

Summary of Document GEF/ME/C.39/1

GEF Evaluation Office: Progress Report from the Director

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.39/1, “*GEF Evaluation Office: Progress Report from the Director*,” takes note of the on-going work of the Office and the outlines of the work plan for GEF-5 that the Office is preparing, and requests the Office to prepare a detailed work plan and budget for the GEF-5 period at its meeting in May 2011, taking into account comments made.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Progress Report of the Director is meant to provide the Council with important information on on-going work. As such this report will not contain a full overview of all activities of the Evaluation Office, but focus on a few issues that require the Council’s attention. This report aims to start up a first discussion with Council on the role of the Office during GEF-5, including the Fifth Overall Performance Study. Secondly, this will be placed within the context of improved financial management in the office, as well as a revised structure of the Office. Furthermore, the report provides up-to-date information on the selection of countries for the upcoming country portfolio evaluations, the work of the Office supporting monitoring and evaluation of adaptation issues, and the support for the community of practice regarding evaluating climate change and development.

2. The main streams of evaluative work have been agreed with Council: performance evaluations to check upon the various efforts to improve implementation and efficiency of the GEF; country portfolio evaluations to increase the understanding of how GEF support fits into national priorities and policies; thematic evaluations to tackle cross-cutting issues and specific strategies and priorities in the GEF; and impact evaluations to measure and assess the contribution of the GEF to global environmental trends and benefits.

3. The Office will aim to fully integrate OPS5 into the work plan of the Office and to focus on two key inputs into the replenishment process for GEF-6:

- At the start of the replenishment process: an overview document of trends on key issues, as emerging from the evaluation streams.
- Before the final phase of the replenishment process: the full OPS5 report.

4. To be able to deliver these products, the Office will need to deepen its investments in the evaluation streams during the GEF-5 period. Elements that need to be taken into account include, amongst others, the need to invest more in evaluations (as noted by the peer review), the increase in the GEF portfolio (with at least 40%), and the broadening of the GEF network and modalities.

5. However, economies of scale can be achieved. The improved financial management system of the Office has already led to considerable savings at the end of FY10. The final expenditure for FY10 amounted to just under \$3.8 million, whereas the Council approved a budget of just over \$4 million: a savings of \$228,000 was returned to the general GEF Trust Fund. Preliminary calculations show that with a modest 9% increase in the base budget for FY12, followed with 3% inflation increases, the Office will be able to ensure the increase in efforts needed to ensure the same evaluation coverage that was achieved for GEF-4. The Office will prepare a detailed work plan and budget for Council's consideration at the May 2011 meeting.