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GEF MANAGEMENT ACTION RECORD 2025

(Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office)

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QUICK SCAN

- 1. Since 2006, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) has annually presented the Management Action Record (MAR) to the GEF Council to track and report on the implementation of evaluation recommendations.
- 2. Prior to 2023, the MAR tracked progress based on IEO recommendations that were endorsed by the GEF Council. Following the reform of the MAR system, progress is now assessed by evaluating the extent to which Management has implemented its action plan for each recommendation. MAR2023 was the first report to assess progress based on the implementation of Management’s action plan.
- 3. Another important shift occurred in November 2022, when the GEF IEO presented its Review of the GEF Management Action Record to the GEF Council.¹ The review recommended that the Management's response include a clear statement of its level of agreement with each recommendation and where appropriate, a detailed action plan with specific actions and timelines. MAR 2024 was the first to report on the quality of Management’s response to the GEF IEO’s evaluation recommendations.
- 4. The MAR 2025 presents an assessment of progress in implementing action plans for 63 recommendations from 23 evaluations—22 presented to the GEF Council and one to the LDCF/SCCF Council. It also assesses the quality of Management's response to 41 GEF IEO evaluation recommendations, including 20 new recommendations and 21 that were initially reported in MAR 2024. This assessment is limited to evaluations presented to the GEF Council from November 2022 onwards.

Main Findings

Management Response Quality

5. **Management consistently indicates its agreement with GEF IEO recommendations and fully addresses the agreed elements.** Management has clearly stated its level of agreement with all 41 recommendations assessed to date (see Table A). Overall, Management has fully addressed 39 of these recommendations (95 percent). Notably, all 20 recommendations newly included in MAR2025 were fully addressed in Management’s response.

Table A. Quality of Management Response to GEF IEO Recommendations

Dimensions	MAR 2024	MAR2025	Total
<i>New Recommendations assessed for quality</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>41</i>
Clear Specification of Agreement	100%	100%	100%
Recommendation Fully Addressed	90%	100%	95%
Concrete Actions Proposed	52%	80%	66%
Timeframe Specified	71%	85%	78%

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis

6. **Compared to MAR 2024, the action plans in MAR2025 are more specific, featuring clearer steps and more consistent timeframes.** Eighty percent (16 plans) of the 20 action plans newly covered in MAR 2025 outline concrete steps to address the GEF IEO's recommendations. Overall, this is an improvement over the MAR 2024 cohort, where only 52 percent of the 21 action plans outlined concrete actions. Additionally, eighty five percent of the new action plans

¹ GEF IEO (2022). Review of the GEF Management Record (MAR). GEF/E/C.63/01. Available at: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-11/EN_GEF_E_C63_01_GEFIEO_review_of_the_Management_Action_Record_Final.pdf

in MAR 2025 provide a timeframe for completing the proposed actions, compared to 71 percent in MAR2024.

Action Plan Implementation

7. **The implementation of action plans demonstrates significant progress**, with 33 action plans, (54 percent), rated by the GEF IEO as having high or substantial progress (see Table B). Twenty-eight action plans (46 percent) were rated as medium or negligible for implementation progress. While the IEO generally agrees with Management's self-assessment, differences arise when implementation gaps are not reflected in Management’s reporting, resulting in lower ratings assigned by the IEO.

Table B: Distribution of Management and GEF IEO ratings on progress of implementation of Management’s action plan for a GEF IEO recommendation

GEF IEO's ratings in 2025	Management's ratings in 2025					
	High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Not rated/Not applicable	Total
High	7	0	0	0	0	7
Substantial	9	16	0	0	1	26
Medium	0	12	12	0	0	24
Negligible	0	0	3	0	1	4
Not rated	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total	16	28	17	0	2	63

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

8. **Significant progress has been made over time, with nearly half of the action plans receiving improved ratings in 2025 compared to 2024.** Of the 30 action plans evaluated in both years, 14 (47 percent) showed sufficient progress to warrant an increase in their rating by one grade. The remaining 16 action plans (53 percent) maintained the same rating, though some demonstrated minor improvements. The role of time as a key factor in determining the level of implementation is evident: all action plans with negligible progress are linked to evaluations presented to the Council in 2024, suggesting that limited progress is primarily related to the short time frame for implementation.

Graduation

9. Twelve action plans will be graduated from the MAR due to high or substantial progress in implementing Management's action plan. No action plans will be retired, as none have yet reached the five-year threshold. A total of 51 action plans will be retained for the MAR 2026 cycle, during which their implementation progress will be reassessed.

BACKGROUND

1. Since 2006, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) annually presents the Management Action Record (MAR) to the GEF Council. The MAR is the key tool for accountability, tracking, and reporting on the quality of Management's response to recommendations from the GEF IEO, as well as on the progress in implementing action plans to address these evaluation recommendations.
2. Prior to 2023, MAR assessed progress against GEF IEO recommendations that were endorsed by the GEF Council. Following the MAR reform, implementation progress is now assessed by evaluating the extent to which Management has executed its action plan to address each recommendation. MAR2023 was the first MAR to report on progress in implementation on Management's action plan.
3. Another important shift was in November 2022, when the GEF IEO presented its Review of the GEF Management Action Record to the GEF Council.² The review recommended that the Management's response should include a clear statement indicating the level of agreement with each recommendation and that its action plan should list specific actions with timelines, where appropriate. MAR 2024 was the first to report on the quality of Management's response to the GEF IEO's evaluation recommendations.

Coverage

4. MAR 2025 presents an **assessment of progress in implementation of action plans** for 63 recommendations from 23 evaluations—62 recommendations from 22 evaluations presented to the GEF Council, and one recommendation from an evaluation presented to the LDCF/SCCF Council, that were presented from December 2020 onwards. By comparison, MAR 2024 covered 20 evaluations (50 recommendations) and assessed progress in action plans for 39 recommendations from 16 evaluations; four evaluations (11 recommendations) presented to the GEF Council in February 2024 were not assessed at that time, as it was too early. Table 1 provides a list of the evaluations covered in MAR 2024 and MAR 2025.
5. MAR 2025 covers six new evaluations, whereas three evaluations that were included in MAR2024 have been removed. Two evaluations were removed as the action plans for all recommendations had been graduated because of high or substantial progress. Additionally, the Evaluation of the Agency Self-Evaluation Systems and the GEF Portal (four recommendations) was removed because implementation of the action plans was fully addressed in the Evaluation of Components of the GEF's Results-Based Management System (GEF IEO 2024).
6. Cumulatively, MAR 2025 reports on the **quality of Management's responses** provided from November 2022 onwards to 41 GEF IEO recommendations. This includes responses to 20 recommendations from six evaluations presented to the GEF Council in June and December 2024, i.e., after the closing of MAR 2024. It also includes an assessment of the quality of action plans for 21 recommendations from eight evaluations presented to the Council between November 2022 and February 2024, which were first reported in MAR 2024.

² GEF IEO (2022). Review of the GEF Management Record (MAR). GEF/E/C.63/01. Available at: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-11/EN_GEF_E_C63_01_GEFIEO_review_of_the_Management_Action_Record_Final.pdf

Table 1: Summary of GEF IEO Evaluations considered in MAR 2025

Name of Evaluation	Council meeting	Number of recommendations	MAR 2024		MAR 2025	
			Assessment of Management response quality (responses in the cohort)	Assessment of action plan implementation progress	Assessment of Management response quality (responses in the cohort)	Assessment of action plan implementation progress
Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund	December, 2020	1	-	1	-	1
Evaluation of GEF Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations	December, 2020	2	-	2	-	2
Third Joint GEF-UNDP Evaluation of the Small Grants Programme (SGP)	June, 2021	7	-	7	-	7
GEF Support to Innovation: Findings and Lessons	June, 2021	3	-	3	-	3
Evaluation of the Country Support Program	June, 2021	2	-	2	-	2
Formative Evaluation of the GEF Integrated Approach to address the Drivers of Environmental Degradation	June, 2021	1	-	1	-	1
Evaluation of GEF Engagement with Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	June, 2021	2	-	2	-	2
Evaluation of the Institutional Policies and Engagement of the GEF	June, 2021	3	-	3	-	3
Results Based Management –Evaluations of the Agency Self-Evaluation Systems and the GEF Portal	June, 2021	4	-	4	-	Retired
Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund	December, 2021	1	-	1	-	Graduated
Evaluation of GEF support to Sustainable Forest Management	June, 2022	1	-	1	-	Graduated
Study on Resilience, Climate Change Adaptation and Climate Risks in the GEF Trust Fund	June, 2022	2	-	2	-	2
Review of the GEF Management Action Record (MAR)	November, 2022	2	2	2		2
Evaluation of the Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on GEF Activities	November, 2022	3	3	3		2 (One graduated)

Evaluation of The GEF's Approach and Interventions in Water Security	June, 2023	2	2	2		2
Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation of the Lower Mekong River Basin Ecosystem	June, 2023	3	3	3		3
Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation: GEF Support to Drylands Countries	February, 2024	4	4	-		4
Evaluation of Community-Based Approaches at the GEF	February, 2024	3	3	-		3
Learning from Challenges in GEF Projects	February, 2024	1	1	-		1
Evaluation of GEF Support to Climate Information and Early Warning Systems	February, 2024	3	3	-		3
Evaluation of Cofinancing in the GEF	June, 2024	3	-	-	3	3
Evaluation of the Global Wildlife Program	June, 2024	4	-	-	4	4
Assessing Portfolio-Level Risk at the GEF	June, 2024	2	-	-	2	2
Evaluation of GEF Interventions in the Chemicals and Waste Focal Area GEF-5 TO GEF-8	December, 2024	4	-	-	4	4
Evaluation of GEF Programs in Pacific Small Island Developing States	December, 2024	3	-	-	3	3
Evaluation of Components of the GEF's Results-Based Management System	December, 2024	4	-	-	4	4
All evaluations		70	21	39	20	63

Source: GEF IEO.

Methodology

Management's Response to Recommendations

7. The assessment of Management's response to GEF IEO's evaluation recommendations focuses on several aspects of the response. These include:

- (a) **Clarity of Agreement Statement:** Management is expected to clearly indicate its level of agreement with a GEF IEO evaluation recommendation. The assessment categorizes the responses based on whether the level of agreement is clearly stated and if clearly stated what that level is. The categories used to report the level of agreement in the response are: Clear (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree), and Unclear.
- (b) **Responsiveness:** Where Management agrees or partially agrees with a GEF IEO recommendation, it is expected to present an action plan to address the recommendation. The extent to which an action plan is responsive was assessed using the following rating scale: Fully Addressed, Partially Addressed, and Not Addressed.
- (c) **Concrete Actions:** The action plan proposed by Management is expected to include concrete actions to address the respective recommendations. Each action plan was categorized based on whether it proposed concrete actions. The following categories were used: Concrete Actions, Preliminary Actions, and Contingent Actions.
- (d) **Time Frame:** Actions listed in an action plan are expected to be accomplished within a specific time frame. Each action plan was categorized based on the extent to which a time frame was provided for the accomplishment of the listed activities. The following categories were used: Specific Time Frame for All Activities, Specific Time Frame for Some but Not All Activities, Unclear Time Frame for All Activities, and Time Frame Not Specified.

Assessment of Implementation Progress

8. For each action plan, Management provides self-rating on the progress in implementing the action plan, along with commentary as necessary. The GEF IEO validates these self-assessments and provides its own ratings and comments on the progress of the Management's action plan for each tracked recommendation. The following rating scale is used to assess the progress in implementation of the action plan:

- (a) **High:** Management's action plan for the relevant recommendation has been fully implemented.
- (b) **Substantial:** Management's action plan for the relevant recommendation has largely been implemented; or most actions have been implemented, but some aspects/actions have not been fully implemented.
- (c) **Medium:** Some of the actions listed in Management's action plan have been implemented but not to a significant degree. Alternatively, while some of the specified actions have been implemented, there is only limited progress in implementation of the key specified actions.
- (d) **Negligible:** Specified actions have not yet been implemented, or the progress made so far is negligible.
- (e) **Not rated:** Sufficient information on implementation is not available to allow an assessment of progress.
- (f) **N/A:** Not applicable.

Of the six rating categories, “high,” “substantial,” “medium,” and “negligible” indicate level of progress. “Not rated” indicates lack of sufficient information to assess progress, whereas a “not applicable” rating may be used when subsequent decisions taken by the GEF Council supersede Management’s action plan.

9. The evaluation recommendations and the related action plans are tracked in the MAR for up to five years. These may be graduated or retired from the MAR for the following reasons:
- (a) **Graduated** due to high or, where appropriate, substantial level of progress in implementation of Management’s action plan.
 - (b) **Retired** because the evaluation recommendation and related action plan is not relevant anymore, or further progress on implementation of the action plan is unlikely. An automatic reason for retirement is if a recommendation and related action plan has been covered in the MAR for five years.

FINDINGS

Assessment of Management Response

Clarity of Agreement Statement

10. For all the new recommendations that have been included in MAR 2025, Management provided a response clearly indicating its level of agreement with the recommendations. Management has responded to all recommendations, including those that were covered for the first time in MAR2024, and has clearly indicated its level of agreement in each instance. Of the 20 new recommendations that were included in MAR2025, Management agreed with 13 (65 percent) and partially agreed with 7 (35 percent). Management did not disagree with any of the recommendations that were covered for the first time in MAR2025 or MAR2024 (Table 2).

Table 2: Action plans by level of agreement

Category	MAR 2024 (Nov 22 - Feb 24 Council Meetings)	New recommendations MAR 2025 (Jun and Dec 2024 Council Meetings)	Total
Agreed	15 (71%)	13 (65%)	28 (68%)
Partially agreed	6 (29%)	7 (35%)	13 (32%)
Total	21 (100%)	20 (100%)	41 (100%)

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

11. Management provided its rationale both for agreement and partial agreement with a recommendation. For instance, in the Evaluation of Cofinancing in the GEF (GEF IEO, 2024), the IEO recommended that the GEF Secretariat should assess whether co-financing targets are ambitious yet realistic to maintain credibility and should establish clear criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of co-financing components in project proposals. In its response to the recommendation, Management partially agreed with the recommendation. It indicated its agreement with the need to assess ambition, realism and credibility of cofinancing. However, it disagreed with the proposition to establish precise criteria for inclusion or exclusion of co-financing components because these would limit flexibility to accept different types of contributions as cofinancing.

Responsiveness

12. The extent to which Management has addressed the GEF IEO’s recommendations has slightly improved in MAR 2025 compared to the previous cycle. In MAR 2024, 90 percent of

action plans fully addressed all recommendations; the Management’s response to all the new recommendations covered in the MAR 2025 fully addresses each recommendation (Table 3). For example, the Evaluation of GEF Interventions in the Chemicals and Waste Focal Area: GEF-5 to GEF-8 (GEF IEO, 2024) recommended strengthening the focus on policy and regulatory reforms, awareness, and communication within the focal area activities. In response, the Secretariat indicated that it would continue to work with countries and implementing Agencies to ensure the widespread adoption of these practices in GEF-9 and beyond, and noted that these principles would be clearly articulated in the GEF-9 programming directions.

Table 3: Action plans by level of responsiveness

Category	MAR 2024 ^{1/} (Nov 22 - Feb 24 Council Meetings)	New recommendations MAR 2025 (Jun and Dec 2024 Council Meetings)	Total
Fully addresses recommendations	19 (90%)	20 (100%)	39 (95%)
Partially addresses recommendations	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
Total	21 (100%)	20 (100%)	41 (100%)

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.
Notes: 1/ Figures for MAR 2024 were revised to ensure accuracy in the responsiveness categories.

Concrete Actions

13. The concreteness of actions outlined in the latest set of Management action plans has improved compared to MAR 2024. Eighty percent of the 20 action plans newly covered in MAR 2025 outline concrete steps to address the GEF IEO’s recommendations (Table 4). Four action plans (20 percent) did not propose concrete action – while three (15 percent) presented preliminary measures, one only describes conditions upon which future actions are contingent. Overall, this indicates improvement over MAR 2024 cohort where only about half of the action plans outlined concrete actions.

14. Management response to the third recommendation of the Evaluation of GEF Interventions in the Chemicals and Waste Focal Area GEF-5 TO GEF-8 (GEF IEO, 2024) offers an example of a concrete action plan. The evaluation recommended that the GEF needs to ensure that investments in equipment are fully utilized and sustainable. In response, Management indicated that this recommendation would be included in GEF-9 programming directions to ensure future projects prioritize the effective implementation and long-term sustainability of new technologies, contributing to the overall success and impact of the GEF's interventions in the chemicals and waste focal area. With regards to preliminary actions, Management response to the first recommendation of the Assessing Portfolio-Level Risk at the GEF evaluation (GEF IEO, 2024), noted that it would explore the merits and feasibility of introducing a risk tolerance band for the overall portfolio, and assess whether such an approach would be practical, useful, and appropriate within the GEF context.

Table 4: Action plans by level of concreteness

Category	MAR 2024 (Nov 22 - Feb 24 Council Meetings)	New recommendations MAR 2025 (Jun and Dec 2024 Council Meetings)	Total
Concrete	11 (52%)	16 (80%)	27 (66%)
Not concrete	10 (48%)	4 (20%)	14 (34%)
Preliminary	8 (38%)	3 (15%)	11 (27%)
Contingent	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	3 (7%)
Total	21 (100%)	20 (100%)	41 (100%)

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

Time Frame

15. **Management has made improvements in incorporating timeframes into its action plans, though the level of detail still varies across them.** Eighty five percent of the 20 action plans of the recommendations covered for the first time MAR 2025 provide a timeframe for completing the outlined actions. This is an improvement over the recommendations covered for the first time in MAR2024, where 71 percent had provided a time frame (Table 5). An example of an action plan with a specific timeframe for all activities is the Management response to the fourth recommendation of the Evaluation of the Global Wildlife Program (GWP) (GEF IEO, 2024). In this case, Management indicated that the next GWP annual progress report, including risk management, was expected by July 2024, and that GEF-8’s coordinated approach to risk identification and management would be reflected in national child projects by August 2025. In contrast, Management response to the third recommendation of the Evaluation of Components of the GEF’s Results-Based Management System (GEF IEO, 2024), outlines actions to enhance the GEF Portal, with improvements such as intuitive navigation, clean interfaces, guided workflows, and streamlined data entry, among others. However, while the proposed features are described, the action plan does not specify a timeframe for their implementation, making it difficult to assess whether implementation of specified actions is on track.

Table 5: Action plans by time frame level of detail

Category	MAR 2024 (Nov 22 - Feb 24 Council Meetings)	MAR 2025 (Jun and Dec 2024 Council Meetings)	Total
Time Frame Specified	15 (71%)	17 (85%)	32 (78%)
<i>Specific time frame</i>	<i>11 (52%)</i>	<i>13 (65%)</i>	<i>24 (59%)</i>
<i>For all plan activities</i>	<i>9 (43%)</i>	<i>10 (50%)</i>	<i>19 (46%)</i>
<i>For some plan activities</i>	<i>2 (10%)</i>	<i>3 (15%)</i>	<i>5 (12%)</i>
<i>Broad time frame for all plan activities</i>	<i>4 (19%)</i>	<i>4 (20%)</i>	<i>8 (20%)</i>
Time Frame Not Specified	6 (29%)	3 (15%)	9 (22%)
Total	21 (100%)	20 (100%)	41 (100%)

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

Implementation of Action Plans

Agreement in the assessment of implementation progress

16. **Implementation progress ratings were the same for 59 percent of action plans (35 out of 59), in the remainder the GEF IEO rated the progress lower.** Where the ratings provided by the two varied, the IEO assessed the progress of implementation to be one grade lower than Management's self-assessment (Table 6). The GEF IEO did not rate progress in implementation in two cases whereas Management did not provide a rating in two other instances.
17. **Where GEF IEO rated the progress to be lower than Management’s self-assessment, it identified areas of weak performance that had not been fully accounted for in the self-assessment.** For instance, Management rated its progress as high on the action plan addressing the fourth recommendation of the Third Joint GEF-UNDP Evaluation of the Small Grants Programme (SGP) (GEF IEO, 2021). It cited the development and dissemination of the SGP 2.0 Operational Guidelines, including the SGP results framework. According to Management, these guidelines effectively informed project formulation by the three SGP core implementing Agencies

and guided governance, resource allocation, and budget structures at both global and national levels. The IEO noted that further tracking was needed—particularly on efforts to simplify SGP intervention packaging and apply the results framework at the community level. Another example is the third recommendation from the Evaluation of the Institutional Policies and Engagement of the GEF (GEF IEO, 2021). Management rated its progress on the action plan as substantial. However, the IEO rated it as medium, noting that the roles and responsibilities between the Secretariat and the CSO Network remained unclear. The IEO also highlighted the lack of updates regarding the future directions of the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG).

Table 6: Distribution of Management and GEF IEO ratings on progress of implementation of Management’s action plan for a GEF IEO recommendation

GEF IEO's ratings in 2025	Management's ratings in 2025					Total
	High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Not rated/ Not applicable	
High	7	0	0	0	0	7
Substantial	9	16	0	0	1	26
Medium	0	12	12	0	0	24
Negligible	0	0	3	0	1	4
Not rated	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total	16	28	17	0	2	63

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

18. Implementation progress is high for seven action plans where Management had fully implemented the specified actions (11 percent) (Table 7). For example, in relation to the first recommendation of the Evaluation of the Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on GEF Activities (GEF IEO, 2022), the IEO acknowledged Management’s progress in inclusion of systems thinking, resilience and adaptive management in the design of GEF activities. This was further supported by the IEO’s ongoing assessment of CEO-endorsed project proposals, which notes that nearly all recent projects incorporate these elements. The IEO also rated progress as high on the implementation of the action plan addressing the third recommendation of the Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation of the Lower Mekong River Basin Ecosystem (GEF IEO, 2023). It noted the Secretariat’s continued collaboration with STAP to promote Theory of Change-based project design and acknowledged STAP’s guidance on one of the ecosystem-based approaches.

19. Implementation progress was substantial for 26 action plans (41 percent). In these cases, Management had largely implemented its action plans, although some minor gaps remained. For instance, the sole recommendation from the evaluation of Learning from Challenges in GEF Projects (GEF IEO, 2024) called for incorporation of relevant lessons and guiding principles identified in the evaluation into the detailed action plans for knowledge and learning being developed and operationalized within the framework of the GEF Knowledge Management and Learning Strategy. The IEO assessed the progress in implementation of the action plan to be substantial, especially taking note of the progress made within the context of integrated programs. However, it also pointed to gaps in project-to-project knowledge exchange, country-level learning, and the capture and application of lessons in project design, among other areas.

20. Implementation progress was medium for 24 action plans (38 percent). The IEO rated progress as medium when only a few planned actions had been implemented, or when major actions were still pending. An illustrative case is the action plan addressing the third recommendation of the Evaluation of GEF Support to Climate Information and Early Warning Systems (CIEWS) (GEF IEO, 2024). The IEO acknowledged the Secretariat's efforts to engage the private sector in CIEWS through the third round of the Challenge Program for Adaptation Innovation and the development of blended finance vehicles. However, it determined that while

these initiatives show intention to address financial sustainability of CIEWS, their limited scope does not yet provide a comprehensive and sustainable approach for the broader CIEWS portfolio.

21. **Implementation progress was negligible in four instances (6 percent), but all of these pertain to evaluations that were presented to the GEF Council in 2024.** One such case is the progress on the action plan addressing the first recommendation of the Evaluation of Components of the GEF’s Results-Based Management System (GEF IEO 2024). The IEO noted that, according to Management’s response, work in this area is scheduled to align with progress on the GEF-9 Policy Directions. While progress is currently negligible, the measures taken and their significance may be assessed by next year.

Table 7: Distribution of GEF IEO ratings on progress of implementation of Management’s action plan for a GEF IEO recommendation – by evaluation

Shortened name of the evaluation	GEF IEO's ratings in 2025					
	High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Not rated	Total
Least Developed Countries Fund (2020)	1	0	0	0	0	1
Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations (2020)	1	1	0	0	0	2
Small Grants Program (2021)	0	7	0	0	0	7
Support to Innovation (2021)	0	2	1	0	0	3
Country Support Programme (2021)	0	2	0	0	0	2
GEF Integrated Approach (2021)	0	1	0	0	0	1
Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (2021)	0	1	1	0	0	2
Institutional Policies and Engagement (2021)	0	1	2	0	0	3
Climate Risk, Adaptation, and Resilience (2022)	1	1	0	0	0	2
GEF Management Action Record (2022)	1	1	0	0	0	2
Effects of Covid-19 on GEF Activities (2022)	1	1	0	0	0	2
GEF's Approach in Water Security (2023)	0	1	1	0	0	2
Lower Mekong River Basin Ecosystem (2023)	2	1	0	0	0	3
Support to Drylands Countries (2024)	0	0	4	0	0	4
Community-Based Approaches (2024)	0	0	3	0	0	3
Learning from Challenges (2024)	0	1	0	0	0	1
Early Warning Systems (2024)	0	1	2	0	0	3
Cofinancing (2024)	0	0	2	1	0	3
Global Wildlife Program (2024)	0	2	2	0	0	4
Portfolio-Level Risk (2024)	0	0	2	0	0	2
Chemicals and Waste (2024)	0	0	4	0	0	4
Programs in Pacific SIDS (2024)	0	1	0	2	0	3
Results-Based Management System (2024)	0	1	0	1	2	4
All evaluations	7	26	24	4	2	63

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

Progress Over Time

22. **Of the 30 action plans rated in both 2024 and 2025, Management made progress in nearly half of them.** Compared to the preceding year, Management made sufficient progress in implementation of 14 action plans, leading to an increase in the rating by one grade (Table 8). For the remaining 16 action plans (53 percent), there was no change in the implementation rating despite minor improvements in some instances. An example of improved ratings over time is the action plan addressing the second recommendation of the Evaluation of GEF Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations (GEF IEO, 2020). The IEO rated implementation progress

as substantial in MAR 2024 as it acknowledged that the Secretariat had produced an Information Note for the Council, a positive step towards formally guiding the GEF partnership on fragile and conflict contexts. In MAR 2025, the IEO upgraded the rating to high, recognizing the launch of the GEF’s Guidance Note on Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations (FCS), which supports GEF Agencies and partners in efficiently planning and executing projects and programs in FCS. Similarly, in MAR 2024, the IEO rated implementation progress as medium for the action plan addressing the third recommendation of the Evaluation of the Country Support Program (GEF IEO, 2021). This was due to slower than expected progress in fully implementing the Country Engagement Strategy (CES). In MAR 2025, the IEO rated the progress as substantial, recognizing significant achievements, such as the successful effort to streamline financial support for OFPs while reducing bureaucracy.

Table 8: Distribution of action plans by implementation progress rating

GEF IEO's ratings in 2024	GEF IEO's ratings in 2025				
	High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Total
High	0	0	0	0	0
Substantial	7	11	0	0	18
Medium	0	7	5	0	12
Negligible	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	18	5	0	30

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

Ratings at Exit

23. **Twelve action plans will be graduated from the MAR because of high or substantial progress in implementing Management’s action plan (Table 9).** None of the action plans will be retired, as none have yet reached the five-year mark. A total of 51 action plans will be retained for the MAR 2026 cycle, when progress on their implementation will be reassessed. Among these, 41 percent (21 action plans) have already achieved substantial implementation progress. However, they were not graduated, as the IEO considers that further progress remains possible. Nearly half of the retained action plans have been rated as having medium implementation progress, while four have been assessed as showing negligible progress.

Table 9: Distribution of recommendations – by exit status

Action taken	GEF IEO's ratings in 2025					
	High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Not rated	Total
Graduate	7	5	0	0	0	12
Retire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retain	0	21	24	4	2	51
Total	7	26	24	4	2	63

Source: MAR 2025 Analysis.

CONCLUSIONS

24. The following conclusions have been drawn from the MAR 2025 findings:

- (a) Management continues to clearly indicate its level of agreement with GEF IEO recommendations and fully addresses the elements it agrees with.
- (b) Compared to MAR 2024, Management's action plans are more specific, outlining clearer steps to address recommendations, and including more consistent timeframes.
- (c) The IEO generally concurs with Management's self-assessment. However, where differences arise, they are typically due to implementation gaps not adequately reflected in Management's self-assessment, resulting in a lower progress rating from IEO.
- (d) There has been significant progress in the implementation of action plans over time, with nearly half showing improved ratings in 2025 compared to 2024.