GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: Moldova (1994–2009)

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Foreword

This evaluation was one of two country portfolio evaluations conducted in 2010 examining Global Environment Facility (GEF) support in the Europe and Central Asia region. Moldova was selected based on its large and diverse portfolio, which includes projects in most of the GEF focal areas, and its group allocations under the Resource Allocation Framework for both biodiversity and climate change.

The evaluation found that GEF support in Moldova in the persistent organic pollutants focal area has been of strategic importance. Moldova successfully secured a full-size project, the results of which are reinforced and complemented by various other donors' projects, and which led to significant additional results and sustainable outcomes. Another finding was that GEF support to biodiversity had been instrumental in helping Moldova fulfill its obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity. GEF funding supported Moldova in building a robust foundation for meeting its obligations by developing key policy documents, including an action plan, and the country's first national report to the convention. In the climate change focal area, GEF support has had limited results, but upcoming projects offer the potential for meaningful impacts given successful replication.

GEF support has been relevant to national priorities, international conventions, and the GEF mandate, except with regard to combating land degradation. Analysis of the efficiency of GEF support shows that the project preparation and approval process in Moldova has been relatively efficient compared to that in other countries. The evaluation also found that project offices created under the Ministry of Environment, GEF Agencies, and some convention focal points play a key role in GEF project preparation and implementation. Despite these successes, the evaluation found that country ownership has been limited mainly because of a lack of coordination and of a clear strategy regarding GEF support. There was little evidence of the dissemination of project information and lessons to decision makers and stakeholders.

The GEF Evaluation Office and the GEF focal point invited a wide range of stakeholders—including representatives of the national government, GEF Agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other civil society partners—to discuss the findings of the evaluation on March 18, 2010, in Chisinau. During the workshop, the evaluation's context and methodology were presented as well as the preliminary findings and emerging recommendations. This was followed by small group discussions on select issues and a very fruitful open forum discussion. The feedback received was highly constructive and comments have been incorporated into this report as appropriate.

The Moldova evaluation was presented to the GEF Council in June 2010 together with the 2010 annual country portfolio evaluation report, which synthesized the main conclusions and recommendations from the two country portfolio evaluations undertaken by the Evaluation Office in Moldova and Turkey. Consequently, the Council asked that (1) the GEF Agencies systematically involve operational focal points in monitoring and evaluation activities by sharing relevant information with them in a timely manner; (2) the GEF Secretariat consider provision of specific monitoring and evaluation training to the national focal point mechanism through the Country Support Program; and (3) the Evaluation Office strengthen, in collaboration with the GEF Secretariat on monitoring issues, the role of operational focal points in monitoring and evaluation. The Council also encouraged the GEF Agencies to give stronger support to environment issues outside their GEF-supported projects and promote up-scaling with partner governments.

The government of Moldova has responded to the evaluation; its response can be found in annex F of this report.

The GEF Evaluation Office would like to thank all who collaborated with the evaluation. I would also like to thank all those involved for their support and useful criticism. Final responsibility for this report remains firmly with this Office.

Rob D. van den Berg
Director, GEF Evaluation Office

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by an evaluation team managed by Anna Viggh, Evaluation Officer, GEF Evaluation Office; and consisting of three consultants: Claire Dupont (lead consultant), Ludmila Gofman, and Daniela Petrusevschi. Carlo Carugi, Senior Evaluation Officer and country portfolio evaluation team leader in the GEF Evaluation Office, provided overall guidance for the evaluation. Maria Soledad Mackinnon of the GEF Evaluation Office served as research assistant.

Members of the government of Moldova—in particular, H. E. Gheorghe Salaru, Minister of Environment, who serves as the GEF political and operational focal point, and Inga Podoroghin of the Ministry of Environment—provided full cooperation and participated actively in this evaluation.

An aide-mémoire containing key preliminary findings was presented in Chisinau on March 18, 2010, to national stakeholders, including representatives of the national government, GEF Agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other civil society partners. The feedback received was highly constructive, and the comments have been incorporated into this evaluation report.

Abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFC	chlorofluorocarbon
CO_2	carbon dioxide
COP	conference of the parties
CPE	country portfolio evaluation
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FSP	full-size project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	greenhouse gas
IDA	International Development Association
IEE	industrial energy efficiency
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
MSP	medium-size project
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NIP	national implementation plan
ODS	ozone-depleting substances
OPS4	Fourth Overall Performance Study
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyl
PDF	project development facility
PIF	project identification form
POP	persistent organic pollutant
PPG	project preparation grant
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
ROtI	review of outcomes to impacts
SGP	Small Grant Programme
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

All dollar amounts are U.S. dollars unless otherwise indicated.

1. Main Conclusions and Recommendations

1.1 Background

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council has requested that the Evaluation Office conduct country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) every year. The overall purpose of CPEs is to provide the GEF Council and the concerned national governments with an assessment of the results and performance of GEF-supported activities at the country level, and of how these activities fit into national strategies and priorities as well as within the global environmental mandate of the GEF. In fiscal year 2010,[1] Turkey and Moldova were selected for evaluation.[2]

Several factors made Moldova a good choice for a CPE. It has a large and diverse portfolio which includes projects in most of the GEF focal areas, received group allocations under the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) for both biodiversity and climate change, and participates in Black Sea and Danube River regional projects.

The evaluation of GEF support in Moldova had the following objectives, as derived from the overall purpose and standard terms of reference for GEF CPEs:

- Independently evaluate the **relevance and efficiency** of GEF support in the country from several points of view: national environmental frameworks and decision-making processes, the GEF mandate and achievement of global environmental benefits, and GEF policies and procedures
- Assess the **effectiveness and results** of completed and ongoing projects in each relevant 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 in the GEF, and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF support.

Since 1994, the GEF has invested about $21.72 million in Moldova and has mobilized about $23.44 million in cofinancing for its projects there. Taking into account financing provided for project preparation, the GEF contribution in Moldova totals $22.54 million with $23.80 million in cofinancing. GEF funding has been provided for 14 national projects—5 in biodiversity,

[1] The GEF fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.

[2] The Turkey CPE is available as GEF Evaluation Report No. 60.

4 in climate change, 2 in international waters, 2 in persistent organic pollutants (POPs), and 1 multifocal (table 1.1). The international waters and POPs focal areas account for the largest funding shares—about 46 and 29 percent of total support, respectively.

With eight projects totaling $18.65 million, the World Bank has been the main channel for GEF support in Moldova, followed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which has four projects totaling $1.58 million. The majority of closed national projects were implemented through the World Bank, while most of the new activities are implemented through UNDP. One project is being implemented through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and a planned project is under preparation through the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). In addition, Moldova has participated in 16 GEF-supported initiatives that have a regional or global scope. Most of the regional initiatives involving Moldova are international waters projects for the Danube River and Black Sea. The goal of the global projects has been the preparation of communications to United Nations (UN) conventions and the development of frameworks and action plans.

1.2 Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

An evaluation team made up of staff from the GEF Evaluation Office and consultants—one national and two international—with extensive experience in Moldova's environmental sector conducted the Moldova CPE between October 2009 and May 2010. The methodology's components comprised a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques and tools. Several sources of information from different levels (project, government, civil society, GEF Agencies, and so on) formed the basis of the evaluation. The quantitative analysis used indicators to assess the efficiency of GEF support using individual projects as the unit of analysis (time and cost of preparing and implementing projects, and so forth). The evaluation team used standardized tools and protocols developed for the GEF CPEs and adapted these to the Moldovan context. Projects were selected for visits based on their implementation status and geographic clustering; this latter permitted visits to several projects within limited time frames. Review of outcomes to impacts (ROtI) studies were undertaken for two completed projects.[3]

[3] The GEF Evaluation Office recently developed the ROtI methodology, which is an innovative method for assessing a project's progress toward impact a few

Table 1.1

GEF Support to National Projects in Moldova by Focal Area

Focal area	Number of projects	GEF grant (million $)	Total cofinancing (million $)	Percentage of total GEF support
Biodiversity	5	2.89	2.32	11.54
Climate change	4	2.36	3.69	13.40
International waters	2	9.51	11.13	45.70
POPs	2	6.76	6.28	28.86
Multifocal	1	0.20	0.03	0.50
Total	**14**	**21.72**	**23.44**	**100.00**

Triangulation—using three or more analytic inputs to validate an assessment—and quality control were exercised throughout.

The evaluation primarily focused on the 14 national projects implemented within the boundaries of Moldova. An additional eight regional projects—including six in the international waters focal area—and six global projects were reviewed. These regional and global initiatives were selected on the basis of significant in-country involvement. A full assessment of the aggregate results, relevance, and efficiency of these projects was beyond the scope of this CPE, given that only the Moldova components were assessed. National and regional project proposals under preparation were not part of the evaluation.

Several limitations were taken into account and addressed where possible during the evaluation:

- CPEs are challenging, as the GEF does not operate by establishing country programs that specify expected achievement through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets.
- The identification of the GEF portfolio in Moldova was a difficult task, especially the identification of national components of regional projects. The evaluation team ultimately established a clear and reliable data set on Moldova projects and project documentation, despite a variety of inconsistencies, gaps, and discrepancies in the initially available data.
- The evaluation only assesses the contribution of GEF support to overall achievements and does not attempt to provide direct attribution.
- Evaluating the impacts of GEF-funded projects is not straightforward. Many projects do not clearly or appropriately specify the expected impact—or sometimes even the outcomes—of projects. This difficulty has been addressed through analysis and cross-examination of information from the various sources used (meta-analysis of other evaluations, internal project reports, interviews with key stakeholders, field studies, aggregate portfolio analysis, and field ROtIs).
- The assessment should be seen in the context of the nature of the GEF portfolio in Moldova. GEF support in the country includes a large range of enabling and capacity-building activities that are not expected to produce direct impacts at the environmental level but should do so as follow-up activities are implemented.

years after project completion using a theory of change approach.

1.3 Conclusions

Results and Effectiveness

Conclusion 1: In the biodiversity focal area, progress toward impact is modest, although the GEF has provided significant support to Moldova in fulfilling its obligations under the biodiversity convention.

Of nine GEF projects in Moldova in the biodiversity focal area, six are enabling and capacity assessment activities. These projects have largely served to lay the foundation for managing biodiversity conservation. Of particular importance is the first biodiversity enabling activity undertaken in Moldova, the Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan, and National Report project (GEF ID 474), which provided support to the country for meeting its obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by developing key policy documents and the country's First National Report to the CBD. Many of the activities included in the action plan developed under the project have been further moved forward through national initiatives or international projects, including subsequent GEF-supported projects.

Despite their considerable number, the Moldova enabling activities, when taken together, have had a rather limited impact. Several impact drivers—including a consistent and regularly updated information database, continued interactions among stakeholders, and extensive dissemination of project results—have not been achieved. The main barriers to achievement are limited existing capacities and institutional conflicts among central authorities involved in biodiversity conservation and management.

The medium-size project (MSP) Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem (GEF ID 1600) did not achieve one of its key expected outputs, namely the establishment of the Lower Dniester National Park, as the parliament did not approve the park's creation. The project nonetheless had some positive impacts. It succeeded in raising awareness and commitment among local authorities and the general population. It also managed to leverage additional financing for the development of local environmental action plans. And some of the project results, such as the technical studies and management plan prepared for the national park and community resource management pilots, are highly replicable.

In particular, the outcomes and lessons learned from this project have fed into the design and preparation of the recently begun MSP Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova (GEF ID 3675). This project, which became effective in April 2009, aims to develop an enabling framework for the expansion of the Moldova protected area system to include underrepresented ecosystems. It is too early to assess outcomes, but these should include the improved representativeness and coverage of the country's protected area system and strengthened capacity to manage the system. Over the long term, these would contribute to improving the management of existing protected areas and to increasing the number and extent of protected areas in Moldova that can effectively conserve globally unique habitats and the species they contain, with a focus on those that are currently underrepresented. An education and awareness program in Orhei is also planned. Replication of project outcomes is foreseen through direct reproduction of various project elements, practices, and methods, as well as by scaling up experiences. The project's institutional sustainability is very much linked to the availability of resources that ensure the continuity of project results. The project has a particular focus on increasing the cost-effectiveness of institutional arrangements and securing income for the protected area network both at the central level and for individual protected areas.

Two completed GEF global projects addressed biosafety. These enabling activities played an important role in supporting the development of the National Biosafety Framework and interaction with the Biosafety Clearing-House Mechanism. The results of these projects have been sustained through an ongoing national MSP, Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework (GEF ID 3043). This project focuses on the development of key legislation, capacity building, and awareness raising at the national and local levels. In Moldova, it has been particularly successful in triggering cooperation between the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture.

Conclusion 2: In the climate change focal area, GEF support has had limited results, but upcoming projects hold the potential to achieve meaningful impacts, given successful replication.

In the climate change area, GEF support includes two completed national enabling activities, which supported development of the First and Second National Communications to the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It has also provided capacity building in the sector and for improving the quality of the greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory.

These enabling activities have helped put climate change higher on the government agenda and in raising awareness among stakeholders. The enabling activities project team found the first project to be a learning exercise that helped build capacity and expertise for future projects. As in the biodiversity focal area, Moldova's climate change enabling activities have been particularly successful in pulling competencies and expertise together, and in defining priorities and measures to be taken to address relevant issues.

Only one MSP, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes (GEF ID 2490), has been completed. The project's main objective was to provide examples of best practices in the use of biomass- (straw-) fueled energy systems as a viable alternative to fossil fuels and a sustainable means of addressing the energy supply problems facing rural communities and agro-enterprises. The project has achieved limited actual annual emissions reductions through greater efficiency and fuel switching from coal to straw biomass. It has also been very successful in demonstrating to the local population the social and economic benefits of using renewable energy, including decreased operating costs. Replication is taking place, although on a limited scale thus far.

The ROtI study carried out for this project found that by successfully delivering the planned outcomes, the project has been instrumental in ensuring the partial realization of the foreseen impact drivers. The main area of concern is the assumptions, which are considered to be the factors necessary to reach the project's ultimate impacts. Policy, legislation, and—especially—funding are not sufficient to encourage the development of biomass use. Furthermore, economic growth, particularly in rural areas, has not taken place yet.

A planned MSP, Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector in Moldova (GEF ID 3719), aims to improve energy efficiency in the industrial sector, which should lead to reduced global environmental impact and enhanced competitiveness.

Conclusion 3: In the international waters focal area, it is too early to assess the results of the two national full-size projects, only one of which has been completed. Results of other projects are limited.

GEF support in the international waters focal area has a clear regional dimension in Moldova, as it has been provided through regional projects targeting the Danube River Basin and Black Sea. Two large subprojects have been implemented: the full-size project (FSP) Agricultural Pollution Control (GEF ID 1355), under the World Bank–GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea (GEF ID 1014) and the FSP Environmental Infrastructure (GEF ID 1542), under the Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River Basin and the Black Sea (GEF ID 2044). Only the former of these two regional FSPs has been completed.

Apart from these two subprojects, activities undertaken in Moldova under regional projects are not easy to identify. GEF regional projects have had very limited national components in Moldova, consisting primarily of the collection of information on nutrient reduction, small grants, and wetlands demonstration activities. The assessment of results is correspondingly limited.

The completed FSP, Agricultural Pollution Control, aimed to increase the use of mitigation measures by agro-industry and farmers to reduce nutrient discharge. It was conducted in collaboration

with agro-industry and farmers, and benefited from the ongoing World Bank Rural Investment and Services Project. The project included activities in a pilot watershed area (installation of communal and individual platforms, development of a code of good agricultural practices and wetlands restoration activities, and public awareness). The initiative additionally contributed to strengthening the capacity of water and soil quality monitoring, as well as to raising awareness on manure management in rural areas; these latter results need to be further sustained.

Replication by three villages is considered a significant achievement of the project, and much interest has been expressed for replication outside the pilot sites. Such replication will depend on the availability of financing at the local level and support from local authorities. The project's impact is thus limited at present and conditional on the commitment and financial capacities of local authorities. It is not possible at this time to assess the impacts of the project per se, given the short amount of time since project completion in December 2009 and the limited extent of the pilot area.

The ongoing FSP on environmental infrastructure aims to improve the quality of sanitation services in Soroca, and to reduce the discharge of pollutants from Soroca municipal sources into the Nistru River—and subsequently to the Black Sea—through the construction of a wastewater treatment plant (constructed wetlands) and engineering technical assistance. One project objective is to test and disseminate the constructed wetlands technology in the region. Given the low cost of this technology compared to traditional wastewater treatment plants and the need for sewage treatment in the region, the project could have a significant impact at national and regional levels if the technology proves efficient and is replicated throughout the region. The project's implementation has faced a series of difficulties stemming from changes in the responsible agency at the national level, changes of local leadership through local elections, and land allocation for the facility.

The results of several regional projects are very limited and insufficiently visible. For example, the completed regional project Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin (GEF ID 1460) provided small grants to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to promote and demonstrate nutrient reduction practices. These efforts were considered successful, particularly in raising awareness among the local population. With regard to another regional project, Promoting Replication of Good Practices for Nutrient Reduction and Joint Collaboration in Central and Eastern Europe (GEF ID 2746), project activities in Moldova are rather limited and are intended to contribute to the reduction of water pollution, especially in the Prut River Basin, through promotion of best agricultural practices in a pilot area.

National components of regional projects are often marginal in Moldova—to the extent that it was difficult to even identify them during the evaluation. Further, the lack of dissemination of project results is a serious obstacle to regional sharing of experiences.

Conclusion 4: GEF support to the POPs focal area has been of strategic importance.

GEF support to Moldova in the POPs focal area has comprised a mixed and staged combination of enabling activities and an FSP. The enabling activities supported the country in preparing its National Implementation Plan (NIP) for the Stockholm Convention on POPs. This NIP preparation project (GEF ID 1640) facilitated collaboration among various institutions and was instrumental

in raising awareness about POPs. In a second enabling activity, the global project Assessment of Existing Capacity and Capacity Building Needs to Analyze POPs in Developing Countries (GEF ID 2423), the GEF targeted laboratories, providing support for capacity building, including training and equipment.

The GEF FSP POPs Management and Destruction Project (GEF ID 2508) has contributed to the environmentally safe management and disposal of stockpiles of contaminated pesticides and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). The quantitative targets set for the destruction of these stocks were achieved and in some cases surpassed. The project helped strengthen country capacity to enhance its POPs information management and reporting system, POPs monitoring capacity, and POPs control. It also provided support to improve the legal framework for POPs management. (This project component was delayed and, at the time of the CPE, had not been completed.) The project also included an awareness and education campaign aimed at establishing a communications framework for POPs and other chemicals and raising public awareness concerning POPs sources and effects for different target groups. This project component has been successfully implemented and has resulted in increased awareness among the authorities and the public. Strengthened capacity and raised awareness are key elements in sustaining project outcomes.

Results from these GEF POPs initiatives have informed successive projects in this area financed by other donors. For example, the inventory of obsolete pesticide stockpiles was used to evaluate financial costs for subsequent projects. The NIP approved at the end of the enabling activity was considered a good basis for applying for an FSP. And, based on the experience gained in developing the FSP, it was easier to prepare two subsequent projects, funded by, respectively, UNEP and the Canadian International Development Agency.

For the GEF POPs Management and Destruction Project to reach its ultimate impact, additional measures are needed to finalize the elimination of POP- and PCB-contaminated equipment. Further projects funded by the GEF and other donors should help fully implement the NIP. In this regard, the regional GEF project Capacity Building on Obsolete Pesticides in EECCA [Eastern European, Caucasus, and Central Asia] Countries (GEF ID 3212) provides further support to complete the inventory of POP-polluted sites.

Relevance

Conclusion 5: Overall, GEF support has been relevant to national sustainable development and environmental priorities, international conventions, and regional processes as well as to the GEF mandate, except with regard to combating land degradation.

GEF support aligns with Moldova's sustainable development needs and challenges, as reflected in the various national development strategies formulated during the last 10 years. In particular, by promoting sustainable practices in the context of economic restructuring and development, several GEF projects have contributed to local development policy—a key objective for Moldova, given the economic importance of the agricultural sector and exacerbated poverty in rural areas.

GEF projects have addressed most of the main environmental priorities set by national development and environmental policy documents, including water resources through regional projects, toxic substances and waste management with a focus on POPs, and biodiversity conservation. GEF support has also been used to tackle climate change, which is recognized in various strategies as a key concern for Moldova, in combination with

energy security issues, notably in terms of energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy. Climate adaptation has been addressed somewhat marginally, primarily through limited project components in larger international waters or biodiversity initiatives.

Enabling activities support the fulfillment of Moldova's obligations under international conventions. International waters projects, both regional and national, have contributed to regionwide processes aimed at the protection of the Danube River Basin and the Black Sea. These activities have also supported the establishment of national priorities for sustainable development and environmental protection.

One exception to the overall alignment of GEF and Moldovan priorities is the absence of projects related to land degradation, a priority identified in sectoral strategies such as the 2000 National Action Plan to Combat Desertification and the National Comprehensive Program for 2003–20 on Increasing Soil Fertility. Moldova is eligible for GEF funding in this area, and project proposals for two MSPs were prepared with UNDP as the GEF Agency. However, both proposals were dropped by the GEF Secretariat in 2009 because funds for land degradation were depleted early in GEF-4 (2006–10).

The amount of GEF support received to date is not equal across focal areas, with funding for international waters and POPs projects accounting for just under three-quarters of GEF support. Various proposals in the pipeline focus on other priorities and, if accepted, would lead to a more balanced portfolio.

Conclusion 6: Country ownership is limited mostly because of a lack of coordination and of a clear strategy regarding GEF support.

Project offices, convention focal points, and GEF Agencies have, to varying extents, been the main drivers of GEF projects in Moldova. Project proposals are often prepared by a core group of dedicated people within the project offices, with support from the GEF Agencies. A lack of political leadership and coordination during project preparation and implementation is the main obstacle preventing the country from decisively influencing project development and implementation. The quasi-monopoly of the Ministry of Environment as the GEF national executing agency contributes to a lack of coordination and of the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders. There is a risk that the GEF might be seen as the exclusive domain of the ministry, preventing initiatives from other institutions.

This concern, along with the issue of coordination, should be taken into consideration in programming and implementation at the national level. At present, the involvement of interested institutions is often limited to contacts within steering committees, and there is no overall planning strategy regarding GEF support. Another factor with a direct influence on country ownership is the change of government, which often results in changes of priorities and in responsibilities or staff in national executing agencies; this is turn influences project implementation and outcomes.

In contrast, the POPs Management and Destruction Project has exhibited strong ownership and commitment at the national level, triggering complementarities of donor support and enhanced cross-fertilization among projects and the sustainability of different initiatives—including GEF projects—and demonstrating the value of robust country ownership. The project has facilitated coordination among various relevant central authorities, and has fully utilized and complemented the results of previous projects by creating synergies among national activities and project activities funded by the GEF and other donors to address POPs.

The need for coordination and strategic planning has been recognized at a high political level, and the Moldovan government recently approved legislation that addresses this issue. The regulation on coordination of foreign assistance sets new procedures, allocates responsibilities, and lays out institutional restructuring. If fully and efficiently implemented, the regulation could serve as the much-needed foundation for the country to play a more active role in initiating, implementing, and evaluating GEF projects. It demonstrates the government's willingness to play a far more proactive role in influencing and shaping donor assistance, as well as ensures stronger ownership through organized and systematic coordination of the various central authorities in international assistance. This new approach could enhance country ownership through the development of coherent national strategies and plans regarding donor assistance, including that provided by the GEF.

MSPs and FSPs have produced mixed results. In some focal areas, projects have been effective in demonstrating the benefits of good practices and innovative technologies. However, the impact drivers needed to achieve projects' ultimate impacts and the up-scaling of demonstrated practices and technologies have been only partially achieved. Additionally, project results are not always fully nationally owned and integrated into national frameworks.

The analysis of the GEF portfolio in Moldova found that an important element contributing to the sustainability of project outcomes is the ability to demonstrate likely social and economic benefits along with the expected environmental ones. In other words, the generation of income, savings, or social benefits is an effective tool in gaining support from the local population; its relevance should not be overlooked.

The level of cofinancing has been relatively low in Moldova, with a ratio of slightly over 1:1 for both FSPs and MSPs. Cofinancing is far more limited for enabling activities. In certain cases, expected cofinancing did not actually materialize in full. On the other hand, there has been a constant increase in cofinancing ratios over time. Cofinancing in Moldova reached a ratio of 1.63 under GEF-4 compared to 1.02 under GEF-2 (1999–2002).

Efficiency

Conclusion 7: The total project processing time span in Moldova is comparable to average figures for GEF projects. There are mixed perceptions on the complexity and duration of GEF project preparation and implementation procedures, although the general view tends to be positive.

Overall in Moldova, the GEF project preparation and approval process has been relatively efficient in comparison to that in other countries. The average preparation cost across all national projects is very reasonable compared with costs identified in previous CPEs. The processing time span is comparable to average figures for GEF projects with regard to MSPs (11 months on average from entry into the GEF pipeline to project start-up) and enabling activities (3 months on average from approval by the Chief Executive Officer [CEO] to project start-up). For two FSPs, the time from pipeline entry to project start-up is comparable to average figures. Preparation of the third FSP was exceptionally long, lasting six years. This anomalous and extensive duration was due to the particularities of the specific project.

Stakeholder perceptions of GEF efficiency vary. Several stakeholders found GEF project development procedures difficult compared to those of other donors, and maintained that the preparation of an FSP was overly time consuming, due to

the complexity of the requisite feasibility studies. Most of the interviewed representatives of MSPs and enabling activities found project preparation procedures and duration to be reasonable. Surprisingly, the general view is rather positive, in contrast to previous evaluations where GEF processes and procedures were considered overly complicated and inefficient.

Some stakeholders noted that the lack of coordination (mentioned above with regard to Conclusion 6) during project preparation may lead to problems during implementation if the relevant environmental impact assessment or authorization procedures required by national legislation are not taken into account.

Seven of nine completed projects needed an extension for their completion. These included six enabling activities for which the extension ranged from 7 to 32 months, or 60 to 270 percent of planned duration.

Conclusion 8: Project offices set up under the Ministry of Environment, GEF Agencies, and some convention focal points play a key role in GEF project preparation and implementation.

The project offices created within the Ministry of Environment play a key role in both the design and implementation of GEF projects. These offices are set up per focal area, usually at the request of the relevant convention focal point. The availability of funding to support implementation of the corresponding convention is the main criterion for establishing such an office. These project offices manage other donor projects as well as GEF projects and are a useful device in maintaining a core team of qualified experts with proven ability to prepare, manage, and implement projects. However, their existence is highly dependent on available funding, and they often work in isolation, which leads to a lack of coordination across focal areas.

The CPE identified several examples of GEF projects successfully building on earlier efforts, apparently because the core teams of experts working in the project offices have a strong motivation to develop new projects and generally facilitate consolidation of support across projects.

GEF Agencies' support was found to be critical in GEF project preparation and implementation in Moldova, particularly because of their resources and knowledge of GEF rules and procedures. The convention focal points have occasionally played a driving role in GEF project preparation, mainly in initiating a project concept and providing guidance to the project office. The level of proactivity appears to depend on the individuals concerned. Focal point involvement has been hindered by changes in staff.

The roles and responsibilities of national executing agencies and GEF Agencies are generally considered to be clearly established, and the CPE identified no specific problems in this regard.

Conclusion 9: The dissemination of information and sharing of lessons learned are limited.

One important condition for ensuring that projects produce effective results and achieve their ultimate impacts is effective dissemination of project outcomes and outputs to decision makers, stakeholders, and the general public. Although some projects have addressed dissemination of GEF project lessons learned and achievements—mainly through final seminars and documentation provided at project close—these measures are not framed in a clear strategy, including in the project proposals. This lack prevents replication and continued awareness raising beyond the project's lifetime.

Until recently, information on project results and lessons learned have not been sufficiently

disseminated by GEF Agencies, national executing agencies, and project teams. In several cases, websites developed under projects were not maintained after project completion, making useful information inaccessible. Similarly, project databases have been neglected after project completion.

Conclusion 10: The GEF focal point mechanism has not provided sufficient strategic guidance and coordination.

In Moldova, both the political and operational roles of the GEF focal point are assigned to one person; since 2008, the minister of environment has held this position. Several key informants expressed concern about the effectiveness and efficiency of the GEF focal point mechanism, given its sizable responsibilities. In particular, while the project offices or convention focal points play a noticeable role in operational activities, there is a lack of guidance and facilitation to align projects with the national development plan and environmental priorities. Additionally, the focal point is not involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the GEF portfolio. Information on GEF mechanisms and procedures is also lacking.

Recent initiatives may greatly improve the situation. First, Moldova benefits from the GEF Country Support Program, and it is likely that such support will continue in the future. Second, under the new regulation on the institutional framework and the mechanism of coordinating foreign assistance, the Ministry of Environment should designate a sector coordinator and a sector foreign assistance board, both of which will play a key role in planning foreign assistance, including that provided by the GEF. This planning will entail defining assistance priorities, identifying project ideas and developing proposals, and negotiating and signing contracts for foreign assistance. Finally, with UNDP support, a workshop was organized within the Ministry of Environment in January 2010 to discuss Moldova's involvement in GEF-5 (2010–14). Although the ministry elected to not include other GEF Agencies, the workshop was a very useful planning exercise and highly informative, especially for new ministerial staff.

1.4 Recommendations

To the GEF Council

Recommendation 1: The GEF should fully support the introduction of the Small Grants Programme in Moldova.

Projects with activities at the local level should be encouraged as a means of overcoming the potential lack of political commitment and encouraging replication. Generally, projects close to the local population have a high potential for replication. Concrete, pragmatic examples of successful practices are seen as more effective than workshops and seminars, and strong involvement by the local population contributes to the up-scaling of demonstrated new technologies and good practices. This finding is especially true in relation to rural areas, which tend to be especially affected by poverty. The direct involvement of the population at the local level contributes to enhancing the catalytic effect and replication of GEF projects. Such involvement would be better secured through the Small Grants Programme (SGP), which works directly with NGOs and community-based organizations to address environmental issues and supports the delivery of global environmental benefits at the local level. Moldova has already had experience with small grants under a regional international waters project as well as under the UNDP Small Grants Scheme component, whose design is based on that of the GEF SGP. These initiatives have been successful and have shown the potential for this modality to help generate ownership at the local level. Establishment of the SGP

in the country would also provide much-needed support to the Moldovan NGO community, which is very active but has limited means.

To date, there has been no GEF SGP in Moldova. The country has expressed its interest, and its application to the SGP was very recently approved by the GEF SGP Steering Committee. The GEF should support this process to ensure that the SGP is added as a new GEF modality in Moldova.

Recommendation 2: The GEF should provide guidance on and establish requirements for the dissemination of project results and lessons learned.

As noted by the Fourth Overall Performance Study of the GEF (OPS4), learning in the GEF is still not systematically encouraged. The GEF lacks a knowledge management strategy that pulls all learning efforts together in a coordinated way. This lack results in lost opportunities for learning on the part of the GEF partners and countries.

At the country level, the Moldova CPE has highlighted the importance of learning efforts to encourage replication and up-scaling. However, dissemination of project results and lessons learned is far too limited. Such dissemination and communications activities are primarily a responsibility of the GEF Agencies, national executing agencies, and project implementation teams under the auspices of GEF projects.

It is therefore recommended that the GEF support these activities through the development of relevant guidance and/or requirements. For example, the GEF could require large projects with a significant awareness-raising component to develop a communications strategy that identifies and plans for appropriate activities both during and after project implementation. All project proposals should make provisions for disseminating information on project results during and after the project, with a corresponding budget allocation. Instructions should be provided as to how to ensure that information resources, including websites and databases, are maintained and used after project completion. Similarly, guidance on dissemination of lessons learned would be useful in supporting the exchange of experiences among projects, GEF Agencies, and national executing agencies.

To the Government of Moldova

Recommendation 3: Address issues of land degradation and climate adaptation in GEF projects.

Since land degradation is a priority clearly established in national sectoral policy documents, it should be addressed in future GEF projects either within specific land degradation–related projects or in projects addressing other focal areas, particularly biodiversity or international waters. In these latter two focal areas, project activities relating to sustainable agricultural practices are particularly relevant and should address land degradation issues.

Another growing priority is climate change adaptation. While GEF projects to date have mainly focused on promotion of renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency, it is recommended that the government, along with the GEF Agencies, consider GEF support for projects targeted at climate change adaptation under the Climate Change Fund. Moldova is eligible for this fund as a non–Annex I country. However, because the fund's focus is on most-vulnerable countries, the resources available for those countries that are outside Africa and that are not small island developing states may be rather limited. Therefore, other potential sources of funding for climate adaptation projects should be sought. As with land degradation, these issues could be integrated into biodiversity and international waters projects

in order to reduce the vulnerabilities of the population and communities to floods and droughts and to climate variability, while protecting and restoring vulnerable ecosystems.[4]

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the focal point mechanism and develop a strategic approach to GEF support to ensure efficient coordination among the main stakeholders, including other donors.

The functions of the focal point should generally be strengthened, notably through sufficient funding and the provision of support staff. Such support would enable the enhancement of the strategic and coordinative role of the focal point by providing additional resources to facilitate liaison with stakeholders and day-to-day communication, and dissemination of project outputs and outcomes as well as lessons learned. It would also allow the focal point to become more involved in the monitoring and evaluation of GEF-supported projects.

In this regard, the GEF Country Support Program is a very useful mechanism, which should be fully and effectively exploited by Moldova to disseminate information about, and coordinate with a wide range of stakeholders on a strategic approach to, GEF support. The program could be particularly instrumental in helping maintain websites and Web pages set up by projects and to develop and update project databases.

Several additional measures and actions should be considered to improve coordination among key stakeholders, including other donors:

- Improve coordination in programming and implementation of GEF support by creating a framework and mechanism of coordination of future GEF support with all national stakeholders and GEF Agencies. Participation of stakeholders in the design and implementation of GEF projects should be further supported, in particular by facilitating effective integration and dialogue among the different central authorities and other key players in environmental fields. The advantages of having other organizations as GEF project national executing agencies should be seriously considered and promoted. Moldova would likely benefit from undertaking a GEF portfolio identification exercise, coordinated by the GEF focal point and linked with national and GEF Agencies' planning processes, as proposed under GEF-5.

- Systematic coordination among donors should be strongly encouraged. This would allow synergies during project implementation, and could be instrumental in supporting replication and promoting the catalytic effect of previous projects. To this end, an effective strategy to support replication should be developed. In several cases, project impacts may not be realized due to a lack of financial means and political commitment. Coordinated implementation of various projects—such as other donor projects or national projects and programs targeted at rural development, and GEF projects focused on the promotion of environmentally friendly technologies—is instrumental in creating synergies and ensuring the realization of desired impacts. Such combined efforts among different projects can greatly help ensure improved continuity of project results. Synergies can also be created if other projects and programs are used to build on project results while there is still time to do so—for example,

[4] Such an approach is in line with the final GEF-5 programming document, which underlined the existing interlinkages among GEF focal areas, cross-focal synergies, and the avoidance of trade-offs in the individual focal area strategies (GEF Secretariat 2010).

through support to replication of the demonstrated technology or good practices.

- Representatives of public authorities (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Processing, Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Forestry Agency, and others), convention focal points, NGOs, academia, and GEF Agencies should be involved in discussing and setting priorities and strategies for GEF support. In addition, they should be informed of results and lessons learned from GEF projects implemented in Moldova. Improved coordination of GEF support at the national level would be a decisive step in more actively involving other national executing agencies.

2. Evaluation Framework

This chapter presents the background information, objectives, and methodology related to and used in the GEF Moldova country portfolio evaluation.

2.1 Background

The GEF Council requested that the Evaluation Office conduct evaluations of the GEF portfolio at the country level—that is, GEF country portfolio evaluations. The overall purpose of CPEs is twofold:

- To evaluate how GEF-supported activities fit into national strategies and priorities, as well as within the global environmental mandate of the GEF
- To provide the Council with additional information on the results of GEF-supported activities and how these activities are implemented

Countries are selected for portfolio evaluation from among 160 GEF-eligible countries, based on a stratified randomized selection and a set of strategic criteria. So far the Evaluation Office has conducted nine CPEs: Costa Rica (pilot case in 2006); the Philippines and Samoa (both in 2007); Benin, Cameroon, Madagascar, and South Africa (in 2008); and Egypt and Syria (in 2009). Reports for the completed evaluations are available on the GEF Evaluation Office website (www.gefeo.org). The most recent portfolio evaluations were undertaken in Moldova and Turkey in 2010. Among several considerations, Moldova was selected based on its large and diverse portfolio, which includes projects in all the GEF focal areas, its group allocations under the RAF for climate change and biodiversity, and its participation in Black Sea and Danube River regional projects.

2.2 Objectives

Based on the overall purpose of GEF CPEs, the Moldova evaluation had the following specific objectives:

- Independently evaluate the **relevance and efficiency** of GEF support in the country from several points of view: national environmental frameworks and decision-making processes, the GEF mandate and achievement of global environmental benefits, and GEF policies and procedures.
- Assess the **effectiveness and results** of completed and ongoing projects in each relevant 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 in the GEF, and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF support.

The CPEs do not aim to evaluate or rate the performance of the GEF Agencies, partners, or national governments. The evaluation analyzes the performance of individual projects as part of the overall GEF portfolio, but without rating such projects.

2.3 Scope

Since 1994, the GEF has invested about $21.72 million (with about $23.44 million in cofinancing) through 14 national projects—5 in biodiversity, 4 in climate change, 2 in international waters, 2 in POPs, and 1 multifocal project. When project preparation financing is included, the GEF's contribution to Moldova totals $22.54 million. The World Bank, with eight projects totaling $18.65 million, has been the main channel for GEF support in Moldova followed by UNDP, with four projects totaling $1.58 million. The majority of closed national projects were implemented through the World Bank, while most of the new activities are being implemented through UNDP. In addition, one national project is being implemented through UNEP, and a planned project is under preparation through UNIDO. In the biodiversity focal area, GEF support has been concentrated on the conservation and management of protected areas, and efforts to meet biosafety obligations. In climate change, it has focused on renewable energy from agricultural waste. The international waters projects in Moldova relate to agricultural pollution control and environmental infrastructure. In the POPs area, the GEF focus has been on safely managing and disposing of stockpiles of POP-contaminated pesticides and PCBs, and strengthening the country's regulatory and institutional arrangements. The GEF has also supported a series of enabling activities in all the focal areas, as required by the international conventions for which the GEF serves as the financial mechanism. Financing for the enabling activities supported by the GEF in Moldova totals about $1.46 million.

In addition, Moldova has participated in 16 initiatives with a regional or global scope financially supported by the GEF. Regional and global projects were selected for review in this CPE where the following criteria were met:

- A project coordination unit and/or sites existed in Moldova.
- There was a clear connection to national projects.
- The project was in a focal area of particular relevance to Moldova.

In all, 14 regional and global projects were included in the review in addition to the 14 national projects. Most of the regional projects in which Moldova participates are international waters projects involving the Danube River and the Black Sea. The global projects have played a key role in developing communications to the UN conventions and developing frameworks and action plans. Chapter 4 outlines GEF support to the national, regional, and global projects in which Moldova has participated.

National proposals under preparation—for example, projects that have been allocated project preparation grants (PPGs)—were not explicitly included in the CPE. Any projects approved after December 2009 also were not included. Five dropped projects that did not complete the approval process are discussed to a limited extent.

The context in which the projects were developed and approved and in which they are being

implemented constitutes the focus of the evaluation. The three main contextual areas examined, as highlighted in chapter 3, are as follows:

- **Potential for securing global environmental benefits in each focal area**—to determine whether the maximum potential national and global benefits have been secured
- **Relevant national policy, legislative, strategy, planning, and institutional frameworks**—to determine the relevance of the portfolio to national frameworks and priorities
- **GEF policies, principles, programs, and strategies**—to determine the relevance of the portfolio to the GEF

The evaluation is not intended to comprehensively review the country's response to the various global conventions, because this response goes beyond the GEF. Rather, it only considers GEF support; the country will usually have a wider set of responses to the conventions that do not include the GEF.

2.4 Methodology

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 address the three main areas of the evaluation—the results and effectiveness, relevance, and efficiency of GEF support, respectively. Each chapter begins by listing certain key questions that guided the evaluation process. Each question is supported by an evaluation matrix (annex B), which contains a tentative list of indicators or basic data, potential sources of information, and methodology components. The evaluation made use of the indicators in GEF project documents, as well as indicators of each of the focal areas, the RAF, and any appropriate national sustainable development and environmental indicators.

The Moldova CPE was conducted between October 2009 and May 2010. The evaluation team consisted of staff from the GEF Evaluation Office and local and international consultants from Milieu Ltd. The team was headed by a task manager from the GEF Evaluation Office. The methodology comprised a series of components using a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques and tools. The **qualitative** aspects of the evaluation are based on the following sources of information:

- **At the project level**, project documents, project implementation reports, terminal evaluations or closure reports, and reports from monitoring visits
- **At the country level**, documents relevant to the broad national sustainable development and environmental agenda, priorities, and strategies; specific policy, strategies, and action plans relevant to focal areas; GEF-supported strategies and action plans relevant to the global conventions; and national environmental indicators
- **At the GEF Agency level**, country assistance strategies and frameworks and their evaluations and reviews, specifically from UNDP
- Evaluative evidence **at the country level** from GEF Evaluation Office evaluations, such as the Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities, the overall performance studies, or from national evaluations
- **Statistics and scientific sources**, especially for national environmental indicators
- **Interviews with GEF stakeholders**, including the GEF focal point, relevant government departments, national executing agencies; NGOs; GEF Agencies including the World Bank, UNDP, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); bilateral donor agencies; and project managers (annex C lists those interviewed)

- A limited number of **field visits** to project sites, including limited interviews with GEF beneficiaries at the community level where possible (annex D lists these field visits)
- Information from the **national consultation workshop** held March 18, 2010, to enable comment and discussion on findings before the report was finalized, as well as written comments (annex E lists the workshop participants)

The **quantitative** analysis used indicators to assess the efficiency of GEF support using projects as the unit of analysis (time and cost of preparing and implementing projects, and so forth). The evaluation team used standardized tools and protocols for the CPE and adapted these to the Moldovan context. These tools included

- a matrix outlining the information relevant to the evaluation and expected sources,
- a project review protocol to conduct the desk and field reviews of GEF projects, and
- an interview guide for conducting interviews with different stakeholders.

Projects were selected for visits based on whether they had been completed and on their geographic clustering; this latter permitted visits to several projects within limited time frames. Site visits played a key role in applying the review of outcomes to impacts methodology. ROtI studies were conducted on two projects that had been completed for at least two years to allow analysis of progress toward impact.

The process and outputs of the evaluation are outlined in the terms of reference (annex A). The three main phases of the evaluation were as follows:

- Conduct of the evaluation, including at least two visits by representatives of the GEF Evaluation Office
- Presentation by the GEF Evaluation Office of the draft report at a national consultation workshop with major stakeholders
- Preparation of the final report, incorporating any comments, for presentation to the GEF Council and the government of Moldova

2.5 Limitations of the Evaluation

CPEs are challenging, as the GEF does not establish country programs that specify expected achievements through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets. In general, CPEs entail some degree of retrofitting of frameworks in order to judge the relevance of the aggregated results for a diverse portfolio of projects. Accordingly, the basic evaluation frame proposed by the GEF was adapted—along with the other relevant policy, strategy, and planning frameworks outlined in chapter 3—as a basis for assessing the results and relevance of the portfolio in the Moldovan context.

The identification of the GEF portfolio in Moldova was difficult and time consuming, as little information was available and it was not compiled in a systematic way. The evaluation team had to rely on the GEF database, complementing and supplementing these data through interviews and desk review. The Moldovan Ministry of Environment did not maintain a list of GEF projects. The national components of regional projects, with the exception of the two FSPs under the Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and the Black Sea, were particularly challenging to identify. There is little institutional memory within the Ministry of Environment, and little evidence of activities carried out in Moldova has been found in project documentation. To the extent possible, the team conducted extensive interviews in order to identify activities carried out in the country. The main sources of information were the GEF Agencies and the project

offices. The evaluation team ultimately managed to establish a clear and reliable set of data on projects and project documentation.

Attribution of results comprises another area of complexity. The CPE does not attempt to provide a direct attribution of development and environmental results to the GEF, but instead addresses the contribution of GEF support to the overall achievements obtained in partnership with others, looking at roles and coordination, synergies and complementarities, and knowledge sharing among various initiatives.

Where possible, assessment of results is focused at the level of outcomes and impacts rather than outputs. Project-level results are measured against the overall expected impact and outcomes from each project. Expected impacts at the focal area level are assessed in the context of GEF objectives and indicators of global environmental benefits. Outcomes at the focal area level are primarily assessed in relation to catalytic and replication effects, institutional sustainability and capacity building, and awareness.

Evaluating the impacts of GEF-funded projects is not straightforward. Many projects do not clearly or appropriately specify the expected impact—or sometimes even the outcomes—of projects. Often, the type of information provided by project reports and terminal evaluations is limited to outcomes or even just outputs and does not contain an evaluation of impacts. The project documents do not always provide clear, consistent formulations of objectives, indicators, and targets or baselines from which progress can be assessed. The absence of information on project impacts is also attributed to the time frames of evaluation cycles; evaluations are usually conducted before measurable impacts can be expected. This difficulty has been addressed through analysis and cross-examination of information from the various sources used (meta-analysis of other evaluations, internal project reports, interviews with key stakeholders, field studies, aggregate portfolio analysis, and field ROtIs).

Finally, the assessment should be seen in the context of the nature of the GEF portfolio in Moldova. To date, GEF support in Moldova includes a large range of enabling and capacity-building activities, which are not expected to produce direct impacts at the environmental level but rather as follow-up activities are implemented. As only three national projects have been completed, with one FSP nearing completion, it is too early to fully measure the global environmental impacts of the GEF portfolio in Moldova.

3. Context of the Evaluation

3.1 General Description

Moldova is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe, located between Romania to the west and Ukraine to the north, east, and south. Its topography is primarily hilly plains interspersed with deep river valleys, with elevations up to 43 meters. Moldova is part of the Black Sea watershed and has two large rivers, the Dniester and the Prut. Three-quarters of the country is covered by a fertile soil type called chernozem, which is ideal for agriculture. Rich soil and a favorable climate support diversified agricultural production ranging from wheat, corn, barley, tobacco, sugar beets, soybeans, and sunflowers to extensive fruit orchards, vineyards, and walnut groves. The country does not have any major mineral deposits; its natural resources include deposits of lignite, phosphorite, and gypsum (UNECE 2005).

By several measures, including UNDP's Human Development Index, Moldova is the poorest country in Europe.[1] The rural population, which represents 58.6 percent of the total population as of 2009, is particularly vulnerable (National Bureau of Statistics 2009). When Moldova gained its independence in 1991, its economy was highly dependent on the support of the former Soviet Union. This is still partly true, especially in terms of energy, as 98 percent of Moldova's consumed energy resources are largely imported from the Russian Federation. Moldova experienced an unprecedented economic collapse after independence. The country's unstable internal political situation and territorial disintegration were intensified by difficulties in implementing the reforms needed to cope with the political and economic transition (Government of Moldova 2004).

The 1991 conflict in Transnistria, a separatist region located between the Dniester River and the Ukrainian border, deepened the crisis by severing economic ties within the country. Most of the industrial sector is located in Transnistria, including many food processing companies and the largest power plant in Moldova. The gas pipelines that supply the country cross Transnistria, which threatens the security of the gas supply. The internal conflict also affected banking, monetary, and payment systems and fanned the emergence of black markets.

Although the Moldovan economy finally started to grow again in 2000, the country was severely hit by the 2009 global economic crisis. However, recent data suggest that the situation will improve. In January 2010, the EBRD revised its growth forecasts and is now expecting a 4 percent growth rate in Moldova for 2010 and 2011 (EBRD 2010).

The Soviet legacy of overexploitation of national resources, along with the recent economic recession, has led to numerous environmental

[1] Moldova ranks 117 on the index as of 2009.

problems in Moldova, including increased water pollution, deforestation, and soil erosion. These problems have been somewhat offset by the decline in economic activity and the corresponding decrease in pollution, particularly pollution from industry.

3.2 Status of Environmental Resources in the GEF Focal Areas

Biodiversity

The natural biological diversity of Moldova is determined by its geography. Specifically, the republic's territory is situated at the intersection of three ecoregions—Central Europe, Euro-Asia, and the Mediterranean—which favors a rich biodiversity. Moldova borders the Balkans and constitutes a transition zone between the Asian continental steppe and the European forest steppe (METD 2001b).

About three-quarters of Moldova's land area is dedicated to agriculture, while natural and semi-natural ecosystems cover approximately 15 percent. Significant portions of these ecosystems are highly degraded, and the number of endangered species has climbed dramatically from 55 to over 180 in the last 30 years (UNDP 2009).

Flora and Fauna

The flora of Moldova comprise 5,513 plant species, of which 1,989 are vascular plants and 3,524 are nonvascular. No endemic plant species has been identified in the country. The forest ecosystems have the richest biodiversity of plant species, followed by the steppe ecosystems (MENR 2009a). During the last 50 years, 31 flora species have disappeared from Moldova. Ecological analysis has established that 77 percent of the plant species lost were dependent on wetlands habitats (Izverskaya 2000).

Forests account for about 11 percent of the total area of the country (MENR 2009a). Natural formations represent only 4 percent of the total cover. The percentage of afforestation differs greatly from zone to zone, and forest cover is quite limited and fragmented.

Similarly, Moldovan steppes are seriously threatened. In the past, steppe communities covered about two-thirds of the Moldovan territory. Currently, natural steppe communities have been preserved only in small and isolated areas, occupying 1.9 percent of the country's total area (UNDP 2009). The status of flora diversity of steppe ecosystems is considered unsatisfactory throughout the country due to excessive and uncoordinated grazing and a decrease in steppe vegetation that has left large areas denuded of feather grass and other valuable steppe species (MENR 2009a). Twenty-six species of plants were included in the first edition of the "Red Book of the Republic of Moldova" (Academy of Sciences of Moldova 1978); the second edition (Academy of Sciences of Moldova 2001) includes 117 plant species and 9 species of fungi (METD 2001b).

Some 460 species are considered invasive flora. There are about 114 species of invasive weeds which impinge on both natural ecosystems of degraded meadows and agricultural ecosystems. The North American maple (*Acer negundo*) poses a significant threat to forest ecosystems. The share of endangered biota in Moldova is rather high.

Moldova fauna include 14,800 species of animals, including 461 species of vertebrates and about 14,339 invertebrates. The "Red Book" lists 116 animal species, and the number of endangered or critically endangered animal species increased from 29 to 101 between 1978 and 2001 (Academy of Sciences of Moldova 1978, 2001). Several species of Moldovan fauna are included in the "European Red Book."

Threats to Biodiversity

Although the surface of protected areas and afforested zones in Moldova has increased over the last 20 years, the country's biodiversity remains threatened by a variety of factors. The lack of viable natural habitat is seen as the most significant threat to biodiversity; other threats include overharvesting, industrial pollution, and invasive species (DevTech Systems 2007).

Human activities undertaken during the 1960s and 1970s—notably the conversion of forests, steppe areas, and wetlands systems for agriculture—affected biodiversity in Moldova by fragmenting natural areas and habitats, thereby limiting their ecological function. These activities also threaten species diversity and ecosystem services such as water retention and filtration, soil fertility, and stability; this in turn results in ongoing loss of habitats and species. The biodiversity of the steppe zones has been particularly adversely affected by overgrazing, soil erosion, landslides, and soil salinization as a result of intensive irrigation of flood plains and pollution of surface waters (METD 2001a; DevTech Systems 2007). Intensive agricultural practices have caused deforestation, soil erosion, and pollution through the extensive use of chemicals. Such practices are the legacy of Soviet agricultural techniques, which involved the use of a large quantity of pesticides and fertilizers. Today, the use of chemicals in agriculture has been reduced, albeit primarily for economic rather than environmental reasons. Consequently, there is the risk that if farmers' economic conditions improve, the use of chemicals will again rise.

Illegal logging and hunting have also had a negative impact on biodiversity. Moreover, climate change has affected various local species of flora and fauna; this in turn has had a significant impact on ecosystem composition and resulted in degradation of ecosystem services to local populations (UNDP 2009).

The lack of free ecological niches and the competition between species have favored the emergence of invasive species (METD 2001b). Finally, the poor enforcement of environmental protection legislation is another threat to biodiversity conservation. The situation is particularly difficult in protected areas that are now managed by local authorities.

Protection Status

Between 1998 and 2006, the proportion of land area under protection in Moldova increased from 1.96 percent to 4.65 percent (MENR 2007a). The number of protected areas (figure 3.1) grew from 309 to 312. Currently, the system of protected areas in Moldova covers 157,227 hectares or 4.65 percent. This coverage corresponds to the 2010 targets established by the country's Biological Diversity Conservation National Strategy and Action Plan (METD 2001a), the National Development Strategy (Government of Moldova 2008), and the Millennium Development Goals for the Republic of Moldova (Government of Moldova 2007). However, the total protected area coverage in Moldova is still far below the European Union (EU) average of about 15 percent of the country's land area.

Under current conditions, Moldova's protected area system does not effectively address threats to biodiversity, as it is not ecologically representative. A large number of species, ecosystems, and ecological processes are not adequately protected; moreover, the management regimes of the existing protected areas do not provide full security for particular species or ecosystems.

Climate Change

Status of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Between 1990 and 2005, Moldova's total direct GHG emissions, as expressed in carbon dioxide

Figure 3.1

Natural Areas Protected by the State in Moldova

Source: METD 2001a.

(CO_2) equivalent, revealed a decreasing trend, dropping about 72.3 percent from 42,886.0 gigagram CO_2 equivalent in 1990 to 11,883.5 gigagram CO_2 equivalent in 2005. This decline was due mainly to Moldova's transition to a market economy after independence and the effects of the global economic crisis (MENR and UNDP 2009).

The energy sector is, by and large, the main contributor to GHG emissions in Moldova, followed by the agricultural sector, and waste and industrial

processes; a very limited share of emissions is generated from solvents and other products (figure 3.2). While the other contributors have all seen an increase in their share of GHG emissions over the 1999–2005 period—notably the waste sector, whose GHG emissions tripled—the energy sector's share, although still the most important source of GHG emissions, has decreased from 81 to 65 percent.

Moldova's Second National Communication to the UNFCCC developed three scenarios of future projections with a 2030 horizon, excluding land use, land use change, and forest. All three scenarios result in an increase in GHG emissions, ranging from a worst case of about 156 percent to 123 percent under the most optimistic scenario (MENR 2009b).

Mitigation Options

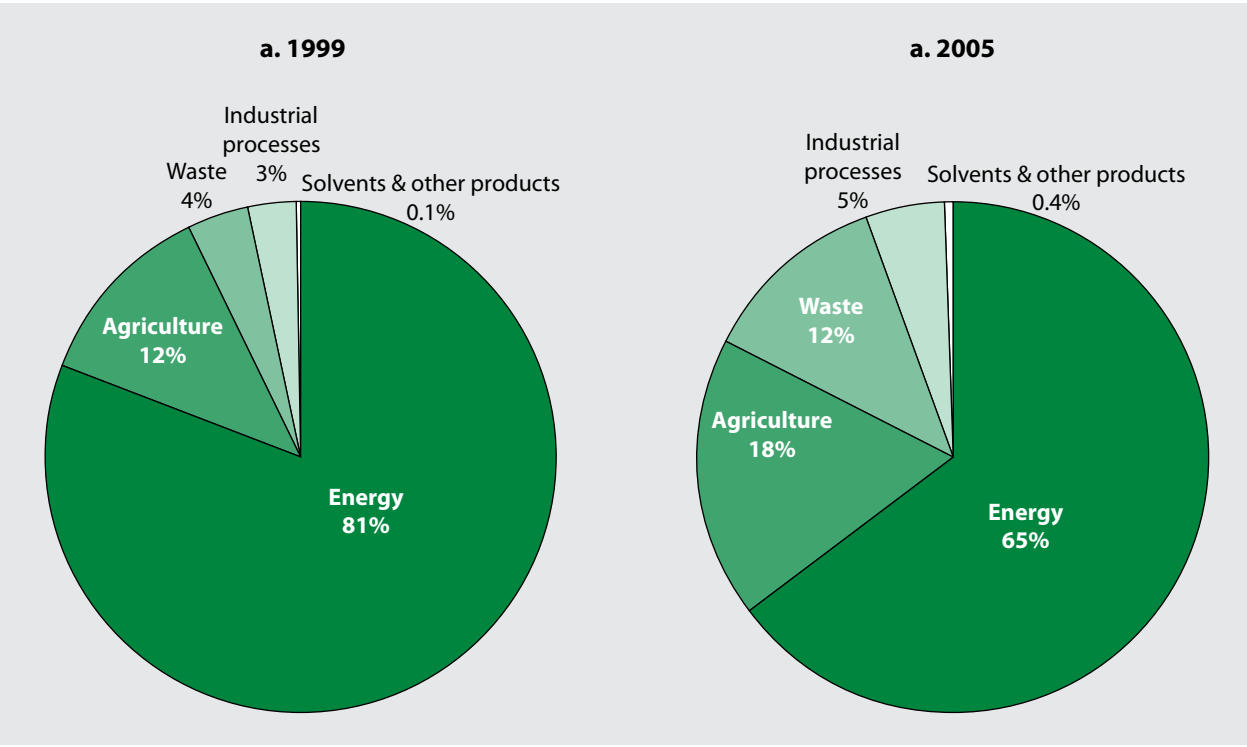
The Second National Communication to the UNFCCC identifies a range of measures (again excluding land use, land use change, and forest) to reduce GHG emissions and increase carbon removals in the relevant sectors—energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry, and waste (MENR 2009b).

Renewable Energy

Moldova's current energy strategy sets a target of 6 percent for the share of renewable energy in the country's total energy balance by 2010 and 20 percent by 2020. If these targets are achieved, they will contribute to an annual GHG emissions reduction of about 167 to 210 gigagrams of CO_2 equivalent (MENR 2009b).

Figure 3.2

GHG Emissions in Moldova by Sector, 1999 and 2005



Source: MENR 2009b.

A 2002 feasibility study on biomass, wind, and solar energy in Moldova found that there is potential to use renewable energy in Moldova at reasonable costs (Todos and others 2002). However, despite some experience in the use of renewable energy, limited financial resources, insufficient political will, and lack of awareness constitute significant barriers for its implementation in Moldova.

Vulnerability to Climate Change

The state of natural ecosystems, agriculture, and public health is, to a large extent, dependent on climate change impacts. The risk factors that determine the degree of vulnerability for ecosystems and public health are soil humidity deficiency, uneven distribution of precipitation, frequent floods, and high temperatures, particularly in early summer and late spring (MENR 2009b).

The main impacts of global climate change in Moldova have been identified by UNDP (2009), which focuses on climate change in Moldova. These impacts include an increase in annual mean air temperature to 4.1–5.4°C, with maximum warming in winter and transition seasons, and a continuous annual decline in summer precipitation. The annual decrease in precipitation against a temperature increase stimulates a strong humidity deficit, resulting in a drier climate. Finally, extreme weather events are likely to become more frequent in the future, as illustrated by two recent catastrophic events—a severe drought in 2007 and heavy flooding in 2008.

These impacts present a number of very serious threats, of which the following are notable:

- Water shortage coupled with increasing frequency of short-term water oversupply, particularly in the form of flash floods
- Impacts on ecosystems such as biodiversity losses
- Reduced agricultural harvests seriously undermining the country's food security
- Likely negative impacts on transportation infrastructure and energy distribution networks, demand, and production capacity
- Human health linked to growing temperatures, leading to heat waves and a decline in the quality of drinking water

Adaptation to Climate Change

The priorities in adapting to new climate conditions, identified by assessing the vulnerability of ecosystems and risk factors, include measures related to water and biodiversity, as follows:

- **For natural ecosystems**—extension of natural areas, assessment of species and ecosystem stability under the new climate conditions, development and implementation of forests and other green area extension programs, efficient forest management, and restoration of wetlands
- **For water resources**—water protection against pollution and depletion caused by anthropogenic activities, prevention of water-destructive effects, identification of flood risk areas and implementation of flood prevention measures, and consolidation of hydrotechnical constructions for flood protection

International Waters

Surface Water Resources

All Moldovan rivers are part of the Black Sea Basin and flow from the northwest to the southeast. The country's water network consists of the Dniester and Prut River systems, the rivers flowing into the Danube lakes, and the lakes in the vicinity of the Black Sea. The country's hydrographical network accounts for about 2.7 percent of its territory, with a total length of about 16,000 kilometers. The flow

of small rivers decreases in summer, sometimes drying up completely. The most intense floods take place in the summer during a typically torrential rainy season.

The main sources of water supply in Moldova are the Dniester River (over 80 percent of total consumption), and groundwater (15.2 percent) (MENR 2008).

Water resources are unequally distributed across the country. The northern and, to some extent, central parts of Moldova are currently fairly water secure; the southern part suffers from a natural water deficit.

Groundwater Resources

Groundwater resources are also not uniformly distributed. The main water reserves are located in the aquifer underlying the Dniester River. Moving farther away from the river, the water table's supply decreases (UNECE 1998).

The majority of Moldova's groundwater does not meet quality standards for potable water due to excessive concentrations of chemical substances. Groundwater characteristics are influenced by both natural and anthropogenic factors, in particular the lack of treatment of wastewater discharge and an excessive use of pesticides and other chemicals in agriculture and forestry.

In recent years, the number of operational artesian wells significantly decreased by around 50 percent. Simultaneously, there has been a pronounced increase in the number of wells fed by aquifers.

Main Threats to Water Resources

Due to climate change, Moldova is expected to experience an increasing frequency of short-term water oversupply, particularly in the form of flash floods, as well as seasonal droughts (UNDP 2009). In drought years, many Moldovan rural communities currently experience problems with water availability, leading to problems of food security.

Moldova's water pollution has both point sources—namely the discharge of insufficiently treated or untreated wastewater—and diffuse sources—in particular, rainwater drained from settlements and runoff from agricultural land and dumps (MENR 2008). Runoff is caused by environmentally unsustainable crop and soil management practices; overexploitation and illegal cutting of forests, leading to the destruction of forest belts and buffer strips; inappropriate management, storage, and disposal of animal manure and waste; overgrazing; and mismanagement of wetlands (GEF 2001). Wastewater discharged from residential or industrial areas is a major contributor to surface water pollution, as wastewater treatment plants have ceased operation. The quantity of untreated or insufficiently treated wastewater has dramatically risen since 2000.

Intense nitrate pollution of underground water resources is mainly due to improper management of manure and household waste, which is stored near groundwater sources. In rural areas, where most of the population draws their drinking water from polluted groundwater sources and where only 17 percent of families use central supply sources, the low quality of water has a direct impact on the population's health, causing increased morbidity and generating additional health-related expenditures for the state budget and economy.

Persistent Organic Pollutants

Moldova has used extremely high amounts of pesticides in the past. From the 1950s to the 1990s, an estimated total of 560,000 tons of pesticides were used in the country, including 22,000 tons of persistent organochlorinated compounds. Pesticide

use peaked during 1975–85, but has been dramatically reduced over the last decades.

Nonetheless, stockpiles of obsolete pesticides pose a continuous threat to the environment and public health. From 1991 to 2003, about 60 percent of Moldova's warehouses for pesticide storage were destroyed or dismantled, and only 20 percent of those remaining have been maintained in satisfactory condition. Significant amounts of obsolete pesticides were stored in the open air. The deteriorated packaging increased the risk to human health and the environment, as some warehouses were situated close to residential areas (MENR 2004). The National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants adopted in 2004 estimated the total amount of obsolete pesticides in Moldova at that time as approximately 5,650 tons.

In 2005, Moldova had an unusually high amount of PCBs requiring disposal; this circumstance derived from the fact that, under the Soviet Union regime, the country had been the energy hub transmitting electricity to Bulgaria. Most of the PCBs in Moldova were concentrated in electrical power installations. The capacitors at these installations were situated outdoors, and PCBs leaked from corroded capacitor batteries into the soil below. In all, 20,000 PCB-containing capacitors, both unused and those classified as discarded, were located in 20 electrical substations throughout the country, mainly at the Vulcanesti power station. The leakages resulting from these corroded capacitors are expected to increase in the coming years.

Land Degradation

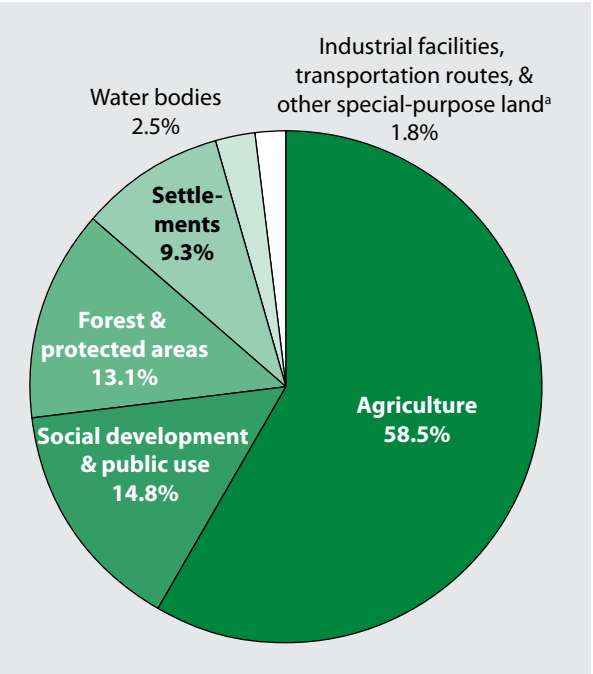
Moldova has unique land resources, characterized by black earth with a high productivity potential and very high (greater than 75 percent) utilization rate. As shown in figure 3.3, agriculture is the predominant land use in the country. Chernozem, a highly productive soil, makes up 78 percent of the country's arable land (UNDP 2009).

Soil fertility has been seriously affected by agricultural exploitation and the application of intensive technologies. Excessive grazing is one of several severe problems contributing to soil degradation in Moldova. Animal husbandry in the country far exceeds established standards of animal units per hectare of pasture. In addition, the majority of pastures have low productivity, since they are located on eroded lands (MENR 2007a).

Erosions, ravines, landslides, and floods have all had a negative impact on soil, while soil dehumidification processes have led to a decrease in the humus content of Moldova's agricultural lands (MENR 2007a).

Figure 3.3

Land Use in Moldova



Source: National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova 2009.
a. Includes pastures, plantings, flooded areas, and diverse structures.

Ozone

Moldova has no chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) production, and CFC consumption by the industrial, commercial, and servicing sectors has been covered entirely by imports. Since the 1998 approval of Moldova's refrigerant management plan, CFC consumption has rapidly decreased. Importation of CFCs and PCB-containing equipment has been banned in the country since January 1, 2008. Servicing of old CFC-based equipment is performed using existing stockpiles and/or from recovered and recycled CFCs (MENR 2007a).

The refrigeration servicing sector is the only one in which CFCs are still used, as it faces the dual challenge of upgrading technicians' skills in good practices and improving end user knowledge in dealing with retrofits and the conversion to non-CFC alternatives. This challenge is particularly acute as it applies to smaller and medium-size locally owned businesses (MENR 2007a).

With support from the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, Moldova is currently developing a management plan to phase out the release of hydrochlorofluorocarbons.

3.3 Environmental Legal, Operational, and Policy Framework

After gaining its independence in 1991, Moldova actively engaged in transitioning to a market economy and integrating into global and regional processes. The main challenge the country faced was to develop its own administrative, policy, and legal framework—including in the environmental area—moving away from the old Soviet system, which was both bureaucratic and rigid, and toward a legal system closer to internationally recognized principles and European legislation.

Alignment with the European Union is an increasingly important feature in the development of Moldovan environmental legislation and policies, given the privileged relationship the country has established with the EU within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed with the EU in 1995. Based on this agreement, the EU Moldova Action Plan adopted in 2005 sets forth the strategic objectives of cooperation between Moldova and the EU over a three-year time frame (EU 2005). Its implementation will support Moldova's objective of further integration into European economic and social structures. One of the aims of the action plan is to advance Moldovan legislation, norms, and standards toward those of the EU. Negotiations on a reinforced EU-Moldova Association Agreement began in January 2010. This agreement will constitute a new stage in EU-Moldova relations, by reinforcing the political dialogue and sectoral cooperation, including in the environment area.

A key aspect of the recent evolution of Moldova's environmental policy and legislation is reform of central public administration, along with regulatory reform. The aim of both reforms is to modernize and improve governance in Moldova.

The **Central Public Administration Reform Strategy**, approved in 2005, aims to establish a modernized, efficient central public administration system in compliance with principles of good governance. This goal would be achieved by reorganizing the ministries and other centralized public authorities, optimizing the decision-making process, and improving the management of human resources and public finances.

The recent restructuring of the Moldovan government, which followed the election of July 2009, incorporated some of the Central Public Administration Reform Strategy recommendations. The new Ministry of Environment, established in September 2010, succeeds the Ministry of Ecology

and Natural Resources.[2] Like its predecessor, it incorporates the State Environmental Inspection, the Fishery Service, the Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources, the National Agency for Regulation of Nuclear and Radiological Activities, the State Hydrometeorological Service, and the National Institute of Ecology. Additionally, it has authority over Apele Moldovei (the Moldovan Water Management Agency), which was previously directly subordinate to the government. The ministry's staff was increased from 33 to 51 persons.

The **regulatory reform** was initiated in 2006. It aims to improve the regulatory system governing entrepreneurial activities at the national and local levels. Notably, a regulatory impact assessment is now required for all new legislation as of January 1, 2008.[3] The reform also led to the adoption of a so-called "guillotine process"—a rapid review of all legal acts to identify and cancel those that are unnecessary and outdated. This process started in 2004 with the adoption of the first guillotine law, followed by the second guillotine law adopted in 2007. A third guillotine law is planned for the medium term (2010–11). This process has led to the cancelation of several environmental legal documents, including in some old Soviet environmental quality standards. As these standards have not yet been replaced, a certain level of uncertainty and confusion exists.

Overview

After independence, Moldova initiated a reform of its environmental protection legislation. It adopted a main framework law on environmental protection in 1993. The National Strategic Action Program for Environmental Protection 1995–2020, developed with support provided by the World Bank, was adopted in 1995. The following year, the National Environmental Action Plan 1995–98 was adopted within the framework of the strategic program. However, activities to be accomplished under the action plan have been only partially implemented, and no further action plans have been adopted. Several laws aimed at biodiversity conservation have been passed; these include a 1995 law on the animal kingdom, a 1996 forestry code, and a 1998 law on protected areas. A new water code was adopted in 1993.

A second wave of environmental policy and legislative development occurred after 2001, when Moldova adopted a Concept of Environmental Policy, developed specific legislation affecting various environmental sectors, and passed several key laws on biodiversity. Energy framework legislation was adopted, as was the 2007 National Energy Strategy. No major legislation was passed regarding water, but several policy documents have been formulated; their impact has not been significant due to a lack of implementation. Land degradation issues have been addressed in a number of recent policy documents.

Policy documents and legislation directly relevant to the POPs focal area were developed and supported by the GEF; these include the National Strategy on the Reduction and Elimination of POPs, the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on POPs, and a law on

[2] Responsibility for the environment and associated considerations in Moldova was, before 1998, lodged with the Department for Environmental Protection; this was reorganized as the Ministry of Environment and Territorial Development in 1999 and then as the Ministry of Ecology, Construction, and Territorial Development in 2001. In 2004, it became the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, losing its responsibilities in the areas of construction and territorial development.

[3] Governmental Decision No. 1230, October 24, 2006, on approval of the methodology of regulatory impact assessment and monitoring of regulatory act efficiency.

phytosanitary and fertilizer products, all of which were adopted in 2004. The main legislation in the ozone focal area was a 2002 law on trade regime and the use of ozone-depleting substances (ODS), which has been supplemented by a number of implementing regulations.

A more recent third wave of legislation has been triggered by Moldova's aspiration to European integration; this has led to a consequent attempt at harmonization with the requirements of EU legislation. In this regard, a series of new laws are being developed—covering, among other areas, environmental protection, water, chemical substances, the classification and labeling of chemicals, and waste—often with support from international donors. However, the drafting and approval process is very slow, and efforts are not always sufficiently coordinated. These problems are due in part to a lack of clear priorities and political drive, as environmental issues appear to be low on the national policy agenda.

Moldova is a party to most of the important global and regional environmental agreements; table 3.1 summarizes the country's participation in the conventions and agreements of particular relevance to the GEF focal areas. Moldova is also a partner in environmental protection cooperation agreements with its neighboring countries of Romania and Ukraine, as well as with Denmark, Italy, Latvia, and Poland.

Overall, implementation of these various international agreements and legislation is limited, partly because of a lack of capacity and of human and financial resources, as well as ineffective implementation and enforcement mechanisms, and limited stakeholder participation. Moldova's environmental legislation suffers from gaps and inconsistencies which have not always been addressed in a systematic way when developing new legislation. Also, despite the country's adoption of a comprehensive set of strategic documents, these are often duplicative and not always realistic, especially with regard to financing.

Table 3.2 shows, by year, the connection between national policies and legislation, the ratification of international conventions, and the implementation of GEF projects. In cases where GEF projects were implemented prior to national policies and legislation, they likely contributed to Moldova's development of environmental law.

General Policy and Legislative Framework

The chief policy document currently in force with regard to environmental policy in Moldova is the Concept of Environmental Policy, approved in 2001. It includes four main environmental objectives and actions:

- Improve and ensure good governance in the environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Maintain the quality of the environment as a factor key to human health and quality of life.
- Ensure transboundary cooperation in the environmental field and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Improve the level of environmental education, information, and awareness.

The 2001 concept replaced the 1995 National Strategic Action Program for Environmental Protection 1995–2020 as Moldova's primary environmental policy document. However, no overall environmental protection strategy and action plan was subsequently developed, and the concept is currently being revised.

Moldova also adopted in 2001 the Concept on Sustainable Development of Settlements as an integrated part of its regional development policy. The concept aims at

Table 3.1

Moldovan Participation in Relevant International Conventions

Convention	Year of agreement
Biodiversity	
United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	1995 (R)
Protocol on Biosafety	2002 (R)
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)	2000 (R)
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar)	1999 (R)
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	2000 (R)
Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats	1993 (R)
Convention on European Landscape	2000 (R)
Climate change/energy	
Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution	1995 (R)
Protocol on Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone	2000 (S)
Protocol on Heavy Metals	2002 (R)
Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants	2002 (R)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	1995 (R)
Kyoto Protocol	2003 (A)
Energy Charter Treaty	1996 (R)
International waters	
Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes	1994 (R)
Protocol on Water and Health	2005 (R)
Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters	2003 (S)
Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the River Danube	1999 (R)
Land Degradation	
Convention to Combat Desertification	1999 (A)
POPs	
Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal	1998 (A)
Amendment to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, including Annex VII	2008 (A)
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	2004 (R)
Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade	2004 (R)
Ozone	
Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer	1996 (A)
Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	1996 (A)

Note: A = accession; R = ratification; S = signature.

Table 3.2

Years of Entry into Force of Policy Documents, Regulations, Treaties, and GEF Projects

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Convention		• CBD (BD) • UNFCCC (CC) • Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CC)	• Energy Charter (CC)		• Basel (POPs)	• Wetlands of International Importance (BD)	• CITES (BD) • Conservation of Migratory Species (BD) • European Landscape (BD) • Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone (CC)	
Policy							• Program on Production and Domestic Wastes Management (POPs)	• National Strategy and Action Plan on Biodiversity (BD) • Strategy on Forestry Sustainable Development (BD)
Legislation	• Environmental People Law (BD • Monument Protection Law (BD) • RAUA (POPs)	• Animal Law (BD) • Law on Phytosanitary Quarantine (POPs)	• Forest Code (BD)	• Law on Protection of Atmospheric Air (CC) • Law on Hazardous Substances and Products (POPs) • Law on Domestic and Production Waste (POPs)	• Law on Protected Areas (BD)	• Law on Plant Protection (POPs)	• Law on Energy Conservation (CC)	• Biosafety Law (BD) • Government Decree on Approval of Measures for Centralized Storage and Disposal of Obsolete Unused and Prohibited Pesticides (POPs)
GEF support					BD Strategy, Action Plan & 1st Report to CBD (GEF ID 474)			
								Capacity Building Needs (BD) (GEF ID 908)
				1st Communication (CC) (GEF ID 323)				Capacity Building (CC) (GEF ID 1010)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Convention	• Cartagena Protocol (BD) • Heavy Metals Protocol (POPs) • POPs Protocol (POPs)	• Kyoto (CC)	• Stockholm (POPs) • Rotterdam (POPs)				• Amendments to Basel (POPs)		
Policy		• National Program for Energy Conservation (2003–10) (CC)	• National Strategy on Reduction and Elimination of POPs • NIP for the Stockholm Convention (POPs)			• National Energy Strategy (2007–20) (CC)			
Legislation		• Regulation on Management of Products of Phytosanitary Use and Fertilisers in the National Economy (POPs)	• Law on Phytosanitary and Fertilizer Products (POPs)	• Law on Red Book (BD) • Regulation on Products of Phytosanitary Use and Fertilizers (POPs) • Regulation on Import, Storage, Marketing and Use of Products of Phytosanitary Use and Fertilizers (POPs)	• Fishery Law (BD) • Law on Animals Used in Experiments (BD)	• Zoological Gardens Law (BD) • National Ecological Network Law (BD) • Law on Renewable Energy (CC)	• Law on Vegetal Kingdom (BD) • Law on Protection of Plant Varieties (BD)	• Regulation on PCBs (POPs)	
GEF support	GEF ID 908 (cont'd)			• Biosafety Clearing-House (BD) (GEF ID 2128; global) • 3rd report (BD) (GEF ID 2713; global)			4th report (BD) (GEF ID 3746; global)		
	BD Conservation in Lower Dniester Delta (GEF ID 1600)				Support to Implementation of Biosafety Framework (BD) (GEF ID 3043)				
	Biosafety Frameworks (GEF ID 875; global)			Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste (CC) (GEF ID 2490)				Protected Area System (BD) (GEF ID 3675)	
	GEF ID 1010 (cont'd)				2nd Communication (CC) (GEF ID 2387; global)				
	CB for GHG Inventory (CC) (GEF ID 1018; regional)			Assessment of Capacity and Capacity Building to Analyze POPs (GEF ID 2423; global)				POPs Management and Destruction (GEF ID 2508)	
	Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs (GEF ID 1640)								

Note: BD = biodiversity; CC = climate change.

- balanced development of cities in conjunction with overall sustainable socioeconomic development,
- development of the legal and institutional framework,
- support of local public administration in its socioeconomic development efforts.

The concept led to the adoption of the 2004–06 Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, which establishes the policy framework for Moldova's sustainable development over the medium term. The strategy's chapter on environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources emphasizes the need for integrating sustainable development principles in socioeconomic activities. The main objectives of the strategy are to prevent and reduce the degradation of natural resources and increase the efficiency of their use; to maintain the quality of the environment; and to create an effective natural disaster monitoring, prevention, and damage compensation system.

The Moldovan Village national program, approved in 2005, is part of the national strategy, and constitutes the political framework for sustainable rural development in the country for the 2005–15 period. The program addresses the degradation of the natural environment in rural areas.

The National Development Strategy 2008–11 follows on from the 2004–06 Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy; it serves as the country's current primary strategic planning document for the medium term. The strategy sets out Moldova's development objectives until 2011 and establishes priority measures and actions to achieve those objectives. It is focused on a limited number of strategic priorities to ensure concentration of available resources so as to effectively achieve the set objectives. The strategy is intended to ensure the continuity of the reforms initiated and priorities set in the context of the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the EU-Moldova Action Plan, and the Millennium Development Goals.

Presently, the main environmental protection framework legislation is the 1993 law (No. 1515). It is outdated, and the need for a core revision is generally recognized. A new law on environmental protection is being developed with support from UNEP. However, harmonization with EU legislation makes this a very complex exercise, entailing both developing a framework law, and making a series of strategic decisions that will shape the future of environmental regulation in Moldova.

Other related legislation already in place includes the following:

- The Law on Ecological Expertise and Environmental Impact Assessment (No. 851, 1996) establishes the scope, tasks, and principles of ecological expertise and environmental impact assessment (currently under revision).
- The Law on Natural Resources (No. 1102, 1997) regulates relationships among the use, protection, and reproduction of natural resources in order to ensure ecological security and sustainable development of Moldova; and establishes the legal foundation for determining natural resource property rights, management, use, and control procedures, and liability.
- The Law on Payment for Environmental Pollution (No. 1540, 1998) regulates payments for pollutant emissions into the environment and waste disposal, and provides for the establishment of an environmental fund.

Biodiversity

Moldova's policy and legislative framework related to biodiversity is quite comprehensive.

The country has benefited from extensive international support in this field, particularly through GEF-financed projects. Moldova ratified the CBD in 1995 and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in 2002.

The main policy documents for biodiversity management are the Biological Diversity Conservation National Strategy and Action Plan approved by the government in 2001; these were developed with the support of a GEF enabling activity implemented through the World Bank. The strategy's overall goal is to establish a basis for the adequate management of natural resources and the sustainable development of social and economic systems, with a particular focus on the conservation of biological and landscape diversity. To achieve these objectives, the action plan sets out various activities relating to the legislative and institutional framework, territorial planning, biodiversity conservation and restoration, research and monitoring, and informational/educational activities.

In 2001, Moldova also adopted a Strategy on the Sustainable Development of the Forest Sector, together with the State Program on Forest Fund Areas Regeneration and Forestation for 2003–20. The strategy identifies issues of national interest in the forest sector: conservation of the biological diversity of forests, rational use of forest resources, and the extension of forest areas from 10.7 percent of the land to 15 percent. It also aims to improve the protection of forests and integrate forest management with that of other sectors.

A first set of laws developed within Moldova's biodiversity conservation legal framework was adopted before 2000; a second set was adopted beginning in 2005. Specifically, several key biodiversity laws covering the animal kingdom, a forest code, and protected areas were adopted in 1995, 1996, and 1998, respectively. Beginning in 2005, these were complemented by another series of key laws, including the following:

- Law on the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova, which regulates the protection, use, and reintroduction of lost, seriously endangered, endangered, vulnerable, rare, and undetermined plant and animal species included in the "Red Book of the Republic of Moldova" (2005)
- Law on the piscicultural fund, fisheries, and conservation of aquatic biological resources (2006)
- Law on the National Ecological Network, which provides a legal framework for the establishment, development, and management of the network as an integrated part of the pan-European ecological network as well as of local ecological networks (2007)
- Law on the vegetable kingdom (2008)
- Law on the protection of plant varieties (2008)

Climate Change and Energy

Climate change and energy are seen as priority issues by the government of Moldova. Moldova ratified the UNFCCC in 1995. GEF projects have provided useful support to the country in implementing its obligations under the UNFCCC. They have also contributed, together with other internationally funded projects, to the general debate on climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, especially with regard to energy efficiency and energy from renewables.

The principal document establishing Moldovan priorities in the field of energy policy is the National Energy Strategy (2007–20). The strategy's main objectives are to ensure the security of the energy supply, promote energy conservation and efficiency, and increase the use of renewables to satisfy domestic energy demand. It sets

quite an ambitious target: that renewable energy sources achieve 10 and 20 percent shares in the energy balance by 2010 and 2020, respectively. The strategy recognizes the importance of acceding to the Energy Community Treaty and ensuring harmonization with EU energy-related legislation. Before the adoption of the National Energy Strategy, the National Program for Energy Conservation (2003–10) had set a target to reduce energy intensity by 2–3 percent annually by 2010.

A range of new laws was adopted in the energy sector beginning in the 1990s to replace the old Soviet legal framework. Particularly notable is the 2000 law on energy conservation. More recently, the law on renewable energy, adopted in 2007, establishes a legal framework for the renewable energy sector and regulates the production and sale of renewable energy and fuel. It established the National Agency for Energy Regulation, as well as the Energy Efficiency Fund; this latter has not been established yet. The law provides incentives to use renewable energy sources; these too have not yet been implemented. In addition, a draft law on energy efficiency is currently under preparation.

International Waters

Moldova is part of the Danube River Basin and is a party to the Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the River Danube. The country has also signed bilateral agreements with Ukraine and Romania on shared water resource management.

The main objectives of Moldova's water management policy are established in the National Water Management Policy Concept (2003), covering the period 2003–10. These overriding objectives are (1) implementation of stable management of water as a natural resource and as a socioeconomic function, and (2) creation of healthy and safe conditions for human life. The concept aims at the rational use and conservation of water resources, water quality improvement, meeting both economic and population needs with regard to the water supply, and rehabilitation of aquatic ecosystems.

The Water Supply and Sanitation Program of the Republic of Moldova until 2015 was approved in 2005 and addresses issues linked to the poor state of the supply and sanitation infrastructure and lack of connection in rural areas. The program's overall objective is to ensure steady and continuous functioning of centralized and decentralized communal water supply and sanitation systems. The main goals are to contribute to the improved health and welfare of the population, rational use of water, environmental protection, protection of water supply sources against pollution and depletion, rational management of capital investments, improvement of service quality, improvement of the economic efficiency of the water supply and sanitation sector, a reduction by half of the population (currently about 1 million inhabitants) that is without access to safe water resources by 2015.

A strategy for water supply and sanitation was approved in 2007. The strategy's specific objectives over the medium term (2008–12) are decentralization of water supply and sanitation public services, promotion of market economy principles, expansion of centralized water supply and sanitation systems and improved access to services, promotion of sustainable development and environmental protection measures, and promotion of social partnership. The strategy also includes long-term objectives (2013–25), notably to meet the population's water demands, to implement water safety plans and ensure the quality of drinking water in accordance with European standards, to ensure urban wastewater treatment in line with European standards, and to ensure

regional cooperation in water supply and sanitation services.

To date, only modest implementation successes have been realized under either the program or the strategy; this is due to a lack of resources.

The costs estimated in the two supporting documents are not entirely consistent, with the 2005 Water Supply and Sanitation Program citing a total cost for the sector of about €350 million, and the 2007 strategy estimating €2.25 billion. One of the reasons for this discrepancy is the absence of a reliable, up-to-date, centralized database of information on the state of collection and treatment systems.

A draft water law has been under preparation for the last four years. The draft law reflects the provisions of European water-related legislation, in particular the EU Water Framework Directive. Currently, the main framework legislation regulating water resource use and protection in Moldova is a 1993 water code. It focuses mainly on water quantity issues and does not address river basin management and planning. Institutional capacity is rather limited with regard to water management.

Persistent Organic Pollutants

Moldova has been very active in developing policies and legislation on POPs management, leading to the ratification of the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions in 2004.

The purpose of the Program on Production and Domestic Wastes Management, approved in June 2000, is to promote cleaner production through reduction and prevention of waste accumulation. However, there has been almost no development of this plan, which included some provisions to address pesticides, including POPs.

Strategic documents were developed that specifically target POPs—namely, the National Strategy on Reduction and Elimination of Persistent Organic Pollutants in the Republic of Moldova and the NIP for the Stockholm Convention on POPs, adopted in 2004. The NIP was developed under a GEF enabling activity.

More recently, the government has prepared a draft National Program on Sustainable Management of Chemical Substances in the Republic of Moldova, which is expected to be approved in 2010. This will be the main strategic planning document that sets forth long-term objectives for the development of an integrated management system for chemical substances including POPs. The first implementation period (2010–15) will focus on improving the legal and institutional framework in line with international standards, capacity strengthening, and risk reduction activities targeting priority chemical substances. The second period (2015–20) will focus on the elaboration and implementation of strategies regarding the assessment and reduction of risks associated with chemical substance management, cleaner production, and improving analytic capacities.

Moldova's framework law on chemicals management dates from 1997. The law on hazardous substances and products sets out the general provisions on chemicals management inserted into the 1993 law on environmental protection. Due to a lack of implementing regulations and mechanisms, the law is far from being fully implemented and enforced. Legislation on plant protection is also quite outdated, as it was developed mostly in the mid-1990s (1995 law on phytosanitary quarantine; 1999 law on plant protection).

More recently, a law adopted in 2004 establishes the legal framework and state policy on activities related to pesticides and fertilizers. Implementing regulations establish procedures for testing and approval of pesticides and fertilizers for use in

agriculture and forestry and the import, storage, marketing, and use of pesticides and fertilizers.

Also worth noting is the 1997 law on domestic and production waste, which regulates the management of domestic and production wastes through their reduction and reuse. A new draft law on waste management is currently being developed; its aim is to harmonize the Moldovan legal framework on waste with EU legislation. A regulation on the control of transboundary transport of dangerous waste and its disposal was approved by the Moldovan government in 2003.

The review of Moldovan chemicals and waste legislation undertaken by the GEF POPs stockpiles project revealed many gaps, especially with regard to basic elements of chemical life-cycle legislation. It found that the distribution of competencies among institutions is not clear, nor is the allocation of responsibilities to operators. Interministerial coordination mechanisms are almost nonexistent, except with regard to pesticide management. Under the GEF POPs stockpiles project, a regulation on PCBs was developed; this was approved in 2009. It regulates the management of PCBs and equipment containing PCBs to ensure effective implementation of, and compliance with, international requirements and harmonization with EU requirements. The project also supported development of a range of draft legislation, notably two laws on chemicals and on the classification and labeling of chemicals, along with a draft strategy on waste management.

Land Degradation

Moldova has developed a number of policy documents relating to land degradation, starting with the National Program for Preventing Desertification adopted in 2000. The purpose of this program is to maintain and enhance soil fertility in the country's dry regions affected by desertification processes. The program targets lands that are not yet fully degraded or that have already started to dry out. The program also aims to consolidate institutional cooperation at all levels among donors, government, and local administration. It seeks to involve both the general population and NGOs. Due to insufficient financial support, the program has been only partially implemented.

The 2003–10 National Program for Exploring New Lands and Increasing Soil Fertility is also of relevance. This program has two parts. The first part deals with degraded soils, aiming to protect soils from erosion and to recover damaged soils. Using a list of priority anti-erosion works for the period 2003–10, this part of the program is being executed within the limits imposed by very scarce financial resources. The program's second part focuses on preserving and/or increasing the fertility of both degraded soils with low productive potential and those less affected through the sensible use of fertilizers, crop rotation, irrigation, and other regeneration measures to ensure food security.

In addition, the State Program on Regeneration and Afforestation of Forest Land for 2003–20 was designed to support implementation of Moldova's National Strategy of Forestry Sustainable Development and provides for measures targeting forest regeneration and development.

Specific legislation aims to regulate land degradation issues. The key instrument in this regard is the 2000 law on improvement of degraded land by afforestation, which establishes the legal basis for improvement by afforestation of degraded land plots, the procedures for identifying such land plots, and financing sources. It covers all types of degraded land that can be improved by afforestation—regardless of ownership structure/management—in order to protect soil, rehabilitate the hydrological balance, and improve environmental conditions.

Ozone

Moldova became a party to the convention on ozone layer protection, as well as to the Montreal Protocol regarding the substances that destroy the ozone layer, in 1996 (Parliament Decision No. 966-XIII). The country also adopted the London and Copenhagen Amendments to the Montreal Protocol in 2001.

The 1999 National Program for the Gradual Phase-out of ODS provided for the creation of an ozone unit under the Ministry of Environment charged with implementing the program. The program's objectives are to develop a monitoring system for importing and using ODS, harmonize a system for customs codification, establish taxes for ODS and equipment containing ODS, appraise statistical data on the use and importation of ODS and ODS-containing equipment, ensure the efficient monitoring of licensing and quota systems, and develop and implement new technologies and refrigerants that pose no harm to the ozone layer.

Moldova's main legislation addressing ODS is Law No. 852-XV of 2002, which regulates the ODS trade regime and ODS use. It includes detailed provisions on licensing ODS trade, controlling ODS emissions, and ODS management and accounting. It applies to the production, import, export, re-export, transit, market circulation, sale, use, recovery, recycling, and regeneration of substances that deplete the ozone layer, either in their pure state or in mixtures with concentrations exceeding 1 percent mass, in bulk or in transportation containers; as well as to ODS-containing equipment and products containing halogenated hydrocarbons that deplete the ozone layer.

The law was amended in 1999 and 2004 to address the licensing of certain activities associated with ODS use. A refrigerant management plan was developed, and a recovery/recycling program for refrigerants was implemented. Licensing and authorization systems have been established for activities linked to ODS and equipment containing ODS, and licensing and quota systems have been subject to monitoring. Numerous regulations and orders have been adopted within this legal framework to address technical aspects, import, export, use and handling, and occupational safety. Most recently, in May 2008, Law No. 852-XV was amended to exempt alternatives to ODS from environmental taxes. Customs codes have been updated by adopting the international harmonized system.

4. The GEF Portfolio in Moldova

This chapter presents an overview of GEF support to Moldova in terms of financial resources provided and number of projects, by type of project, GEF focal area, GEF Agency and national executing agency, and GEF replenishment period.

4.1 Projects in the GEF Moldovan National Portfolio

Between 1994 and 2009, the GEF invested about $21.72 million in Moldova; cofinancing totaled about $23.44 million. This funding has supported 14 national projects—5 in biodiversity, 4 in climate change, 2 in international waters, 2 in POPs, and 1 multifocal project (table 4.1). The projects range in size from small investments for enabling activities to large full-size projects. Moldova does not participate in the Small Grants Programme, but has submitted an application following a successful pilot small grants program financed and implemented by UNDP.

In **GEF-1** (1995–98), only two enabling activities were financed. The Enabling Moldova to Prepare Its First National Communication in Response to Its Commitments to UNFCCC project received $0.325 million and was implemented through UNDP; the Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan, and National Report project received $0.125 million and was implemented through the World Bank.

Moldova's first FSP was the Agricultural Pollution Control Project, an initiative in the international waters focal area. It was approved in **GEF-2** for $4.95 million and was implemented through the World Bank with $5.79 million in cofinancing. The country's first MSP was also approved in GEF-2; this was the World Bank–implemented project, Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem. It received $0.975 million, but was closed early prior to full disbursement of the GEF grant. Three enabling activities addressing biodiversity, climate change, and POPs convention reporting, respectively, were approved in GEF-2 as well.

During **GEF-3**, five projects in Moldova were financed: two FSPs, two MSPs, and one enabling activity. The World Bank–implemented FSP POPs Management and Destruction Project is the largest project funded by the GEF in Moldova, with a GEF grant of $6.35 million and $6.25 million in cofinancing. The second FSP funded in this replenishment period was the Environmental Infrastructure Project, with GEF financing of $4.562 million; this project is implemented through the World Bank with $5.338 million in cofinancing. The MSP Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes received $0.973 million in GEF support. It too is implemented through the World Bank, with cofinancing of $1.654 million. Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework project, the second MSP, is the first national project implemented through UNEP. It received $0.542 million from the GEF and $0.147 million

Table 4.1

GEF Portfolio in Moldova, 1994–2009: National Projects

GEF ID	Project title	Focal area	GEF Agency	Project type	GEF grant (million $)	Total cofinancing (million $)	GEF phase
Completed							
323	Enabling Moldova to Prepare Its First National Communication in Response to Its Commitments to UNFCCC	CC	UNDP	EA	0.325	0	1
474	Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan, and National Report	BD	WB	EA	0.125	0	1
908	Assessment of Capacity Building Needs and Country Specific Priorities in Biodiversity	BD	WB	EA	0.300	0.040	2
1010	Climate Change Enabling Activity (Additional Financing for Capacity Building in Priority Areas)	CC	UNDP	EA	0.100	0	2
1355	Agricultural Pollution Control Project—under WB–GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	IW	WB	FSP	4.950	5.790	2
1600	Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem	BD	WB	MSP	0.975	1.041	2
1640	Enabling activities related to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in the Republic of Moldova	POPs	WB	EA	0.412	0.025	2
1803	National Self-Assessment of Capacity Building Needs	MF	UNDP	EA	0.200	0.025	3
2490	Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes	CC	WB	MSP	0.973	1.654	3
Ongoing							
1542	Environmental Infrastructure Project - under Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River Basin and the Black Sea	IW	WB	FSP	4.562	5.338	3
2508	POPs Management and Destruction Project	POPs	WB	FSP	6.350	6.250	3
3043	Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework	BD	UNEP	MSP	0.542	0.147	3
3675	Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova	BD	UNDP	MSP	0.950	1.092	4
PIF approved							
3719	Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector in Moldova	CC	UNIDO	MSP	0.960	2.040	4
Dropped							
1157	Upgrading of Chisinau Waste Water Treatment Plant	IW	EBRD	FSP	—	—	n.a.
1556	Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Residential Sector in Moldova	CC	UNDP	MSP	0.975	0	n.a.
2280	Land Degradation	LD	UNDP	MSP	0.975	0	n.a.
2522	Ecological Network Development in Mid-Prut River Catchment	BD	WB	MSP	1.000	0	n.a.
2744	Integrated and Sustainable Land Management Through Community Based Approach	LD	UNDP	MSP	1.000	0	n.a.

Note: n.a. = not applicable; — = not available. PIF = project identification form; BD = biodiversity; CC = climate change; IW = international waters; LD = land degradation; MF = multifocal; WB = World Bank; EA = enabling activity.

in cofinancing. The period's enabling activity was a multifocal project, the National Self-Assessment of Capacity Building Needs (GEF ID 1803), implemented through UNDP. Two MSPs that had received project development funds totaling $50,000 (see section 7.1) were approved, but later dropped in this phase. An additional two MSP proposals under preparation through UNDP in the land degradation focal area were dropped during GEF-4.

In **GEF-4**, Moldova participates under the RAF in group allocations for both biodiversity (with a possible maximum of $3.2 million for 89 countries in the group) and climate change (with a possible maximum of $3.3 million for 112 countries). Moldova has used $1.1 million in the biodiversity area and $1 million in the climate change area; this includes project development funding. These figures include the approval of the two MSPs: Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova, under implementation through UNDP; and Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector in Moldova, which has had its project identification form (PIF) approved. UNIDO is the GEF Agency for this latter MSP, its first in Moldova. The climate change funding also includes project preparation funding of $0.980 for the Biogas Generation from Animal Manure Pilot Project, which was PIF approved in January 2010, too late to be included in the evaluation.

National project locations are shown in figure 4.1. Project sites are distributed relatively evenly throughout the country. The ongoing POPs Management and Destruction Project has the most project sites, and is the only project with sites in the autonomous region of Guagazia. The Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes initiative also has a large number of project sites, with 11 locations of installed biomass boilers. Due to the ongoing conflict in Transnistria—a breakaway territory since 1990, located between the Dniester River and the eastern Moldovan border with Ukraine—no project activities have taken place in this region.

4.2 Allocations by Focal Area

The international waters focal area represents the largest amount of GEF funding in Moldova, accounting for $9.51 million, or about 44 percent of total GEF funds for national projects, and $11.13 million in cofinancing, or 47.5 percent of total cofinancing for national projects (table 4.2). These funds were used for two FSPs. The POPs area accounts for just under a third of all national project funding; this support finances one enabling activity and an FSP worth $6.35 million in GEF funding with $6.25 million in cofinancing.

The biodiversity and climate change focal areas have received much smaller amounts. In biodiversity, the GEF has financed five projects totaling $2.98 million. These include three MSPs—two on protected areas and one on biosafety—and two enabling activities. In the climate change area, Moldova has received $2.36 million for two MSPs—one for renewable energy and another for energy efficiency—and two enabling activities. Support in the multifocal area comprises a single enabling activity funded for $0.2 million.

4.3 Project Status

About one-third of all GEF funding support allocated to Moldova from 1994 to 2010 has supported projects that are now completed (table 4.3), including three projects each in the biodiversity and climate change focal areas, and one project each in the international waters, POPs, and multifocal areas. All six national enabling activities undertaken in the country have been completed, along with one FSP and two MSPs. Most of the remaining funding supports ongoing projects, including

Figure 4.1

Locations of National Projects

Project title	Symbol	Settlements (District)	Activity
Agricultural Pollution Control Project		Carpineni, Lapusna, Negrea villages (Hincesti District)	Manure platforms
		Tochile-Raducani and Razeni villages (Leova District)	Wetlands restoration
Environmental Infrastructure Project		Soroca town (Soroca District)	Wastewater treatment facility
Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem		Purcari, Olanesti and Crocmaz (Stefan Voda district)	Biodiversity conservation activities
POPs Management and Destruction		Ratus village (Telenesti District), Grimancauti village (Briceni District), Carpineni village (Hincesti District), Cimislia Town (Cimislia District), Timiliuti and Ghindesti villages (Floresti District), Recea village (Riscani District), Straseni own (Straseni District), Tudora and Olanesti villages (Stefan-Voda District), Nisporeni Town (Nisporeni District), Chipesca village (Soldanesti District)	Repackaging, transport and final destruction of POPs containing and contaminated obsolete pesticides
		Vulcanesti Town, (Gagauzia Territorial Administrative Unit), Briceni, Lipcani, Edinet, Donduseni, Drochia, Soroca, Orhei, Ungheni, Straseni, Hincesti, Comrat, Ceadir-Lunga	Packaging and safe disposal of obsolete capacitors containing PCBs
Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste		Chiscareni village (Singerei district), Taraclia village (Causeni district), Viisoara village (Glodeni district), Viisoara and Burlanesti villages (Edinet district) and Boghenii Noi village (Ungheni district), Antonesti and Volintiri villages (Stefan Voda district)	Biomass boilers installed
Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the PAS in Moldova		Orhei District	Establishment of the Orhei National Park

Table 4.2

GEF National Projects in Moldova by Focal Area and Funding

Focal area	GEF funding (million $)	% of total GEF funding	Cofinancing (million $)	% of total cofinancing
Biodiversity	2.89	13.3	2.32	9.9
Climate change	2.36	10.9	3.69	15.8
International waters	9.51	43.8	11.13	47.5
POPs	6.76	31.1	6.28	26.8
Multifocal	0.20	0.9	0.03	0.1
Total	**21.72**	**100.0**	**23.44**	**100.0**

Table 4.3

GEF Investment in National Projects by Status and Focal Area
million $

Focal area	Completed	Ongoing	PIF approved	Dropped	Total
Biodiversity	1.40	1.49	0	1.00	**3.89**
Climate change	1.40	0	0.96	0.98	**3.33**
International waters	4.95	4.56	0	0	**9.51**
Multifocal	0.20	0.00	0	0	**0.20**
POPs	0.41	6.35	0	0	**6.76**
Land degradation	0	0	0	1.98	**1.98**
Total	**8.36**	**12.40**	**0.96**	**3.95**	**25.67**
Percentage allocated	33	48	4	15	**100**

two MSPs in biodiversity, one FSP in international waters, and one FSP in the POPs focal area. Moldova has a large number of dropped projects—five—accounting for $3.95 million in support; these dropped projects were in the biodiversity, climate change, and international waters areas; two projects were in land degradation. Four were MSPs, and one dropped project was an FSP.

4.4 Allocations by GEF Agency

GEF Agencies play key roles in GEF projects on the ground. They assist eligible governments and NGOs in the development, implementation, and management of GEF projects and serve as the conduit between countries and the GEF in the project approval process. They also participate in GEF governance, as well as in the development of GEF policies and programs.

The GEF works with 10 Agencies, 7 of which are eligible to operate in Moldova: UNDP, UNEP, the World Bank, EBRD, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and UNIDO. The other three Agencies (the African, Asian, and Inter-American Development Banks) have a regional focus and are thus not involved in Moldova.

The GEF works with UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, and the World Bank in Moldova. Both UNDP and the World Bank have country offices here, as does EBRD. To date, EBRD has not implemented a GEF

project, although a proposed international waters project was dropped prior to approval.

GEF allocations by focal area and Agency are shown in figure 4.2. The **World Bank** is the major GEF Agency in Moldova, responsible for 8 of the country's 14 national projects, with a total allocation of $18.65 million—almost 86 percent of the total GEF allocation. About half of this funding is allocated to the international waters focal area through two FSPs (the Agricultural Pollution Control Project and the Environmental Infrastructure Project). The World Bank is also the largest cofinancer of GEF projects in Moldova, contributing a total of $20.14 million. The World Bank has implemented three FSPs, two MSPs, and three enabling activities. These projects addressed the biodiversity, climate change, POPs, and international waters focal areas.

UNDP has served as the GEF Agency for four projects in Moldova—one biodiversity MSP and three climate change enabling activities. These projects represent just over 7 percent of total GEF support and 5 percent of total cofinancing.

UNEP is responsible for one biosafety MSP, accounting for 2.5 percent of the GEF portfolio in Moldova. The first project implemented by **UNIDO** in Moldova is a climate change MSP with an allocation of $0.96 million, or 4.4 percent of GEF funding, and a large amount of cofinancing—$2.04 million, which is 8.7 percent of total cofinancing. **FAO** is also active in Moldova through a regional MSP dealing with POPs capacity building.

Figure 4.3 shows GEF support by Agency and GEF replenishment period. UNDP has been active in each replenishment period, albeit with a limited allocation as it has implemented mainly enabling activities and one MSP. In contrast, the World Bank played a minor role during the first replenishment period but became the predominant GEF Agency during GEF-2 and GEF-3, as it was the only Agency implementing FSPs in Moldova. In

Figure 4.2

GEF Funding for National Projects in Moldova by Agency and Focal Area

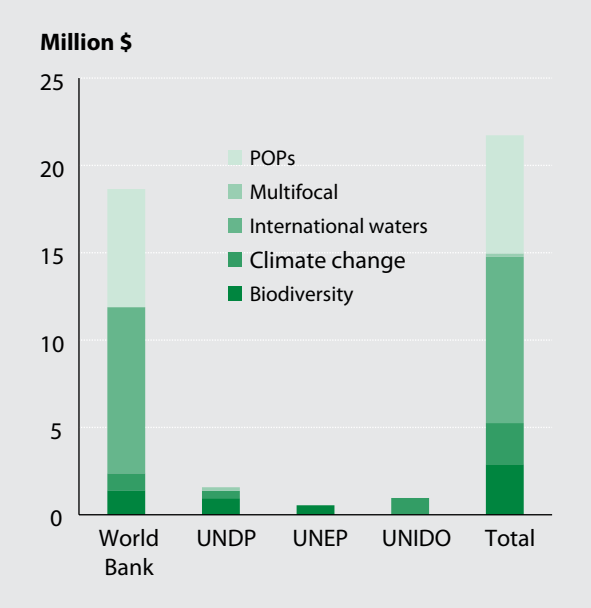
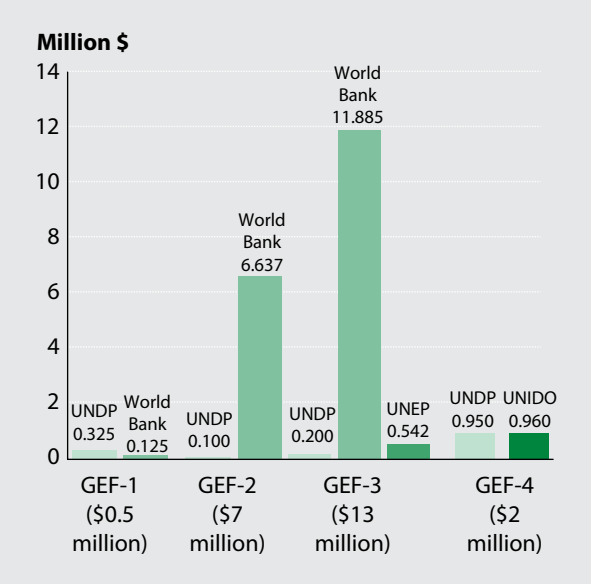


Figure 4.3

GEF Approvals of Moldovan Projects by Agency and Replenishment Period



GEF-4, UNDP and UNIDO have been allocated funds for one MSP each. Not included in figure 4.3 is a World Bank MSP that was PIF approved in 2010 but not included in this evaluation.

4.5 National Executing Agencies

The main national executing agency in Moldova is the Ministry of Environment, which is the central public authority in charge of policy development in the environment area and sustainable management of natural resources. The ministry has been the national executing agency for all GEF national projects with the exception of one MSP. The NGO Biotica was the national executing agency for the Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem project, which was implemented through the World Bank.

4.6 Regional and Global Projects

Moldova has also received GEF support through regional and global projects. The majority of these projects—12 of 16—have been completed; 4 are currently under implementation. Table 4.4 shows the breakdown of regional and global projects by focal area and GEF Agency. Of 10 regional projects, 8 are in the international waters focal area. UNDP is the GEF Agency for five of these projects, and the World Bank for three. One of the remaining two regional projects is in the climate change focal area and is implemented through UNDP; the other is in the POPs focal area with FAO as the GEF Agency. Of six regional projects, four are in the biodiversity focal area. UNDP is the GEF Agency for all of these projects and jointly implements one of them with UNEP. A second joint UNDP-UNEP global project is in climate change; the remaining global project is in the POPs focal area and implemented through UNEP. Eight of the regional and all six global projects were considered in this evaluation (table 4.5).

The amounts allocated to national components or activities are not readily available for **regional projects** and are difficult to calculate, as the GEF grants are allocated for the project as a whole and not by country. An exception is subprojects of the programmatic approach, for which the amount of the GEF grant for an individual country is clearly defined. In the case of Moldova, two subprojects have been approved under the Danube/Black Sea Strategic Partnership Nutrient Reduction Investment Fund; these projects (the Agricultural Pollution Control Project and Environmental Infrastructure Project) were thus analyzed as national projects.

Of the six **global projects**, five have easily identifiable national components. The amount allocated to Moldova equals $0.511 million for four projects in biodiversity and one in climate change. The remaining global project is in the POPs focal area. All these projects are enabling or capacity-building activities intended to support the implementation of global convention requirements.

Table 4.4

Number of Regional and Global Projects in Which Moldova Participates, by Focal Area and GEF Agency

Focal area	World Bank	UNDP	UNEP	UNDP-UNEP	FAO	Total
Biodiversity	0	0	3	1	0	**4**
Climate change	0	1	0	1	0	**2**
International waters	3	5	0	0	0	**8**
POPs	0	0	1	0	1	**2**
Total	**3**	**6**	**4**	**2**	**1**	**16**

Table 4.5

GEF Portfolio in Moldova, 1994–2009: Regional and Global Projects

GEF ID	Project title	Focal area	GEF Agency	Project type	Project status	GEF grant (million $)	Total cofinancing (million $)	GEF phase
Regional projects								
342*	Developing the Danube River Basin Pollution Reduction Programme	IW	UNDP	FSP	C	3.900	3.600	1
399*	Danube River Basin Environmental Management	IW	UNDP	FSP	C	8.500	35.000	Pilot
1014	Danube/Black Sea Basin Strategic Partnership on Nutrient Reduction, Tranche I	IW	WB	FSP	C	0	29.555	2
1018	Capacity-building for Improving the Quality of Greenhouse Gas Inventories (Europe and CIS)	CC	UNDP	FSP	C	0.925	0.994	2
1460	Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin—Phase I	IW	UNDP	FSP	C	5.000	6.600	2
1661	Danube/Black Sea Strategic Partnership—Nutrient Reduction Investment Fund: Tranche 2	IW	WB	FSP	C	1.750	74.800	2
2042	Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin (Tranche 2)	IW	UNDP	FSP	C	12.000	12.878	3
2044	Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea—World Bank–GEF Nutrient Reduction Investment Fund: Tranche 3	IW	WB	FSP	O	2.918	222.182	3
2746	Promoting Replication of Good Practices for Nutrient Reduction and Joint Collaboration in Central and Eastern Europe	IW	UNDP	MSP	O	0.975	1.400	4
3212	Capacity Building on Obsolete Pesticides in EECCA [Eastern European, Caucasus and Central Asia] Countries	POP	FAO	MSP	O	1.000	1.397	4
Global projects								
875	Development of National Biosafety Frameworks	BD	UNEP	EA	C	26.092	12.342	2
2128	Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) of the Cartagena Protocol	BD	UNEP	FSP	C	4.965	0.350	3
2387	National Communications Programme for Climate Change	CC	UNDP-UNEP	EA	C	58.487	1.547	3
2423	Assessment of Existing Capacity and Capacity Building Needs to Analyze POPs in Developing Countries	POP	UNEP	MSP	C	0.395	0.921	3
2713	UNEP Support to CBD Parties for Preparation of Third National Reports to the COP of CBD	BD	UNEP	MSP	C	1.000	0	3
3746	Support to GEF Eligible CBD Parties for Carrying out 2010 Biodiversity Targets National Assessments- Phase II	BD	UNDP-UNEP	MSP	O	1.000	0.712	4

Note: *not included in the evaluation. BD = biodiversity; CC = climate change; IW = international waters. WB = World Bank. C = completed; O = ongoing.

5. Results of GEF Support to Moldova

This chapter presents the results, in terms of outcomes and impacts, of the various GEF-supported projects and enabling activities undertaken in Moldova. The following questions are addressed:

- Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the project level?
- Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the aggregate level by focal area?
- Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the country level?
- How successful is the dissemination of GEF project lessons and results?
- Is GEF support effective in producing sustainable results that are maintained after project completion?

Results were measured by focal area using the following parameters:

- **Impacts:** changes in environmental status, especially those of global significance as well as reductions in threats to the globally significant resource
- **Outcomes:** the likely or achieved short- and medium-term effects of project interventions presented by
  - catalytic and replication effects
  - policy changes and institutional sustainability
  - capacity building and awareness

Information on results was compiled from interviews, reviews of existing project documentation, two ROtI studies, and field visits to selected projects.

The GEF portfolio in Moldova includes a large number of enabling activities, as six of the country's national projects are enabling activities, as are two of its six global projects. Another three global projects are similar to enabling activities in that they provide support to international conventions or to capacity assessment. Thus, 11 of Moldova's GEF projects are essentially enabling activities, and as such, are not expected to produce direct environmental impacts. Rather, the impact of enabling activities is seen when follow-up activities are implemented or on considering the combined results of a series of enabling activities.

Additionally, enabling activities are often instrumental in developing future FSPs or MSPs which build on the results of enabling activities to enrich project design and implementation. Several examples are given throughout this chapter of cases where the assessments carried out under enabling activities have fed into the definition of further projects aimed to solve the issues identified.

5.1 Biodiversity

The biodiversity portfolio consists of nine projects, six of which have been completed and three of which are under implementation. Five projects are

national; these are three MSPs and two enabling activities. Four are global and comprise enabling activities and capacity-building projects. There is no regional project in this focal area.

Impacts

Some enabling activities had some successful outputs as discussed below. However, the impacts can be limited for projects with small budgets and of short duration. For example, the global enabling activity supporting the development of Moldova's Third Report to the CBD could not really update existing information on the state of biodiversity through assessment on the ground, but rather provided resources to involve expertise for report compilation. As a consequence, the project had only limited impacts, as per the main conclusions of the ROtI study undertaken for this project and presented in box 5.1. The same conclusions would apply to support in the preparation of the Fourth Report to the CBD, provided under the ongoing enabling activity Support to GEF Eligible CBD Parties for Carrying out 2010 Biodiversity Targets National Assessments—Phase II (GEF ID 3746).

Only one MSP has been completed in the biodiversity focal area: Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem. The project aimed to improve in-situ conservation in

Box 5.1

Impacts of Enabling Activities

ROtI analysis conducted by the GEF Evaluation Office of the Moldova enabling activity UNEP Support to CBD Parties for the Preparation of the Third National Reports to the COP of the CBD (GEF ID 2713) found that the project, particularly when considered along with other similar activities, has contributed to

- supporting regular reporting to the CBD, thus helping fulfill the country's obligations under the convention;
- creating and maintaining a team of dedicated experts in biodiversity, facilitating information exchange;
- regular, albeit, limited assessment of CBD implementation in Moldova; and
- supporting the development and design of concrete projects with potentially greater impact.

Nonetheless, review of the various conditions and factors identified as necessary to achieve ultimate impacts shows that these are only very partially realized. The level of awareness of biodiversity status and of conservation issues remains low, central and local authorities' commitment is very limited, and the enforcement of biodiversity legislation is poor.

Enabling activities such as this one can lead to a broadened and mobilized constituency for biodiversity. They do so by helping to develop and maintain information—although often incomplete—on biodiversity conservation. Awareness raising outside the biodiversity community is generally very limited, as found through review of related indirect impacts. Although some publications and articles are published following reporting to the CBD, this is not sufficient to broaden awareness of the importance of biodiversity to the general public. Publishing is usually on an ad hoc basis and, as a rule, limited to scientific publications. Overall, the contribution of biodiversity enabling activities is quite limited, while national projects have been more effective in raising the awareness of the general public, although mainly on a local scale.

The quality of reporting to the CBD depends on the consistency and completeness of the information collected. Data tend to be collected in a sporadic way, and there is not enough funding available to generate new data. No evidence was found of a direct link between the preparation of the third national report and more active, effective involvement of the country in the implementation of biodiversity-related international conventions and activities. This impact should be considered by looking at all types of enabling activities and capacity-building projects, as they have contributed to the establishment and maintenance of a team of qualified experts, which is involved in their implementation. The results of these enabling activities have also been used in preparing two MSPs: Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem and Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova.

the Lower Dniester River through the establishment of a national park and ecological corridors promoting sustainable management of natural resources, including national and local capacity-building activities, awareness building, and education, while improving collaboration with Ukraine on the protection of the transboundary wetlands in the project area. The project began in 2002 and was closed in 2005 without establishing the national park due to a lack of support and commitment from the central administration to put the proposed area under protection. Nevertheless, the project had a number of fruitful results, notably the development of technical studies and management plans for the park, support to environmentally friendly investment through rural advisory and financial services, and awareness-raising activities. The project also managed to leverage additional financing for various initiatives, including, among others, development of local environmental action plans. However, the project's impacts are very limited and are mainly at the local level through capacity building and knowledge generation.

The other MSP in the biodiversity area was initiated too recently (September 2009) to assess its outcomes and impacts. The project aims to improve the system of protected areas and to establish a national park. It has a capacity-building component, and an education and awareness program in Orhei is projected. The long-term intended impacts are the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the protected area system and improved ecosystem coverage of underrepresented terrestrial ecosystem areas such as the steppe and forest ecosystems, as well as improved management of terrestrial protected areas. The project would thus contribute to increasing the number and extent of protected areas in Moldova that can effectively conserve globally unique habitats and the species they contain.

Outcomes

Catalytic and Replication Effects

With regard to catalytic and replication effects, the first biodiversity enabling activity is of particular importance. This project supported Moldova in building a robust foundation for implementing its commitments under the CBD by developing key policy documents and the country's First National Report to the convention. It pulled together existing information on biodiversity which had previously been scattered among different institutions—including the Ministry of Environment and various scientific organizations—thus creating a baseline to support decision making. Many of the activities included in the project's action plan have been moved forward through subsequent national initiatives or international projects. For example, the biodiversity strategy underlined the importance of developing the national ecological network of Moldova, and the action plan includes a section dedicated to the establishment of such a network. An ecological network law was adopted in 2007, and the government has prepared and presented a plan to the parliament for approval. Biotica, one of the NGOs participating in these enabling activities, is implementing a project funded by the Norwegian government to develop a national ecological network in Moldova as part of the Pan-European Ecological Network. A national program for establishing the network has been prepared for the period 2008–15; it proposes 82 areas to be designated as formal protected areas comprising the core of the network.

This first enabling activity was followed by the Assessment of Capacity Building Needs and Country Specific Priorities in Biodiversity project, which, among other objectives, supported the preparation of the Second Report to the CBD. This activity had a rather large budget as compared to other enabling activities, with a GEF grant of

$300,000 and $40,000 in cofinancing. Planned for one year, the project lasted almost three. Its completion report includes an impressive list of legislation and draft legislation developed by the project. Some of these had already been developed by the Ministry of Environment; the project supported their finalization and adoption. The project also contributed to the designation of two wetlands of international importance (the Lower Nistru site and the Lower Prut Lakes site, representing an extension of Moldova's protected areas by up to 76,482 hectares). Finally, the project prepared the design of a biodiversity database and monitoring system; this has not been populated to date.

A review of MSPs in the biodiversity focal area reveals several factors that have the potential to trigger catalytic effects and replication: involvement of the local population, cooperation with other initiatives, and a combination of interventions at the local and national levels. These factors are discussed below.

The Lower Dniester Delta project was effective in mobilizing the local population. Its component on rural and financial services was carried out in close cooperation with the International Development Association (IDA) Rural Investment and Services Project, which encouraged synergies and mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation, and sustainable resource use efforts in economic development initiatives in the region. The GEF project also managed grants for helping local and regional authorities integrate biodiversity conservation into land use plans, update land use plans covering parts of the buffer zone, and promote improved sustainable agricultural practices on private farms. As noted in the project's completion report, some of these results are replicable. Management plans and technical studies are used as reference documents for similar initiatives in the country. Established and tested community resource management pilots are being continued under the World Bank Soil Conservation Project. The public financial incentive system to encourage private investments in rural areas that are environmentally friendly is being used as a model for the Securing Long-Term Biodiversity Conservation in the Altai-Sayan Ecoregion Project implemented by WWF Russia.

Replication of the protected area system MSP outcomes is expected to occur through direct replication of selected project elements, practices, and methods, as well as through the scaling up of experiences. The project's expected catalytic effect is to enhance the sustainability of the national protected area system in financial, institutional, and social terms. For the project to achieve the desired impacts, however, the government's willingness to allocate financial resources is critical. Institutional sustainability is strongly linked to available resources to ensure the continuity of project results. The project intends to improve the effectiveness of the protected area system, while developing a pilot project through the establishment of a national park. In other words, it combines a demonstration site at the local level with extensive activities supporting a protected area inventory and a planning process for new protected areas, mainly at the central level. This combined approach operating at both the local and government levels is seen as an effective means to overcome barriers and achieve the desired long-term impacts identified above.

Two global enabling activities have been completed in the biodiversity focal area. These projects played an important role in supporting the development of the National Biosafety Framework and Biosafety Clearing-House Mechanism in Moldova. The results of these projects have been sustained through the ongoing National Biosafety Framework MSP, which started in 2006 and

should be completed at the end of 2010. Its purpose is to implement the framework; it focuses on governance and capacity building. The project is expected to further develop the legislative framework initiated under the previous enabling activities through the formulation of implementing regulations and updating of existing legislation.

Policy Changes and Institutional Sustainability

Moldova's biodiversity enabling and capacity-building activities have been instrumental in promoting and developing the legal framework for biodiversity conservation. They have also contributed to developing capacity through the collection, verification, and analysis of baseline data. However, the sustainability of these project results is uncertain. Many factors and measures needed for sustainable impacts—including an adequate and regularly updated information database, continued interaction among stakeholders, and extensive dissemination of project results—have not been achieved. The legislation developed with support from the projects is poorly enforced. Gaps and inconsistencies identified through the national capacity self-assessment (NCSA) project (that is, the National Self-Assessment of Capacity Building Needs) still need to be addressed. The main barriers to sustainability are limited existing capacities, institutional conflicts with other central authorities involved in biodiversity conservation and management, unclear distribution of responsibilities, and human and financial resource constraints.

In particular, communication and coordination among the main agencies involved in natural resource conservation and management—the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Processing, and the State Forestry Agency—remain inadequate. For example, the Steering Committee created by the Ministry of Environment for the Lower Dniester Delta project aimed to include representatives from all key stakeholders. Unfortunately, the State Forestry Agency and the authorities from the Transnistrian breakaway territory were not fully involved in Steering Committee sessions. At present, the Interdepartmental Coordination Council for the Promotion of the 2001 National Strategy and Action Plan established to facilitate implementation of the Biological Diversity Conservation National Strategy and Action Plan developed under the first biodiversity enabling activity is not operational. ROtI assessment of the enabling activity facilitating preparation of Moldova's Third National Report to the CBD found that one of the assumptions identified as necessary for the realization of full impact—namely, the commitment of relevant ministries at the individual and cross-sectoral levels—was poorly achieved. Interaction among various institutions charged with the management of biological resources is unsatisfactory and needs to be strengthened, particularly with regard to protected area management. Conflicts with the State Forestry Agency have been reported with regard to protected area management and representation. Similarly, cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Processing is not always satisfactory.

Some positive examples of cooperation do exist, such as the joint approval by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Processing of the biosafety action plan (2009–2015) developed under the MSP Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework.

While the Lower Dniester Delta project had no clear impact at the national level, it remains to be seen how effective the new MSP—Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova—will be in terms of policy improvements and institutional

sustainability, particularly with regard to the planned strategy and implementation plan for the consolidation and expansion of the national protected area system, the preparation and approval process for the establishment of the first national park in Moldova, and proposed reform of institutional arrangements for protected area management.

Capacity Building and Awareness

The Lower Dniester Delta biodiversity MSP can be considered a model in terms of its involvement and interaction with local authorities and populations. The project was successful in working closely with local authorities, creating strong ownership at the local level as demonstrated by the support the authorities provided to the project. Not only did the project carry out traditional awareness-raising activities (including an extensive information dissemination campaign, workshops, and seminars), but—more importantly—it used a highly participatory approach. This included stakeholders' consultation and community outreach campaigns on the creation of the park, and the provision of advisory and technical services to residents of the buffer and transition zones of the national park by the World Bank Rural Investment and Services Project. Notably, as a result of this proactive approach, the number of local environmental NGOs involved and activities has significantly increased.

The ongoing MSP on Moldova's protected area system is planning a strong awareness-raising and capacity-building component. It looks to develop a national strategic framework for coordinating the implementation of conservation education and awareness programs to be adopted by the government and the local implementation of a focused outreach program in and around Orhei to support the process of establishing the national park. During the preparation phase, the project had already actively interacted with the Orhei district authorities, which had committed to cofinancing project activities associated with the national park establishment process.

Awareness-raising components of biodiversity enabling activities are usually limited to the involvement of the main stakeholders through working group or stakeholder workshops. Moldova's first enabling activity in this focal area took a familiar approach, setting priorities through a stakeholder workshop, with key problems identified by national experts and discussed in conference with the participation of specialists from ministries, departments, scientific institutions, and NGOs. Dissemination of the results of such initiatives is often limited. In line with this paradigm, dissemination of Moldova's Third National Report to the CBD occurred primarily by posting it on the CBD and Moldovan Clearing-House Mechanism websites. The report was not formally published, although it was sent to a few stakeholders working in the field of biodiversity. Some of the report's conclusions were included in articles published in *Nature*, a journal issued by the Ecological Movement of Moldova NGO, which was part of the working group.

In contrast, the Fourth National Report to the CBD was prepared in a more participatory manner and was published in Romanian and English. UNDP plans to finance the formal launching and wide dissemination of the report. It will be an important awareness-raising instrument during the 2010 activities related to the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity in Moldova.

As mentioned earlier, enabling activities were instrumental in building capacity within the teams of experts involved in the projects. It is interesting to note that NGOs that participated in the country's earliest enabling activities are still quite active in the field of biodiversity conservation, the

only area where an NGO has been designated as a national project executing agency.

These efforts and achievements notwithstanding, overall public awareness of the significance and value of biodiversity remains very low in Moldova. Public awareness-raising and educational activities carried out as part of donor-funded projects are often not sustained or properly integrated into public structures and programs. Despite some positive achievements, the outcomes of various biodiversity projects are limited in terms of capacity building and awareness raising.

5.2 Climate Change

The GEF portfolio in the climate change focal area consists of six projects in Moldova. One completed MSP focused on renewable energy from agricultural waste; another PIF-approved MSP targets energy efficiency in the industrial sector. The climate change portfolio also has two completed national enabling activities, a global project on capacity building to develop national communications for climate change, and a regional capacity-building project aimed at improving the quality of GHG inventories in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Impacts

The Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste MSP aimed at addressing global climate change and reducing associated threats by achieving a reduction in GHG emissions through the promotion of renewable energy from biomass. In addition to achieving actual annual emissions reductions of 4,258 tons of CO_2 equivalent through greater efficiency and fuel switching from coal to straw biomass, the project has been instrumental in demonstrating social and economic benefits through the use of renewable energy, including decreased operating costs. The development of renewable energy is an inherent part of international efforts aimed at climate change mitigation and the promotion of a green economy. Moldova's energy potential from renewable sources (excluding geothermal) is estimated at 2,500 tons of oil equivalent, including 2,700 tons from biomass. However, for the project to achieve its full ultimate impacts—a significant reduction in GHG emissions and overall energy security—a number of impact drivers and assumptions would need to be realized.

The ROtI study found that the project has been instrumental in ensuring partial replication and up-scaling of biomass energy systems. This is considered an intermediate state, a necessary step toward delivering the ultimate project impacts and contributing to global environmental benefits through the lasting improvement (or at least maintenance) of the Earth's climate and better local air quality. The ROtI found the main area of concern to be the identified assumptions—development of biomass use encouraged through policy, legislation, and funding; and economic growth, especially in rural areas—because they were only very partially achieved.

The Reducing GHG Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector in Moldova MSP aims to establish policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks to promote and support sustainable industrial energy efficiency (IEE), and stimulate the creation of a national market for IEE products and services. It anticipates the increased adoption by Moldovan industries of energy efficient technologies and energy management as an integral part of their business practices. Through system optimization and active energy management, the project expects to achieve significant GHG emissions. Based on initial data collection and elaboration, the project PIF cites potential cumulative direct GHG emissions savings of

between 26,000 and 38,000 tons of CO_2 equivalent and indirect emissions savings up to 180,000–300,000 tons of CO_2 equivalent by 2023. This contribution to global environmental benefits is largely conditioned on successful replication of the proposed IEE pilot projects.

Also in the climate change focal area, the GEF has supported the preparation of Moldova's First and Second National Communications to the UNFCCC through enabling activities. It has also provided capacity building in this sector and for improving the quality of the GHG inventory, and supported the identification of technology needs for GHG emissions abatement with a focus on the energy and industry sectors.

Outcomes

Catalytic and Replication Effects

The ROtI study carried out for the Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste MSP found that replication has taken place, but at a limited scale up to now. There is a general recognition that continued awareness raising, government support, and financial aid are needed for significant up-scaling of biomass-fueled energy systems. While awareness raising has been partially continued, no additional funding and governmental support have been obtained to date. The project has resulted in increased societal acceptance of biomass boilers and increased awareness of the benefits of using alternative sources of energy. The involvement of the private sector in the project has been a powerful tool in encouraging replication. The boiler manufacturer is continuing its activities and has a direct interest in replication.

The same pertains to Moldova's IEE project, where replication will be encouraged through eight pilot IEE projects, accounting for a cumulative 30,000 megawatt hours of energy savings to be implemented by enterprises from key industrial sectors (food, processing, textile and light manufacturing, and manufacture of nonmetallic products) partnering in the project. These pilot projects will be selected on the basis of their potential for replication and/or energy savings.

The first enabling activity in the climate change focal area supported the preparation of Moldova's First National Communication to the UNFCCC and development of its GHG emissions inventory. This project fed into two subsequent enabling activities, one of which provided additional financing for capacity building in identified priority areas, and the second of which aimed to develop capacity for improving the quality of the GHG inventory. By supporting preparation of the initial inventory, the original enabling activity analyzed GHG abatement options, conducted a vulnerability and adaptation assessment, and developed the main elements of an action plan for responding to climate change. Through the various analyses it carried out, the project helped collect baseline information and develop relevant expertise. It was thus a much-needed learning exercise and had a catalytic effect on subsequent enabling activities as the expertise built under it was used and further developed. Taken together, all of these enabling activities have allowed the GEF to provide continuous support to Moldova in the climate change focal area since 1997, building expertise and in-country capacity in sequence and in tandem, as shown in table 5.1.

Policy Changes and Institutional Sustainability

During the implementation of the renewable energy MSP, the project team interacted mainly with local authorities and stakeholders; national authorities have not been actively involved, despite attempts by the project team. Notwithstanding the ambitious targets set by Moldova's National Energy Strategy (2007–2020)—a 10 percent share for renewable energy sources in the

Table 5.1

Overview of Climate Change Enabling Activities in Moldova

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Support to First Communication to UNFCCC												
				Capacity building in priority areas								
					NCSA							
						Capacity building for GHG inventory						
									Support to Second Communication to UNFCCC			

country's energy balance by 2010 and a 20 percent share by 2020, and the establishment of a legal framework for the renewable energy sector—and the 2007 law on renewable energy, commitment to this sector remains low at the national level. In particular, there is no incentive in place to encourage the use of renewable energy sources, and the Energy Efficiency Fund provided for by the law has not been established. It is largely beyond the power of the GEF project to influence or address the development of policy, legislation, and funding to promote and encourage the development of biomass use. However, if a reduction in CO_2 emissions and overall energy security are considered priorities by the Moldovan authorities, this should trigger the development of a more enabling policy environment for the up-scaling of biomass energy systems. The recent change in government may lead to a positive evolution in this respect. Key stakeholders have noted that the new minister of agriculture, one of the promoters of the law on renewable energy, has clearly taken a position in favor of the use of biomass.

The IEE MSP seeks to support the establishment of market-oriented policy and regulatory instruments for the sustainable progression of Moldovan industries toward international best energy performance, and to stimulate the creation of a market for IEE products and services. In particular, it plans to establish a benchmarking program and a mandatory IEE expert certification program, and to develop a platform for setting energy efficency targets. The project also intends to make industries, suppliers, and energy efficiency experts fully aware of the economic potential for energy efficiency improvements in the manufacturing sector; and to equip them with the capacity and tools to reap the benefits of such potential. This mix of policy instrument and market incentives is expected to ensure the attainment of the project outcomes.

Capacity Building and Awareness

Prior to the implementation of the renewable energy from agricultural waste project, public awareness in Moldova about alternative energy systems was very low, and there was a general negative perception of the use of biomass as a source of energy. Awareness was raised during the project through seminars for representatives of local authorities and directors of schools and other public offices, resulting in a total outreach to about 350 persons; audio and video aids, information leaflets, and promotional materials; participation in thematic exhibitions; preparation and publication in Romanian of a book, *Biomass and*

Its Use for Energy Purposes (550 copies); and the establishment of a website providing information on biomass use as a source of energy. The project has successfully raised awareness of an alternative energy system—biomass boilers—particularly within the geographical areas of its demonstration sites.

Awareness-raising activities have continued since the project's completion, primarily through the marketing activities of a biomass boiler manufacturer. Further awareness raising has likely resulted from delegations visiting the demonstration districts since project completion, informal information exchanges with other villages, and media coverage. It is worth noting that biomass has become part of the university curriculum, under the leadership of one of the former consultants to the project.

However, some of the outputs leading to increased awareness have not been sustained. For example, the website was not available at the time of the evaluation due to a lack of financing. Efforts to transfer ownership of the website to an institution that can maintain it have not been finalized, and as of this writing, the former project manager is attempting to resolve the situation.

The fact that biomass boilers have been installed in districts other than those in which the demonstration units were located is a clear sign that the project's effects were not limited to the project locations, but have extended outside the villages and districts where the boilers have been installed.

In accordance with priorities identified by the conference of the parties (COP) of the UNFCCC based on review of its First Communication, Moldova has focused on capacity building in industry and energy. Its follow-on climate change enabling project has provided funding and support for development in these two areas.

Additionally, the Capacity-Building for Improving the Quality of GHG Inventories project helped build the capacities of eight national experts who contributed later to the Second National Communication and inventory.

5.3 International Waters

Eight international waters projects were included in the CPE. In Moldova, GEF support in this focal area has a clear regional dimension, as it has been provided through six regional projects targeting the Danube River Basin and the Black Sea. Two large subprojects have been approved: an FSP on agricultural pollution control, financed under the World Bank–GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea; and an environmental infrastructure FSP, which is ongoing, financed under the Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River Basin and the Black Sea. Apart from these, activities undertaken in Moldova as part of larger regional projects are not easy to identify. These two projects had very limited national components in Moldova, mostly involving the collection of information on nutrient reduction, small grants, and wetlands demonstration activities. The assessment of results is also limited, as only one of the two FSPs has been completed, and that completion is fairly recent (December 2009).

Impacts

The completed FSP, Agricultural Pollution Control Project, aimed to reduce, over the long term, the discharge of nutrients and other agricultural pollutants into surface and groundwater in watersheds draining into the Danube River and Black Sea. The project particularly sought to increase the use of mitigation measures by agro-industry and farmers to reduce nutrient discharge through

- collaboration with agro-industry and farmers benefiting from the ongoing World Bank Rural Investment and Services Project, and
- various activities in a pilot watershed area (installation of communal and individual manure platforms, development of a code of good agricultural practices and wetlands restoration activities, and public awareness).

As part of a regional initiative, the added value of the project was to provide an opportunity for exchanging experiences and learning lessons from similar projects within the Danube River and Black Sea region.

The project helped introduce improved manure and nutrient management practices as well as organic farming. Its completion document states that ammonium and nitrate concentrations decreased at most monitored stations during the project's implementation. For this trend to be sustained, a high level of replication would be needed. As discussed in the next section, replication is, at this point, limited, despite a certain degree of interest. It is not possible at this time to assess the impacts of the project given the short amount of time since its completion and the limited extent of the pilot area.

The project also expected impacts in terms of climate change mitigation through increased carbon sequestration from tree planting and ecologically sustainable land use practices, and decreased methane emissions from farming and livestock practices. However, there is no evidence of such impacts.

The second international waters FSP, Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin, was implemented in two phases during GEF-2 and GEF-3. It provided small grants support to NGOs to promote and demonstrate nutrient reduction practices. These initiatives were quite successful and included the renovation of a wastewater treatment works, a "Danube and I" campaign on environmental health issues, and educational materials on threatened species within the River Prut Basin. About one of these initiatives involving agricultural best practices, the NGO Feedback and Project Assessment Missions concluded that, although the project did not produce direct local environmental benefits, it had much potential for indirect long-term benefits on the basis of improved awareness of and understanding about good agricultural practices among all stakeholders including farmers, local communities, and NGOs (Zinke and others 2007). The report emphasized the importance of this for Moldova where these concepts were previously unknown and the level of awareness was very low. It added that a great number of local farmers were aware of the project and likely to have been influenced by its activities and outputs.

The environmental infrastructure FSP began in 2007 and aims to improve the quality of sanitation services in Soroca and to reduce the discharge of pollutants from Soroca municipal sources into the Nistru River and, subsequently, the Black Sea. These goals will be achieved through the construction of a wastewater treatment plant using constructed wetlands. One of the objectives of the project is to test and disseminate constructed wetlands technology in the region. Considering the low cost of this technology compared to traditional wastewater treatment plants and the need for sewage treatment in the region, the project could have a significant impact at both the national and regional levels, if the technology proves efficient. However, the success of the project's outcomes will only be measurable once the constructed wetlands is in operation. The project's implementation faced a series of difficulties due to changes in the national responsible agency,

changes of local leadership following elections, and problems linked to land allocation.

The ongoing GEF-4 regional project Promoting Replication of Good Practices for Nutrient Reduction and Joint Collaboration in Central and Eastern Europe, which started at the end of 2008, focuses on the identification of nutrient reduction best practices and lessons learned, dissemination and promotion of these, and successful nutrient reduction replication strategies. The project activities in Moldova are to contribute to the reduction of water pollution, especially diffuse organic pollution in the Prut River Basin, through promotion of best agricultural practices—specifically, the management of biological waste through platform construction and composting production in the Cahul pilot area.

Outcomes

Catalytic and Replication Effects

In the international waters focal area, GEF support provided through regional projects has, generally speaking, catalyzed the implementation of regional agreements—namely the Danube River Protection Convention—as well as transboundary agreements related to water.

Replication effects are more evident with regard to the Agricultural Pollution Control Project. This project originally intended to build 8 communal platforms and 1,200 household platforms within the project pilot area; this was reduced to 3 communal and 450 household platforms due to management problems with the initial platforms. Several key informants noted that the lack of commitment of local authorities in fulfilling the tasks undertaken at the project preparation stage and changes in local leadership following the elections negatively influenced the project's final outcomes.

According to project documents and interviews, three villages and more than 200 households built manure platforms at their own expense based on project-supported designs. Similarly, two agroprocessors installed wastewater treatment stations with their own funds using project designs and consultants trained by the project. Replication by three additional villages outside the pilot area is considered a significant achievement. Although much interest has been expressed for replication outside the pilot sites, this will depend on the availability of financing at the local level and support from local authorities (manure management, wetlands restoration, forest planting), financial means (manure management), and efficient awareness raising (good agricultural practices). Therefore, the project's impact is limited at present. In addition, it should be noted that some of the platforms built under the project have not always been properly managed, an observation made during a field visit to the pilot area. This is clearly a serious obstacle to replication.

The project also has a catalytic effect through its close cooperation with the World Bank Rural Investment and Services Project. With grant cofinancing, it mainstreamed environmental considerations through agricultural extension projects. For example, it cofinanced the construction of manure storage facilities and wastewater treatment facilities. In addition, the project provided support to the government of Moldova in developing a new project on biogas digesters from animal waste; this initiative is designed to replicate the Agricultural Pollution Control Project's experiences throughout the country and to assist Moldova in reducing GHG emissions in line with the Kyoto Protocol.

If the technology used in the environmental infrastructure project proves successful, the project's replication potential could be high. The pilot municipality and water supply and sanitation facility plan to organize a conference on wastewater management for regional information transfer at

the Soroca wastewater treatment plant site. With these activities, the project will support the establishment of partnerships among cities and towns in the region and will provide a model to enable implementation of successful processes.

Policy Changes and Institutional Sustainability

Outcomes of the international waters FSPs in terms of policy changes and institutional sustainability are rather limited. The now-completed Agricultural Pollution Control Project had a legal component but only developed a code of good agricultural practices. No evidence was found that this code—1,500 copies of which have been printed—has been effective in guiding the implementation of environmentally friendly agricultural practices. Indeed, the code appears to be overly technical.

The project supported implementation of a law on organic farming and other legislation on agricultural practices by training farmers in organic methods and certification of organic products. It also helped develop the Regulation on Wetlands of International Importance adopted in 2007.

The FSP has clearly benefited from being a regional project. From its preparation stage on, the project enabled Moldova to learn from the experiences of Romania, which implemented a similar project earlier. Information exchange continued throughout the project, often in the form of regional conferences, including one held in Chisinau in 2006.

In contrast, the environmental infrastructure FSP focuses more on transboundary issues than on regional cooperation at the level of the Danube River Basin. During the Soviet era, wastewater from the city was treated by a facility located on the Ukrainian bank of the river. At present, the city is discharging its wastewater directly into the river. This has been a cause for some tension in the relations between Ukraine and Moldova. The environmental structure project is proposing a potential solution to solve this conflict.

Capacity Building and Awareness

Awareness raising has not always been successful in the international waters area, nor has it always been possible to overcome the resistance of local populations. The Agricultural Pollution Control Project showed that implementation of project activities could lead to conflicts with the local population. The project faced strong opposition from local communities regarding its wetlands restoration activities, and one interviewee noted that conflict management experts would have been useful as early on as the project formulation stage. Awareness-raising activities on mitigation measures to reduce nutrient discharge were successful, but several interviewees mentioned that this awareness raising should be further sustained.

Regional projects can offer good opportunities to disseminate best practices. For example, the ongoing Promoting Replication of Good Practices for Nutrient Reduction and Joint Collaboration in Central and Eastern Europe initiative has carried out an inventory of projects implemented in the region with an eye toward selecting best practices and publishing dissemination materials.

5.4 Persistent Organic Pollutants

Several projects have been conducted in Moldova in the POPs focal area. Enabling activities conducted from 2002 to 2004 developed the country's NIP and supported capacity strengthening for compliance with Moldova's obligations under the Stockholm Convention. A global project, Assessment of Existing Capacity and Capacity Building Needs to Analyze POPs in Developing Countries, supported capacity-building activities targeted at laboratories. A regional 2009–11 project implemented by FAO aimed at building capacity

on obsolete pesticides provided further support toward completing Moldova's inventory of POP-polluted sites. Moldova has also been successful in attracting GEF funding for an FSP which is providing for the environmentally safe management and disposal of obsolete POPs.

Impacts

At the time of this evaluation, only the enabling activities related to implementation of the Stockholm Convention had been completed. As with all enabling activities, it is difficult to relate project outcomes to global environmental benefits and far-reaching impacts. The main benefit of this project has been to foster adoption of a policy framework that provides an enabling environment within which to address POPs issues in Moldova.

The global objective of the POPs Management and Destruction Project is to protect the environment and human health by safely managing and disposing of stockpiles of POP-contaminated pesticides and PCBs, and strengthening the regulatory and institutional arrangements for the long-term control of POPs and other toxic substances in line with the requirements of the Stockholm Convention and other related conventions and protocols ratified by Moldova. The quantitative targets set by the project for the destruction of POP-contaminated stocks of obsolete pesticides and PCB capacitors were achieved—and in some cases surpassed. During project preparation, the total quantity of obsolete pesticides in Moldova was estimated at 6,940 tons. This figure was increased to 7,350 tons during project implementation. While project documents called for the destruction of 1,150 tons of obsolete pesticides, the project has actually collected and shipped to France for disposal 1,292.5 tons of pesticides from 13 warehouses in 11 districts. Another approximately 4,000 tons are stored in good condition at the Chismichioi warehouse; these pesticides will be eliminated after those from other warehouses.

Thus, one-third of Moldova's total 3,330 tons of obsolete pesticides stored in district warehouses were disposed of.

With regard to PCBs, Moldelectrica SE, TREDI—the company contracted by the project—has dismantled, repacked, and shipped to France for incineration 18,660 PCB-containing power capacitors (934 tons) from 13 power stations, including 1,800 capacitors (9 tons) from four pits at the Vulcanesti 400-kilowatt station.

These results demonstrate that Moldova is making a significant step in meeting its obligations under the Stockholm Convention and is contributing—albeit in a limited way—to the reduction of the global POPs burden. Moldova is thus also addressing contamination of the global food supply, notably by reducing its contribution to contamination of the aquatic environment via long-range transport.

Destruction of obsolete pesticides has been performed with support from other donors as well. In 2009–10, Moldova continued to eliminate obsolete pesticides under a project funded jointly by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and implemented by the Ministry of Defense. As of the time of this CPE, some €2.2 million had been received from the project—an amount sufficient to eliminate 1,260 tons of obsolete pesticides.

Outcomes

Catalytic and Replication Effects

The POPs enabling activities supported the country in preparing its NIP for the Stockholm Convention in line with UNEP–World Bank guidance. The NIP has already enabled the initial collection,

verification, and analysis of data on the POPs situation in Moldova and the development of options that can inform decisions at all levels. In particular, in addition to a review of the institutional framework on POPs, the project carried out a comprehensive POPs inventory covering information on obsolete pesticides, warehouses, and storage places related to the agricultural sector; data on the electric network, transformers, capacitors, and used dielectric oils in the energy sector; and on potential sources of POPs emissions in the industrial sector. The social and economic assessment of damage to the environment and to the public health, and the evaluation of costs for reducing and eliminating obsolete pesticides and PCB-contaminated oil from capacitors and transformers carried out under the project, served as the baseline for risk assessment for the NIP. Further, these inputs contributed to development of a sectoral environmental strategy which was included as a component of the National Strategy for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction developed by the Moldovan government.

These activities also helped build a strong ownership within the country, mainly as a result of the participatory approach used throughout the project. The project's results and data have fed into other activities, in particular those aiming to implement the NIP. These activities have included the POPs Management and Destruction FSP as well as an implementing agreement, signed in May 2006, between the Moldovan government and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Organization for the destruction of pesticides and dangerous chemicals. This agreement addressed the repackaging and transportation of 1,720 tons of pesticides and dangerous chemicals and their centralization in about 30 warehouses, identification of unknown pesticides, and projects aimed at the disposal of pesticides and dangerous chemicals and remediation of contaminated facilities. This initiative was complemented by another NATO project begun in 2005 aimed at establishing laboratory infrastructure and training personnel in the characterization of pesticides and POPs.

Because the POPs Management and Destruction Project covered all of Moldova, replication is not really relevant, except insofar as the FSP served as a model for replication in other countries. The project did have a useful catalytic effect in terms of leveraging additional resources and fostering international cooperation; this is demonstrated by the complementary projects Moldova has managed to attract in this field, such as Remediation of POP Pesticides Polluted Areas and Clean-Up of PCB Contaminated Oil in Power Equipment financed by the Canada Persistent Organic Pollutants Fund, and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (also see box 6.1). To date, the Canadian project has constructed cofferdams for three sites polluted by POPs. Similarly, the POPs Management and Destruction Project's inventory of PCB-containing or -contaminated power equipment launched in 2008 has been extended beyond the initial 6,500 equipment units to 35,000 units as a result of cofinancing made available from the National Environmental Fund and the Canada Persistent Organic Pollutants Fund.

While the project proposal foresaw incineration of 50 tons of contaminated soil from the Vulcanesti station, in preparing a clean-up feasibility study for the station, the project found a total quantity of 2,500 tons of soil contaminated with PCBs above 50 ppm. The feasibility study also determined the level of PCB pollution of the area after eliminating the capacitors and provided some recommendations for clean-up. It was decided that the best temporary solution in terms of technical, economic, and environmental feasibility was to store the soil in cofferdams built on the station's property; these

should be covered with a protective layer to avoid environmental pollution. To date, the project has applied this solution to two of the pits after excavating the capacitors. In this instance, the project has diverged from its original proposal to adapt to the situation on the ground and has identified and begun to implement the most feasible solution to address soil contamination. It remains to be seen, however, if contamination of the two remaining pits will be similarly addressed.

Policy Changes and Institutional Sustainability

One of the main achievements of the POPs enabling activities was to support debate on the ratification of the Stockholm Convention; ratification took place on April 7, 2004, or about three years after Moldova signed the convention on May 23, 2001. The NIP developed by the project was approved in October 2004 and serves as a basis for the government's activities in this field. However, due to political tensions, only a shortened version of the NIP was approved by the government.

The POPs Management and Destruction Project has been effective in further strengthening country capacity in terms of POPs monitoring and control. Improvement of the legal framework for POPs management was also foreseen, but this project component was delayed and, at the time of the CPE, had not yet been completed. Consequently, neither had the POPs information management and reporting system component of the project, as it is strongly dependent on the outcomes of the legal component. These two components (legislation and information system) are extremely important in ensuring that project results are further sustained. The adoption of legislation aligned with international and EU requirements would be a clear demonstration of the country's commitment to address POP-related issues. Because the project was finalizing the planned legislation and regulations during the evaluation, it was not possible to assess the project's policy changes and institutional sustainability aspects in this regard.

Capacity Building and Awareness

GEF support has been quite effective in raising awareness of POPs issues. In particular, the POPs enabling activity developed a communications strategy for the Stockholm Convention which promotes a highly participatory approach and provides for information dissemination. It also established a website (**www.moldovapops.md**) which has been maintained and regularly updated, and is now being used for subsequent projects. The POPs Management and Destruction Project included a POP awareness and educational campaign, which aimed at establishing a communications framework for the management of POPs and other chemicals and to raise public awareness concerning POP sources and effects for various target groups. This component of the project has been successfully implemented. Although it has resulted in increased awareness among the authorities and the public about POP and PCB issues, the local population continues to dismantle warehouses where obsolete pesticides are stored. Equally important as raising awareness in such cases is proper enforcement of the law.

Continuity between projects in the same area has helped build an awareness among public authorities, key stakeholders, and the population at large. For example, by 2005, awareness of PCB issues was built within the government and in large enterprises, primarily through the POPs enabling activity. However, as the public has no direct access to these substances, awareness within the general population remained very low. The GEF POPs FSP attempted to address this gap, building public awareness of PCBs through a variety of activities and campaigns. Under the current project, knowledge of and information on the PCB inventory has already reached individual consumers.

Capacity building has been provided under the enabling activity, notably to fulfill reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention. Under the global project Assessment of Existing Capacity and Capacity Building Needs to Analyze POPs in Developing Countries, the GEF provided support for capacity building, targeting laboratories and including training and equipment. The POPs Management and Destruction Project also included capacity-building activities, such as training of inspectors in all aspects of PCB enforcement, management, and control. During the inventory conducted of PCBs, inspectors were involved in the design of the questionnaires and databases, and the project developed reporting format guidelines and instructions. However, it was noted that these guidelines need to be included in the inspectorate procedures through a ministerial order to ensure their systematic application. The project further contributed to strengthening the analytical capabilities of key laboratories in PCB and POP measurement to ensure effective monitoring and control.

Interviewees emphasized that Moldovan authorities should take a more active and responsible role in sustaining project outcomes. For example, fencing contaminated sites and erecting warning signs, along with targeted information campaigns, would not be an expensive measure but could ensure that the population does not use the sites anymore. Many contaminated sites are privately owned or are abandoned and used as pasture. The general population often assumes that once the obsolete pesticides have been removed, the location is safe, unaware of any remaining—frequently high—levels of contamination. This demonstrates that, despite the progress made to date, efforts to raise awareness should be continued. It is also the responsibility of the authorities to ensure proper POPs control and enforcement.

5.5 Multifocal Area

The multifocal area represents a very small part of GEF support in Moldova, accounting for only 0.9 percent of total GEF funding for national projects, and provided through a single enabling activity, National Self-Assessment of Capacity Building Needs. This activity enables countries to conduct a self-assessment of their capacity needs and prepare a national capacity action plan. In Moldova, it aimed at integrating actions undertaken under the three Rio conventions and to improve both coordination and national capacity so as to reinforce the synergetic effect of the conventions' implementation. The project's final output was a report and national action plan for capacity building to implement the Rio de Janeiro conventions.

Outcomes

Catalytic and Replication Effects

The NCSA enabling activity had a catalytic effect in that it provided a basis for further project development and national initiatives. For example, UNDP is preparing a project proposal for GEF funding on Strengthening Environmental Fiscal Reform for National and Global Environment Management. This is a response to the deficiencies identified in the NCSA report in the legal framework for the financing of environmental protection measures—specifically, the lack of fiscal incentives.

In line with the project's long-term aim to strengthen synergies across the conventions and to develop capacity in the most cost-efficient manner, the NCSA enabling activity was innovative in that it assessed capacity-building needs from a cross-cutting perspective. This was a new approach for Moldova. Three sectoral working groups for climate change, biodiversity, and desertification, respectively, finalized area-specific assessments. A working group was then established to conduct a cross-cutting issues evaluation

and to identify capacity needs and priorities in line with this evaluation. These inputs provided the basis for the action plan.

Policy Changes and Institutional Sustainability

The action plan would have served as a useful foundation for strategic decision making and for establishing the conditions necessary to ensure the sustainability of results, but it was not adopted. It has not been used as an official planning document in Moldova, and achievement of the project's envisioned outcomes and impacts as thus been significantly undermined.

Capacity Building and Awareness

As part of the NCSA process, awareness was raised on global issues and commitments in the areas of biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation to foster a more informed dialogue with stakeholders.

Decision makers and representatives of various institutions were involved in the NCSA's preparation, notably through the appointment of a focal point for communication with the project. The main responsibility of these focal points was to ensure that the project products are known within their respective organizations, and that ministries' representatives are involved in development of project products. They were also in charge of ongoing communication with the project and participation at workshops. Most of the central authorities were represented, including the ministries of transportation and communications, agriculture, justice, foreign affairs, industry, the economy, finance, energy, education, and health; and the departments of statistics and sociology, and emergency response.

In addition, local public authorities (representatives of districts and communes) and civil society were involved in the evaluation and identification of capacity needs, mainly through regional workshops. To coordinate priorities across the three thematic areas, a special seminar for NGOs was organized. The academic sector was also involved, as the Academy of Sciences assessed and approved the reports of the thematic and cross-cutting working groups. The final report and action plan were discussed at a two-day seminar attended by representatives of the government agencies listed above as well as of the Academy of Sciences and the NGO sector.

6. Relevance of GEF Support to Moldova

This chapter addresses the following questions:

- Is GEF support relevant to the country's development needs and challenges, as established in the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the National Development Strategy and Action Plan?
- Is GEF support relevant to national environmental priorities, in particular to the Moldovan Concept of Environmental Policy, and to Moldova's GEF focal area strategic documents?
- Do the GEF and its Agencies support the establishment of priorities for sustainable development and environmental protection, and related decision-making processes within Moldova?
- Is GEF support relevant to the objectives of the various global environmental benefits (that is biodiversity, GHGs, international waters, POPs, and land degradation)?
- Is GEF support relevant to the achievement of the GEF mandate and strategic objectives?
- Is Moldova supporting the GEF mandate and focal area programs and strategies with its own resources and/or support from other donors?

6.1 The GEF Portfolio and National Priorities

The National Strategy of Sustainable Development of the Republic of Moldova (2000) was the first development policy document based on sustainable development principles, notably the establishment of a market economy with a social focus; creation of an open civil society; development targeted at the improvement of life quality; and a new security concept covering economic, social, food, and environmental aspects. National development needs and challenges were revisited in the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2004–2006), which has since been replaced by the National Development Strategy 2008–11.

The poverty reduction strategy paper sets three long-term development objectives—sustainable socially oriented development, the reintegration of the country, and European integration—with three medium-term objectives: sustainable and inclusive economic growth; poverty and inequality reduction, and increased participation of the poor in economic development; and human resource development. The National Development Strategy establishes these priorities: strengthening democracy based on the rule of law and the respect of human rights principles, the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict and reintegration of the country, enhancing the competitiveness of the national economy, human resource development, enhancing employment and promoting social inclusion, and regional development.

Both documents, together with the Moldovan Village National Program for 2005–15, show a clear

focus on regional development policy. This aspect has been integrated into several national projects implemented at the local level. The GEF-funded Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste project supported regional rural development by working directly with small rural communities and helping them secure and diversify their energy supply—an important step given the growing expense of energy, particularly with regard to the costs of connecting to centralized networks, including gas networks. It has also allowed the creation of new economic opportunities for local farmers who could sell their product (straw) in the local market. In the international waters and biodiversity focal areas, projects have also addressed local communities' development through the promotion of environmentally friendly agricultural practices, safe manure management, and organic farming under the Agricultural Pollution Control Project; the Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Project has similarly addressed environmentally friendly investments in rural areas and community natural resource management.

Environmental priorities defined in the national development strategies are as follows:

- Water resource protection and management
- Toxic substances and waste, including obsolete pesticides
- Management
- Forest resource protection and extension of protected areas in relation to biodiversity conservation
- Land degradation

Governance improvement and awareness raising are also seen as priorities.

The National Development Strategy is less focused on environmental protection, which is seen as part of balanced regional development rather than a priority in itself. In addition to the priorities identified earlier, the strategy also considers the development of renewable energy a priority; this is also addressed through specific policy documents, notably the National Energy Strategy (2007–2020).

Although identified, priorities in the environmental field are not clearly set. The main policy document currently in force with regard to environmental policy is the Concept of Environmental Policy approved in 2001. It includes four main environmental objectives and actions:

- Improving and ensuring good governance in environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources
- Maintaining quality of the environment as a factor that secures health and quality of life
- Transboundary cooperation in the environmental field and sustainable use of natural resources
- Improving the level of environmental education, information, and awareness

To fulfill these objectives, the concept lists a series of measures related to biodiversity, soil conservation, water resource protection, prevention of air pollution, and waste management.

GEF support has addressed some of the main priorities listed in these documents, namely water resources, toxic substances and waste management with a focus on POPs, and biodiversity conservation. In this regard, the GEF project Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova addresses one of the concrete measures identified by the Concept of Environmental Policy, the establishment of a national park at Orhei. Climate change and the promotion of renewable energy have been addressed through enabling activities and

the Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste project.

There is no GEF project specifically addressing climate change adaptation, even though this is a priority as noted in the Second National Communication to the UNFCCC and by UNDP (2009), which identifies climate change adaptation policy options and possible measures. Climate change adaptation has been addressed in a marginal way, mainly through limited components integrated in international waters or biodiversity projects, in particular through reforestation activities.

One exception is the absence of projects relating to issues of land degradation,[1] despite the fact that this constitutes a high priority for Moldova, especially given the importance of agriculture in the economy. This priority has also been emphasized through sectoral strategies such as the 2000 National Action Plan to Combat Desertification and the National Comprehensive Program for 2003–20 on Increasing Soil Fertility. Both of these include actions to combat land degradation and increase agricultural production through strengthened institutional capacity and a reinforced legal framework, improved scientific support to the process, and dissemination of best practices. Two proposed MSPs—Land Degradation and Integrated and Sustainable Land Management through a Community-Based Approach—were prepared with UNDP as the implementing GEF Agency. The projects were approved by the GEF CEO in 2005 but were later dropped when funds for land degradation were depleted early in GEF-4.

The GEF and its Agencies have supported the establishment of priorities for sustainable development and environmental protection mainly through enabling activities in Moldova; these activities are helping the country fulfill its obligations under the international conventions. While project concepts would originate from the COP and be supported by the GEF Agencies, proposals typically were then further prepared under guidance from the relevant convention focal point. The outcomes of enabling activities have often been used for setting priorities in national policies and strategic documents. However, in certain cases, outcomes from such projects have not been endorsed officially due to changes in government or a lack of commitment from project beneficiaries.

The GEF portfolio in Moldova is overall quite diverse and has addressed national priorities as defined in various government strategic documents (table 6.1). However, the amount of support provided is not equal across focal areas, with the international waters and POPs focal areas accounting for 74.6 percent of total funding (45.7 percent for international waters and just under 29 percent for POPs). This imbalance may shift, as several proposals that are now at quite an advanced stage of preparation focus on climate change, biodiversity, and multifocal areas. These proposals, if approved, would lead to a more balanced portfolio:

- Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improving Energy Efficiency in Residential Buildings (climate change; UNDP)
- Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into Territorial Planning Policies and Land-Use Practices (biodiversity; UNDP)
- Strengthening Environmental Fiscal Reform for National and Global Environmental Management (multifocal; UNDP)
- Biogas Generation from Animal Manure Pilot Project (climate change; World Bank)

[1] Land degradation was added to the GEF mandate only in 2002.

Table 6.1

Relevance of GEF Support to National Priorities by Replenishment Period

Period	GEF projects	Development and environmental priorities
GEF-1	• Enabling Moldova to Prepare Its First National Communication in Response to Its Commitments to UNFCCC • Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan, and National Report • Developing the Danube River Basin Pollution Reduction Program	GEF-1 projects provided support to fulfill commitments under the climate change, biodiversity, and Danube conventions. Biodiversity and international waters projects also contributed to implementation of the National Environmental Action Plan for 1996–98, which called for the protection of existing natural resources and the extension of forested and protected areas. The projects addressed the need to initiate a public awareness program for protecting scarce natural resources from illegal activities.
GEF-2	• Agricultural Pollution Control Project • Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem • Assessment of Capacity Building Needs and Country Specific Priorities in Biodiversity • Climate Change Enabling Activity (Additional Financing for Capacity Building in Priority Areas) • Enabling activities related to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in Moldova • Danube/Black Sea Basin Strategic Partnership on Nutrient Reduction, Tranches I & 2 • Capacity-building for Improving the Quality of GHG Inventories • Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin—Phase I • Development of National Biosafety Frameworks	The GEF continued to support implementation of enabling activities supporting the climate change, biodiversity, Danube, and POPs conventions. Projects continued support toward the accomplishment of requirements under the National Strategy for Environmental Protection for 1995–2020. GEF projects also contributed to implementation of provisions under the National Strategy of Sustainable Development of the Republic of Moldova and the Biological Diversity Conservation National Strategy and Action Plan.
GEF-3	• Environmental Infrastructure Project • Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes • POPs Management and Destruction Project. • Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework • National Self-Assessment of Capacity Building Needs • Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin (Tranche 2) • Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea • Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing House of the Cartagena Protocol • National Communications Programme for Climate Change • Assessment of Existing Capacity and Capacity Building Needs to Analyze POPs in Developing Countries • Support to CBD Parties for Preparation of Third National Reports to the COP of CBD	GEF-3 projects continued support of the above-noted conventions. Support was also focused on contributing to implementation of the following national policy documents: • National Strategy for Environmental Protection for 1995–2020 • National Strategy of Sustainable Development of the Republic of Moldova • Concept of Environmental Policy • Strategy of Sustainable Development of the Forest Sector • Biological Diversity Conservation National Strategy and Action Plan • Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2004–2006 • Moldovan Village National Program (2005–15) • National Water Management Policy Concept • National Program for Energy Conservation (2003–10) • National Strategy on Reduction and Elimination of POPs in the Republic of Moldova
GEF-4	• Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova • Reducing GHG Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector in Moldova • Promoting Replication of Good Practices for Nutrient Reduction and Joint Collaboration in Central and Eastern Europe • Capacity Building on Obsolete Pesticides in EECCA [Eastern European, Caucasus and Central Asia] Countries • Support to GEF Eligible CBD Parties for Carrying out 2010 Biodiversity Targets National Assessments— Phase II	GEF-4 continued to support the climate change, biodiversity, and POPs conventions. GEF projects have been in line with the provisions of the following national documents: • Concept of Environmental Policy • Biological Diversity Conservation National Strategy and Action Plan • Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2004–2006 • National Strategy on Reduction and Elimination of POPs in the Republic of Moldova • Energy Strategy of the Republic of Moldova until 2020

Country Ownership and Commitment

Project offices, convention focal points, and GEF Agencies have—to varying extents—been the main drivers of projects in Moldova. There is a high degree of ownership within the staff of the project offices, which are involved directly in both project preparation and implementation. The role of the convention focal points varied from substantive involvement to provision of overall guidance. This limited input is primarily due to a lack of resources, as the ministry's small technical staff has little time available, and not due to a lack of commitment. It appears that, on several occasions, it has been difficult to secure full cooperation from the ministry's officials. In some cases, this circumstance has delayed adoption of policy documents and legislation supported by GEF projects. Another factor having a direct influence on level of ownership are changes in government; these often result in changes in priorities, national executing agency staff, and responsibilities—thus influencing project implementation and outcomes. The same remark applies to changes in leadership following local elections.

Several stakeholders highlighted donor influence in moving project concepts forward, noting that most project proposals were donor driven rather than government driven. The substantial role GEF Agencies play in the development of project ideas and proposals is linked to the lack of coherent national strategies and plans regarding the GEF. Without a real planning process or systematic coordination mechanisms, proposals are generally advanced and developed by a small group of people, mainly from the staff of project offices, who have expertise in GEF project preparation procedures and inevitably influence the design of projects.

Another salient feature of GEF support to Moldova is the quasi-monopoly of the Ministry of Environment as the GEF national executing agency. The ministry is the executing agency for all national projects except the Lower Dniester Delta project, for which the designated national executing agency was the NGO Biotica.[2] This concentration of projects under the Ministry of Environment is mainly a logical consequence of the distribution of responsibilities and competencies within the Moldovan government. The ministry is in charge of climate change, water, chemicals, and biodiversity issues; it has partial responsibility for land degradation issues as well. All focal points of the international conventions for which the GEF serves as financial mechanism are located within the ministry, and, the GEF focal point is the minister of environment. There is a risk that the GEF could be perceived as the exclusive domain of the ministry, preventing initiatives from other institutions. Consequently, and given the lack of coordination in programming and implementation at the national level, the involvement of interested institutions is often limited to contacts within steering committees, and there is no overall planning strategy regarding GEF support.

Some cases of fertile and successful cooperation show that strong ownership and commitment at the national level can trigger complementarities of donor support and enhance cross-fertilization between projects and sustainability of various initiatives, including GEF projects (box 6.1).

The lack of coordination and strategic planning has been recognized at a high political level, and the government has recently approved new legislation in an effort to address this issue. The regulation covering the institutional framework and

[2] The executing agency for the environmental infrastructure project was initially the Agency for Reconstruction and Territorial Development; authority was passed on to the Agency Apele Moldovei and finally to the Ministry of Environment.

Box 6.1

Successful Synergy between GEF, Other Donors, and National Initiatives

Moldova recognized POPs management as a priority early on. An analysis of the various stages of policy development and implementation shows that the country managed to create synergies between national and project activities funded by the GEF and other donors to address this issue.

Work in Moldova had already begun on trying to assess obsolete pesticides and to find a solution for their safe storage and disposal when the GEF POPs enabling activity was implemented. In 2002, the government decided to use a single centralized storage facility. However, after this solution proved untenable, Moldova chose to establish a system of storage warehouses centralized at the district rather than the national level. Coordination among the different central authorities was efficient, with a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities. The Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Processing, and the Ministry of Health cooperated to prepare an inventory of warehouse sites. The packaging of pesticides was financed through funds from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Processing and the Ministry of Environment and through a NATO Partnership for Peace Trust Fund project, completed in April 2008. The Ministry of Defense and the Department of Emergency Situations were also involved in the repackaging and transport of obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemicals. All these activities were supported by the GEF enabling activity and subsequent FSP on POPs management and destruction.

mechanism for coordinating foreign assistance provided to Moldova by international organizations and donor countries was approved in January 2010 and aims to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of foreign assistance by better coordination throughout the entire planning and implementation process. Among other things, the regulation establishes an interministerial committee for strategic planning. The committee is responsible for ensuring streamlining and coordination of foreign assistance with a view to achieving national socioeconomic development priorities, as well as efficient and effective use of funds. Responsibilities for the main actors (prime minister, chancellery) are specified in the regulation. Each ministry should designate a sector coordinator and sector foreign assistance board. The regulation also establishes key requirements to the planning process, under the supervision of the national coordinator. Particular attention is given to alignment with national priorities. It regulates management and evaluation aspects and sets a common format for presenting project concepts.

If fully and efficiently implemented, the new procedures, allocation of responsibilities, and institutional restructuring could serve as the much-needed foundation for the country to play a more active role in initiating, implementing, and evaluating projects. It demonstrates the government's willingness to play a far more proactive role in influencing and shaping donor assistance, as well as ensuring stronger ownership through organized and systematic coordination of the various central authorities to international assistance. This approach should enhance country ownership through the development of coherent national strategies and plans regarding donor assistance, including from the GEF. It has been recognized that the linkages between sectors should be improved—for example, between environment and agriculture, especially with regard to biodiversity and land degradation issues.

Enabling activities have supported capacity building for the implementation of international conventions (CBD, UNFCCC, Biosafety Protocol, Stockholm Convention). They have also contributed to the development of the corresponding national policy and legal framework, particularly for biodiversity, biosafety, and POPs. Improvements are possible, however, notably in terms of an increased focus on and resources dedicated to

actual assessments and strategic decision making. MSPs and FSPs to date have produced mixed results. In some focal areas, projects have been effective in demonstrating the benefits of good practices and innovative technologies. However, the impact drivers necessary to achieve the ultimate impacts of projects—especially for replication and up-scaling of demonstrated practices/technologies—have only partially been achieved. Project results are not always fully nationally owned and integrated into national frameworks.

Analysis of the GEF portfolio in Moldova has also shown that an important element contributing to the sustainability of project outcomes is the ability to demonstrate likely social and economic benefits along with the expected environmental ones. In other words, generation of income or savings or social benefits is an effective tool in gaining support from the local population, and its importance should not be neglected.

Cofinancing

As used here, cofinancing is funding that is additional to the GEF grant and needed to implement project activities and achieve project objectives. The GEF sets no specific requirement as to the proportion of cofinancing, but it is expected to be part of any GEF project.

Analysis of project documents in Moldova found that, for national projects, against total GEF funding of about $21.72 million, approximately $23.44 million has been provided for cofinancing—a ratio slightly over $1 for every $1 from the GEF. Cofinancing is far more limited for enabling activities: from nonexistent to 11 percent of the total cost of the project, generally as an in-kind contribution. This low level of cofinancing reflects the limited resources available for environmental activities.

Table 6.2 shows that the cofinancing ratio has increased in Moldova over the replenishment periods to 1.63 in GEF-4. This positive trend should be maintained during the upcoming GEF-5, for which the expected ratio is 1:4. By focal area, international waters and climate change have benefited from higher ratios than the other areas. This is partly explained by the fact that several enabling activities (two in each focal area) were carried out in the biodiversity and climate change areas, while in contrast, there were no enabling activities in the international waters area and only one in POPs. The multifocal area consists of one enabling activity, hence the very low ratio of 0.12. The distribution of cofinancing by Agency shows the highest ratio for World Bank projects, as both FSPs and three of six MSPs were implemented through this Agency. The high

Table 6.2

Cofinancing Ratios by Agency, Modality, Focal Area, and GEF Replenishment Period

Parameter	Cofinancing ratio
Agency	
UNDP	0.70
UNEP	0.27
UNIDO	2.12
World Bank	1.07
Modality	
FSP	1.16
MSP	1.13
Enabling activity	0.06
Focal area	
Biodiversity	0.80
Climate change	1.56
International waters	1.16
POPs	0.92
Replenishment period	
GEF-1	0
GEF-2	1.02
GEF-3	1.06
GEF-4	1.63

cofinancing ratio for UNIDO is derived from a single MSP, for which a project preparation grant was recently approved.

Note that, in certain cases, expected cofinancing is not actually provided in full. However, there are no reliable, consistent data available regarding actual versus planned cofinancing due to a lack of documentation on completed projects.

6.2 Relevance to GEF Mandate and Focal Area Programs and Strategies

Biodiversity

Global and national enabling activities have helped Moldova fulfill its reporting commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, ratified in 1995. In 2000, GEF support enabled Moldova to prepare its First National Report on Biological Diversity in accordance with Article 26 of the CBD. In addition, the country developed its Biological Diversity Conservation National Strategy and Action Plan. The GEF also supported assessment of capacity-building needs and country-specific priorities in biodiversity and the development of the Second, Third, and Fourth Reports to the CBD.

The recently begun GEF project Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova was designed to support the primary objectives of the CBD: conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from use of these components. Project implementation is expected to contribute to the achievement of the GEF biodiversity strategy objective—to improve the sustainability of protected area systems.

The activities under two GEF global enabling projects have helped Moldova align itself with the main objectives of the GEF biosafety strategy aimed at building capacity for implementation of national biosafety frameworks.

Climate Change

Moldova ratified the UNFCCC in 1995 and the Kyoto Protocol in 2003. GEF climate change enabling activities have provided support to Moldova to fulfill its commitments under the UNFCCC by preparing the First and Second National Communications. The country also received support to improve the quality of its GHG emissions inventory.

The Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste MSP was designed to contribute to the achievement of the GEF's 2007–10 climate change strategy objective of sustainable energy production from biomass by implementing biomass boilers and promoting the use of renewable energy.

International Waters

A GEF FSP on agricultural pollution control, conducted under the World Bank–GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea, aimed to reduce pollution from nutrients in the Prut River—and consequently in the Danube River and Black Sea—through improved manure and nutrient management. The ongoing FSP on environmental infrastructure, supported under the Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River Basin and the Black Sea, was designed to contribute to the reduction of nutrient pollution in the Dniester River, and consequently the Black Sea, through provision of wastewater treatment. The activities of both projects are relevant to the GEF strategic program on international waters under GEF-4 on reducing nutrient overenrichment and oxygen depletion from land-based pollution.

The recently begun regional project Promoting Replication of Good Practices for Nutrient Reduction and Joint Collaboration in Central and Eastern Europe is expected to produce direct environmental impacts of nutrient reduction through the demonstration and replication of good practices and by fostering regional collaboration.

Persistent Organic Pollutants

Moldova ratified the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants in 2004. A subsequent enabling activity implemented with GEF support helped Moldova prepare its National Implementation Plan in line with the convention's requirements.

Activities under two ongoing projects—an FSP on POPs management and destruction and an MSP on capacity building on obsolete pesticides—are in line with two objectives of the GEF POPs strategy, specifically to strengthen the capacity of countries to implement the Stockholm Convention and to invest in partnerships to carry out NIPs to reduce and eliminate POPs. The destruction of obsolete pesticides and PCB-containing capacitor stockpiles will have substantial environmental and human health benefits locally, regionally, and globally.

Land Degradation

Moldova acceded to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in 1999. In the land degradation focal area, the GEF strategy is to contribute to arresting and reversing current global trends—specifically desertification and deforestation—based on a landscape approach and ecosystem management principle to maximize integration with other GEF focal areas.

The objectives of the framework guiding implementation of the strategy are relevant to Moldova, namely develop an enabling environment that will place sustainable land management in the mainstream of development policy and practices, and scale up sustainable land management investments that generate mutual benefits for the global environment and local livelihoods.

No project in this focal area has yet been implemented in Moldova. The absence of land degradation projects in the GEF portfolio is seen as a gap in GEF support, as land degradation is a priority for the country and Moldova is eligible for GEF funding in this area. The two project proposals developed for Moldova were dropped by the GEF Secretariat in 2009 because funds for land degradation were depleted early in GEF-4.

Ozone

Moldova became party to the convention on ozone layer protection as well as to the Montreal Protocol regarding substances that destroy the ozone layer in 1996.

There has been no GEF project in the ozone focal area in Moldova. In accordance with its 1995 Operational Strategy, the GEF is helping countries with economies in transition that are not eligible for funding under the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol to implement activities to phase out ozone-depleting substances in a manner consistent with these countries' obligations under the Montreal Protocol. Moldova is not in this situation, as it is eligible for financial support under the Multilateral Fund. With the fund's support, Moldova implemented a series of projects aimed at strengthening the institutional framework, improving legislation, supplying equipment, and raising awareness of different target groups about ozone layer protection. The fund is also financing a project to develop a management plan for phasing out the release of hydrochlorofluorocarbons.

6.3 Relevance to GEF Agency Strategies and Frameworks

As described in chapter 4, the World Bank, with eight projects totaling $18.65 million, has been the main channel for GEF support in Moldova; followed by UNDP, with four projects amounting to $2.69 million (these figures include cofinancing). The majority of closed national projects were implemented through the World Bank, while most of the new activities are through UNDP. Both Agencies have offices in Moldova and have developed national frameworks for their assistance. Because most of the projects and all of the enabling activities aimed to contribute to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in Moldova, the GEF portfolio has a general relevance to the strategies and frameworks of the GEF Agencies rather than a direct correlation.

Moldova joined the World Bank in 1992 and the International Development Association in 1994. Since then, World Bank lending has consistently supported the country's economic reform program by working to reduce poverty and raise living standards. After the problems experienced with the Lower Dniester Delta biodiversity conservation project, the World Bank decided not to pursue implementation of any more MSPs.

As established in the various country assistance strategies, the World Bank focuses on supporting Moldovan compliance with European and world standards as well as on implementation of country strategy provisions to improve the environment. All GEF projects implemented by the World Bank were in line with country assistance strategy environment-related provisions, contributing to the implementation of country commitments under the UNFCCC, the CBD, the Danube Convention, and the Stockholm Convention.

UNDP's mandate in Moldova is determined by the October 2, 1992, agreement between it and the government of Moldova, which requires the Agency "to support and supplement the national efforts at solving the most important problems of its economic development and to promote social progress and better standards of life."[3] Under GEF-3, the two projects implemented through UNDP—the NCSA enabling activity and the regional Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin (Tranche 2)—aimed to contribute to implementation of the Rio Conventions and the Danube Convention, respectively, in line with the UN Development Assistance Framework for 2001–05 to provide assistance for implementation of environmental conventions and laws.

The objective of the UNDP Country Programme 2007–11 is to make strategic contributions to national development priorities embodied in the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the EU-Moldova Action Plan, and to the achievement of the National Millennium Development Goals. The three GEF-4 projects implemented through UNDP are in line with this program, and are expected to contribute to improved management of natural resources through projects in the biodiversity and international waters areas.

Only one national project has been implemented through UNEP, the Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of the Republic of Moldova MSP. UNEP is the GEF Agency for four global projects with Moldovan components as well. Two of these are focused on enabling activities or capacity building for the

[3] www.undp.md/publications/doc/sbba.pdf; accessed March 2009.

Cartagena Protocol; one focuses on POPs, and one on reporting to the CBD. This focus on the multilateral environmental agreements for which the Agency is the secretariat is obviously within its mandate.

UNIDO will implement the PIF-approved Reducing GHG Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector project. This initiative clearly falls under the UNIDO Industrial Energy Efficiency Program.

7. Efficiency of GEF-Supported Activities in Moldova

This chapter addresses the following issues:

- How much time, effort, and financial resources are needed to develop and implement projects, by type of GEF support modality?
- What is the role of the various stakeholders in the implementation of GEF projects? How do they operate, and how are their activities coordinated?
- How successful is the participatory approach in project preparation and implementation?
- What synergies exist among GEF Agencies in programming and implementation?
- What synergies exist among national institutions for GEF support in programming and implementation?
- What synergies exist between GEF support and that of other donors?
- How efficient is the GEF focal point mechanism?

7.1 Resources Required for Project Processing

This section reviews the efficiency of GEF-supported activities in Moldova, as measured by the time and money needed to process a project through the GEF activity cycle.

Preparation Costs

Because project proponents do not fully disclose such information, calculating the cost of preparing a GEF project is difficult. The cost of any associated project development facility (PDF; now known as a project preparation grant) may be used as an indicator of a particular project's preparation cost, but PDFs are granted up to a certain maximum amount by project modality (for example, a PDF for the preparation of an MSP can be a maximum of $50,000), and independent determination of costs may not necessarily be possible.

Table 7.1 lists all national MSPs and FSPs funded by the GEF in Moldova that have used PDFs for project preparation. The PDFs awarded for the two FSPs listed are comparable, with $300,000 for the Agricultural Pollution Control Project and $330,000 for the POPs Management and Destruction Project; these amounts represent 6.1 and 5.2 percent, respectively, of total project cost. For a third Moldova FSP, the Environmental Infrastructure Project (not included in the table), no PDF funds were used; instead, preparation activities were supported by the IDA Pilot Water Supply and Sanitation Project.

Four MSPs have received a PDF and one a PPG. A planned MSP, Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector in Moldova, has also received a PPG. The amount of GEF support to MSP project

Table 7.1

Project Preparation Costs as a Percentage of the GEF Grant

Project title	Project status	Focal area	Project type	GEF Agency	Funding (million $)			Preparation cost as % of total
					GEF grant	PDF/PPG	Total GEF funding	
Agricultural Pollution Control Project	C	IW	FSP	WB	4.950	0.300	5.250	6.06
Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem	C	BD	MSP	WB	0.975	0.025	1.000	2.56
Reducing GHG Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Residential Sector	D	CC	MSP	UNDP	0.975	0.025	1.000	2.56
Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes	C	CC	MSP	WB	0.973	0.025	0.998	2.57
POPs Management and Destruction Project	O	POP	FSP	WB	6.350	0.330	6.680	5.20
Ecological Network Development in Mid-Prut River Catchment	D	BD	MSP	WB	1.000	0.025	1.025	2.50
Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System	O	BD	MSP	UNDP	0.950	0.050	1.000	5.26
Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector	PIF	CC	MSP	UNIDO	0.960	0.040	1.000	4.17

Note: C = completed; D = dropped; O = ongoing; PIF = PIF approved. BD = biodiversity; CC = climate change; IW = international waters; WB = World Bank.

preparation ranges from $25,000 to $50,000, and from approximately 2.5 to 5.2 percent of total cost.

The average preparation cost across all national projects is 3.9 percent, which is similar to the costs identified in previous CPEs. These costs do not include the contribution made by the project proponents to the preparation process. The total cofinancing for PDF/PPG amounts to $341,000, or 30.7 percent of the total financing for PDF/PPG.

Average Time Taken to Achieve Activity Cycle Milestones

Figure 7.1 presents the GEF activity cycle before its recent reformulation in 2007; all but two of the projects discussed in this report were approved under this earlier activity cycle. Tables 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4 show the duration of the activity cycle for completed and ongoing GEF-supported projects in Moldova. Regional and global projects are not included in this discussion because they have

Figure 7.1

GEF Activity Cycle

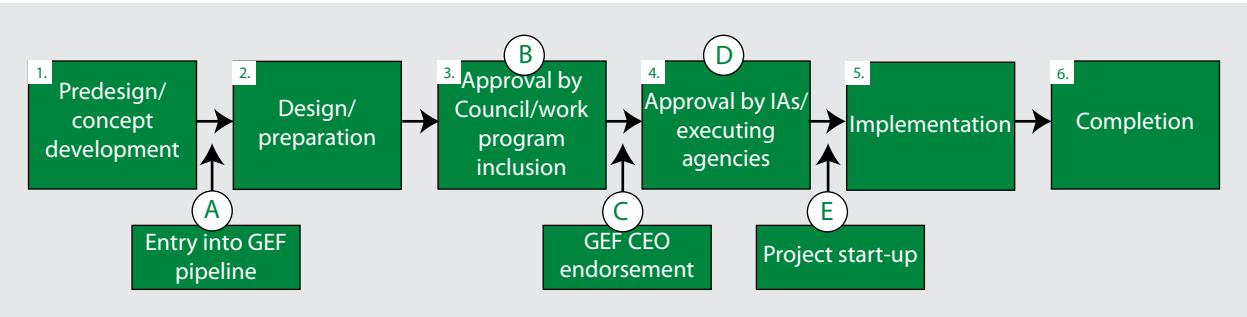


Table 7.2

Duration of the Activity Cycle for GEF-Supported FSPs in Moldova

Project title	Duration between stages (days)					
	A→B	B→C	C→D	D→E	B→E	A→E
Agricultural Pollution Control Project	n.a	n.a	28	25	n.a.	997
Environmental Infrastructure Project	n.a.	n.a.	56	154	n.a.	2,192
POPs Management and Destruction Project	522	64	30	83	177	699

Note: n.a. = not applicable. Data are based on the received date in the GEF database, not the pipeline entry date. See figure 7.1 for stages of GEF activity cycle (A–E).

Table 7.3

Duration of the Activity Cycle for GEF-Supported MSPs in Moldova

Project title	Duration between stages (days)		
	C→D	D→E	A→E
Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem	21	6	127
Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes	12	8	516
Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework	55	72	274
Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System	35	0	397

Note: Data are based on the received date in the GEF database, not the pipeline entry date. See figure 7.1 for stages of GEF activity cycle (A–E).

Table 7.4

Duration of the Activity Cycle for GEF-Supported Enabling Activities in Moldova

Project title	Duration between stages (days)
	B→E
Enabling Moldova to Prepare Its First National Communication in Response to Its Commitments to UNFCCC	129
Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan, and National Report	19
Assessment of Capacity Building Needs and Country Specific Priorities in Biodiversity	102
Climate Change Enabling Activity: Additional Financing for Capacity Building in Priority Areas	116
Enabling activities related to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in the Republic of Moldova	78
National Self-Assessment of Capacity Building Needs	120

Note: Data are based on the received date in the GEF database, not the pipeline entry date. See figure 7.1 for stages of GEF activity cycle (A–E).

different requirements, such as extensive international consultations.

Distinctions should be made between national FSPs, MSPs, and enabling activities, as the activity cycle differs slightly depending on modality. The limited number of projects and missing information (as noted below) also need to be taken into account when attempting to draw inferences from these duration data.

A complete data set exists for only one of Moldova's three **FSPs** (table 7.2). The remaining two—the Agricultural Pollution Control Project and the Environmental Infrastructure Project—were financed under the Danube/Black Sea Basin Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction, a regional program consisting of three tranches. Funding for the country-specific FSPs goes through a slightly different approval process and is not included in a work program. Therefore, their first approval is endorsement by the GEF CEO (stage C in figure 7.1).

For the three FSPs, the time from pipeline entry to project start varied from 23 months—just under two years—for the POPs Management and Destruction Project, to about 33 months for the Agricultural Pollution Control Project to six years for the Environmental Infrastructure Project. The two requirements for the first two FSPs are in line with average GEF figures. The preparation time for the third project, however, was exceptionally long. The excessive entry to start-up duration is linked to the particularities of this specific project, including the extended World Bank preparation schedule associated with the IDA credit, lengthy negotiations, and development of the project concept.

Duration data are more complete for Moldova's four **MSPs** (table 7.3). On average, MSPs take less time than FSPs: 11 months from entry into the GEF pipeline to project start-up, with about 2 months between GEF endorsement and start-up.

Preparation of **enabling activities** takes less time than for FSPs and MSPs, as they do not require GEF Council approval and the process is relatively straightforward, usually entailing only completion of a template request form. On average, it takes about three months from CEO approval to project start-up for enabling activities (table 7.4).

Overall in Moldova, the project preparation and approval process has been relatively efficient in comparison to other countries. However, perceptions vary by stakeholder. Several of those interviewed noted that the preparation of regional projects takes a long time, and that the project development procedures for regional and national projects are difficult compared to those of other donors, such as the European Commission. It was also noted that the preparation of FSPs is overly time consuming, even in the case of the POPs Management and Destruction Project, and that efforts should be made to further reduce preparation time. Some key informants maintained that the length of the preparation process was linked to the complexity of the required feasibility studies, which often needed to be reviewed before approval. On the other hand, most of those interviewed representing MSPs and enabling activities found the procedures and duration of project preparation to be reasonable. Some stakeholders noted that a lack of coordination during project preparation may result in problems at the implementation stage—for example, if the relevant environmental impact assessment or authorization procedures established by national legislation are not taken into account. In such cases, much time can be later lost in obtaining the necessary approvals or permits; this might even jeopardize achievement of the project outputs.

Expected and Actual Completion Dates

Table 7.5 compares the start-up and actual closing dates for Moldova's FSPs, MSPs, and enabling activities, in addition to project extensions and planned durations.

- Only one of the country's three **FSPs** has been completed. No time extension was needed. The project lasted five years and was completed on the target completion date. Planned duration for the other two FSPs is four years. It should

Table 7.5

Planned and Actual Durations of FSPs, MSPs, and Enabling Activities in Moldova

Project	Modality	Target completion date	Actual completion date	Planned duration (months)	Extension (months)
Agricultural Pollution Control Project	FSP	12/31/2009	12/31/2009	60	0
Environmental Infrastructure Project		12/15/2011	n.a.	48	n.a.
POPs Management and Destruction Project		05/31/2010	n.a.	48	n.a.
Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem	MSP	4/30/2005	4/30/2005	48	0
Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes		12/31/2007	5/31/2008	36	5.1
Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework		6/30/2010	n.a.	48	n.a.
Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System		5/31/2013	n.a.	48	n.a.
Enabling Moldova to Prepare Its First National Communication in Response to Its Commitments to UNFCCC	Enabling activity	8/1/1999	2/28/2001	24	19.2
Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan, and National Report		6/1/1999	4/30/2001	14	23.3
Assessment of Capacity Building Needs and Country Specific Priorities in Biodiversity		4/30/2001	12/31/2003	12	32.5
Climate Change Enabling Activity: Additional Financing for Capacity Building in Priority Areas		5/29/2002	12/31/2002	12	7.2
Enabling activities related to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in the Republic of Moldova		7/8/2004	7/18/2004	24	0.3
National Self-Assessment of Capacity Building Needs		1/31/2005	12/31/2005	15	11.1

Note: n.a. = not applicable (project still under implementation).

be noted that a limited time extension is being considered for the POPs Management and Destruction Project in order to make up for a delay in finalizing the legal component and an associated delay in implementing the project's information management system component. It is likely that a considerable extension will be needed with regard to the Environmental Infrastructure Project, in view of the long delay and difficulties experienced with the project's political approval process.

- Only two **MSPs** had been completed at the time of the evaluation. One of these, Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem, was closed before being fully implemented, because the parliament did not approve the establishment of the national park central to the project; consideration of this project's duration is thus irrelevant. With regard to the second MSP, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste, the time extension needed to complete the project was 5.1 months; the

planned duration was three years. This entailed an increase in project completion duration of about 14 percent. The planned duration for the two MSPs still under implementation is four years.

- Six completed **enabling activities** were considered, all of which required a time extension. However, the differences among the various project activities are too significant to make calculation of an average value meaningful. Apart from the enabling activities related to implementation of the Stockholm Convention, which only needed extensions of a few days, the additional time required ranged from 7 to 32 months—or from 60 to 270 percent of the planned duration of the activities.
- The average planned length of implementation was 52 months for FSPs, 45 months for MSPs, and 16.8 months for enabling activities.

7.2 Roles and Relationships

Who Initiates, Designs, and Implements GEF Projects?

Project offices created within the Ministry of Environment play a key operative role in both the design and implementation of projects in Moldova. The convention focal points have also occasionally played a driving role in project preparation, mainly in initiating a project concept and providing guidance to the project office. The situation depends very much on the individuals involved. Focal point involvement has been hindered by changes in personnel. It is standard practice for a new minister to change staff, including personnel serving as convention focal points. Although this turnover has not been institutionalized, it has happened often enough to have a negative impact on focal point commitment. Moreover, each time a new focal point is nominated, he or she must go through a learning curve. Support from GEF Agencies is seen as critical in project preparation, particularly because of their resources and knowledge of GEF rules and procedures.

Project offices are set up along focal area lines—climate change, POPs, biodiversity, carbon finance, biosafety, ozone, and water supply and sanitation—usually at the request of the relevant convention focal point. The availability of funding to support implementation of the corresponding convention is the primary criterion for establishing such an office. The legal status of these offices varies greatly from one to another. The current minister intends to evaluate and standardize project office status. All project offices manage other donor projects in addition to GEF projects. For example, in addition to the GEF–World Bank POPs Management and Destruction Project, the POPs office was implementing two other projects at the time of the GEF evaluation: the Canadian Grant for the Remediation of POP Pesticides Polluted Areas and Clean-Up of PCB Contaminated Oil in Power Equipment (financed through the World Bank by the Canada Persistent Organic Pollutants Fund) and the UNEP-funded Strategic Approach to International Chemical Management project.

Similarly, the project office implementing the GEF's Environmental Infrastructure Project was responsible in 2003–08 for a $7 million IDA pilot water supply and sanitation project. It is currently implementing two other projects: (1) the 2009–10 Regional Development and Social Protection Project, Part D, supported by the European Community Cofinancing Trust Fund Grant Agreement and IDA; and (2) the 2008–13 National Water Supply and Sanitation IDA Project.

As noted elsewhere, the Ministry of Environment is the national executing agency for all projects except one, Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem, for which the

NGO Biotica was the national executing agency. That project was closed early, however, mainly because of the failure of central authorities to advance the creation of a national park envisaged under the project as the first multiple-use protected area in the country.

Project offices are seen as a useful way to maintain a core team of qualified experts who have acquired significant expertise in preparing, managing, and implementing projects. The evaluation identified several examples of projects that are successfully building on previous initiatives. Because project offices are highly dependent on available funding for their existence, the core teams of experts within the project offices have a strong motivation to develop new projects, and consequently facilitate consolidation of support across projects. Box 7.1 provides an example of the structure and main features of one project office, the Biodiversity Office.

The fact that project offices often work in isolation leads to a lack of coordination across focal areas. This is an important point in view of emerging issues such as climate adaptation which require an integrated and cross-sectoral approach.

Use of a participatory approach in project development and implementation is mixed across the Moldovan GEF portfolio. In some cases—as with the protected area system project—project development and implementation have been highly participatory. In contrast, the Agricultural Pollution Control Project experienced conflicts with the local population during wetlands restoration activities, as people were afraid that access to these areas traditionally used for fishing and grazing would be limited. Project staff believe that these difficulties could have been at least partly avoided if the local population had been more involved early on during the project preparation stage.

Box 7.1

Biodiversity Office

The various projects and activities supporting biodiversity conservation in Moldova have triggered the establishment of a Biodiversity Office within the Ministry of Environment. The office has been in operation since July 14, 2000, when it was established within the Ministry of Ecology, Construction and Territorial Development, a predecessor to today's Ministry of Environment. It is a nonprofit organization with financial and administrative autonomy within the budgetary limits and standards established by the Ministries of Finance and Environment and coordinated with the World Bank. The office has its own bank account and uses the ministry's seal and fiscal code.

The office's original objective was to implement a second phase GEF–World Bank enabling activity on assessing capacity-building needs and preparing the Second National Report.. (In fact, its establishing authority, Ministerial Order No. 334, states that the office is to act in accordance with—among others—the directives and standards of the World Bank, revealing the office's origination for these initial projects.) Over time, however, and in accordance with its legal authority, the office has come to manage implementation of other donor projects dealing with biodiversity conservation as well. It also serves as Moldova's national focal point for the Biosafety Clearing-House Mechanism.

With the active support of the GEF Agencies, the Biodiversity Office plays a key role in the preparation and implementation of projects. In particular, it is seen as a useful means for maintaining a core team of qualified experts able to prepare, manage, and implement projects. However, its existence is very much dependent on available funding, such as from the implementation of international assistance projects. In the last year, the office faced financial problems due to a lack of projects.

Source: Interviews with GEF stakeholders.

The lack of consistency in the application of the participatory approach could be overcome to some extent by more proactive strategic guidance from the national level. Key informants noted the importance of involving stakeholders and all beneficiaries before implementation—ideally at an early preparation stage—to ensure the

commitment of both local- and national-level public authorities, a crucial condition to achieving project outcomes and impacts. The participatory approach is also seen as instrumental in raising awareness and overcoming old habits and suspicions toward new technologies. For example, activities aimed at raising the awareness and involvement of the local population throughout the installation of pilot units of biomass boilers under the Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes project helped overcome the populace's general negative perception toward the use of biomass as a source of energy.

It has been noted previously that private sector involvement is key in achieving planned outcomes and ensuring the realization of a project's ultimate impacts. In particular, the participation of the private sector during a project can help ensure further awareness raising and future funding for replication once a project has ended.

Analysis of the GEF portfolio in Moldova has shown that an important factor in encouraging ownership is to demonstrate likely social and economic benefits along with the expected environmental ones. Specifically, demonstration of a project's ability to generate income, savings, or social benefits is an effective tool in gaining support from the local population. Similarly, an approach encompassing activities at the local level as well as at the national is seen as instrumental in overcoming the potential lack of political commitment and encouraging replication. Strong involvement of the local population in project activities such as demonstrating innovative technologies or good practices can contribute greatly to the up-scaling of those technologies and practices. There have been several examples in Moldova of local authorities taking on the role of champion, actively promoting project results.

Activities aimed at local-level ownership should be undertaken in combination with supporting activities at the national level to trigger political support from national authorities and encourage the development and/or adaptation of the enabling legislative and policy framework, including permitting procedures and incentives, or future financing from such governmental sources as the Environmental Fund.

How Clear Are Roles and Responsibilities?

None of those interviewed cited a lack of clarity regarding the relative roles and responsibilities of executing agencies and GEF Agencies. However, in general, project concept development and implementation are handled almost exclusively by a set of key individuals in various organizations. As there is no established procedure or coordination mechanism, decisions on project approval or rejection are made on an ad hoc basis and in the absence of clear criteria. This circumstance results in a lack of transparency and a dependence on a small group of GEF-knowledgeable "insiders."

As noted, the World Bank and UNDP have been the two primary GEF Agencies in Moldova to date, with UNDP playing a more active role in the two most recent replenishment periods. UNIDO and FAO will each serve as the GEF Agency for two upcoming projects: UNIDO for a national MSP in the climate change focal area, which has been PIF approved; and FAO for a regional project under implementation. The expected increased government involvement and coordination in the planning process could be an opportunity to attract other GEF Agencies.

7.3 Lessons Learned across GEF Projects

Until recently, information on project results and lessons learned have not been sufficiently disseminated by GEF Agencies, national executing agencies, and project teams. In several cases,

websites developed under projects were not maintained after the project's end, meaning that useful information was no longer accessible. Similarly, databases developed under a project have been neglected after project completion.

During the national consultation workshop held in March 2010 to review the aide-mémoire, stakeholders commented on the lack of a well-defined strategy for disseminating project results, particularly about lessons learned from project implementation. Although some projects have indeed planned for dissemination of GEF project lessons learned and achievements—mainly through final seminars and documentation made available at the project's end—these measures are not framed in a clear strategy, including in the project proposals. This lack of planning prevents replication and continued awareness raising beyond a project's lifetime. Very few instances could be identified where project results had been publicized on project office or ministry websites. Also, several stakeholders noted that the Ministry of Environment's capacity to disseminate, build on, and sustain project results should be strengthened. Implementation of the new regulation on the institutional framework and the mechanism of coordinating foreign assistance could bring some improvement.

Despite the lack of a dissemination strategy, several examples exist where project results have been built on to develop further projects. For example, enabling activities related to implementation of the Stockholm Convention in Moldova fed into the POPs Management and Destruction Project. Similarly, biodiversity convention enabling activities as well as the Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta MSP fed into the Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova project. Another example is the succession of projects relating to biosafety, where a global project established the foundation for the development of Moldova's national biosafety framework, and implementation of the framework is supported through an MSP.

Overall, using the experience gained from other projects to enrich new project design and implementation is mainly due to the efforts of core teams that are retained through project offices and are highly motivated to find new projects. GEF Agencies also play an important role in this regard.

7.4 GEF Focal Point Mechanism

GEF guidelines indicate that there should be two focal points: one operational and one political. **Political focal points** are responsible for GEF governance issues and policies and communications with their constituencies. **Operational focal points** are responsible for in-country program coordination of GEF projects and other operational activities. In Moldova, one person has been nominated to serve as both the political and operational focal point: the minister of environment has held this position since 2008.

The GEF requires endorsement of all projects by the operational focal point. Given the additional responsibilities of the GEF focal point in Moldova, concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of the focal point mechanism were raised by some key informants. In particular, while the project offices or convention focal points play a noticeable role in operational activities, there is a lack of guidance and facilitation to align projects with the national development plan and environmental priorities. Additionally, the focal point's involvement in monitoring and evaluation of the GEF portfolio is very limited.

Synergies among different donors within the framework of a single project—such as the

cooperation that exists between the Agricultural Pollution Control Project and the IDA rural investment and services project regarding the rural and financial services component—can reinforce or sustain project outcomes, as can synergies among a combination of projects conducted in succession in the same focal area, as in the POPs area. In Moldova, synergies between support provided by the GEF and other donors are mainly driven by relationships existing between and among the donors and the projects themselves rather than the result of coordination by the GEF focal point.

The **dissemination of information** on GEF mechanisms and procedures in Moldova was nonexistent until recently. As mentioned above, no systematic records have been kept about GEF projects in the country. When the evaluation team checked the list of GEF-supported projects made available at the beginning of the evaluation, several gaps and inconsistencies were identified of which the ministry was unaware. GEF Agencies have far more visibility in a country than does the GEF, whose financing is not always clearly acknowledged. The Agencies' visibility is a direct consequence of their presence in the country and their activities in the framework of projects financed by other donors.

Some positive signs indicate that the GEF focal point mechanism in Moldova is moving toward a more **strategic approach**:

- The GEF **Country Support Program** is a capacity-building project focusing on the provision of support to GEF focal points to strengthen country-level coordination and consultation, promote genuine country ownership of GEF-financed activities, and encourage the involvement of recipient countries and interested government and civil society stakeholders in activities that benefit the global environment. Using Country Support Program funding, UNEP signed a small-scale agreement with the Ministry of Environment in November 2009.
- The new regulation on the institutional framework and the mechanism of coordinating foreign assistance (see section 7.1) provides for the designation of a sector coordinator and a sector foreign assistance board by each ministry and other central authorities. The **sector coordinator** will be responsible for developing project and program proposals, managing a contract negotiation group, harmonizing interactions between foreign assistance projects and programs, good implementation and monitoring of projects, avoiding overlaps and double financing and ensuring sustainability, annual reporting on the implementation of foreign assistance, and ensuring transparency of activities and of the results obtained. The **sector board** is an advisory body in charge of planning and monitoring foreign assistance projects and programs for the sector. Chaired by the sector coordinator, the board includes heads of subdivisions responsible for sector policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation, and EU integration; representatives of donors active in the sector; and of the national coordination unit. It can also include, if appropriate, representatives of the private sector, NGOs, and other relevant institutions. The sector coordinator will play a key role in the planning of foreign assistance—specifically, in defining assistance priorities, identifying project ideas and developing proposals, and negotiating and signing contracts on foreign assistance.
- With UNDP support, a **workshop** was organized within the Ministry of Environment in January 2010 to discuss Moldova's involvement in GEF-5. Although the ministry decided not to include other GEF Agencies in the workshop, it was a very useful planning exercise and highly informative, especially for new ministerial staff.

Annex A. Terms of Reference

This annex presents the terms of reference for the Moldova country portfolio evaluation. Minor editorial changes have been made.

A.1 Background and Introduction

At the request of the Global Environment Facility Council, the Evaluation Office conducts country portfolio evaluations every year.[1] This year, Moldova and Turkey have been selected. These terms of reference relate to the Moldova CPE. CPEs aim to provide the GEF Council with an assessment of results and performance of GEF-supported activities at the country level, and of how GEF-supported activities fit into the national strategies and priorities as well as within the global environmental mandate of the GEF.

Countries are selected for portfolio evaluation from among 160 GEF-eligible countries, based on a stratified randomized selection and a set of strategic criteria.[2] The evaluation findings and recommendations from the Moldova and Turkey CPEs will be synthesized in a single report, the *Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2010*, which will be presented to the GEF Council at its June 2010 meeting. Among several considerations, Moldova was selected based on its large and diverse portfolio, including projects in the majority of the GEF's focal areas, its group allocations under the RAF for climate change and biodiversity, and its participation in both Black Sea and Danube River regional projects.

Moldova is a small country of 3.63 million people with a per capita income of $1,470 (2008);[3] it became independent in August 1991 after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. As a result of constitutional changes, Moldova became a parliamentary republic in 2000. Following a decade of economic decline and fragmented institutional development, Moldova has since 2000 enjoyed relative political stability and sustained economic recovery. However, many challenges remain. Moldova has the lowest gross domestic product among European nations and a vulnerable economy that relies heavily on remittances from citizens working abroad. Its agriculture-based economy is susceptible to drought and changing external market pressures. The environment suffers from the heavy use of agricultural chemicals, and poor farming methods have caused

[1] So far nine countries have been evaluated: Costa Rica, the Philippines, Samoa, Cameroon, Benin, Madagascar, South Africa, Egypt, and Syria.

[2] See www.gefeo.org/uploadedFiles/Evaluation_Office/Country_Portfolio_Evaluations/Ongoing_Evals-Country_Portfolio_Evals-Notes_on_Selection_Criteria.pdf, accessed March 2009.

[3] World Development Indicators database, World Bank, September 2009.

widespread soil erosion. In 2005, Moldova's CO_2 emissions were 2.1 metric tons per capita.[4] As of 2003, only 1.4 percent of Moldova's total land area was protected.[5]

Moldova aspires to join the European Union over the long term. In this context, approximation with EU environmental legislation is both a major challenge and an important priority. In 1995, Moldova signed the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU, which entered into force in 1998. The agreement sets up the framework for cooperation between the EU and neighboring countries.

In biodiversity, GEF support has concentrated on conservation and management of protected areas, and efforts to meet biosafety obligations. In climate change, it has focused on renewable energy from agricultural waste and energy efficiency in buildings. The international waters projects focused on agricultural pollution control and environmental infrastructure. For POPs, the focus has been on safely managing and disposing of stockpiles of POP-contaminated pesticides and PCBs, and strengthening the regulatory and institutional arrangements in Moldova. GEF support also included a series of enabling activities for all the focal areas, as requested and required by the international conventions for which the GEF serves as financial mechanism. Financing for the enabling activities supported by the GEF is about $1.5 million.

In addition, Moldova has participated in 17 initiatives financially supported by the GEF with a regional or global scope. Table A.2 breaks down these projects. Most of the regional projects involving Moldova are international waters projects for the Danube River and Black Sea. The global projects have played a key role in developing communications to UN conventions and developing frameworks and action plans.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Earth Trends, 2003.

Table A.1

GEF Support to National Projects by Agency and Focal Area

Agency	Focal area	GEF amount (million $)	No. of projects
World Bank	Biodiversity	1.40	3
	Climate change	0.97	1
	International waters	9.51	2
	POPs	7.98	2
	Subtotal	19.87	8
UNDP	Biodiversity	0.95	1
	Climate change	1.40	3
	Multifocal	0.20	1
	Subtotal	2.55	5
UNEP	Biodiversity	0.54	1
UNIDO	Climate change	0.96	1
Total		**23.91**	**15**

Table A.2

Regional and Global Projects Involving Moldova by Focal Area and GEF Agency

Focal area	World Bank	UNDP	UNEP	UNDP-UNEP	FAO	Total
Biodiversity	0	0	3	1	0	**4**
Climate change	0	1	0	1	0	**2**
International waters	3	5	0	0	0	**8**
POPs	0	0	1	1	1	**3**
Total	**3**	**6**	**4**	**3**	**1**	**17**

A.2 Objectives of the Evaluation

Based on the overall purpose (above) of the GEF CPEs, the evaluation for Moldova will have the following specific objectives:

- Independently evaluate the *relevance* and *efficiency* of GEF support in a country from several points of view:[6] national environmental frameworks and decision-making processes, the GEF mandate and achievement of global environmental benefits, and GEF policies and procedures.
- Assess the *effectiveness* and *results* of completed and ongoing projects in each relevant focal area.[7]
- 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 in the GEF, and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF support.

The evaluation will address the performance of the GEF portfolio in Moldova in terms of relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness as well as the contributing factors to this performance.

The Moldova CPE will analyze the performance of individual projects as part of the overall GEF portfolio, but without rating such projects. CPEs do not have an objective of evaluating or rating the performance of the GEF Agencies, partners, or national governments.

A.3 Key Evaluation Questions

The GEF CPE will be guided by the following key questions:

- **Relevance of GEF support**
  - Is GEF support relevant to national development needs and challenges, as established in the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the National Development Strategy and Action Plan?
  - Is GEF support relevant to national environmental priorities, in particular to the Moldovan Concept of Environmental Policy, and to Moldova's GEF focal area strategic documents?
  - Do the GEF and its Agencies support the establishment of priorities for sustainable development and environmental protection, and related decision-making processes within Moldova?
  - Is GEF support relevant to the objectives of the various global environmental benefits (that is, biodiversity, greenhouse gases, international waters, POPs, and land degradation)?
  - Is Moldova supporting the GEF mandate and focal area programs and strategies with its own resources and/or support from other donors?
- **Efficiency of GEF support**
  - How much time, effort, and financial resources does it take to develop and implement projects, by type of GEF support modality?

[6] *Relevance:* the extent to which the objectives of the GEF activity are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities, and partner and donor policies, including changes with time; *efficiency:* the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible (funds, expertise, time, and so on).

[7] *Effectiveness:* the extent to which the GEF activity's objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance; *results:* the output, outcome, or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a GEF activity.

- What is the role of the various stakeholders in the implementation of GEF projects? How do they operate and how are their activities coordinated?
- How successful is the participatory approach in project preparation and implementation?
- What are the synergies among GEF Agencies in programming and implementation?
- What are the synergies between national institutions for GEF support in programming and implementation?
- What are the synergies between GEF support and other donors' support?
- How efficient is the GEF focal point mechanism?

- **Results and effectiveness of GEF support**
  - Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the project level?
  - Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the aggregate level by focal area?
  - Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the country level?
  - How successful is the dissemination of GEF project lessons and results?
  - Is GEF support effective in producing sustainable results that are maintained after project completion?

Each question is supported by a preliminary evaluation matrix, which is presented in annex B. The matrix contains a tentative list of indicators or basic data, potential sources of information, and methodology components, and will be validated or further developed by the evaluation team once the evaluation phase starts. As a basis, the evaluation will use the indicators from GEF project documents as well as relevant indicators of the focal areas and the RAF. These will be complemented by appropriate and available national sustainable development and environmental indicators.

A.4 Scope and Limitations

The Moldova CPE will cover all types of GEF-supported activities in the country at all stages of the project cycle (pipeline, ongoing, and completed) and implemented by all GEF Agencies in all focal areas, including applicable GEF corporate activities. The main focus of the evaluation will be national projects.

In addition, some of the most important regional and global projects in which Moldova participated will be reviewed. This part of the evaluation will review the overall GEF support to Moldova through these regional projects, report on results within Moldova, and describe the ways in which Moldova participated in them. The review of selected regional projects will feed into the aggregate assessment of the national GEF portfolio described above.

The stage of the project will determine the expected focus of the analysis (see table A.3).

Table A.3

Focus of Evaluation by Project Status

Project status	Relevance	Efficiency	Effectiveness	Results
Completed	Full	Full	Full	Full
Ongoing	Full	Partially	Likelihood	Likelihood
In pipeline	Expected	Processes	n.a.	n.a.

Note: n.a. = not applicable. The main focus of the evaluation will be relevance and efficiency; it will explore possible methodologies on how to evaluate project effectiveness and results.

CPEs are challenging as the GEF does not yet operate by establishing country programs that specify expected achievements through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets.[8] In

[8] Voluntary GEF national business plans will be introduced in GEF-5.

general, CPEs entail some degree of retrofitting of frameworks to be able to judge the relevance of the aggregated results of a diverse portfolio of projects. Accordingly, the approach the GEF Evaluation Office uses to conduct CPEs will be adapted and will be informed by other relevant national and GEF Agency strategies, country programs, and planning frameworks as a basis for assessing the aggregate results and relevance of GEF support in Moldova.

GEF support is provided through partnerships with many institutions operating at different levels, so it is challenging to consider GEF support separately. The CPE will not attempt to provide a direct attribution of development results to the GEF, but address the contribution of GEF support to the overall achievements, that is, to establish a credible link between what the GEF supported and its implications. The evaluation will address how GEF support has contributed to overall achievements in partnership with others, by questions on roles and coordination, synergies and complementarities, and knowledge sharing.

The assessment of results will be focused, where possible, at the level of outcomes and impacts rather than outputs. Project-level results will be measured against the overall expected impact and outcomes from each project. Expected impacts at the focal area level will be assessed in the context of GEF objectives and indicators of global environmental benefits. Outcomes at the focal area level will be primarily assessed in relation to catalytic and replication effects, institutional sustainability and capacity development, and awareness.

Of the 15 national projects, 9 have been completed, 4 are ongoing, and the other 2 have been approved. Only one full-size project (Agricultural Pollution Control) and one medium-size project (Renewable Energy from Agricultural Wastes), both implemented through the World Bank, have been completed. A second medium-size project (Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem, implemented through the World Bank) was closed before completion of project activities. The remaining six completed projects are enabling activities: two on producing national reports to the CBD (through the World Bank), two on generating reports to the UNFCCC (through UNDP), one on POPs (through the World Bank), and the National Capacity Self-Assessment (through UNDP). Projects under implementation include the nearly completed Environmental Infrastructure Project and the POPs Management and Destruction Project, both implemented through the World Bank. Support to the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework is implemented through UNEP, and the Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova implemented through UNDP started in June 2009. Reducing GHG Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector has been PIF approved and will be implemented through UNIDO. The remaining pipeline project, Reducing GHG Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Residential Sector implemented through UNDP, has not progressed beyond the PDF-A stage. In addition, there are four projects that were dropped including one proposed by EBRD on wastewater treatment, two land degradation proposals from UNDP, and one World Bank biodiversity project.

The context in which these projects were developed, approved, and are being implemented constitutes a focus of the evaluation. This includes a historical causality assessment of the national sustainable development and environmental policies, strategies, and priorities; the legal environment in which these policies are implemented and enforced; GEF Agency country strategies and programs; and GEF policies, principles, programs, and strategies.

Weaknesses of monitoring and evaluation at the project and GEF program levels have been mentioned in past CPEs and other evaluations of the Office, and may pose challenges to the Moldova CPE as well. Not all the information that will be used for the analysis will be of a quantitative nature.

A.5 Methodology

The Moldova CPE will be conducted by staff of the GEF Evaluation Office and regional and local consultants, led by a task manager from the GEF Evaluation Office. The team includes technical expertise on the national environmental and sustainable development strategies, evaluation methodologies, and the GEF. The consultants selected qualify under the GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines, and are requested to sign a declaration of interest to indicate no recent (last three to five years) relationship with GEF support in the country. The GEF focal point in Moldova, although not a member of the evaluation team, will be an essential partner in the evaluation.

The methodology includes a series of components using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and tools. The *qualitative* aspects of the evaluation include a desk review of existing documentation. The expected sources of information include the following:

- At the *project level*, project documents, project implementation reports, terminal evaluations, reports from monitoring visits, and documents produced by projects
- At the *country level*, national sustainable development agendas, environmental priorities and strategies, GEF-wide focal area strategies and action plans, and global and national environmental indicators
- At the *Agency level*, country assistance strategies and frameworks and their evaluations and reviews
- Evaluative evidence at the *country level* from GEF Evaluation Office evaluations, such as those related to the Program Study on International Waters, overall performance studies, and/or other studies
- *Interviews* with GEF stakeholders, including the GEF focal point and all other relevant government ministries, bilateral and multilateral donors including the European Commission, civil society organizations and academia (including both local and international NGOs with a presence in Moldova), GEF Agencies (World Bank, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO), and the national convention focal points
- *Interviews* with GEF beneficiaries and supported institutions, municipal governments and associations, and local communities and authorities
- *Field visits* to selected project sites
- Information from national consultation *workshops*

The *quantitative* analysis will use indicators to assess the relevance and efficiency of GEF support using projects as the unit of analysis (that is, linkages with national priorities, time and cost of preparing and implementing projects, and so forth) and to measure GEF results (that is, progress toward achieving global environmental impacts) and performance of projects (such as implementation and completion ratings). The analysis will also use available statistics and scientific sources, especially for national environmental indicators.

The evaluation team will use standard tools and protocols for the CPEs and adapt these to the Moldovan context. These tools include a project review protocol to conduct the desk and field reviews of GEF projects and interview guides to conduct interviews with different stakeholders.

A selection of project sites will be visited, including but not limited to the context of conducting the two ROtI field studies (see below). The criteria for selecting the sites will be finalized during the implementation of the evaluation, but emphasis will be placed on completed projects and those clustered within a particular geographic area, given time and financial resource limitations. The evaluation team will decide on specific sites to visit based on the initial review of documentation and balancing needs of representation as well as cost-effectiveness of conducting the field visits.

A.6 Process and Outputs

These country-specific terms of reference have been prepared based on an initial GEF Evaluation Office visit to Moldova in November 2009, undertaken with the purpose of scoping the evaluation and identifying key issues to be included in the analysis. It was also an opportunity to officially launch the evaluation, while at the same introduce the selected local consultant to GEF national stakeholders. These terms of reference conclude the Moldova CPE preparatory phase, and set the scene for the evaluation phase, during which the evaluation team will complete the following tasks:

1. Complete the ongoing literature review to extract existing reliable evaluative evidence.
2. Prepare specific inputs to the evaluation:[9]
   - *GEF portfolio database*, which describes all GEF support activities within the country, basic information (GEF Agency, focal area, GEF modality), their implementation status, project cycle information, GEF and cofinancing financial information, major objectives and expected (or actual) results, key partners per project, and so on
   - *Country environmental legal framework*, which provides the historical perspective of the context in which the GEF projects have been developed and implemented. This document will be based on information on environmental legislation, environmental policies of each government administration (plans, strategies, and similar), and the international agreements signed by the country presented and analyzed through time so as to be able to connect with particular GEF support
   - *Global environmental benefits assessment*, which provides an assessment of the country's contribution to the GEF mandate and its focal areas based on appropriate indicators, such as those used in the RAF (biodiversity and climate change) and other indicators extracted from project documents and other relevant sources
   - ROtI field studies of two national projects completed at least two years, selected in consultation with the Evaluation Office staff, to strengthen the information gathering and analysis on results
3. Conduct the evaluation analysis and triangulation of collected information and evidence from various sources, tools, and methods. This will be done during the GEF Evaluation Office staff's second country visit to consolidate the evidence gathered so far and fill in any additional information and analysis gaps before formulating findings, conclusions, and preliminary recommendations. During this visit, additional fieldwork will be undertaken as needed.
4. Conduct a national consultation workshop with the government and national stakeholders,

[9] These inputs are working documents and are not expected to be published as separate documents.

including project staff, donors, and GEF Agencies, to present and gather stakeholders' feedback on the main CPE findings, conclusions, and preliminary recommendations to be included in a first draft CPE report. The workshop will also be an opportunity to verify errors of facts or analysis in case these are supported by adequate additional evidence brought to the attention of the evaluation team.

5. Prepare a final Moldova CPE report, which incorporates comments received and will be presented to the GEF Council and to the Moldovan government. The GEF Evaluation Office will bear full responsibility for the content of the report.

As indicated above, the GEF focal point will be an intrinsic and essential partner in this evaluation. The Ministry of Environment has been requested to provide support to the evaluation, such as identifying key people to be interviewed; communicating with relevant government departments; supporting organization of interviews, field visits, and meetings; and identifying main documents. The GEF Agencies will be requested to provide support to the evaluation on their specific projects or activities supported by the GEF, including identification of key project and Agency staff to be interviewed, participation in interviews, arrangement of field visits to projects, and provision of project documentation and data.

The evaluation will be conducted between October 2009 and May 2010. The key milestones of the evaluation are presented in table A.4.

Table A.4

Evaluation's Key Milestones

Milestone	Deadline
Literature review	November 30, 2009
Finalization of the GEF Moldova portfolio database	November 30, 2009
Country environmental legal framework	December 31, 2009
Global environmental benefits assessment	December 31, 2009
Two field ROtI studies	January 15, 2010
Data collection/interviews and project review protocols	February 15, 2010
Consolidation of evaluative evidence, eventual additional field visits	February 15, 2010
National consultation workshop	March 15, 2010
Draft CPE report circulated to stakeholders for comments	March 29, 2010
Incorporation of comments in a final CPE report	May 10, 2010
Final draft CPE report	May 26, 2010

Annex B. Evaluation Matrix

This annex presents the evaluation matrix used in the Moldova country portfolio evaluation. Minor editorial corrections have been made.

Key question	Indicators/basic data	Sources of information	Methodology
Is GEF support relevant?			
Is GEF support relevant to national development needs and challenges, as established in the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the National Development Strategy and Action Plan?	GEF supports development needs (that is, income generation, capacity building) and reduces challenges	Relevant country-level sustainable development and environment policies, strategies, and action plans	Desk review; GEF portfolio analysis by focal area, Agency, modality, and project status (national)
	The GEF's various types of modalities, projects, and instruments are coherent with country needs and challenges	Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), PMIS, Agencies' project databases	
		Government officials, Agencies' staff, donors and civil society representatives	Stakeholder consultation (focus groups, individual interviews)
		Country legal environmental framework	Literature review, timelines, historical causality, and so on
Is GEF support relevant to national environmental priorities, in particular to the Moldovan Concept of Environmental Policy, and to Moldova's GEF focal area strategic documents?	GEF support is within Moldova's environmental priorities	Relevant country-level sustainable development and environment policies, strategies, and action plans, in particular the Moldovan Concept of Environmental Policy	Desk review; GEF portfolio analysis by focal area, Agency, modality, and project status (national)
		Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), PMIS, Agencies' project databases	
	Level of GEF funding compared to other ODA in the environmental sector	Available databases (international such as World Bank, OECD, and so on; and national, such as department of statistics, other)	
	GEF support linked to the National Environmental Action Plan, national communications to the UNFCCC, national POPs, NCSA, and so on	GEF-supported enabling activities and products (NCSA, NEAP, national communications to UN conventions, and so on)	Stakeholder consultation (focus groups, individual interviews)
	GEF support has country ownership and is country based (that is, in terms of project origin, design, and implementation)	Government officials, Agencies' staff, donors and civil society representatives	
		Country legal environmental framework	Literature review, timelines, historical causality, and so on

Key question	Indicators/basic data	Sources of information	Methodology
Do the GEF and its Agencies support the establishment of priorities for sustainable development and environmental protection, and related decision-making processes within Moldova?	Relevant national policies and strategic documents include set of priorities that reflect the results and outcomes of relevant GEF support	Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), PMIS, Agencies' project databases	Desk review
	GEF activities facilitate and contribute to decision-making process leading to the definition of sustainable development and environmental protection priorities	Government officials, Agencies' staff, donors and civil society representatives	Stakeholder consultation (focus groups, individual interviews)
		Country legal environmental framework	Literature review, timelines, historical causality, and so on
Is GEF support relevant to the objectives of the various global environmental benefits (biodiversity, greenhouse gases, international waters, POPs, land degradation, and so on)?	Project outcomes and impacts are related to the RAF Global Benefit Index (for biodiversity and climate change) and to other global indicators for POPs, land degradation, and international waters	National convention action plans, RAF, biodiversity scorecard, and so on	Desk review, project field visits, project review protocols
		Country legal environmental framework	Literature review, timelines, historical causality, and so on
	GEF support linked to national commitments to conventions	Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), PMIS, Agencies' project databases	GEF portfolio analysis by focal area, Agency, modality, and project status (national)
		Government officials, Agencies' staff, donors and civil society representatives	Stakeholder consultation (focus groups, individual interviews)
		Global environmental benefits assessment	Literature review
Is Moldova supporting the GEF mandate and focal area programs and strategies with its own resources and/or support from other donors?	GEF activities, country commitment, and project counterparts support the GEF mandate and focal area programs and strategies (catalytic and replication, and so on)	GEF Instrument, Council decisions, focal area strategies, GEF-4 programming strategy	Desk review; GEF portfolio analysis by focal area, Agency, modality, and project status (national)
		Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), PMIS, Agencies' project databases	
		GEF Secretariat staff and technical staff from GEF Agencies	Interviews
		Global environmental benefits assessment	Literature review
		Country legal environmental framework	Literature review, timelines, historical causality, and so on
Is GEF support efficient?			
How much time, money, and effort does it take to develop and implement a project, by type of GEF support modality?	Process indicators: processing timing (according to project cycle steps), preparation and implementation cost by type of modalities, and so on	Project-related documentation (project documents and logframes, implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), PMIS, Agencies' project databases, RAF pipeline	Desk review, GEF portfolio analysis, timelines
	Process of identifying and approving projects, including cooperation with focal point		
	Projects dropped after PDF and canceled projects	GEF Secretariat and Agencies' staff and government officials, GEF focal point	Interviews, field visits, project review protocols
	GEF vs. cofinancing	National and local government officials, donors, NGOs, beneficiaries	

Key question	Indicators/basic data	Sources of information	Methodology
What is the role of various stakeholders in the implementation of GEF projects? How do they operate and how are their activities coordinated?	Level of participation	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	Desk review and meta-analysis of evaluation reports
	Roles and responsibilities of GEF actors	Project staff, government officials	
	Coordination between GEF projects		
	Existence of a national coordination mechanism for GEF support	GEF Secretariat staff and technical staff from GEF Agencies	Interviews, field visits, institutional analysis
How successful is the participatory approach in project preparation and implementation?	Extent of participatory approach in project preparation and implementation	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	Desk review and meta-analysis of evaluation reports
	Awareness of and support to the project	Project staff, government officials, NGOs, beneficiaries	
	Project preparation and implementation integrate various stakeholders' views	GEF Secretariat staff and technical staff from GEF Agencies	Interviews, field visits
What are the synergies among GEF Agencies in programming and implementation?	Acknowledgment between GEF Agencies of each others' projects	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	Desk review and meta-analysis of evaluation reports, interviews, and field visits
	Effective communication and technical support between GEF project agencies and organizations	GEF Agency staff, national executing agencies (NGOs, other)	
What are the synergies between national institutions for GEF support in programming and implementation?	Acknowledgment between institutions of each others' projects	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	Desk review and meta-analysis of evaluation reports, interviews, and field visits
	Effective communication and technical support between national institutions	Project staff, national and local government officials	
What are the synergies between GEF support and other donors' support?	Acknowledgment between institutions of each others' projects	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	Desk review, focus groups and individual interviews, and field visits
	Effective communication and technical support between institutions	NGO staffs and donors' representatives	
	Complementarity of GEF support	Evaluations of other donors' funded projects	Meta-analysis of evaluation reports
How efficient is the GEF focal point mechanism?	Transparency and efficiency of project preparation and approval process	Project staff, national and local government officials, beneficiaries	Individual interviews, field visits, institutional analysis
	Efficient coordination of different stakeholders in project preparation and implementation	GEF Secretariat staff and technical staff from GEF Agencies	
	Effective communication with other stakeholders, including feedback on project implementation		
Is GEF support effective in producing results that are sustainable?			
Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the project level?	Project outcomes and impacts	Project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives	Focus groups and individual interviews
		ROtI studies	ROtI methodology
	Existing ratings for project outcomes (that is, self-ratings and independent ratings)	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	Desk review, project review protocols
	Changes in global benefit indexes and other global environmental indicators	Evaluative evidence from projects and donors, global environmental benefits assessment	Literature review, meta-analysis of evaluation reports

Key question	Indicators/basic data	Sources of information	Methodology
Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the aggregate level by focal area?	Aggregated outcomes and impacts from above	Project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives	Focus groups and individual interviews
		ROtI studies	ROtI methodology
		Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	GEF portfolio aggregate analysis
	Catalytic and replication effect	Data from overall projects and other donors	Desk review
		ROtI studies	ROtI methodology
		Project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives	Focus groups and individual interviews
	Contribution by the GEF	Data from overall projects and other donors	Desk review
		ROtI studies	ROtI methodology
		Project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives	Focus groups and individual interviews
Is GEF support effective in producing results (outcomes and impacts) at the country level?	Aggregated outcomes and impacts from above	Project-related documentation (project documents and logframes, implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on)	GEF portfolio aggregate analysis, desk review
	Overall outcomes and impacts of GEF support	Project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives	Field visits, focus groups, and individual interviews
	Catalytic and replication effect	Data from projects financed by other donors and or by the government, ROtI studies	Desk review, ROtI methodology
How successful is the dissemination of GEF project lessons and results?	Project design, preparation, and implementation have incorporated lessons from previous projects within and outside the GEF	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), ROtI studies, project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives	Desk review, ROtI methodology, GEF portfolio and pipeline analysis
	Effective communication of project lessons and results, development of specific tools for dissemination		
	Use of project results by other projects and reciprocally	NGO staffs, project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives	Focus groups and individual interviews
Is GEF support effective in producing sustainable results that are maintained after project completion?	Availability of financial and economic resources	Project-related reviews (implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, and so on), NGO staffs, project staff and beneficiaries, national and local government representatives, ROtI studies	Desk review, focus groups and individual interviews, project review protocols, ROtI methodology, GEF portfolio analysis
	Stakeholder ownership, social factors		
	Existence of technical know-how		
	Environmental risks		
	Existence of an institutional and legal framework	Country legal environmental framework	Literature review, timelines, historical causality, and so on

Annex C. Interviewees

Alexei Andreev, Ecological Society Biotica, Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem

Alexandru Apostol, Deputy Head, State Environmental Inspectorate, Ministry of Environment, CBD Focal Point

Valentin Arion, Thermoenergetics Department, Technical University Head, Renewable Energy Agricultural Wastes Project

Ion Barbarasa, Assistant Project Manager, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Viorica Bejan, Coordination Specialist, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Ministry of Environment

Tatiana Belous, Senior Researcher, Institute of Ecology and Geography, Danube Convention Focal Point

Oleg Bogdevich, Deputy Director, Institute of Geology and Seismology, Danube Convention

Ilie Boian, Deputy Director, State Hydrometeorological Service, Ministry of Environment, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Focal Point

Corneliu Bordeianu, Project Manager, Renewable Energy Agricultural Wastes Project

Radu Bordeianu, Technician, wastewater treatment facility for the Tehnostelca Ltd slaughterhouse, Hincesti town, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Sandra Broka, Task Team Leader, World Bank

Marcela Bors, Director, Nicolai Casso High School, Chiscareni village, Singerei District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Andrea Bronzini, Team Leader, IV SWS/IRIDRA/HYDEA, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Luba Buga, Mayor, Boghenii-Noi village, Ungheni District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Anatol Burciu, Engineer, IV SWS/IRIDRA/HYDEA, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Corneliu Busuioc, NIRAS Denmark, Remediation of POP Pesticides Polluted Areas and Clean-Up of PCB Contaminated Oil in Power Equipment Project

Iaroslava Butuc, Financial Specialist, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Jaime Cavelier, Senior Biodiversity Specialist

Valeriu Cazac, Director, State Hydrometeorological Service, UNFCCC Focal Point

Vasile Cernavca, Deputy Mayor, Chiscareni village, Singerei District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Sergiu Cicati, Director, Gros & Co International (straw boiler manufacturer), Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Valentin Ciubotaru, BIOS NGO

Ion Cornei, Inspector, Hincesti District Ecological Inspection, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Ion Cotofana, Biodiversity Office, Ministry of Environment

Victor Cotruta, Financial and Development Director, Regional Environmental Centre Moldova

Olga Covaliova, Biosafety Consultant, Biosafity Office

Ana Cumanov, Chief of Soil Quality Monitoring Centre, State Hydrometeorological Service, Ministry of Environment

Larisa Cupcea, Project Assistant, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Matilda Dimovska, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Moldova

Dumitru Drumea, Executive Director, Regional Center for Environmental Studies, ECOS, Danube Convention

Gheorghii Filipovici, School Director, Boghenii-Noi village, Ungheni District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Dumitru Galupa, Moldsilva Forestry Agency, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Vladimir Garaba, Chisinau Branch of the Ecological Movement of Moldova

Sandu Ghidirim, Operations Officer, World Bank, Moldova Country Office, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Gavril Gilca, Head of Environmental Monitoring Centre, State Hydrometeorological Service, Ministry of Environment

Iulian Gisca, Project Manager, Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova Project

Andrei Globa, Mayor of Orhei District, Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova Project

Anatol Gobjila, Senior Operations Officer, World Bank Moldova

Iurie Gorodenco, Mayor, Viisoara village, Glodeni District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Elena Grosu, School Steward, Chiscareni village, Singerei District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Echim Gumeniuc, Dean of Forestry Faculty, Agricultural University of Moldova, Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova Project

Liviu Gumovschi, Executive Director, Consolidated Agricultural Project Management Unit

Sergiu Gutu, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Tamara Guvir, Deputy Head, Environmental Pollution Prevention, Ministry of Environment, International Waters Focal Point

Dinne Smederup Hansen, Senior Project Manager, Economics, Financial Analysis & Law, COWI A/S, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Kaarina Immonen, Resident Representative, UNDP Moldova

Rodica Iordanov, Project Coordinator, Milieukontakt International, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Andrei Isac, Executive Director, Regional Environmental Centre Moldova

Alexandru Jolondcovschi, Manager, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Libor Krkoska, Head of Office, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Andrea Kutter, Senior Partnership Specialist, World Bank

Meleca Leonid, Engineer, WSSPIU, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Angela Lozan, Manager, Biosafety Office

Sergiu Magdil, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Iurie Malanciuc, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Processing

Stefan Mangir, Mayor, Negrea village, Hincesti District, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Liudmila Marduhaev, Consultant, Environmental Pollution Division, Stockholm Convention and SAICM Focal Point

Melanie Marlett, Country Manager, World Bank Country Office

Leonid Meleca, Engineer, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Ruslan Melian, ECOS NGO, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Andrei Munteanu, Institute of Zoology, Academy of Sciences of Moldova

Maria Nagornii, Head, Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Ministry of Environment

Nicolae Nastase, Head, Ecological Inspectorate of Stefan Voda District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Vasilie Nicic, Director, Russian Gymnasium, Chiscareni village, Singerei District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Valentin Plesca, POPs Office Manager, POPs Management and Destruction Project, Ministry of Environment

Inga Podoroghin, Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Ministry of Environment

Ion Raileanu, Manure Management Expert, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Alecu Renita, Ecological Movement of Moldova

Eugeniu Revenco, Program Coordinator, Demonstration Projects ACSA NGO

Valeriu Rosa, Moldelectrica State Enterprise, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Raisa Rosca, Kindergarten Director, Boghenii-Noi village, Ungheni District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Valeriu Rosca, Head, Municipal Enterprise Apa-Canal, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Alexandru Rotaru, Project Assistant, Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova Project

Vasile Rotaru, Farmer, Lapusna village, Hincesti District, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Gheorghe Salaru, Minister of Environment and GEF Focal Point

Henry Salazar, Senior Country Officer, GEF Secretariat

Aurelia Samson, Director, Water Supply and Sanitation Project Implementation Unit, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Victor Sau, Mayor, Soroca Town, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Ion Sava, Chief, Orhei Ecological Inspectorate, Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova Project

Petru Scomoroscenco, Master, Moldelectrica Substation, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Vasile Scorpan, Manager, Climate Change Office, Ministry of Environment

Valerii Scutelnic, Director, Orhei Forestry Enterprise, Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova Project

Anatol Sirbu, Mayor, Antonesti village, Stefan Voda District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Cora Shaw, Senior Agriculture Economist, World Bank

Alexandru Sorocean, Head, Construction, Communal Services and Roads Section, Soroca District Council, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Maria Angelica Sotomayor, World Bank Task Team Leader, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Ion Spinei, Deputy Mayor of Soroca Town, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Ludmila Stepanchevic, School Principle, Viisoara village, Glodeni District, Renewable Energy from Agricultural Waste Project

Marius Taranu, Climate Change Office, Ministry of Environment

Anatol Tarita, Head, Ozone Office, Ministry of Environment

Valeriu Tatiu, Deputy Chairperson, Soroca District Council, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Alexandru Teleuta, Director, Botanical Garden, Academy of Sciences of Moldova

Tatiana Tugui, SAICM Project Coordinator, Ministry of Environment

Nadja Vetters, Portfolio Manager, UNDP Moldova

Stela Zabrian, Public Relations Specialist, Soroca Town Hall, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Ivan Zavadsky, Senior Water Resources Management Specialist

Dimitrios Zevgolis, Climate Change Specialist, GEF Secretariat

Annex D. Sites Visited

Antonesti village (Stefan Voda District), November 5, 2009

Orhei District, November 10, 2009

Straseni town (Straseni District), February 4, 2010

Boghenii Noi village (Ungheni District), February 4, 2010

Stolniceni village (Hincesti District), February 8, 2010

Lapusna village, Negrea village, Carpineni village (Hincesti District), February 8, 2010

Chiscareni village (Singerei District), February 9, 2010

Viisoara village (Glodeni District), February 9, 2010

Soroca town, February 10, 2010

Annex E. Workshop Participants

The following people participated in the national consultation workshop held March 18, 2010, at the Jolly Alon Hotel, Chisinau, Moldova.

Gheorghe Agbas, Life Quality NGO

Alexei Andreev, Ecological Society Biotica, Biodiversity Conservation in the Lower Dniester Delta Ecosystem

Ion Barbarasa, Assistant Project Manager, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Viorica Bejan, Coordination Specialist, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Ministry of Environment

Ioana Bobîna, Environmental Movement of Moldova

Corneliu Bordeianu, Project Manager, Renewable Energy Agricultural Wastes Project

Carlo Carugi, Senior Evaluation Officer, GEF Evaluation Office

Lazar Chirica, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment

Dumitru Coada, Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Environment

Ion Cotofana, Biodiversity Office, Ministry of Environment

Olga Covaliova, Biosafety Office, Ministry of Environment

Lilia Curchi, *Nature Magazine*

Matilda Dimovska, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Moldova

Claire Dupont, Milieu Ltd, Consultant, Evaluation Team

Tatiana Echim, Project Coordinator, A. O. Hilfswerk Austria

Pavel Gavrilita, Carbon Financing Office, Ministry of Environment

Salaru Gheorghe, Minister of Environment and GEF Focal Point

Iulian Gisca, Project Manager, Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of the Protected Area System in Moldova Project

Ludmila Gofman, Milieu Ltd, Consultant, Evaluation Team

Sergiu Gutu, Apele Moldovei, Ministry of Environment

Tamara Guvir, Deputy Head, Environmental Pollution Prevention Division, International Waters Focal Point

Breda Howard, Environmental Expert, EC Project, Support to the Implementation of Moldova-EU Agreements

Andrei Isac, Executive Director, Regional Environmental Centre Moldova

Angela Lozan, Biosafety Office, Ministry of Environment

Sergiu Magdil, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Agricultural Pollution Control Project

Leonid Meleca, Engineer, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Nicolae Moldovanu, State Hydrometeorological Service, Ministry of Environment

Dana Petrusevschi, Program Manager, Regional Environmental Centre Moldova

Valentin Plesca, POPs Office Manager, POPs Management and Destruction Project

Eugeniu Revenco, Program Coordinator, Demonstration Projects ACSA NGO

Aurelia Samson, Director, Water Supply and Sanitation Project Implementation Unit, Environmental Infrastructure Project

Vasile Scorpan, Manager, Climate Change Office, Ministry of Environment

Natalia Soltanici, Consultant, Section for International Relations and European Integration, Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Ministry of Environment

Anatol Tarita, Ozone Office, Ministry of Environment

Tatiana Tugui, SAICM Project Coordinator, Ministry of Environment

Cristina Buruian, Division for Economic Relations with the EU, European Integration Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration

Ion Talmaci, Forest Research and Management Institute, Moldsilva Agency, Ministry of Environment

Rob van den Berg, Director, GEF Evaluation Office

Nadja Vetters, Portfolio Manager, UNDP Moldova

Anna Viggh, GEF Evaluation Officer, Evaluation Team

Annex F. Country Response

MINISTERUL MEDIULUI
AL REPUBLICII MOLDOVA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Our Ref 03-08/333 **Date**: 23 June 2010

Subject: *GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE) for Moldova*

Dear Ms. Barbut,

Herewith, I have the pleasure to present to the GEF and to its Evaluation Office the compliments of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova and to express our deep gratitude for having involved our country in the rich experience of Portfolio Evaluation.

We are very grateful to the evaluation team for the performed work and for their efforts to contribute to the improvement of the collaboration between the Republic of Moldova and the GEF by elaborating constructive conclusions and recommendations.

The Evaluation Report was presented to the project managers, National Focal Points of the international Conventions, implementing agencies and other interested parties and it was accepted without any objections or comments.

We are pleased to note that the Evaluation Team finds that GEF Support to the Republic of Moldova has been relevant to national sustainable development and environmental priorities and to the GEF mandate, however we agree that in some areas there are weakness and obstacles that we need to properly address in order to achieve sustainable results.

In this context we support and fully agree with the Evaluation Team conclusions and will do our best to implement their recommendations.

Taking this opportunity I would like to assure you that I will spare no effort to ensure the continuation of the excellent relations between the Republic of Moldova and the GEF.

Looking forward to a fruitful collaboration.

Sincerely,

Gheorghe ŞALARU
Minister
GEF Political and
Operational Focal Point

To: Ms. Monique BARBUT,
CEO and Chairperson
Global Environment Facility

9, Cosmonautilor str., Chisinau MD 2005, Republic of Moldova
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Following is a list of the publications and documentation cited in the body of this report. Publications of the GEF are available at **www.thegef.org/gef/gef_Documents_Publications**. *Publications cited for the GEF Evaluation Office are available at* **www.thegef.org/gef/eo_office** *under Evaluations & Studies and in the online documents database ASK ME. All web links cited here were accessed March 2009, unless otherwise indicated.*

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55	GEF Annual Impact Report 2009	2010
54	OPS4: Progress Toward Impact—Fourth Overall Performance Study of the GEF, Full Report	2010
53	OPS4: Progress Toward Impact—Fourth Overall Performance Study of the GEF, Executive Version	2010
52	GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: Syria (1994–2008)	2009
51	GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: Egypt (1991–2008)	2009
50	GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2009	2009
49	GEF Annual Performance Report 2008	2009
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41	GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: Benin (1991–2007)	2008
40	GEF Annual Performance Report 2007	2008
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33	Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities	2007
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31	GEF Annual Performance Report 2005	2006
30	The Role of Local Benefits in Global Environmental Programs	2006
29	GEF Annual Performance Report 2004	2005
28	Evaluation of GEF Support for Biosafety	2006
	Third Overall Performance Study	2005
	GEF Integrated Ecosystem Management Program Study	2005
	Biodiversity Program Study	2004
	Climate Change Program Study	2004
	International Waters Program Study	2004
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ED-3	Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations	2008
ED-2	GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines	2008
ED-1	The GEF Evaluation and Monitoring Policy	2006

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