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EVALUATION OF GEF ENABLING ACTIVITIES

(Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF)

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFR	Africa
APR	Annual performance report
ASGM NAP	Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining National Action Plans
BOAD	West African Development Bank
BUR	Biennial Update Report
CAF	Development Bank of Latin America
CEO	Chief executive officer
CHM	Clearing-House Mechanism
CI	Conservation International
COP	Conference of the parties
CSO	Civil society organization
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FECO	Foreign Economic Cooperation Office, Ministry of Environmental Protection of China
FSP	Full-sized project
FUNBIO	Brazilian Biodiversity Fund
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GCIP	Global Cleantech Innovation Programme
GEB	Global environmental benefit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAP	Integrated approach pilot
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LDC	Least developed country
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDB	Multilateral development bank
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MIA	Minamata Initial Assessment
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSP	Medium-sized project
MTR	Midterm report

NAP	National Action Plans
NAPA	National Programmes of Adaptation
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessments
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NIP	National Implementation Plans
NPFE	National Portfolio Formulation Exercises
OFP	Operational focal point
PIF	Project identification form
PIR	Performance implementation report
POP	Persistent organic pollutant
PPF	Project preparation facility
PPG	Project preparation grant
SAP	Simplified approval process
SCCE	Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SIDS	Small island developing states
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
TAF	Technical assistance facility
TER	Terminal evaluation rating
TNA	Technology Needs Assessments
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WWF-US	World Wildlife Fund

Note: All dollar amounts are in U.S. dollars unless otherwise indicated. The GEF replenishment periods are as follows:

Pilot phase: 1991–94

GEF-1: 1995–98

GEF-2: 1999–2002

GEF-3: 2003–06

GEF-4: 2006–10

GEF-5: 2010–14

GEF-6: 2014–18

GEF-7: 2018–22

Executive Summary

The GEF defines an enabling activity as a “project for the preparation of a plan, strategy, or report to fulfill commitments under a Convention” (GEF, 2021). They represent the “basic building block of GEF assistance to countries.” GEF Enabling activities are a channel through which countries fulfill their essential communication requirements for a specific convention by “providing basic and essential level of information to enable policy and strategic decisions to be made or assisting in plans that identify priority activities within a country” (GEF, 2014).

The objective of this Evaluation of GEF Enabling Activities addresses three main areas of enquiry: (i) *Relevance*, (ii) *Effectiveness and Results*, and (iii) *Efficiency*. It assesses the role of enabling activities in helping countries meet their convention obligations, their role in developing national policies as well as preparing national plans and strategies, and the efficiency of the direct access mechanism. The evaluation drew on information obtained from a global survey, a desk review of documents, and interviews with staff from Conventions, GEF Agencies, and the GEF Secretariat. The evaluation was completed for the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7).

The main findings based of this evaluation are:

Enabling activities are predominantly viewed as a tool for supporting countries in reporting to the Conventions. The enabling activities modality is achieving it’s intended objective of helping countries fulfill their obligations under the Conventions for which the GEF is the financial mechanism. Some Conventions suggested that if enabling activity resources had not been available, then reports would not have been produced on time, and so the ability to check, understand, and assess implementation would have been basically undermined.

Enabling activities play a significant role beyond Convention reporting and are helping to fill several gaps. Enabling activities play an important role in the identification of needs; development of enabling environments for future projects; and development of accurate data and baseline information. They have been less effective as capacity building support when reporting is undertaken by international consultants.

Enabling activities are aligned with national priorities, but the link to Convention Guidance is less clear. There is a complicated relationship between Convention guidance and enabling activities. There can be a link between national reporting that is supported by enabling activities, and the evolution of Guidance. However, the relationship is Convention-specific. Where Conventions are highly politicized ... and example being the UNFCCC ... there is less room for national reporting to influence Guidance. Where reports are technical in nature, and there is a review process where report findings feed directly into Convention outcomes, they have a greater influence.

The original purpose of enabling activities has been fulfilled, but needs are changing over time, and the focus of enabling activity-supported projects is shifting. As time has passed, and countries, GEF Agencies, and Conventions have become more familiar with the requirements of

Convention guidance, there has been a shift beyond formal reporting, to examining how enabling activities can be applied as a tool to support actual compliance.

Achievement of results is determined by resources, national capacity, and political will. A combination of factors affect the ability of enabling activities to achieve results. The main determinants include availability of resources, national capacity, and political will.

The approval process is considered to be efficient, but post-approval, there are concerns about disbursement and implementation. Stakeholders all agree that umbrella arrangements face significant delays at two main junctures: during the preparation of the umbrella arrangement; and, during the disbursement phase. With regards to the former, a significant problem appears to be obtaining all OFP endorsement letters prior to submission for approval by the GEF. The umbrella approach can only move as “fast as the slowest player”. The GEF Agencies exhibited considerable frustration with the length of time it can take to complete an enabling activity project. It was stressed that enabling activity projects are supposed to be discrete and short. However, many do not finish on time.

Direct access was a good idea in theory, but it is too bureaucratic and cumbersome. Direct access was tested in GEF-5 and was ultimately not successful due to the transaction costs/burden associated with World Bank procedures. The GEF is not an independent legal entity, and disbursement of funds directly to countries is onerous for GEF staff, the World Bank, and countries alike.

Ad hoc approaches to Convention reporting do not necessarily lead to good quality work. Ad hoc approaches to Convention reporting may affect the quality of reporting outcomes over time. National planning processes should not be restricted to a six-month period before the submission of a report. A more sophisticated approach would be to consider the process of reporting as adaptive and ongoing, with a semi-permanent local team dedicated to the task.

The burdens on GEF Agencies are too high. A problem for the Agencies is that they are required to subsidize the cost for delayed projects. The Agency fee is not covering extensions, due to the necessity to provide ongoing oversight. The claim was made that the cost-prohibitive nature of managing enabling activities is one reason why other Agencies are not involved.

The processing and management of enabling activities is perceived to be not agile enough. Enabling activities are more complex than they need to be and should be more agile. The front-end approval process is efficient, but disbursement and implementation are not.

Addressing the inefficiencies in how the processes of project approval, disbursement, and implementation are carried out would help to strengthen this instrument. Suggestions for consideration include developing a more strategic and systemic approach with countries and Agencies; and engaging with agencies to identify efficiency gains by reducing the time between GEF approval and first disbursement, and allowing for a wider range of enabling activities implementors.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is an international financial organization that provides grants to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for projects that address global environmental concerns related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, and chemicals and waste. The GEF has provided over \$21.7 billion in grants and mobilized an additional \$141.54 billion in financing for over 5,409 projects and programs in 170 countries.¹ Today, the GEF is an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector. The governance structure of the GEF includes an Assembly, a Council, a Secretariat, a Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, the World Bank as Trustee, and an Independent Evaluation Office (IEO).

2. The GEF provides support to countries in three main modalities: (i) enabling activities, (ii) medium-sized projects, and (iii) full-sized projects. Additional financing is provided through programs such as the GEF Small Grants Programme², Programmatic Approaches, Integrated Approach Pilots, Integrated Programs, and the Non-Grant Instrument Program. The GEF IEO is conducting an evaluation of the GEF enabling activity modality. The GEF enabling activities are foundational modalities specifically designed to prepare plans and/or strategies, and to help countries fulfill their obligations under the Conventions to which the GEF is the financial mechanism. The GEF currently serves as the financial mechanism and funds enabling activities related to five conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

1.1 Evaluation objectives, questions, methods, and limitations

3. The objective of the Evaluation of GEF Enabling Activities is to provide the GEF Council with an assessment of enabling activities and generate evaluative evidence for the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7). The evaluation addresses three main areas of enquiry: (i) *Relevance*, (ii) *Effectiveness and Results*, and (iii) *Efficiency*. It assesses the role of enabling activities in helping countries meet their convention obligations, their role in developing national policies as well as preparing national plans and strategies, and the efficiency of the direct access mechanism. The primary audience is the GEF Council and the evaluation will inform OPS7 and the GEF's 8th replenishment process. The evaluation will also be useful to the GEF Secretariat, to the broader constituency of GEF Agencies, and to GEF member countries as well as civil society partners.

¹ Number of projects/programs and financial information as of February 2021.

4. The evaluation questions are derived from: 1) the GEF-7 programmatic directions; 2) the main issues identified by previous GEF IEO evaluations; 3) guidance from the Conventions; and 4) from issues of concern for the GEF Council. The key evaluation questions are as follows:

Relevance

- What is the strategic importance of enabling activities in the GEF suite of modalities?
- To what extent are activities under the GEF enabling activity modality relevant to:
 - Conference of Parties guidance;
 - GEF focal area strategies; and
 - recipient countries' national agendas in climate change, biodiversity, POPs, mercury, and land degradation?
- How has the use of enabling activities changed over time?

Effectiveness and Results

- What is the evidence on the role of enabling activities in developing national policies as distinct from preparing national plans and strategies?
- Complementarities or overlaps between enabling activities and other Agency projects in the GEF—is there scope for efficiencies?

Efficiency

- How are enabling activities processed? Is there economy in terms of processing times and resources in bundling enabling activities as large projects, programs, and umbrella arrangements?
- How is the allocation for enabling activities being spent?
- What have the conventions done to streamline reporting, internally and among other conventions? What are the opportunities for the GEF to streamline enabling activities support to enable countries comply with convention requirements?

5. The evaluation questions were addressed through a mixed methods approach encompassing both quantitative and qualitative analytical methods and tools. An evaluation matrix composed of the key questions, relevant indicators, sources of information, and methods is presented in Annex 1: Evaluation matrix. The evaluation conducted extensive interviews with GEF Agencies, the GEF Secretariat, and the multilateral conventions for which the GEF is the financial mechanism. The evaluation conducted a global survey sent to all GEF Operations Focal Points (OFPs) and members of their staff to gather views on the effectiveness and efficiency of GEF enabling activities. The evaluation additionally did a portfolio review of GEF enabling activities the purpose of which is to identify and extract data from project documents for GEF-financed enabling activities to assess (i) their coherence with country, convention, and GEF priorities; (ii) their areas of intervention and contribution; and (iii) their adherence to GEF policies on stakeholder engagement, gender and safeguards. Synergies with other ongoing evaluations were sought by coordinated data gathering, analysis, and cross-

fertilization. The evaluation additionally drew on existing IEO evaluative evidence and ongoing evaluations which cover enabling activities through case studies.

6. The evaluation covers enabling activities designed and implemented beginning in GEF-4. The portfolio is composed of 544 MSPs with \$ 262.2² million in GEF grant and \$ 187.97 million in planned co-financing. The evaluation also examined the global and umbrella arrangements utilized in the GEF to assist countries in meeting their obligations to the Conventions, which, between GEF-4 and GEF-7, amount to 119 projects/programs and an additional \$348.28 million in GEF grants. The evaluation consisted of a quality at entry analysis of a sample of enabling activities and desk case studies in three countries: Jamaica, Madagascar, and Thailand. Cross-cutting issues such as gender, resilience, and private sector and CSO involvement were covered where opportunities for specific data gathering arose. Triangulation of the qualitative as well as quantitative data and information collected was conducted at the completion of the data analysis and information gathering phase to determine trends and to identify the main findings, lessons, and conclusions. In line with IEO practice, an internal peer reviewer was selected for this evaluation. The approach paper was shared for comments with stakeholders and peers in the GEF IEO.

7. The evaluation team was limited by time constraints and budgetary restrictions in the selection and analysis of the number of enabling activity projects for deeper learning. This limitation was mitigated through a sample of project reviews and country case studies analysis. GEF enabling activities are not required to submit terminal evaluations unless they are approved under the non-expedited procedures. This is a significant limiting factor for the evaluation, considering that less than 4 percent of all enabling activities fall under this category. It was therefore not possible to obtain portfolio-level results using terminal evaluations.

8. The evaluation used the GEF portal data as of February 28th, 2021.

1.2 Defining the GEF modalities (enabling activity modality)

9. The GEF provides support to countries either through projects such as the: (i) enabling activities, (ii) medium-sized projects, and (iii) full-sized projects, or through GEF programs including the Programmatic Approaches, Integrated Approach Pilots, Integrated Programs. GEF programs are long-term strategic arrangements of interlinked projects that aim to achieve large-scale impact on the global environment. The GEF also provides support through the GEF Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP). The GEF SGP, while procedurally approved as an FSP, is administered by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and makes funds up to \$50,000 directly to community-based organizations (CBOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In its fifth operational phase, the SGP updated its operational guidelines to allow for

² Grant amount including project preparation grant but excluding associated agency fees.

strategic projects of up to \$150,000. The GEF additionally provides support through the Non-Grant Instrument Program.

10. The GEF defines an enabling activity as a “project for the preparation of a plan, strategy, or report to fulfill commitments under a Convention” (GEF, 2021). They represent the “basic building block of GEF assistance to countries.” GEF Enabling activities are a channel through which countries fulfill their essential communication requirements for a specific convention by “providing basic and essential level of information to enable policy and strategic decisions to be made, or assisting in plans that identify priority activities within a country” (GEF, 2014).

11. Enabling activities may be approved under an expedited process for funds up to \$1 million or as an MSP for funds from \$1 million to \$2 million, or can be approved through the FSP project cycle procedures for funds exceeding \$2 million.³ GEF enabling activities can additionally be financed through the direct access modality, by which nationally entities may submit a proposal directly to, and enter into a grant agreement with, the GEF Secretariat, in order to access resources up to \$500,000 for preparation of convention reports to the CBD or UNFCCC, and up to \$150,000 for reporting to the UNCCD. Finally, enabling activities can be approved through an umbrella project modality, whereby the GEF approves one proposal submitted by an implementing agency on behalf of a set of countries. Once approved, the implementing agencies disburses funds to countries and provides support with implementation and delivery of outcomes as appropriate.

12. As foundational activities, the GEF enabling activities qualify for full cost funding from the GEF and do not have co-financing requirements. They also are not eligible for a project preparation grant (PPG), nor are they required to submit monitoring and evaluation reports.

1.3 Background and history of the enabling activity modality

13. The GEF enabling activities modality were first described in the GEF’s *Draft Operational Strategy* at the GEF’s 5th Council session in July 1995. The modality along with the *Revised Draft Operational Strategy* were approved by the 6th GEF Council in October 1995. The introduction of the enabling activities modality came in light of the Council’s approval of the provisions for the GEF to fund enabling activities for UNFCCC in February 1995. In April 1996, following a request from the COP2 meeting of the CBD and the Council approved the operational criteria for biodiversity enabling activities. Following the GEF becoming the financial mechanism to the Stockholm Convention, the GEF approved in April 2001 the initial guidelines for enabling activities under the convention. Similarly, in 2014, the GEF approved the initial guidelines for enabling activities under the Minamata Convention in preparation to serve as the financial mechanism once the convention entered into force. For the UNCCD however, though the GEF

³ The GEF considers all financing up to \$2 million MSPs, however GEF enabling activities may be MSPs, but may follow a separate expedited procedure, or can be approved as an FSP umbrella arrangement.

became the financial mechanism to the convention in GEF-4, enabling activities related to the UNCCD such as the NAP and NAP alignment were not funded through the GEF until GEF-5.

14. The enabling activity modality in itself has not changed since its inception in 1995. The modality gained efficiencies in the approval process through expediting approvals but has not been structurally changed. During the 22nd Council meeting, the GEF Council approved new operational procedures for the expedited financing for biodiversity and climate change enabling activities not exceeding \$450,000 and for POPs no exceeding \$500,000. Currently, expedited procedures all followed for all grants up to \$1 million.

15. The GEF has introduced two additional modes in which countries can access enabling activities funds. The first being the introduction of the direct access mechanism in GEF-5 which allows countries to access GEF funds for fulfilling their obligations under the CBD, UNFCCC, and UNCCD directly without the need of going through a GEF implementing agency. The second is the introduction of the umbrella projects.

16. The enabling activities modality was reviewed by the GEF IEO as part of the 2007 *Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities* and again in 2013 in the *Meta-Evaluation of GEF Enabling Activities*.

17. The 2013 Meta evaluation found that GEF enabling activities are effective in helping countries meet their convention obligations and producing strategic plans. Enabling activities were additionally found to be highly relevant in facilitating the development of national policies. The Meta evaluation concluded that enabling activities to have successfully supported the development of enabling environments in countries to meet their convention obligations.

18. The 2007 Joint evaluation and the 2013 Meta evaluation both outlines issues with enabling activities project cycle. While the approval process for enabling activities was swift and efficient, the time for preparing an enabling activity and the subsequent implementation time experience significant delays. The evaluation recognized efforts made by the partnership to increase efficiency, however enabling activities were still found to experience delays both at the formulation and implementation stages.

1.4 Types of GEF enabling activities

19. The evaluation conducted a portfolio level quality at entry review of GEF enabling activities. The desk review conducted a structured portfolio review of a random sample of approved enabling activity projects between GEF-4 and GEF-7. The purpose of the project review was to identify and extract data from project documents for GEF-financed enabling activities to assess (i) their coherence with country, convention, and GEF priorities; (ii) their areas of intervention and contribution; and (iii) their adherence to GEF policies on stakeholder engagement, gender and safeguards.

20. The evaluation conducted reviews for a random sample of 149 enabling activities, with 90% confidence, that were CEO endorsed or approved, under implementation, or completed between GEF-4 to GEF-7.

21. Project reviews indicate that the all enabling activities contribute to *knowledge generation* (100%) followed by *Information sharing and access* (98%) and *policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks* (83%). This is similar to the findings from reviewing enabling activities for the 3 SCCEs, where 87 percent of enabling activities reviewed main area of intervention was *knowledge generation*, and 70 percent had *policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks* as the main area of intervention.

Table 1: Intervention typologies of enabling activities

Area of Intervention	Typology	Enabling Activities (n=149)	
		(n)	(%)
Knowledge and information	Knowledge generation	149	100%
	Information sharing and access	146	98%
	Awareness-raising	98	66%
	Skills-building	130	87%
	Monitoring and evaluation	58	39%
Institutional capacity	Policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks	123	83%
	Governance structures and arrangements	41	28%
	Informal processes for trust building and conflict resolution	1	1%
Implementing strategies	Technologies and approaches	7	5%
	Implementing mechanisms and bodies	0	0%
	Financial mechanisms for implementation and sustainability	1	1%

*Several projects address multiple areas of intervention

2. THE GEF ENABLING ACTIVITIES PORTFOLIO

2.1 Funding

22. As of February 28th, 2021, the GEF had 1370 enabling activities committing \$ 601.2 million in GEF grants⁴ and \$237.11 million in planned co-financing,⁵ accounting for 25 percent of all projects and three percent of GEF grants (Table 2). The full-sized projects, medium-sized projects, as well as the programs⁶ include 164 interventions amounting to \$416.39 million in GEF grants as *umbrella arrangements*⁷ in order to help countries meet their obligations to the conventions.

Table 2: GEF portfolio by modality—pilot phase to date

Modality	Number of projects/programs		Grant amount (\$ millions)		Cofinancing amount (\$ millions)	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Enabling activities	1370	25%	\$ 601.20	3%	\$ 237.11	0.17%
Full-sized projects	2719	50%	\$ 18,136.88	84%	\$ 116,271.67	82%
Medium-sized projects	1219	23%	\$ 1,307.93	6%	\$ 6,239.27	4%
Programs	100	2%	\$ 1,660.62	8%	\$ 18,795.11	13%
Total	5408	-	\$ 21,706.63	-	\$ 141,543.15	-

Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

23. Between GEF-5 and GEF-7, the amount of allocated financing stayed stable at approximately \$200 to \$211 million or 4.7% of the total GEF financing envelop. In comparison the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) amounted to \$140 million in GEF-5 and GEF-6, and \$128 in GEF-7 (2.9% of the GEF overall financing envelop) (Table 3). Despite the relatively small nominal amounts of both the SGP and enabling activities financing, the SGP is operationalized through a strategic and programmatic approach, while GEF enabling activities are viewed as normative support.

⁴ This amount includes project preparation grants, but excludes Agency fees

⁵ Planned cofinancing. Actual cofinancing is only reported on for closed projects with terminal evaluations in the annual performance report database. For consistency, this evaluation reports on planned cofinancing unless otherwise stated

⁶ Programs in the GEF are defined as longer-term and strategic arrangement of individual yet interlinked projects that aim at achieving large-scale impacts on the global environment.

⁷ Umbrella arrangements are a way of combining enabling activities for multiple countries under one umbrella in order to ease the administrative burden associated with developing and securing approval of enabling activities under a single convention for multiple countries.

Table 3: Allocated financing for enabling activities by GEF phase and focal area

	GEF-5 Financing (\$ million)		GEF-6 Financing (\$ million)		GEF-7 Financing (\$ million)	
GEF overall allocation	\$	4,250	\$	4,433	\$	4,433
Small Grants Program	\$140	3.3%	\$140	3.2%	\$128	2.9%
Enabling activities total allocation	\$200	4.7%	\$208	4.7%	\$211	4.8%
Biodiversity	\$60	30.0%	\$13	6.3%	\$46	21.8%
Climate Change	\$80	40.0%	\$130	62.5%	\$110	52.1%
Land Degradation	\$15	7.5%	\$15	7.2%	\$23	10.9%
POPs (Stockholm)	\$35	17.5%	\$20	9.6%	\$18	8.5%
Mercury (Minamata)	\$10	5.0%	\$30	14.4%	\$14	6.6%

24. **The amount of financing available for and used by enabling activities is dependent on the cycles of reporting required from the multilateral conventions.** The number of enabling activities and associated GEF financing over the GEF periods has fluctuated over time. However, accounting for projects that are traditionally considered enabling activities though processed as FSP or MSP umbrella arrangements in the GEF system provides a clearer view of the overall portfolio of GEF enabling activities (Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3). The introduction of new reporting requirements for the climate change convention manifested in an increase of enabling activities allocation under climate change in GEF-6. Similarly, the entry into force of the Minamata convention allowed for an increase of the enabling activities allocation for Minamata under GEF-6.

Figure 1: Enabling activity projects by GEF phase

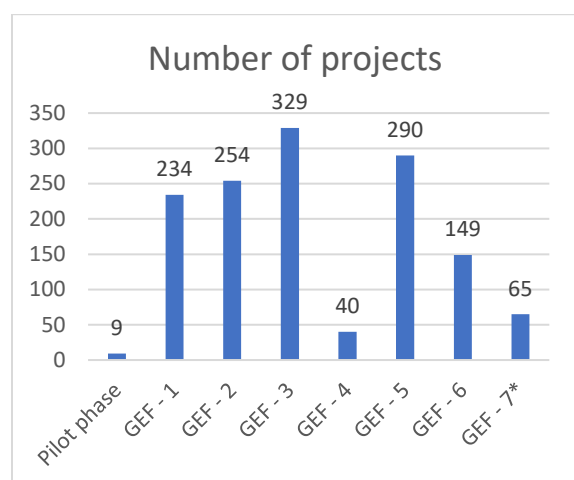
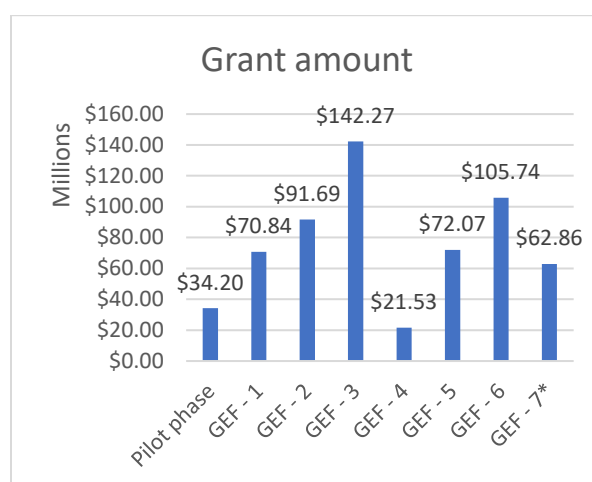


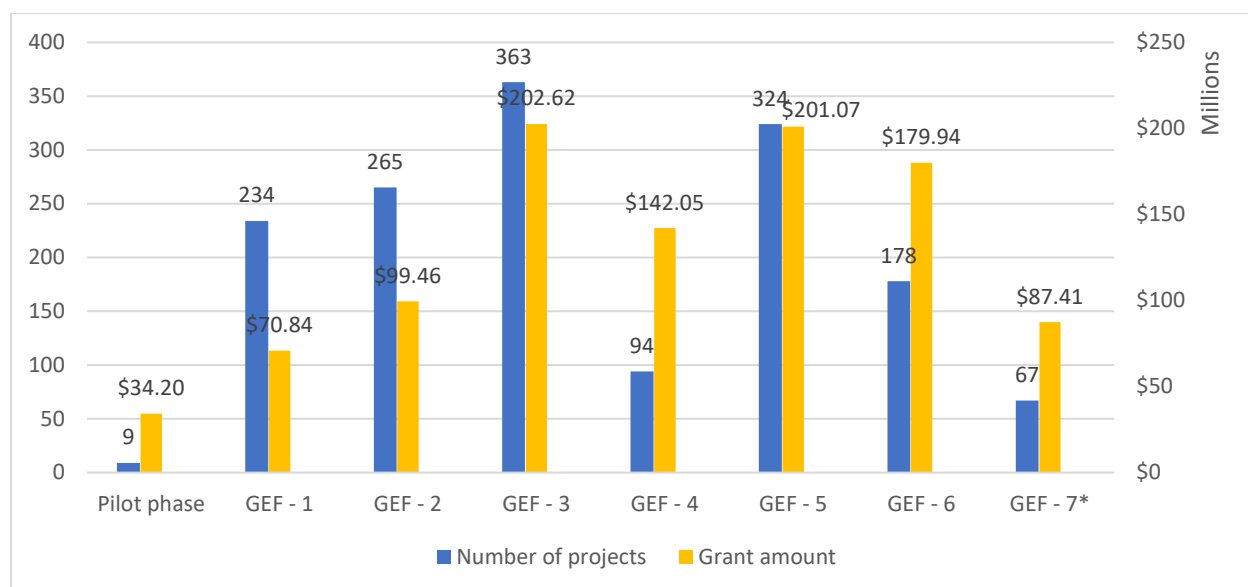
Figure 2: Enabling activity financing by GEF phase



Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

Note: *GEF-7 programming is still underway

Figure 3: GEF enabling activities and umbrella arrangements by GEF phase



Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

Note: *GEF-7 programming is still underway

25. **Umbrella arrangement are larger in size and global in nature.** GEF enabling activities processed under the enabling activity modality account for 89 percent of projects and 59 percent of financing, while the umbrella arrangements, because of their global nature, while they only account for 11 percent of enabling activity projects, they amount to 41% of financing.

Table 4: GEF enabling activities and umbrella arrangements over GEF phases

GEF Phase	Enabling activity modality				Umbrella arrangements				Total	
	Number of projects		Grant amount		Number of projects		Grant amount		Number of projects	Grant amount
	(#)	(%)	(\$ million)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(\$ million)	(%)	(#)	(\$ million)
Pilot phase	9	100%	\$34.20	100%			-		9	\$34.20
GEF - 1	234	100%	\$70.84	100%			-		234	\$70.84
GEF - 2	254	96%	\$91.69	92%	11	4%	\$7.77	8%	265	\$99.46
GEF - 3	329	91%	\$142.27	70%	34	9%	\$60.34	30%	363	\$202.62
GEF - 4	40	43%	\$21.53	15%	54	57%	\$120.52	85%	94	\$142.05
GEF - 5	290	90%	\$72.07	36%	34	10%	\$129.00	64%	324	\$201.07
GEF - 6	149	84%	\$105.74	59%	29	16%	\$74.20	41%	178	\$179.94
GEF - 7*	65	97%	\$62.86	72%	2	3%	\$24.55	28%	67	\$87.41
Total	1370	89%	\$601.20	59%	164	11%	\$416.39	41%	1534	\$1,017.59

Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

Note: *GEF-7 programming is still underway

2.2 Enabling activity subtypes

26. Enabling activities function primarily as convention reports and planning documents.

Looking the portfolio of enabling activities (both processed formally under the modality or as umbrella arrangements) between GEF-4 and GEF-7, it is evident that the main utility of enabling activities is for convention reporting (Table 5).

27. Enabling activities were classified to develop a taxonomy that would allow for organization of enabling activities as well as to quantify the numbers of strategies, plans, programs, communications, national reports etc. that have been supported by the GEF's enabling activity modality. The evaluation used the enabling activities' project proposals and planning documentation for this exercise. For broad organizational purposes, enabling activities were first classified into those that aimed at helping countries report to conventions and those that did not. In order to gain a more detailed classification of enabling activities that targeted conventions, enabling activities were further organized based on convention and report type. Enabling activities that did not seek assist countries with convention reporting were labeled by intervention type in accordance with GEF documentation in the following categories: Capacity Building / Assessment / Strengthening, Convention/Protocol Ratification and/or Implementation, Policies & Regulations. The evaluation also took note of the NSCAs and NPFs.

28. The evaluation was able to classify 663 projects, 544 enabling activities and 119 umbrella arrangements, between GEF-4 and GEF-7. Based on this classification, 90.8 percent of all enabling activities specifically supported countries to meet obligations under the conventions, 7.5 percent were not related to any conventions reporting,⁸ while less than two percent aimed at coordinating between the three Rio Conventions.⁹

Table 5: Use of enabling activities for reporting to convention (GEF-4 to GEF-7)

Convention / Area or intervention		Number of Projects	(%)**	Grant amount (\$ million)	(%)**
Convention	CBD	164	24.7%	\$ 132.95	21.8%
	UNFCCC	175	26.4%	\$ 297.29	48.7%
	UNCCD	57	8.6%	\$ 27.14	4.4%
	Stockholm Convention***	97	14.6%	\$ 73.97	12.1%
	Minamata Convention***	109	16.4%	\$ 80.77	13.2%
Convention Coordination (Rio)		13	2.0%	\$ 11.26	1.8%
Non-Convention		50	7.5%	\$ 9.48	1.6%
Total		663*		\$ 610.47	

Note: * total includes umbrella arrangements

Note: ** single projects may include components for multiple conventions

⁸ Non-convention enabling activities include NCSAs, NPFs, and other non-convention related activities.

⁹ Rio Conventions are the CBD, UNFCCC, and the UNCCD. Between GEF-4 and GEF-6, the GEF implemented a set of projects specifically aimed at enhancing in country capacity and increasing coordination for implementing Rio Conventions.

Note: *** 2 projects are double counted on account of addressing both the Stockholm and Minamata conventions

29. For the biodiversity focal area for example, majority of enabling activities were used for creating and updating NBSAPs under the CBD, while in land degradation the main utility of enabling activities was for producing and aligning the NAPs for the UNCCD. Similarly, under the in the climate change focal area, enabling activities were used for the BURs and national communications to the UNFCCC. In the chemicals and waste focal area enabling activities are used for creating and updating NIPs under the Stockholm convention and for the ASGM national action plans under Minamata. Additionally, enabling activities were used for the Minamata initial assessment, which, while not a reporting requirement under the convention, was instrumental in ensuring readiness of countries for ratifying and implementing the convention, subsequently leading to its speedy entry into force (Table 6Table 5).

Table 6: Use of enabling activities for reporting to convention by report type (GEF-4 to GEF-7)

Convention / Area or intervention	Report type	Number of Projects	(%)**
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP)	90	13.6%
	Biosafety Report / Biosafety Clearing-House – Cartagena Protocol	10	1.5%
	National Report	44	6.6%
	Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) – Nagoya Protocol	17	2.6%
	2010 Biodiversity Targets National Assessments	3	0.5%
Minamata Convention on Mercury	ASGM National Action Plans	35	5.3%
	Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA)	71	10.7%
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	National Implementation Plans (NIPs)	94	14.2%
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	National Report	4	0.6%
	National Action Plans (NAPs)	48	7.2%
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	Biennial Update Report (BUR)	125	18.9%
	National Communication	97	14.6%
	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)	6	0.9%
	National Programmes of Adaptation (NAPAs)*	7	1.1%
	Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs)	4	0.6%
Capacity Building / Assessment / Strengthening		62	9.4%
Convention/Protocol Ratification and/or Implementation		60	9.0%
Policies & Regulations		7	1.1%
National Capacity Self-Assessments (NSCA)		9	1.4%
National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE)		39	5.9%
Total		663*	

Note: * total includes umbrella arrangements

Note: ** single projects may include components for multiple reports

2.3 Focal areas

30. The majority of enabling activities are under the climate change focal area, followed by biodiversity and chemicals and waste, while land degradation has the least number of enabling activities both in terms of projects and financing. This is unsurprising considering (i) the climate change convention has the highest number of reporting requirements among the five conventions to which the GEF is a financial mechanism; (ii) the increase of enabling activities financing under chemicals and waste with the introduction of the Minamata Convention; and (iii) enabling activities financing for land degradation under the UNCCD only started in GEF-5 (Table 7).

Table 7: GEF enabling activities by GEF phase and GEF focal area

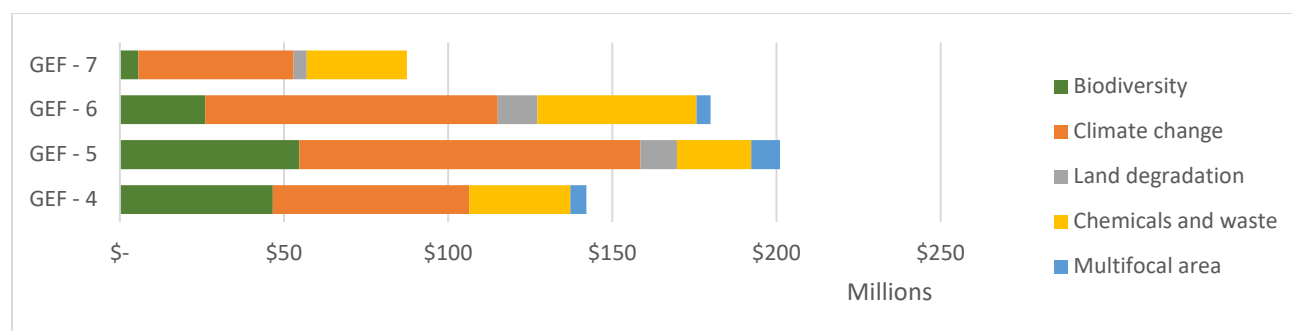
GEF Phase	Biodiversity		Climate Change		Chemicals and Waste		Land Degradation		Multifocal Area		Total	
	(#)	(\$ million)	(#)	(\$ million)	(#)	(\$ million)	(#)	(\$ million)	(#)	(\$ million)	(#)	(\$ million)
Pilot Phase	4	14.00	5	20.20		-		-		-	9	34.20
GEF - 1	141	25.88	93	44.97		-		-		-	234	70.84
GEF - 2	111	46.44	99	24.77	43	20.28		-	1	0.20	254	91.69
GEF - 3	35	7.51	76	70.74	79	35.56		-	139	28.46	329	142.27
GEF - 4	18	4.91	7	12.42	9	2.92		-	6	1.27	40	21.53
GEF - 5	77	18.40	52	26.78	76	19.63	45	6.19	40	1.07	290	72.07
GEF - 6		-	57	55.26	85	38.20	6	12.08	1	0.20	149	105.74
GEF - 7	2	2.71	37	47.21	23	8.94	3	4.00		-	65	62.86
Total	388	119.85	426	302.35	315	125.53	54	22.27	187	31.20	1370	601.20

Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

Note: *GEF-7 programming is still underway

31. The predominance of climate change enabling activities is even more evident when comparing enabling activities financing by focal area from GEF-4 to GEF-7 (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Enabling activities and umbrella arrangement financing (\$ US million) by GEF phase and focal area (GEF-4 to GEF-7)



Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

Note: *GEF-7 programming is still underway

2.4 Agencies

32. The majority of the enabling activities portfolio is concentrated among UNDP, UNEP, and UNIDO who over time have developed a comparative advantage in supporting countries to meet their obligations to conventions (Table 8). The World Bank, while did implement some enabling activities prior to GEF-4, by support for enabling activities has but halted. The Bank views the transition costs for enabling activities for both the Bank and for countries to comply with the Bank policies and procedures as too high in comparison with the size of the enabling activity.

Table 8: Enabling activities by GEF agency (GEF-4 to GEF-7)

Agency	Number of projects		Grant amount	
	(#)	(%)	(\$ million)	(%)
CI	1	0.2%	-	-
DBSA	1	0.2%	0.25	0.1%
FAO	8	1.5%	3.78	1.4%
GEFSEC*	62	11.4%	4.99	1.9%
IADB	1	0.2%	0.44	0.2%
IUCN	1	0.2%	2.75	1.0%
UNDP	219	40.3%	106.72	40.7%
UNEP	155	28.5%	108.28	41.3%
UNIDO	93	17.1%	27.25	10.4%
World Bank	3	0.6%	7.74	3.0%
Total	544		262.19	

Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

Note: *GEFSEC implemented enabling activities include the direct access enabling activities and the NPFs and NCSAs

33. Distribution of EA Funding by GEF Agency and by Focal Area. 86% of projects and 92% of financing for enabling activities is implemented by UNDP, UNEP, and UNIDO. When umbrella programs are accounted for, 88% of enabling activities and 91% of associated enabling activity financing is concentrated between UNDP, UNEP, and UNIDO. While UNIDO has a thematic focus on enabling activities under the chemicals and waste focal area (Minamata and Stockholm), UNDP and UNEP bear the lion's share of assisting countries in meeting their obligation conventions under the other focal areas, namely the obligations to the CBD, UNFCCC, and UNCCD (Table 9).

Table 9: Enabling activities and umbrella arrangements by GEF agency and by focal area (GEF-4 to GEF-7)

Agency / Focal Area	Number of projects		Grant amount	
	(#)	(%)	(\$ million)	(%)
AfDB	1	0.2%	21.60	3.5%
Chemicals and Waste	1		21.60	

CI	1	0.2%	-	-
Land Degradation	1		-	
DBSA	1	0.2%	0.25	0.04%
Chemicals and Waste	1		0.25	
FAO	9	1.4%	6.24	1.0%
Biodiversity	2		2.80	
Climate Change	1		0.85	
Land Degradation	6		2.59	
GEFSEC*	63	9.5%	7.55	1.2%
Biodiversity	8		1.85	
Chemicals and Waste	3		0.52	
Climate Change	3		0.65	
Land Degradation	10		1.49	
Multi Focal Area	39		3.03	
IADB	1	0.2%	0.44	0.1%
Biodiversity	1		0.44	
IUCN	1	0.2%	2.75	0.5%
Land Degradation	1		2.75	
UNDP	251	37.9%	219.45	35.9%
Biodiversity	63		28.21	
Chemicals and Waste	28		8.32	
Climate Change	134		170.34	
Land Degradation	8		1.09	
Multi Focal Area	18		11.48	
UNEP	233	35.1%	301.64	49.4%
Biodiversity	89		98.75	
Chemicals and Waste	73		59.74	
Climate Change	35		120.48	
Land Degradation	31		19.21	
Multi Focal Area	5		3.45	
UNIDO	97	14.6%	33.71	5.5%
Chemicals and Waste	97		33.71	
World Bank	5	0.8%	16.84	2.8%
Biodiversity	1		0.90	
Chemicals and Waste	1		8.20	
Climate Change	3		7.74	
Total	663*		610.47	

Source: GEF Portal as of February 28th, 2021, excluding canceled or dropped projects.

Note: *GEFSEC implemented enabling activities include the direct access enabling activities and the NPFs and NCSAs

2.5 Regions and geographic scope

34. Distribution of enabling activities financing by region shows that the umbrella arrangements are mainly concentrated in global and regional programs, which is evident in the difference in the figures below, where Figure 5 shows the distribution of enabling activity financing by GEF region and figure 6 shows the same with the inclusion of the umbrella arrangements.

35. Majority on enabling activities are in national projects in Africa and Latin America, and East Asia and the Pacific, followed by Europe and Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia.

Figure 5: Enabling activities funding by scope and region (GEF-4 to GEF-7) – n=544

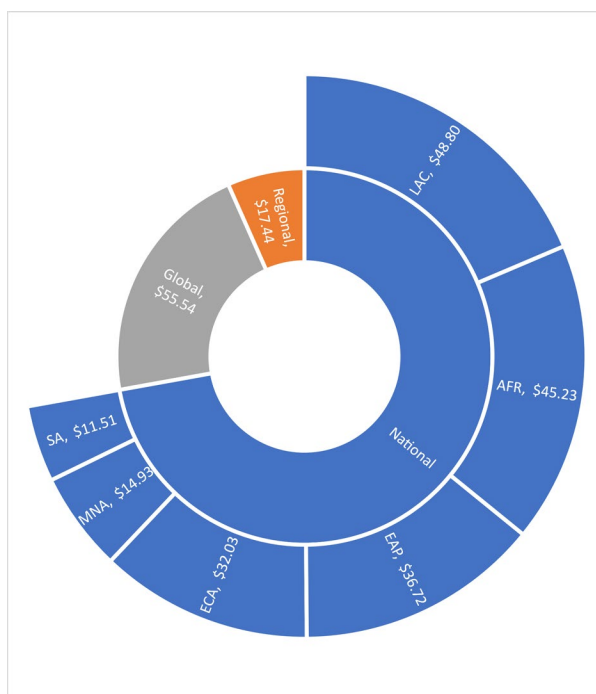
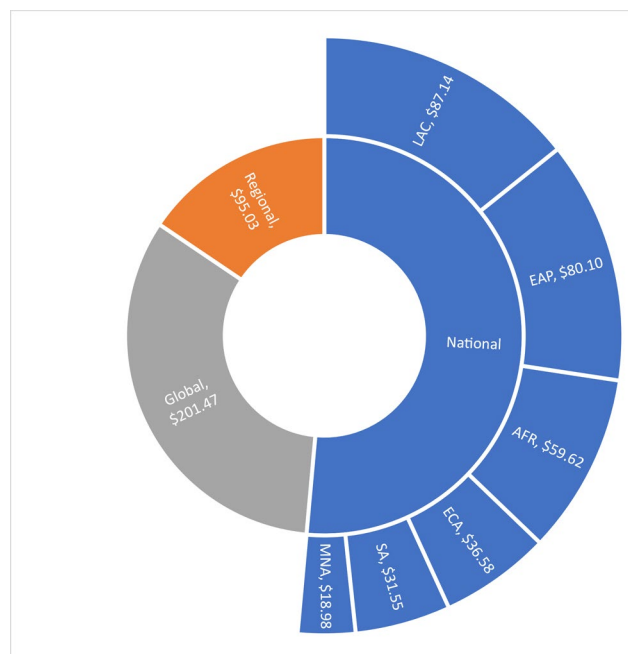


figure 6: Enabling activities and umbrella arrangements funding by scope and region (GEF-4 to GEF-7) – n=663



36. Looking at the share on enabling activities to SIDS and LDCs, 41.4% of enabling activities and 45% of enabling activity financing is in SIDS and/or LDCs, while 58.6% of projects and 55% of financing are in countries that are neither LDCs nor SIDS (Table 10).

Table 10: Enabling activities by country groupings - LDCs and SIDS

Country Grouping	Number of projects		Grant Amount	
	(#)	(%)	(\$ million)	(%)
LDCs	126	23.2%	\$ 42.80	16.3%
SIDS	71	13.1%	\$ 22.80	8.7%
LDCs and SIDS	28	5.1%	\$ 52.36	20%
non LDCs / SIDS	319	58.6%	\$ 144.23	55%
Total	544		\$ 262.19	

3. RELEVANCE OF THE ENABLING ACTIVITIES MODALITY

37. Relevance measures the extent to which the modality meets the needs of the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies, Convention staff and countries (as represented by Operational Focal Points).

38. The team asked the following key evaluation questions:

- (i) What is the strategic importance of enabling activities in the GEF suite of modalities?
- (ii) To what extent are activities under the GEF enabling activity modality relevant to: Conference of Parties guidance; GEF focal area strategies; and, recipient countries' national agendas in climate change, biodiversity, POPs, mercury, and land degradation?
- (iii) How has the use of enabling activities changed over time?

3.1 Strategic Importance

39. To address this key evaluation question, the team developed three sub-questions that asked: (i) what has been the purpose of the enabling activities modality?; (ii) what are enabling activities being used for, and what gaps are they addressing?; and, (iii) is the original purpose being fulfilled?

40. **Enabling activities have been viewed predominantly as a tool for supporting countries in reporting to the Conventions.** Not surprisingly, it is clear that enabling activities have been used mainly for Convention reporting, and for supporting countries to meet their Convention obligations. The global survey asked three questions about the extent to which enabling activities have assisted with Convention obligations. The following responses were obtained:

- (i) 68% indicated that enabling activities had helped their country to prepare for signing a multilateral environmental agreement/Convention/ Protocol;
- (ii) 85% indicated that enabling activities had supported their country to produce reports to Conventions (e.g national communications, action plans, initial assessments etc); and,
- (iii) 50% indicated that enabling activities had supported their country in final ratifications of multilateral agreements/Conventions/Protocols.

41. Interviews with Convention staff also indicated the importance of enabling activities as a catalyst for production of required reports. Some Conventions suggested that if enabling activity resources had not been available, then reports would not have been produced on time,

and so the ability to check, understand, and assess implementation would have been basically undermined.

42. Interviews with the GEF Secretariat provided similar feedback. Convention reporting is considered to be the main utility of enabling activities. The GEF acts as a conduit to provide funding for the countries to meet their Convention obligations. In addition, however, enabling activities are considered to “provide groundwork for everything”. For example, with regard to climate change, enabling activities provide countries with tools to understand their own mitigation sources, and their own vulnerabilities to climate change. They can then use this information to inform their policies and programmes, along with identifying gaps and needs. GEF Sec also considers that enabling activities have provided uniform data from all Convention parties, and that this has helped to inform negotiations.

43. **Enabling activities are helping to fill a number of gaps.** Further questioning allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the strategically important role that enabling activities have played, beyond reporting to Conventions. For example, Table 11 shows that enabling activities have played a significant role in the development of national policies, national plans/strategies, and domestic legal and regulatory frameworks. In addition, funding through this modality has helped countries to: identify needs; develop enabling environments for future projects; develop accurate data and baseline information; and, develop national capacities.

Table 11: Enabling Activities as Gap Filling: Global Survey Responses

Statement	% Agreement
Agreed that enabling activities had helped to develop and/or improve national policies and legal/regulatory frameworks;	75%
Stated that enabling activities had assisted in developing national plans and strategies;	88%
Indicated that enabling activities had supported the implementation of national plans and strategies;	75%
Stated that enabling activities had helped to identify needs and priorities	77.5%
Indicated that enabling activities have helped the country to develop an enabling environment for future interventions/projects	65%
Indicated that enabling activities led to more accurate data and baseline information for the Conventions	70%
Stated that enabling activities help develop national/local capacity in country	80%

44. Interviews with Convention staff indicated that countries often use enabling activity projects as a way of undertaking stakeholder consultations, especially then they need to validate the information that they want to report to Conventions. The global survey indicated that nearly 70% of respondents believed that stakeholders are ... “adequately involved in the preparation and implementation of enabling activities”.

45. While the modality is clearly filling a number of gaps, many of which it was not originally designed to address, interviews indicated that there are some gaps that still exist, and that could be dealt with by the modality, if it were to be redesigned. For example, Convention interviews pointed to the fact that national strategies and plans supported by enabling

activities are not necessarily well monitored, once they have been put in place. It was suggested that some portion of enabling activities funding could be directed towards the establishment of monitoring systems.

46. **Enabling Activities are Fulfilling their Purpose.** A combination of reviews of the 2013 meta-evaluation and individual interviews makes it clear that enabling activities are considered to have fulfilled their original purpose. The 2013 meta-evaluation states that “the modality is highly relevant to ensure that countries meet the Conventions’ obligations and identify their needs and priorities. There is evaluative evidence that demonstrates that enabling activities support the development of enabling environments in recipient countries”. Case studies in in Madagascar, Thailand, and Jamaica, concluded that with the help of GEF enabling activities, recipient countries have established baseline data in each focal area, set environmental priorities, identified solutions to some environmental issues, improved policy and legislation frameworks as well as institutional arrangements, strengthened environmental management capacity of staff, and put in place action plans for next steps.

47. Project reviews showed that enabling activities have helped countries in *Preparing national plans or strategies* (98.26%) and *reporting to Conventions* (87.92%), they also contribute to *Capacity building / enhancing local capacities* (83.22%) and *identifying needs and priorities* (82.55%).

48. Interviews with the implementing agencies indicated that, in a strict sense, enabling activities have generally fulfilled their purpose, if this is defined entirely by a focus on Convention reporting. For example, as countries have become more familiar with climate change and understand its implications, they have taken reporting more seriously and have established government institutions and organizations to be responsible for climate mitigation and adaptation.

49. However, some concerns were raised about the quality and frequency of reporting, and about whether the modality has achieved gains beyond formal reporting. With regard to the former concern, most of the interviewed GEF agencies indicated that reports to Conventions have varied significantly in quality across countries, although ... in general ... quality appears to have improved in recent years. Reporting frequency has also been an issue for some Conventions and some countries. One GEF agency indicated that it would not provide future enabling activity support until countries had completed a relevant report, and uploaded it to the agency’s website.

50. As indicated earlier, while it is clear that, in some circumstances, enabling activities have filled gaps that were not necessarily obvious when the modality was initially designed, some of the interviewed GEF agency staff suggested that projects supported by enabling activities had not necessarily resulted in improved country capacities, or political uptake. GEF Secretariat interviews pointed to the fact that the modality cannot be used to fund government staff. As a consequence, there has been a reliance on consultants to produce Convention reports, and this has not encouraged the development of local capacity. While the engagement of local

consultants has expanded over time, there appears to still be a dependency on “external” expertise. It was also suggested that the Conventions have perhaps exacerbated this problem by continually reforming guidelines and requirements, so that countries have trouble in keeping up.

51. One of the interviewed GEF Agencies also discussed concerns about the use of scarce resources, and a concomitant sense of country entitlement to resources. It was considered that there was duplication happening across reporting to the climate change Convention. National Communications, National Adaptation Programmes of Action, and National Adaptation Plans used similar baseline information, but were accessing enabling activities to produce separate reports. It was suggested that Convention Guidance does not necessarily encourage coherence, and it is difficult to control duplication due to the “siloing” aspect of the enabling activity application procedure.

3.2 Enabling Activities, Convention Guidance and Country National Agendas

52. This evaluation question was addressed by examining whether enabling activities had influenced the development of Convention guidance, and whether they were aligned with national priorities.

53. **Enabling activities are aligned with national priorities, but the link to Convention Guidance is less clear.** With regard to the first issue, there is a complicated relationship between Convention guidance, and enabling activities. The 2013 meta-evaluation quotes OPS4 as stating that “[...] the historical burden of Guidance has now reached 317 requests”. In addition, “new Guidance hardly ever replaces older guidance: it usually becomes an addition to previous decisions and requests”. Interviews with Convention staff indicated that there can be a link between national reporting that is supported by enabling activities, and the evolution of Guidance. However, the relationship is Convention-specific. Where Conventions are highly politicized, and example being the UNFCCC, there is less room for national reporting to influence Guidance. Where reports are technical in nature, and there is a review process where report findings feed directly into Convention outcomes, they have a greater influence.

54. An example of the latter was provided by the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The Convention’s Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), develops reporting standards/templates. Countries then report using these templates, and the findings and analysis are discussed in the CRIC. From there, Conference of the Parties decisions are drafted, which are supposed to identify recommendations for future implementation measures. As the Convention develops, new Guidance is drafted. It is therefore possible to trace a line of causation between the initial enabling activity and the development of new Guidance.

55. Other interviewed Convention staff did not necessarily see a direct relationship between an enabling activity-supported report and Convention Guidance. Reports can often be incomplete, and information is not always accurate. It is often difficult for the Conventions to validate report data, and Guidance can take years due to the inherently political nature of the process.

56. With regard to the issue of alignment with national priorities, the case studies provided confirmatory evidence. For Madagascar, enabling activities have had a catalytic effect in three areas: identifying key national priorities for future projects; reporting to Conventions; and, as a basis for future GEF reports. In Jamaica, enabling activities have been applied primarily in the biodiversity and climate change focal areas, and have contributed by: providing a basis for future GEF projects; as a method for identifying gaps or barriers to sustainable development; and, as a way of integrating environmental issues in the Jamaican development process.

57. Project reviews indicated that GEF enabling activities are well aligned with country priorities, GEF strategies, and convention guidance, where over 99% of projects described specific relevance of the enabling activity to country priorities, 99% of projects described specific relevance of the enabling activity to convention guidance, and 88% of projects described specific relevance of the enabling activity to GEF focal area strategies.

3.3 Changing Use of Enabling Activities Over Time

58. **The original purpose of enabling activities has been fulfilled, but needs are changing over time, and the focus of enabling activity-supported projects is shifting.** Country case studies in Madagascar, Jamaica, and Thailand indicated that enabling activities have directly led to: the establishment of baseline data in each focal area; the setting of environmental priorities; and, improved policy, legislative frameworks, and institutional arrangements.

59. Interviews with Convention staff, GEF Agencies, and the GEF Secretariat consistently indicated that the use of enabling activities has evolved over time. Initial guidance focused almost entirely on the process of reporting. Guidance has become more precise over time, and has become clearer on the nature of support and on encouraging regional engagement. Some Conventions indicated that reporting under Conventions has influenced reporting under Protocols. This appears to have been the case for the Convention on Biological Diversity, and its supplementary Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources. Climate change Convention staff gave the example of how the enabling activities modality has expanded. In 2015, Biennial Update Reports (BURs) were introduced, and the Paris Agreement has now resulted in the phase-out of BURs and the introduction of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs).

60. Beyond the evolution of formal reporting, the Conventions have been examining how enabling activities can be a tool that supports actual compliance, rather than routine

administrative reporting. For example, UNCCD staff stated that they have been encouraged by moving from supporting countries to fill out reporting forms, to capacity building on the use of land use planning tools.

3.4 Adherence with GEF policies

61. The project reviews found that GEF enabling activities are aligned with GEF policies on stakeholder engagement and gender mainstreaming. Over 62% of projects reviewed identified affected and participating stakeholders, and an additional 25% indicated that stakeholder identification is planned at a later stage. However, for over 73% of projects, projects documents showed no evidence that stakeholders were involved in the project design.

62. Majority of projects have information on stakeholder engagement, where 43% mention stakeholder engagement without providing further details, while 25% indicate how stakeholders will be engaged and an additional 20% further indicate methods of engagement. Sixty-one percent of reviewed projects indicate plans to develop a stakeholder engagement plan; 19% provided an SEP of equivalent in the project document, while 18% did not include an SEP or equivalent.

63. In looking at the gender policy, only 14.7% of project conducted and shared results on a gender analysis in the project document, while 28.8% did not provide any gender analysis in available documents. However, 54% of projects reviewed indicated plans to conduct a gender analysis. Additionally, 58% of projects indicate plans to develop a GAP, while 30% did not provide a GAP or equivalent.

4. EFFECTIVENESS AND RESULTS

64. Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which the intervention's intended outcomes or specific objectives have been achieved. In its simplest form, an enabling activity will have been successful if a relevant report has been produced and is submitted on time to a Convention. There are, however, other measures of effectiveness, that go beyond standard reporting. In a sense, effectiveness can be measured by examining the "added value" of enabling activities. The evaluation team was therefore interested in obtaining answers to the following question:

- (i) What is the role of enabling activities in developing national policies/laws as distinct from national plans or strategies?

65. Another key question relates to whether enabling activities have been used as inputs to the design of other GEF projects, and what factors affect the achievement of results within the modality. This issue was addressed by the following main evaluation question:

- (ii) Are there complementarities or overlaps between enabling activities and other Agency projects in the GEF?

66. These questions were addressed in interviews with Convention focal points, GEF Agencies, and the GEF Secretariat; observations from the three country case studies; responses to the global survey; and, desk review.

4.1 Role of Enabling Activities in the Development of National Policies/Regulations

67. **The relationship between enabling activities and the development of national policies/regulation is uncertain.** The 2013 meta-evaluation and review of current enabling activities addressed the issue of the relationship between enabling activities and national policies. The 2013 study indicated that there was only weak "evaluative evidence" that the strategies and plans developed with the support of enabling activities were integrated into national development frameworks. The project reviews and country case studies confirm that only a minority of projects address national policies or frameworks as their primary objective. Directly impacting national policies might be outside the scope of the enabling activity modality and might fit more into MSP or FSP modalities.

68. Outcomes from interviews are more nuanced. Stockholm Convention respondents suggested that one of the strengths of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) was that there was a direct link between a chemical being listed, and the introduction of new domestic chemical control laws. The claim was made that ratification of the Convention is a proxy for the development of national policies and laws.

69. UNCCD interviews indicated that National Action Plans (NAPs), produced with enabling activity support, have been directly applied in national decision-making processes, and have become policy documents that are verified at a high political level.

70. UNFCCC interviewees did not see a basis for concluding that enabling activities lead directly to new policies and regulations, although they view Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as being “like” national policies, given that governments are required to ratify them. Countries are also seen as making an effort to mainstream NDCs in their national planning.

4.2 Complementarities or Overlaps Between Enabling Activities and other Agency Projects in the GEF

71. This main evaluation question was addressed by posing the following two subsidiary questions:

- (i) What are the key factors that affect the achievement of results within the EA modality? and,
- (ii) Are EAs used as inputs to the design of other projects?

72. **Achievement of results is determined by resources, national capacity, and political will.** Interviews with Convention staff and GEF Agencies indicated that a combination of factors would affect the ability of enabling activities to achieve results. Availability of resources is clearly an issue. Some countries are totally reliant on GEF funds, and sometimes this is not considered to be sufficient. Other countries use a combination of GEF funds and other sources, and some do not use external sources.

73. Not surprisingly, national capacity is also a determinant of enabling activity outcomes. National capacities affect the outcome, quality and timeliness of enabling activities. Some countries have teams set up to produce reports on a semi-permanent basis, and so “institutional memory” is high. Other countries establish different ad hoc teams every time a report is required.

74. Another important determinant of result quality is political will. UNFCCC interviews suggest that the “driver” for reporting can make a difference. For example, the driver for National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Update Reports (BURs) is different from the driver for National Adaptation Programmes of Action, National Adaptation Plans, and Technology Needs Assessments. Countries produce NCs and BURs because they are obligated to by international law, and because these reports have international “visibility”.

75. The UNFCCC claims that a key factor in determining the standard of enabling activities outputs is the priority that a government gives to climate change issues. If they are valued, and

if these issues have a clear political priority, then capacities are developed in-house. If not, then the work is outsourced, and local capacity is not built.

76. The availability of information at the national level can also be a determinant of report quality. Interviews with Convention on Biological Diversity staff indicated that the development of support tools has enhanced the quality of Convention reports. The UN Biodiversity Lab has supported the improvement of national reporting data through technical peer reviewing. Comparability of data is also important. This can best happen when there is harmonizing within a focal area. It was suggested that there are ongoing attempts to harmonize reporting within the chemicals Conventions by examining how this could work across the Stockholm Convention, the Basel Convention, and the Rotterdam Convention. Quality assurance approaches by the Conventions are also having an impact. For example, in the early days of reporting to the UNFCCC there was no quality check on national communications. Thanks to the Paris Agreement, there is now a verification process in place, so the quality of reports is improving.

77. **Enabling activity-funded projects are used as inputs to the design of other projects.** All of the sources of information accessed for this evaluation pointed to the direct linkage between enabling activities and the design of future projects. For example, Table 12: Added Value of Enabling Activities: Global Survey ResponsesTable 12 presents responses from the global survey. It shows that between 77% and 85% of respondents agreed that Convention reports are used to provide baselines for national planning and future projects.

Table 12: Added Value of Enabling Activities: Global Survey Responses

Statement	% Agreement
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to provide inventories and baselines for national planning	85%
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to provide inventories and baselines for future projects	80%
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to identify future areas of intervention in the country	77.5%

78. Interviewed GEF Agencies indicated that reports are regularly used as baseline information for additional GEF-funded, or other donor-funded projects. For example, UNDP indicated that there is a section in the Project Identification Form (PIF) on alignment of the proposed project with Conventions. UNDP also uses Convention reports as background assessments that point to where the agency should be investing. Other GEF Agencies made it clear that they encourage countries to think beyond their reporting obligations, and to use Convention reports as strategic policy support tools, through which they can inform the development of national policies, frame priorities, and identify opportunities for new projects.

79. GEF Secretariat interviews indicated that Medium-sized Project (MSP) applications and Full-sized Project (FSP) applications all reference Convention reports, strategies, and plans. The Conventions presented similar observations. In the climate change areas, countries use

information from National Communications and Biennial Update Reports as a background for MSP and FSP applications. Projects also need to be aligned to government priorities. The UNCCD indicated that, if a project is designed in the land degradation focal area, there is a need to refer to the National Action Plans funded by enabling activities.

80. In Tanzania for example, GEF enabling activities facilitated the preparations of the NCSA and its action plan, the initial national communication to the UNFCCC, the NAPA, the POPs NIP, and a variety of situation analyses and project feasibility studies. According to the Tanzania CPE, document review revealed that many of the concepts, proposed strategies and approaches, and recommendations in these documents were used in the formulation of national policies, strategies, laws, and regulations. Specific examples include the Strategy for Urgent Actions on Land Degradation and Water Catchments, the National Biosafety Framework, and the National Climate Change Strategy.

81. Country case studies in Madagascar, Jamaica, and Thailand confirm that enabling activities are providing a valuable input to additional project development. The assessment of GEF enabling activities, full-sized and medium-sized projects in Madagascar for example showed that enabling activities have a catalytic effect in the following three spheres: identifying key national priorities for future projects, reporting to national conventions, and as a basis for future GEF projects (Box 1).

Box 1: Evidence of Enabling Activity Support for Additional Project Development – Madagascar

Madagascar: Enabling activities have had a catalytic effect in the following three spheres: (1) identifying key national priorities for future projects; (2) reporting to national conventions; and, (3) as a basis for future GEF projects. In Madagascar, enabling activities formed a basis for future GEF projects in the land degradation focal area. Enabling activities contribution to the NBSAP was found to be important as a guide and basis for the development of subsequent MSPs and FSPs in the biodiversity focal area. Two enabling activities under the climate change focal area (GEF ID 639 and 2521) were successful in providing initial support to Madagascar's climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts respectively, which were then scaled up in subsequent MSP and FSP projects.

The Alignment of National Action Programme to the UNCCD 10 Years Strategy and Preparation of the Fifth Reporting and Review process (GEF ID 4983) outlined key priorities for combating desertification, which were later used as guidance for the development of the *MSP Participatory Sustainable Land Management in the Grassland Plateaus of Western Madagascar* (GEF ID 5354) which, in turn, facilitated aspect of the NAP by (i) developing the capacity of policy makers and land users to manage land sustainably, (ii) establishing an appropriate knowledge-management system, and (iii) implementing emergency measures to counteract land degradation.

82. Enabling activities in Jamaica were shown to have contributed to the development of a strong enabling environment within the biodiversity and climate change focal areas. Enabling activities have contributed to the identification for gaps or barriers to sustainable development, the integration of environmental sustainability in the Jamaican development process, and the development of future GEF projects (Box 2).

Box 2: Evidence of Enabling Activity Support for Additional Project Development – Jamaica

Jamaica: Primarily within the biodiversity and climate change focal areas, GEF-funded enabling activities have contributed to this enabling environment as follows: (1) basis for future GEF projects; (2) as an identification mechanism for gaps or barriers to sustainable development; and, (3) integration of environmental sustainability in the Jamaican development process. The NCSA (GEF ID 1862) played an important priority setting role for subsequent GEF projects in the biodiversity focal area and in identifying priority areas for future GEF action.

The *Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in the Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia)* (GEF ID 9455) was successful in facilitating the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention through the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders in the Caribbean.

83. In Thailand, enabling activities catalyze subsequent projects primarily by providing a baseline for future action or by providing a guiding framework for subsequent projects especially with in the case of the NBSAP and climate change communications. However, we see little evidence for the impact of enabling activities in terms of addressing cross cutting issues between focal areas. This suggests that the impact of enabling activities as they relate to catalyzing future projects are siloed within focal areas instead of addressing broad environmental issues that relate to multiple focal areas (Box 3).

Box 3: Evidence of Enabling Activity Support for Additional Project Development – Thailand

Evidence suggests that enabling activities helped catalyze subsequent projects primarily by providing a baseline for future action or by providing a guiding framework for subsequent projects. Evidence of Enabling activities as a baseline for future projects is most clear in the development of convention target documents such as the NBSAP, Biennial Update Report, and National Communications to the UNFCCC. These documents were often referenced as guidelines of priority areas in the development of future projects. The “*Support to Alignment of NBSAP with CBD Obligations and to Development of CHM*” (GEF ID 3307) identified a set of targets to be implemented by 2020, which were later addressed through “*Sustainable Management Models for Local Government Organisations to Enhance Biodiversity Protection and Utilization in Selected Eco-regions of Thailand*” (GEF ID 5726) which enabled a policy framework for mainstreaming biodiversity into development planning and budgeting. The “*Sustainable Management of Biodiversity in Thailand's Production Landscape*” (GEF ID 3940) and “*Catalyzing Sustainability of Thailand's Protected Area System*” (GEF ID 3517) both address the gaps in Thailand’s protected area system identified as part of the NBSAP alignment.

Evidence of enabling activities indirect impact in national planning and policies can be found through the MSP “*Greening Industry through Low Carbon Technology Application for SMEs*” (GEF ID 5725), which served a dual purpose both to implement aspects of national strategies developed under Thailand’s enabling activities “*Third National Communication (TNC) and Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC*” (GEF ID 5370) while also contributing to national plans. The enabling activity played a part in the strategic development of the MSP project, the project also implemented national plans such as the 3rd SME Promotion Master Plan which supported SME sustainable growth. This suggest that EAs have the potential to indirectly (through contributions to larger projects) contribute to and implement national planning and policies.

5. EFFICIENCY

84. To analyze efficiency, this evaluation focused on speed of the processing of enabling activities, efficiency of implementation, and streamlining of reporting. The key evaluation question asked were:

- (i) How are enabling activities processed? Is there economy in terms of processing times and resources in bundling enabling activities as large projects, programs, and umbrella arrangements?
- (ii) What have the conventions done to streamline reporting, internally and among other conventions? What are the opportunities for the GEF to streamline enabling activities support to enable countries comply with convention requirements?

85. These questions were addressed in: interviews with Convention focal points, GEF Agencies, and the GEF Secretariat; observations from the three country case studies; responses to the global survey; and, desk review.

5.1 Processing of Enabling Activities

86. The first key evaluation question was addressed by asking: how long it takes to process and implement an enabling activity; whether implementation and execution is efficient; whether the direct access mechanism has improved the efficiency of the overall process; and, whether there are any other perceived inefficiencies.

87. **The approval process for GEF enabling activities appears to be efficient.** As presented in Figure 7, the majority of enabling activities in the GEF are under \$1million in financing and are processed as expedited enabling activities.

88. As indicated in Table 13, on average, enabling activities, whether expedited (less than \$1million), processed as 1-step MSP or 2-step MSP (between \$1million and \$2million), or processed as FSP, take between three and three-and-a-half months to be approved by the GEF Secretariat. In GEF-4 and GEF-7, umbrella arrangements are taking longer to process. The trend from GEF-4 to the present shows that processing times for enabling activities have reduced in GEF-5, GEF-6, and GEF-7. Interviewed stakeholders agreed that the application and approval process was straightforward and efficient, however they indicated that efficiency issues for enabling activities are more centered around implementation and execution.

Figure 7: Enabling activities subtypes by approval procedures

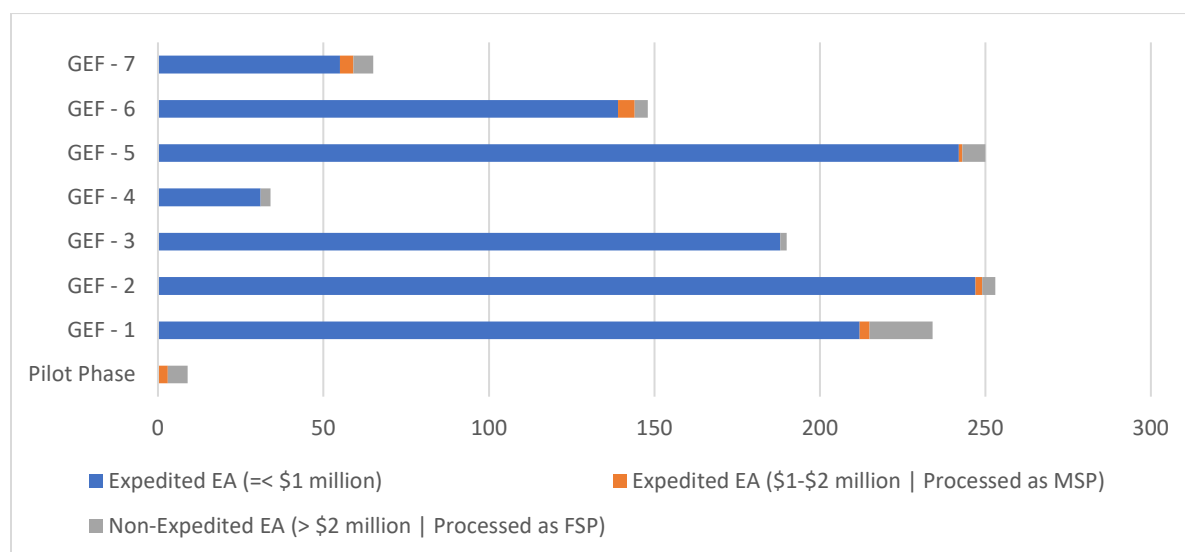


Table 13: Average approval time (months) – GEF enabling activities and umbrella arrangements

GEF Phase	Expedited enabling activities		Non-expedited enabling activities		Umbrella arrangements	
	Number of Projects	Average approval time (in months)	Number of Projects	Average approval time (in months)	Number of Projects	Average approval time (in months)
GEF - 4	38	17.07	4	2.28	53	12.11
GEF - 5	270	1.98	7	3.17	34	3.36
GEF - 6	146	2.44	5	4.30	29	2.16
GEF - 7	51	4.42	4	2.68	1	8.33
Total	505	3.50	20	3.18	117	7.10

5.2 Efficiency of Implementation and Execution

89. **Post-approval, there are concerns about disbursement and implementation.** Table 14 shows the average time taken from approval to first disbursement of funds, for enabling activities and umbrella arrangements, for GEF-4 to GEF-6. The table does not include GEF-7 projects, and many of these are still in the early phases of implementation and may not have confirmed dates of first disbursement / actual project start. The evaluation opted to take GEF-7 out of this analysis so as not to skew the results towards the few outlier cases available for analysis. Table 15 is included for comparison, and provides the same information, but for MSPs and FSPs.

Table 14: Average time from approval to 1st disbursement (in months) – GEF enabling activities and umbrella arrangements – GEF-4 to GEF-6 only

GEF Phase	Expedited enabling activities		Non-expedited enabling activities		Umbrella arrangements	
	Number of Projects	Average time from approval to 1st disbursement (in months)	Number of Projects	Average time from approval to 1st disbursement (in months)	Number of Projects	Average time from approval to 1st disbursement (in months)
GEF - 4	38	10.27	4	3.24	53	8.41
GEF - 5	270	7.28	7	6.21	34	5.67
GEF - 6	146	6.49	5	12.84	29	7.13
Total	454	7.21	16	7.19	116	7.27

Table 15: Average time from approval to 1st disbursement (in months) – GEF FSPs and MSPs – GEF-4 to GEF-6 only

GEF Phase	FSP		MSP	
	Number of Projects	Average time from approval to 1st disbursement (in months)	Number of Projects	Average time from approval to 1st disbursement (in months)
GEF - 4	481	12.93	252	11.90
GEF - 5	629	6.83	229	3.32
GEF - 6	393	9.20	196	3.67
Total	1503	9.37	677	6.58

90. Table 14 shows that there is very little difference in average disbursement time between the three different methods of processing enabling activities. All require approximately 7 months from approval through to first disbursement. It is noticeable, however, that there are significant variations in disbursement times across the three GEF phases, with average times for non-expedited activities and umbrella arrangements increasing in GEF-6. Also worthy of note, as shown in Table 15, the average disbursement times for MSPs and FSPs are not that different from those encountered by enabling activities. This is perhaps notable, given that, as indicated during GEF Agency interviews, *“enabling activities have a quicker and lighter project cycle as compared to MSPs and FSPs”*.

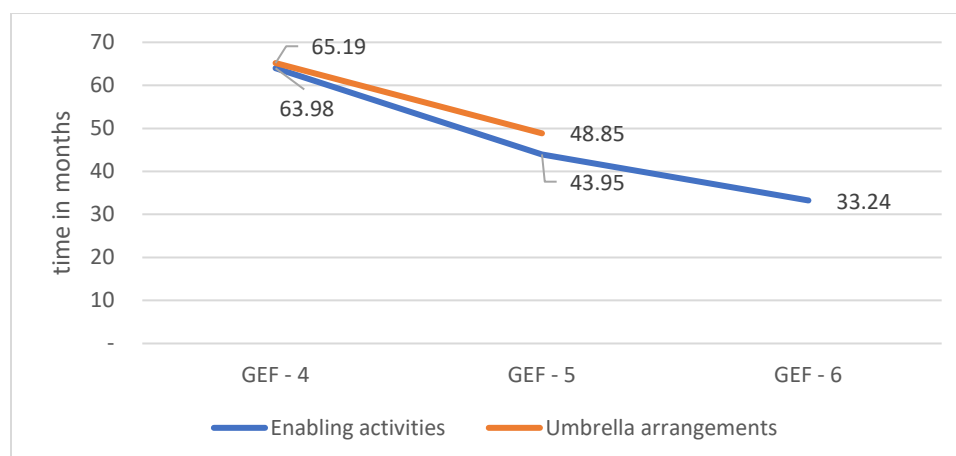
91. Umbrella arrangements have become an important method for the processing of enabling activities. UNEP and UNDP are the most active GEF Agencies in processing enabling activities. They find that using an umbrella approach, where country applications for funding are “bundled” together, is more efficient than dealing one-on-one with individual countries. For the Agencies, enabling activities are small projects, and creating a project document for each

country, and for each Convention report, is an inefficient exercise, with significant transaction costs.

92. However, the GEF secretariat, GEF agencies, Convention secretariats, and countries all agree that umbrella arrangements face significant delays at two main junctures: during the preparation of the umbrella arrangement; and, during the disbursement phase. With regard to the former, a significant problem appears to be obtaining all OFP endorsement letters prior to submission for approval by the GEF. The umbrella approach can only move as “fast as the slowest player”. If one country is delayed in submitting the OFP endorsement letter, it risks delaying the approval of the funding for all involved countries. With regard to the latter, individual country projects don’t start as soon as the umbrella project is approved by the GEF. Projects only start when legal agreements are signed with countries, and so Agencies stagger the signing of agreements. Even then, they only disburse funds against an agreed detailed workplan that is used to monitor country projects. The disbursement process is therefore dependent on how quickly a country signs the memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Agency, and the number of MoUs that the Agency needs to process.

93. **Project implementation can be slow.** The average implementation time for GEF Enabling activities for the 262 completed enabling activities between GEF-4 and GEF-6 is 44.5 months (just shy of 4 years). Average implementation time for enabling activities has gone down from 64 months in GEF-4 to 33.2 months in GEF-6.

Figure 8: Average project length (in months) – enabling activities vs. umbrella arrangements



94. The evaluation found that enabling activities often experience implementation delays and are extended. The GEF Agencies exhibited considerable frustration with the length of time it can take to complete an enabling activity project. It was stressed that enabling activity projects are supposed to be discrete and short. However, many do not finish on time. The Agencies can support governments, but ultimately it is up to the countries to complete

whatever report/plan/strategy has been funded. The 2011 Jamaica CPE for example noted that delays in enabling activities were not systemic, but rather related to each individual project.

Table 16: Average project length (in months) – enabling activities vs. umbrella arrangements

GEF Phase	Enabling activities		Umbrella arrangements	
	Number of Projects	Average project length	Number of Projects	Average project length
GEF - 4	34	63.98	32	65.19
GEF - 5	191	43.95	14	48.85
GEF - 6	37	33.24	-	-
Total	262	44.50	46	61.01

5.3 Direct Access Mechanism

95. **The Direct Access Mechanism is cumbersome and bureaucratic.** A direct access approach to funding was introduced in GEF-5. The rationale behind it was to improve efficiency, by allowing countries to apply directly to the GEF for project funds, instead of having to route through GEF Agencies. There are only 23 direct access proposals in the GEF system, 22 of which were submitted in GEF-5 and one GEF-6. This represents 4.2 percent of the 544 enabling activities between GEF-4 and GEF-7, or 3.5% of enabling activities including umbrella arrangements.

96. The global survey showed that 55% of respondents were either “extremely familiar”, or “fairly familiar” with enabling activities in general, whereas the figure for direct access was 42%. Twelve-and-a-half percent of respondents were not at all familiar with the direct access mechanism.

97. Interview responses were unanimous in their antipathy towards the mechanism. Interviewees saw it as a good idea in theory. The main problem appears to have been that, because the GEF is not an independent legal entity, it cannot disburse funds directly. As a consequence, the mechanism needed to follow World Bank Group procedures. It was stated that there were approximately 40 separate steps required from approval to first disbursement. The bureaucratic and time-consuming nature of the disbursement process appears to have discouraged countries from taking this course.

5.4 Other Perceived Inefficiencies

98. **Ad hoc approaches to Convention reporting do not necessarily lead to good quality work.** A number of additional concerns associate with perceived inefficiencies were raised by Convention staff and GEF Agency staff during interviews. First, Convention staff were cognizant of the fact that the GEF Agencies see enabling activities as small projects that should be dealt

with quickly, so that bigger projects can be focused on. However, there is a perception that this approach may affect the quality of reporting outcomes over time. The belief is that national planning processes should not be restricted to a short period before the submission of a report. A more sophisticated approach would be to consider the process of reporting as adaptive and ongoing, with a semi-permanent local team dedicated to the task. It would therefore be an iterative and continuous process.

99. **The burdens on GEF Agencies are too high.** It has already been mentioned that GEF Agencies, primarily UNDP and UNEP, are frustrated with the amount of time it takes for enabling activity projects to be completed. The main problem for the Agencies is that they are required to subsidize the cost for delayed projects. The Agency fee is not covering extensions, due to the necessity to provide ongoing oversight. UNDP states that it is currently providing an average of approximately \$400,000 of subsidy per project, and that this is unsustainable. Similarly, World Bank views the transition costs for enabling activities for both the Bank and for countries to comply with the Bank policies and procedures as too high in comparison with the size of the enabling activity modality. The claim was made that the cost-prohibitive nature of managing enabling activities is one reason why other Agencies are not involved.

100. **The processing and management of enabling activities is perceived to be not agile enough.** GEF Agency and GEF Secretariat staff indicated that enabling activities are more complex than they need to be and should be more agile. The front-end approval process is efficient, but disbursement and implementation is not.

5.5 Streamlining

101. The issue of streamlining and harmonizing of reporting was addressed in the global survey, and in interviews with staff from Agencies, Conventions, and the GEF Secretariat.

102. **Streamlining and harmonization of reporting is considered to be important, but there is no consensus as to how it should best take place.** Table 17 presents results from the global survey questions that asked OFP respondents to indicate their level of agreement with three statements that had harmonization and alignment as their focus. Answers show that the majority of respondents agree that Convention reporting can be better harmonized and streamlined.

Table 17: Global Survey Responses: Harmonization and Alignment

Statement	% Agreement
There is a need for harmonized reporting in my country to the different Conventions	77.5%
The GEF can play a role in streamlining baseline data reporting in my country	82.5%
The timeline for each Convention obligation submission should be better aligned with each other and GEF cycles	77.5%

103. The GEF Agencies have different experiences with streamlining/harmonization. For example, the Coordination Unit at UNEP has a role in managing the portfolios for each Convention. Also, because UNEP houses the Secretariats for some of the Conventions, it sees the burden on countries and welcomes efforts to harmonize. However, it also recognizes that each Convention has different data requirements, and so while the aspiration is a good one, the reality may be more difficult to obtain.

104. For UNDP, all the climate change enabling activities are clustered around one team, and so a degree of coordination is already taking place. This was not the case 8-to-10 years ago, when the portfolio used to sit in regional hubs across the world.

105. FAO's Natural Resources and Sustainable Production stream coordinate reports to CBD, UNCCD, and UNFCCC. FAO is organized by regions, and regional teams share the same technical officers. The Rotterdam Secretariat in FAO cooperates very closely with the Basel and Stockholm Conventions.

106. Interviews with GEF Secretariat suggested that, if coordination were to be improved, it will have to be at the country level. The GEF has made attempts to streamline reporting across the Rio Conventions – between GEF-4 and GEF-6, the GEF implemented a set of 13 national projects specifically aimed at enhancing in country capacity and increasing coordination for implementing the Rio Conventions – but that this initiative has not gained traction. The process of review, specificity, data etc. have proven to be too complicated. In addition, the Conventions have different reporting deadlines, so timelines are out of sync. The GEF Secretariat tried to develop a programme in GEF-7 to look into how the GEF could support countries to report in a more coordinated manner. The Conventions supported the idea, but it didn't make it into the final replenishment outcome of GEF-7. Finally, it was suggested that countries tend not to ask for better coordination, because different people work on different Conventions at the country level.

6. MAIN FINDINGS

6.1 Main findings

107. The objective of this evaluation of GEF Enabling Activities is to provide the GEF Council with an assessment of enabling activities and generate evaluative evidence for the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7). The evaluation drew on information obtained from a global survey, a desk review of documents, and interviews with staff from Conventions, GEF Agencies, and the GEF Secretariat. The main findings based of this evaluation are:

Finding 1: Enabling activities are predominantly viewed as a tool for supporting countries in reporting to the Conventions. The enabling activities modality is achieving it's intended objective of helping countries fulfill their obligations under the Conventions for which the GEF is the financial mechanism. Some Conventions suggested that if enabling activity resources had not been available, then reports would not have been produced on time, and so the ability to check, understand, and assess implementation would have been basically undermined.

Finding 2: Enabling activities play a significant role beyond Convention reporting and are helping to fill several gaps. Enabling activities play an important role in the identification of needs; development of enabling environments for future projects; and development of accurate data and baseline information. They have been less effective as capacity building support when reporting is undertaken by international consultants.

Finding 3: Enabling activities are aligned with national priorities, but the link to Convention Guidance is less clear. There is a complicated relationship between Convention guidance and enabling activities. There can be a link between national reporting that is supported by enabling activities, and the evolution of Guidance. However, the relationship is Convention-specific. Where Conventions are highly politicized ... and example being the UNFCCC ... there is less room for national reporting to influence Guidance. Where reports are technical in nature, and there is a review process where report findings feed directly into Convention outcomes, they have a greater influence.

Finding 4: The original purpose of enabling activities has been fulfilled, but needs are changing over time, and the focus of enabling activity-supported projects is shifting. As time has passed, and countries, GEF Agencies, and Conventions have become more familiar with the requirements of Convention guidance, there has been a shift beyond formal reporting, to examining how enabling activities can be applied as a tool to support actual compliance.

Finding 5: Achievement of results is determined by resources, national capacity, and political will. A combination of factors affect the ability of enabling activities to achieve results. The main determinants include availability of resources, national capacity, and, political will.

Finding 6: The approval process is considered to be efficient, but post-approval, there are concerns about disbursement and implementation. Stakeholders all agree that umbrella arrangements face significant delays at two main junctures: during the preparation of the

umbrella arrangement; and, during the disbursement phase. With regards to the former, a significant problem appears to be obtaining all OFP endorsement letters prior to submission for approval by the GEF. The umbrella approach can only move as “fast as the slowest player”. The GEF Agencies exhibited considerable frustration with the length of time it can take to complete an enabling activity project. It was stressed that enabling activity projects are supposed to be discrete and short. However, many do not finish on time.

Finding 7: Direct access was a good idea in theory, but it is too bureaucratic and cumbersome.

Direct access was tested in GEF-5 and was ultimately not successful due to the transaction costs/burden associated with World Bank procedures. The GEF is not an independent legal entity, and disbursement of funds directly to countries is onerous for GEF staff, the World Bank, and countries alike.

Finding 8: Ad hoc approaches to Convention reporting do not necessarily lead to good quality work.

Ad hoc approaches to Convention reporting may affect the quality of reporting outcomes over time. National planning processes should not be restricted to a six-month period before the submission of a report. A more sophisticated approach would be to consider the process of reporting as adaptive and ongoing, with a semi-permanent local team dedicated to the task.

Finding 9: The burdens on GEF Agencies are too high. A problem for the Agencies is that they are required to subsidize the cost for delayed projects. The Agency fee is not covering extensions, due to the necessity to provide ongoing oversight. The claim was made that the cost-prohibitive nature of managing enabling activities is one reason why other Agencies are not involved.

Finding 10: The processing and management of enabling activities is perceived to be not agile enough. Enabling activities are more complex than they need to be and should be more agile. The front-end approval process is efficient, but disbursement and implementation are not.

6.2 Main suggestions for improvement

108. In the past, enabling activities had a very specific role to play in the suite of GEF funding modalities. Their clear purpose has been to fund the preparation of reports, plans, strategies, and assessments, as part of reporting requirements of Conventions. This important role should continue. However, the focus of enabling activity-supported projects is changing, and there are clear inefficiencies in how the processes of project approval, disbursement, and implementation are carried out. The evaluation concludes with the following suggestions for consideration which have also been reflected in the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7).

109. **The GEF along with Agencies and member countries could consider developing a strategic and systemic approach for enabling activities.** An approach for improving the overall efficiency of funding for Convention reporting would be for the system to change, whereby a

country would submit one proposal to the GEF that would cover all Convention reporting needs over a 5-year cycle, or to coincide with a GEF cycle. Countries would then decide how to use this block funding most effectively. Countries could be encouraged to establish “standing” teams to work on preparing relevant Convention reports and be encouraged to stop approaching reporting as an ad hoc activity, but more as an iterative and continuous process.

110. The GEF could consider engaging with agencies for possible efficiency gains in the preparation, implementation, and execution of enabling activities. To reduce the time period between GEF approval and first disbursement, especially for umbrella arrangements, one suggestion is for the GEF to consider not requiring letters of endorsement from OFPs prior to GEF approval. The GEF could consider providing funding to the relevant GEF Agency and have endorsement letters as a requirement for disbursement from the Agency to the country.

111. The GEF could consider engaging with agencies to allow for a wider range of enabling activities implementors. The current system that encourages countries to apply for enabling activity funds primarily through either UNEP or UNDP is not sustainable. The GEF could consider engaging with the Agencies to: (i) find a way to encourage a wider range of Agencies to support countries in applying and implementing enabling activities. The range could be extended to include Convention Secretariats or other financial mechanisms as implementing agencies for enabling activities; and, (ii) could examine methods by which the agency fee may be increased to cover the supervision time required when countries do not finish projects on time.

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ANNEX 1: EVALUATION MATRIX

Key Questions	Indicators/Basic Data/What to Look for	Sources of Information & Methodology
Relevance		
What is the strategic importance of enabling activities in the GEF suite of modalities?	1) What was the purpose of enabling activities in the GEF instrument 2) What are enabling activities being used for? What gaps are they addressing? 3) Is the original purpose/aim of enabling activities being fulfilled?	1) Desk and portfolio analysis 2) Interviews 3) Global survey
To what extent are activities under the GEF enabling activity modality relevant to Conference of Parties guidance, GEF focal area strategies, and recipient countries' national agendas in climate change, biodiversity, persistent organic pollutants, mercury, and land degradation?	1) Are enabling activities aligned with GEF focal area strategies? 2) Are enabling activities aligned with national priorities? 3) How are enabling activities helping countries meet obligations to Conventions? 4) How are enabling activities aligned with the conventions to which the GEF is the financial mechanism	1) Document review 2) Interviews with stakeholders 3) Global survey (operational focal points and Convention focal points)
Has there been a review/evaluation by Conventions of the needs and importance of enabling activities? How has the use of enabling activities changed over time?	1) Have enabling activities influenced the evolution of Convention guidance? 2) Has the purpose of enabling activities changed over time (from the perspective of different stakeholders, e.g., GEF Sec, and from Conventions/countries)? 3) Does the enabling activities modality have future relevance (from the perspective of the different stakeholders)?	1) Desk review 2) Document review 3) Interviews with stakeholders
Effectiveness and Results		
What is the role of enabling activities in developing national policies as distinct from national plans or strategies?	1) Is there any evidence that enabling activities influence the design of national policies or laws/regulations?	1) Desk review and document review 2) Interviews with stakeholders 3) Global survey (operational focal points and Convention focal points)
Complementarities or overlaps between enabling activities and other Agency projects in the GEF—is there scope for efficiencies?	1) What are the key factors that affect the achievement of results within the enabling activities modality? 2) Are enabling activities used as inputs to the design of other GEF projects? 3) Are enabling activities used as inputs to the design of other donor funded projects?	1) Desk review and document review 2) Interviews with stakeholders 3) Global survey (operational focal points and Convention focal points)

Key Questions	Indicators/Basic Data/What to Look for	Sources of Information & Methodology
<i>Efficiency</i>		
How are enabling activities processed? Is there economy in terms of processing times and resources in bundling enabling activities as large projects, programs, and umbrella arrangements? Are enabling activities well aligned and adhering to GEF policies?	1) How long does it take to process an enabling activity? 2) How does the process compare with other GEF modalities? 3) Have the direct access and expedited mechanisms improved the efficiency of the overall enabling activities process? 4) Are the various policies (Gender, Safeguards, and Stakeholder engagement) reflected in the design and implementation of enabling activities?	1) Desk and portfolio analysis 2) Interviews with stakeholders
How is the budget for enabling activities allocated and being spent?	1) How has the financial allocation for enabling activities changed over the GEF replenishments?	1) Desk and portfolio review 2) Interviews with Conventions
What have the conventions done to streamline reporting? Internally and among other conventions How can the GEF streamline enabling activities and support provided to enable countries to comply with convention requirements?	1) Have they been involved in streamlining reporting across the different conventions; what have they done? 2) What are the types of activities and information collected through enabling activities and are there opportunities or scope for efficiencies and streamlining of processes?	1) Desk review 2) Interviews with stakeholders

ANNEX 2: LIST OF COUNTRY CASE STUDIES AND PROJECTS

Country / ID	Agency	Focal Area	GEF period	Type	Scope	Title
JAMAICA						
10003	UNEP	Land Degradation	GEF - 6	EA	Global	GEF Support to UNCCD 2018 National Reporting Process - Umbrella III
439	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 1	EA	National	Enabling Jamaica to Prepare its First National Communication in Response to its Commitments to UNFCCC
472	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 1	EA	National	Development of a National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy & Action Plan and Report to the CBD
1760	UNDP	POPs	GEF - 3	EA	National	Enabling Activities for Jamaica to Develop and Implement the National Implementation Plan for the POPs Convention
1862	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 3	EA	National	National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Global Environment Management
1882	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 3	EA	National	Climate Change Enabling Activity (Additional Financing for Capacity Building in Priority Areas)
3180	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	EA	National	Assessment of Capacity Building Needs, Preparation of the Third National Report (CBD) and the Clearing House Mechanism
5476	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 5	EA	National	Third National Communication (TNC) and Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC
5502	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 5	EA	National	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan
5893	UNEP	Land Degradation	GEF - 5	EA	National	Support to the Alignment of Jamaica's National Action Programme to the UNCCD 10 Year Strategy and Preparation of the Reporting and Review process.
10130	UNDP	Chemicals and Waste	GEF - 7	EA	National	Review and update of the national implementation plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
10445	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 7	EA	National	Learning-by-doing preparation of the Fourth National Communication and Second Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC

Country / ID	Agency	Focal Area	GEF period	Type	Scope	Title
41	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 2	EA	Regional	Building Capacity for Conducting Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments in the Caribbean Region
9455	UNEP	Chemicals and Waste	GEF - 6	EA	Regional	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in the Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia)
3764	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	FSP	National	Strengthening the Operational and Financial Sustainability of the National Protected Area System
4167	UNEP	Climate Change	GEF - 4	FSP	National	LGGE Promoting Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Buildings in Jamaica
4454	IADB	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Integrated Management of the Yallahs River and Hope River Watersheds
9862	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 6	FSP	National	Conserving Biodiversity and Reducing Land Degradation Using an Integrated Landscape Approach
3049	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 4	MSP	National	Piloting Natural Resource Valuation within Environmental Impact Assessments
3487	UNDP	Land Degradation	GEF - 3	MSP	National	LDC/SIDS Portfolio Project: Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Jamaica
5843	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 5	MSP	National	Deployment of Renewable Energy and Improvement of Energy Efficiency in the Public Sector
10014	IADB	Climate Change	GEF - 6	MSP	National	Strengthening Jamaica's Capacity to Meet Transparency Requirements under the Paris Agreement
MADAGASCAR						
9981	UNEP	Land Degradation	GEF - 6	EA	Global	GEF Support to UNCCD 2018 National Reporting Process - Umbrella I
174	UNEP	Biodiversity	GEF - 1	EA	National	First National Report to the CBD
415	UNEP	Biodiversity	GEF - 1	EA	National	Clearing House Mechanism Enabling Activity
639	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 2	EA	National	Enabling Madagascar to Prepare its Initial National Communication in Response to its Commitments to UNFCCC
1396	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 2	EA	National	Consultations for the Second National Report on Biodiversity (add on)
1847	UNEP	POPs	GEF - 3	EA	National	Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Madagascar

Country / ID	Agency	Focal Area	GEF period	Type	Scope	Title
2398	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 4	EA	National	National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Environmental Management
2521	World Bank	Climate Change	GEF - 3	EA	National	Preparation of a National Action Program to Adapt to Climate Changes
2577	UNEP	Biodiversity	GEF - 3	EA	National	Biodiversity Enabling Activities Add-on: Assessment of Capacity Building Needs and Establishment of a National Clearing House Mechanism
4820	GEFSEC	POPs	GEF - 5	EA	National	Enabling Activities to review and update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
4983	UNEP	Land Degradation	GEF - 5	EA	National	Alignment of National Action Programme to the UNCCD 10 Years Strategy and Preparation of the Fifth Reporting and Review process
9457	UNEP	Chemicals and Waste	GEF - 6	EA	National	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Madagascar
3373	World Bank	Land Degradation	GEF - 4	FSP	National	SIP: Watershed Management
3687	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	FSP	National	Madagascar's Network of Managed Resource Protected Areas
3773	World Bank	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	FSP	National	Support to the Madagascar Foundation for Protected Areas and Biodiversity (through Additional Financing to the Third Environment Support Program Project (EP3)
4568	UNEP	Climate Change	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Adapting Coastal Zone Management to Climate Change in Madagascar Considering Ecosystem and Livelihoods
5233	AfDB	Climate Change	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Enabling Climate Resilience in the Agriculture Sector in the Southwest Region of Madagascar
5317	UNIDO	Climate Change	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Increased Energy Access for Productive Use through Small Hydropower Development in Rural Areas
5351	UNEP	Biodiversity	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Strengthening the Network of New Protected Areas in Madagascar
5352	UNEP	Biodiversity	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Conservation of Key Threatened Endemic and Economically Valuable Species in Madagascar

Country / ID	Agency	Focal Area	GEF period	Type	Scope	Title
5486	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 5	FSP	National	A Landscape Approach to Conserving and Managing Threatened Biodiversity in Madagascar with a Focus on the Atsimo-Andrefana Spiny and Dry Forest Landscape
5632	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Enhancing the Adaptation Capacities and Resilience to Climate Change in Rural Communities in Analamanga, Atsinanana, Androy, Anosy, and Atsimo Andrefana
9330	World Bank	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 6	FSP	National	Sustainable Agriculture Landscape Project
9546	WWF-US	Biodiversity	GEF - 6	FSP	National	Expanding and Consolidating Madagascar's Marine Protected Areas Network
9692	World Bank	International Waters	GEF - 6	FSP	National	Second South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish2)
9793	UNEP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 6	FSP	National	Conservation and Improvement of Ecosystem Services for the Atsinanana Region through Agroecology and the Promotion of Sustainable Energy Production
10371	FAO	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 7	FSP	National	Biodiversity Conservation, Restoration and Integrated Sustainable Development of Lower Mangoky and South-Mananara watersheds
3335	UNEP	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	MSP	National	BS Support for Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Madagascar
3374	UNDP	Land Degradation	GEF - 4	MSP	National	SIP: Stabilizing Rural Populations through Improved Systems for SLM and Local Governance of Lands in Southern Madagascar
5354	UNEP	Land Degradation	GEF - 5	MSP	National	Participatory Sustainable Land Management in the Grassland Plateaus of Western Madagascar
9300	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 6	MSP	National	Strengthening National Capacities to Meet Global Environmental Obligations with the Framework of Sustainable Development Priorities
9948	CI	Climate Change	GEF - 6	MSP	National	Building and Strengthening Madagascar's National Capacity to Implement the Transparency Elements of the Paris Agreement
10316	UNEP	Biodiversity	GEF - 7	MSP	National	Effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing from the Use of Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge in Madagascar
THAILAND						

Country / ID	Agency	Focal Area	GEF period	Type	Scope	Title
307	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 1	EA	National	Enabling Thailand to Prepare its First National Communication in Response to its Commitments to UNFCCC
1912	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 4	EA	National	National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA)
2076	UNEP	POPs	GEF - 3	EA	National	Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for THAILAND
3307	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	EA	National	Support to Alignment of NBSAP with CBD Obligations and to Development of CHM
5370	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 5	EA	National	Third National Communication (TNC) and Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC
5894	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 5	EA	National	Thailand's Domestic Preparation for Post-2020 Contributions
9487	UNIDO	Chemicals and Waste	GEF - 6	EA	National	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
9541	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 6	EA	National	Thailand's Second Biennial Update Report (SBUR) to the UNFCCC
10131	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 7	EA	National	Thailand's Fourth National Communication and Third Biennial Update Report (NC4-BUR3) to the UNFCCC
385	UNDP	Climate Change	Pilot Phase	EA	Regional	Asia Least-Cost Greenhouse Gas Abatement Strategy (ALGAS)
13	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 2	FSP	National	Removal of Barriers to Biomass Power Generation and Co-generation
3359	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 4	FSP	National	Promoting Renewable Energy in Mae Hong Son Province
3445	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 4	FSP	National	SFM: Integrated Community-based Forest and Catchment Management through an Ecosystem Service Approach (CBFCM)
3517	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	FSP	National	Catalyzing Sustainability of Thailand's Protected Area System
3786	UNIDO	Climate Change	GEF - 4	FSP	National	CF: Industrial Energy Efficiency
3940	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 4	FSP	National	Sustainable Management of Biodiversity in Thailand's Production Landscape
4037	UNIDO	Climate Change	GEF - 4	FSP	National	TT-Pilot (GEF-4): Overcoming Policy, Market and Technological Barriers to Support Technological Innovation and South-South Technology Transfer: The Pilot Case of Ethanol Production from Cassava
4165	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 4	FSP	National	LGGE Promoting Energy Efficiency in Commercial Buildings in Thailand (PEECB)

Country / ID	Agency	Focal Area	GEF period	Type	Scope	Title
4677	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 5	FSP	National	GMS-FBP: Strengthening Capacity and Incentives for Wildlife Conservation in the Western Forest Complex
5086	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Achieving Low Carbon Growth in Cities through Sustainable Urban Systems Management in Thailand (LCC)
5330	UNDP	Multi Focal Area	GEF - 5	FSP	National	Maximizing Carbon Sink Capacity and Conserving Biodiversity through Sustainable Conservation, Restoration, and Management of Peat-swamp Ecosystems
9222	UNIDO	Chemicals and Waste	GEF - 6	FSP	National	Greening the Scrap Metal Value Chain through Promotion of BAT/BEP to Reduce U-POPs Releases from Recycling Facilities
10390	FAO	Biodiversity	GEF - 7	FSP	National	Integrated Forest Landscape Management for Strengthening the Northeastern and Eastern Forest Corridors
10409	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 7	FSP	National	Mainstreaming biodiversity-based tourism in Thailand to support sustainable tourism development
3299	UNDP	Climate Change	GEF - 4	MSP	National	Strengthening the Capacity of Vulnerable Coastal Communities to Address the Risk of Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events
4184	UNIDO	Climate Change	GEF - 4	MSP	National	Promoting Small Biomass Power Plants in Rural Thailand for Sustainable Renewable Energy Management and Community Involvement
4210	World Bank	Climate Change	GEF - 4	MSP	National	Sustainable Urban Transport in Chiang Mai
5512	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 5	MSP	National	Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes
5725	UNIDO	Climate Change	GEF - 5	MSP	National	Greening Industry through Low Carbon Technology Application for SMEs
5726	UNDP	Biodiversity	GEF - 5	MSP	National	Sustainable Management Models for Local Government Organisations to Enhance Biodiversity Protection and Utilization in Selected Eco-regions of Thailand
5800	UNIDO	Climate Change	GEF - 5	MSP	National	GEF UNIDO Cleantech Programme for SMEs

ANNEX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Name	GEF Affiliation	Organization
Jillian Campbell	Convention Secretariat	Convention on Biological Diversity
Lijie Cai	Convention Secretariat	Convention on Biological Diversity
Marianela Araya Quesada	Convention Secretariat	Convention on Biological Diversity
Monique Chiasson	Convention Secretariat	Convention on Biological Diversity
Nadine Saad	Convention Secretariat	Convention on Biological Diversity
Neil Pratt	Convention Secretariat	Convention on Biological Diversity
Wadzanayi Mandivenyi	Convention Secretariat	Convention on Biological Diversity
Marianne Bailey	Convention Secretariat	Minamata Convention on Mercury
Frank Moser	Convention Secretariat	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
Giovanna Moire	Convention Secretariat	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
Kei Ohno Woodall	Convention Secretariat	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
Anja Thust	Convention Secretariat	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
Louise Baker	Convention Secretariat	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
Munazza Naqvi	Convention Secretariat	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
Annett Moehner	Convention Secretariat	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Bert Van der Plas	Convention Secretariat	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Jigme Jigme	Convention Secretariat	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Motsomi Maletjane	Convention Secretariat	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Hernan Gonzalez	GEF Agency	Food and Agriculture Organization
Kuena Morebotsane	GEF Agency	Food and Agriculture Organization
Valeria Gonzalez Riggio	GEF Agency	Food and Agriculture Organization
Yurie Naito	GEF Agency	Food and Agriculture Organization
Cassie Flynn	GEF Agency	United Nations Development Programme
Damiano Borgogno	GEF Agency	United Nations Development Programme
Eva Huttova	GEF Agency	United Nations Development Programme
Pradeep Kurukulasuriya	GEF Agency	United Nations Development Programme
Alex Owusu-Biney	GEF Agency	United Nations Environment Programme
Emmanuel Ngore	GEF Agency	United Nations Environment Programme
Rupert Colville	GEF Agency	United Nations Environment Programme
Ruth Zugman Do Coutto	GEF Agency	United Nations Environment Programme
Jerome Stucki	GEF Agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Juergen Hierold	GEF Agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
Olga Gordiievskia	GEF Agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
Smail Alhilali	GEF Agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
Anil Sookdeo	GEF Secretariat	Global Environment Facility Secretariat
Chizuru Aoki	GEF Secretariat	Global Environment Facility Secretariat
Mark Zimsky	GEF Secretariat	Global Environment Facility Secretariat
Milena Gonzalez Vasquez	GEF Secretariat	Global Environment Facility Secretariat
Minna Kononen	GEF Secretariat	Global Environment Facility Secretariat
Ulrich Apel	GEF Secretariat	Global Environment Facility Secretariat

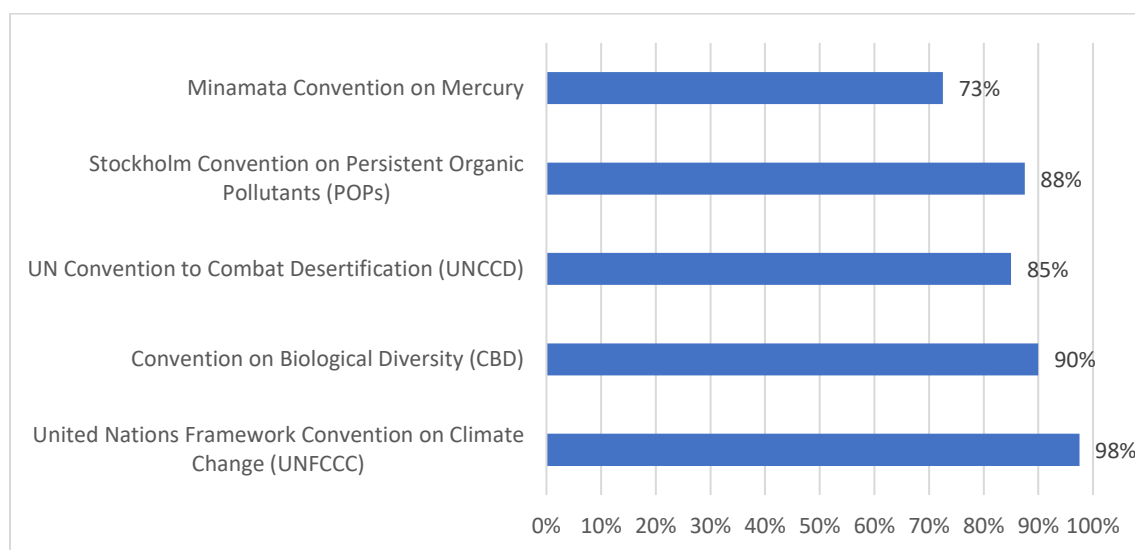
ANNEX 4: OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT SURVEY ANALYSIS

The evaluation conducted a global survey sent to 233 GEF Operations Focal Points (OFPs) and members of their staff. The evaluation used the most updated list of OFPs listed on the GEF website. The evaluation received 40 responses to the survey, a 17.2% response rate.

The following annex provides an analysis of survey responses by question.

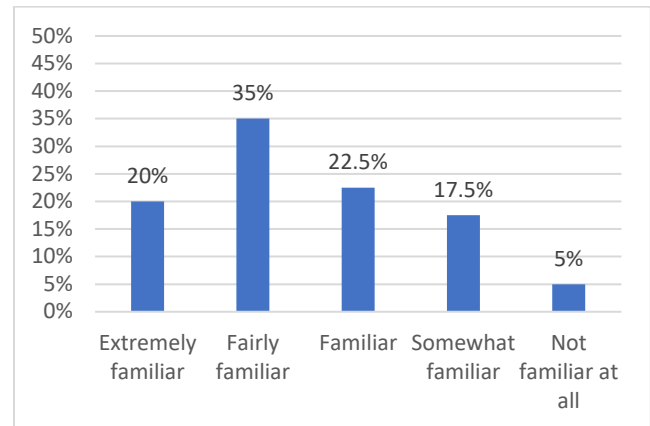
1. Is your country party to the following conventions?

Convention	Number of responses	(%)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	39	98%
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	36	90%
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	34	85%
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	35	88%
Minamata Convention on Mercury	29	73%
Total	40	



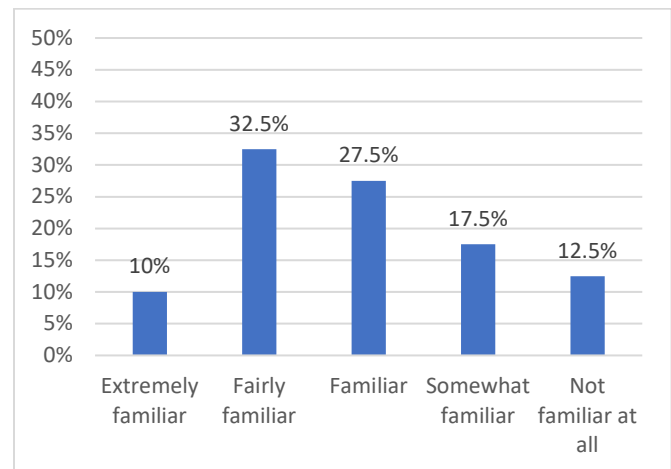
2. On a scale of 1-5, how familiar are you with the GEF enabling activity modality? (5 = Extremely familiar; 4 = Fairly familiar; 3 = Familiar; 2 = Somewhat familiar; 1 = Not familiar at all)

	Number of responses	(%)
Extremely familiar	8	20%
Fairly familiar	14	35%
Familiar	9	22.5%
Somewhat familiar	7	17.5%
Not familiar at all	2	5%
Total	40	



3. On a scale of 1-5, how familiar are you with the direct access mechanism for GEF enabling activities? (5 = Extremely familiar; 4 = Fairly familiar; 3 = Familiar; 2 = Somewhat familiar; 1 = Not familiar at all)

	Number of responses	(%)
Extremely familiar	4	10%
Fairly familiar	13	32.5%
Familiar	11	27.5%
Somewhat familiar	7	17.5%
Not familiar at all	5	12.5%
Total	40	



4. Has your country used the direct access mechanism for enabling activities? (Yes; No; Not sure / don't know)

	Number of responses	(%)
Yes	17	43%
No	8	20%
Not sure / don't know	15	38%
Grand Total	40	

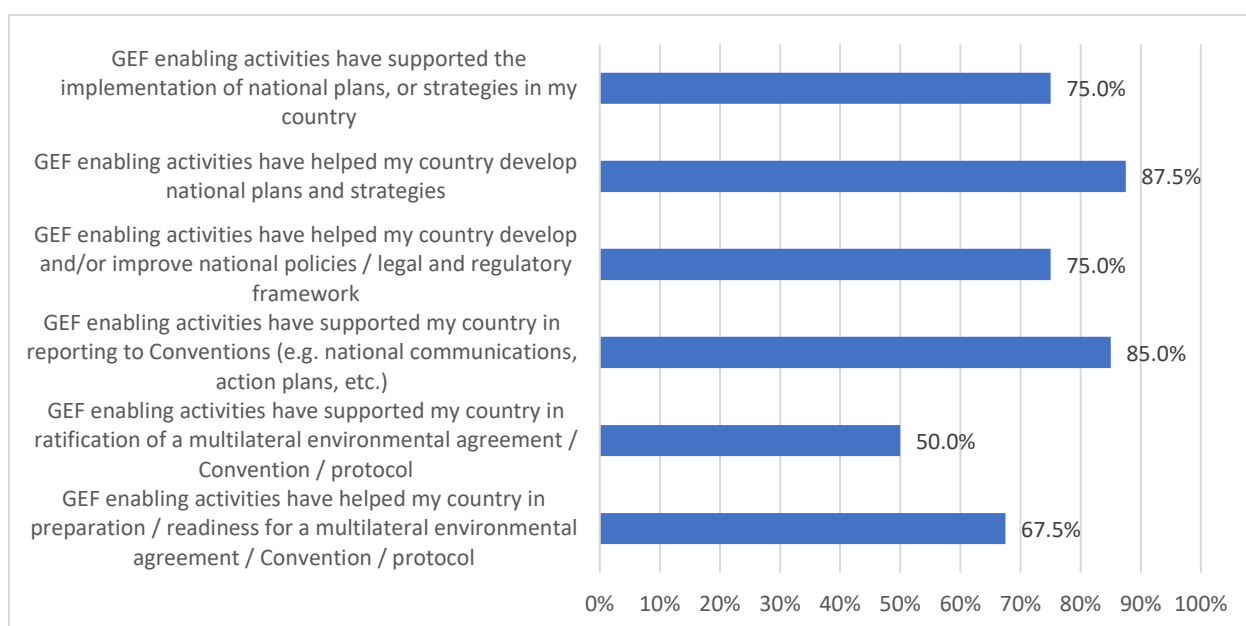
5. For what type of reporting was the direct access used? (Reporting to the UNFCCC; Reporting to CBD; Reporting to UNCCD; Not applicable / my country has not used the direct access mechanism)

	Number of responses	(%)
Reporting to the UNFCCC	22	55%
Reporting to CBD	24	60%
Reporting to UNCCD	18	45%
Not applicable / my country has not used the direct access mechanism	10	25%
Total	40	

6. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the statements below on the utility of GEF enabling activities in your country:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
GEF enabling activities have helped my country in preparation / readiness for a multilateral environmental agreement / Convention / protocol	25%	42.5%	7.5%	2.5%	22.5%
GEF enabling activities have supported my country in ratification of a multilateral environmental agreement / Convention / protocol	12.5%	37.5%	10%	2.5%	37.5%
GEF enabling activities have supported my country in reporting to Conventions (e.g. national communications, action plans, etc.)	37.5%	47.5%	-	2.5%	12.5%
GEF enabling activities have helped my country develop and/or improve national policies / legal and regulatory framework	30%	45%	10%	2.5%	12.5%
GEF enabling activities have helped my country develop national plans and strategies	37.5%	50%	2.5%	2.5%	7.5%
GEF enabling activities have supported the implementation of national plans, or strategies in my country	20%	55%	10%	2.5%	12.5%

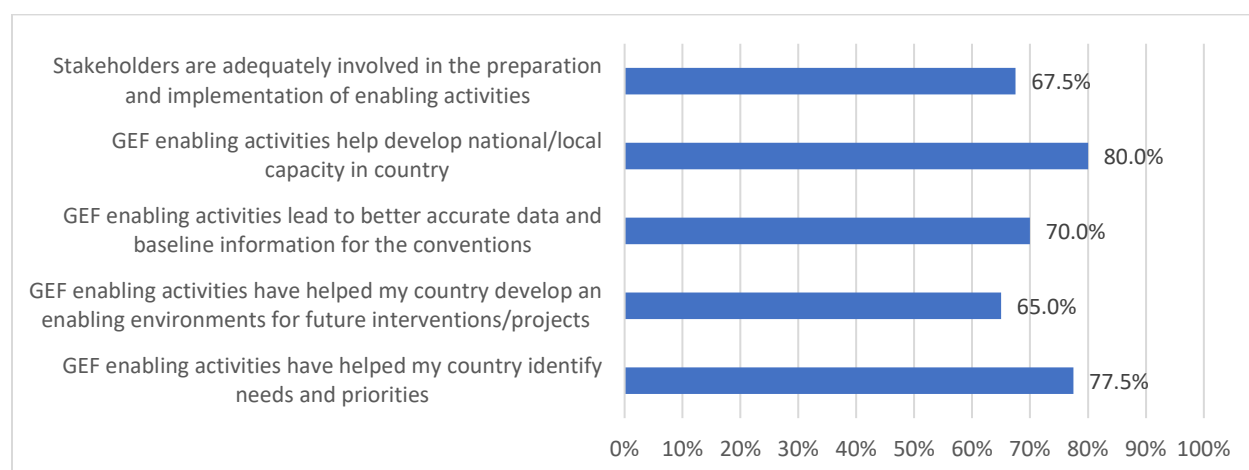
Statement	% Agree or Strongly Agree
GEF enabling activities have helped my country in preparation / readiness for a multilateral environmental agreement / Convention / protocol	67.5%
GEF enabling activities have supported my country in ratification of a multilateral environmental agreement / Convention / protocol	50.0%
GEF enabling activities have supported my country in reporting to Conventions (e.g. national communications, action plans, etc.)	85.0%
GEF enabling activities have helped my country develop and/or improve national policies / legal and regulatory framework	75.0%
GEF enabling activities have helped my country develop national plans and strategies	87.5%
GEF enabling activities have supported the implementation of national plans, or strategies in my country	75.0%



7. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the statements below on the utility of GEF enabling activities in your country:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
GEF enabling activities have helped my country identify needs and priorities	25%	52.5%	15%	-	7.5%
GEF enabling activities have helped my country develop an enabling environments for future interventions/projects	32.5%	32.5%	20%	-	15%
GEF enabling activities lead to better accurate data and baseline information for the conventions	30%	40%	15%	-	15%
GEF enabling activities help develop national/local capacity in country	40%	40%	12.5%	-	7.5%
Stakeholders are adequately involved in the preparation and implementation of enabling activities	32.5%	35%	27.5%	-	5.0%

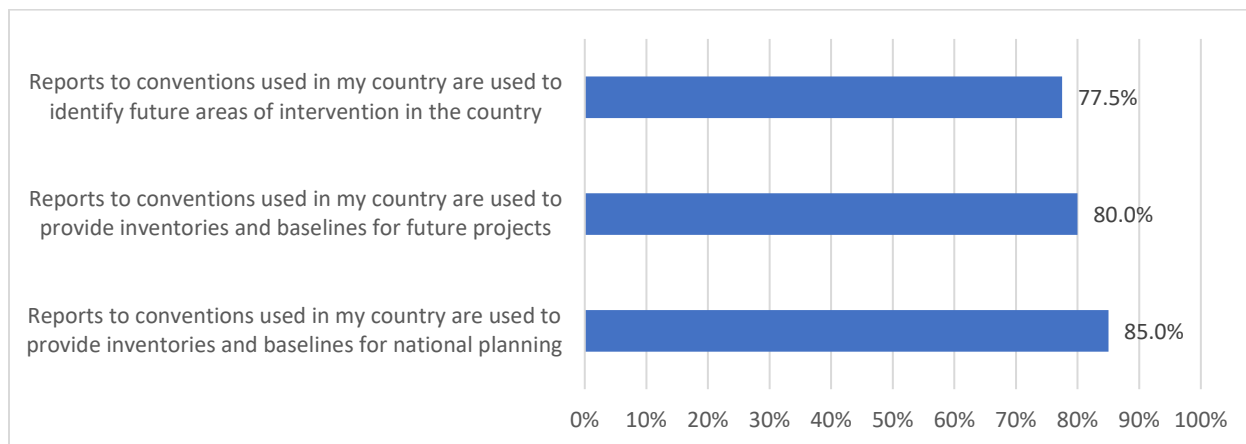
Statement	% Agree or Strongly Agree
GEF enabling activities have helped my country identify needs and priorities	77.5%
GEF enabling activities have helped my country develop an enabling environments for future interventions/projects	65.0%
GEF enabling activities lead to better accurate data and baseline information for the conventions	70.0%
GEF enabling activities help develop national/local capacity in country	80.0%
Stakeholders are adequately involved in the preparation and implementation of enabling activities	67.5%



8. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the statements below:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to provide inventories and baselines for national planning	27.5%	57.5%	10%	-	5%
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to provide inventories and baselines for future projects	35%	45%	12.5%	-	7.5%
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to identify future areas of intervention in the country	37.5%	40%	17.5%	-	5%

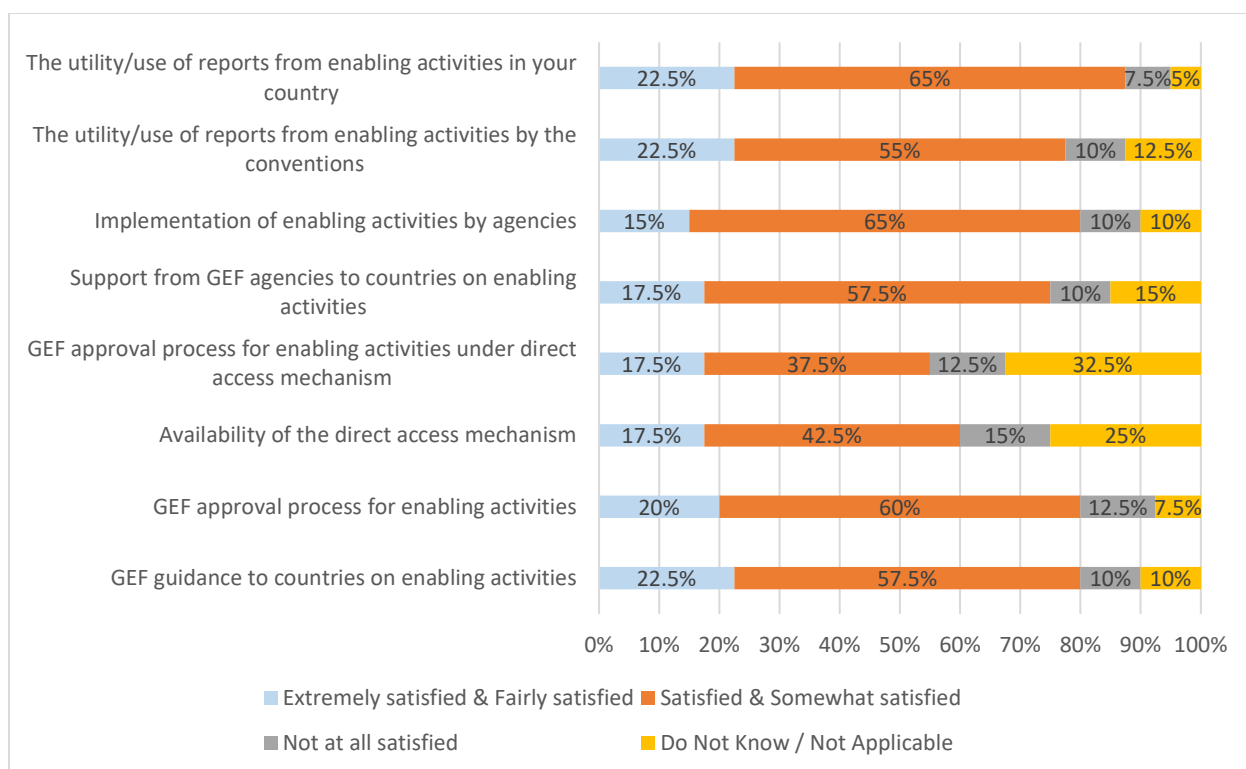
Statement	% Agree or Strongly Agree
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to provide inventories and baselines for national planning	85.0%
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to provide inventories and baselines for future projects	80.0%
Reports to conventions used in my country are used to identify future areas of intervention in the country	77.5%



9. Please indicate the extent of your satisfaction with the various aspects of the GEF enabling activities:

Statement	Extremely satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
GEF guidance to countries on enabling activities	10%	12.5%	32.5%	25%	10%	10%
GEF approval process for enabling activities	7.5%	12.5%	37.5%	22.5%	12.5%	7.5%
Availability of the direct access mechanism	5%	12.5%	30%	12.5%	15%	25%
GEF approval process for enabling activities under direct access mechanism	10%	7.5%	27.5%	10%	12.5%	32.5%
Support from GEF agencies to countries on enabling activities	10%	7.5%	37.5%	20%	10%	15%
Implementation of enabling activities by agencies	5%	10%	40%	25%	10%	10%
The utility/use of reports from enabling activities by the conventions	12.5%	10%	35%	20%	10%	12.5%
The utility/use of reports from enabling activities in your country	10%	12.5%	45%	20%	7.5%	5%

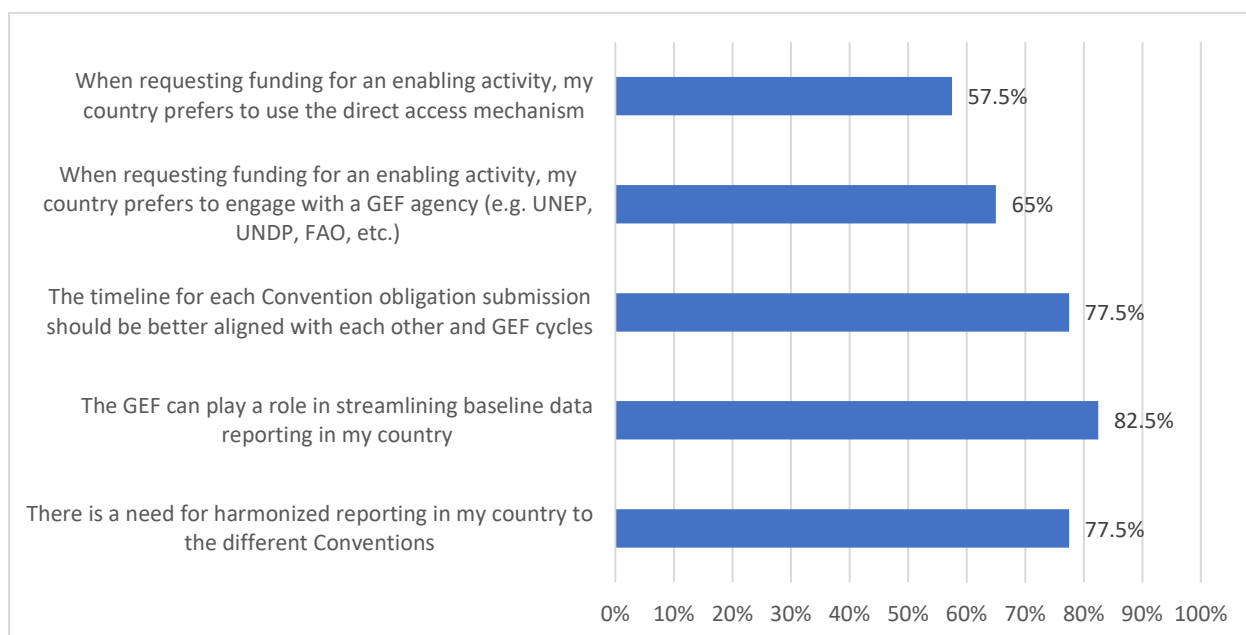
Statement	Extremely satisfied & Fairly satisfied	Satisfied & Somewhat satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
GEF guidance to countries on enabling activities	22.5%	57.5%	10%	10%
GEF approval process for enabling activities	20%	60%	12.5%	7.5%
Availability of the direct access mechanism	17.5%	42.5%	15%	25%
GEF approval process for enabling activities under direct access mechanism	17.5%	37.5%	12.5%	32.5%
Support from GEF agencies to countries on enabling activities	17.5%	57.5%	10%	15%
Implementation of enabling activities by agencies	15%	65%	10%	10%
The utility/use of reports from enabling activities by the conventions	22.5%	55%	10%	12.5%
The utility/use of reports from enabling activities in your country	22.5%	65%	7.5%	5%



10. Please rate the extent of your agreement with the statements below:

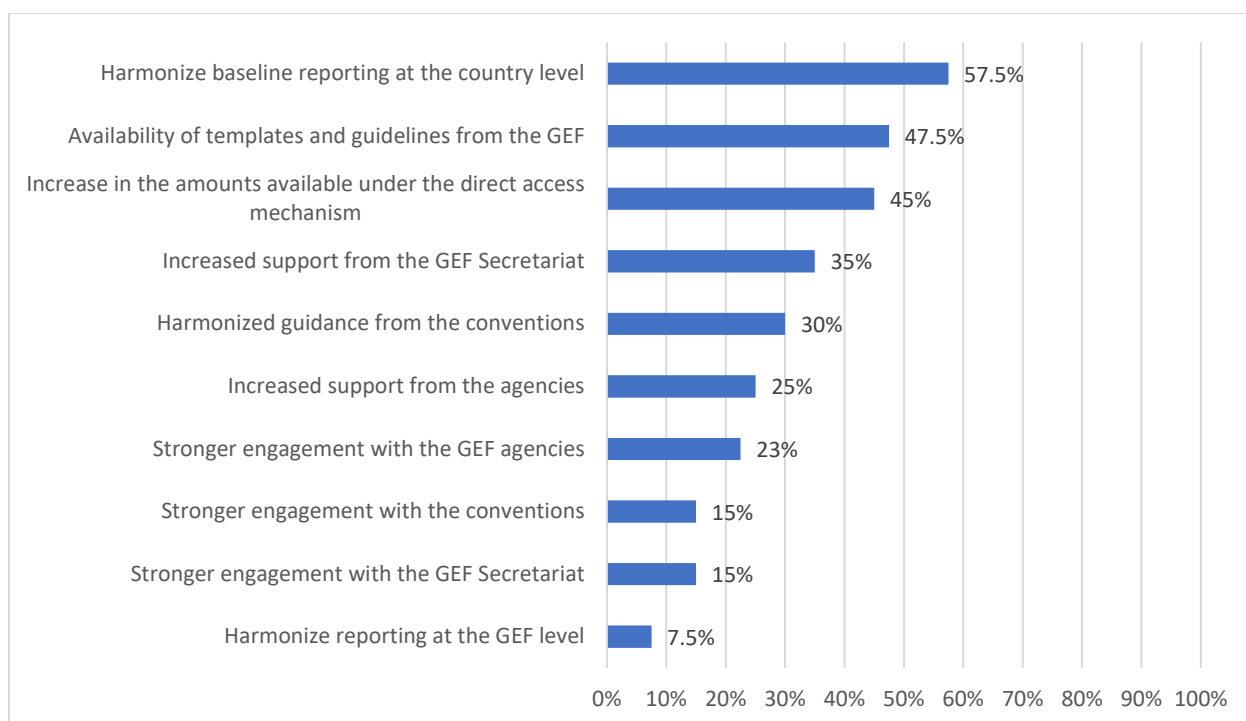
Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
There is a need for harmonized reporting in my country to the different Conventions	50%	27.5%	20%	-	2.5%
The GEF can play a role in streamlining baseline data reporting in my country	47.5%	35%	10%	2.5%	5%
The timeline for each Convention obligation submission should be better aligned with each other and GEF cycles	40%	37.5%	15%	2.5%	5%
When requesting funding for an enabling activity, my country prefers to engage with a GEF agency (e.g. UNEP, UNDP, FAO, etc.)	32.5%	32.5%	17.5%	10.0%	7.5%
When requesting funding for an enabling activity, my country prefers to use the direct access mechanism	32.5%	25%	17.5%	-	25%

Statement	% Agree or Strongly Agree
There is a need for harmonized reporting in my country to the different Conventions	77.5%
The GEF can play a role in streamlining baseline data reporting in my country	82.5%
The timeline for each Convention obligation submission should be better aligned with each other and GEF cycles	77.5%
When requesting funding for an enabling activity, my country prefers to engage with a GEF agency (e.g. UNEP, UNDP, FAO, etc.)	65%
When requesting funding for an enabling activity, my country prefers to use the direct access mechanism	57.5%



11. What key improvements would you like to see for enabling activities in GEF-8 and beyond? (please select the three most important to your country)

Key Improvements	(#)	(%)
Harmonize reporting at the GEF level	3	7.5%
Stronger engagement with the GEF Secretariat	6	15%
Stronger engagement with the conventions	6	15%
Stronger engagement with the GEF agencies	9	23%
Increased support from the agencies	10	25%
Harmonized guidance from the conventions	12	30%
Increased support from the GEF Secretariat	14	35%
Increase in the amounts available under the direct access mechanism	18	45%
Availability of templates and guidelines from the GEF	19	47.5%
Harmonize baseline reporting at the country level	23	57.5%
Total	40	

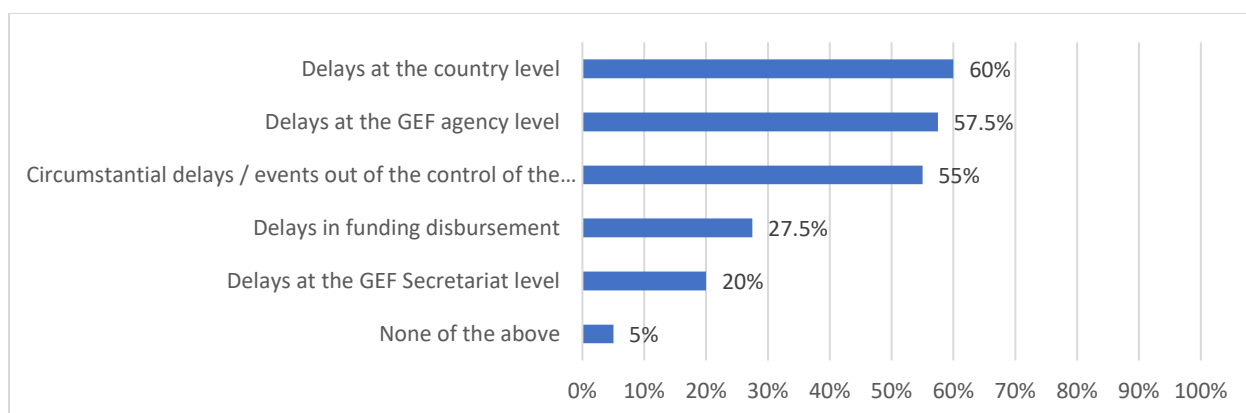


Open ended responses
more collaboration and exchange, and synergy between conventions
provide experts who can write good proposals to access GEF funding
We did not take any support from GEF during 10 Years*

*comment from Syria

12. If there have been delays in the development of enabling activities projects and/or approvals, why do you think this might be the case?

Key Improvements	(#)	(%)
None of the above	2	5%
Delays at the GEF Secretariat level	8	20%
Delays in funding disbursement	11	27.5%
Circumstantial delays / events out of the control of the country, agency, or GEF Secretariat	22	55%
Delays at the GEF agency level	23	57.5%
Delays at the country level	24	60%
Total	40	



Open ended responses
Sometime the national institution are not enough involved that's why delays occurs The COVID 19 pandemic is conditioning many activities
In fact the delay can be at all levels, but it is the time taken by the agencies or the GEF that the focal points cannot understand
drafting of the proposal and assistance of IAs in the drafting of proposal. GEF feedback on the status of EA proposals submitted for funding approval
Afghanistan has not received fund from direct access, except one case (OFP Annual Fund 2015), so we would like to accelerate achieving fund from enabling activities direct access. 2. In some cases the delay has been in process of enabling activities within our partner GEF Agency. The example of such delay can be seen in 5th national biodiversity and action plan, what has been refereed from UNEP to the WCS.
limited GEF Agencies in our region causing delays in funding disbursements as well
Delay in correspondence and follow-up of enabling activities from GEF entities
the GEF does not respect the schedule, a mission = the persons and the financial means.
If the project does not provide funding for a project manager, implementation may be delayed due to lack of dedication on the part of officers who may have other duties.
My country is suffering from non-funding of GEF for all activities related of implementation the environmental conventions

13. Please provide any additional comments to inform the *Evaluation of GEF Enabling Activities*. _____

Open ended responses
Unforeseen circumstances
A need to also ensure national processes are transparent in terms of programming the enabling activities requested to the GEF and their technical agencies.
for me, the delays can only be explained by the lack of communication or lack of interactions throughout the project instruction chain.
Delays in funds disbursement remains a challenge in timely completion of activities.

The GEF Support for Enabling Activities is key for the countries to fulfill their reporting obligations and it should be possible for us to apply for the funding for several reporting obligations at the same time to reduce the admin burden
The country OFP should receive the project follow up
have been an operational focal point since February this year. As a focal point I think access to the GEF portal is important. I have already sent several emails to the GEF secretariat requesting support, but I have not yet received the feedback. So I think the support of the GEF secretariat is essential.
Project formulation processes take a long time and needs may change during formulation time.
Better mass media interaction! More involvements of the stakeholders
regular communication
Increase financial support (ceiling) for the enabling activity especially in the preparation of National Reports to conventions
GEF enabling activities are very important to developing countries to help them meet their obligations under international conventions
the enabling activities have a fixed time for their execution, any delay in their implementation causes the deadline to be exceeded.
It appears important to strengthen communication at the national level on GEF activities and mechanisms from which the country can benefit.
Activities should be coordinated with national plans.
Feedback on the status of countries' compliance to reporting to conventions.
Use of financial window to support GEF Enabling Activity is of low priority at the national level. Presumably because of low budget limit and short duration for implementation.
Funds must be disbursed appropriately
Facilitate funding disbursement from GEF in time
limited GEF Agencies in our region
projects must be executed on time, the GEF will have to put in the financial means on time for example the drafting of the fourth report of the Cartagena Protocol October 2019 we are 2021 no Fund
It should be a better balance in the distribution of resources between implementing and administration.
Provide assistance with experts in proposal writing to enable government agencies to access the funding.
Better PR and mass-media presents
securing special presidential authority (SPA) to implement a project
The GEF really needs to better understand the capabilities of the national governments. In many cases, like in Africa, government capabilities to implement GEF projects is limited. More support from the GEF implementing Agencies is needed.
It is important to have more information available to us and direct access and communication with the Focal Points as well. There is a lot of interaction with the agencies but not with the Focal Points who are the real representants of the countries.
Syria submitted many proposals and endorsement letters for benefit from GEF support since 2011, and till now It did not get any kind of support from GEF.

ANNEX 5: PROJECT REVIEW PROTOCOL ANALYSIS

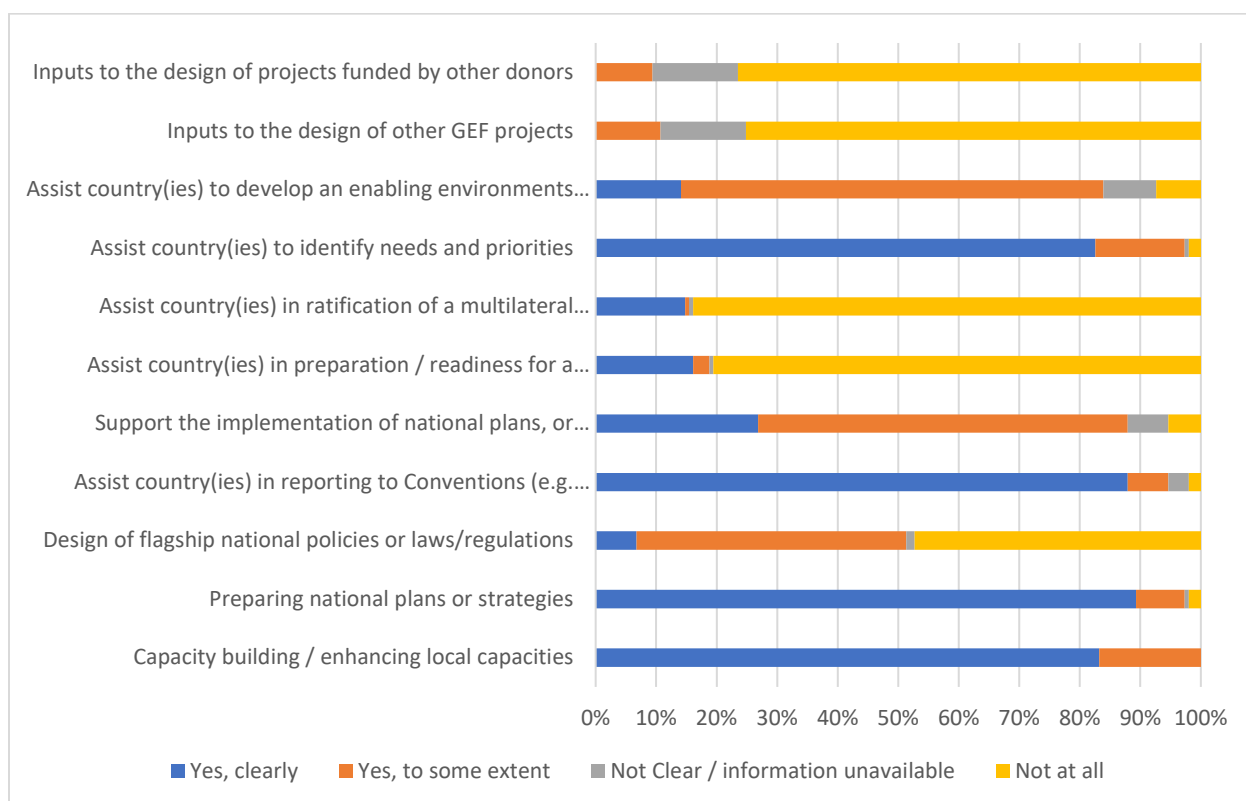
The evaluation conducted a project review of a sample of 149 approved enabling activities between GEF-4 and GEF-7, a review of about 30% of the portfolio of projects and representative sample with 85% confidence. The evaluation used a pseudo random number generator to select the projects for review. The majority of projects reviewed were GEF-5 projects (51.7%), followed by projects from GEF-6 (31.5%), while the remaining projects were from GEF-4 and GEF-7. These percentages are representative of the universe of projects between GEF-4 and GEF-7. The evaluation conducted a statistical analysis of the sample reviewed to show its true representation of the universe; p-value was <0.05 indicating the selected sample is representative of the universe of projects.

The following annex provides an analysis of findings.

1. The GEF enabling activities are well aligned with country priorities, GEF strategies, and convention guidance:
 - Over 99% of projects described specific relevance of the enabling activity to country priorities.
 - 99% of projects described specific relevance of the enabling activity to convention guidance.
 - 88% of projects described specific relevance of the enabling activity to GEF focal area strategies
2. The GEF enabling activities have helped countries ratify the Minamata convention. The project review showed that 15% of enabling activities were aiming at assisting countries to ratify a convention, specifically the Minamata convention through the MIA.
3. The objective that the enabling activity will result/contribute to:

Objective	Yes, clearly		Yes, to some extent		Not at all		Not Clear / information unavailable		Total
	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	
Capacity building / enhancing local capacities	83.22%	124	16.78%	25	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	149
Preparing national plans or strategies	89.26%	133	8.05%	12	2.01%	3	0.67%	1	149
Design of flagship national policies or laws/regulations	6.76%	10	44.59%	66	47.30%	70	1.35%	2	148
Assist country(ies) in reporting to Conventions (e.g. national communications, action plans, etc.)	87.92%	131	6.71%	10	2.01%	3	3.36%	5	149
Support the implementation of national plans, or strategies in country(ies)	26.85%	40	61.07%	91	5.37%	8	6.71%	10	149
Assist country(ies) in preparation / readiness for a multilateral environmental agreement / Convention / protocol	16.11%	24	2.68%	4	80.54%	120	0.67%	1	149
Assist country(ies) in ratification of a multilateral environmental agreement / Convention / protocol	14.77%	22	0.67%	1	83.89%	125	0.67%	1	149

Assist country(ies) to identify needs and priorities	82.55%	123	14.77%	22	2.01%	3	0.67%	1	149
Assist country(ies) to develop an enabling environment for future interventions/projects	14.09%	21	69.80%	104	7.38%	11	8.72%	13	149
Inputs to the design of other GEF projects	0.00%	0	10.74%	16	75.17%	112	14.09%	21	149
Inputs to the design of projects funded by other donors	0.00%	0	9.40%	14	76.51%	114	14.09%	21	149



4. Project reviews indicate that the all enabling activities contribute to *knowledge generation* (100%) followed by *Information sharing and access* (98%) and *policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks* (83%).

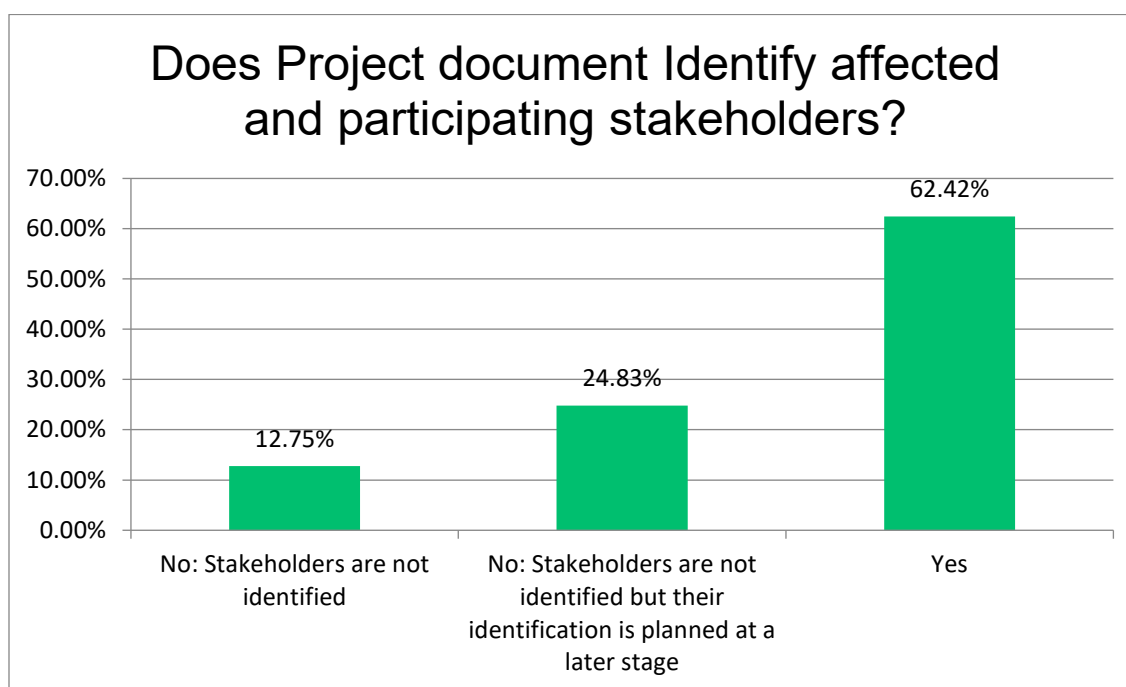
Area of Intervention	Typology	Enabling Activities (n=149)	
		(n)	(%)
Knowledge and information	Knowledge generation	149	100%
	Information sharing and access	146	98%
	Awareness-raising	98	66%
	Skills-building	130	87%

	Monitoring and evaluation	58	39%
Institutional capacity	Policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks	123	83%
	Governance structures and arrangements	41	28%
	Informal processes for trust building and conflict resolution	1	1%
Implementing strategies	Technologies and approaches	7	5%
	Implementing mechanisms and bodies	0	0%
	Financial mechanisms for implementation and sustainability	1	1%

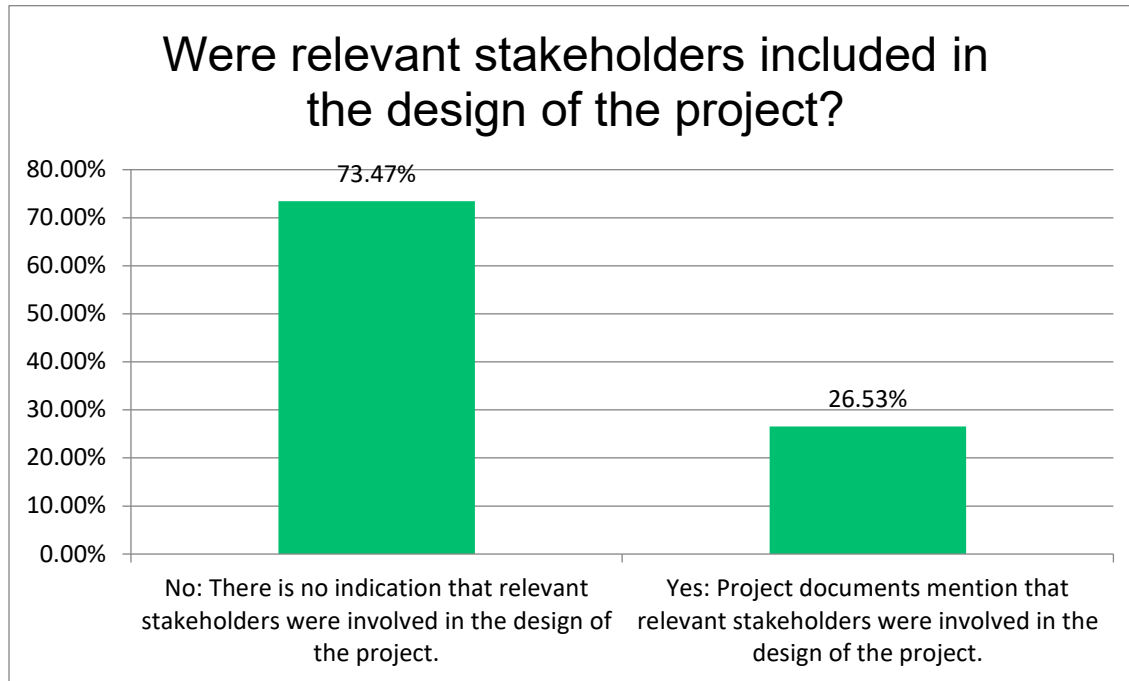
5. All enabling activities (99%) identified contributing to *GEB 6. Enhance capacity of countries to implement MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and mainstream into national and sub-national policy, planning financial and legal frameworks.*

6. Findings on Stakeholders & Gender:

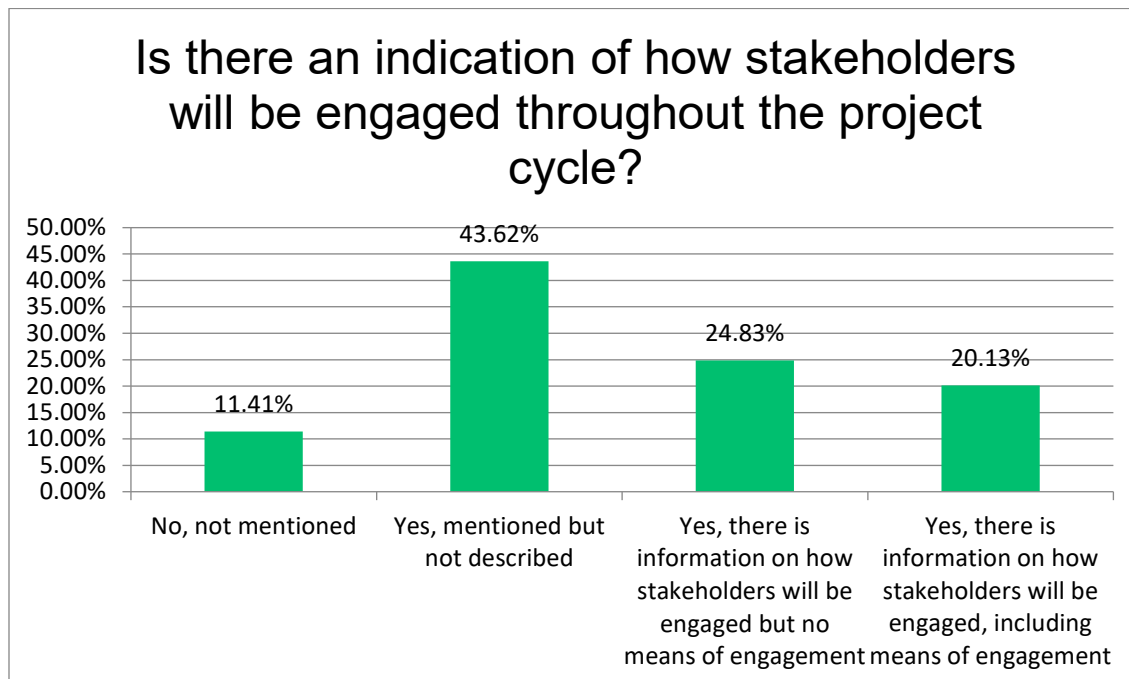
- Over 62% of projects identify affected and participating stakeholders, and an additional 25% indicated that stakeholder identification is planned at a later stage.



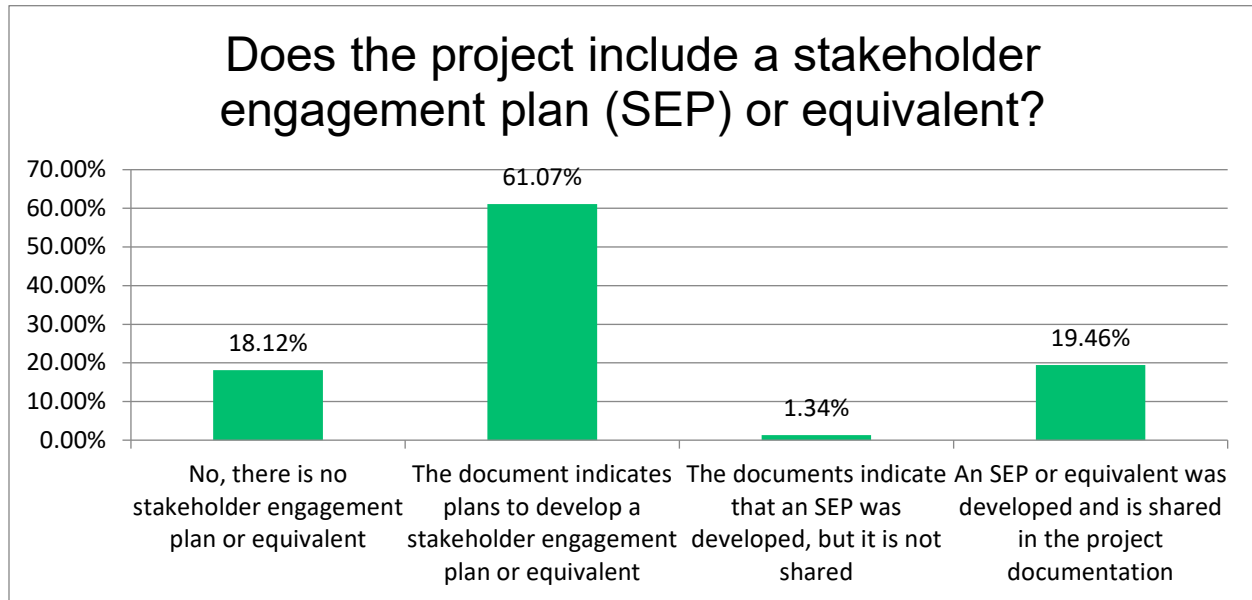
- For over 73% of projects, projects documents showed no evidence that stakeholders were involved in the project design.



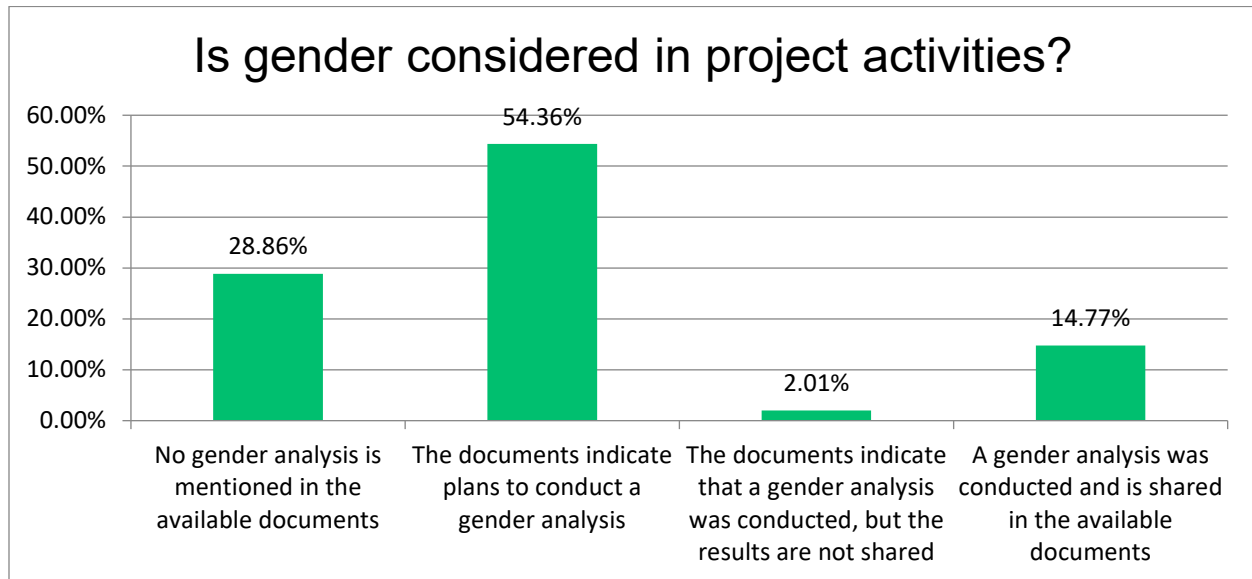
- Majority of projects have information on stakeholder engagement. 43% mention stakeholder engagement without providing further details, while 25% indicate how stakeholders will be engaged and an additional 20% further indicate methods of engagement.



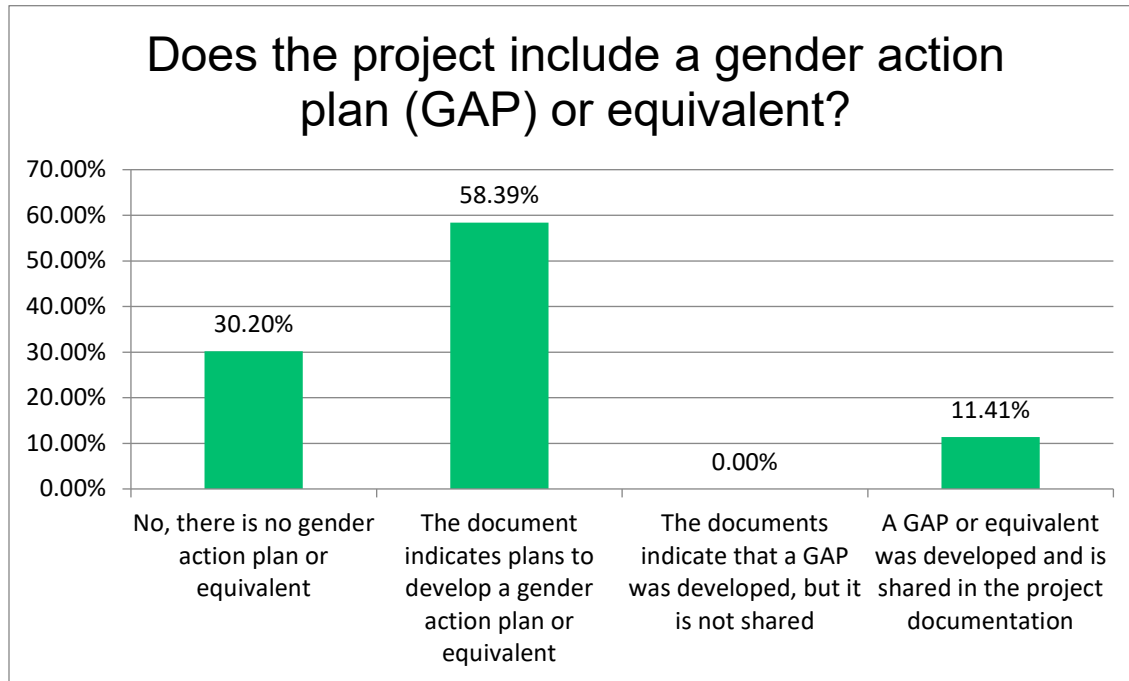
- Majority of projects (61%) indicate plans to develop a stakeholder engagement plan; 19% provided an SEP of equivalent in the project document, while 18% did not include an SEP or equivalent.



- Majority of projects (54%) indicate plans to conduct a gender analysis, 14.7% of project conducted and shared results on a gender analysis in the project document, while 28.8% did not provide a gender analysis in available documents.



- Majority of projects (58%) indicate plans to develop a GAP, while 30% did not provide a GAP or equivalent.



ANNEX 6: LIST OF PROJECTS REVIEWED

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
3004	Review of the National Biodiversity Strategy, Development of the Action Plan and Participation in the National Clearing House Mechanism	GEF - 4	UNEP	Ghana	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
3139	Enabling Activities to Facilitate Early Action on the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs	GEF - 4	UNIDO	Eritrea	POPs	Project Implemented
3175	Assessment of Capacity Building Needs, Preparation of Second and Third National Report (CBD) and the Clearing House Mechanism - ADD ON	GEF - 4	UNDP	Guyana	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
3180	Assessment of Capacity Building Needs, Preparation of the Third National Report (CBD) and the Clearing House Mechanism	GEF - 4	UNDP	Jamaica	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
3317	Development of a National Clearing House Mechanism and Assessment of Capacity Building Needs - Add on	GEF - 4	UNEP	Malawi	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
3344	Initial Assistance to enable the Cook Islands to fulfill its obligations under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPS). (NIP for Cook Islands)	GEF - 4	UNDP	Cook Islands	POPs	Project Implemented
3409	Enabling Activities for the Preparation of a National Adaptation Plan of Action	GEF - 4	UNEP	Angola	Climate Change	Under Implementation
3412	National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change	GEF - 4	UNDP	Nepal	Climate Change	Council Approved
3464	National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change (NAPA) Formulation Project	GEF - 4	UNDP	Timor Leste	Climate Change	Project Implemented
3525	Needs Assessment and Priority Setting for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity EA Add On PMIS 538	GEF - 4	UNDP	Mexico	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
3568	Enabling activities to facilitate early action on the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Angola	GEF - 4	UNIDO	Angola	POPs	Project Implemented

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
3854	Development of a National Clearing House Mechanism and Capacity Assessment for Taxonomy and Indigenous Knowledge(Add-on) (New title as of March 19, 2009)	GEF - 4	UNEP	Uganda	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4069	Enabling activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): Development of a National Implementation Plan for the Russian Federation	GEF - 4	UNEP	Russian Federation	POPs	Project Implemented
4254	Mitigation Options of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions in Key Sectors in Brazil	GEF - 4	UNEP	Brazil	Climate Change	Project Implemented
4556	Strengthening the Enabling Environment for Bd Conservation and Management in India	GEF - 5	GEFSEC	India	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4587	First NBSAP for Iraq and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Iraq	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4595	Revision of the National BD Strategy and Action Plan including the Fifth national Report to the Convention on BD	GEF - 5	GEFSEC	Albania	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4666	Support to Kyrgyzstan for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Kyrgyz Republic	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4670	Support to NAMIBIA for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Namibia	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4674	Support to Cameroon for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Cameroon	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4681	Support to Bahrain for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Bahrain	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4686	Bangladesh: Updating and Mainstreaming of National BD Strategy and Action Plan	GEF - 5	GEFSEC	Bangladesh	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4694	Support for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Tajikistan	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4695	Support to Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
4698	Alignment of National Action Programs with the UNCCD 10-Year Strategy and reporting process	GEF - 5	FAO	Honduras	Land Degradation	Project Implemented

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
4704	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Azerbaijan	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4705	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Botswana	GEF - 5	UNDP	Regional	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4706	Enhancing capacity for alignment of National Action Programme to 10 year Strategy of UNCCD & for National Reporting to UNCCD Secretariat	GEF - 5	GEFSEC	India	Land Degradation	Under Implementation
4713	Second National Communication to the UNFCCC	GEF - 5	UNDP	Serbia	Climate Change	Project Implemented
4715	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Argentina	GEF - 5	UNDP	Argentina	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4783	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	North Macedonia	POPs	Project Implemented
4813	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Malaysia.	GEF - 5	UNDP	Malaysia	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4814	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Zimbabwe	GEF - 5	UNDP	Zimbabwe	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4833	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Yemen	GEF - 5	UNDP	Yemen	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4838	Updating Vietnam National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	GEF - 5	UNDP	Viet Nam	POPs	Project Implemented
4853	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Morocco	GEF - 5	UNDP	Morocco	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4903	Development of a National Implementation Plan for Namibia to Facilitate its Implementation of the	GEF - 5	UNEP	Namibia	POPs	Under Implementation

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)					
4965	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Egypt	GEF - 5	UNDP	Egypt	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4979	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Serbia	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4980	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Indonesia	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4989	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Uzbekistan	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
4997	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Sri Lanka	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
5027	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Belize	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
5032	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Algeria	POPs	Project Implemented
5042	Support to Alignment of Uganda's National Action Programme and Reporting Process to the UNCCD Ten-Year Strategy	GEF - 5	UNEP	Uganda	Land Degradation	Under Implementation
5047	Support to Russian Federation for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	GEF - 5	UNEP	Russian Federation	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
5050	Development and Alignment of National Action Programme to the UNCCD 10 Years Strategy and Preparation of the Fifth Reporting and Review process	GEF - 5	UNEP	Ukraine	Land Degradation	Project Implemented
5081	Support NAP Alignment and UNCCD Reporting	GEF - 5	UNDP	Belarus	Land Degradation	Project Implemented
5084	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Fiji	Biodiversity	Project Implemented

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
5095	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Lao PDR	POPs	Project Implemented
5107	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Ethiopia	POPs	Project Implemented
5161	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Mozambique	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Mozambique	POPs	Project Implemented
5167	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Nigeria	POPs	Project Implemented
5180	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Ecuador	POPs	Under Implementation
5181	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Lesotho	POPs	Project Implemented
5182	Enabling Activities to Facilitate early Action on the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Myanmar	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Myanmar	POPs	Under Implementation
5189	Third National Communication to the UNFCCC	GEF - 5	UNDP	Bangladesh	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5196	Support to Somalia for the Development of its first NBSAP and Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	FAO	Somalia	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
5219	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Bolivia	POPs	Project Implemented
5296	Third National Communications (TNC) to the UNFCCC and Biennial Update Reporting (BUR)	GEF - 5	UNDP	Malaysia	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5306	Third National Communication	GEF - 5	UNDP	Nicaragua	Climate Change	Project Implemented

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
5309	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Tunisia	POPs	Under Implementation
5418	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Mauritius	GEF - 5	UNDP	Mauritius	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
5474	Third National Communication and First Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC	GEF - 5	UNDP	Yemen	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5475	Third National Communication on Climate Change and First Biennial Update Report	GEF - 5	UNDP	Paraguay	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5493	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Niger	POPs	Project Implemented
5498	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Guinea-Bissau	POPs	Project Implemented
5502	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Jamaica	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
5519	Initial National Communication to the UNFCCC	GEF - 5	UNDP	South Sudan	Climate Change	Under Implementation
5521	Namibia's First Biennial Update Report (FBUR) to the UNFCCC	GEF - 5	UNDP	Namibia	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5572	Costa Rica's First Biennial Update Report	GEF - 5	UNDP	Costa Rica	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5574	Peru's First Biennial Update Report (FBUR)	GEF - 5	UNDP	Peru	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5607	Support for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Pakistan	Biodiversity	Under Implementation
5629	Review and Update of the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Fiji	GEF - 5	UNEP	Fiji	POPs	Under Implementation
5631	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in	GEF - 5	UNDP	South Sudan	Biodiversity	Under Implementation

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
	South Sudan by Development of the first National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)					
5642	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Panama	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
5644	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in the Republic of Mali	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Mali	POPs	Under Implementation
5645	Third National Communication (TNC)	GEF - 5	UNDP	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Climate Change	Project Implemented
5684	Support to Dominica for Development of National Action Program Aligned to the UNCCD 10 Year Strategy and Reporting Process under UNCCD	GEF - 5	UNEP	Dominica	Land Degradation	Project Implemented
5697	Enabling the Sultanate of Oman to Prepare Its Second National Communication (SNC) and Biennial Update Report (BUR) to the UNFCCC	GEF - 5	UNEP	Oman	Climate Change	Under Implementation
5756	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan	GEF - 5	UNDP	Cook Islands	Biodiversity	Project Implemented
5780	Support NAP Alignment and UNCCD Reporting in Antigua and Barbuda	GEF - 5	UNDP	Antigua and Barbuda	Land Degradation	Project Implemented
5849	Support to Ecuador for the Development of National Action Programs Aligned to the UNCCD 10 Year Strategy and Reporting Process under UNCCD	GEF - 5	UNDP	Ecuador	Land Degradation	Project Implemented
5860	Development of Minamata Convention on Mercury Initial Assessment in Africa	GEF - 5	UNEP	Regional	POPs	Project Implemented
5861	Development of Minamata Convention on Mercury Initial Assessment in Brazil	GEF - 5	UNEP	Brazil	POPs	Under Implementation
5862	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment in the People's Republic of China	GEF - 5	UNIDO	China	POPs	Under Implementation
5864	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Moldova	GEF - 5	UNEP	Moldova	POPs	Project Implemented
5866	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) in the Republic of Armenia	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Armenia	POPs	Project Implemented

GEF ID	Project Title	GEF Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Project Status
5873	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) in the Republic of Yemen	GEF - 5	UNIDO	Yemen	POPs	Under Implementation
5874	Second Communication to the UNFCCC	GEF - 5	UNDP	Timor Leste	Climate Change	Under Implementation
5875	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Madagascar	GEF - 5	UNEP	Madagascar	POPs	Project Implemented
6944	Development of Minamata Convention on Mercury Initial Assessment in Africa	GEF - 6	UNEP	Regional	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9098	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment in Francophone Africa II	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Regional	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9168	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Chad	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9170	Improve Mercury Management in India	GEF - 6	UNDP	India	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9172	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Cameroon	GEF - 6	UNEP	Cameroon	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9185	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment	GEF - 6	UNEP	Regional	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9187	Development of Minamata Convention Mercury Initial Assessment in Pacific	GEF - 6	UNEP	Regional	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9196	Development of a Minamata Initial Assessment	GEF - 6	UNEP	North Macedonia	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9198	Minamata Initial Assessment for Montenegro	GEF - 6	UNDP	Montenegro	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9311	Strengthen National Decision making towards Ratification of the Minamata Convention and Build Capacity towards Implementation of Future Provisions	GEF - 6	UNDP	Azerbaijan	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9344	Minamata Convention: Initial Assessment in Turkey	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Turkey	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9350	Development of National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Paraguay	GEF - 6	UNEP	Paraguay	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation

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9353	Minamata Convention: Initial Assessment in Guatemala	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Guatemala	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9358	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Nigerian Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining sector	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Nigeria	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9377	Review and update of the national implementation plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Cuba	GEF - 6	UNDP	Cuba	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9378	Second Biennial Update Report	GEF - 6	UNDP	Lebanon	Climate Change	Project Implemented
9394	Second Biennial Update Report on Climate Change	GEF - 6	UNDP	North Macedonia	Climate Change	Project Implemented
9440	Third National Communication and First Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Vanuatu	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9442	Umbrella Programme for Preparation of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports to the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNEP	Global	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9455	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in the Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia)	GEF - 6	UNEP	Regional	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9457	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Madagascar	GEF - 6	UNEP	Madagascar	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9475	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector in Peru	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Peru	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9478	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining Sector in Ghana	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Ghana	Chemicals and Waste	Project Implemented
9533	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining Mali and Senegal	GEF - 6	UNEP	Regional	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9541	Thailand's Second Biennial Update Report (SBUR) to the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Thailand	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9616	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	GEF - 6	DBSA	South Africa	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation

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9622	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and Updating of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining	GEF - 6	UNEP	Lao PDR	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9634	Review and Update of the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)	GEF - 6	UNEP	Micronesia	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9641	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Eritrea	GEF - 6	UNEP	Eritrea	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9655	Development of Georgia's Fourth National Communication and Second Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Georgia	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9680	Advanced Minamata Initial Assessment in Mongolia	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Mongolia	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9733	Second Biennial Update Report and Third National Communication under the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Serbia	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9737	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector in Ecuador	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Ecuador	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9751	Development of a Minamata Initial Assessment in El Salvador	GEF - 6	UNEP	El Salvador	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9755	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Indonesia	GEF - 6	UNEP	Indonesia	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9819	Third National Communication and First Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Cuba	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9831	Third Biennial Update Report and Fourth National Communication under the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Chile	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9838	Namibia's Third Biennial Update Report (BUR3) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	GEF - 6	UNDP	Namibia	Climate Change	Under Implementation

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9841	Enabling Activities to Review and Update the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 6	UNIDO	Botswana	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9844	First Biennial Update Report and Third National Communication on Climate Change	GEF - 6	UNDP	Guatemala	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9865	Development of Minamata Initial Assessments (MIA) in the Caribbean (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines)	GEF - 6	UNEP	Regional	Chemicals and Waste	Under Implementation
9871	Colombia's Second Biennial Update Report (BUR2)	GEF - 6	UNDP	Colombia	Climate Change	Under Implementation
9957	Bangladesh: First Biennial Update Report (BUR1) to the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Bangladesh	Climate Change	Under Implementation
10003	GEF Support to UNCCD 2018 National Reporting Process - Umbrella III	GEF - 6	UNEP	Global	Land Degradation	Under Implementation
10010	Fourth National Communication to the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	Egypt	Climate Change	Under Implementation
10024	Fourth National Communication and Third Biennial Update Report on Climate Change under the UNFCCC	GEF - 6	UNDP	North Macedonia	Climate Change	Under Implementation
10030	GEF Support to UNCCD 2018 National Reporting Process - Umbrella IV	GEF - 6	UNEP	Global	Land Degradation	Under Implementation
10310	National action plan in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in the Plurinational State of Bolivia	GEF - 7	UNIDO	Bolivia	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10354	Review and Update of the National Implementation Plan for the Republic of Moldova under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	GEF - 7	UNEP	Moldova	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10383	Development of National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Cote d'Ivoire	GEF - 7	UNEP	Cote d'Ivoire	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10423	Development of National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Costa Rica	GEF - 7	UNEP	Costa Rica	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10440	National action plan on mercury in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Cameroon	GEF - 7	UNIDO	Cameroon	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared

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10450	Enabling Preparation of Nicaragua's Fourth National Communication and First Biennial Update Report to UNFCCC	GEF - 7	FAO	Nicaragua	Climate Change	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10495	Mali's Fourth National Communication within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change	GEF - 7	UNDP	Mali	Climate Change	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10527	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Togo	GEF - 7	UNEP	Togo	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10585	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in The Bahamas	GEF - 7	UNEP	Bahamas	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10639	Support to Preparation of the Fourth National Biosafety Reports to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety - ASIA-PACIFIC, GRULAC, CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE REGIONS	GEF - 7	UNEP	Global	Biodiversity	CEO Endorsement Cleared
10652	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Cuba	GEF - 7	UNEP	Cuba	Chemicals and Waste	CEO Endorsement Cleared