

Water security evaluation: audit trail for stakeholder comments to the approach paper

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
GEF Secretariat	General comment (see also pgs 7 and 10)	One goal of the evaluation is to develop an overall theory of change and guideline on how to approach water security. I recommend being careful with the notion of a 'blueprint' though as no one single guidance and approach will fit all situations; for example, the approaches in single low capacity FCV countries with mainly water-land- CC related stresses is very different, than multi-country, multi-sector transboundary basins with possibly deep seated tensions which in themselves widely differ etc. Even just in the international waters focal area practice from the field suggests and GEF applies are flexible but structured approach only. A <u>set of</u> general approaches adapted to issues and regions may be needed, while of course there may also be some communalities.	Context has been added on page 11 to take this comment into account for the theory of change.
GEF Secretariat	Matrix (pg 16) Comparison of water security threats/severity from independent indices	Most of these indices are focused on water quantity (be it the water risk filter, blue peace index, basins at risk) plus some related governance proxies or direct measures, yet there are (i) none that are very useful in terms of threats to water security from pressures on water <u>quality</u> ; or (ii) combine an index with available and feasibly exploitable groundwater. Even the GEF TWAP, while analyzing some degree of multi-factor stress in its approach,	This comment is noted and we will take it into account when evaluating the usability of indices and also when analyzing the indices for evaluative purposes. Additionally, we will look into the ISWEL project tools.

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
		has been focusing only on large regional, basinwide comparisons and averaging factors across basins or very large-subbasin or national basin units that have to be used with caution. The GEF funded, UNIDO implemented GEF Integrated Solutions for Water, Energy and Land (ISWEL) project provides a more differentiated picture you may want to explore as another input and has been combining a multi-sector threats analysis with climate scenarios to identify global water security hotspots.	
GEF Secretariat	General comments and matrix pg 20	Please consider a differentiated approach on how to define “success” of GEF interventions. The matrix points to rating <i>if or if not</i> “outcomes related to water security are sustained” post project. While this may be clear to define for projects that e.g. install wells or water access points, transboundary projects and their contribution to water security support processes that not seldom take decades to result in basin agreements and basin-wide institutions being established; let alone soft or hard investments that are regionally agreed and made operational. So, the success of these transboundary projects can sometimes better be expressed by the degree of advancing a cooperation process a few steps in the right direction (and with expected setbacks along the way). Accounting for process steps as successful outcomes in regional processes would be another way to look at “success”.	GEF projects outcome sustainability will be evaluated based on the outcomes the project set out to achieve—if a project outcome was to take incremental steps in basin agreements or institution building, the evaluation will look at the success and sustainability of these incremental steps—not on the ground activities the project didn’t aim to achieve.
GEF Secretariat	Four elements of water security (pg 7 and elsewhere)	Please include health and hygiene into priority 1.	The suggested change was made.

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
GEF Secretariat	GEF freshwater strategy	The GEF TF does have a transboundary freshwater strategy within the international water focal area. It does not have a cross-cutting freshwater strategy across focal areas and IPs.	This sentence has been clarified to make reference to the IW strategies in the programming directions for each replenishment phase.
GEF Secretariat	Relation of water security to conflict: para 3, page 3: "Freshwater issues are also linked to human security- ..."	You may want to consider differentiating the link between population numbers, resource scarcity (water and land) and conflict even more. Afterall, by all these parameters California may be long overdue for an armed conflict ...	This sentence has been edited for clarity.
GEF Secretariat	Water quality testing in the country case studies (pg. 11)	The text suggests that the IEO evaluation aims to perform water quality testing ? I would caution to do so if that is the case as such one-off samples in one season at one flow and location would have little value. I am assuming this is just a wrong impression and no actual sample taking is envisioned.	The options listed in this paragraph for verification of outcomes and sustainability are subject to feasibility based on the circumstances of individual projects. The water quality testing referred to here would likely be testing of household/community water quality rather than in-stream. The sentence has been edited for clarity.
GEF Secretariat	Table 2 – Selection of country case studies	We would welcome to see criteria and indication for the selection of transboundary basins for the IEO evaluation and would be happy to discuss any selection with IEO if helpful. A large portfolio of the GEF addressing water security is in the international waters focal area, yet, at this point the selection for case studies does not include criteria for case studies relevant to international waters. You mentioned doing ONE basin case study which would be very limited	More detail on criteria to select case studies was added on page 11. More case studies were added as well, and multiple case studies will be multi-country focusing on a transnational basin. Table 2 has been updated.

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
		given the GEF TF investment in shared freshwater systems dates back to 1995 and IW is <u>the</u> focal area within the GEF TF which is fundamentally routed in increasing water security, regional integration and stability through greater cooperation among basin countries.	
GEF Secretariat	"Scope and key evaluation questions" p.7	The selection criteria of the project portfolio with specific words in the project title/components will likely create a bias in the findings as many relevant LD projects will not be included in the review. LD projects have important water security co-benefits but rarely address water issues explicitly.	Unfortunately, there is no water security tag in the GEF Portal, so the best way to search the entire GEF portfolio for all projects that relate to water security is to search the title, objective and component titles. However, we welcome suggestions of key words we could use to capture missing LD projects. The comment will be reflected in the limitations section of the final report if it materializes during the course of the evaluation.
GEF Secretariat	"Evaluation design" p.10	Particular attention could be given to the integrated programs to assess their potential increased performance to provide water security benefits.	The evaluation will assess actual performance rather than potential to increase performance. Integrated programs have mostly not shown any results creation as of yet and generally to not focus on water security.
GEF Secretariat	"Evaluation design/GEF project portfolio review" p.10	Maybe a reflection on selecting the most relevant indicators to assess the project effectiveness would be a useful addition in the approach.	A sentence reflecting this comment has been added to the description of the

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
			'study of good practices in water security.'
GEF Secretariat	"Effectiveness" p.18	The authors may also consider the effectiveness depending on the 4 dimensions of water security as we can expect the results can be very different.	Effectiveness indicators in the evaluation matrix have been edited to reflect the suggested change.
GEF Secretariat	"Water plays a key role in the food security IPs, while the cities IPs aim to protect populations from floods and other disasters and safeguard clean water supplies."	This sentence is a bit confusing and indicates that water doesn't play a key role in Cities IP. Cities IP gives a strong focus on water through multiple entry points and for wider set of purposes instead of just flood protection. The paper may refer to the PFD of SCIP in this regard which includes integrated water planning and use as one of the intervention areas. The water security focus includes flood management, restoring water bodies and water efficiency measures. Integrated water planning and use. The Child Project interventions relate to water in different ways, some are nature-based solutions to mitigate flood risk and improve water quality while others aim to improve wastewater management using a circular economy approach to reuse wastewater as an input. Indonesia's approach aims to use Child Project funding to integrate water management and land development to protect habitats and marine life in coastal cities. In terms of nature-based solutions that focus directly on water, Costa Rica aims to use reforestation of their metropolitan area of San Jose to improve urban water quality. Sierra Leone will use catchment-basin and ecosystems-based approaches to improve climate	This sentence has been altered to make it clear that water plays a key role in both the food security and cities IPs.

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
		resilience, thereby reducing flood risk and more effectively managing the watershed. China's investments will go toward a strategy to enhance natural assets through nature-based solutions for climate resilience to reduce flooding and to improve the water quality through water filtering at the selected project sites. Since water scarcity is a major issue for Indian cities, the India Child Project aims to use conservation and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems services to protect selected natural water bodies. Similar to India, Morocco has a challenge with water scarcity, and will use investments to improve resource efficiency in Marrakech including water and energy.	
GEF Secretariat	"A major theme of the land degradation focal area is combating the impacts of drought and water scarcity in agriculture".	Suggest to use the more 'agreed language' from the GEF Programming directions document: "The goal of the land degradation focal area is to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation, desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. A dedicated land degradation focal area objective specifically supports countries in dryland geographies to build resilience to mitigate the effects of droughts through drought-smart land management, including the management of water resources for agriculture."	This sentence has been adjusted to use the preferred language.
UNDP	Page 3 first para.: "many of the most critical ecosystem services are water-based—from removing contaminants"	this long used term should be avoided, nature is not 'designed' to remove vast majority of the 'contaminants' (esp synthetic) humans release to the environment	This statement has been edited based on the comment.

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
UNDP	Page 3 second para.: “As global population increases, so does society’s use of water, reducing the amount available for ecosystems.”	historically true but population growth and water use need to be decoupled if the water supply crisis is to be solved	This sentence has been changed to past tense.
UNDP	Page 3 third para.: “However, freshwater is also critical to food security (SDG 2), health and well-being (SDG 3), energy and security (SDG 7), sustainable cities (SDG 11), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate impacts (SDG 13) and terrestrial biodiversity (SDG 15).”	also SDG 14 since rivers represent one of largest source of ocean pollution	Reference to SDG 14 has been added.
UNDP	Page 6 third para.: GEF IEO (2018a) found that fostering cooperation among neighboring countries can prevent freshwater IW projects from being formed in the first place.”	this sentence doesn't make sense	This sentence has been edited for clarity.
UNDP	Page 6 third para.: “Often the long time needed to perform sensitive negotiations is longer than the 18-month time limit to design a GEF project.”	any inter-govt negotiations on water-related agreements (SAPs, conventions...) would occur in the 3-5 year FSP not in the design phase	This sentence has been edited for clarity.
UNDP	“The importance of monitoring quality of service and water quality over just user access is reinforced by research showing that reporting on the number of people that obtained access to “safe drinking water”	the water MDG was NOT for safe drinking water, it was for an 'improved water source' which doesn't guarantee its safety. This is main reason the ante and baseline for SDG6.1 target(100% to safe water) was upped substantially, resulting in a baseline of much larger numbers	According to United Nations (2015) , Target 7.c of the MDGs was “halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.”

Stakeholder	Location of comment	Comment	IEO response
	for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals 7 was overestimated because they include communities drinking from contaminated water sources”	of people w/o access to safe drinking water	This sentence has been edited for clarity.
UNDP	Page 7, Relevance question	“should add river basin organizations since they are major client/beneficiary in large portion of GEF IW freshwater projects”	River basin organizations have been added to this question.
UNDP	Page 10, GEF project portfolio review	should go beyond TEs and look at other project outputs such as reports, studies, websites, etc., bulk of this material is available at iwlearn.org	The portfolio review will only look at official GEF project documents because it is a broad review of hundreds of projects. However, the case studies will go more in depth and include all the documents listed in the comment. This has been clarified in the case study description.
WWF	Annex II	A recommendation to add WWF’s MAR2R project to the list of projects to review with water security impacts	After a more comprehensive review of the portfolio, this project is included in the overall water security portfolio. However, considering it is an ongoing GEF-5 project, it will not be included in the portfolio reviews.