

Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS 6): Results Based Management

Draft Approach Paper

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has given attention to, accountability for, and measurement of results since its inception. Although several elements of a Results Based Management (RBM) framework were already mainstreamed in GEF business processes, comprehensive approach to tracking of results was missing. A major development during GEF-3 was introduction of tracking tools to monitor the results of the biodiversity focal area projects focused on protected areas. As a natural progression of this development, the policy recommendations negotiated during the replenishment process for GEF-4 called for development of results indicators for all GEF focal areas. In response to these recommendations, during GEF-4 a RBM framework was adopted by the GEF Council in FY2007 along with approval of a special budget for RBM in FY2009. The GEF-5 programming document included a Corporate Results Framework which specified the objectives pursued by the GEF along with expected results and targets.

The *Fifth Overall Performance Study (OPS-5)* (2013) conducted by the GEF IEO assessed the extent to which GEF RBM system was relevant, effective and efficient. The assessment found that the GEF approach to RBM was overly complex: it was tracking too many indicators and was not tracking them well. OPS-5 noted that the overly complex RBM requirements impose considerable burden on the Agencies, who are responsible for tracking of project results. OPS-5 also noted that tracking and reporting of results for multi-focal area projects was especially burdensome. OPS-5, therefore, underscored the need to simplify the GEF tracking tools so that they are less burdensome and more effective in tracking results.

The *GEF-6 Policy Recommendations* by the Replenishment Group called for improving the utility and efficiency of the RBM in GEF by “rationalizing the indicators in the focal area tracking tools, with particular focus on multi-focal area projects.” It requested the Secretariat to develop a comprehensive work plan to strengthen the RBM system. In response to the recommendations, the Secretariat prepared an RBM action plan¹, which was approved by the GEF Council in October 2014. The GEF Secretariat also strengthened its RBM team in 2015.

Annual Performance Report (APR) 2015, prepared by the GEF IEO, presented an assessment of the extent to which OPS-5 recommendations related to focal area tracking tools had been implemented. The assessment found that the tracking tools for GEF-6 are leaner and better aligned with the focal area results framework indicators. It noted that although biodiversity tracking tools have also been streamlined, their number is still high. It further noted that streamlining of the tracking tools for the multi-focal area projects has been limited. It found gaps in compliance with the tracking tools requirements at several levels, but noted the steps being undertaken by the Secretariat to improve performance on this front. APR2015 recommended that the GEF should reassess its approach to tracking

¹ The Results-Based Management: Action Plan (GEF/C.47/05)

tools for GEF-7, and the burden and utility of its biodiversity tracking tools and of other alternatives. The recommendation was endorsed by the GEF Council in its June 2016 meeting.

The approach paper for the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6) identifies RBM as one of the areas that will be covered as part of its work to understand relevance and global contribution of the GEF. The aim will be to understand the extent the RBM system captures results of GEF activities and supports adaptive management. This review is being undertaken as an input to OPS-6. It will address the key issues related to RBM specified in the OPS-6 approach paper. The work on tracking tools undertaken as part of APR2015 will be an important input to this review. At the time APR2015 was prepared, the Secretariat was undertaking several steps to improve the GEF RBM system. This review will also take stock of the extent to which progress has been made.

Key Questions

The review will seek to answer following questions:

1. What is the role of RBM in GEF partnership?
2. To what extent is the GEF RBM system relevant, effective and efficient?
3. To what extent and in what ways is the information generated through the RBM system utilized?
4. To what extent have the key concerns noted in OPS-5 and in GEF-6 policy recommendations of the Replenishment Group been addressed?

The review will assess the role of RBM in the GEF partnership. It will assess the role of RBM within the context of the network nature of the GEF partnership, taking into account the GEF mandate, the nature of activities that it supports, and the time lag involved in manifestation of the environmental results. The review will assess the extent to which this role is being played by the RBM system that is in place.

The review will assess the extent the GEF RBM system tracks key expected results of its activities. It will seek to understand the arrangements that are in place to gather, analyze and report information. It will assess the extent to which the RBM system is effective. It will assess the roles, responsibilities and burden sharing across the GEF partnership for RBM. It will assess the extent to which the system is efficient. It will seek to compare GEF approach to RBM with that of other international organizations.

The review will assess the manner in which the information generated through the RBM is utilized at different levels, i.e. Agency, focal area, and corporate level. It will seek to analyze various information streams of the RBM system, number and types of decisions taken based on the information provided by the RBM system. It will determine the extent to which it is being used for decision making at different levels and will identify factors that enable or hinder its use.

The review will determine the extent to which concerns noted in OPS-5 and in the GEF-6 policy recommendations have been addressed. It will also take stock of the measures that have been undertaken by the Secretariat to revamp the RBM system, and the extent these are likely to address the gaps identified in the earlier assessment.

Methodological Approach

The review on RBM will draw information from several sources. This includes: a survey of the GEF publications including Council Documents, Replenishment Documents, GEF IEO evaluations and related intermediary products and datasets; and, interviews with the GEF Secretariat's RBM team and program managers, and GEF Agency staff and consultants, Operational Focal Points (OFPs), CSO Network members, and, GEF Conventions. An online survey will also be conducted to get feedback from a wider group of GEF stakeholders on RBM in GEF.

The GEF documents relevant to RBM will provide information on the expectations from the RBM and the framework adopted to deliver on those expectations. Work undertaken for APR2015 will be an especially useful input to this review on streamlining of the tracking tools and quality of indicators. The review will also draw from datasets on Agency compliance and on availability of tracking tools being prepared by the Secretariat. Further, where applicable the review will also draw on the analysis on tracking tools prepared for APR2015. GEF Annual Monitoring Reports, GEF reports to the Conventions, and results monitoring scorecard designed by the Secretariat will be a source of information on how the information generated through the RBM is being reported and utilized.

The review will rely on interview of the key informants and stakeholders to gather information on GEF arrangements, policies and processes, which are relevant to RBM.

- **Design:** Secretariat and Agency staff that have experience in RBM related issues such as Secretariat's RBM team and program managers, and the GEF coordinators and RBM relevant staff at the Agencies, will be an important source of information on understanding the RBM arrangements in detail, including factors that facilitate or hinder its effectiveness.
- **Tracking and reporting of results:** The inputs from the GEF Agencies will be especially useful in understanding how their RBM system work both for their other activities and for activities that are supported by the GEF. Others that will be interviewed to gather other perspectives on the RBM related arrangements will include the GEF Operational Focal Points and CSO Network Members.
- **Utilization:** GEF Conventions will be a source of information on how the information provided by the Secretariat is used and the strengths and weaknesses of the GEF reporting to the Conventions. Senior management of the GEF Secretariat and the team leads for the Focal Areas will provide information on how they utilize information for decision making. Similarly, the GEF Coordinators at the Agencies and other key Agency staff will be interviewed to gather information on how they utilize information generated through the RBM system in their decision making.

An online survey on performance related issues will be conducted for OPS-6 to reach out to a wider set of respondents. Questions relevant to RBM related concerns will be imbedded in the detailed survey on performance issues. The survey will be administered to the OFPs, Agency staff, and CSO Network members.

The review will also seek to compare RBM related arrangements in GEF with those in other organizations. These include comparable network organizations and also international organizations that support projects focused on addressing environmental concerns.

Review Report

The review report will have following sections:

- Introduction
- Key Questions
- Methodology
- Findings and conclusions
- Summary

Activity calendar

The review will be conducted by a two member team. The team will be led by a Senior Evaluation Officer, and the other member of the team will be a Senior Consultant. The activities for the review will start in July 2016 and end in the first week of April 2017 (Table 1).

Table 1: Calendar of Activities

Activity	Duration	Milestone
Preparation of approach paper	July-Aug 2016	15 th of August 2016
Desk Review of GEF IEO Evaluations	August to September 2016	September 30 th 2016
Survey of project documents and TEs	September to December 2016	December 20 th 2016
Analysis	January to February 2017	February 15 th 2017
Draft review report	February to March 2017	March 7 th 2017
Final report of the review	March to April 2017	April 7 th 2017