



## Note on the Selection Process and Criteria for the GEF Country Portfolio Evaluations

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**(Approved by Robert van den Berg, Director, GEF Evaluation Office, on  
September 14, 2010)**

### Background

1. The GEF Council requested the GEF Evaluation Office to conduct evaluations of the GEF portfolio at the country level: GEF Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPEs). The Office undertook its first CPE in 2006 in Costa Rica on a pilot basis with the objective of assessing the feasibility and cost effectiveness of this type of evaluation and to develop, based on the experience, methodologies to fully implement this type of evaluation in subsequent years.
2. After the Costa Rica experience, the Office decided to conduct one or two CPEs per year in each geographic region (as defined by the GEF Country Support Programme) to save on travel costs. Countries were selected for portfolio evaluation from all eligible for GEF support, based on a transparent selection process and a set of criteria as indicated by Council. Standard terms of reference were developed and used to guide the conduct of CPEs.<sup>1</sup>
3. To date the Office has completed eleven CPEs: Costa Rica (pilot case in fiscal year 2006); The Philippines and Samoa (in fiscal year 2007); Benin, Madagascar, South Africa, and Cameroon (in fiscal year 2008); Egypt and Syria (in fiscal year 2009); and Turkey and Moldova (in fiscal year 2010).
4. CPEs are conducted by the Office to assess the totality of GEF support across all GEF Agencies and programs. The country is used as the unit of analysis. CPEs have the following specific objectives:
  - Independently evaluate the relevance and efficiency of the GEF support in the country from several points of view: national environmental frameworks and decision-making processes, the GEF mandate and the achievement of global environmental benefits, and GEF policies and procedures.
  - Assess the effectiveness and results of completed and ongoing projects in each focal area.
  - Provide additional evaluative evidence to other evaluations conducted or sponsored by the GEF Evaluation Office.
  - Provide feedback and knowledge sharing to (1) the GEF Council in its decision making process to allocate resources and to develop policies and strategies, (2) the country on its participation on the GEF, and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF funded projects and activities.

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<sup>1</sup> GEF Evaluation Office, 2006.

5. Furthermore, these evaluations bring to the attention of Council different experiences and lessons of how the GEF is implemented at the national level from a variety of countries.

6. In fiscal year 2011 the Evaluation Office will restart the CPE sequence by region. The Office is seizing the opportunity to update the country selection process and criteria. The standard terms of reference for these evaluations will also be revised and published as a separate document on the Office's Web site ([www.gefeo.org](http://www.gefeo.org)).

## Principles and Criteria for Country Selection

7. The principles behind the previous criteria and country selection process included:

- **Clarity and transparency** of the selection process
- **Fair chance** for all GEF recipient countries to be selected (through a stratified random selection process)
- **Programmatic criteria** (policy relevance, financial weight, stakeholder opinion and demand, public/media debate, evaluation coverage, evaluability, and synergy with other evaluations).

8. In this revised selection process, while some of the above principles have been maintained, others have been streamlined and/or further specified as listed below:

- **Clarity and transparency** of selection process
- **Regional coverage** to ensure a broad representation of GEF support in each region. Given the large number and diversity of eligible countries and the limited number of CPEs that can be conducted, both quantitative and qualitative criteria will be applied (diversity of the portfolio; financial weight; maturity of the portfolio; LDC/SIDS status; evaluation coverage)
- **Evaluability and synergy** with other evaluations conducted by the Office or evaluation offices of the GEF Agencies, and with Council agenda subjects.

## Steps of the Selection Process

9. Countries will be selected through a two-phased approach composed of a number of steps. A two-step **pre-selection phase** groups countries in each region. This phase was completed in July 2010 (see annex A). The second or **selection phase** aims to shortlist potential candidate countries out of the initial groups of countries. This phase will be done approximately every six to nine months.<sup>2</sup> This allows accounting for any contingent factors and seasonality issues to maintain flexibility in the country selection process. These two phases and related steps are further defined below.

### Pre-Selection Phase

10. Step 1: grouping by region. The first step in the process is to group countries according to geographic regions. The main reason for conducting CPEs by region is to provide recommendations that may be relevant to others in the region as well as to highlight similarities and differences within and across regions.<sup>3</sup> In some cases there are possibilities to save on travel costs by combining missions and resources.

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<sup>2</sup> For GEF-5 CPEs will be conducted consecutively according to a multi-annual planning, that is, in fiscal year 2011 one CPE will start in September, one in January, and one in April (GEF/ME/C.38/1, paragraph 12).

<sup>3</sup> Since 2008 the findings and recommendations from CPEs are synthesized in a single document, the Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report (ACPER), and submitted to the Council. A meta-evaluation will be conducted of all CPEs completed during GEF-4 to draw lessons for GEF-5.

11. The Office aims to conduct a total of 15 CPEs covering all regions according to the following sequence: four in Latin America and the Caribbean, four in Asia and Pacific, four in Sub-Saharan Africa, one in Middle East and North Africa, and two in Europe and Central Asia. The number of CPEs per region was determined by considering the amount of future GEF investment and the number of countries in each region. In terms of STAR allocation (see table 1 below) Asia and Pacific receives 32.3 percent and could warrant five or 33.3 percent of the CPEs. However, when considering the number of countries (see table 2 below) Sub-Saharan Africa with 32.6 percent of the countries could warrant five CPEs. In both cases, one CPE in Middle East and North Africa and two in Europe and Central Asia are justified. For the remaining three regions a more equitable distribution of CPEs is four each.

**Table 1. STAR Allocation and Proposed Number of CPEs by Region**

Region	STAR	% of total STAR	Number of CPEs	% of total CPEs	Difference in percentages
LAC	647.17	27.2	4	26.7	0.5
Asia	768.42	32.3	5	33.3	-1.0
AFR	513.85	21.6	3	20.0	1.6
MENA	133.02	5.6	1	6.7	-1.1
ECA	317.54	13.4	2	13.3	0.1
Total	2,380.00	100.0	15	100.0	0.0

**Table 2. Number of Countries and Proposed Number of CPEs by Region**

Region	Number of countries	% of total countries	Number of CPEs	% of total CPEs	Difference in percentages
LAC	33	22.9	3	20.0	2.9
Asia	34	23.6	4	26.7	-3.1
AFR	47	32.6	5	33.3	-0.7
MENA	11	7.6	1	6.7	1.0
ECA	19	13.2	2	13.3	-0.1
Total	144	100.0	15	100.0	0.0

12. Step 2: grouping by STAR allocation. The second step is to rank countries into groups within each region according to their indicative STAR allocation.<sup>4</sup> The number of groups correspond with the number of CPEs to be conducted in the relevant region (see annex A for groupings). The ranking excludes countries where CPEs were conducted during GEF-4. In the event allocations in the STAR are revised, as happened with the RAF, this step will be redone with the new figures for the remaining CPEs.

### **Selection Phase**

13. Step 3: short listing by STAR allocation group. The Office will shortlist countries and select two to three for CPEs on a rolling basis approximately every six to nine months. In September 2010 two countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region will be selected. To adequately represent GEF support in each region, three candidate countries from two STAR allocation groups (i.e. group B and

<sup>4</sup> See GEF-5 Initial STAR Allocations, July1, 2010 (GEF/C.38/Inf.8/Rev.1).

group C), for a total of six countries, will be short listed. The short listing will be based on the following quantitative criteria:

- **Diversity of the portfolio** – to account for the variety of focal areas, GEF Agencies, and modality of projects represented in the country portfolio
- **Financial weight** – to consider the relative importance of the amount of GEF funding received by countries
- **Maturity of the portfolio** – to dispose of a sufficient amount of completed GEF activities in the portfolio to allow assessment of results
- **LDC/SIDS status** – to take into due consideration the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States as classified by the United Nations
- **Evaluation coverage** – to consider the Office’s previous evaluation work and as such comply with the practice of ensuring adequate evaluation coverage worldwide while optimizing resources

14. A system of indicators and scores to measure each of the above-mentioned criteria has been developed with a possible highest score of 9.5 (see table 3 for indicators and scales). The three highest scoring countries in each group will be considered for further exploration.

15. Step 4: final ranking. The last step in the selection process will be done two to three months prior to the start up of the CPE to select the final countries. It will consist of reviewing the short listed countries in each STAR group according to the following qualitative criteria:

- **Evaluability** – to consider the amount and quality of available baseline information regarding the context in which the GEF projects were prepared and implemented, as well as the availability of other country specific information
- **Synergy with other evaluations and with Council agenda subjects** – to pursue eventual opportunities for collaboration with GEF Agency evaluation offices on ongoing or future joint evaluations as well as with other ongoing or future evaluations of the Office, and to cover new thematic subjects on the Council agenda

16. To avoid putting countries with small GEF portfolios at a disadvantage, evaluability has not been given a scale for scoring. Countries will be judged as evaluable when relevant evaluation information is available, i.e. when previous country evaluations have been conducted by evaluation offices of GEF partners, reliable baseline information on global environmental benefits indicators exists and/or national environmental strategies setting priorities for GEF allocations have been set.

17. Synergy will be considered as a preferential criterion and has not been given a scale. Countries with opportunities for synergies with ongoing or future evaluations proposed by evaluation offices of GEF Agencies or the Evaluation Office will be given priority. This reflects higher cost-effectiveness of the evaluation effort and lower evaluation overburden to participating countries. The timing of other evaluations is a crucial element to be considered in judging opportunities for synergies. Opportunities for synergies with new thematic subjects on the Council agenda including policy and strategy development, (i.e. geographic or ecosystem characteristics) will also be given priority in making the final selection of countries. Other unexpected contingent events, such as natural or man-made disasters, would also need to be taken into account.

18. If a selected country declines to undergo the evaluation then one of the remaining two highest scoring countries will be selected. The final selections will be communicated to the Council in GEF Evaluation Office Council documents.

**Table 3. CPEs Country Selection Criteria (short listing)**

Criteria	Definition	Indicator/Information Source	Quantifier	Scale of Points
Diversity of the portfolio	The variety of focal areas, GEF Agencies, and types of projects represented in a country portfolio	Higher number of focal areas, GEF Agencies and types of projects present receive higher rating	<u>Focal Areas</u> – 4 to 6 focal areas – 2 to 3 focal areas – 1 focal area <u>GEF Agencies</u> – More than 2 Agencies – 2 Agencies – 1 Agency <u>Project modality</u> – More than 2 modalities – 2 modalities – 1 modality	<u>Focal Areas</u> – 1 – 0.5 – 0 <u>GEF Agencies</u> – 1 – 0.5 – 0 <u>Project modality</u> – 1 – 0.5 – 0
Financial weight	The relative importance of the amount of GEF funding received by countries	Higher amount of GEF funds allocated receive higher rating	<u>Historical GEF allocation</u> – More than \$100 million – More than \$50 to \$100 million – \$20 to \$50 million – Less than \$20 million	<u>Historical GEF allocation</u> – 2 – 1.4 – 0.7 – 0
Maturity of the portfolio	Sufficient number of completed GEF activities allowing looking at results	Portfolios with higher number of available project terminal evaluations and/or completion reports receive higher rating	<u>Terminal evaluations and completion reports</u> – More than 6 TEs – 5 to 6 TEs – 3 to 4 TEs – 1 to 2 TEs – No TEs	<u>Terminal evaluations and completion reports</u> – 1 – 0.75 – 0.5 – 0.25 – 0
LDC and/or SIDS status	Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States as classified by the UN	LDCs and SIDS are given priority	<u>LDC/SIDS status</u> – SIDS – yes – SIDS – no – LDC – yes – LDC – no	<u>LDC/SIDS status<sup>5</sup></u> – 1 – 0 – 0.5 – 0
Evaluation coverage	How much a country is covered by Office previous evaluation work (the Office policy of ensuring adequate evaluation coverage worldwide while optimizing resources)	Countries included in previous evaluations receive lower rating	<u>Evaluation products</u> – No products – 1 to 3 products – 3 to 5 products – More than 5 products	<u>Evaluation products</u> – 2 – 1.4 – 0.7 – 0

<sup>5</sup> The GEF portfolio in most Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are predominantly regional projects, therefore SIDS are given higher priority in the score in order to get a representative percentage in the selected countries.

## Annex A.

Country		GEF-5 STAR (\$ Million)			
		CC	BD	LD	Total
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>					
Group A	Brazil	53.92	68.22	7.17	129.31
	Mexico	40.03	52.75	5.47	98.25
	Colombia	13.43	37.49	2.44	53.36
	Argentina	20.21	14.61	4.96	39.78
	Peru	8.71	26.25	2.97	37.93
	Ecuador	4.07	24.37	3.39	31.82
	Chile	9.00	18.09	1.97	29.07
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	11.77	14.49	0.95	27.21
Group B	Bolivia, Plurinational State of	5.93	11.44	3.12	20.49
	Cuba	4.40	11.52	1.11	17.03
	Panama	2.16	11.29	0.51	13.95
	Guatemala	2.28	7.99	0.94	11.22
	Honduras	2.00	7.27	0.78	10.05
	Jamaica	2.00	4.80	2.09	8.89
	Dominican Republic	2.58	5.36	0.72	8.66
	Paraguay	2.89	2.95	2.81	8.65
Group C	Bahamas	2.00	4.26	1.48	7.74
	Haiti	2.00	4.56	0.79	7.35
	Trinidad and Tobago	2.94	2.74	1.24	6.91
	Nicaragua	2.00	3.94	0.78	6.72
	Guyana	2.00	3.26	1.12	6.37
	Uruguay	3.47	1.99	0.63	6.09
	Suriname	2.00	3.00	0.55	5.55
	Belize	2.00	2.44	0.68	5.12
Group D	Saint Lucia	2.00	1.87	0.86	4.73
	Grenada	2.00	1.50	1.16	4.66
	Saint Kitts and Nevis	2.00	1.50	0.98	4.48
	Antigua and Barbuda	2.00	1.50	0.94	4.44
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2.00	1.50	0.71	4.21
	El Salvador	2.00	1.50	0.59	4.09
	Barbados	2.00	1.50	0.50	4.00
	Dominica	2.00	1.50	0.50	4.00
<b>Total Latin America and the Caribbean</b>		<b>219.79</b>	<b>357.44</b>	<b>54.90</b>	<b>632.13</b>

Country		GEF-5 STAR (\$ Million)			
		CC	BD	LD	Total
<b>Asia and Pacific</b>					
Group A	China	149.60	52.67	9.42	211.69
	India	93.75	30.58	5.10	129.43
	Indonesia	29.67	54.17	4.07	87.91
	Thailand	20.10	9.05	2.48	31.63
	Malaysia	14.24	14.66	1.41	30.31
	Viet Nam	13.89	12.12	1.50	27.52
	Pakistan	12.61	4.92	4.17	21.69
	Papua New Guinea	2.00	13.32	1.17	16.49
Group B	Myanmar	7.12	6.72	1.51	15.35
	Sri Lanka	2.67	7.84	2.16	12.68
	Bangladesh	9.65	1.88	1.12	12.65
	Mongolia	3.19	4.33	3.34	10.86
	Lao People's Democratic Republic	3.26	6.11	1.49	10.86
	Afghanistan	2.00	3.35	3.89	9.24
	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	6.93	1.50	0.51	8.94
	Nepal	4.02	2.67	1.60	8.29
Group C	Cambodia	2.21	3.85	1.22	7.28
	Fiji	2.00	4.56	0.59	7.15
	Micronesia (Federated States of)	2.00	3.49	0.90	6.38
	Solomon Islands	2.00	3.60	0.65	6.25
	Maldives	2.00	2.54	0.91	5.45
	Vanuatu	2.00	2.55	0.89	5.44
	Cook Islands	2.00	2.14	0.50	4.64
	Niue	2.00	1.50	1.05	4.55
Group D	Marshall Islands	2.00	2.02	0.50	4.52
	Bhutan	2.00	1.96	0.53	4.50
	Palau	2.00	1.92	0.50	4.42
	Timor-Leste	2.00	1.50	0.90	4.40
	Tonga	2.00	1.59	0.75	4.34
	Kiribati	2.00	1.69	0.56	4.25
	Tuvalu	2.00	1.50	0.59	4.09
	Nauru	2.00	1.50	0.50	4.00
<b>Total Asia and Pacific</b>		<b>422.42</b>	<b>265.80</b>	<b>56.91</b>	<b>727.22</b>

Country		GEF-5 STAR (\$ Million)			
		CC	BD	LD	Total
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>					
Group A	United Republic of Tanzania	7.86	13.95	5.61	27.43
	Democratic Republic of the Congo	8.92	13.81	0.67	23.41
	Nigeria	14.29	5.64	3.14	23.08
	Ethiopia	6.59	8.13	4.29	19.02
	Kenya	5.00	8.95	4.26	18.21
	Angola	5.18	6.99	3.48	15.65
	Sudan	8.88	3.68	2.67	15.23
	Namibia	2.00	6.28	5.69	13.97
	Mozambique	3.19	7.00	2.87	13.06
	Zambia	3.77	4.26	3.01	11.04
	Uganda	4.64	3.83	2.22	10.68
Group B	Botswana	3.18	2.11	5.21	10.50
	Burkina Faso	3.23	1.50	5.10	9.83
	Mali	3.54	1.96	4.04	9.54
	Senegal	2.41	1.80	4.92	9.13
	Ghana	2.45	2.62	3.78	8.85
	Côte d'Ivoire	2.00	3.25	2.94	8.19
	Mauritius	2.00	5.19	0.89	8.08
	Gambia	2.00	1.50	4.57	8.07
	Seychelles	2.00	4.90	0.71	7.60
	Malawi	2.00	4.39	1.19	7.58
	São Tomé and Príncipe	2.00	2.77	2.73	7.50
Group C	Cape Verde	2.00	3.52	1.48	7.00
	Mauritania	2.00	2.05	2.87	6.92
	Niger	2.00	1.50	3.38	6.88
	Chad	2.20	1.91	2.72	6.82
	Djibouti	2.00	1.50	3.14	6.64
	Eritrea	2.00	1.50	3.13	6.63
	Zimbabwe	2.00	1.72	2.87	6.58
	Congo	2.00	3.28	1.04	6.32
	Gabon	2.00	3.40	0.91	6.31
	Swaziland	2.00	1.50	2.69	6.19
	Guinea	2.00	2.43	1.50	5.93
Group D	Togo	2.00	1.50	1.99	5.49
	Central African Republic	2.00	1.68	1.75	5.44
	Liberia	2.00	2.42	0.62	5.04
	Comoros	2.00	2.08	0.70	4.78
	Guinea-Bissau	2.00	1.50	1.10	4.60
	Rwanda	2.00	1.50	1.08	4.58
	Burundi	2.00	1.50	1.07	4.57
	Lesotho	2.00	1.50	0.81	4.31
	Sierra Leone	2.00	1.50	0.68	4.18
	Equatorial Guinea	2.00	1.50	0.50	4.00
	<b>Total Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>137.34</b>	<b>153.97</b>	<b>106.88</b>	<b>404.84</b>



Country		GEF-5 STAR (\$ Million)			
		CC	BD	LD	Total
<b>Middle East and North Africa</b>					
Group A	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	18.69	6.33	3.75	28.77
	Morocco	5.81	4.90	5.04	15.75
	Algeria	9.17	3.87	1.99	15.03
	Tunisia	4.00	1.50	5.36	10.86
	Yemen	2.66	4.27	2.11	9.04
	Jordan	2.06	1.50	3.44	7.00
	Lebanon	2.00	1.50	2.75	6.25
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	2.09	1.50	0.91	4.49
	Iraq	2.58	1.50		4.08
<b>Total Middle East and North Africa</b>		<b>32.35</b>	<b>22.04</b>	<b>24.75</b>	<b>101.27</b>
<b>Europe and Central Asia</b>					
Group A	Russian Federation	87.01	24.37	8.18	119.57
	Ukraine	22.46	1.50	2.99	26.94
	Kazakhstan	15.49	4.76	5.09	25.34
	Uzbekistan	12.77	1.65	4.98	19.40
	Belarus	9.56	1.50	0.50	11.56
	Azerbaijan	6.52	1.50	3.46	11.48
	Turkmenistan	5.40	1.70	3.27	10.37
	Armenia	2.35	1.50	4.12	7.97
	Serbia	4.46	1.50	0.70	6.66
Group B	Kyrgyzstan	2.00	1.50	3.05	6.55
	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2.00	1.50	2.48	5.98
	Tajikistan	2.00	1.50	2.44	5.94
	Croatia	3.33	1.50	0.76	5.59
	Georgia	2.00	1.50	2.05	5.55
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.77	1.50	0.66	4.93
	Montenegro	2.00	1.50	0.65	4.15
	Albania	2.00	1.50	0.58	4.08
<b>Total Europe and Central Asia</b>		<b>187.32</b>	<b>56.31</b>	<b>49.31</b>	<b>282.08</b>