritania will be conducted in July); Bhutan, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Tanzania for the LDCs SCCE; and Belize, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica, Kiribati, and Vanuatu for the SIDS SCCE (Maldives, Mauritius, and St. Lucia will be conducted in July). The Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, and Uganda country case studies cover both the African Biomes and LDCs SCCEs; the Comoros, Kiribati and Vanuatu country case studies cover both the SIDS and LDCs SCCEs; and the Guinea-Bissau country case study covers all three SCCEs. A small sample of completed and ongoing projects is being reviewed in these countries, purposively selected based on the aggregate portfolio analysis, geospatial analysis and review of project and program documents. The focus of SCCE case studies is to deep-dive into the main hindering and/or contributing factors – either project -or context related – to sustainability and performance of GEF interventions in tackling the main environmental challenges countries face. Main findings, conclusions and recommendations of these three evaluations will be presented to the Council within the fiscal year.

VI. EVALUATING GEF PERFORMANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

19. The IEO undertakes performance evaluations to provide feedback on the quality of the GEF portfolio, GEF policies and processes, governance and health of the partnership, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The evaluations also assess the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of GEF-supported activities and processes in delivering expected outputs and outcomes. During the course of the plan period, the IEO will prepare several performance evaluations, many of which are directly related to the GEF 2020 Strategy's operational principles: these include Annual Performance Reports (APRs), and targeted studies on several performance-related topics such as the self-evaluation systems of the Agencies, resource allocation, non-grant instruments, the effects of the expansion of the GEF partnership, the new project management information and the results-based management systems with the focus on core indicators, the knowledge management system, the re-designed policies on safeguards, gender mainstreaming, engagement with civil society and indigenous peoples, and the overall governance of the GEF partnership.

Annual Performance Report

20. The APR is a feature product of the IEO's performance evaluation work. Based on the information received on completed projects, the APR presents a detailed account of the performance of the GEF portfolio in terms of project results, processes that may affect project results, and M&E arrangements. It also provides feedback on the quality of reporting by the agencies on completed projects. The APR also presents management action records, which track adoption of the Council's decisions across the GEF partnership. Based on the emerging needs of the partnership, the IEO will continue to present targeted studies on various performance-related topics or special themes. The APR2019 will have a special theme on sustainable transport, APR 2020 will take a deep dive into the self-evaluation systems of GEF Agencies, APR 2021 will review the updated Project Management Information System (PMIS).

LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Reports

21. The LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Reports (AERs) during FY20-23 will continue to report on the performance of the LDCF and SCCF through assessment of completed projects using information from terminal evaluations. As the LDCF/SCCF portfolio matures the submission of an increasing number of terminal evaluations² will permit more detailed assessment of the portfolio's performance including project results, processes that may affect project results, M&E arrangements, gender consideration, innovative approaches, lessons learned and good practices. The IEO will report on updates of the LDCF and SCCF program evaluations conducted during FY16-17 in the AER. The IEO proposes to update the LDCF program evaluation in FY20 and the SCCF program evaluation in FY21. The updates will include an assessment of the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation and will provide evaluative evidence on the progress towards LDCF/SCCF objectives and for future revision of the adaptation strategy. During FY20-23 AERs will also report on special studies and other assessments, in line with the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation. Potential additional topics to report on are multi-trust fund projects, engagement with the private sector, and systemic impact. The AER will continue to present management action records to track adoption of the LDCF/SCCF Council's decisions across the GEF partnership.

Additionality in the GEF

22. Analogous to the study on transformational change in the GEF, the IEO has undertaken a study on additionality which will be included in OPS7. This study developed a framework to better understand GEF's additionality, and applied this in the context of completed projects. This framework has the potential to be applied at the early project design stage to assess the potential for additionality. A similar framework for understanding and applying transformational change was developed in GEF-6.

² It is estimated that the number of terminal evaluations submitted will grow at an increasing rate.

Innovation in the GEF

23. This study will understand the process of promoting innovation for global environmental benefits through GEF interventions. Since its inception in 1991, there has been an expectation that the GEF would support innovative technologies and approaches and would help overcome barriers to their adoption at scale. More recently, the GEF 2020 vision, as well as the GEF-7 Programming Directions have emphasized support for innovation as a priority for the partnership necessary to address global environmental challenges. This study will develop a framework for understanding the factors and conditions that influence the promotion of innovation in GEF-supported projects and programs. This framework is intended for use at various stages of the project cycle: during design, implementation, at completion and beyond. The study will draw on lessons from the scientific and development literature, key informant interviews, portfolio and case study analysis. The final report will be presented to the Council at the spring 2020 meeting.

VII. COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION OF THE GEF

24. The Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6) was completed and presented to the 7th replenishment of the GEF. While performance-related concerns continue to be addressed, with greater maturity of the GEF portfolio and an increasing cumulative body of work, impacts and related issues are now given more attention, including topics related to the drivers of environmental degradation, transformational change, multiple benefits, and integrated programs. Institutional issues related to GEF systems on results and knowledge management, policies on safeguards, indigenous peoples and civil society and the overall governance and health of the partnership will also be addressed. The Comprehensive Evaluation to be conducted towards the end of GEF-7, would be considered the seventh in the series of overall evaluations of the GEF.

25. It is proposed that the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation (OPS7) will indicatively have as its overarching theme GEF's contribution to additionality, innovation and transformational change. It would focus specifically on GEF strategies, the increasing shift towards programmatic approaches, integrated and impact programs, as well as the GEF's performance and demonstrated strengths in driving innovation, scaling up and transformative change. As the GEF-7 programming directions and the GEF 2020 Strategy emphasize integrated approaches and impact programs, and with more evidence from the implementation of the integrated approaches likely to be available, OPS7 would aim to examine the evidence on results and the process of these programs, in view of the GEF's mandate to produce global environmental benefits. The entire IEO work program has been designed so that multiple evaluations (Annex, Table 4) can be brought to bear to shed light on these strategic questions.

26. Adaptation to climate change will be included in the OPS7 through various channels. It will, in particular, bring in evaluative evidence from the program evaluations of LDCF and SCCF.

27. The Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF would also bring in evaluative evidence from important performance and process evaluations, including the APRs, and

experiences from non-grant financing and GEF interventions in supply chains. Importantly, the Comprehensive Evaluation will report on gender mainstreaming in the GEF against the OPS5 review of the 2011 GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and a review of the Gender Equality Action Plan approved by the Council in November 2014.

28. With the passage of time, the GEF portfolio has matured. As a result, there has been a steady increase in the number of projects that are completed each year. From about 40 terminal evaluations submitted per year in 2004–05, the number of terminal evaluations submitted by the Agencies has increased to about 193 in 2018, accounting for \$616.6 million in GEF grants. The cumulative number of terminal evaluations has increased from 108 in 2004, when the Office first began tracking terminal evaluations, to 1567 in 2019. This large pool of terminal evaluations that are now accessible provide opportunities for the IEO to prepare deeper analyses and to uncover new relationships which influence outcomes and sustainability. Given the increase in annual terminal evaluation submissions and the growth in the cumulative number of terminal evaluations, more resources are being used to undertake these analyses.

VIII. POLICY, GUIDANCE, AND METHODOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

GEF Evaluation Policy

29. Given the evolving nature of the GEF partnership—including the expansion of the number of GEF Agencies—the GEF M&E policy has been appropriately separated into two: a monitoring policy and an evaluation policy. The Evaluation Policy has been submitted as a separate working document for Council approval.

Terminal Evaluation Guidelines

30. The IEO issues terminal evaluation guidelines to provide the GEF partner Agencies with guidance on the preparation of terminal evaluations. These guidelines cover topics including, but not restricted to, the purpose and scope of terminal evaluations, roles and responsibilities, and communication with the IEO. Since the IEO last issued terminal evaluation guidelines in 2008, there has been progress in several areas. The IEO now gives greater attention to concerns related to gender and to reporting on progress to impact. With the roll out of the new evaluation policy, the terminal evaluation guidelines will be updated to reflect the changes, and include, for example, guidance on program-level terminal evaluations.

Methodologies to Measure Impacts

31. Since 2012, the framework for broader adoption and progress towards impact has been used to evaluate the relevance of the GEF focal area strategies; progress made toward impact of a portfolio of 450 projects; the relevance of the GEF portfolio in specific countries; and the results of GEF support and factors affecting impact in international waters, climate change mitigation, and biodiversity at the regional, country, market, and site scales. The IEO continues to apply a broad spectrum of approaches and evaluation methodologies to measure the outcome and impacts of GEF supported interventions, including remote sensing, quasi-

experimental designs, rapid impact evaluations, carbon valuations, alongside other qualitative methods to measure environmental and socio-economic co-benefits. The IEO is also collaborating with universities to create web applications to summarize portfolios and to understand pre- and post-intervention trends in ocean health and human welfare, using changes in marine-related laws and regulations, fish catch, and marine protected area coverage as impact indicators in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME). Geospatial analysis has been integrated with the field-based case studies in the SCCEs.

32. The IEO will continue to apply innovative evaluative approaches drawing on multi-disciplinary knowledge from fields such as conservation science, forestry, geography, remote sensing, economics, statistics and social sciences to assess progress, and to measure environmental outcomes and impact.

Evaluating Policies and Practices related to Gender, Safeguards and Indigenous Peoples in GEF Programming

33. During GEF-7, the IEO will continue its work on methodological development to include dimensions of gender equality in evaluations. Approach papers for major IEO evaluations will integrate gender standards and principles in the evaluation methodology and process. The IEO will also continue to report annually to the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) on the level of integration of gender equality and empowerment of women in its evaluations. Assessment of gender mainstreaming in the GEF will be included in the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF. The IEO will assess progress in implementation of the new GEF Policy on Gender Equality that came into effect on July 1, 2018 and a review of the IPs GEF Gender Implementation Strategy approved by the Council in June 2018. The implementation of the GEF minimum standards on environmental and social safeguards and GEF's principles and guidelines for engagement with indigenous peoples' will also be evaluated.

Contributions to GEF Working Groups and Inter-Agency Meetings

34. During GEF-6, the IEO participated in several working groups and inter agency meetings convened by the Secretariat. These working groups covered topics such as co-financing, gender, the project activity cycle, greenhouse gas emissions avoidance benefit measurement, STAR, Project Management Information System, knowledge management, and results-based management. The IEO continues to participate in these working groups to ensure the utility of its evaluations by making evaluative evidence available to these groups; providing clarifications on data sets, findings, and conclusions; and pointing out the limitations of the work. During GEF-7, the IEO will participate in working groups and inter-agency meetings at the Secretariat's, Agencies and STAP request and, in a role consistent with the IEO mandate and independent status.

IX. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, LEARNING, AND EVALUATION UTILIZATION

The purpose of the IEO knowledge management, learning, and outreach activities is to increase the use of evaluations across the GEF partnership and in countries, and to promote the application of lessons from evaluations to improve the overall performance and impact of the GEF.

35. During GEF-6, IEO made a substantive progress in knowledge management activities in response to the findings of its 2015 knowledge needs assessment (GEF/ME/C.49/Inf.01). A prevailing need, identified at that time, was for products that would synthesize evaluative evidence, lessons and good practices on priority topics, such as focal areas and cross-cutting themes. Accordingly, focal area studies and meso-level evaluation products were developed and shared with stakeholders to support learning from evidence. The first two meso-level products, the Review of the GEF Support for Transformational Change and an Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF's Additionality, drew on existing evaluative evidence with limited field work. Since their introduction, there has been an increased demand for learning products of such nature from GEF partners. Moreover, to help with timely and user-friendly sharing of evaluation findings, IEO introduced several communication products, including learning briefs, videos, and infographics. IEO presented evaluation findings during a variety of thematic and evaluation conferences, tailored presentations for the country constituency meetings during the GEF Assembly, used social media to raise awareness of evaluations, and exchange relevant information with partners and regional evaluation associations. The IEO website has been revamped with enhanced search function capabilities and interactive data and maps displays that support users in independent exploration of evaluations.

36. As part of its work on strengthening country stakeholder evaluation capacities, IEO will develop new training materials and an on-line training tool on terminal evaluations and good practices. In addition, IEO will explore possibility of preparing a learning series for project designers and implementers. These short, practical notes will present findings from evaluations in a digestible manner, for example, on factors affecting delivery and performance of GEF projects, design and implementation for scaling up, transformation, additionality. The notes will be published in English, French, and Spanish to ensure maximum utility for the end users. The IEO will explore possibility to collaborate with existing multilateral knowledge platforms such as the Global Delivery Initiative to systematically extract lessons on project design and implementation for these series using data science.

37. The IEO will systematically communicate evaluation findings to members of the GEF partnership and to broader audiences. All major evaluations will have a communication plan; for all completed evaluations learning briefs will be prepared and, where appropriate, other bite-sized communication products, such as short videos. IEO will host presentations and webinars and will share evaluation findings at relevant platforms, conferences, and stakeholder meetings. The IEO website plans to feature additional data from evaluations to inform stakeholders on country ratings and results. Social media channels will continue to expand coverage of office-related events and conferences in real-time.

Participation in GEF Meetings and Evaluation Networks

38. The IEO has always served as a source of information and resources to the Council, government focal points, and stakeholders in general. For that reason, the Office will continue developing instructional and learning products to facilitate the dissemination of lessons learned from its evaluations. At the same time and in coordination with the GEF Country Support Program, the IEO will continue to revise the training materials to be distributed during the Extended Constituency Workshops.

39. The IEO is aware of the importance of being a part of the general dialogue within the global evaluation community. During GEF-7, IEO will maintain an active role in the UN Evaluation Group and the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the international financial institutions. Other relevant networks include the Results, Measurement and Evidence Stream of the World Bank Group and the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS). Also, the Office will continue to maintain close interaction with universities and research institutes on specific methodological and analytical work, both for the benefit of its evaluations and in order to remain at the forefront of evaluation approaches in the multilateral world.

Special Initiatives

40. Special initiatives of the IEO are financed through voluntary funding outside the budget approved by the Council. The Special Initiatives Trust Fund of the Office was set up with the approval of the Council in 2006.

Earth-Eval Community of Practice

41. The IEO initiated Climate-Eval, a community of practice on the evaluation of climate change and development since 2008. This initiative is aimed at establishing a virtual network in which practitioners active in climate change and development evaluation can exchange, access, and solicit current information related to effective evaluation practices in this rapidly evolving field. Consistent with the broader scope of GEF's work, Climate-Eval was renamed Earth-Eval in late 2017. Earth-Eval contributes to building capacity among evaluation practitioners through the identification of best practices and lessons learned, and the development of indicators and guidelines for climate change projects and programs.

Third International Conference on Evaluating Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resource Management

42. The IEO will join forces with a leading evaluation organization, IDEAS, to convene a conference in October 2019 representing all key interests in the evaluation of environmental sustainability. The first two conferences were held in 2008 and 2014, resulting in authoritative books based on selected presentations at the conference which were developed further into substantive chapters. The Third Conference will bring to the Prague Assembly leading practitioners and thinkers on environmental evaluation from the international and national public organizations in the North and the South, the academic community, environmental

organizations and thinktanks, civil society and the private sector. The participants will be encouraged to share their concrete experiences with environmental interventions and their evaluations on various environmental topics, including natural resources management, biodiversity conservation, land degradation, sustainable forestry, water management, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation.

43. The specific themes for the Third International Conference will include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Transformative change towards environmental sustainability
- (2) Innovation related to environment and climate change programs
- (3) Climate change adaptation
- (4) Climate, environment, fragility and conflict
- (5) Big data, indicators, and geospatial tools

Peer Review of the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF

44. At the December 2018 Council meeting, the IEO proposed to the Council to undertake the Third Peer Review of the IEO as part of its regular work program. The Council approved the decision and recommended that the IEO plan and conduct the review and present the findings to the Council in June 2020. The main objective of the proposed Review is to enhance IEO's impact and strengthen its role as an independent evaluator of the GEF's work by providing suggestions and recommendations to the GEF Council. The review will be based on good practice principles established for peer reviews by the UN Evaluation Group and the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the MDBs. The Review should clearly identify IEO's main strengths and areas where improvement is necessary. The Review will be submitted for the Council's consideration for any changes in the mandate, direction or structure of the IEO. Operational improvements emanating from the Review will be the responsibility of the IEO.

X. ESTIMATED BUDGETS FOR THE IEO FOR GEF-7 & A FINAL REPORT ON GEF-6

45. The approved budget for the IEO for the GEF-7 replenishment period is \$24.5 million. The estimated annual budgets and multiannual budgets for the IEO are shown in table 1. The IEO work program has been tailored so that the approved budgets will allow for an effective and efficient delivery of the proposed work program. The IEO budget for the first year of the GEF-7 cycle has been calculated at US\$6.2 million, of which US\$4.7 million are to cover the office fixed and variable cost that includes salaries and benefits plus office space, training and networks. The budget for evaluation work to be executed during FY20 is US\$1.3 million (Annex Table 4).

46. The annual budget includes fixed costs on salaries and general operations; the variable costs include allocations for participation in networks, knowledge management initiatives, the Third International Conference on Environmental Evaluation, the Professional Peer Review of

the IEO, and professional development. The multiannual budgets include the costs of consultants, travel, and miscellaneous expenses. As the evaluations will be all led by IEO staff utilizing in-house human resources to the extent possible, staff cost will be charged directly to the individual evaluation budgets via the World Bank time recording system. The special initiatives trust fund receives a small amount of funding for special initiatives such as the third international conference on environmental evaluation, developing models to assess socioeconomic benefits in sustainable forest management, and the Earth-Eval platform.

Table 1: Approved IEO Budget for GEF-7 (FY20-23)

	GEF-7 (million)				
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	Total
Fixed Cost					
Salaries	2.409	2.527	2.651	2.781	10.368
Benefits	1.686	1.769	1.856	1.947	7.258
Sub-total (A)	4.095	4.296	4.507	4.728	17.626
Operations (B)	522	529	534	531	2.116
Total (A + B)	4.617	4.825	5.041	5.259	19.742
Variable Cost					
Prof. Dev.	20	20	20	20	80
Networks	20	20	20	20	80
Management	260	65	65	65	455
Total (C)	300	105	105	105	615
Total (A+B+C) = D	4.917	4,930	5.146	5.364	20.357
Evaluations (E)	1.300	1.700	900	243	4.143
Total (D + E)	6.217	6.630	6.046	5.607	24.500

The management variable cost for FY20, includes the Peer Review and Third Conference

IEO Total Budget for GEF-6

47. For the GEF-6 period, the IEO total expenses, as of June 30, 2019, have been estimated at \$20.2 million. The original approved budget for this period was of US\$19 million. However, the World Bank increased the staff benefits from 50 percent to 70 percent annually, starting July 1, 2017. The extra funds required to cover these costs was calculated at US\$1.2 million or US\$600 thousand for fiscal years 18 and 19 respectively. It is estimated that the IEO budget for GEF-6 will be executed in full.

Table 2: IEO Budget for GEF-6

GEF-6 IEO Operations (million)					
Expense Categories	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19 (est.)	Disbursement
<i>Staff Costs</i>	2.369	2.593	3.289	3.685	11.936
<i>Consultant Fees</i>	6	2	74	5	87
<i>Associated Overhead Costs</i>	51	43	51	41	186
<i>Travel expenses</i>	150	170	174	100	594
<i>Equipment Costs</i>	316	511	553	490	1.870
<i>Training</i>	31	30	27	12	100
<i>Contractual Services</i>	75	33	0	28	136
<i>Participation in Networks</i>	6	34	26	18	84
Sub – Total (A)	3.004	3.416	4.194	4.379	14.993
GEF-6 IEO Evaluations (millions)					
Expense Categories	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19 (est.)	Disbursement
<i>Staff Costs</i>	426	493	296	185	1.400
<i>Consultant Fees</i>	966	1,506	417	335	3,224
<i>Associated Overhead Costs</i>	5	9	11	1	26
<i>Travel expenses</i>	226	194	48	87	555
<i>Dissemination</i>	15	2	9	1	27
Sub – Total (B)	1.638	2.204	773	609	5.232
Total (A+B)	4.642	5.620	4.975	4,988	20.225

IEO Staffing

The IEO is starting GEF-7 with a total of 18 permanent staff (Table 3). A senior evaluation officer and an evaluation officer have moved on to other positions. These staff will be replaced with 2 staff at the level of evaluation officer (GF). A senior evaluation officer in the office is reimbursed through the Donor Funded Staffing program from Japan.

Table 3: IEO Staff FY-20	
1	Director
1	Chief Evaluation Officer
3	Senior Evaluation Officer
1	Senior Operations Officer
4	Evaluation Officer
1	Knowledge Management Officer
1	Research Assistant
1	Senior Program Assistant
1	Program Assistant
3	Research Analyst
1	Data and Systems Analyst

ANNEX

Table 4: Indicative IEO Evaluation Program FY19-22

FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
EVALUATIONS			
Evaluation of GEF's interventions in Biodiversity Mainstreaming (completed)	Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation Africa Sudano-Sahelian Biomes (ongoing)	Evaluation of the Integrated Approach Pilots/Impact Programs	Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7)
Evaluation of the GEF-UNIDO Global Cleantech Program (completed)	Review of the Agency Self Evaluation Systems	Evaluation of the Implementation of GEF's Policies on: Gender, Safeguards, Stakeholder Engagement	Evaluation of Enabling Activities, including CBIT, Biosafety
Value for Money in Sustainable Forest Management Interventions (ongoing)	Sustainable Forest Management Study	Evaluation of GEF's Interventions in private sector supply chains (agricultural commodities, gold, fisheries)	
Evidence from GEF's Experience with Scale-Up and Replication (ongoing)	Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation LDCs (ongoing)	Evaluation of the Country Support Program	

	Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation SIDS (ongoing)	Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation with a regional focus on Latin America	
	Evaluation of Small Grants Program (strategic themes, such as upgrading policy)	Follow-up studies to the evaluation of STAR, RBM, KM Updates to focal area studies (special themes focusing on innovation, scaling up and transformational change) Non-Gant Instruments (NGI) with a focus on specific initiatives	
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS			
Annual Performance Report (APR) (special chapter on transportation)	APR	APR (special chapter on review of the GEF Portal)	
LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report (AER)	LDCF/SCCF AER	LDCF/SCCF AER	LDCF/SCCF AER
LEARNING PRODUCTS/POLICIES			
Understanding Additionality in the GEF Evaluation Policy	GEF in Fragile and Post Conflict Environments Review of Medium-Sized Projects Innovation in the GEF Peer Review of the IEO	OPS7 approach paper	

