

GEF Council Meeting
November 13 – 15, 2012
Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 10

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE ANNUAL THEMATIC EVALUATIONS REPORT 2012

1. The Secretariat and the Agencies welcome the second *Annual Thematic Evaluations Report (ATER)* prepared by the GEF's Evaluation Office. The report provides an update of the progress made to date on the *GEF Enabling Activities Evaluation* and presents the main conclusions and recommendations for *the Evaluation of the GEF Focal Area Strategies*.
2. The Secretariat and the Agencies appreciate the progress that has been made on the Enabling Activities evaluation and looks forward to receiving any lessons that are drawn from the two phases of the evaluation. For the evaluation of the GEF's Focal Area Strategies, the Evaluation Office presents several preliminary conclusions and recommendations as part of the preparatory step for the broader assessment of Focal Area achievements in the context of OPS5.
3. The Secretariat understands the evaluation of the strategies is a **formative** evaluation and as such it is not an assessment of performance but rather an opportunity to learn from the GEF-5 process and improve the strategies for GEF-6. In addition to this evaluation, it is important to note that the Secretariat has in place other mechanisms that will also contribute to strengthening the GEF and LDCF/SCCF's overall strategies, this includes: input derived from the results management system of the Secretariat; contributions from Agencies on project design and implementation issues; direct dialogue with countries about their needs; engagement with STAP and other experts on the scientific and technical merits related to the different focal areas; guidance from the conventions and convention-related work programs and targets; and direction from Council.
4. The Secretariat believes that the five recommendations put forth by the Evaluation Office should be seen less as prescriptive recommendations that often accompany **summative** evaluations and more as suggestions for improvement. The GEF-6 strategy process must allow for the flexibility needed to undertake the complex task of developing coherent strategies within the GEF's partnership model.
5. **Recommendation 1** states "An explicit discussion of envisaged causal linkages and chains of causality in line with current scientific knowledge forms the basis for the formulation of GEF-6 Strategies" The Secretariat will consider the specific causal linkages and pathways presented in this report for each focal area when developing the GEF-6 strategies. As stated in the evaluation and as was undertaken in GEF-5, the scientific community represented by the STAP panel, together with experts that may be engaged through Technical Advisory Panels, will play a central role to ensure the latest scientific knowledge is fully taken into account in strategy development.
6. The Secretariat fully agrees with **Recommendation 2** that GEF-6 strategies should "enable a more flexible and strategic approach to developing Multi-Focal Area projects, which would be able to adopt elements from several focal areas in a consistent manner." The Secretariat and the Agencies have initiated discussions in regards to the streamlining measures, and will continue to work with our partners to develop a more coherent strategy for Multi-Focal Area projects in GEF-6.
7. The Secretariat and the Agencies are committed to considering potential ways GEF and LDCF/SCCF activities can lead to transformational impacts. As part of the GEF-6 strategy

development process, the Secretariat will take **Recommendation 3** into account and consider “potential pathways from GEF activities to the broader adoption of GEF results to further define and strengthen the GEF’s catalytic role.”

8. **Recommendation 4** states “Given the impact of convention guidance on the Focal Area Strategies the GEF should continue the dialogue with CBD to further define the relationship between guidance and strategies in a way that allows for responsiveness as well as strategic coherence in GEF-6.

9. Beginning at COP-9, the GEF Secretariat has been working closely with the CBD Secretariat and the CBD COP to enhance the coherence of guidance from the COP to the GEF. The result has been an increased convergence between COP guidance and the evolving GEF biodiversity strategy. The Secretariat in collaboration with the Agencies will continue to find ways and means to enhance responsiveness to convention guidance.

10. We note the evaluation’s perception of the disconnect between the support GEF provides to implementation of two Protocols of the CBD (the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya Protocol) and the goal of the current GEF biodiversity strategy and agree that this support and its rationale can be more coherently integrated in future iterations of the strategy. In addition, the Strategic Plan of the CBD for 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets provides the overarching framework for GEF support going forward, and future GEF strategies will need to demonstrate their coherence with the Strategic Plan.

11. The Secretariat agrees with **Recommendation 5** and will revisit the GEF’s overall approach to capacity development as part of the GEF-6 strategy discussion. While the Secretariat agrees that capacity development is included as part of activities within focal areas, flexibility for standalone capacity development is useful and necessary.