

Management Action Record 2015

The GEF Management Action Record (MAR) tracks the level of adoption, by the GEF Secretariat and/or the GEF Partner Agencies (together here referred to as GEF Management), of GEF Council decisions that have been made on the basis of GEF Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO) recommendations. The MAR serves two purposes: “(1) to provide Council a record of its decisions based on the evaluation reports presented by the GEF IEO, the proposed management actions, and the actual status of these actions; and (2) to increase the accountability of GEF Management regarding Council decisions on monitoring and evaluation issues.”¹

The MAR was first presented in APR 2005 and, thereafter, it has been a regular feature of the APR. Based on its experience of implementing MAR and feedback from the key stakeholders, beginning FY2014-15 (MAR 2014) the IEO streamlined the MAR process. There were two key changes in the approach:

- (a) Instead of reporting on all the tracked Council decisions annually, from APR2014 onwards the reporting on tracked decisions is based on whether or not sufficient time has elapsed for the management to adopt the decision and for IEO to assess progress. The revised approach is also suited for instances where it is difficult to gauge compliance without a thorough assessment and/or where compliance may be ascertained only to a certain point in the replenishment cycle.
- (b) Where appropriate, the decisions tracked may be graduated from the MAR if a ‘substantial’ rating or higher has been achieved. These changes in approach mean that at the start of the MAR process for a given year, the IEO determines whether a decision needs to be reported on in the MAR in that year. If a decision does not need to be reported that year, then the IEO lists these decisions as those for which reporting has been deferred along with information on when and how the adoption of the decision will be assessed in future.

MAR 2015 tracks 11 GEF Council decisions. Of these, it reports on level of adoption of seven GEF Council decisions. Three new decisions, two from the June 2015 GEF Council meeting, and one from the October 2015 GEF Council meeting, have been added to the MAR for tracking. Since MAR2012 the IEO has also been tracking adoption of the decisions of the Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Council. None of the decisions from the LDCF/SCCF Council are tracked and reported on in MAR2015 because the one decision that was tracked in MAR2014 was graduated from the MAR due to significant adoption, and no new decision from the LDCF/SCCF Council was eligible for inclusion. Nonetheless, tracking and reporting will resume when a decision of the LDCF/SCCF Council meets the criteria for tracking and reporting through MAR.

¹ GEF Council, “Procedures and Format of the GEF Management Action Record.” GEF/ME/C.27/3., GEF Council November, 2005.

Rating Approach

For each tracked GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council decision that is reported on, self-ratings are provided by GEF Management on the level of adoption along with commentary as necessary. Ratings and commentary on tracked decisions are also provided by the GEF Evaluation Office for verification. The rating categories for the progress of adoption of Council decisions were agreed upon through a consultative process of the Evaluation Office, the GEF Secretariat, and the GEF Agencies. Categories are as follows:

- (a) **High:** Fully adopted and fully incorporated into policy, strategy or operations.
- (b) **Substantial:** Decision largely adopted but not fully incorporated into policy, strategy or operations as yet.
- (c) **Medium:** Adopted in some operational and policy work, but not to a significant degree in key areas.
- (d) **Negligible:** No evidence or plan for adoption, or plan and actions for adoption are in a very preliminary stage.
- (e) **Not rated:** ratings or verification will have to wait until more data is available or proposals have been further developed.
- (f) **N/A:** Not-applicable (see commentary).

The Council decisions may be graduated or retired from the MAR because of one or more of the following reasons:

- (a) **Graduated** due to high or, where appropriate, substantial level of adoption of Council decision
- (b) **Retired** as the Council decision has become less relevant, or subsequent Council decisions have made high level of adoption of the decision difficult, or further progress on adoption of the decision is likely to be slow and long drawn. An automatic reason for retirement would be if a decision has been reported on in the MAR for five years.

The GEF IEO keeps track of the reasons for removing a decision from the MAR.

Decisions Tracked for MAR 2015

MAR 2015 tracks management actions on GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council decisions based on 6 GEF Evaluation Office documents:

- (a) Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.42/03)
- (b) GEF Annual Impact Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.43/04)
- (c) GEF Annual Impact Report 2013 (GEF/ME/C.45/1)
- (d) GEF IEO Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014 (GEF/ME/C.46/04)
- (e) Semi-Annual Evaluation Report June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation

(f) Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015, section on Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes

Four decisions from MAR 2014 were deferred, as they require detailed assessments to ascertain progress in their adoption, and the IEO will report on the progress of these decisions when the required assessments are undertaken in future. The decisions for which reporting has been deferred are listed in Table 1:

Table 1: Council Decisions on which reporting on adoption has been deferred

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	Council Decision	Future Assessment of Decision Adoption
1	June 2012	Decision on Agenda Item 8: The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.42/03, "Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012," document GEF/ME/C.42/04, "Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012," and having taken note of the two Country Portfolio Evaluations in Nicaragua and OECS (GEF/ME/C.42/Inf.02) requested the Secretariat: 3) To enable South-South cooperation activities as components of national, regional and/or global projects where opportunities for exchange of technology, capacity development and/or sharing of best practices exist.	Deferred. The Council decision is a directional decision. Adoption of this decision will be assessed as part of the work undertaken for next comprehensive evaluation of the GEF (OPS-6).
2	November 2012	Decision on Agenda Item 11: The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.43/04, "GEF Annual Impact Report 2012", and document GEF/ME/C.43/05, "Management Response to the GEF Annual Impact Report 2012", took note of the considerable achievements of GEF support to the South China Sea and adjacent areas including, amongst others, that in 21 of 26 cases where comparative data could be obtained, GEF has supported initiatives that reduced environmental stress and improved or maintained socioeconomic conditions. Given the important contributions that GEF support has made to addressing regional transboundary concerns, and the role of the GEF as a critical player in the region, as noted by the report, the Council requested the Secretariat to: 1) Take into account the findings and recommendations of this evaluation when screening future proposals submitted for GEF funding in the South China Sea and adjacent areas, most notably: • when choosing areas for expansion, that the conditions conducive to broader adoption are present in those areas; • that the distinctive competencies within the GEF partnership are more fully drawn on to mainstream transboundary environmental concerns among sectorial ministries • that systems for managing risks and trade-offs are specified; • that more attention is given to the support of actions that address regional environmental goods and services; • that cash and in-kind co-financing for regional services provided by GEF projects reach sustainable levels by project end; • that adequate coordination and management of risks within the GEF partnership be given attention.	Deferred. The IEO will carry out this assessment as part of the planned evaluation on programmatic approaches. This evaluation will assess the extent to which recommendations remained relevant and the progress made towards the recommendations.
3	November 2013	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.45/1, "Annual Report on Impact", and document GEF/ME/C.45/2, "Management Response to the Annual Report on Impact," notes the considerable achievements of GEF support to Climate Change Mitigation in China, India, Mexico and Russia. It notes that in several projects progress toward impact was slowed down by barriers to change that were not fully included in project design and implementation. However, it is also noted that the current portfolio of mitigation support has shifted towards tackling broader adoption in a more comprehensive way in mitigation support in GEF-5. The Council requests the Secretariat to include this emphasis and where necessary further strengthen it in the proposals for GEF-6.	Deferred. Reporting on this decision will be deferred. Its adoption will be assessed as part of the work undertaken for next comprehensive evaluation of the GEF (OPS-6).
4	May 2014	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.46/04, "Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," document GEF/ME/C.46/05, "Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," ... requested the Secretariat and the Agencies: 2) To pay greater attention to national knowledge exchange and promote dissemination of data and information in the relevant national languages.	Deferred. The decision is directional in orientation. The GEF IEO will track this when it assess the KM activities for the next comprehensive evaluation of the GEF (OPS-6).

Findings

Of the 11 Council decisions that are being tracked, seven were rated for the level of adoption of the decision. For six of these, the ratings provided by the management and the GEF IEO matched. Overall, this is indicative of a convergence in the ratings.

GEF Council Decisions with Adoption Rated at a High or Substantial Level

Of the seven decisions tracked, for five the level of adoption was rated to be substantial or higher. These five decisions pertain to five different evaluations² submitted to the GEF Council. Of the five decisions, adoption of the decision on the GEF Semi Annual Evaluation Report June 2014 (GEF/ME/C.48/02), which was based on the Joint GEF UNDP Small Grant Programme Evaluation, was rated high by both the Management and the IEO. The decision had asked the Management to revitalize the global SGP Steering Committee. The Management reported that the Committee is now fully active and meets on a semi-annual basis, and is providing overall strategic guidance to the SGP. The IEO in its assessment acknowledged that the Committee had been completely revitalized and is indeed providing strategic guidance to the SGP on a regular basis.

There were four other decisions where the level of adoption was rated substantial. The decision on the GEF Annual Impact Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.43/04) had asked the Secretariat to adopt a more robust tracking and reporting approach to ensure Agency accountability for collaboration and cooperation in the South China Sea and the East Asian Seas. The IEO noted implementation of a GEF supported medium size project on Applying Knowledge Management to Scale up Partnership Investments for Sustainable Development of the Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs), which aims at enhancing the capacity of the projects in the region to effectively capture and disseminate lessons learned. However, it assessed that such projects are not adequate substitutes for a mechanism to track Agency accountability for collaboration and cooperation in the region. Nonetheless, the IEO assessed that the recent restructuring of the Secretariat for region based program development is likely to facilitate robust tracking and Agency accountability.

The Council decision based on the GEF Annual Impact Report 2013 (GEF/ME/C.45/1) requested the Secretariat to continue its work on the improvement of the methodology for the GHG emission accounting in GEF projects, in collaboration with the STAP and relevant entities. Management rated the level of adoption of this decision to be 'substantial'. The IEO finds that the Management's assessment of progress is consistent with the actual progress made. The Secretariat coordinated a consultative process involving STAP, the GEF Agencies, IEO, and consultants, to devise an approach to improve GHG emissions accounting in GEF projects in the given context of evolving methodologies and lack of uniformity in evaluation methodologies used by the GEF Agencies. The working groups established for this work were able to come up

² GEF Annual Impact Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.43/04); GEF Annual Impact Report 2013 (GEF/ME/C.45/1); GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation 2014 (GEF/ME/C.46/04); Semi Annual Report of the GEF IEO June 2015 (GEF/ME/C.48/02); Semi Annual Report of the GEF IEO October 2015 (GEF/ME/C.49/02).

with a consistent approach in terms of the process to be followed to identify the appropriate methodologies for GHG Accounting for a given GEF project.

The Council decision on the IEO Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014 (GEF/ME/C.46/04) requested the Secretariat to explore and pursue opportunities for use of SGP country programs as service providers to implement community-level activities for FSPs and MSPs. In its self-assessment, Management reported that in the ongoing SGP consultations, proposals for SGP to serve as a delivery mechanism were under development in Mauritius, Ukraine and in the Caribbean islands. The IEO assessed this to be a substantial level of adoption of the Council decision.

The Council decision on Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015 (GEF/ME/C.49/02) endorsed the report's recommendations, which were based on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, and it asked the Secretariat to implement these recommendations. The report had five recommendations and progress on each of these recommendations was assessed. The IEO provided an overall adoption rating of substantial, taking the progress on the five recommendations into account. In terms of progress on individual recommendations, progress was rated to be substantial on: Ensuring that GEF support targets areas rich in global biodiversity (Recommendation 1); Addressing the socioeconomic conditions that will ensure local community commitment to biodiversity protection (Recommendation 2); Investing in broader governance issues to address large-scale drivers (Recommendation 3); and, Investing in understanding what works and why (Recommendation 5). On the recommendation on 'Developing a more reliable and practical monitoring system to track and assess results at the project and portfolio levels' the level of adoption was rated to be medium.

Decisions with Medium level of Adoption

Of the seven decisions for which level of adoption was rated, two were rated 'medium'. The first decision was based on the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.42/03) and it requested the Secretariat to reduce the burden of reporting requirements of multi-focal area projects to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects. The IEO notes that compared to GEF-5 there has been a reduction in the indicators used in the GEF-6 tracking tools for most of the focal areas. By extension this reduction is likely to reduce the reporting burden for multi-focal area projects. However, the reporting burden is still significantly more than for single focal area projects. Therefore, the IEO assessed that only a medium level of adoption has taken place for this decision.

The second decision, for which the IEO has rated the adoption to be 'medium', was based on the recommendations of the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report June 2015 (GEF/ME/C.48/02) that were based on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation. The decision asked the Secretariat and UNDP to continue upgrading the SGP Country Program, building on strengths and addressing weaknesses, and to revisit the criteria for selection of countries for upgradation. Management reported that it has identified six new countries for upgradation in GEF-6, where SGP would now be funded through FSPs. The IEO acknowledged this progress but assessed that

further progress needs to be made in building on the strengths and addressing the weaknesses identified in the evaluation.

Graduated Decisions

Of the five decisions that received a rating of substantial or high adoption, three will be graduated from MAR. This includes one decision that received a 'high' rating and two others that received 'substantial' ratings for adoption. The graduated decisions addressed issues such as revitalization of the SGP Steering Committee, improvement in GHG accounting methodologies used in GEF projects, and adoption of a robust tracking and reporting approach to ensure Agency accountability for collaboration and cooperation in the South China Sea and the East Asian Seas area.

Two decisions that achieved a substantial rating for adoption but would not be graduated from MAR include the decisions that addressed use of SGP Country Programs as service providers for FSPs and MSPs, and implementation of the recommendations based on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes. Among these two decisions, the IEO intends to continue to track progress on use of SGP of Country Programs so that the gains made so far are not lost. For the latter, although there has been substantial progress in adoption of some recommendations, on others the progress has been medium. Therefore, there is still a need to track adoption.

Table 2 provides the Council decisions tracked by MAR2015 along with information on screening and the assessment of the level of adoption.

Table 2: Template for reporting on Adoption of Council Decisions

2.a Recommendation based on Council review of Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.42/03).

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
1	June 2012	The burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects should be reduced to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects.	The Secretariat has had many discussions with Agencies related to recommendation two "The burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects should be reduced to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects." It should also be noted that using tracking tools for multifocal area projects was only introduced in GEF-5, so it may be premature to draw this conclusion at this time. Furthermore, one should remember that these new tools are required only three times during the life of the project, a very reasonable requirement: at CEO endorsement, mid-term, and project completion. Additionally, for multifocal area projects, the Secretariat does not require the full set of tracking tools be applied. Rather, as the language in paragraph 86 suggests, the tools should only be completed for the "essential focal area indicators that need to be monitored throughout multifocal area projects." There are currently no multifocal area projects	Decision on Agenda Item 8: The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.42/03, "Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012," document GEF/ME/C.42/04, "Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012," and having taken note of the two Country Portfolio Evaluations in Nicaragua and OECS (GEF/ME/C.42/Inf.02) requested the Secretariat: 2) To reduce the burden of monitoring requirements of multifocal area projects to a level comparable to that of single focal area projects.	Substantial: GEFSEC is undertaking a process to consolidate and align tracking tools with the GEF-6 strategy. Through this initiative the indicators have been simplified to focus on those most relevant to the portfolio level reporting needs of the individual focal areas, but also efforts are being made to identify synergy across focal areas on a simplified TT for MFA projects. The process is still ongoing but the result will be tools which is now much more amenable for use in both single and multi-focal area projects.	Medium: GEF IEO acknowledges that a process of consolidation and alignment of tracking tools with the GEF-6 strategy has been launched and is now ongoing. However, design of simplified TTs for MFA projects still has to be finalized. During the process the number of tracked indicators have been reduced for some focal areas. Its, however, not clear as how the concern related to multi-focal projects is being tackled.	Medium: There was a reduction of indicators in each of the FA tracking tools in GEF 6, completed in July 2015. This has also led to some reduced burden on MFAs. However, we believe that much more can be done and are working towards a much more streamlined approach with fewer indicators in GEF 7. GEFSEC is currently working towards much more streamlined tracking tools for MFAs and IAPs.	Medium: GEFIEO acknowledges the reduction of indicators in each of the focal areas tracking tools in GEF-6 (including the SFM focal area). We are also aware of GEFSEC efforts in making the tracking tools more user friendly, which is a good complement to the reduction of indicators. The recently launched pilot on tracking tools for multifocal programs, being tested in the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program on SFM, the Coastal Fisheries Initiative and the Illegal Wildlife Trade program) is definitely a step in the right direction too. However, this decision refers specifically to tracking tools of multifocal projects, which burden must be comparable to that of single focal area projects. Here, GEFIEO takes note of GEFSEC ongoing work on designing guidelines for multifocal projects, which includes the discussion on a more integrated way of tracking results in multifocal projects, to reduce the burden on multifocal projects. The level of adoption of this decision be tracked in next MAR.

			under implementation that require tracking tools from more than one focal area.					
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2.b Recommendation based on Council review of GEF Annual Impact Report 2012 (GEF/ME/C.43/04).

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
2	Nov. 2012	Recommendation 5 from the GEF Annual Impact Report 2012: A more robust programmatic approach should be developed for GEF IW support to the SCS and adjacent area...GEF engagements with the magnitude of support given in the SCS and adjacent areas require more robust tracking and reporting of multiagency commitments to communication, coordination and introspection among IW projects, and a common focus on global benefits. GEF has introduced the stocktaking meetings for this purpose, but as indicated above, they have only skirted around critical GEF partnership issues. Given the structural nature of the interactions among agencies (being equals), the responsibility for more robust tracking and reporting with regards to multi-agency collaboration and cooperation should be placed on the GEF Secretariat. This new function should be approached as an instrument for adaptive management. It should also allow for inputs from the various GEF stakeholders,	The Secretariat and Agencies appreciate Recommendation 5 that "A more robust programmatic approach should be developed for GEF IW support to the SCS and adjacent areas." Subsequent to the implementation of the projects in the SCS, the GEF has recognized the importance of a programmatic approach in the region and has made several changes in how programming is undertaken. This includes a medium-sized project (MSP) for the recently approved World Bank programmatic approach in the SCS with the mandate to coordinate the program.1In addition to measures taken within specific programmatic approaches and projects, we are supporting robust dialogues through the Inter-Agency Focal Area Task Forces which are chaired by the GEF Secretariat as a forum for further collaboration and cooperation. It should also be noted, that in the case of the SCS regional project, there was no attempt prior to the approval of these projects to	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.43/04, "GEF Annual Impact Report 2012", and document GEF/ME/C.43/05, "Management Response to the GEF Annual Impact Report 2012", took note of the considerable achievements of GEF support to the South China Sea and adjacent areas including, amongst others, that in 21 of 26 cases where comparative data could be obtained, GEF has supported initiatives that reduced environmental stress and improved or maintained socioeconomic conditions. Given the important contributions that GEF support has made to addressing regional transboundary concerns, and the role of the GEF as a critical player in the region, as noted by the report, the Council requested the Secretariat to: 2) Adopt a more robust tracking and reporting	Medium: The project "Scaling up the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia" will facilitate cooperation among a number of regional bodies, among other through Signed Partnership Agreements between PEMSEA and YSLME Commission, WCPF Commission and other regional governance mechanisms to enable planning, coordination and implementation among the respective SAPs, while addressing EAS program sustainability and integration with broader regional cooperation frameworks. Further, cooperation, collaboration and coordination is consistently being carried out through the IW Task Force, for the region in question as well as the rest of the regions IW are engaged in.	Medium: The coordination of GEF support with other regional initiatives is an important step to ensure the effectiveness of GEF support in the SCS. While the IW task force can be used to exchange information among Agencies, there is still no clarity of the mechanism put in place to monitor and ensure coordination and cooperation accountability among initiatives and regional institutions supported by the GEF in the SCS and adjacent areas.	Substantial: To better address the need for a regional mechanism to monitor and ensure coordination and cooperation among initiatives the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has funded an MSP on Applying Knowledge Management to Scale up Partnership Investments for Sustainable Development of Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) of East Asia and their Coasts, which aims at enhancing the capacity of projects in the region to effectively capture and disseminate lessons learned and best practices and potentially leverage increased investments. While the Asia-Pacific	Substantial: The implementation of a mechanism (in this case, the MSP) is necessary in ensuring that knowledge is shared across projects in the region. While this is not a substitute for a mechanism that tracks Agency accountability for collaboration and cooperation that allows stakeholder inputs and the discussion of critical partnership issues, the restructuring of the Secretariat towards region-based program development is a step in the right direction that will better ensure that projects and programs implemented by different Agencies will be complementary

		including country representatives, and seek to identify and tackle critical issues affecting the functioning of the partnership and the execution of the broader GEF strategy in the region.	think of strategic partnerships, programmatic approaches or similar constructs.	approach to ensure Agency accountability for collaboration and cooperation in the South China Sea and the East Asian Seas.			region has benefitted from numerous GEF-supported projects, one of the major challenges still faced by most projects is how to make the resulting outputs and information useful and accessible to target users in a coordinated fashion, it is envisioned that the MSP will facilitate this process.	and coordinated when appropriate. Given this recent restructuring, the decision will be Graduated from the MAR.
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2.c Recommendation based on Council review of GEF Annual Impact Report 2013 (GEF/ME/C.45/1).

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
3	Nov. 2013	The measurement of GHG emission reduction, both direct and indirect, needs to be further improved. STAP should be requested to formulate a targeted research project to ensure that over time assessments of direct and indirect GHG emission reductions can be verified.	The GEF Secretariat recognizes the usefulness of developing ex-post GHG emission reductions verification. As stated in the response to Conclusion 5, however, verifying ex-post emission reductions will entail policy and organizational changes along with methodological improvement. To address the need to improve the measurements of GHG emission reduction and verification, the GEF Secretariat suggests to initiate a dialogue, including STAP, on how direct and indirect GHG emission reductions from GEF projects may be verified.	The Council requests the GEF Secretariat, in collaboration with STAP and other relevant entities, to continue its work on the improvement of the methodology of GHG emission reduction calculations, and to engage in a dialogue to improve (i) the assessment of direct GHG emission reduction during project implementation and at completion, and (ii) improved estimation of indirect GHG emission reduction. The Council requests the GEF Secretariat to report back by the next Council meeting with proposals on the way forward	Substantial: In November 2014, the GEF and STAP formulated a research project to improve GEF GHG accounting methodologies. In the project, three Working Groups (WG) are formed and a consulting firm is engaged. The WG members come from the representatives of the GEF Council, STAP, the GEF IEO, GEF Agencies, the UNFCCC, CSOs (WRI, and REN21) and GEF SEC staff. WG 1 is working on improving measurement of GHG emissions reduction for EE, RE, and transport projects. WG 2 is working on developing methodological framework and guideline for LULUCF or AFOLU projects. WG 3 is designing strategies for operationalizing the GEF new methodological frameworks and guideline. The GEF/STAP project will close in June 2015.	Substantial: The GEF Secretariat with STAP has set up working groups that include the GEF Agencies and other stakeholders to address the monitoring issues related to GHG emissions pointed out in the evaluation. This is a promising and initiative that also seeks to establish communication with other initiatives seeking to harmonize GHG emission monitoring.	Substantial: The three working groups worked well and accomplished their individual tasks. The project report was completed in March 2015. On the basis of the report, the GEF SEC prepared an information document for the 48th GEF Council Meeting June 02 – 04, 2015: GUIDELINES FOR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING FOR GEF PROJECTS - FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF GEF WORKING GROUPS. GEF/C.48/Inf.09, May 07, 2015. In addition, in 2015 the GEF joined a working group of International Financial Institutions aimed at harmonization of GHG accounting methodologies which will further inform GEF SEC work.	Substantial The GEF Secretariat followed up on the Council decision and established a process with involvement of STAP, GEF Agencies, and GEF IEO to improve the GEF GHG accounting methodologies. It hired a consulting firm to prepare draft proposals for discussion. The Council information document, 'Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Accounting and Reporting for GEF Projects – Findings and Recommendation of GEF Working Groups' (GEF/C.48/Inf.09; 2015) acknowledges the challenge of achieving full consistency given that methodologies are still evolving and uniformity in use of methodology might be difficult to achieve. It, however, advances GEF partnership in the path of greater consistency in accounting of GHG emissions by specifying the

								process that agencies should adopt in identifying the specific methodologies suited for the projects that they are preparing. Given the progress made so far, the decision will be Graduated from MAR.
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2.d Recommendation based on Council review of the GEF IEO Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014 (GEF/ME/C.46/04)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2014	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
4	May 2014	The GEF should explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programmes as service providers to implement community level activities for FSPs and MSPs.	The Secretariat concurs with the recommendation that the GEF should explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programmes as service providers to implement community-level activities of other GEF-financed full-sized projects and medium-sized projects. The Secretariat has included such a recommendation as part of the proposals in the Council paper on the <i>GEF Small Grants Program Implementation Arrangements</i> , presented at this Council meeting.	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.46/04, "Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," document GEF/ME/C.46/05, "Management Response to the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014," requested the Secretariat: 1) To explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programmes as service providers to implement community level activities for FSPs and MSPs.	High The GEF Council Document on the <i>GEF Small Grants Program Implementation Arrangements</i> (GEF/C.46/13) approved by Council in May 2014 includes a voluntary option for sustaining the efficiency and effectiveness of SGP grant-making in GEF-6, that "is to utilize the country programmes or the global programme as delivery mechanisms for relevant Full-Sized Projects". Based on this, the GEF Secretariat has started discussions with UNDP's Central Programme Management Team and Upgraded Country Programs manager in order to define some criteria for establishing the appropriateness of using this delivery mechanism as well as priority regions and countries.	Substantial: the decision has been incorporated into the SGP programming document for GEF-6, but discussion on how to operationalize it is still ongoing. During GEF-6 the GEF IEO will look into quantifiable evidence of MSPs/FSPs using SGP as service providers to deliver community level activities, both at project design (i.e. share of PIFs and/or PPGs mentioning SGP as service provider) and implementation stages (as reported in PIRs and TEs).	Substantial: The use of SGP country programmes as delivery mechanisms continues to be explored and is being further explained and illustrated during the SGP consultations ongoing in parallel with the ECWs. Concrete proposals for SGP to serve as a delivery mechanism are under development in countries such as Mauritius, Ukraine, as well as in the joint UNEP/UNDP GEF IW-ECO regional project in the Caribbean which involves 8 SGP country programmes in the sub-region.	Substantial: GEF IEO acknowledges the concrete progress made in the adoption of this decision, demonstrated by the examples mentioned in Mauritius, Ukraine and the Caribbean, among others. The IEO will verify actual implementation of such arrangements during GEF-6 in a larger number of cases.

2.e.1 Recommendation based on Council review of the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
5	June 2015	The GEF should revitalize the SGP Steering Committee to support high level strategic thinking in developing a long term vision for the SGP, to foster dialogue between UNDP and the GEF, and to advise the Council as appropriate on strategic decision making.	The Secretariat supports the recommendation of the evaluation report and have begun the process of revitalizing the SGP Steering Committee. New TORs have been discussed that clearly define the role of the Committee as a forum for clarification of the SGP's long-term vision as well as other strategic issues. The Secretariat concurs that the SGP Steering Committee will oversee an updating of the SGP's corporate vision and long-term strategy. The SGP Steering Committee may organize, as needed, wider fora on key strategic issues to bring into the discussion other key stakeholders and partners. Inputs from these consultations will feed into the Committee's strategic guidance on SGP as well as to the preparation of Council papers, as appropriate. UNDP and CPMT, in consultation with the GEF Secretariat, will continue to refine operationalization of the upgrading policy. We welcome the four suggestions listed under this recommendation and will work with the GEF Secretariat to design and execute these recommended changes in GEF-7, in particular to ensure all around compliance with the SGP Operational Guidelines. The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation that upgrading remains voluntary for LDCs and SIDS and that changes to the process for accessing STAR funds by non-upgraded countries through the global project should be clear and agreed.	The Council, having reviewed GEF/ME/C.48/02, Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, and GEF/ME/C.48/03, Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, requests the Secretariat to: (1) Revitalize the global SGP Steering Committee to support high-level strategic thinking in developing a long-term vision for the SGP, to foster dialogue between UNDP and the GEF on the SGP, and to advise the Council as appropriate on strategic decision making concerning the SGP.	High: The SGP Steering Committee is fully active and continues to meet on a semi-annual basis in parallel with GEF Council meetings. The membership of the Steering Committee includes the GEF Secretariat (as chair), UNDP (as implementing agency), and the GEF CSO Network (representing CSOs). The Steering Committee is providing overall strategic guidance to the SGP according to its agreed Terms of Reference.	High: GEF IEO acknowledges the complete revitalization of the SGP Steering Committee and its main mission, as stated in the re-actualized Terms of Reference, to provide high level strategic direction and long term vision for the SGP. The committee has met twice, in July and in October 2015. A review of the proposed work plan to implement recommendations from the Joint Evaluation of the GEF SGP was in the agenda of the October meeting. Notably, a proposal has been discussed to consult with stakeholders on the SGP vision within the framework of the Extended Constituency Workshops as a way to broaden consultation in a cost effective manner, by having an additional 1-day dedicated to discussions on SGP with CSOs in the ECWs. In view of it high level of adoption, GEF IEO the decision is Graduated from MAR.

2.e.2 Recommendation based on Council review of the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
6	June 2015	The GEF and UNDP should continue upgrading, building on strengths while addressing the weakness identified. The criteria for selection of countries for upgrading should be revisited.	UNDP and CPMT, in consultation with the GEF Secretariat, will continue to refine operationalization of the upgrading policy. The Secretariat welcomes the four suggestions listed under this recommendation and will work with the GEF Secretariat to design and execute these recommended changes in GEF-7, in particular to ensure all around compliance with the SGP Operational Guidelines. The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation that upgrading remains voluntary for LDCs and SIDS and that changes to the process for accessing STAR funds by non-upgraded countries through the global project should be clear and agreed.	The Council, having reviewed GEF/ME/C.48/02, Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, and GEF/ME/C.48/03, Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation, requests the Secretariat and UNDP to: (1) Continue upgrading the SGP Country Program, building on strengths while addressing the weaknesses identified by the evaluation. The criteria for selection of countries for upgrading should be revisited.	Substantial: The GEF and UNDP are continuing the process of upgrading, and 6 new countries will be upgraded in GEF 6 and separately funded through FSPs. These countries include Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. This will bring the total number of Upgraded SGP countries to 15, with the original 9 countries. The criteria for selection of countries follow what was laid out in the Council paper "SGP: Implementation Arrangements during GEF6".	Medium: GEF IEO acknowledges the continuation of upgrading to six more countries, and looks forward to further verify the full adoption of this decision concerning the recommended building on strengths while addressing the weaknesses identified by the joint evaluation, and the revision of the criteria for selection of countries for upgrading. The Office will continue to track adoption of this decision.

2.f Recommendation based on Council review of the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015, section on Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
7	October 2015	Rec 1: GEF should ensure that its support targets areas rich in globally important and significant biodiversity.	Rec 1: The Secretariat and Agencies agree with Recommendation 1 that GEF should continue to ensure that GEF support be targeted to globally significant sites with high biodiversity values, which has been a fundamental criterion for project eligibility since the inception of the GEF. Global biodiversity value will remain the main criterion for prioritization. When choosing between potential sites of clear global biodiversity value, additional factors such as climate change vulnerability and ecological impacts of climate change may be taken into account, but these will be secondary and only after the global importance criterion is met.	The Council, having reviewed the section on the Joint Impact Evaluation of GEF Support to Protected Areas and Surrounding Landscapes, in the "Semi-Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: October 2015," and GEF/ME/C.49/02, "Management Response to the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report October 2015", takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation, endorses the recommendations and requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations, including recommendation 4.	Rec. 1: High. Key action: 1.1. Ongoing: Ensure that Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) criteria established in the GEF-6 BD strategy are applied using available geospatial information and technology. GEF Secretariat has already arranged for full access to the (KBA) database and GEF program managers can now assess whether GEF investments are being directed towards Key Biodiversity Areas as stipulated in the GEF-6 biodiversity strategy and are approving all investments only when these criteria are met. Agencies are being reminded by GEFSEC of the need to identify how projects meet this criteria. GEFSEC also attended the first meeting of the KBA Partnership and will work with the Partnership to facilitate implementation of the KBA standard within the GEF portfolio.	Substantial: The acquisition of the KBA database and its use in assessing future project sites is a critical step in ensuring that globally important biodiversity are being targeted by GEF support. This will be an ongoing effort that needs to be tracked over a longer period to assess whether or not these new objective and geospatial-based criteria will decrease the number of GEF-supported sites in less biodiversity-rich areas. As part of implementing the Council decision, the Secretariat will also need to continually integrate the most relevant scientific criteria in site selection that will have an impact on GEF investments, such as climate change vulnerability. The extent of use of the KBA and other appropriate scientific criteria, and its effect on the selection of sites for GEF support will be tracked in next year's MAR.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
		Rec 2: GEF should address socioeconomic conditions that will ensure local community commitment to biodiversity protection.	Rec 2: The Secretariat and Agencies are committed to ensure that GEF protected area projects are designed and implemented in a way that results in shared benefits among the intended beneficiaries. The Secretariat and Agencies are committed to continuing to apply the GEF Environmental and Social Safeguards, as well as those of the Implementing Agencies, to help achieve this end. The Secretariat and Agencies will aim to exploit opportunities within its protected area portfolio to further develop the evidence base to better predict the factors that influence whether protected area projects have positive or negative impacts on livelihoods and benefits.		Rec 2: Substantial. Key actions: 2.1 Ongoing: Application of the GEF Environmental and Social Safeguards. 2.2 Ongoing: The Secretariat and Agencies will aim to exploit opportunities within its protected area portfolio to further develop the evidence base to better predict the factors that influence whether protected area projects have positive or negative impacts on livelihoods and benefits. The GEF biodiversity strategy provides funding through the biodiversity focal-area set aside to support the implementation of experimental and quasi-experimental design that may be used to support this kind of analysis. 2.3. Ongoing: GEF is working with STAP to finalize operational guidance on how to design protected area projects so that they generate evidence on what works and under what conditions with regards to improving livelihoods and how to most accurately measure and monitor socio-economic benefits through field-tested methods such as: 1) Detailed livelihood surveys; 2) Social assessment of protected areas (SAPA); and 3) Financial value chain method. Aim is to have operational guidance document produced and in use by July 2016.	Substantial: The Secretariat is making significant progress through collaboration with STAP to better assess socioeconomic outcomes in relation to GEF-supported PAs. The completion of use of the guidance in project proposals will be tracked in the next year's MAR.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
		Rec 3: GEF should invest in broader governance issues to address large-scale drivers.	Rec 3: The Secretariat and Agencies agree that the GEF should invest more in interventions that enable dialogue and joint decision-making with multiple stakeholders in and around PAs, and also with stakeholders representing different sectors and operating at different scales – PA, landscape, PA system, national ministries -- that tend to have conflicting development priorities and management objectives with regards to biodiversity conservation. The GEF's biodiversity strategy has long recognized the critical importance of this aspect of biodiversity management and it is the primary rationale for GEF's support to biodiversity mainstreaming and GEF BD Programs 9 and 10.		Rec.3: Substantial Key Actions: 3.1. GEF support to country-driven projects under Programs 9 and 10 in GEF-6 totals \$123 million which leveraged \$606 million of cofinancing as of March 14, 2016. This represents 40% of overall biodiversity programming thus far in GEF-6 and 43% of overall cofinancing provided to biodiversity projects. 3.2 Ongoing: Ensure that by the time of CEO endorsement all projects develop clear theories of change that identify the determinants that are necessary for successful biodiversity mainstreaming projects to facilitate learning and codification of best management practices.	Substantial: The Secretariat is making significant progress by channeling 40% of GEF-6 biodiversity programming towards biodiversity mainstreaming in production landscapes, seascapes and sectors, and particularly through the integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services into development finance & planning. It will be important to track GEF's progress in engaging non-environment sectors over the longer term as evidenced by their financial support for biodiversity-friendly activities and by the integration of biodiversity criteria in development-oriented decisions. Given the current investments in mainstreaming, the Office will not track adoption of this sub-decision through MAR. However, other sub-decisions may continue to be tracked.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
		Rec 4: The GEF should develop a more reliable and practical monitoring system to track and assess results at the project and portfolio levels.	Rec 4: The Secretariat and the Agencies agree that basic information on GEF support to PAs (where, what and when) that is currently collected through project documents and the biodiversity tracking tools must be more easily available for informational and analytical purposes. We acknowledge that recent advances in geospatial technology, and the availability of global and local databases provide opportunities to significantly improve results monitoring and reporting. Notwithstanding its proven utility both within and outside of the GEF, we agree with the evaluation that the METT has shortcomings particularly with regards to monitoring biodiversity outcomes and condition within protected areas and to address that we improved the METT for application in GEF-6 and incorporated more objective and data driven assessments of protected area outcomes and biodiversity condition. We will explore further refinement of the METT as we approach GEF-7.		Rec.4: Medium Key Actions: 4.1 Ongoing: The GEF is evaluating the feasibility and infrastructure requirements necessary to have all projects submit shapefiles of the location of the project investment. GEF is Also currently assessing how to geo-locate the backlog of PA projects and other land-based or ocean-based projects. 4.2 Ongoing: GEF is evaluating various options on how to use of geospatial technology for project and portfolio monitoring. 4.3 Ongoing: GEF is currently developing an online system for completing tracking tools which will make the data collected easier to analyze. 4.4 In response to the IEO suggestion that GEF streamline the Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) reporting requirements to focus on information that can be used in conjunction with existing global datasets and geospatial data to perform meaningful analyses on management effectiveness and biodiversity impacts at a global level, the GEF has already streamlined the METT for GEF-6 but will undertake further analysis with global experts on streamlining the METT for GEF-7. 4.5 Ongoing: GEF is taking an active role in the KBA partnership.	Medium: The Secretariat has begun to invest in both human resources and infrastructure to integrate more geospatial technology into project proposal assessment and monitoring. The effectiveness of requiring Agencies to submit useful geospatial information at project submission will need to be tracked over the next year. The usefulness of the streamlined METT, including the online system, will likewise need to be assessed. The Secretariat's membership in the KBA partnership will facilitate partnerships with institutions that manage global monitoring databases. Partnerships at the national level will need to be identified as much as possible by project submission, and tracked over the course of the project to ensure that data collected and monitoring systems funded by GEF projects are managed by sustainable research institutions. The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.

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					The Partnership aims to facilitate the implementation of the KBA standard globally and brings together leading NGOs, many of whom are specialized in biodiversity data management, as well as other partners (users of biodiversity information, managers, protected area authorities, etc.) This is the first action in response to the IEO suggestion that GEF establish partnerships with agencies that specialize in biodiversity data management to facilitate GEF support to biodiversity, particularly with regards to the data supply and management. Given that the KBA criteria are part of GEF funding decisions for our support to protected areas, this partnership should help with GEF implementation of the standard within the protected area portfolio. GEF will continue to identify and develop these kinds of partnerships going forward.	

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF EO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2015	GEF EO Rating & Comments in MAR 2015
		Rec 5: GEF should invest in understanding what works and why.	The Secretariat and Agencies agree that GEF partners, including the Independent Evaluation Office, the Secretariat, STAP, and the Agencies should jointly exploit opportunities to generate evidence and deepen understanding on what works, for whom, and under what conditions across the entire realm of biodiversity management options. We believe this could be anchored in GEFSEC's work on strengthening the GEF partnership and on knowledge management efforts also underway in GEF-6.		Rec 5: High Key Actions: 5.1 Ongoing: The GEF is currently working with STAP on a number of these issues already, including developing operational guidance on how to design protected area projects so that they generate evidence on what works and under what conditions with regards to improving livelihoods, as well as further analysis of biodiversity impacts resulting from GEF's biodiversity mainstreaming investments. 5.2 Ongoing: IEO made specific suggestions on developing a better understanding on how to catalyze the changes needed for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use to take place at a large scale and how to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in ways that produce multiple environmental and socioeconomic benefits. We believe that biodiversity mainstreaming strikes at the core of these two issues. GEF is working with STAP to contribute to the overall understanding of mainstreaming as it applies to biodiversity and provide concrete examples of how it can be operationalized in GEF projects. Concrete outputs from this work will be: a) Brief conceptual paper on mainstreaming, which will define it economically and include a) a categorization of mainstreaming	Substantial: The Secretariat is making progress through collaboration with STAP to better assess effective socioeconomic conditions in relation to GEF-supported PAs and biodiversity impacts resulting from mainstreaming investments. The Secretariat is developing a tool to categorize the different mainstreaming approaches that GEF has been supporting and analyze which ones are most effective in improving biodiversity. The results are intended to provide guidance on where to focus future investments in mainstreaming. The results of these efforts and their use in project proposals by Agencies will be tracked in next year's MAR.

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					approaches building on the determinants identified in the 2014 STAP publication and b) suggestions for priority areas for guidelines which may result in one or more “how to guides” on a specific aspects of mainstreaming such as CBNRM, sustainable use, policy development, zoning/district planning, stewardship, biodiversity mapping, etc.). This will begin with developing a rationale for tools that can be used to internalize costs and benefits. b) Consider how the GEF can practically measure whether or not biodiversity actually benefits from a ‘mainstreaming’ action through identification, development and testing of appropriate indicators (e.g. could measure soil fertility, carbon, soil cover, etc.) Possibly use a ‘trophic level’ approach. The work with STAP will begin in earnest in FY 2017; however, GEFSEC has begun preliminary work on this topic and has consulted with the IEO on the design of an analysis of determinants of successful biodiversity mainstreaming with the aim of producing an analysis to be shared at COP 13.	