

Management Action Record 2020

Introduction

The GEF Management Action Record (MAR) tracks the level of adoption of GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council decisions that are based on the recommendations of the evaluations conducted by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO). The GEF Secretariat and/or the GEF Agencies, referred to as GEF Management as applicable, are responsible for adoption of the Council’s decision. 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.”¹ MAR 2020 reports on level of adoption of decisions based on GEF IEO recommendations included in eight different evaluations:

- a. Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation (GEF/ME/C.48/02) reported in Semi-Annual Evaluation Report June 2015 (GEF/ME/C.48/02)
- b. Evaluation of the GEF CSO Network (GEF/ME/C.50/02)
- c. Review of the GEF Policy on Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.08) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO May 2017 (GEF/ME/C.52/01/Rev.02)
- d. Review of GEF Support for Transformational Change (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.06) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO May 2017 (GEF/ME/C.52/01/Rev.02)
- e. Review of GEF’s Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.07) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO November 2017 (GEF/ME/C.53/01)
- f. Biodiversity Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.03) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO November 2017 (GEF/ME/C.53/01)
- g. Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02)
- h. Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/02)

Of the eight evaluations, six evaluations were presented to, and their recommendations endorsed by, the GEF Council. The remaining two evaluations were presented to, and their recommendations endorsed by, the LDCF/SCCF Council. These eight evaluations contained 26 recommendations of which 24 pertained to the six evaluations presented to the GEF Council and two recommendations pertained to the two evaluations presented to the LDCF/SCCF Council.

During 2017 the GEF council endorsed 58 recommendations presented to it by the GEF IEO through the May and November 2017 Semi-Annual Evaluation Reports. Progress in adoption of these recommendations was not reported in MAR 2017 because it was still too early to take stock of the progress. MAR2020 tracks and report on progress in adoption of 21 of these 58 recommendations. Of these 21 recommendations, five pertain to the Review of GEF’s Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.07), three to the Review of the GEF Policy on Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.08), 12 to the Biodiversity Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.03), and one to the Review of GEF Support for Transformational Change (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.06). The remaining 37 recommendations are listed in Annex A, and progress on their adoption will be reported on in future.

The Third Professional Peer Review of the Independent Evaluation Function of the Global Environment Facility, being presented concurrently to the June 2020 GEF Council meeting, includes a recommendation that calls for a procedure or mechanism to enable preparation of robust and articulate Management response and MAR, and ensure adequate consideration by the Council to the MAR. The GEF IEO intends to adopt the recommendation and start discussions with Council and GEFSEC on improving the system, with a planned roll out of a new MAR system in June 2021.

Rating Approach

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

Findings

GEF IEO and GEF Secretariat agree on ratings of adoption of all Council decisions that are tracked in MAR2020, with adoption level rated substantial for seven evaluations and medium for one. The council decision based on the *Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund* which recommended that the GEF Secretariat explore and develop mechanisms to ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the Fund, make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF, and ensure that the data in the Project Management Information System is up to date and accurate, has been retired, as a new Council decision will be made on the 2020 Update of the Program Evaluation of the LDCF in December 2020.

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

GEF Council Decisions with a Substantial Level of Adoption

Seven of the eight council decisions were rated to have a substantial level of adoption. The GEF Council decision based on the Evaluation of the GEF CSO Network encouraged the network to establish a working group with a balanced representation to interact with the Council Working Group based on an updated vision for the network, including governance, policies and cooperation mechanisms. The GEF IEO and the Management agree that there has been substantial progress in adopting the Council decision. During the reporting period, the GEF Secretariat organized three consultations with CSOs, and presented Council with information on CSO, IPLC and private sector engagement in the GEF Corporate scorecard. GEF IEO is currently conducting an evaluation of the institutional policies and engagement, including the Stakeholder engagement policy.

The Review of GEF Support for Transformational Change recommended the development and application for a framework for ex-ante assessments of projects or programs intended to be transformational. GEF IEO and the Management agree that progress on adoption of these recommendations has been substantial, as the GEF has embraced the proposed framework and included considerations for transformational change in the Programming direction for GEF-7, including impact programs.

The Review of the GEF Policy on Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards recommended that GEF should: review its minimum standards for environmental and social safeguards; improve monitoring of safeguards and reporting; and, support capacity development, convening of experts, and communications. GEF IEO and the Management agree that progress on adoption of these recommendations has been substantial. Following on the preparation of an updated policy on environmental and social safeguards (ESS), the GEF Secretariat developed guidelines, as well as an assessment of GEF Agencies’ compliance, both presented at the 57th Council meeting. GEF IEO continues to track development of an ESS template, and GEF Secretariat support in capacity development, expert convening and communications, which has taken place at ECWs and Agency’s retreats.

The Biodiversity focal area study included 12 recommendations related to project design and overall strategy for GEF programming in biodiversity. Though some recommendations could not yet be rated, overall progress on adoption of the recommendations is rated as substantial by both GEF IEO and management. Much progress is related to the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program, which has increased geographic and species coverage of the GEF portfolio of Biodiversity related projects.

The GEF IEO recommendations in the Review of GEF’s Engagement with Indigenous Peoples called for: dedicated funding opportunities for indigenous people’s organizations; update of policies and guidelines; review of the role of the indigenous peoples’ advisory group; and improved reporting on engagement of indigenous people and relevant results through mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations. Both GEF IEO and the Management assessed the overall progress on adoption of the recommendations to be substantial. A new policy for indigenous people was prepared and approved by the Council in the previous reporting period, and the GEF IEO will evaluate its implementation as part of OPS7.

The Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund recommended that the GEF Secretariat should: explore and develop mechanisms that ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the Fund; make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF; and ensure that the data in the GEF PMIS is up to date and accurate. Both GEF IEO and the Management assessed the overall progress on adoption of the recommendations to be substantial. The GEF Secretariat has co-organized a successful pledging event where additional resources for the LDCF were pledged by several donors. The GEF Policy on Gender Equality, which is also applicable to LDCF activities is regarded by GEF IEO as substantial progress on the adoption of the gender mainstreaming related recommendation. While the transition to the portal is still underway, the systems in place to ensure that portal data-including project status, key dates and financial figures, is continually updated and kept accurate moving forward is not clear. A new Council decision will be made on the 2020 Update of the Program Evaluation of the LDCF in December 2020 and this decision is therefore retired.

The Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund called the GEF Secretariat to prioritize sustainable financing for the fund; to describe the SCCF’s niche within the global adaptation finance landscape; and, ensure that PMIS data is up to date and accurate. The GEF IEO assesses the overall progress on adoption of these recommendations to be substantial. Much of the progress made is in 4 terms of the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation for the Special Climate Change Fund for 2018- 2022, which the IEO will continue to track. Progress on ensuring sustainable funding has been medium. Progress on the transition from PMIS to the GEF Portal is described above.

Decisions with a Medium Level of Adoption

The GEF IEO and Management’s assessment on the level of adoption of the decision based on the Joint GEF - UNDP Small Grant Programme Evaluation is medium, as it was the previous year. The Council’s decision had called for reconsideration of the criteria for upgradation of the participating countries. The Management reports that it has reconsidered the criteria for upgradation but is using it without any changes for the GEF-7 period. One country, Malaysia, was upgraded in the previous period and a Full-Sized Project for \$2.5 million for the country was approved by Council as part the December 2019 Work Program. Discussions between GEF Secretariat and UNDP on SGP implementation are ongoing, the third joint SGP evaluation will also include a focus on country upgrading.

Retired Decisions

The council decision based on the *Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund* which recommended that the GEF Secretariat explore and develop mechanisms to ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the Fund, make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF, and ensure that the data in the Project Management Information System is up to date and accurate, has been retired with a substantial rating for adoption. A new Council decision will be made on the 2020 Update of the Program Evaluation of the LDCF in December 2020. All other decisions will continue to be tracked in MAR 2021.

A summary of all council decisions tracked by MAR with final GEF IEO ratings is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Council decisions, final GEF IEO ratings, by MAR year

Rating at Exit: Final Rating at Graduation or Retirement from MAR							
MAR	High	Substantial	Medium	Negligible	Not Rated/ Possible to Verify Yet	Not Applicable	Total
2005	5	15	7	3	-	-	30
2006	5	1	-	-	-	-	6
2007	7	8	-	-	2	-	17
2008	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
2009	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
2010	9	3	4	3	-	2	21
2011	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2013	5	1	1	1	2	-	10
2014	4	2	6	1	1	-	14
2015	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
2016	1	3	1	0	0	0	4
2017	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
2019	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
2020	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	49	37	20	8	5	2	120

Decisions which IEO Tracked in MAR2020

Details of the Council decisions, management’s response and GEF IEO ratings tracked in MAR2020 are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Adoption of Council Decisions

A.1 Recommendation based on Council review of the Semi-Annual Evaluation Report June 2015, section on the Joint GEF-UNDP Small Grants Programme Evaluation (GEF/ME/C.48/02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
1	June 9 th , 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.	Medium: The Council decides on the criteria for upgrading. The Council, at its 54th meeting in June 2018 and having reviewed document GEF/C.54/05/Rev.01, <i>GEF Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF-7</i>, took note of the implementation arrangements and approved the proposed financing structure for the GEF-7 SGP. The Council further requested the Secretariat and UNDP, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to keep under review the criteria for eligibility to core funds, and to propose any changes for Council consideration with a view to ensuring an equitable deployment of SGP support over time. Consistent with the Council's decision and the upgrading criteria retained, one additional country – Malaysia – was upgraded.	Medium: GEF IEO takes note that a new country, Malaysia, has been upgraded. However, no progress appears to have been made since last year on revisiting the criteria for selection of countries for upgrading. GEF IEO will track the revisiting of the upgrading criteria in the next MAR. Upgrading will also be re-assessed in the next SGP evaluation, planned for Fiscal Year 20.	Medium: A Full-Sized Project for \$2.5 million for Malaysia as new Upgraded Country Programme was approved by Council as part the December 2019 Work Program. The GEF Secretariat and UNDP are in on-going discussions about the implementation of the SGP as a whole. A Steering Committee of the SGP meeting has been called by the Secretariat for May 2020, where strategic issues will be discussed, including the need to address the criteria for Upgrading in GEF-8. The GEF Secretariat expects that the IEO Joint Evaluation will provide valuable information about the upgrading criteria, that can inform the proposal to be presented to Council for consideration for GEF-8.	Medium: GEF IEO takes note of the Secretariat plans to discuss strategic issues including the upgrading criteria in the next SGP steering Committee. Indeed, the ongoing third Joint SGP Evaluation focuses on upgrading as a main area of evaluative enquiry that can inform GEF-8 Replenishment discussions.

A.2 Council decision based on the Evaluation of the GEF CSO Network (GEF/ME/C.50/02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
2	June 9 th , 2016	Recommendation 1: A contemporary vision for the CSO Network be created within the new GEF architecture. The vision should inter alia a) clarify the Network's role, b) set out a shared understanding amongst all parts of the Partnership of the Network's contribution in guarding the global commons and c) identify a modality to finance Network activities. Recommendation 2: The GEFSEC and CSO Network should develop clear rules of engagement which guides cooperation and communications. These could be adjusted as needed. Recommendation 3: The CSO Network should continue to build itself as a mechanism for strengthening civil society participation in the GEF at the global, regional and national levels, paying particular attention to: membership development, capacity building and value-added working relationships across the Partnership. Recommendation 4: The CSO Network should strengthen its governance, with particular attention to: annual work plans, cooperation with IPAG, terms for the Network's Regional Focal Points and the complaints process.	The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation that a new vision should be developed for the GEF CSO Network within the GEF Partnership. The Secretariat looks forward to collaborating with the CSO Network and other partners to develop that vision. Regarding the recommendation to the GEFSEC and CSO Network to develop clear rules of engagement that guide cooperation and communications, the Secretariat is pleased to report that cooperation with the new management of the Network has been strengthened through more frequent formal communication and participation of the CSO Network representatives in various task forces and working groups, including the one on public involvement. The Secretariat will assess jointly with the CSO Network regarding whether additional mechanisms are needed to further enhance cooperation.	The Council, having reviewed GEF/ME/C.50/02, Evaluation of the GEF Civil Society Organization (CSO) Network, and GEF/ME/C.50/03, Management Response to the Evaluation of the GEF Civil Society Organization Network, decides to set up an ad-hoc working group of interested Council Members to develop an updated vision of the relationship between the GEF and civil society, and a plan to achieve it, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and report back to the Council at its first meeting in 2017. The Council encourages the CSO Network to establish a working group that includes balanced representation of CSO Stakeholder views, to interact with the Council Working Group on a new, updated vision for the Network, including governance, policies, guidelines and cooperation mechanisms.	Substantial: At the 55th Council meeting in December 2018, the Secretariat presented a progress report on the implementation of the Updated Vision to Enhance Civil Society Engagement with the GEF (GEF/C.55/Inf.04). The progress report informed the Council of the following activities: - Organization of the Civil Society Forum at the Sixth GEF Assembly; - Process of Selection of CSOs and indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) for Sixth GEF Assembly, the 54th and 55th Council meetings; - Selection of Topic areas for the Consultations; - Engagement of CSOs and IPLC in Consultations and at the 55th GEF Council Meeting; and - Capacity development, consultation and outreach to civil society. Following the approval of the Policy on Stakeholder Engagement, the Secretariat updated relevant templates to reflect the new policy requirements, developed Guidelines for the Implementation of the Policy, and began reviewing projects and monitoring the portfolio in accordance with the requirements established in the Policy.	Substantial: The Secretariat presented a progress report on the implementation of the updated vision to enhance engagement with civil society. (GEF/C.55/Inf.04). In it the Secretariat has outlined new processes for selection of CSOs at GEF events such as the Assembly, Council meetings and ECWs. The Secretariat has also updated templates for submission of GEF7 projects such that there are now fields requiring that proponents outline stakeholder engagement with CSOs during the preparation of the projects/program as well as plans to monitor continuing involvement of CSOs in the implementation of projects/programs. As it is early still in GEF7, no monitoring reports have been conducted. Portfolio review for Agency adherence with Stakeholder Policy was conducted by Secretariat for internal audit purposes. Results are not available. Portfolio review results for adherence with stakeholder engagement policy are anticipated as part of the Annual Monitoring Report. As part of the Updated Vision for Enhanced Engagement with CSOs, the Secretariat established engagement guidelines for the CSO Network at Council meetings including pre-assigned topics for CSO address on the day dedicated to CSO engagement and allowing interventions from the Network during discussion of Agenda items as opposed to only the end of the discussion. Regarding the Evaluation's recommendations made to the CSO Network, the Network was actively involved in the successful organization of the CSO forum at the 6th GEF Assembly in Danang Vietnam. The Network continues to rely on voluntary resources for implementation of its activities and as such,	Substantial: The GEF Secretariat has continued implementing the Updated Vision to enhance engagement with civil society. In this context, three successful consultations with CSOs have been organized with participation of CSOs and the IPLC, as per the topics selected by Council, i.e. on Gender and the Environment; Combatting Plastic Pollution; and Combatting Illegal Wildlife Trade. Regarding implementation of the Policy on Stakeholder Engagement and monitoring of CSO engagement in GEF projects, the GEF Secretariat has provided Council with information on CSO, IPLC and private sector engagement in the GEF Corporate scorecard presented at each Council meeting. See for example: GEF-7 Corporate Scorecard - June 2019 GEF-7 Corporate Scorecard - December 2019	Substantial: The GEF IEO notes the progress of Updated Vision to enhance engagement with civil society. Regarding implementation of the Policy on Stakeholder Engagement and monitoring of CSO engagement, the GEF Secretariat has provided the score related to the stakeholder engagement (e.g. consultation in project identification stage, and engagement and described roles of stakeholders in projects) The GEF IEO also notes that the GEF Secretariat presented the compliance with Minimum Standards in the Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards, Gender Equality, and Stakeholder Engagement in December 2019. The GEF IEO continues to monitor the activities to enhance engagement with civil society. The GEF IEO is currently conducting the evaluation of the institutional policies and engagement, including the Stakeholder engagement Policy. This decision will be retired when a new Council decision is made on the 2021 Update of the evaluation of the policies in June 2021.

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						is still limited in the degree of progress made in forwarding membership development or advancing partnerships within the GEF family. The Network's activities remain focused primarily on Council activities (i.e. preparation for consultations and responses to Agenda items); and participation at ECWs. As stated in the Evaluation, lack of resources will make it difficult for the Network to push much further beyond these activities.		

A.3 Council decision based on Review of GEF Support for Transformational Change (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.06) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO May 2017 (GEF/ME/C.52/01/Rev.02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
3	May 25 th , 2017	The GEF should consider developing and applying a framework for ex- ante assessments of projects or programs that are intended to be transformational to enhance impacts. This study has presented an example of a framework that could be applied.	Substantial: The GEF has embraced the framework for ex ante assessment of all programs seeking to advance transformational change. This is primarily reflected in the process established for programming resources to tackle major drivers of environmental degradation. The Program Framework Documents (PFDs) for such programs have emphasized higher levels of ambition, importance of market mechanisms and private sector engagement, and multi-stakeholder platforms as drivers of transformational change. These are framed by a robust Theory of Change with clear impact pathways and outcome targets. In addition, the GEF is also engaging with agencies on learning initiatives to assess and understand progress toward advancing transformational change, based on key principles and assumptions established for specific programs.	Substantial: The GEF involved considerations for transformational change in the Programming Directions for GEF-7, including in the Impact Programs. The GEF-7 Program Framework Documents (PFDs) discuss transformational change as a level of ambition, and scale, while theories of change in PFDs consider the ways the programs will address barriers for transformational change.

A.4. Recommendations from the Review of the GEF Policy on Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.08) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO May 2017 (GEF/ME/C.52/01/Rev.02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
4	May 25 th , 2017	Review the GEF Minimum Standards. While the key requirements of the GEF safeguards remain relevant and aligned with international good safeguards practice, a high-level comparative review identified a range of gaps in thematic coverage in the GEF Minimum Standards that appear germane for the types of environmental and social risks present in the GEF portfolio. A review and potential update of the GEF Minimum Standards may be warranted. A phased, collaborative review process could be undertaken, with more targeted analyses of potential gap areas. A potential revision process would need to strike a proper balance between addressing relevant policy gaps in the GEF Standards while avoiding such extensive changes that would require wholesale revisions to often newly adopted safeguard frameworks of many GEF Agencies. Avenues for minimizing costs of a review and potential update would need to be identified. Improve safeguards monitoring and reporting. GEF should consider tracking social and environmental risks at the portfolio-level and ensuring a “flow-through” of monitoring information on safeguards implementation. Agencies should inform GEF of the safeguards risk categorization assigned to projects/programs and keep GEF informed of safeguards implementation issues through monitoring and reporting. Where available, this should ideally build off Agency systems rather than duplicating them. GEF could issue guidance regarding safeguards-related reporting in annual reporting and project/program evaluations. Increased GEF attention of safeguards implementation reporting may support and strengthen relatively new safeguards systems among some GEF Agencies and promote greater consistency. Support capacity development, expert convening, and communications. The expanded GEF Partnership encompasses Agencies with widely diverse levels of safeguards experience and institutional capacity. Expanded networking, knowledge sharing, and expert convening may be beneficial. A number of GEF Agencies would welcome increased opportunities for knowledge sharing and capacity support regarding key challenges in addressing certain safeguard issues. GEF could seek opportunities to gain from existing international safeguard networks (not ‘recreating the wheel’) and leverage the significant safeguards expertise across the	Substantial: Review the GEF Minimum Standards: Following the IEO review and associated Council decision, the Secretariat presented in November 2017 a plan to update the 2011 policy by the fall of 2018. The plan, approved by the Council, included a collaborative process spearheaded by a multi-stakeholder working group of interested representatives of, inter alia, the Council, Agencies, the CSO Network, the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group, IEO, and recipient country Operational Focal Points. During the consultation process, the Secretariat made targeted efforts reach out to representatives of civil society and indigenous peoples’ organizations. In accordance with the agreed plan and timeline, the Secretariat conducted a consultative process to develop an updated policy for Council consideration. The process included mapping of GEF Agencies’ policies and systems related to environmental and social safeguards to inform the Secretariat and the Working Group about the most relevant gaps and areas for improvement in the GEF’s current policy, as well as good practice examples of how such gaps could be addressed. The Updated Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (GEF/C.55/07/Rev.01) was approved by the Council in December 2018. <u>Improve safeguards monitoring and reporting:</u> The new Policy sets minimum requirements for documentation and reporting in GEF-financed projects and programs: In Project Identification Forms (PIFs) and Program Framework Documents (PFDs) submitted for Work Program entry or CEO Approval, Agencies provide indicative information regarding any Environmental and Social Risks and potential Impacts associated with the proposed project or program; and any measures to address such risks and impacts. At CEO Endorsement/ Approval, Agencies provide	Substantial: <u>Review the GEF Minimum Standards</u> The Secretariat presented the plan to review GEF’s safeguard in the GEF 53rd Council. The Secretariat updated policy was presented, and the Council approved it in the GEF 55st Council. The collaborative process to develop updated policy on environmental and social safeguards were intensively taken and the process was well-documented in the Council document. <u>Improve safeguards monitoring and reporting</u> Under the updated policy, the monitoring and reporting are strengthened. At the portfolio level, the GEF Secretariat would report annually to the Council on the implementation of the policy, including the type and level of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts. In terms of the assessment of Agencies’ compliance with requirements, the Secretariat would present the review of Agencies Compliance with requirements in the GEF 57th Council. The Secretariat is in the process of updating its templates and guidelines to support the effective implementation of the Policy. The GEF IEO will continue to track. <u>Support capacity development, expert convening, and communications</u> During the consultation process for revising the policy, the Secretariat led a collaborative process and shared relevant experiences and expertise.	Substantial: Review the GEF Minimum Standards: As part of the approval of the updated GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (SD/PL/03), the Council requested the Secretariat to facilitate an assessment of Agencies’ compliance with the new minimum standards set forth in the Policy. The Secretariat initiated an assessment of all 18 GEF Agencies in the spring of 2019, and subsequently presented a report on the Assessment of GEF Agencies’ Compliance with Minimum Standards in the Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards, Gender Equality, and Stakeholder Engagement (GEF/C.57/05) at the 57th Council meeting in December 2019. The report followed an almost 6-month consultative process, which in line with the Policies was facilitated by the Secretariat and carried out by expert reviewers. In accordance with the Guidelines for GEF Agencies’ Compliance with the Policies, issued in the spring of 2019 (SD/GN/03), the Secretariat, in collaboration with the expert reviewers, facilitated bilateral consultations with all Agencies on preliminary findings, offering ample opportunities for Agencies to provide clarifications and additional evidence, and to verify final findings. In all cases where an Agency was assessed not to have met a standard, including its sub-components, Agencies established concrete timebound actions to address the identified gaps. All these Agencies committed themselves to provide updates on the progress on their plans of action to the GEF Secretariat until they have met full compliance with each minimum standard in the three Policies. The Council approved, at the 57th Council meeting, the plans of action submitted by Agencies to achieve full compliance and decided that these Agencies may continue	Substantial: Review the GEF Minimum Standards: Following the updated policy and associated Council requests, the GEF Secretariat initiated the Assessment of GEF Agencies’ Compliance and reported on the results of assessment at the 57th Council. The Secretariat also developed the Guidelines on the Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards as an information document in the 57th Council Meeting. The IEO continues to monitor the implementation of a safeguard policy. <u>Improve safeguards monitoring and reporting</u> The Guidelines on the Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards that were approved in the GEF 57th Council and the agencies require reporting on risk and impact as part of MTR submission as part of MTR submission. The GEF IEO will continue to track, including the development of template on ESS in the portal by the GEF Secretariat.

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		GEF Partnership. GEF and GEF Agencies could convene safeguard focused workshops during Expanded Constituency Workshops or other GEF events. GEF could also consider how best to communicate GEF's policy requirements, including the GEF Minimum Standards, with country partners to further build a shared understanding on the need for effective safeguards implementation.	any additional information, including any environmental and social assessments carried out, and any Environmental and Social Management Plans or the equivalent. In addition, Agencies provide information on the implementation of relevant environmental and social management measures at project mid-term, if applicable, and at project completion. Agencies report annually to the Secretariat any cases reported to their respective accountability, grievance and conflict resolution mechanisms in connection with GEF-financed projects or programs, and how such cases have been addressed. The Secretariat is in the process of updating its templates and guidelines to support the effective implementation of the Policy. <u>Support capacity development, expert convening, and communications:</u> Throughout the process to review and update the policy on environmental and social safeguards, the Secretariat has convened Agency representatives and other stakeholders to share relevant experiences and expertise, including through three GEF Agency retreats as well as meetings of the multi-stakeholder Working Group on environmental and social safeguards. In March 2010, the Secretariat launched a process to assess all Agencies against the minimum standards included in the updated policy. This assessment process will present further opportunities for Agencies to identify any gaps in their relevant policies, procedures, and systems, and learn from experts as well as each other on ways to fill such gaps.	The Secretariat has not yet specifically planned activities for supporting capacity development, expert convening, and communication. The GEF IEO will continue to track.	to seek GEF financing while they implement the time-bound plans of action. In line with this Council decision, the Secretariat will report to the Council on the progress on Agencies' implementation of the plans of action at subsequent Council meetings based on the updates provided by the Agencies and, as needed, facilitate further expert assessment and consultation with the Agencies. The updated Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards provides requirements for Agencies to document and report on environmental and social risks and potential impacts, and their management, throughout the GEF project and program cycle. In addition, the Policy sets out a role for the Secretariat in the review of projects and programs for the availability and completeness of the information requested at the various stages of the project and program cycles; and the monitoring of and reporting on safeguards implementation at the portfolio level. The Secretariat facilitated, in the Fall of 2019, a consultative process to develop guidelines to support the effective implementation of these requirements. The Guidelines on the Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (SD/GN/03) that were approved by the CEO on December 19 and included in the GEF 57th Council meeting as an information document, provide detailed guidance on how to implement the project and program level requirements set out in the Policy, including documentation and reporting throughout the GEF Project Cycle. The Secretariat has of yet not been able to deploy the new templates on ESS in the portal. Agencies have, however, been advised to provide information on Environmental and Social Safeguards and/or indicate the relevant project documents in the existing template on Risks (Part II, Section 5). As per the Guidelines on the GEF Policy on Environmental and Social	

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					Safeguards, the Secretariat, in its review, are assessing the availability and completeness of information related to: 1) The overall project/ program risk classification; 2) Relevant types and levels of risks and potential impacts; 3) Measures to address identified risks and potential impacts; and 4) Any supporting documents such as screening or Environmental and Social Risk and Impact Assessment reports. <u>Support capacity development, expert convening, and communications</u> Throughout the processes of (1) updating the policy on environmental and social safeguards; (2) developing the guidelines; and (3) carrying out the compliance assessment, the Secretariat has convened Agency representatives and other stakeholders to share relevant experiences and expertise, including through GEF Agency retreats as well as meetings. The Secretariat has also incorporated dedicated sessions in the ECWs to raise broader awareness.	<u>Support capacity development, expert convening, and communications</u> The GEF Secretariat has been taking their opportunity to explain the policy in the ECWs and Agency’s retreats. The GEF IEO continues to track. This decision will be retired when a new Council decision is made on the 2021 Update of the evaluation of the policies in June 2021.

A.5. Council decision based on Biodiversity Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.03) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO November 2017 (GEF/ME/C.53/01)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
5	Nov 30, 2017	Address practical sustainability questions more directly. The goal of project sustainability – nationally sustainable governmental ABS frameworks and the capacity to implement them domestically- relies on attention to the key factors directing national support. It will be essential for national government legislators to recognize the need of a budget allocation to run the processes associated with the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. Monetary and non-monetary benefits accrued by private or public entities could be supporting activities not associated with the administrative process, including technology transfer and public awareness. Notable progress toward proving sustainability in this way has been achieved in some projects which are focusing on direct development of national capacities to utilize and add value to domestic Genetic Resources (GR) and ATK. This approach can be effectively scaled to each country’s needs and capabilities, and to building on that country’s capacities. Project designs should include plans for future sustainability. Focus on technical and professional capacity-building in addition to increasing general and generic awareness. The building of “true” capacity, within the relevant	Substantial Recommendations 1-4. Unable to assess progress yet as only one ABS project has been submitted and approved since the evaluation. Recommendation 5. The GEF laid the groundwork and raised the profile of IWT through GWP in Phase 1 and is committed to sustain the efforts and ensure sustainability of the conservation outcomes through support in Phase II. Phase I of the Global Wildlife Program (GWP) was launched in 2015 seeking to address the escalating illegal wildlife trade (IWT) across 19 countries in Asia and Africa and supporting efforts on-the-ground with a platform for knowledge exchange and coordination implemented by the Global Child Project. The Program carries out activities in 13 African counties (Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Republic of Congo, Tanzania, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) and in 6 Asian countries (Afghanistan, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam). In this phase, the GEF invested \$131 million and leveraged \$704 million. Phase II of the program was launched in GEF-7, aiming to continue fighting illegal wildlife trade in source, transit and demand countries while also focusing on wildlife-based economies as the basis for sustainable development. This phase will operate in 13 countries; 6 in Africa (Angola, Chad,	Substantial Recommendations 1-4. Not rated. Ratings will have to wait until more projects are approved. Recommendation 5: Substantial: The GEF IEO notes that there has been an increase in the geographic coverage along with commensurate funding available through phase II of the program.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
		governments and participating users at technical and professional levels needs to be sufficient that those parties will rarely need to seek further external assistance. In this connection, it is necessary to ensure that activities reach the intended audience in a form and at a level that they can absorb and use; that designated “capacity-building” activities do not ultimately become generic awareness raising; and that, where awareness raising is conducted, it is carefully targeted to address present needs with regard to project sustainability (parliamentary and minister-levels), and project activities (specific communities involved in the project) The above-mentioned trend in building national capacity to directly utilize domestic GR and ATK clearly points the way in this recommendation as well. Adopt a tailored country-specific approach in projects. Interventions and the timing for their implementation should be tailored to be consistent with the national importance, relevance and capacities for ABS. The inclusion of too many interventions into a single project could undermine or minimize the long-term value of premature work done on interventions that are required at a later stage. Maximize the earliest possible availability of project lessons, experiences and outputs. Evaluation planning and implementation should place greater emphasis on earlier evaluation components, such as, for example, reviewing and challenging PIRs and other internally developed reports more closely, providing clearer reporting/data standards, and calling for and executing externally conducted mid-term reviews more often. Such timely collected information made more readily available, as soon as possible, as a guide for other projects and future project design. Where possible, project outputs should be accessible, to maximize the body of ABS related technical information available. The GEF has an important role to play in combating illegal wildlife trade, and the ongoing illegal wildlife trade crisis warrants scaling up of GEF’s work. Given the scale of the problem, additional efforts are required to combat illegal wildlife trade. As an intergovernmental organization with an established track record in addressing a range of biodiversity-related issues, the GEF has distinct advantages. With its mandate and expertise, it brings together multilateral agencies and national governments to develop and implement effective programs on the ground. Scaling up the GEF’s work requires increased funding under the GEF-7 replenishment cycle and a sharper focus on illegal wildlife trade. Further integration of bottom-up, country-driven approaches with top-down, strategic approaches is necessary. Such integration is essential to both developing effective IWT programming and maintaining ownership and buy-in of individual countries in their projects. Adjustments to the funding mechanism for GEF IWT activities could facilitate integration of these approaches. Rather than relying solely on STAR allocation funding as under GEF-6—with the exception of funding under the global coordination grant it would be desirable to support the program with non-STAR funds to carry-out activities in transit- and demand- countries where investing GEF resources may not accrue Global Environmental Benefits for the participating countries. Additional non-STAR resources would benefit activities across international borders in supply countries where STAR funding may not be sufficient to cover both	Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Namibia and South Africa), 4 in Asia (Bhutan, Cambodia, India and Indonesia) and 3 in Latin America and the Caribbean (Belize, Ecuador and Panama). The program will also include a Global Child Project for the coordination and knowledge management that will focus on Preventing the Extinction of Known Threatened Species, and Wildlife for Sustainable Development. This global child project will not only support the 13 countries of Phase II but also the 19 countries in Phase I. The GEF is investing of \$82 million and will leverage \$483 million in co-financing. Additional countries and funding will be added to the program for the Council Meeting of June and/or December 2020. Recommendation 6. In preparation for the expansion of the Global Wildlife Program, the World Bank as the lead Agency, in close collaboration with the other GEF Agencies (UNDP, UNEP, ADB, WWF and CI) and the members of the Program Steering Committee, prepared a Logical Framework/ Theory of Change for the program. The objective of starting with a top-down approach was to ensure that interested countries would prepare projects with investments that were linked from the very beginning to a structured framework and would capture the lessons learned from GEF-6. Preparing this draft framework to get started with the GEF-7 program, rather than building it based on the content of the projects that were received from the interested countries, was a recommendation of the IEO that was understood by the GWP and now well implemented in practice, proven successful for efficiency. Because participating countries in demand countries, mostly in Asia and South East Asia, did not allocate significant funding for activities on demand reduction and behavioral change, the Global Project will use some of its funds to invest in demand reduction. This integration between needs based strategic approach and country driven priorities has helped tackle not just the source and transit aspects of IWT but also address the gap in demand reduction. The GWP has built working relationships with the Southern African Development Community Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas Initiative of (SADC – TFCA https://tfcaportal.org/) in an effort to secure transboundary investments among GWP participating countries. The GWP will be supporting the Annual Meeting of the SADC TFCA Network (originally scheduled for 24-26 March 2020 in Pretoria, South Africa but postponed due to the pandemic). To enhance the work on IWT across international boundaries, the GWP has organized many events to address this issue, including the recent virtual event “Combating Maritime Trafficking of Wildlife” organized in partnership with UNDP and the Basil Institute on February 26, 2020 and in-person event on Cross-Border Partnerships for Conservation and Development in Zambia on November 1, 2018. In phase II, the GWP is planning regional donor coordination to work with other donors in this space and maximize effectiveness of donor funding. A component on the wildlife-based economy will also support projects in collaborating with the private sector to scale up nature-based tourism efforts and protected area financing. Because the bulk of the GEF funds are allocated to individual countries using the System of Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR), GWP doesn’t count with significant resources (except some in the Global Project for Coordination and KM) to support to activities across international borders in transit- and demand- countries. Recommendation 7. In GEF-7 the Global Wildlife Program expanded activities to cover three countries in Latin America and the Caribbean: Belize, Ecuador and Panama. These three-projects focus on addressing the threats to Jaguars and other species in the target protected areas. It is important to remember that while the GWP is open to work with both terrestrial and marine species, and cover biodiversity more broadly, the selection of threatened species is ultimately the decision of the participating countries using their STAR allocation. Neither the GEF Secretariat nor the World Bank as the lead agency, have the mandate to include countries or species in the program. Recommendation 8. Because the GEF allocates the bulk of the funds to countries via the STAR, the Global Wildlife Program does not count on the financial resources to carry out cross-border activities except for small investments with funds of the Global Child Project administered by the World Bank as the lead agency. The GWP, through its virtual events, targets participants in the United States and Europe to raise awareness about this issue and open doors for partnerships. Through the various knowledge products such as publications and	Recommendation 6: Substantial GEF IEO welcomes that the program is striving to become more structured. The IEO notes that addressing demand reduction through the child projects has been a challenge due to the country driven priorities and welcomes the effort of the global project to address this gap. The GEF IEO also takes a note of the collaboration with SADC – TFCA and similar other planned initiatives. The GEF IEO notes that the current pandemic has affected efforts by GEF and the GWP. The IEO encourages engagement with the public and private sector to manage risks and plan for contingencies such as pandemics, natural disasters or other catastrophic events. This becomes crucial in the context of the focus on nature-based tourism and wildlife-based economies in Phase II (GEF-7) of the program. Recommendation 7. Medium. The IEO welcomes the increase in geographic and species coverage. The IEO understands that the GEFSEC and the agencies do not have a unilateral mandate to include countries or species in the program. However, the IEO encourages the GEFSEC to continue working with the Agencies and the country partners for strategic expansion to other species, countries and regions that is crucial for addressing IWT.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
		the domestic as well as trans-boundary activities. Private sector funding could be leveraged to address wildlife trafficking and demand issues. With respect to the scope of the GEF’s illegal wildlife trade funding, there should be a strategic expansion to other species, countries, and regions. Specifically, the program should expand to cover Latin America and the Caribbean, which pose particular issues with respect to the pet trade. To protect biodiversity more broadly, it would also be beneficial to expand strategically to cover other wildlife, moving beyond elephants, rhinos, and big cats. In addition to country-led national projects, stronger regional and global programming is important. Projects at both scales—country-specific projects and those at a broader scale—are important to the success of the program. Because illegal wildlife trade is ultimately an international issue, the program can be more cohesive if cross-border connections are designed as a core part of the program. This could be achieved by supporting activities across international borders with non-STAR resources. In addition, the GEF ought to consider how to engage other countries that are not yet participants in the Global Wildlife Program but are part of the larger system of illegal wildlife trade—whether they are eligible GEF recipients, like China, or non-recipients, like the United States, Europe, or Japan. The communication initiated with major international donors and their agencies should continue. Political will and corruption should be explicitly and directly addressed in all IWT projects. A robust and coordinated focus on political will and corruption will ultimately help achieve the increases in arrests, prosecutions, and convictions that the GEF-6 Biodiversity Strategy prescribes. Participating countries in future GEF funded projects on poaching and illegal wildlife trade, should be encouraged to invest some financial resources in addressing corruption issues. An alternative would be for the GEF to support third parties like the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) to engage with countries to pursue this part of the agenda as is being done in some countries. Continue to use the simplified but relevant measures for tracking overall Program performance while reflecting the uniqueness of child projects. As is the GWP tracking tools are used, the GEF should continue to assess that experience to ensure that it matches the current expectations regarding its benefits. The lessons that emerge should then be integrated into the tracking tool and evaluation frameworks going forward. Monitoring and evaluation of all IWT projects should include the tracking of arrests, prosecutions, convictions, and penalties as appropriate. Collecting data for these sub-indicators for all projects would enable a more thorough assessment of the effectiveness of the projects, as well as the impact of corruption and political will on efforts to combat IWT. Doing so would contribute to realizing the priority set under Program 3 of the GEF-6 Biodiversity Strategy of increasing arrest and conviction rates for poaching of threatened species. Create links between other international activities regarding demand and GEF-supported efforts. As with trafficking, it important to acknowledge a critical portion of the supply chain with respect to demand occurs in the United States and in Europe, which are not eligible GEF recipients. While this problem is, in part, outside of the	reports, the GWP also disseminates important information that countries beyond those that receive STAR can use for conservation planning and action. Recommendation 9. The third component of the Global Wildlife Program in GEF-7 aims to complement existing efforts to reduce illegal wildlife trade. Specifically, this component includes four subcomponents: (i) strengthen policies and national legal frameworks and increase political recognition of wildlife crime as a Serious Crime as defined by UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime ; (ii) generate, analyze, and share actionable information, data and intelligence on criminal networks; (iii) increase capacity to combat wildlife crime (poaching and trafficking) and fight corruption across enforcement, judiciary, and prosecution; and (iv) strengthen transboundary, regional and international capacity and cooperation. Cross-sector partnerships will be facilitated through engagement with the International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime (ICWC) to partner with relevant entities on enforcement, policy, regulatory, and institutional issues related to illicit financing, anti-corruption, customs, legal, and governance. For example, the GWP will help expand efforts on anti-money laundering (AML) training, which received significant support from the UK government, piloted under GWP GEF-6 in Kenya and Tanzania and these will be scaled up. There are 12 GWP countries that have already or are in the process of applying the ICWC Toolkit and/or Indicator Framework which helps to assess and reinforce the need for stronger cooperation among all involved in combating IWT. Recommendation 10. One of the indicators of the GWP is the “Number of law enforcement and judicial activities at program sites”. Under this, there are also a number of relevant sub-indicators including: i) law enforcement staff/km²; ii) Number of patrol person-days/months; iii) Number of arrests/patrol month; iv) Number of tools deployed to combat wildlife crime; v) Number of countries that have legislation that defines wildlife crime as a serious crime; vi) Number of wildlife/wildlife product seizures at program sites; vii) Number of investigations that lead to arrests of wildlife/wildlife products smugglers and viii) Number of prosecutions of wildlife/wildlife product smugglers. In only a few cases, it would be possible to capture information on the conviction and penalties as there are not enough resources and man-power to follow all the cases that reach the courts. The GWP, in addition to the tracking tools, also conducts qualitative assessments to ensure that progress made by the projects is tracked beyond numbers. Recommendation 11. In GEF-7 the GWP will explore collaboration opportunities to engage with the US agencies in charge of the deployment of National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking (February 2014) and Implementation Plan (February 2015), as well as the Executive Order on Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking was approved by President Trump in 2017. The GWP participated regularly in the USAID Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species (ROUTES) Partnership briefings, to stay up to date on the efforts by the international community to disrupt wildlife trafficking by reducing the use of legal transportation supply chains. The European Commission (EC) developed EU’s continental strategic approaches to wildlife conservation, the external dimension of the 2016 EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking, engaging with communities to enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. The release of the EC’s Strategic Approach to Conservation in Africa (February 2015) as well as the African Environmental Ministers Meeting (AMCEN) of March 2015 is evidence of increasing political commitment. Through the donor coordination activities, the GWP will explore collaboration opportunities related to the EU “Larger than Elephants” strategic approach to wildlife conservation in Africa, including during a joint Environment Week to be held with EC DEVCO in early 2019, and progress collaboration related to the EU “Larger than Tigers” strategic approach to wildlife conservation in Asia. The first-ever review of international donor funding for combatting illegal wildlife trade in Africa and Asia, conducted by the GWP, showed that a total of more than \$1.3 billion was committed by 24 international donors from 2010-2016 (includes GEF \$390 million funding referenced above), or approximately \$190 million per year. The Analysis of International Funding to Tackle Illegal Wildlife Trade filled a knowledge gap by demonstrating the scale of donor funding and the range of	Recommendation 8. Medium: The activities and knowledge products implemented by the Global Child Project are welcome, however more regional efforts and cross-border collaborations would be needed. Country projects can include components and activities for cross-border collaboration. Recommendation 9: Substantial. The IEO welcomes the effort to address political will and corruption through the GEF 7 sub-components. The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision. Recommendation 10. Substantial. The IEO notes that the measures, indicators including qualitative assessments mentioned by the GEFSEC in their management response are relevant for tracking progress of the program. The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision. Recommendation 11. Medium: The IEO welcomes the planned activities to create links between other international activities. The IEO will continue to assess how these activities address demand reduction at a global scale.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
		scope of the GEF’s activities, it must be acknowledged in working to solve this global problem on a global scale. In addition, the GEF can foster linked between demand countries and GEF-eligible countries, such as the partnership created between Mozambique and Vietnam regarding illegal wildlife trade. Sustainability of knowledge sharing components needs to be established. The knowledge sharing components of the Global Wildlife Program will facilitate the Program’s further evolution. Fostering connections between experts and in-country staff, in addition to the relationships with the implementing agency technical staff, will enable the continual improvement of the programs at the ground level. The connections between countries fostered by these coordinating and knowledge sharing activities run by the WB with the coordination grant, can also facilitate the development of projects to combat illegal wildlife trade that reach across borders.	activities to tackle the crisis. A preliminary analysis of the updated data that goes through 2018 shows commitment now totals over \$2.3 billion to 1,612 projects that help combat IWT. New committed funds since 2010 fluctuated, peaking at \$464 million in 2017. Donor projects included over \$1.5 billion in investments in 69 countries, and \$0.8 billion in various regional and global projects. Recommendation 12. The fifth component of GWP in GEF-7 and the third component of the GEF-7 global grant will serve as an umbrella to bring together all the other Program components and expedite action and knowledge transfer. For GEF-7 GWP, the Global Project will scale up the analytical and policy work as well as knowledge and coordination exchanges along the two priorities identified in the GEF-7 Replenishment Programming Directions: Support Wildlife-based Economy and Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade. This component not only will implement the knowledge, coordination and M&E activities to help the national projects be exposed to state-of-the-art knowledge but will also build national project capacity to conduct these activities themselves. To deliver this, the program will leverage child project budgets to supplement the Global Project budget and increase the participation of project team members in important thematic conferences and study tours by encouraging national projects to send additional people to these knowledge events. Furthermore, the GWP will train representatives from national projects to take back the lessons learned to their respective country and use national project funds to disseminate the knowledge resources to a broader in-country audience and implement national capacity building efforts. The Communities of Practice that the GWP will create on specific thematic topics will further ensure that country projects can tap into the available expertise in relevant areas.	Recommendation 12: Not rated. Additional data will be needed to assess the sustainability of the knowledge sharing components.

A.6 Recommendations from the Review of GEF’s Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.07) reported in Semi Annual Evaluation Report of the GEF IEO (GEF/ME/C.53/01)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendations	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
6	Nov 30, 2017	Establish and strengthen dedicated funding opportunities for indigenous peoples’ projects/organizations. Indigenous peoples remain limited as beneficiaries in the support they receive from GEF. To date, support has come primarily through the SGP which, by design, is limited in scale and scope. Dedicated funding outside STAR would address the systemic challenges and operational constraints to increased indigenous peoples’ engagement. Simultaneously, strengthening the SGP and other GEF project-oriented grant mechanisms, such as the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, or creating incentives to engage IPLCs could also help improve access. Update relevant Policies and Guidelines to reflect best practice standards concerning indigenous peoples, including a rights-based approach to engagement. Internationally, safeguard norms regarding Indigenous Peoples have changed. This manifests in a number of GEF Agency standards that have emerged since 2012. To remain at the leading edge and continue to serve the field of practice with advanced thinking about how best to safeguard the rights of indigenous peoples, a recalibration is required. Attention should be given to provisions related to the right to self-determination and to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) as they pertain to consultations with indigenous peoples concerning GEF projects. Review the Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Group’s role for operational constraints. IPAG is unequivocally viewed as an important and advantageous body to guide GEF’s decision making and engagement with indigenous people. To increase its effectiveness, GEF should undertake	Substantial: <u>Establish and strengthen dedicated funding opportunities for indigenous peoples’ projects/ organizations:</u> The GEF has been working to improve access and inclusion throughout the focal areas as indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) should not be limited to specific funding opportunities. As part of the GEF-7 Programming Directions and in response to the IEO evaluation and recommendations from the GEF’s Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Group (IPAG), the Inclusive Conservation Initiative was created as part of the biodiversity focal area set aside. This is a dedicated funding opportunity for IPLC-led biodiversity conservation. Other areas, such as the Congo Basin Impact Program, are making specific efforts for outreach and involvement of IPLCs. <u>Update relevant Policies and Guidelines to reflect best practice standards concerning indigenous peoples, including a rights-based approach to engagement:</u> At its 55th meeting in December 2018 the GEF Council approved an updated policy on environmental and social safeguards (GEF/C.55/07/Rev.01). The policy introduces stronger minimum standards for Agencies; including stronger protections for indigenous peoples and enhanced requirements for indigenous peoples’ free, prior, and informed consent. The Secretariat has launched a process to assess all Agencies against the new minimum standards by December 2019 and will introduce new guidelines and templates for safeguards-related documentation and reporting in time for policy effectiveness on July 1, 2019. <u>Review the Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Group’s role for operational constraints:</u>	Substantial <u>Establish and strengthen dedicated funding opportunities for indigenous peoples’ projects/ organizations:</u> Biodiversity is one of five focal areas in GEF-7 and “inclusive conservation” is one of its program areas. A short section on “inclusive conservation” in the programming document recognizes indigenous peoples’ and local communities’ “role as stewards of the global environment”. In the same section of the GEF-7 programming document, GEF commits to building on the foundation of previous support for indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), including through the Small Grants Program (SGP) and full- and medium-sized projects, to “work with indigenous peoples and local communities, national governments, NGOs, and others to strengthen the capacity of IPLCs to conserve biodiversity” IEO will continue to monitor this recommendation for evidence of the development of a portfolio of IPLC led projects that receive support from the inclusive conservation initiative and other set asides that make specific efforts for outreach and involvement of IPLCs. No information has been provided thus far from the Secretariat on the development of any such proposals/projects/programs. <u>Update relevant Policies and Guidelines to reflect best practice standards concerning indigenous peoples, including a rights-based approach to engagement:</u> The GEF has updated its policy on environmental and social safeguards	Substantial: <u>Establish and strengthen dedicated funding opportunities for indigenous peoples’ projects/ organizations:</u> The Inclusive Conservation Initiative project was approved at the December 2019 Council and is now in the PPG phase. The agencies selected were based on a competitive call for proposals that were reviewed by IPAG, STAP and GEF Secretariat. A call for Expressions of Interest from IPLC organizations to receive funding is currently open (broader consultations for the development of global components are on hold/moving to virtual exchanges due to COVID-19). Other projects and programs are providing significant resources, such as the Congo Basin IP where component 3 of the PFD is specifically focused on IPLCs. SGP continues to provide important support at the community level. A recent review of their portfolio identified 90 countries with indigenous peoples and, in those countries, about 40% of grants are going to indigenous peoples’ organizations. <u>Update relevant Policies and Guidelines to reflect best practice standards concerning indigenous peoples, including a rights-based approach to engagement</u> The GEF Secretariat has informally asked agencies to track issues or concerns with the implementation of the IP provisions safeguards policy and more broadly in engaging with IPLCs. The agency members of IPAG have noted the unintended consequence of safeguards can be the exclusion of indigenous areas or peoples to avoid the “hassle” of undertaking safeguards, so the GEF Secretariat has asked GEF Agencies to look out for this occurring. In addition, the GEF’s safeguards language on peoples in voluntary isolation is new to many agencies and, therefore, is an important potential learning opportunity. As noted in the responses on the safeguards policy - the Guidelines on the Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (SD/GN/03) that were approved by the CEO on December 19 and included in the GEF 57th Council meeting as an information document, provide detailed guidance on how to implement the project and program level requirements set out in the Policy, including	Substantial: <u>Establish and strengthen dedicated funding opportunities for indigenous peoples’ projects/organizations:</u> The Inclusive Conservation Initiative project, which is conducted by a partnership between the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Conservation International, was approved in 57th Council. The project is still PPG stage and the GEF IEO continues to monitor implementation of the project. <u>Update relevant Policies and Guidelines to reflect best practice standards concerning indigenous peoples, including a rights-based approach to engagement</u> The Guidelines on the Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguard was approved in the 57th Council meeting. The Guidelines are to support the effective implementation of the project and program level documentation and reporting requirements set out in the Policy. (Indigenous peoples are dealt in Minimum Requirements 5). The GEF IEO will evaluate the institutional policies and stakeholder engagement, including the engagement with Indigenous peoples in the GEF Projects.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendations	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
		several steps including a review of succession planning and “on-boarding” for IPAG members to preserve knowledge of outgoing members and to orient new ones, and a review of the existing scope/limitations of the IPAG’s mandate and its relationship with the Indigenous Peoples Focal Points (IPFP) embedded within the CSO Network. GEF should clarify IPAG’s communication/engagement role for more formal contacts with regional and global networks of indigenous peoples; consider an increase in the staff time and resources allocated by the GEFSEC IP focal point to IPAG activities; translation requirements for relevant documents such that IPAG is able to engage in English, French, Spanish Facilitate dialogue between indigenous peoples and local communities and GEF Government Focal Points. One of the major hurdles for greater engagement of indigenous peoples in GEF projects is acceptance by national governments in some of the countries that GEF operates. The GEF through its relationships with national governments can help to increase prominence of indigenous peoples’ activities and encourage mainstreaming of IP issues into environmental programming. In this regard, GEF should seek opportunities for a higher profile of indigenous peoples in GEF projects and a higher profile at GEF events such as Extended Constituency Workshops and Council meetings. Monitor application of Minimum Standard 4 and Indigenous Peoples’ portfolio. A greater flow of information should come from tracking the environmental and social risks of the GEF portfolio. Currently there is no requirement that Agencies report on compliance with safeguards, leaving the GEF portfolio vulnerable. Agencies should	In the last IPAG meeting in December 2018, IPAG discussed some of the challenges that it faces in terms of outreach and operational constraints. As new IPAG members join, the issue of on-boarding is being considered to make sure that all members can effectively participate and advise the GEF. English remains the principle working language of the IPAG as there are long and informal meetings. Facilitate dialogue between indigenous peoples and local communities and GEF Government Focal Points. The GEF is working facilitate dialogue while remaining country driven. The GEF will be supporting up to two CSO representatives as part of the Expanded Constituency Workshop and IPLC representatives from the CSO Network and IPAG members are asked to share information about these meetings with their networks. There has been some IPLC participation as part of various National Dialogues. For example, the Fiji National Dialogue representatives from the Ministry of iTaukei (responsible for affairs of indigenous Fijians) participated and shared their initiatives and what they would like to see funded. There was also participation and proposals from several NGOs that work in iTaukei areas, such as the Fiji Locally Managed Marine Area Network. <u>Monitor application of Minimum Standard 4 and Indigenous Peoples’ portfolio:</u> In accordance with the updated policy on environmental and social safeguards, Agencies are required to document, monitor, and report on relevant environmental and social risks and potential impacts, and their management, throughout the GEF project cycle. This includes risks related to indigenous peoples in accordance with Minimum Standard 5 of the policy. The Secretariat will monitor the information provided by Agencies, and report annually to the Council on the implementation of the policy. As mentioned above, the Secretariat is in the	(GEF/C.55/07/Rev.01), including Min Standard 4: Indigenous people. The standard now requires Agencies to demonstrate Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of affected Indigenous Peoples. IEO will continue to monitor the Secretariat’s process of reviewing Agencies adherence to the new minimum standards. <u>Review the Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Group’s role for operational constraints.</u> IEO will continue to review minutes of the IPAG meetings to understand the Secretariat’s efforts to address operational constraints faced by IPAG and monitor efforts to better on-board new IPAG members. IPLC participation at Council meetings and ECWs will also be reviewed to assess for effective IPLC representation at these meetings. <u>Monitor application of Minimum Standard 4 and Indigenous Peoples’ portfolio:</u> IEO will continue to assess the Secretariat’s review of Agency performance in implementation of Minimum Standard 4 and development of Guidelines and templates for the effective implementation of new standards in the safeguard, including dialogue between OFPs and IPLCs in the design, implementation and monitoring of GEF projects. IEO will also continue to assess the effectiveness of the new GEF portal in identifying projects with IPLC involvement as beneficiaries or implementors through the keyword taxonomy system.	documentation and reporting throughout the GEF Project Cycle. <u>Review the Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Group’s role for operational constraints.</u> These are ongoing discussions as IPAG also considers its role now that the Inclusive Conservation Initiative has been funded and has its own Interim Steering Committee. IPAG will also need to have some significant member turn over which will provide an opportunity to consider improving operations. Some issues remain outside of the Secretariat’s ability to control, such as the lack of a CSO Network Steering Committee indigenous representative due to ongoing turn over in membership. <u>Monitor application of Minimum Standard 4 and Indigenous Peoples’ portfolio:</u> The GEF Portal project taxonomy includes a key word marker for indigenous peoples. This will allow us the GEF to monitor projects that engage with indigenous peoples. As noted in the management response on safeguards more generally - the Secretariat initiated an assessment of all 18 GEF Agencies in the spring of 2019, and subsequently presented a report on the Assessment of GEF Agencies’ Compliance with Minimum Standards in the Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards, Gender Equality, and Stakeholder Engagement (GEF/C.57/05) at the 57th Council meeting in December 2019. In all cases where an Agency was assessed not to have met a standard, including its sub-components, Agencies established concrete timebound actions to address the identified gaps. All these Agencies committed themselves to provide updates on the progress on their plans of action to the GEF Secretariat until they have met full compliance with each minimum standard in the three Policies. The Guidelines on the Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (SD/GN/03) that were approved by the CEO on December 19 and included in the GEF 57th Council	<u>Review the Indigenous People’s Advisory Group’s role for operational constraints</u> The GEF IEO continues to monitor IPAG and Inclusive Conservation Initiative activities to understand the IPAG. <u>Monitor application of Minimum Standard 4 and Indigenous People’s Portfolio:</u> GEF IEO will continue to assess the Secretariat’s review of Agency performance in implementation of Minimum Standard 5 in updated safeguard policy, as well as effectiveness of the new GEF portal in identifying projects with IPLC involvement as beneficiaries or implementors through the keyword taxonomy system. The GEF IEO is currently evaluating the institutional policies and engagement, including how engagement with civil society including indigenous peoples has been reflected in GEF projects. This decision will be retired when a new Council decision is made on the 2021 Update of the evaluation of the policies in June 2021.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendations	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
		inform GEF of the safeguard risk categorization assigned to projects involving indigenous peoples and keep GEF informed of safeguards implementation issues through monitoring and reporting. Similarly, projects need to be tagged to allow for systematic retrieval. As part of the tagging, further definition within the GEF of what is considered indigenous peoples' engagement should ensue. Finally, GEF could encourage Agencies to use mid-term and terminal evaluation templates that capture indigenous peoples' engagement and results.	process of developing guidelines and templates to ensure the effective implementation of the new safeguards-related documentation and reporting requirements. With respect to the monitoring of the IPLC portfolio, as part of the roll-out of the GEF Portal in GEF-7 the GEF introduced a keyword taxonomy system which will allow the tagging of projects by keywords. These include "indigenous peoples" as well as topics of particular relevance to IPLC groups such as "access and benefits sharing". This tagging should allow for the easy identification of projects with IPLC involvement in GEF-7.		meeting as an information document, provide detailed guidance on how to implement the project and program level requirements set out in the Policy, including documentation and reporting throughout the GEF Project Cycle.	

A.7 Council decision based on the Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
7	June 9 th , 2016	Recommendation 1: The GEF Secretariat should explore and develop mechanisms that ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the Fund. Recommendation 2: The GEF Secretariat should make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF. Recommendation 3: The GEF Secretariat should ensure that the data in the Project Management Information System is up to date and accurate.	The Secretariat appreciates the findings of the report and agrees with the GEF IEO that enhancing financial predictability can improve the effectiveness of the LDCF. The Secretariat notes that the means to address this need falls within the purview of the donors of the fund. In line with the GEF Gender Equality Action Plan the Secretariat will continue to work to ensure that LDCF projects mainstream gender, noting that gender performance of the LDCF portfolio has improved considerably. As part of the overall upgrade of the GEF project management information systems, the Secretariat will also endeavor to correct, verify and update the relevant LDCF project data.	The LDCF/SCCF Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02, Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund, and GEF/LDCF.SCCF/20/ME/03, Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund, took note of the conclusions of the evaluation and endorsed the recommendations taking into account the Management Response.	Substantial: <u>Recommendation 1:</u> As stated in the two previous MARs, predictability of financing for LDCF falls within the purview of the donors to the Fund as well as the LDCF/SCCF Council. As regards adequacy and sustainability of the LDCF, the GEF Secretariat has been making concerted efforts: over FY 2018, the GEF Secretariat engaged in multiple consultations with donors and recipients of the LDCF to ensure the formulation of a GEF-7 strategy for climate change adaptation that would be well-aligned with donor and recipient priorities and in response to IEO findings, and thus well-positioned for adequate and sustained resourcing. Major enhancements in the new strategy include: introduction of a \$10 million cap per LDC to ensure more equitable access (subject to increase with donor contributions); introduction of a work program modality with strategic prioritization factors, including level of LDCF resource access by countries (to help facilitate underserved countries); and raising the cumulative funding cap to \$50 million per LDC. These efforts have been positively viewed by donors, who have made contributions of \$67 million to the LDCF at the first LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting of GEF-7, in December 2018. <u>Recommendation 2:</u> The <i>GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund for 2018-2022</i> enhances gender responsiveness to further promote gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment overall through targeted interventions, in line with GEF's new Gender Policy, introduced in 2017. The proposed results	Substantial: Rec. 1 Medium: The Secretariat's efforts to ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the LDCF are welcome. The IEO encourages the Secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism. Rec. 2 Substantial: The IEO will track the implementation of the 2018 Policy Gender and Equality by LDCF. Rec. 3 Medium: While much work has been done on the upgrade of the GEF project management information system it has not resulted in a clear picture of progress towards improving the quality of information. The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.	Substantial: <u>Recommendation 1:</u> As stated in the previous MARs, predictability of financing for LDCF falls within the purview of the donors to the Fund as well as the LDCF/SCCF Council. In September 2019, Germany, together with the LDC Group and the GEF, co-organized a pledging event at the margins of the UN Secretary General's Climate Action Summit where additional resources for the LDCF were pledged by several donors. Access to LDCF support in the GEF-7 period continued in a systematic and timely manner, with 57 percent of LDCs getting support from the LDCF in the first 18 months, with \$209 million. Eleven LDCs have already reached the \$10 million cap. There is little wait for countries to access LDCF resources. <u>Recommendation 2:</u> The GEF Policy on Gender Equality and GEF Policy on Stakeholder Engagement apply to LDCF projects, as stipulated in the current GEF Strategy on Climate Adaptation. The results architecture includes gender relevant indicators. Furthermore, PIFs are reviewed by the GEF gender expert to advise the Program Managers on how to integrate gender dimensions systematically. The Work Program cover note, presented to Council, includes a section on gender and how the projects respond to the ambitions and requirements set out in the GEF policy. <u>Recommendation 3:</u> The GEF project management information system (PMIS) is no longer being updated, as the GEF has transitioned to the Portal. The staff responsible for data management (see comment from MAR 2019) have gone through all the project files on the Portal and the PMIS with a	Substantial: Rec. 1 Substantial: The IEO welcomes the Secretariat's efforts in co-organizing a successful pledging event to ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the LDCF. The IEO encourages the Secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism. Rec. 2 High: The IEO is assessing the implementation of the 2018 Policy on Gender Equality by LDCF in the ongoing 2020 LDCF program evaluation. Rec. 3 Medium: While the transition to the portal is still underway, the systems in place to ensure that portal data-including project status, key dates and financial figures, is continually updated and kept accurate moving forward is not clear. This decision will be retired as a new Council decision will be made on the 2020 Update of the Program Evaluation of the LDCF in December 2020.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
					framework includes relevant disaggregated indicators for men and women so that impacts and outcomes, and their gender relevance, can be tracked and analyzed. In addition, during the technical review process, Program Managers at the GEF Secretariat inquire into qualitative aspects of gender equality to be supported by the proposed activities on a project-by-project basis, for example relating to engagement of women in project conceptualization and implementation, addressing the particular vulnerability concerns of women, conducting gender gap analysis, etc. <u>Recommendation 3:</u> The Secretariat has hired a new staff member (donor supported) in December 2018 who, as part of his responsibilities, is assessing the PMIS and other data sources with a view to enhance data quality and accuracy in the GEF Portal. This work was also included in the LDCF/SCCF workplan and budget for FY 2019. Also, as stated in the two previous MARs, recommendation 3 continues to be addressed in the context of the overall upgrade from the project management information system to the GEF Portal.		consultant to identify data discrepancies. The information has been shared with ITS World Bank, responsible for the Portal maintenance, so that they can be addressed as the Portal continues to undergo further development. All LDCF project submissions are done on the Portal, similar to the GEF Trust Fund, following same access and updating procedures by the Agencies and the Secretariat. As such, there should not be any new data updating and accuracy issues that would be specific to the LDCF.	

A.8 Council decision based on the Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund (GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/02)

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
8	May 25 th , 2017	Recommendation 1: Reaffirming and strengthening a recommendation from the previous SCCF Program Evaluation in 2011, the GEF Secretariat should prioritize the development of mechanisms that ensure predictable, adequate and sustainable financing for the Fund, given its support for, and focus on innovation Recommendation 2: The GEF Secretariat should articulate and publicly communicate the SCCF's niche within the global adaptation finance landscape, to include an explicit statement regarding the SCCF's relation with – and complementarity to – the Green Climate Fund. Recommendation 3: The GEF Secretariat should ensure that PMIS data is up to date and accurate.	The Secretariat appreciates the findings of the report and notes the recommendation for the SCCF to focus on innovation. Based on the deliberations by the LDCF/SCCF Council and the endorsement of that finding, the GEF Secretariat will continue to articulate and publicly communicate the role of the SCCF externally. The Secretariat agrees with the GEF IEO that enhancing financial predictability can improve the effectiveness of the SCCF. The Secretariat notes that the means to address this need falls within the purview of the donors of the fund. As part of the overall upgrade of the GEF project management information systems, the Secretariat will also endeavor to correct, verify and update the relevant SCCF project data.	The Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/02, Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund and GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/03, Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund, takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation and endorses the recommendations taking into account the Management	Substantial: Recommendation 1: As stated in the two previous MARs, predictability of financing for the SCCF falls within the purview of the donors to the Fund as well as the LDCF/SCCF Council. As regards adequacy and sustainability of the SCCF, the GEF Secretariat engaged in extensive consultations with donors prior to the formulation of the <i>GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund for 2018-2022</i>, with a view to ensuring that the SCCF continues to be a Fund that is perceived by donors to have relevance for supporting innovation in adaptation, and can continue to secure financial resources. In response to the IEO recommendation, key developments of mechanisms to ensure predicable and sustainable financing introduced for the GEF-7 period include: modification of access modality based on resource availability through a call for proposals for the Challenge for Adaptation Innovation; and provision of incentive for mainstreaming adaptation and resilience aligned with GEF Trust Fund programming. The SCCF received a pledge of \$3.3 million at the first LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting of GEF-7, in December 2018. <u>Recommendation 2:</u> SCCF's uniqueness in the climate finance landscape has been on supporting innovation and promoting entrepreneurship-based solutions for adaptation as reflected in the new adaptation programming strategy. The new Challenge for	Substantial: Rec. 1 Medium: The Secretariat's efforts to ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the SCCF are welcome. The IEO encourages the Secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism. Rec. 2 Substantial: The IEO acknowledges the SCCF's niche within the global adaptation finance landscape identified in the <i>GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund for 2018-2022</i> and will track its implementation Rec. 3 Medium: While much work has been done on the upgrade of the GEF project management information system it has not resulted in a clear picture of progress towards improving the quality of information. The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.	Substantial: <u>Recommendation 1:</u> As stated in the previous MARs, predictability of financing for the SCCF falls within the purview of the donors to the Fund as well as the LDCF/SCCF Council. The Secretariat systematically provides information on the resource constraints and requests donor support at Council meetings and at donor consultations. <u>Recommendation 2:</u> SCCF's uniqueness in the climate finance landscape has been on supporting innovation and promoting entrepreneurship-based solutions for adaptation as reflected in the new adaptation programming strategy, and complementarity with the GCF is also clarified in the strategy. All the projects that the SCCF has supported in the reporting period focus on areas where the SCCF unique advantages are established: innovation, particularly with private sector engagement; regional/global in nature to support the most vulnerable, such as SIDS, and for the Challenge Program for Adaptation Innovation. <u>Recommendation 3:</u> The GEF project management information system (PMIS) is no longer being updated, as the GEF has transitioned to the Portal. The staff responsible for data management (see comment from MAR 2019) have gone through all the project files on the Portal and the PMIS with a consultant to identify data discrepancies. The information has been shared with ITS World Bank, responsible for the Portal maintenance, so that they can be addressed as the Portal continues to undergo further development. All SCCF project submissions are done on the Portal, similar to the GEF Trust Fund, following same access and updating procedures by the Agencies and the Secretariat. As such, there should not be any new data	Substantial: Rec. 1 Medium: The Secretariat's efforts to systematically provide information on the resource constraints and requests donor support at Council meetings and at donor consultations are welcome. The IEO encourages the Secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism. Rec. 2 : Substantial: The IEO will track the implementation of the GEF adaptation strategy. Rec. 3 Medium: While the transition to the portal is still underway, the systems in place to ensure that portal data-including project status, key dates and financial figures, is continually updated and kept accurate moving forward is not clear. The IEO will continue to track adoption of this decision.

Ref #	Date of Council Decision	GEF IEO Recommendation	Management Response	Council Decision	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2019	Management Rating & Comments in MAR 2020	GEF IEO Rating & Comments in MAR 2020
					Adaptation Innovation and the proposed incentive mechanism for climate mainstreaming in the adaptation strategy adopted by the council reflect this. In consultation with donors to the SCCF and with the GCF, the <i>GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund for 2018-2022</i> clearly outlines elements of complementarity with the Green Climate Fund (GCF). For any country seeking SCCF resources, the GEF Secretariat will, at a minimum, require agencies to ensure that no duplication is occurring with ongoing or planned GCF-supported activities in those countries. In addition, the GEF and GCF jointly embarked on a process of “coordinated engagement” in June 2018; several countries have expressed interest in participating in active coordination of their programming across the two funds. <u>Recommendation 3:</u> The Secretariat has hired a new staff member (donor supported) in December 2018 who, as part of his responsibilities, is assessing the PMIS and other data sources with a view to enhance data quality and accuracy in the GEF Portal. This work was also included in the LDCF/SCCF workplan and budget for FY 2019. Also, as stated in the two previous MARS, recommendation 3 continues to be addressed in the context of the overall upgrade from the project management information system to the GEF Portal.		updating and accuracy issues that would be specific to the SCCF.	

Annex A. Recommendations for future tracking in MAR

A.1.: Recommendations for future tracking in MAR

Ref #	Evaluation Title	SAER 2017 Recommendations
1	Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.03)	Strategies for scaling up. More attention needs to be paid during project design and implementation to considering strategies for scaling up and particularly financial mechanisms to support private sector engagement and sustainability. The GEF cannot finance the collection and destruction of every ton of legacy POPs, nor cannot it fund the conversion of every industrial facility to cleaner production processes. A more robust theory of change is needed for how the GEF’s demonstration activities will catalyze broader action and impact in the CW focal area. This may involve the development of innovative private sector partnerships, economic instruments, and financial models, as envisioned in the GEF-6 CW Focal Area Strategy under Program 1; such efforts deserve continued support in GEF-7. In particular, as the GEF CW portfolio evolves and focus changes, attention should be paid to ensure that remaining legacy POPs are not orphaned, especially given that cost, ownership, and other barriers are diminishing the efficacy of the demonstration effect for these projects. Different solutions will likely be required for LDCs and SIDS versus middle income countries.
2	Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.03)	Support for reforms. The GEF may also want to consider providing more support for broad-based regulatory reform and sector-wide approaches, to address chemicals and waste issues more holistically.
3	Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.03)	The GEF should also not forget its ozone depletion program, which may have new relevance with the recent adoption of the Kigali Amendments to the Montreal Protocol. In the coming years, some CEITs may need support to meet these new obligations, and opportunities are likely to arise for MFA collaborations with the climate change focal area, especially on energy efficiency.
4	Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.03)	Better monitoring practices. Given the challenges this study faced in tallying the verified results of the GEF CW focal area, the GEF’s monitoring procedures deserve more scrutiny. Tracking tools should be consistently submitted and clearly identified as annual or terminal submissions, and terminal results reported by indicator should match values in the terminal evaluation. Project proposals should consistently incorporate resources designated for monitoring and evaluation (M&E).
5	Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.03)	Communications among the GEF partnership organizations is an area for continued attention. Given an evolving and expanding landscape of opportunities, it is important that all aspects of communication are transparent and collaborative and that country perspectives drive the process. To facilitate the process, a more structured set of partnership planning meetings that fosters ongoing dialogue on resource availability over the replenishment period, focus or priority among strategic objectives and program areas, and transparency of the project pipeline process would be helpful in reducing pockets of confusion.
6	Climate Change Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.02)	The GEF should place continued emphasis on its work on the enabling environment, and innovative projects in climate change mitigation to support market transformation. The GEF should continue to focus on piloting and demonstrating technologies and financial approaches that could be scaled up by other actors. The GEF should explore its potential to be an incubator for countries to test and refine their approaches prior to seeking large-scale finance through other partners. These are areas where the GEF has shown strong results and a comparative advantage. The GEF should also continue to emphasize innovative and cutting edge projects in its LDCF, and SCCF portfolios, to advance climate change adaptation knowledge and practice.
7	Climate Change Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.02)	The GEF Secretariat should take measures to ensure reporting against GEB targets. To understand what past results have been achieved, the GEF Secretariat and the Agencies should ensure post-completion reporting against GEB targets, specifically GHG emissions mitigated.
8	Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.09)	The GEF Secretariat should consider a revision of its policy to better align with best practice standards. As a financial mechanism for five major international environmental conventions and a partnership of 18 agencies, this should include anchoring the policy in the gender-related decisions of the conventions and best practice standards from the GEF Agencies. In the revisions of the policy, the GEF Secretariat should take into account that policies rooted in rights-based frameworks result in more effective gender mainstreaming. Given the effectiveness of the GEF Gender Partnership, the GEF Secretariat should consider the partnership as the vehicle for stakeholder engagement in the updating of its policy. Lastly, the policy should provide greater guidance on gender analysis, and on the responsibilities of the GEF Agencies vis-à-vis the GEF Secretariat.

Ref #	Evaluation Title	SAER 2017 Recommendations
9	Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.09)	The GEF Secretariat with its partners should develop an action plan for implementation of the gender policy in GEF-7. An appropriate gender action plan should support the implementation of the potentially revised policy on Gender Mainstreaming, and should include continued focus on developing and finalizing comprehensive guidelines, tools and methods. This should be done in collaboration with the GEF Gender Partnership, drawing on the knowledge and best practice standards of GEF Agencies, other climate funds, the secretariats of relevant conventions and other partners. Upstream analytical work on the associated links between gender equality and project performance across GEF programmatic areas would support mainstreaming.
10	Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.09)	To achieve the objectives of institutional strengthening and gender mainstreaming the GEF Secretariat should ensure that adequate resources are made available. During GEF-7 institutional capacity within the Secretariat and its staff on gender mainstreaming will need strengthening, and resources within the agencies which have strong institutional gender focus and expertise should be leveraged.
11	Evaluation of Programmatic Approaches in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.01/Rev.01)	The GEF should continue ensuring that programs are relevant to the national environmental priorities of the participating countries while meeting the requirements of the Conventions;
12	Evaluation of Programmatic Approaches in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.01/Rev.01)	M&E should be implemented at the program levels, with a clear demonstration of the additionality of the program over projects.
13	Evaluation of Programmatic Approaches in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.01/Rev.01)	The GEF should continue with appropriate programmatic interventions, addressing issues that are likely to impede outcomes and performance, efficiency, and management, as they become multidimensional;
14	Evaluation of the Integrated Approach Pilots (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.04)	Assess the value addition of the knowledge platforms in a mid-term review to ensure they generate the necessary traction and provide overall support to program implementation. For many interviewed stakeholders, the most important innovative feature in the IAPs is the hub project-supported knowledge platforms. The platforms are viewed as a forum for learning about innovations, exchange ideas and to showcase child projects. The knowledge platforms will require a strong commitment and support by all participating entities to provide the services and benefits they have been designed for. Their contribution towards overall program objectives should be assessed, to ensure they generate the envisioned additionality and support to program implementation.
15	Evaluation of the Integrated Approach Pilots (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.04)	Standardize the indicators, tracking tools and metrics across the IAPs to demonstrate program additionality through M&E. Indicators, tracking tools and metrics should be made uniform to enable aggregation within each IAP and for the three IAPs altogether. This should be done to clearly demonstrate the additionality brought by these pilot initiatives.
16	Evaluation of the Integrated Approach Pilots (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.04)	Assess the role of global environmental benefit (GEB) targets, clarifying whether they are meant as aspirational goals, or as hard targets, and they will be measured at the program level. A mid-term review of the IAPs should take place to assess issues of additionality, effectiveness and efficiency at the mid-term stage of the IAP programs. Given a lack of clarity as to whether GEB targets are aspirational or hard targets, the review should clarify the role of GEB targets, and explain how the GEF aims to assess GEB goals at the program level.
17	Evaluation of the Multiple Benefits of GEF 's Multifocal Area (MFA) Portfolio (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.05)	Identify conditions appropriate for the implementation of MFA projects at the project design and review stage. MFA projects are not required to be integrated, or to seek synergies and mitigate trade-offs. However, projects successful at enhancing synergies and mitigating trade-offs have common conditions and characteristics that have enabled them to maximize the benefits of having multiple focal area objectives. GEF agencies must ensure that the environmental issues and management approaches targeted by MFA projects allow for such synergies while managing the higher transaction costs. Existing capacities and institutional arrangements for sectoral integration at the corporate and country levels should be assessed as part of the MFA project design and approval process. Opportunities for good stakeholder engagement, partnerships to leverage resources from multiple sectors, and integration in project interventions, should be considered in this assessment.

Ref #	Evaluation Title	SAER 2017 Recommendations
18	Evaluation of the Multiple Benefits of GEF 's Multifocal Area (MFA) Portfolio (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.05)	Streamline and enhance monitoring and reporting of MFA projects, including their synergies and trade-offs. Although attempts have been made at the program level to remove repetitive and irrelevant indicators from the tracking tools, streamlining of monitoring and reporting tools in MFA projects is needed at the institutional level. Project monitoring tools should also measure and report the synergies generated and trade-offs mitigated.
19	Evaluation of the Multiple Benefits of GEF 's Multifocal Area (MFA) Portfolio (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.05)	Develop shared guidance on the conditions for designing, reviewing, and implementing MFA projects across the GEF partnership. While strategic priorities have been developed for each focal area, none specify how and which focal area synergies might best contribute to the GEF's vision. As a starting point, members of the GEF partnership need to continue developing a common understanding of key concepts, such as "multiple benefits," "synergies," "trade-offs," and "integration" with the involvement of STAP. Building on the findings of this evaluation, the GEF should develop guidance on the conditions under which MFA projects should be designed and implemented, to enhance synergies across focal areas. Minimum criteria or standards for MFA project design and monitoring would ensure that the benefits of focal area integration are maximized, while transaction costs at the corporate and country levels are managed.
20	Impact of GEF Support on National Environment Laws and Policies (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.05)	Strengthen plans for legal and policy reforms presented in project documents. GEF plays a very important role in the environmental policy and regulatory reform agenda in client countries. When reforms are contemplated, GEF should ensure that project documents clearly differentiate among policies, statutes, regulations, and administrative directives. If a specific environmental law is identified, the document should describe how it fits into the government's legislative/regulatory agenda with specific details on the extent of support from key stakeholders, including government officials, parties directly affected, and the general population.
21	Impact of GEF Support on National Environment Laws and Policies (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.05)	Develop and implement projects or specific program components that focus solely on legal and/or policy reforms. Rather than embedding work on legal reforms in a component of a project, GEF should consider structuring some entire projects around advancing a specific set of legal reforms, particularly in countries with limited institutional capacity. This should focus on putting laws in place that are needed to meet goals defined in international conventions for which GEF serves as the designated financing mechanism. As GEF seeks to achieve more transformational change through its programmatic approaches, and mainstream private sector engagement, the role of policy reform will become even more important.
22	Impact of GEF Support on National Environment Laws and Policies (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.05)	Improve M&E and learning from the reform process. GEF should consider modifying the PMIS to enable projects components that deal with legal reforms to be identified and tracked in the system. Evaluations should be more rigorous, including an assessment of project activities undertaken to advance legal reforms, resulting changes in the content and wording of laws, and the extent to which laws achieved stated aims. Thus, follow up on implementation should be carried out two to three years after project closure to assess the impacts and document lessons learned.
23	Land Degradation Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.02)	Implementing LDN with an appropriate mix of interventions. While being cognizant of cost-effectiveness, context, and country priorities, LDFA should also consider restoration activities along with SLM. SLM practices are intended to help avoid and reduce land degradation while ecosystem restoration will help reverse the process. Newer projects in GEF-6 increasingly focus on achieving LDN targets and therefore would benefit from distinguishing between the two complementary pathways—SLM, and ecosystem restoration, to be able to measure progress toward the LDN targets.
24	Land Degradation Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.02)	Give due consideration to complex contextual factors within an integrated approach framework. While LDFA's strategic focus has appropriately moved toward integrated approaches, complex contextual factors including drought, food insecurity and migration should be given due consideration during project design. The LDFA is highly relevant to areas with land degradation, including Africa, particularly with its distressed emigration hotspots. While neither land degradation nor drought are the primary drivers, they increase food insecurity and vulnerability and therefore may exacerbate the risk of conflict or migration
25	Land Degradation Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.02)	Assess climate risks to LDFA initiatives and design adaptive management responses to such risks. Unsustainable land management practices which the GEF LDFA strategies aim to ameliorate, have a direct and clear linkage to climate change. The effects of climate change are likely to affect many land-based activities including ecosystem functions and services. Broader application of the RAPTA framework is encouraged.

Ref #	Evaluation Title	SAER 2017 Recommendations
26	Land Degradation Focal Area Study (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.02)	Strengthen M&E tools, and methods of knowledge dissemination. The development and continued improvement of the tracking tool is a step in the right direction but will be inadequate to assess project impacts in the long run. The tracking tools should include additional biophysical indicators, increasingly available through geospatial data, to set baselines and measure progress of land productivity to track both GEB's and LDN targets. Precise geospatial information on project locations is imperative for carrying out accurate M&E of LD projects. The LDFA should consider integrating the indicators proposed by the UNCCD's Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) framework. The benefits and impacts of sustained SLM practices and restoration measures are not fully accounted for in the current M&E system. Recognition therefore should be given to the fact that it might be necessary to set a sufficiently longer time frame in monitoring projects striving to achieve LDN.
27	Private Sector (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.04)	The GEF can address operational restrictions to private sector engagement through pursuit of a private sector window.
28	Private Sector (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.04)	The GEF should encourage policy and regulatory reform for its cascade effect on private sector environmental investments.
29	Private Sector (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.04)	Intensify efforts to develop a broader strategy for private sector engagement beyond climate change.
30	Private Sector (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.04)	Improve outreach to GEF recipients of funds, GEF Agencies, and private sector entities.
31	Private Sector (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.04)	Dedicate appropriate resources to tracking, monitoring, and evaluation of the private sector portfolio by improving tagging and retrieval capabilities of the PMIS database.
32	Review of Knowledge Management (KM) in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.08)	The GEF Secretariat should place a high priority on improving the quality and the availability of project-level documentation from a KM perspective, including lessons learned during design and implementation. To ensure minimum standards of consistency in KM across GEF agencies and projects, clear guidance should be provided to Agencies on, for example, the typology of knowledge products to be generated during and after project implementation, and the capture and storage of such information. As the PMIS is currently under revision, efforts should be made to ensure that it becomes the key platform for storing and sharing project-level documentation throughout the project lifecycle. The revisions to this platform should be made in consultation with the GEF Agencies and other parts of the partnership to ensure access for GEF Agencies, project and program staff and countries. The platform should facilitate easy uploading, downloading, and analysis of project and program documents from design through supervision and finally completion.
33	Review of Knowledge Management (KM) in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.08)	The GEF Secretariat and the KM Advisory Group, should develop a plan to connect across GEF Agency KM systems, generate knowledge products and organize learning activities across focal areas, agencies and cross cutting themes. The partnership would benefit from a clear work plan on learning activities and knowledge products to be generated within and across focal areas in collaboration with GEF agencies, along with a proposed resource envelope and enhanced internal capacity. Ideally these products would draw on lessons from across the partnership, including from agencies, STAP, Conventions and countries, and would support strategic decision making and planning at the portfolio and corporate levels. Mechanisms to disseminate and share such knowledge products should also be clearly articulated in the plan.
34	Review of Results-Based Management in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.07)	Update the GEF RBM Framework. The GEF RBM framework of 2007 needs to be updated to reflect the evolved understanding of RBM across the GEF Partnership. During GEF-6, the focus has been on inputs, outputs and in some cases outcomes of GEF activities. The updated framework needs to address the indicators for drivers of environmental degradation and long term impacts of GEF activities so that these are also tracked systematically. GEF should also incorporate the relevant SDG indicators in its results framework for GEF-7 (and beyond).
35	Review of Results-Based Management in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.07)	Upgrade the PMIS to facilitate reporting on achievement of targets. Reporting on results also needs to give adequate attention to past results. Given that GEF-4 and GEF-5 Programming Directions documents had specified targets for those replenishment periods, there is a case for reporting on the actual achievement of these targets. It may be the case that past gaps in the submission of tracking tools, availability of tracking tool data, and data quality, is a constraint. Therefore, it is imperative that measures are put in place to ensure that these bottlenecks are mitigated. Upgrading of the PMIS has been delayed by several years; this upgrade needs to be completed with urgency.

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36	Review of Results-Based Management in the GEF (GEF/ME/C.52/Inf.07)	Address the shortcomings of the focal area tracking tools. GEF needs to rethink the approach to tracking tools for the biodiversity and multiple focal area projects. Although streamlining of the biodiversity tracking tools may be challenging, GEF may consider alternatives such as tracking changes in the protected areas through GIS and remote sensing based tools, coupled with targeted learning missions. Streamlining of the approach to tracking results of the multifocal projects was recommended by OPS-5 and by the GEF-6 Policy Recommendations. However, no direct progress has been made on this front. Given that multifocal projects have emerged as an important modality, the burden for tracking of the results needs to be rationalized.
37	Review of the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) (GEF/ME/C.53/Inf.10)	GEF Secretariat should develop clear protocols and quality checks on calculations. In line with the GEF-5 Mid-Term Review of STAR, the GEF Secretariat has made efforts to minimize errors in the STAR calculations. As STAR databases and equations continue to become increasingly complex, the GEF Secretariat should ensure that quality-control protocols are developed and risks to mistakes in calculations are minimized.