

2021 Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund

Audit Trail of the GEF IEO Approach Paper – January 2021

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
GEF Secretariat			
General	We suggest the evaluation more explicitly include focus on issues regarding the strategic use of the SCCF for generating adaptation impacts across countries that GEF is mandated to support. Example, to what extent is the SCCF able to address the current significant gap in GEF programming on generating climate adaptation impacts in non-LDCs, given its current limited scale of resources? A further example of a strategic issue we suggest to more explicitly include in the scope of this evaluation is the extent to which the SCCF is blending grant finance with non-grant financing of the GEF NGI or other investors, and/or directly using non-grant instruments to generate adaptation impacts. Several comments below related to the key evaluation questions in para 27 related to relevance and effectiveness suggest specific evaluation questions that would begin to address these strategic issues.		The evaluation has a similar question under effectiveness which has been edited in line with this comment. The evaluation will look at the extent to which SCCF is using a balance of grant and non-grant instruments in line with your suggestion.
General	Building on the above comment, and given the resource constraints mentioned in the previous SCCF Evaluation, it would be interesting to see if the new orientation of the SCCF in GEF-7, toward mostly MSPs focused on catalytic adaptation innovation and action, is found to be a valuable strategic direction and niche role for the SCCF.		The evaluation will look at trends in the portfolio including the one noted here and can gather stakeholder feedback through interviews.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
Para 3	Re SCCF windows	We think it's pertinent to mention, either in para 3 or the figure/table immediately below, the cumulative amount of donor resources received per window. Donors earmarked SCCF resources for a particular window, usually either SCCF-A or SCCF-B, with the latter receiving the majority of the funding, which explains the SCCF's adaptation focus. I am not aware of SCCF-C or SCCF-D having received any funds, and this should be noted.	This information has been added using the most recent trustee report as a source, though we would note that SCCF-A, rather than SCCF-B, has received more funding.
Para 2	Additionally, incentive for objective 2, "mainstreaming adaptation and resilience for systemic impact," are being managed outside the pre-selection modality and are aligned with the regular GEF Trust Fund cycle.	What "incentive" is being referred to here? This is a little unclear.	This language is from the GEF adaptation strategy , paragraph 165.
Para 3	Subsequent guidance was provided to the GEF by numerous cops which helped to further define the design of the SCCF	Capitalize COP.	COP has been capitalized.
Para 6	"SCCF supports the adaptation related NDCs and seeks to align its programming with priorities identified in NDCs."	Yes, but not exclusively so. Some developing countries do not identify adaptation priorities in their NDCs but that does not preclude them from accessing the SCCF if they can demonstrate alignment with relevant national strategy documents.	This was based on information from the GEF adaptation strategy , paragraph 28. However, reference to "adaptation related" has been deleted from the sentence in line with this comment.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
Para 7	(i) Selection process of SCCF. (ii) The Challenge Program.	Please separate the Challenge Program para. The Challenge Program has received \$5M from the SCCF, i.e., it's a program under the SCCF. This para on general selection criteria for SCCF projects should not be mixed up with a specific program under the fund. These are two separate topics.	These paragraphs have been separated.
Para 7	The Challenge Program	It would be useful to mention here that the LDCF/SCCF Council in Dec 2020, in the Progress report on the LDCF SCCF recommends (in para 72) to consider "...further maximizing the impact potential of the Challenge Program for Adaptation Innovation including opening a second Call for Proposals prior to the end of GEF-7..."	Information from relevant updates, such as this one, will be provided in the evaluation report.
Para 8	List of 13 agencies implementing SCCF	The list is missing the IADB, which is also implementing an SCCF project (ID 4610). Please include. Also, IUCN has been included though it does not have any SCCF project. (Reference: <i>Trustee report as on September 30, 2020</i>)	The list of Agencies has been corrected in the text and table 2.

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Para 8	“share of the portfolio in terms of approved projects is UNDP” <i>(Full sentence added by GEF IEO for reference: “The largest share of the portfolio in terms of approved projects is UNDP with 24 percent of all projects approved (22 projects), while the World Bank Group has the largest share of total funds approved, at 26 percent.”)</i>	Please check this carefully. According to the LDCF/SCCF Progress Report of Dec. 2020 as well as the Progress Report for Dec. 2019, the largest historic share (in terms of SCCF \$ amount) is held by IBRD (World Bank). Please include this information and ensure that info is correct for number of projects. (In GEF-7, the largest share in terms of \$ amount is held by UNIDO, followed by CI and WWF.)	The second half of the sentence quoted (included here for reference) already notes that World Bank has the largest share in terms of SCCF \$ amount. The evaluation report will discuss changing trends over time including agency composition.
Table 2	Column heading	Heading mentions LDCF, not SCCF. Please correct.	The heading has been corrected.
	Agencies listed	IADB is missing from the list of agencies that have accessed the SCCF. Please include it. Also, IUCN has been included but it does not have an SCCF project. The table seems to be for LDCF projects.	This comment was already made above and has been addressed.
Para 9	Reference to the 2018 Adaptation Strategy	Perhaps better to provide a link to the strategy	A link to the strategy is already provided in the references section.
Para 10		It would be helpful for the readers to clarify what constitute this ‘grant funding’ (i.e., project financing only, or PPG/fees included etc.). This applies to wherever \$ is mentioned in the draft (not just in this para).	This information has been added in a note to the figure below.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
Para 11	UNDP stated to have largest share of the SCCF portfolio	Please check if this is incorrect. According to the LDCF/SCCF Progress Report of Dec. 2020 as well as the Progress Report for Dec. 2019, the largest historic share (in terms of \$ amount) is held by IBRD (World Bank).	This information is based on GEF Secretariat Portal data. Figures 3 and 4 display figures on the share of projects, not funding, as specified in the figures. The text now clearly says it is the share of projects. Numbers and project status will be confirmed in the course of the evaluation.
Para 11	“Of the 90 approved projects and programs, 32 are completed, while the others are either approved and awaiting implementation start, or under implementation.”	Given that the cohort is so small, a suggestion would be to show the details of all 90 projects by stage: approved and awaiting implementation start, under implementation (and at which stage – at which PIR, crossed MTR etc.), completed, completed with financial closure. For the 4 PFDs within that, a similar disaggregation of the PFD-level stage as well as the stage of the child projects can be done. It would be very useful for this Evaluation to give a complete mapping of the entire SCCF portfolio along the lines of implementation stage.	The evaluation report can present more detail on projects by stage to the extent this data is available, and to the extent it is relevant for understanding the analysis.

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Figure 2 (should be Fig. 3)	UNDP shown as having the largest share of the SCCF Portfolio	This is incorrect. According to the LDCF/SCCF Progress Report of Dec. 2020 as well as the Progress Report for Dec. 2019, the largest historic share is held by IBRD (World Bank).	This comment has already been made above. As already stated, this information is correct as per the data recorded in the GEF portal as of September 2020, which showed that 22 projects have been approved for UNDP, versus 17 for the World Bank as of September 2020. The report has already noted in paragraph 8 (now paragraph 9) that in terms of funding, World Bank has the largest share.
Figure 4		Same comment as in para 11 above – beyond what is represented here, there is much more richness of detail to be had along the lines of project status, and this should be easily obtainable data.	Please see response to comment on paragraph 11 above.

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Para 12	“the evaluation will focus on 25 projects: 14 projects which have reached completion between October 2016, the cutoff date for the previous evaluation, and September 2020, the cutoff date for this evaluation, and 11 projects which have reached the threshold of PIF approval during the same timeframe.”	It is unclear why this subset of an already small portfolio is being taken. The reason being given seems to be that a desire not to overlap with the 2017 Evaluation. However, many dimensions that are being considered in this Evaluation (as articulated later on in the paper) are new. Furthermore, the projects that were considered in the 2017 Evaluation would have now progressed further in implementation. It would be much more useful – and much clearer – to consider all 90 approved projects and programs, with their relevance to the particular dimensions under analysis then judged by their stage of implementation which, as outlined in the comment on para 11 above, deserves a further unpacking in its own right.	This statement has been amended for clarity. The evaluation will review all completed projects in order to present consistent performance information for the whole portfolio of completed projects, as this is where the richest information on results can be found. This evaluation is an update to the one completed in 2017, thus unpacking the whole portfolio is not the objective.
Para 13	“The aim will not be to add to the results of the portfolio review presented in 2017, which are unlikely to be much changed by a small number of new projects...”	This statement treats the portfolio as static. Even if the same cohort is evaluated once more, doing so 3 years later can yield very different narratives given that all of the projects would have progressed further through their respective life cycles.	Please see the response to the previous comment.
Para 15	“potential for SCCF projects to contribute to other focal areas was limited”	It is not the role of the SCCF to contribute to other focal areas. Also, what does “limited” mean and how was that conclusion reached?	This is a finding from the 2017 SCCF Evaluation which you can please refer to for more details.

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	It also found that while almost 45 percent of projects may potentially contribute to the land degradation focal area, potential for SCCF projects to contribute to other focal areas was limited (GEF IEO 2018a).	This paragraph seems to be a summary of the previous evaluation. It is not clear why the section emphasized only on the finding related to contribution to Trust Fund focal areas, given that it is not the primary objective of the fund.	Correct, this section—titled “Previous evaluations of the SCCF”—summarizes main findings from previous evaluations, including this finding.
Para 15	“...the GEF Secretariat should prioritize the development of mechanisms to ensure predictable, adequate and sustainable financing for the Fund...”	It would be useful to note in this paper that the predictability, levels, and sustainability of financing for the Fund are as a result of donor decisions, and therefore are not within the control of the GEF Secretariat. While this was a recommendation of the previous Evaluation, this paper states that this Evaluation is also planning to assess the Secretariat’s progress along these recommendations, and therefore this point can be made clear. This recommendation should not be made to the GEF Sec.	Noted.

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Para 18	“Given the small portfolio size, this evaluation will aim to take a more in-depth project level assessment of work funded by the SCCF in recent years, rather than focusing on results at a portfolio level. Similarly, the evaluation will review all completed projects for results in line with the adaptation strategy, to provide information on results for the full cohort of completed SCCF projects.”	It is not clear why the Evaluation is not going to assess results at a portfolio level. This seems like an attainable analysis, with ready data that will yield useful conclusions. The reason given is “small portfolio size”, however, many other Evaluations are coming to aggregate conclusions based on much smaller cohorts. Furthermore, the smaller portfolio size can be seen as an advantage instead of a constraint, as a complete mapping of the results of the entire investment of the SCCF can be done without the need to rely on a sample (and all of the ensuing statistical complications) as is the case with other, larger portfolios. Finally, this paragraph is also contradictory, as it states at the end that information will be provided on “results for the full cohort of completed SCCF projects”, and other parts of the paper actually do refer to results at an aggregate level.	These sentences have been deleted. See comments above for an explanation of the approach to the portfolio review.
Para 22	“This evaluation will cover several themes and developments which were not the focus of the previous evaluation, reflecting changes in the GEF adaptation strategy and in the portfolio of the SCCF.”	A word of caution as to the assessment of older projects against newer policies and strategies (such as gender, private sector, etc.). This is a common thread that has been present through several Evaluations thus far.	Noted.
Para 24	“towards more regional and global initiatives”	This phrase is accidentally repeated in the same sentence.	This has been corrected.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
	In the last four years, major efforts within the SCCF portfolio have been on prioritizing multi-trust fund projects and programs, and regional and global initiatives projects.	This is not accurate. The MTFs were more of a priority with LDCF; and <u>innovation</u> was more of a priority for SCCF.	This has been rephrased to clarify that it is based on trends in the portfolio and statements in GEF adaptation strategies including the current strategy. A footnote has been included with references to relevant sections of the current and previous strategies, including annex III: Mainstreaming Adaptation in GEF Trust Fund Programming, in the current strategy which covers both LDCF and SCCF.
Para 24	“In the last four years, major efforts within the SCCF portfolio have been on prioritizing MTF projects and programs, and regional and global initiatives projects.”	What is the basis of the statement? Major efforts by who? To make this statement, it is important to analyze the % of MTFs in SCCF vis-a-vis other Funds including LDCF. If this % is significantly higher, I suspect the main reason for it is the reality that the amount of SCCF funds are so very limited, that mixing with other Funds is almost a necessity to make the SCCF funds stretch further and contribute to impact on a meaningful scale. Frankly, the “major efforts” have been focused on catalyzing adaptation innovation with limited available resources. Support for adaptation in SIDS is also a priority.	This statement has been revised, please see our response to the comment above.

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Para 24	"...and how this has worked from the perspective of country stakeholders."	It would be helpful to understand how the perspective of country stakeholders is going to be sought – through what data collection and methodologies? The methodology section below does not make this clear.	This will be addressed through post completion evaluations and interviews.
Para 24	"In its review of effectiveness, the evaluation will pay special attention to multitrust fund projects, including their effectiveness in mainstreaming climate change resilience in the GEF trust fund, as well as any challenges in their approval and implementation. "	It is not intuitive why this particular topic has been included to assess effectiveness of SCCF. The definition of SCCF (page 10) articulates other important aspects which relate to SCCF programming strategy better. Mainstreaming climate resilience in GEF TF isn't a core objective of SCCF nor it is in the scope of effectiveness definition. Instead, the Trust Fund projects are mainstreaming climate resilience using their own funds and SCCF isn't meant to provide additional financing to trust fund projects to integrate climate.	Please see the response to similar comments on this paragraph above.

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Para 25	“As with the previous SCCF evaluation, this evaluation will give special attention to gender considerations though it will follow a new approach, guided by changes in the GEF policies and requirements on gender, and in line with the approach taken by the concurrent IEO evaluation of GEF policies.” “The focus of the evaluation will be on evidence of the operationalization of the new Gender Policy in the SCCF.”	As in a comment on para 22 above, a word of caution as to the assessment of older projects against newer policies and strategies. The depth of assessment that can be undertaken at this stage for the SCCF against the relatively new policies and requirements on gender is unclear. While quality at entry is possible, there are gender requirements at different stages of the project cycle, particularly at CEO endorsement, and therefore the relevant cohort under analysis will become more and more limited. This mismatch on gender was also a subject of discussion in the first draft of the LDCF Program Evaluation.	Noted. The second sentence quoted has been amended to clarify that evidence of operationalization of the policy will be gathered from projects approved after it was introduced, while completed projects will be reviewed for gender considerations as well.
Para 26	“This evaluation will review projects for quality of design and performance toward this overarching goal.”	It is unclear how “performance” is going to be assessed, given the earlier statements and assumptions in the paper on the sample to be used, and also the lack of clarity of the implementation progress of the SCCF projects. We would welcome more detail on this.	This paragraph has been revised to clarify that the evaluation will review performance against the common goal of all the GEF adaptation strategies on increasing resilience in developing countries.
Para 26	“Regarding resilience.....”	This paragraph is unclear. Resilience is a core outcome of SCCF and so it is central to “effectiveness assessment” as articulated well in the question. It is not clear why a separate evaluation of resilience is needed.	Resilience is indeed a core outcome of the SCCF and for this reason merits focus.

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Para 27 (table) Point 1: Relevance	“Does SSCF support continue to be relevant to UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions, the GEF adaptation programming strategy, and countries; broader development policies, plans and programs?”	We suggest adding a question to SCCF relevance about the <i>implications of the reality that the SCCF has very limited scale of funds available to invest</i> . in absence of a well-funded SCCF, the reality is the GEF is currently only able to directly generate climate adaptation impacts in LDCs (thanks to a relatively well funded LDCF), and therefore a large portion of GEF target countries are being at least partially neglected in terms of directly generating adaptation impacts. A well- funded SCCF would go a long way to address this substantial gap in current GEF adaptation programming. If the response to the SCCF having limited funds is to recommend focusing more exclusively on global and regional projects (rather than single country projects), then the GEF will continue to not fulfill its mandate to directly supporting all relevant countries (not only LDCs) in addressing their adaptation priorities.	A question has been added under relevance in line with this comment: <i>How has the lack of funding affected the relevance of the SCCF?</i> The approach paper is not recommending a shift towards regional and global initiatives. Rather, as noted in responses above, there is a strong trend in GEF-7 towards regional and global initiatives over country level projects, thus it is pertinent to explore how this shift has been received by stakeholders.
Para 27 (table) Point 2: Coherence	“To what extent are SCCF projects... “	We suggest adding a question on <i>coherence and complementarity with other multilateral funds focused on adaptation finance</i> , particularly the GCF, Adaptation Fund, and CIFs.	This question has been amended in line with this suggestion.

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Para 27 (table) Point 2: Effectiv eness	“What are the gender equality objectives achieved and gender mainstreaming principles adhered to by the SCCF? The evaluation will assess the application of GEF’s gender policies during the past four years.”	Same comment as in para 25 above – the depth of assessment that can be undertaken at this stage for the SCCF against the relatively new policies and requirements on gender is unclear. While quality at entry is possible, there are gender requirements at different stages of the project cycle, particularly at CEO endorsement, and therefore the relevant cohort under analysis will become more and more limited. This mismatch on gender was also a subject of discussion in the first draft of the LDCF Program Evaluation. YS: The above would be same for gender principles, policies and guidance which were approved in past 2-3 years, not 4.	Noted, as earlier stated for comments on paragraph 22 and paragraph 25 above. The evaluation will take this into account while conducting the evaluation.
Para 27 (table) Point 2: Effectiv eness	“To what extent has the SCCF engaged the private sector? The evaluation will assess newly approved and completed projects in line with the 2018-2022 GEF adaptation strategy regarding private sector engagement.”	The completed projects would certainly have been completed before the 2018-2022 Strategy – therefore, the ability to assess completed projects against this benchmark is questionable.	The text has been revised to clarify that newly approved projects will be assessed in line with the current strategy, while the extent of private sector engagement in completed projects will also be explored.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
Para 27 (table) Point 2: Effectiveness	“What are the global environmental benefits delivered through SCCF projects? The evaluation will review completed projects for transformational contributions for adaptation benefits and global environmental benefits delivered in contribution to GEF focal areas, with an aim to present aggregate benefits delivered by recently completed projects.”	Given that GEBs are not required indicators for SCCF, why will the evaluation focus on these? This is contradictory with earlier parts of the paper which state that portfolio-level aggregate assessments would not be taking place – and please note we have also commented in para 18 above that there is indeed a case to be made for a portfolio-level aggregate assessment.	A note has been added to paragraph 25 (previously paragraph 24) that the GEF adaptation strategy has always included synergies with GEF focal areas as a component; it was in fact pillar II of the 2014 strategy. Paragraphs 29 and 31 of the current adaptation strategy outlines synergies and contributions to MEAs and GEBs for both LDCF and SCCF, as does the proposed GEF action #8 in response to COP guidance provided in annex II of the strategy (p. 50). Thus, this is a pertinent line of inquiry for the evaluation. As noted above, language clarifying the evaluation’s approach to portfolio review has been added. The sentence has been revised to clarify that all completed projects will be reviewed.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
Para 27 (table) Point 2: Effectiv eness	"To what extent has the SCCF engaged the private sector?"	We suggest including a question for on SCCF effectiveness in catalyzing private sector investment in adaptation about the <i>extent to which SCCF projects have blended use of its grant-based funds to catalyze loan or equity investments by private sector partners</i> to catalyze the scale of investment in adaptation that is urgently needed. Example of models include grant-based guarantees for creation of commercial lines of credit by partner financial institutions for adaption loans; as well as payments for results in order to catalyze non-grant financing of other investors.	The evaluation will consider the examples provided in this comment in the assessment of SCCF engagement with the private sector.
Para 27 (table) Point 2: Effectiv eness	"To what extent has the SCCF engaged the private sector?"	We suggest including a question on SCCF effectiveness in catalyzing private sector investment on adaptation about the <i>extent to which the SCCF and is using strategic balance of grant and non-grant instruments</i> , as per the first pillar of the LDCF and SCCF strategy. This is especially important given the importance and impact potential other evaluations have placed on non-grant instruments.	The evaluation will look at the extent to which SCCF is using a balance of grant and non-grant instruments.

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Para 27 (table) Point 3: Efficiency	“How has the lack of and unpredictability of resources effected efficiency?” How efficient has the Challenge for Adaptation preselection process been?”	How is "efficiency" going to be judged? Some further methodological details would be most welcome. Also, please note typo on “effected” – it should be “affected”. In reference to “unpredictability”. This does not seem to be a fair criterion to judge the performance of the SCCF, considering, as mentioned above, it is not within the Fund’s control.	This question has been deleted and a question has been added under relevance in line with a previous comment.

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Para 27 (table) Point 4: Sustainability	“To what extent are the results of SCCF support sustainable? The evaluation will review the sustainability ratings of SCCF projects at completion and include assessments of the factors that affect sustainability of outcomes of two projects post completion.”	While an assessment of the sustainability ratings is possible and laudable, it is not clear that this assessment alone can deliver on the question as to whether or not the results of the SCCF support are sustainable. Over and above an analysis of the sustainability ratings, many of the other Evaluations have assessed sustainability through post-completion analyses. However, here only two projects are going to be assessed for post-completion, and even so, travel restrictions mean that site visits are unlikely. Therefore, the sustainability section of this paper may well end up being limited to an analysis of the sustainability ratings. While a useful analysis in its own right, this would not be able to determine the extent to which the results of SCCF support are sustainable, as seems to be the objective as per the leading sentence of the paragraph. We therefore suggest a modification of expectations (and therefore conclusions) on this sustainability point.	The concerns on possible conclusions of this line of inquiry are noted and will be taken into consideration while conducting the evaluation.

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Para 27 (table) Point 5: Addition ality	“What has been the additionality, both environmental and otherwise, of the SCCF?”	Again, there is a question as to whether this analysis is going to be done for the entire cohort of SCCF projects, or for the subset alluded to in earlier paragraphs? This additionality point will be a logical application to the entire cohort of completed projects, not just the projects completed in the interim between the last SCCF Evaluation and present-day.	All completed projects will be reviewed.
Para 27	2 – Coherence	How is this being determined if its relating to specific country by country needs and priorities?	This question has been amended in line with a previous comment.
Para 28	“The Fund’s performance will be assessed at the Fund’s macro level as well as the project level.”	This contradicts many earlier statements that speak of project-level assessment only. Please clarify?	A previous statement in paragraph 19 (previously paragraph 18) which contradicted this statement has been deleted.
Para 29	“Portfolio review...”	As in earlier comments, it is not clear why the portfolio review is being restricted to a sample only.	This comment has already been addressed above.
Para 32	“Quality Assurance”	A useful QA mechanism being adopted in many other Evaluations is the use of a Reference Group. Would this also be possible in this Evaluation?	For smaller evaluations such as this one the IEO has not traditionally had reference groups, but this could be explored for future LDCF/SCCF evaluations.

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Para 33		Will LDCF PU be consulted while planning participation in dissemination events? It will be better to coordinate to ensure the forums are effectively utilized for integrating feedback by the program team. We suggest including GEF Secretariat management responses within the scope of each of these dissemination and outreach opportunities (website, webinars, events, etc.).	This will be taken into consideration in the dissemination strategy for the evaluation.
Annex E	Point 8	The focus of results is primarily on natural resource ownership and governance. This would fit much better in LDCF projects. It is recommended to widen this to more catalytic outcomes such as strengthened planning and entrepreneurial capacities of women to design and implement adaptation solutions.	Annex E presents for reference the full GEF Secretariat's GEF-7 Results Framework on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE).

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General	See para 100 of LDCF/SCCF Strategy for GEF-7	Please also capture the CCA strategy's attention to vulnerable SIDS for the SCCF. The GEF-7 CCA Strategy states that the SCCF can contribute towards the adaptation needs of vulnerable non-LDC SIDS and SIDS that have recently graduated from LDC status. In GEF-7, a concerted effort has been made in this regard by the GEF Secretariat: - An MSP (ID 10195) was approved in June 2019 to mainstream climate resilience in a 7-country regional MTF project for Caribbean SIDS; - Two out of 9 of the Challenge Program PIFs each include two (Pacific SIDS) projects. One is an SCCF the project and the other an MTF that includes SCCF.	SCCF support to SIDS will be captured in the evaluation.
World Bank			

General	The approach paper has multiple references to the previous SCCF program evaluation (2017), including that “the main objective of this evaluation of the SCCF is to evaluate the progress made by the SCCF since the 2017 SCCF program evaluation.” In relation to that, we have a few comments/questions.	It would be informative if the Evaluation could examine how the SCCF program reflects the thematic areas of the SCCF: (i) adaptation, (ii) technology transfer, (iii) mitigation within energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry, and waste sectors), and (iv) economic diversification with the aim of moving away from the production, processing, export, and/or consumption of fossil fuels and associated energy-intensive products. Looking at the list of the SCCF projects in Annex C of the Approach Paper, the impression is that only thematic area (i) (adaptation) is covered by the SCCF portfolio. Is it so and what are the reasons? In relation to the above, it is not very clear why the Approach Paper discusses the contribution of the SCCF portfolio to the GEF focal areas and not to the SCCF thematic areas. In particular, there is a reference to the conclusion 2 of the 2017 Evaluation, which states that “while almost 45 percent of [the SCCF] projects may potentially contribute to the land degradation focal area, potential for SCCF projects to contribute to other focal areas was limited”. Shouldn’t the expected contribution of the SCCF projects to the GEF thematic areas be defined by the SCCF thematic areas? In particular, if SCCF is focused on adaptation, there would be a	Discussion has been added on funding per window, and contributions to each window may be explored further in the evaluation. The inclusion of contributions to other GEF focal areas is based on a focus on synergies across focal areas in both the GEF adaptation strategy and GEF programming strategy.
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Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
		contribution to the climate change focal area and maybe to the international waters one, but less likely to the chemicals and waste focal area. Also, there is quite a large share of the multi-focal area GEF projects, which complicates this discussion. The question is: wouldn't it be more informative to examine which SCCF thematic areas are operationally covered and investigate (maybe in the interviews) why there are no projects covering some of the thematic issues?	

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General	The approach paper has multiple references to the previous SCCF program evaluation (2017), including that “the main objective of this evaluation of the SCCF is to evaluate the progress made by the SCCF since the 2017 SCCF program evaluation.” In relation to that, we have a few comments/questions.	The issue of limited and unpredictable resources of the SCCF seems to be a continuous bottleneck for the Fund’s operational activities and long-term performance. The Approach Paper states that “as a direct consequence of the limited and unpredictable resources, some GEF Agencies have confirmed that they are no longer considering or promoting the SCCF when discussing proposal developments with project partners. The time, financial cost, and political capital required to develop and build support for proposals could not be justified against the high risk of no funding being available.” While the issue is clearly critical, the recommendation of the 2011 SCCF Evaluation, reiterated in the 2017 SCCF Evaluation, that “the GEF Secretariat should prioritize the development of mechanisms that ensure predictable, adequate, and sustainable financing for the Fund” might need more informational support, which the 2020 Evaluation could provide: is it the unpredictability, or the size of the grants, or either one of the two that creates disincentives for the Agencies to apply for funding? Are there other reasons for the Agencies’ low interest in the SCCF funding?	This is an issue that will inherently be covered through the questions on relevance and additionality of the Fund.

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General	The approach paper has multiple references to the previous SCCF program evaluation (2017), including that “the main objective of this evaluation of the SCCF is to evaluate the progress made by the SCCF since the 2017 SCCF program evaluation.” In relation to that, we have a few comments/questions.	Innovation and technology transfer for climate change adaptation in SCCF projects. The Evaluation Paper provides the following information: as part of the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and SCCF endorsed by the Council in June 2018, the GEF Secretariat introduced the Challenge Program for Adaptation Innovation. The Challenge Program is intended as the main vehicle for addressing SCCF objective 1: “reduce vulnerability and increase resilience through innovation and technology transfer for climate change adaptation”. In relation to this new Program (created after the 2017 Evaluation of the SCCF) and considering that innovation and technology transfer is one of the GEF’s, as well as the SCCF’s, comparative advantages, would it make sense to include innovation in the adaptation- and technology transfer-supporting SCCF projects as a special topic or as an evaluation question in the 2020 SCCF Evaluation?	The question of innovation is covered in additionality.

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General	The approach paper has multiple references to the previous SCCF program evaluation (2017), including that “the main objective of this evaluation of the SCCF is to evaluate the progress made by the SCCF since the 2017 SCCF program evaluation.” In relation to that, we have a few comments/questions.	Considering seemingly low demand for the SCCF (which in part is related to the limited and unpredictable resources under this window) to explore the application of GEF Non-Grant instrument under SCCF, especially for the innovations that have chance of replication with the private sector in the areas of technology transfer and resilience (*start-up in green or efficient technologies? Data application for remote sensing and M&E in private-led resilient building enterprises?)	The evaluation will include use of the non-grant instrument under SCCF in its coverage of private sector engagement.
External Reviewer, Adaptation Fund - Technical Evaluation Reference Group (AF-TERG),			
12	Accounting for this difference in threshold for review, the evaluation will focus on 25 projects: 14 projects which have reached completion between October 2016, the cutoff date for the previous evaluation, and September 2020, the cutoff date for this evaluation, and 11 projects which have reached the threshold of PIF approval during the same timeframe.	Given you haven't started the evaluation yet and the approach paper is still under review, is it worth moving the date to December 2020?	To keep the data of this evaluation in line with APR 2021 data, the cutoff date will remain September 2020.
22	Additionally, the GEF and GCF may collaborate to identify pathways and opportunities to facilitate pilot private sector-oriented initiatives supported by the SCCF (and LDCF) to be scaled up with the GCF.	private sector-oriented pilot initiatives.	This has been corrected.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
23	Special attention will also be given to sustainability.	I was thinking; we are now focusing on ex-post work. Given the IEO focus on ex-post, would it be worth to also explore to do an ex-post evaluability assessment of the projects between Oct 2016 - Sept 2020? It could feed into follow-up work on ex-post.	The IEO can consider developing an approach to undertake evaluability assessment more systematically for future evaluations.
24	In the last four years, major efforts within the SCCF portfolio have been on prioritizing multitrust fund projects and programs, and regional and global initiatives projects.	While I see that on the regional and global initiatives, is that equally visible on multitrust fund projects and programs?	This paragraph has been modified to include supporting evidence from the portfolio and the GEF adaptation strategy.
27 (Effectiveness questions)	<i>How effective is the SCCF at strengthening the resilience of developing countries?</i> The evaluation will review completed projects to assess the extent to which they have delivered on expected outcomes around climate change resilience. The evaluation will pay special attention to multitrust fund projects, which there has been a concerted effort to facilitate during the GEF-7 period.	Is that specifically related to effectiveness? I think it also has a strong relevance component.	For this evaluation question the focus is on effectiveness.
27 (Effectiveness questions)	<i>To what extent has the SCCF engaged the private sector?</i> The evaluation will assess newly approved and completed projects in line with the 2018-2022 GEF adaptation strategy regarding private sector engagement.	Would also link this to sustainability, especially in the light of the pilot idea.	In the review of sustainability, the evaluation will review factors including private sector.

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
27 (Sustain ability questio ns)	<i>To what extent are the results of SCCF support sustainable?</i>	It is the likelihood of sustainability, not actual sustainability! I would add an ex-post evaluability assessment here.	The text below the question has been amended to clarify that the evaluation will review the likelihood of sustainability ratings and will include an assessment of the factors that affect sustainability of outcomes of two projects post completion.
27 (Sustain ability questio ns)	The evaluation will review the sustainability ratings of SCCF projects at completion and include assessments of the factors that affect sustainability of outcomes of two projects post completion.	the likelihood of sustainability rating.	Language has been amended in line with this comment.
29	Portfolio review:	Ex-post evaluability assessment, at entry for those approved, at entry and completion for those completed.	This suggestion has been noted above.
30	Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, field verification by IEO staff will not be possible during the evaluation time frame, however If possible, the evaluation will make use of local consultants for field verification.	If possible to be implemented safely, not to transfer risk. Would put something in like that, otherwise it could be interpreted as risk transfer from the intl. consultant to local consultants.	A remark has been added to the section on limitations in line with this comment.
31	While the GEF Secretariat has reported extensive updates and improvements with the quality of project data as part of the migration from the PMIS to the new GEF Portal platform the GEF IEO continues to find issues in terms of accurate reporting of project status.	Has the old data now all be migrated? If not, are there compatibility / comparability issues between PMIS and the new portal? That would be a limitation.	Yes, the old data has been migrated and PMIS is out of date and will not be used for comparison.
STAP			

Para/ figure/ table/ annex	Referenced text	Comments	Response
27 (General comment on Effectiveness questions)	A challenge here will be the shifting definition of resilience across the SCCF. Early on, it was mostly about bouncing back from shocks and stressors, or otherwise being able to resist a shock or stressor. The notion of transformation as part of resilience is relatively recent, for example emerging in the IPCC 1.5 report, but has not been fully developed (IPCC AR6 is pushing the definition further toward transformation). It seems that there could be two tracks of evaluation here. A) The first would evaluate resilience strengthening with reference to the operating definition of resilience in place during the design and approval of each project to hold projects to the targets they were originally given. B) The second would be to assess the extent to which a changing definition of resilience, if it has in fact changed, has either 1) shifted the number of projects deemed to be achieving this goal or 2) shifted what is achieved in SCCF projects. A second challenge will be to clearly define transformational contributions for adaptation benefits and GEBs before the evaluation starts. PIFs tend to be weak in articulating how they will introduce transformational changes or benefits, so defining this inductively from the data seems problematic.		The evaluation will examine the operating definition of resilience in the SCCF over the periods covered and take this into account in review of projects. A definition of transformational contribution has been added to the approach paper.