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GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

International Waters Focal Area Study

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FULL REPORT

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Independent Evaluation Office

International Waters Focal Area Study

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Cover: Boat in the water off the coast of Entebbe on Lake Victoria, Uganda; © Photo: Arne Hoel/World Bank

Contents

Tables

Foreword

The international waters focal area of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established more than 20 years ago to support countries in jointly managing their transboundary surface water basins, groundwater basins, and coastal and marine systems. This is the third study of this focal area, following those completed in 2002 and 2005.

The purpose of this study is to provide insights and lessons for the GEF-7 replenishment cycle, which starts in July 2018. The main objectives of the study are to assess the current relevance of the focal area, and its effectiveness in creating an enabling environment for transboundary cooperation and environmental stress reduction. The study used a mixed-methods approach, and is based on the analysis of the entire international waters portfolio, quality at entry review of the projects approved during the GEF-6 replenishment period, synthesis of evaluative evidence from thematic and terminal evaluations, geospatial analysis, and stakeholder interviews.

The Eighth GEF Biennial International Waters Conference, which took place in Negombo, Sri Lanka, in May 2016, provided an important platform to launch the study and conduct initial interviews with program and project managers. The final report was presented to the GEF Council in November 2016. Since then, the report findings have been shared at multiple meetings, including the expanded constituency workshops for the regional and country stakeholders organized by the GEF Secretariat in 2017.

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Kseniya Temnenko, Knowledge Management Officer of the Global Environment Facility Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO), led this study. The team consisted of Andrea Merla, Senior International Waters Expert, and Xiangyu Wu, Research Analyst, both consultants to the IEO. Anupam Anand, IEO Evaluation Officer, conducted geospatial analysis.

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Abbreviations

APR	annual performance report
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GPA	Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
OPS	overall performance study
PFD	program framework document
PIF	project identification form
SAP	strategic action program
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SIDS	small island developing states
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
TDA	transboundary diagnostic analysis
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The GEF replenishment periods are as follows: pilot phase: 1991–94; GEF-1: 1995–98; GEF-2: 1999–2002; GEF-3: 2003–06; GEF-4: 2006–10; GEF-5: 2010–14; GEF-6: 2014–18; GEF-7: 2018–22.

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

Executive summary

Twenty years after the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council established the international waters focal area and adopted its operational strategy, the Independent Evaluation Office undertook a third study of the focal area, following those completed in 2002 and 2005. The purpose of this study, as part of Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6), was to provide insights and lessons going forward into the next replenishment period (GEF-7), based on evidence from an analysis of the international waters portfolio (296 projects), evaluations and terminal evaluations, and interviews with internal and external stakeholders. The main objectives of were to assess the current relevance of the focal area and its effectiveness in creating an enabling environment for transboundary cooperation and in stress reduction.

Findings

HIGH LEVEL OF CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

The foundations established for the international waters focal area by the 1995 operational strategy have continued to inform actions in the focal area throughout the GEF-4, GEF-5, and GEF-6 replenishment cycles. The focal area strategies have evolved and embraced changing global priorities, and focal area actions have been expanded to address new environmental threats to sustainable development. The focal area is particularly suited and able to contribute to the achievement of a number of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets.

Degradation and depletion of the planet's largely transboundary freshwater and marine resources are caused by complex global pressures of population growth and forced migration, changing climate, global financial and trade distortions, food shortages, and changing diets—not just by water mismanagement and policy failures. Within this context, the role of the international waters focal area, with its transboundary mandate, acquires substantial importance, as these stresses requires strengthened cooperation among countries and a collective response to individual waterbodies. From the evidence collected by the present study, it is clear that the focal area is contributing to the enhancement of regional security and has made significant contributions to support sustainable use and the protection of transboundary waters, their living resources, and dependent ecosystems, further corroborating the findings of the 2005 study.

The relevance of the international waters focal area has also been analyzed from the perspective of the relevance of recently approved projects to the achievement of GEF-6 strategic goals. Based on the few project concepts approved so far, the focal area is responding to GEF-6 programming directions. The only subject not currently covered regards high-altitude melting glaciers.

LARGELY SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

The 127 closed projects have been rated on overall outcome achievement, sustainability, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Seventy-five percent of the completed projects in the international waters portfolio have outcome ratings in the satisfactory range, similar to ratings reported across all focal areas in the Annual Performance Report 2015 (APR 2015). Seventy-nine percent of regional projects have satisfactory outcomes, as compared with 64 percent of national projects. Success rates were highest in Asia (80 percent), and lowest in Europe and Central Asia (65 percent). Focal area support projects (including research and scientific projects) had the highest outcome ratings (89 percent); stress reduction projects (including demonstration and foundational projects) had a success rating of 72 percent. Marine projects (n = 53) have a slightly higher percentage of satisfactory outcome ratings as compared with freshwater projects (n = 51): 77 percent versus 71 percent, respectively.

Sixty-two percent of projects have sustainability ratings of moderately likely or higher, based on the likelihood of project benefits continuing past project closure. This figure is similar to sustainability ratings across all GEF completed projects, again according to APR 2015. Fifty-three percent of rated projects have M&E design ratings in the satisfactory range, and 56 percent have satisfactory M&E implementation ratings. As per APR 2015, these figures are slightly lower than the M&E ratings of the overall GEF portfolio (59 percent and 62 percent, respectively); however, the difference is not statistically significant. Full application of, and reporting on international waters process and stress reduction indicators in projects, would greatly benefit future performance evaluations.

The focal area is now operating in all GEF-eligible countries. It is engaged in the following:

- Facilitating cooperation over transboundary water issues in the majority of GEF-eligible large marine ecosystems and major river and lake basins of the planet (79 waterbodies)
- Directing its investments toward stress reduction in all major high seas fisheries
- Elimination of marine dead zones due to excess nutrients in East Asia, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean
- Strengthening river commissions and other regional bodies
- Promoting multisectoral approaches to surface and groundwater management and a multiplicity of transboundary management arrangements in Africa, Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean; small island developing states (SIDS); and South Asia.

Overall, projects are evenly distributed across regions and involve all eligible countries.

The focal area has been recognized in several evaluations for the high broader adoption of the policies and practices promoted by its projects (the highest rate among GEF focal areas), its demonstrated ability to leverage high levels of cofinancing, its stepwise long-term approach to transboundary cooperation, and its successful knowledge management efforts (notably its focal area support projects, particularly IW:LEARN), and the many projects achieving measurable stress reduction impacts. The focal area has contributed to achievements, some of global renown, in a number of fields: the rehabilitation of the Black Sea Northwest Shelf dead zone, the adoption of the Ballast Water Convention on Alien Species (to enter into force in 2017), the Pacific Tuna Treaty, the Guarani Aquifer Agreement, the establishment of the Benguela Current Commission and

demonstration projects that have supported the process leading to the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions, among others.

A CATALYST FOR INTEGRATION

International waters foundational projects have demonstrated that solutions to water concerns lie not just in improving water supply and treatment, or in protecting aquatic ecosystems and environmental flows, but also—and often primarily—in distant sectors such as food and energy production, trade, land use and urban planning, industrial processes, and forest management. So far, however, attempts to capture and fully develop the huge potential for improved overall effectiveness of the GEF inherent in joining forces of the GEF focal areas toward common objectives have been limited by obstacles on the road to integration such as the focal area silos, sectoral conventions, and difficulties in aligning country priorities with regional objectives. The present emphasis in the GEF toward more integrated actions provides a unique opportunity for focal areas to interact and join forces. There is substantial evaluative evidence that robust programmatic approaches are needed to address complex international waters geographies and transboundary settings, where the GEF partnership can develop its potential and bring about optimal results. The international waters focal area can provide a valuable context for integration, specifically through the strategic action programs (SAPs) agreed upon by the governments of countries sharing a waterbody, based on the science and systemic approach of transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA).

The protection of the Earth's finite and mostly transboundary water resources requires cooperation among countries and synergistic integrated actions across sectors. Further, access to water in sustainable quantity and quality is essential to achieve many of the SDG goals and targets, adapt to the impacts of climate change, achieve energy and food security, protect soil and forests, and combat desertification.

PROMOTING A COLLECTIVE RESPONSE TO GLOBAL AND REGIONAL AGREEMENTS

While not serving any specific international agreement, the international waters focal area has provided through its projects important support to global and regional water-related agreements, from global binding conventions, to regional agreements, programs of action, and codes of conduct. The present study has shown that, after the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the largest level of support by the focal area is dedicated to marine fisheries–related agreements, followed by the Global Program of Action and treaties related to freshwater, SIDS, habitats, and navigation. The merits of international waters projects reside in the collective nature of the response, with projects supporting compliance to the interlinked provisions of related treaties and soft guidance—enhancing their effectiveness and mutually reinforcing sectoral agreements—and in channeling compliance efforts to where they are most needed. The focal area is thus a useful example of the drive toward more integrated guidance from the various multilateral environmental agreements. Of particular interest in this regard are (1) the synergies with the two international waters conventions (1992 and 1997), now both in force, that may open new opportunities for increased effectiveness and coverage of focal area freshwater interventions; and (2) the process of integration among the three major multilateral environmental agreements as exemplified by the adoption of the SDG global indicator on land degradation with its implications for the other conventions, and for water.

Areas of concern

The international waters portfolio shows a trend of increasing investments in stress reduction, with acceleration in GEF-5, with 52 projects approved, and continuing in GEF-6. This positive trend has been accompanied by a decrease in investments in foundational projects addressing new transboundary waterbodies. One possible explanation is the funding envelope (actual allocations to projects) of the focal area, which, after initial growth beginning in GEF-3, remained between a minimum of $280 million (GEF-4) and a maximum of $390 million in GEF-5, with a subsequent decline in real terms. This constraint has been noted in all the overall performance studies of the GEF to date, and all contain recommendations for an expansion of international waters funding in view of its high relevance and satisfactory results.

A cluster of stand-alone, predominantly national, projects nested within a regional strategic framework constitutes the international waters SAPs. Their full implementation will almost without exception require multiple focal area interventions. Food security, energy production, protection of ecosystem services and biodiversity, soil conservation, and resilience to climate variability and climate change are all affected by the availability of water resources of sufficient quantity and quality. The opposite is also true. Solutions to transboundary water concerns identified in the SAPs require national actions in multiple dimensions and GEF focal areas. These national actions respond to regional priorities that need to be reconciled with national priorities. The international waters focal area, through its ecosystem approach and TDA-SAP consensus-building process, provides countries with the framework needed to direct part of their GEF System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) funds where they are most needed to balance transboundary conflictive water uses, while accruing multiple global environmental benefits and providing a collective response to regional and global environmental agreements.

The international waters portfolio evolution over time has led to an unbalanced situation between freshwater and marine projects, with a marked prevalence of GEF investments in marine projects, particularly related to fisheries. The number of freshwater projects has remained constant since GEF-2, with decreasing investment. In GEF-5 and GEF-6, investments in marine issues were double those in freshwater, with over 50 percent going to fisheries projects. Marine fisheries have become the object of the largest GEF international waters investment, with 66 projects and $466 million in investments. This increase began in 2008, has continued through GEF-4, GEF-5, and GEF-6. The reasons for the predominance of marine and fishery projects may lie in the relatively less complex transboundary settings of the marine domain, the short-term economic and social benefits that may be derived from improved ecosystem-based sustainable fishing, and the clear benefits that can be gained in terms of biodiversity conservation. Other factors may also play a role, such as the interest of development banks to engage in this less risky and more profitable field, or an effort to steer the portfolio toward an oceans focal area. Regardless of the reasons, the dominance of marine and ocean investments may limit the ability of the focal area to assist countries in facing the challenges posed by climatic variability and water scarcity affecting vulnerable populations.

Fostering cooperation among riparian/littoral countries of shared waterbodies presents a number of hurdles that delay—or even prevent—action. Among them is the important investment of resources that goes into project or program preparation, when an Agency has to bring countries together and help them agree to join forces around difficult issues, as is often the case with

scarce freshwater in downstream contexts. Not funding the project identification form/program framework document (PIF/PFD) preparation is a high-risk operation for Agencies, particularly when operating in complex transboundary systems. The challenge of having all countries agree on a SAP or even a project document is difficult. It has been observed that setting a time limit of 18 months is not sufficient in relation to what the GEF is trying to achieve, and not all Agencies have grant funding to cover the costs of PIF preparation. This lack of flexibility hinders international waters work where it would be most needed, such as in areas of freshwater conflict or scarcity, or where upstream/downstream and sovereignty issues are more critical (e.g., Central Asia, South Asia, the Fertile Crescent, and Central America). A change or adjustment in policies would be required, allowing GEF international waters projects to work in water conflict areas step by step, including overcoming barriers to cooperation through national projects.

There has traditionally been much interest in involving the private sector in international waters projects both as a major stakeholder in water resources and as a source of additional funding. The results so far have not been encouraging. IW:LEARN, at its latest conference in Sri Lanka in May 2016, explored ways to further and deepen the relationship between international waters–funded projects and the private sector. Changing private sector behavior is the focus of new initiatives in the fisheries sector. According to interviews, efforts are being made to engage with the beverage industry on addressing resource constraints along its supply chains—an issue that most global players have begun to identify as a threat to sustainable long-term investment. Accepting private sector funding is also problematic. The GEF can only receive funding from the private sector as project cofinancing or in setting up trust funds.

All Agency representatives who were interviewed during this study called for greater participation in developing strategies. They maintained that there is much underutilized capacity in the GEF. The large number of GEF Agencies, while expanding the experience, know-how, and networks from which to draw inspiration and opportunities for action, challenges the capacity of the system to act in a synergistic way. This is particularly true for international waters, a focal area not guided by the priorities of a convention. Lack of Agency participation in the definition of international waters strategies may be another reason for the slow, at times perfunctory, response to the strategic directions indicated by the GEF Secretariat.

Suggestions for consideration

- Include an **expanded explanation of strategic fit** in project concepts, as well as a section illustrating project adherence to existing regional and global agreements, and its contribution to implementation of their provisions and achievement of the SDGs.
- Apply **more flexibility in considering the best ways to create an enabling environment** for cooperation in areas of higher water stress or political transboundary tensions. Support should not be denied to those countries willing to cooperate, and a step-by-step approach should be adopted to bring all countries to the table.
- The **history and achievements of completed projects, together with the experiences gained and lessons learned from them, should be fully captured** in a final report produced by the project team.
- The design of all projects, including those not following the international waters TDA-SAP approach, should make an effort to **produce**

science-based baseline conditions and related simple and measurable indicators. The description of the baseline and indicator logic could be part of project concepts, to be detailed quantitatively at project endorsement stage.

- Support and attention should be given to a **new generation of TDAs** planned as part of the ongoing phase of IW:LEARN. The design should adopt a systemic approach and involve multiple focal areas; unravel water nexus conflicts under climate scenarios; and incorporate the social and economic local, national, and regional dimensions; and gender equality conditions based on sex-disaggregated data.
- Ensure sufficient time and support to **build capacity for action on new priority areas**. Innovations and improvements in terms of the relevance introduced in international waters strategies should either be permanent or be allowed to develop their impacts on the portfolio for an extended period of time beyond the four-year duration of a replenishment cycle. Time, and investment in capacity, is needed for countries and Agencies to absorb and develop an understanding and ownership of newly introduced practices and fields of action.
- **No new themes should be added without a concurrent increase in the focal area allocation**. One way to prepare the ground for action on new priority themes in terms of resources and capacity would be to start by funding a project—possibly of a multifocal area nature—to assess the characteristics, needs, global relevance, and focal area implications of any new priority, and thus provide solid elements for decision making and resource planning. A review of GEF international waters action on oceans and ice melting would be required based on the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Climate Change and the Oceans and the Cryosphere due in 2019.
- Consideration should be given to **providing financial support for the preparation of PIFs and PFDs in complex, multicountry contexts** such as those characterizing many international waters projects, in particular foundational ones.

To foster integration within the GEF, and to better coordinate with STAR programming as called for in international waters SAPs, the following measures could be considered:

- Invite representatives of the GEF focal areas and of the major global conventions to **react to proposed international waters strategic priorities well in advance of their adoption**.
- Introduce in future international waters strategies a **reference to the points of view of the various conventions and to shared priorities**, paving the way for consultations on major international waters initiatives at the national level with convention focal points.
- Consider **application of the comprehensive set of SDG indicators** of land cover, land productivity, and carbon stocks in international waters programmatic approaches, as these are being considered for adoption by all three major multilateral environmental agreements.
- Promote dialogue with countries, relevant conventions, focal areas, and donors on the establishment of **priority environmental status indicators** as part of foundational international waters projects. This effort could be associated with the periodic updating of TDAs.

1: Objectives, methodology, and context

The High Level Panel on Water (2016) recently noted that "whether the world is talking about economic or social development, peace and security, or protecting the planet and adapting to climate change, water needs to be at the heart of the conversation."[1] In this context, the present study was undertaken.

1.1 Objectives and methodology

Twenty years after the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) established the international waters focal area and adopted its operational strategy, the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF has undertaken a third study of the focal area, following those of 2002 and 2005. The purpose is to provide insights and lessons for the focal area going forward into the next replenishment cycle (GEF-7), based on evidence from an analysis of a portfolio of 296 projects and terminal evaluations. The objectives of this study were as follows:

- Assess the current relevance of the focal area and of its evolving strategies
- Present a synthesis of the international waters portfolio distribution and trends, including investments, priority themes, geographic coverage, and other relevant aspects
- Assess the contribution of the focal area to relevant global and regional agreements
- Assess the effectiveness of the portfolio of projects in creating an enabling environment for transboundary cooperation and joint actions
- Assess the achievements of the portfolio in term of processes, stress reduction, and environmental status
- Assess whether recently approved projects are consistent with the Council-approved strategic directions and, to the extent possible, their likelihood of success in achieving the stated outcomes
- Identify lessons for GEF-7

The report covers the following topics:

- Evolution of international waters focal area strategies (section 1.2)
- Synthesis of the major findings of Independent Evaluation Office evaluations (section 2.1)
- Portfolio analysis (section 2.2)
- Review of all available terminal evaluations of international waters projects, focusing on the application of international waters indicators,

[1] The High Level Panel on Water is co-convened by the United Nations secretary-general and the president of the World Bank. It is made up of 11 sitting heads of state and government, and a special advisor.

support to global and regional agreements, and final reporting (section 3.2)

- A review of quality at entry for all projects approved by the Council during GEF-6 (until June 2016), with an emphasis on adherence to the GEF-6 Strategic Directions (section 2.3)

Elements of the study were also collected through interviews with staff of the GEF Secretariat, including management and focal area leads, managers of international waters projects, the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), the GEF Agencies, and other stakeholders external to the GEF system such as nongovernmental organizations and conventions; see annex A for a list of interviewees.

1.2 Evolution of focal area strategies

GEF-1, GEF-2, AND GEF-3

Strategy goal, objectives, and approach

The 1995 operational strategy for international waters, adopted through an intergovernmental process, was built on experience gained during the GEF pilot phase, and its overall goals remain valid. Notably, it defined four major issues of global concern relating to international waters on which focal area actions would concentrate:

- Degradation of the quality of transboundary water resources, caused mainly by pollution from land-based activities including toxic chemicals
- Degradation of physical habitats such as wetlands, mangroves, estuaries, and coral reefs as a result of inadequate land and water management
- Introduction of non-indigenous species disrupting aquatic ecosystems and causing toxic and human health effects
- Overexploitation of living and nonliving resources, such as overfishing and excessive water withdrawals

The strategy called for integration and coordination among GEF focal areas, and for action on land degradation through integrated land and water management.

By GEF-3, the international waters strategy had adopted a programmatic approach, defining three operational programs and providing detailed guidance for the design of eligible projects under these programs:

- A waterbody–based program (Operational Program 8)
- An integrated land and water multiple focal area program (Operational Program 9), including small island developing states (SIDS)
- A contaminant-based program (Operational Program 10)

Given the overarching focal area goal of fostering cooperation among countries sharing a transboundary water system, the strategy recommended a simple methodology to create the enabling conditions for, and the foundations of, effective cooperation in the management of shared water resources. This methodology—known as the **transboundary diagnostic analysis–strategic action program (TDA-SAP) process**—characterizing international waters "foundational" projects aimed at building trust among countries through joint fact finding, as a prerequisite for concrete commitments to coordinated stress reduction actions. It included the involvement of interministerial bodies in setting priorities.

Implementation results

During its long period of implementation (12 years), the 1995 international waters strategy was able to

- Establish the TDA-SAP process as the equivalent of enabling activities in the GEF's other convention-related focal areas, thus setting the foundation for cooperation in a number of transboundary waterbodies;
- Initiate actions to reduce stress as part of the implementation of SAPs in 57 projects;
- Contribute to the negotiation and adoption of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants through 17 demonstration projects conducted under Operational Program 10;
- Trigger and support the process that led to the negotiation and adoption of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments on alien species introduction, which entered into force in 2017;
- Promote successful public-private partnerships, innovative funding modalities, and multiproject initiatives to address complex stress reduction endeavors in the fields of coastal zone management, eutrophication, and overfishing.

GEF-4

Strategy goal, objectives, and approach

In December 2006, there was a GEF-wide shift from single-project interventions that dominated the overall GEF portfolio (with the exception of several international waters supported initiatives) toward a more programmatic focus. The purpose of this shift was twofold: (1) to focus the limited funding resources of GEF-4 ($3.13 billion) on a set of priority issues of global environmental concern, and (2) to link projects together to achieve stronger impacts.

Within this context, the international waters focal area—independent from convention guidance and not subjected to the country allocation system—defined a set of four strategic programs for GEF-4 that would support achievement of two long-term strategic objectives (table 1.1).

For the first time, all GEF-4 strategies adopted the results framework approach, indicating specific outcomes for each strategic program and relevant indicators.

Clearly, the GEF-4 international waters long-term objectives continued along the path defined by the

TABLE 1.1 **Summary of GEF-4 international waters focal area strategy**

Strategic long-term objective	Strategic program
1: To foster international, multistate cooperation on priority transboundary water concerns 2: To catalyze transboundary action addressing water concerns	1. Restoring and sustaining coastal and marine fish stocks and associated biological diversity
	2. Reducing nutrient overenrichment and oxygen depletion from land-based pollution of coastal waters in large marine ecosystems consistent with the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA)
	3. Balancing overuse and conflicting uses of water resources in surface and groundwater basins that are transboundary in nature
	4. Reducing persistent toxic substances and testing adaptive management of waters with melting ice

SOURCE: GEF 2007, annex 3.

1995 operational strategy. There were some differences, however, that are worth noting:

- The focus on interventions was narrowed to more defined areas (e.g., action on land-based pollution was in principle limited to main contaminants, such as nutrients).
- A new emphasis was placed on sustainable development aspects, such as freshwater management and related conflicts among uses, and users.
- Countries' attention was drawn to a new human health and climate–related challenge: the melting of ice in high latitudes and altitudes, and the remobilization of persistent toxics.

These new features of the international waters strategy were influenced by the outcomes of the 2002 Sustainable Development Summit. They also reflected growing concerns related to the water resource implications of adaptation to climatic variability and change, the need to find a balance between the growing demand for international waters projects not matched by increasing financial resources,[2] and the need for addressing newly emerging global concerns.

Implementation results

For the four years of GEF-4, the focal area funded 73 projects, distributed in all programs, with the exception of Program 4 on melting ice. This lack of response to a new priority stemmed from various factors, including the short duration of the cycle, which did not allow the GEF system to build the capacity necessary to address a totally new area; and the difficulty for countries to recognize the linkages between the melting of glaciers and of permafrost, climate change, human health, and development.

The portfolio expanded its geographic coverage (embracing, at the end of GEF-4, 149 recipient countries and 23 nonrecipient ones) to new transboundary waterbodies. It progressively moved from foundational work—with such projects comprising 29 percent of all projects funded during the cycle—to stress reduction measures related to SAP implementation (51 percent). During GEF-4, the focal area expanded utilization of innovative funding modalities tested during the previous cycles, now called International Waters Partnership Investment Funds.[3]

GEF-5

Strategy goal, objectives, and approach

This strategy built on the foundational capacity and stress reduction work accomplished in GEF-3 and GEF-4 and encouraged scaling-up of national and local action, particularly under Objective 1 (freshwater conflicts) and Objective 2 (marine fisheries, coastal degradation, and pollution). Following two precursor projects funded in GEF-4 on seamounts and ocean life, the strategy for the first time called for action to protect living marine resources in the high seas, or areas beyond national jurisdiction, which were under mounting pressure by modern, highly technological fishing fleets. The strategy also made explicit reference to the need to take into full consideration the present and likely future impacts of climate change and variability on water security, livelihoods, and ecosystem health.

The drive toward meeting new international waters–related challenges and the call for global

[2] The GEF international waters focal area was the only focal area to receive a decrease in funding for GEF-4 compared to GEF-3. The GEF-3 nominal allocation was $430 million; the GEF-4 amount was $355 million.

[3] In 2008, the GEF Council introduced a new funding modality called programmatic approaches, which subsumes international waters strategic partnerships.

attention was clear in the GEF-5 international waters strategy. The growth in the overall scope of the focal area, however, was not matched with increased funding, so adding new fields of intervention was at the detriment of other, sometimes more important and better tested, areas—in this case, Objective 3, as noted below. Box 1.1 presents the main objectives of the GEF-5 strategy.

Implementation results

During the implementation period of the GEF-5 strategy, 73 projects were funded, for a total GEF allocation of $356 million. Interestingly, 29 of these were multifocal area projects, with an international waters allocation of $70 million.[4] This responded to the GEF Council's call for more integrated approaches.

The major focus of the GEF-5 portfolio was on marine fisheries (Objective 2) with 17 projects and an allocation of $124 million. In addition, there was an encouraging response to the call for action in areas beyond national jurisdiction (Objective 4), with five projects and an allocation of $30 million. Thirty-two projects related to marine issues, including fisheries, for an allocation of $196 million, with respect to 22 freshwater-related projects for an allocation of $108 million, denoting a less than expected response to the priority on freshwater management. Using the newly established programmatic approaches funding modality, seven new international waters and associated multifocal area multiproject initiatives were approved by Council, focusing on Objectives 1,2, and 4. The number of foundational projects (Objective 3) dropped to 15, compared with 21 approved in GEF-4.

[4] Funding from international waters to multifocal area projects began in GEF-3 (8 projects), rising to 18 in GEF-4.

BOX 1.1 GEF-5 objectives

Objective 1: Catalyze multistate cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change

Objective 2: Catalyze multistate cooperation to rebuild marine fisheries and reduce pollution of coasts and large marine ecosystems while considering climatic variability and change

Objective 3: Support foundational capacity building, portfolio learning, and targeted research needs for ecosystem-based, joint management of transboundary water systems

Objective 4: Promote effective management of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction

SOURCE: GEF 2011.

GEF-6

Strategy goal, objectives, and approach

The strategy adopted for the international waters focal area during the 6th replenishment cycle continued along the lines traced by the GEF-5 strategy. Added emphasis has been placed on water-related planetary boundaries and environmental tipping points. A sense of urgency characterizes the background against which the strategy has been developed: freshwater scarcity increasing in most regions with dramatic effects on the poor, growing hypoxia in the oceans driven by land-based sources of nutrients, and 30 percent of fish stocks collapsed beyond rehabilitation.

The GEF-6 strategy focuses on three major objectives (table 1.2):

- Facilitate multicountry cooperation in new transboundary waterbodies

TABLE 1.2 Summary of GEF-6 international waters focal area strategy

Objective	Program
IW-1: Catalyze sustainable management of transboundary water systems by supporting multistate cooperation through foundational capacity building, targeted research, and portfolio learning	1: Foster cooperation for sustainable use of transboundary water systems and economic growth 2: Increase resilience and flow of ecosystem services in the context of melting high-altitude glaciers
IW-2: Catalyze investments to balance competing water uses in the management of transboundary surface and groundwater and enhance multistate cooperation	3: Advance conjunctive management of surface and groundwater 4: Water/food/energy/ecosystem security nexus
IW-3: Enhance multistate cooperation and catalyze investments to foster sustainable fisheries, restore and protect coastal habitats, reduce pollution of coasts and large marine ecosystems	5: Reduce ocean hypoxia 6: Prevent loss and degradation of coastal habitats 7: Foster sustainable fisheries

SOURCE: GEF 2014.

- Step up action in freshwater as part of SAP implementation, focusing on the need to manage water nexus conflicts and promote conjunctive management of all freshwater resources
- Expand GEF action in the marine domain by embracing the environmental continuum river basin–coastal zone–marine environment and fisheries; priority on areas beyond national jurisdiction was subsumed under this objective

Four points of particular interest distinguish the GEF-6 strategy.

- Funds are nominally envisioned for targeted research projects directed to shed light on underresearched global threats and looming environmental tipping points (within Program 1)
- Priority is again placed on high-altitude/latitude ice melting (Program 2)
- As part of focal area action on freshwater, the strategy recognizes the need to invest in regional and national data and decision support systems, and tools and measures to assess climate impacts on recharge areas and storage capacity (Program 3)
- For the first time, gender consideration is identified as a strategic priority in international waters, in line with the newly established Gender Policy of the GEF, to ensure that a gender perspective is successfully incorporated into international waters project design

Highlights of implementation

GEF-6 is at midcourse, and special attention is being given in this study to projects approved under the GEF-6 international waters strategy up to June 2016. So far in GEF-6, 18 programs or projects, for a total allocation of $112 million, have been approved by the Council. Two multifocal programmatic approaches dealing with coastal fisheries/biodiversity with substantial international waters funding ($33 million) and contributions from biodiversity ($13 million) have been approved, marking a move toward ever closer links between international waters and biodiversity in fisheries-related interventions.

GEF-6 strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets recently approved by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September 2015, represent an overarching framework

providing guidance and common objectives to all, from individuals to countries and international organizations. The GEF-6 international waters strategy—which focuses on transboundary cooperation (IW-1); sustaining quality and quantity of freshwater resources and ecosystems (IW-2); sustainable marine fisheries, preventing coastal degradation, and the fight against ocean hypoxia (IW-3); with new attention to gender consideration in water supply and management—is well in line with SDG guidance. Water is a fundamental prerequisite to human life on Earth, and 60 percent of it is transboundary. Hence, water runs across all the SDG targets, and restricting its significance to only Goals 6 and 14—while obvious—would be a limited view. Most prominently, the focal area provides support to the achievement of a number of targets related to Goal 6 on freshwater, Goal 2 on food security, and Goal 7 on energy security; further, it addresses key nexus dimensions: Goal 13 on climate change adaptation and Goal 14 on marine resources.

The foundations established for the international waters focal area in the 1995 operational strategy have continued to inform focal area action throughout the GEF-4, GEF-5, and GEF-6 replenishment cycles. The focal area strategies have been able to evolve and embrace changing global priorities, and expand focal area action to address environmental threats to sustainable development. The GEF-6 focal area strategy is consistent with SDG guidance, and provides support to achievement of the SDGs and specific targets across the range of the SDGs.

2: Findings

This chapter presents the main findings of the study, organized by methodological component:

- Review of previous evaluations
- Portfolio analysis
- Quality at entry review of GEF-6 international waters investments

2.1 Review of existing evaluative evidence

This section summarizes the major findings and conclusions of evaluations of the international waters focal area covering the period 2004 to 2016 and conducted by the GEF's Independent Evaluation Office as part of overall performance studies (OPSs) of the GEF, annual performance reports (APRs), and annual impact reports. The review focuses on the evidence-based conclusions reached by the evaluations regarding two themes of priority interest for the current study:

- Results in terms of processes, stress reduction, and environmental status change
- Continuing relevance of the focal area to global environmental problems and key transboundary issues, and to the GEF-6 Programming Directions

THE 2005 INTERNATIONAL WATERS STUDY AND OPS3

The 2005 study of the international waters focal area was aimed at providing inputs to OPS3 (GEF IEO 2005b). It took into consideration 95 projects approved by the GEF Council since the 2001 international waters study. The 2005 study concluded that there was clear evidence that the international waters focal area was contributing to the enhancement of regional security and represented the "largest effort in history to support sustainable use and protection of transboundary waters" (GEF IEO 2005b, 1); box 2.1 notes study highlights supporting this conclusion. The evaluation highlighted the role of the focal area as being a major facilitator in supporting global and regional agreements. One recommendation valid today is the need for robust indicators of environmental and socioeconomic status, stress reduction, and process.

OPS3 agreed with the program study's findings and conclusions, noting that international waters was a well-managed portfolio of interventions and increasingly successful at leveraging collateral funding (GEF IEO 2005a). It noted that this focal area provided a unique mechanism for improving transboundary environmental problems in continental and coastal waters and the global marine commons. The only recommendation OPS3 made for the international waters focal area was to encourage a shift from enabling activities (foundational projects) "to scaling up of full operations to address

BOX 2.1 Achievements highlighted in 2005 study

- GEF efforts in the focal area facilitated the establishment of several new international policy tools as a result of foundational or demonstration projects, notably a legal regime for avoiding the transfer of alien species in ship's ballast water, which evolved into the Ballast Water Convention; the Caspian Sea Convention; the Dnipro Basin Agreement; the Protocol for Sustainable Development of the Lake Victoria Basin; the Lake Ohrid Treaty; and the Pacific Tuna Treaty.
- A GEF intervention in Africa's Lake Victoria produced a measurable reduction of invasive alien water hyacinth, thereby improving the lake's environmental status.
- The TDA-SAP process and methodology were assessed; the study's conclusion was that "projects combining TDA/SAP activities are most likely to succeed" (GEF IEO 2005b, 2), noting the importance of the stakeholder participation required by the process.
- The innovative financing modality adopted by the Black Sea and Danube Strategic Partnership—the precursor of the present GEF programmatic approaches—was found to be quite effective. The effort sought to prevent the return of devastating eutrophication to the Black Sea during the economic recovery of the Basin's countries. Successful demonstrations implemented during the first phase addressed agricultural nutrients pollution, wetland restoration, and wastewater treatment.

SOURCE: GEF IEO 2005b.

agreed priorities for globally critical transboundary water systems" (GEF IEO 2005a, 53).[1]

[1] The GEF-3 focal area successes lauded by OPS3 did not, however, prevent a decrease in the GEF-4 nominal allocation for international waters.

OPS4

OPS4 made the case for the need for increased support to allow the focal area to step up to a higher level of goals and funding and to move from foundation, to demonstration, to catalyzing investments (GEF IEO 2010), reiterating the call made by OPS3. OPS4 frequently pointed to the international waters strategy and its stepwise modus operandi and catalytic role, marked by increasing levels of commitment by both countries and the GEF, as exemplary for other focal areas. OPS4 placed emphasis on the environmental threats that continued to put development and social progress and stability at risk, and noted the increasing relevance of the focal area.

The evidence of impacts achieved by the focal area was clear. However, the lack of solid baseline information at the waterbody level to measure impacts and identify trends often impeded ability to monitor progress toward impacts. OPS4 reiterated the recommendation made by OPS3 as to the need for stronger baseline and indicator frameworks, indicating the waterbody as the correct context for such frameworks. The phased approach of the international waters focal area requires a long-term commitment from the GEF, and the tracking system would need to be adapted to capture this longer-term perspective.

Overall, OPS4 recognized the focal area for its strategy and stepwise approach, and for its achievements regarding processes and stress reduction; and confirmed its relevance against a changing global context. It noted the need to improve the focal area's ability to measure progress to impact by establishing solid baselines and taking a long-term perspective in monitoring.

OPS5

OPS5 reported that the international waters focal area had a strong focus on a bottom-up approach, and that country needs and demands represented the most important sources of guidance for activities under the focal area (GEF IEO 2014).

Overall, international waters had the highest percentage of projects with successful catalytic impacts (73 percent), followed by climate change projects (66 percent), and biodiversity projects. This was primarily due to the uptake and mainstreaming of policies promoted by the focal area's projects. OPS5 mentioned the exemplary case of the South American Guarani Aquifer project.

Fifty-one percent of the projects in the international waters cluster were reported to have reduced stresses on the water environment and/or improved environmental status. Environmental impact was most often seen at the site level, where projects reduced fishing pressure, reduced nutrient pollution through innovative water treatment plants, increased mangrove and coral reef cover, replenished water supply from improved water use management, and established management capacities in marine protected areas.

The international waters focal area was recognized as an active player directly involved in creating new regional legal agreements and frameworks. OPS5 noted that the GEF had, during GEF-5, provided direct support to 8 of the 18 regional seas conventions, 6 shared inland water agreements, and 5 regional fisheries commissions.

OPS5 especially noted efforts made in learning and knowledge dissemination, highlighting in this regard IW:LEARN (the International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network). IW:LEARN has fostered knowledge generation and systematic exchange among projects and partners aimed at improving project performance. Additionally, OPS5 noted the central role of the scientific community in providing guidance to GEF international waters focal area activities, as well as the contribution of the focal area to scientific advancements. The analytical and foundational support provided through TDAs was particularly noted in this area.

Overall, OPS5 reported a general appreciation for the focal area strategy, methods, achievements and knowledge and learning.

THE SOUTH CHINA SEA IMPACT EVALUATION

Using a systems approach, this evaluation found that while environmental pressures in the South China Sea continue to increase, GEF support to the area has been relevant in addressing regional transboundary issues (GEF IEO 2012). It has contributed to reducing environmental stress in the majority of cases,[2] as well as to improving or maintaining socioeconomic conditions in places where initiatives were implemented. Furthermore, the evaluation found that broader adoption of these successful initiatives has begun to take place. The evaluation brings substantial evidence to the conclusion that "robust programmatic approaches" are needed to address complex international waters geographies and transboundary settings where the GEF partnership can develop its potential and bring about optimal results. Long-term monitoring impacts and final project reporting require additional attention.

[2] The evaluation identified 20 sites in the South China Sea with a total 40 cases of stress reduction, mostly related to habitats.

2.2 Analysis of the international waters portfolio

As of June 28, 2016, the international waters portfolio comprised 296 programs and projects.[3] For the purposes of the study, the portfolio has been organized into a number of categories aimed at facilitating analysis of portfolio trends and project distribution by different parameters and aspects. An element of subjectivity is implicit in assigning projects to some of the categories. Table 2.1 lists the information collected for each program/project.

FUNDING

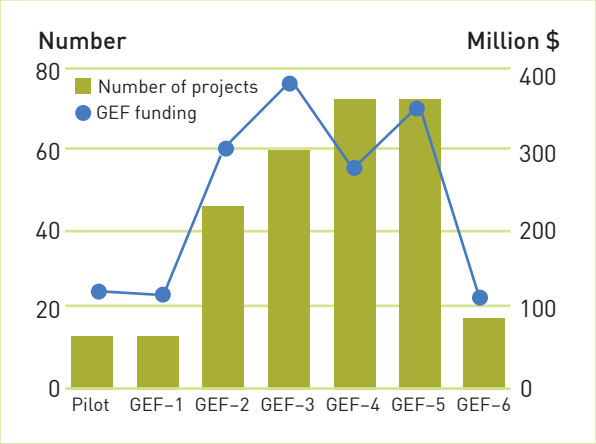
The GEF Trust Fund has been the only source of grants in the international waters focal area, although some programs with international waters components have received funding from the Least Developed Countries Fund. Starting in 1991, and as of June 28, 2016, the focal area had invested total funding of $1.68 billion in grants to 296 program and projects, and leveraged a total of $10.38 billion of cofinancing from other sources, with an average ratio of $6.20 of cofinancing per GEF dollar.

TRENDS BY REPLENISHMENT PERIOD

As shown in figure 2.1, the international waters focal area had been growing steadily until GEF-3, with the number of approved projects increasing from 13 to 60, and investments from $120 million to $390 million (below the nominal allocation for international waters of $430 million). During GEF-4, the number of projects increased only slightly—to 73—while investments went down to $280 million, below the nominal allocation for the focal area ($335 million). In GEF-5, the number of approved projects remained the same as in GEF-4 (73), while the total investment grew to $356 million; this again was below the nominal allocation ($440 million). In GEF-6, the total allocation for international waters was $456 million, of which $112 million had been programmed as of June 2016.

With more convention-related responsibilities undertaken by the GEF over time that were not matched by adequate increases in resources, funding constraints may have affected the international waters focal area. Nominal allocations and investments increased until GEF-3; GEF-4, however, marked the historic minimum, with investments down to $280 million. At midcourse in GEF-6, investments are at $112 million. It is recognized that international waters transboundary projects are complex and take time to develop.

FIGURE 2.1 **Project number and GEF funding by GEF replenishment period, as of June 2016**



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

[3] This includes both focal area initiatives and multifocal area efforts with an international waters component that had reached at least the approval stage. It does not include nine canceled projects, nor Small Grants Programme projects; these latter are discussed beginning on page 24. To avoid double counting, 15 programs (parent projects) have been excluded that already have child projects in the portfolio.

TABLE 2.1 Information compiled for each portfolio program/project

Item	Description
GEF ID/program ID	Stand-alone project/program with child projects
Title	
Program status	Noting all endorsed child projects
Focal area	International waters/multifocal area projects with international waters component
Project status	Ongoing/completed/pipeline (approved but not yet implemented) as reported in the GEF Project Management Information System as of June 2016
GEF period	GEF replenishment period under which project is financed (pilot phase, GEF-1, GEF-2, GEF-3, GEF-4, GEF-5, GEF-6)
Fiscal year of project approval	Full-size projects: year of Council approval; medium-size projects: year of Chief Executive Officer approval
Project size	Full-size project, medium-size project
Project goal	Foundational/stress reduction and demonstration/focal area support, research, and knowledge management[a]
Name of associated waterbody	If applicable
Waterbody/SIDS-related projects	For each project, indicating relevant waterbody, listing main waterbody first Noting project waterbody focus: large marine ecosystem; area beyond national jurisdiction; river basin; lake basin; ground water, aquifer; coastal zone; SIDS; integrated (i.e., taking a "ridge to reef" or "source to sea" approach); glaciers
Marine projects	Including projects addressing large marine ecosystems, areas beyond national jurisdiction
Freshwater projects	Including projects addressing river basins, lake basins, and aquifers
Project themes	Alien species; balancing of water uses; clean industrial production; conjunctive management of surface and groundwater; fisheries; habitats; integrated coastal zone management; integrated lake basin management; integrated water resources management; land-based sources of pollution; land degradation; navigation safety and hazards; nutrients removal/management; persistent toxic substances
Related binding instrument,[b] soft law, or program of action	1992 UNECE Water Convention; 1997 UN Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses; UN General Assembly Resolution 66/104 on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers; Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA); Barbados Program of Action on SIDS; Ramsar Convention on Wetlands; International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78); UN Fish Stocks Agreement; Agreement on Port State Measures; Regional Seas Conventions; Ballast Water Agreement
Region	
Geographic scope	Global/regional/national
Participating countries	
GEF Agency	
GEF grant	Including project preparation grant (PPG) and GEF funding, but not GEF Agency fees; for multifocal projects, only the international waters portion of the GEF grant, and the appropriately weighted percentage of any PPG
Cofinancing	Cofinancing at appraisal; weighted cofinancing for multifocal area projects based on funding for international waters component

a. There is minimal overlap between the categories; two projects are categorized as both foundational and stress reduction.

b. Beyond the three major environmental conventions (whose objectives a large majority of international waters projects support) and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (with whose provisions all marine projects promote compliance).

PROJECT STATUS

As of June 2016, 158 projects had been completed, representing a total investment of over $1 billion; 77 had been approved but not yet implemented (in pipeline); and 61 were under implementation (figure 2.2).

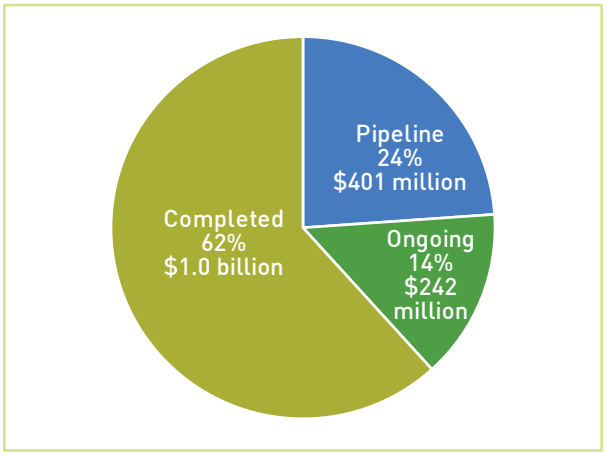
PROJECT MODALITY

Across all GEF replenishment periods, there were 244 full-size projects and 52 medium-size projects. Investments in the former totaled $1.63 billion and $50 million in the latter (figure 2.3).

FOCAL AREA

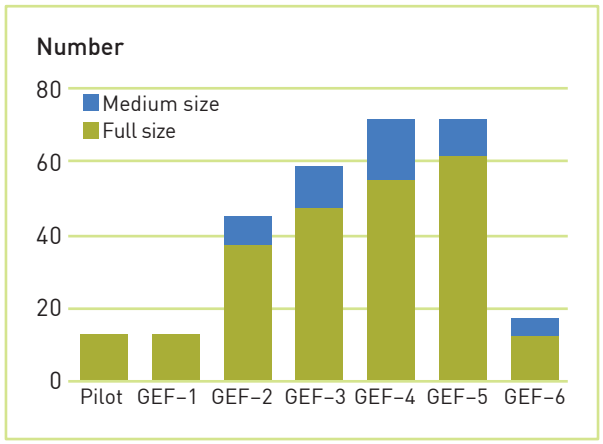
It is interesting to note the rapid growth of multifocal area projects with international waters components, both in numbers and in investment, beginning in GEF-3 (figure 2.4). During the first half of GEF-6, the number of multifocal projects with international waters components was equal to the number of stand-alone international waters projects.

FIGURE 2.2 **GEF funding to portfolio by project status, as of June 2016**



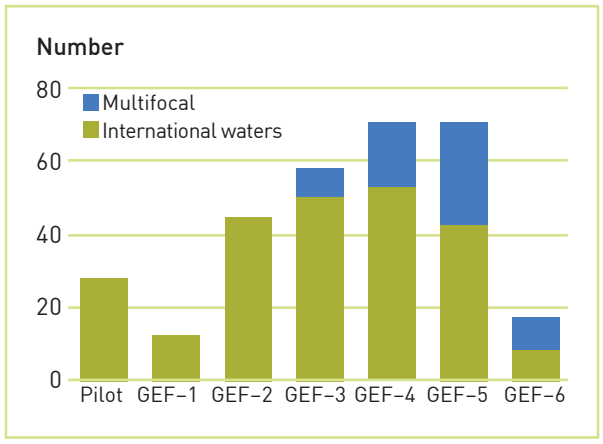
SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

FIGURE 2.3 **Project size by GEF replenishment period, as of June 2016**



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

FIGURE 2.4 **Number of projects by focal area and GEF replenishment period, as of June 2016**



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

The focal area responded well to the priority placed by the Council on integrated, multifocal area initiatives, with a growing number of projects and investments.

GEF AGENCIES

The three original Agencies of the GEF partnership—the United Nations Development

Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Bank—continue to lead in terms of both number of projects and amount of funding, followed—at a distance—by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (table 2.2). All other Agencies combined account for only 15 projects and $72 million in funding. The newer GEF Agencies continue to be in a learning stage, and are in the process of identifying their comparative advantage in the partnership.

The World Bank, while still ahead in total funding ($614 million), has decreased its commitment to the focal area in terms of number of projects, down to 15 in GEF-5 (they were 32 in GEF-3), with funding progressively down to $31.8 million in GEF-5, from $217 million in GEF-3.

PROGRAM/PROJECT GOAL

International waters programs and projects are directed to the following overall goals:

- Setting the foundation for action in transboundary waterbodies by creating the enabling conditions for multicountry cooperation around agreed priorities (**foundational projects**)
- Reducing transboundary stresses to water resources and aquatic ecosystems as part of the systematic implementation of action programs agreed upon by the countries sharing the waterbody (**stress reduction projects**); this also includes projects demonstrating the stress reduction effectiveness of new technologies and behaviors
- Supporting focal area effectiveness through portfolio learning, knowledge management, and global and regional assessments (**focal area support projects**); also included in this category are projects entailing scientific

TABLE 2.2 **Portfolio by Agency, as of June 2016**

GEF Agency	Number of projects	GEF grant ($ million)
United Nations Development Programme	97	468
World Bank	94	615
United Nations Environment Programme	51	208
Multi-Agency	23	248
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	10	46
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	6	23
Inter-American Development Bank	3	28
Asian Development Bank	3	7
African Development Bank	2	18
World Wildlife Federation	2	11
International Union for the Conservation of Nature	2	3
International Fund for Agricultural Development	2	3
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	1	2
Total	296	1,680

SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

research in new emerging areas of concern, with limited funding[4]

The two first goals are interlinked in a stepwise long-term approach adopted by the focal area to bring beneficiary countries from science-based trust building, to priority setting, to preventive/remedial action on the ground. This approach is reflected in the portfolio, showing a growing number of stress reduction projects as the portfolio matures (figure 2.5). It should be noted that foundational projects are inherently complex to develop.

PROJECT FOCUS

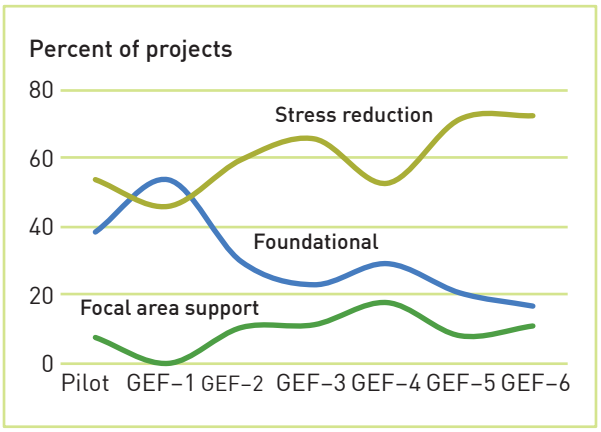
Waterbody versus integrated focus

All initiatives in the international waters focal area address components, or the entirety, of a complex environmental continuum of watersheds/aquifers–estuaries–coastal zone–marine waters. Their focus can be on one or more waterbodies, or they can take an integrated approach:

- **Waterbody focus.** These projects address the various segments of the hydrologic cycle and their dependent ecosystems and living resources: river basin, aquifer, coastal waters, marine and oceanic waters. The bulk of the international waters portfolio takes this focus.
- **Integrated focus.** There are 13 "integrated" projects in the portfolio. Their design recognizes the interlinked nature of water ecosystems, and they operate in an integrated manner, following a "ridge-to-reef" or "source-to-sea" approach when feasible.

[4] Investments for the closely related goals of research and focal area support are characteristic of the international waters focal area, which does not receive guidance from any specific convention; projects with these goals began in the pilot phase and totaled 34 as of June 2016.

FIGURE 2.5 **Portfolio by project goal and replenishment period, as of June 2016**

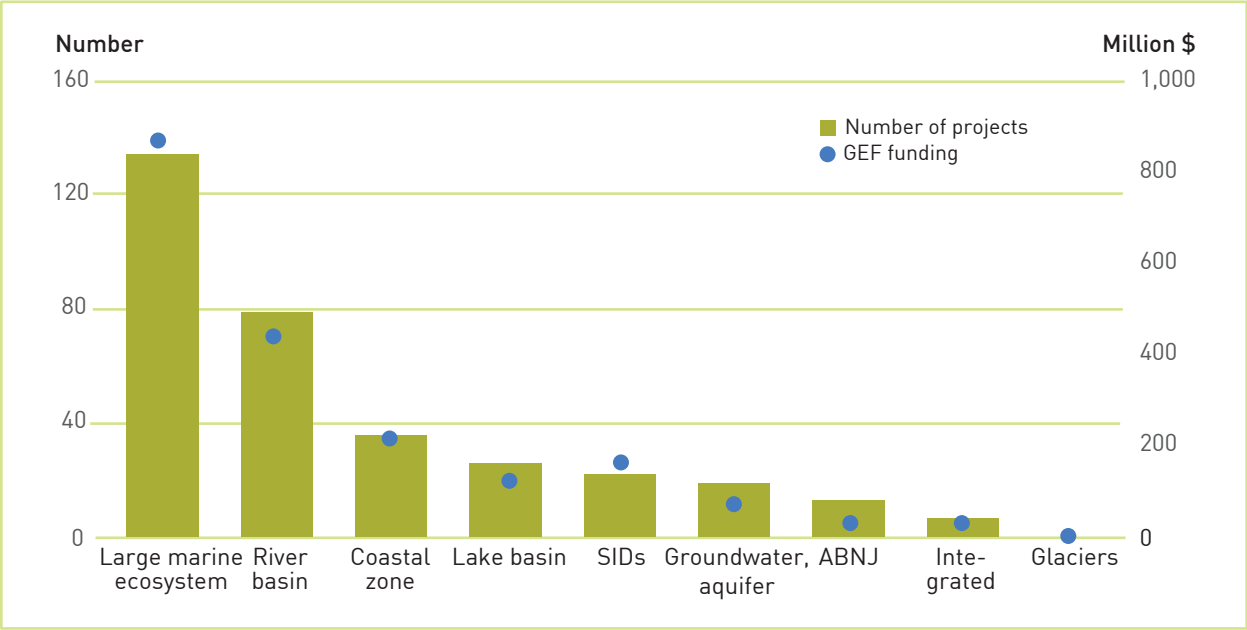


SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

Projects addressing marine waters and their living resources dominate the portfolio, with large marine ecosystems being the subject of 135 projects and accounting for a total investment of $869.5 million (figure 2.6). The prevalence of marine projects in the portfolio began in GEF-3, and continues to this point in GEF-6. The next most prevalent waterbody focus is on river basin, with total funding of $433.7 million for 79 projects. Investment in groundwater ($81 million) is low; and despite reiterated calls for action in GEF-4 and GEF-6, no action has been taken on glaciers.

The focal area has facilitated cooperation over transboundary water issues in the majority of the planet's large marine ecosystems. It is now moving its investments toward stress reduction, particularly in fisheries-related concerns and in reducing hypoxia due to excess nutrients. The GEF has achieved substantial results in these areas by facilitating regional and global binding agreements regarding fisheries and alien species, and in reducing stresses caused by eutrophication and overfishing in a number of large marine ecosystems.

FIGURE 2.6 Number of projects and GEF funding by project focus , as of June 2016



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

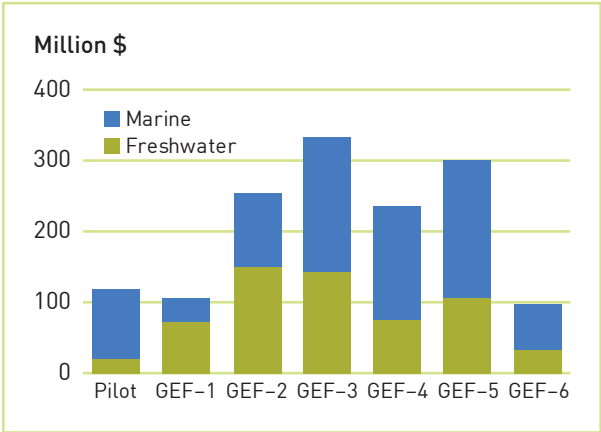
NOTE: ABNJ = area beyond national jurisdiction. Projects may relate to more than one type of waterbody.

Of concern is the slow or absent growth of projects addressing transboundary surface and groundwater resources. This lack is likely due to the contentious nature of freshwater nationally and, especially, internationally, where sovereignty issues and downstream implications are significant. Also of concern is the weak showing in the portfolio of support for groundwater.[5]

Freshwater versus marine projects

Separating GEF international waters freshwater from marine projects confirms a marked imbalance in the portfolio with respect to these two overarching categories, revealing a distinct skew toward marine ecosystems and related environmental concerns (figure 2.7). This imbalance seems to stem less from a deliberate strategic decision than to be the consequence of a spontaneous growth of the portfolio in directions where

FIGURE 2.7 GEF funding for freshwater versus marine projects by GEF replenishment period, as of June 2016



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

[5] The GEF and its partners continue to call for countries to step up action on improved governance and sustainable management of national and transboundary aquifers. Efforts are continuing and progress will depend on an increased understanding of this resource as a vital component in long-term nexus planning and as a climate change buffer resource.

the interests of countries and Agencies coincided, and where transboundary tensions were less severe. The marine cluster shows a strong prevalence of stress reduction projects. IW:LEARN has recently increased its capacity to support the freshwater community.

PROJECT THEME

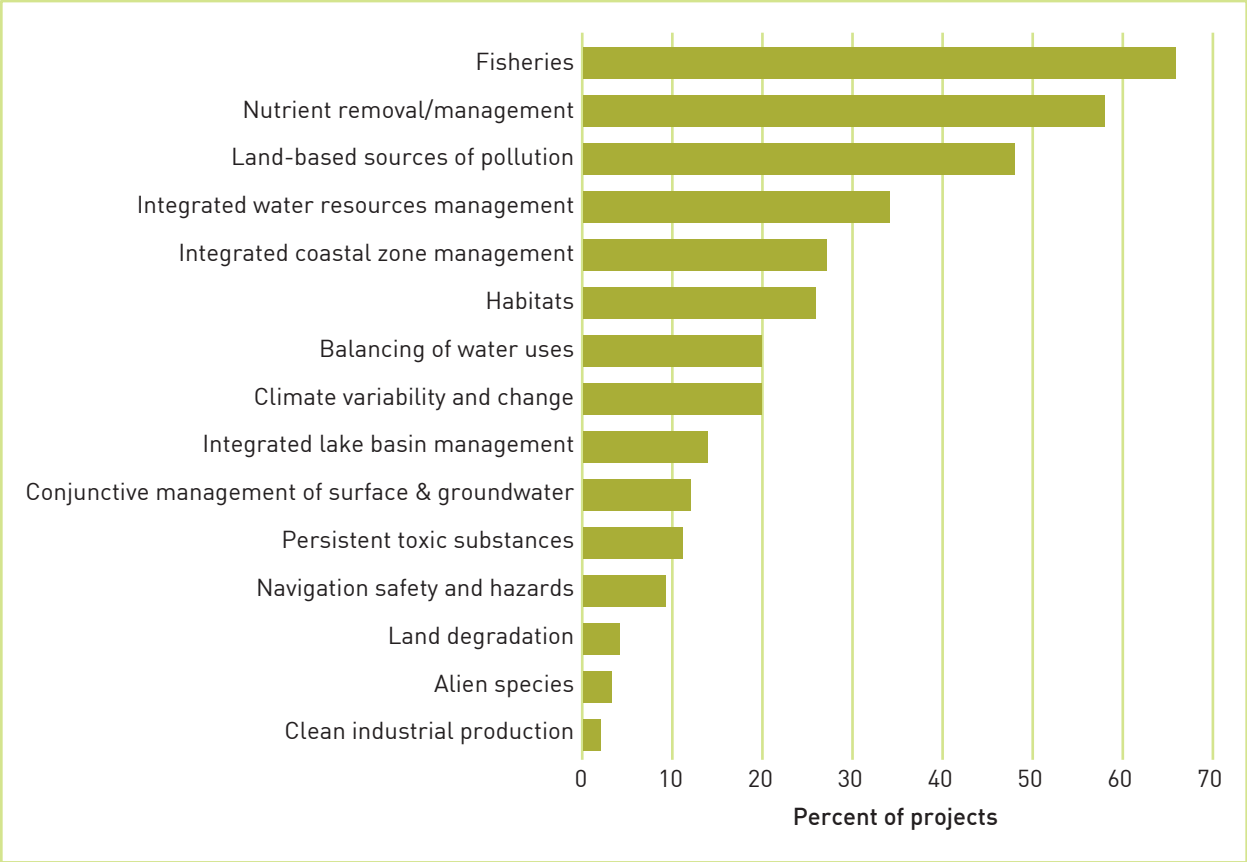
The majority of international waters projects, including foundational and focal area support ones, can be categorized by the issues, or themes, the projects were intended to address. These themes include fisheries, nutrient removal and management, integrated water resources management, etc.

General trends

Consistent with the strength of the marine portfolio, almost half (131 projects and $852 million in GEF grants) of all international waters projects address marine-related themes, with fisheries being the dominant theme for interventions (figure 2.8).

Pollution from land-based sources and nutrients are on a decreasing trend, as the Black Sea and East Asian Seas Strategic Partnerships near completion. The least subscribed themes are clean production, alien species, land degradation, and navigation safety and hazards. Projects featuring themes not well represented in the overall portfolio were notable in their outcomes, however. For

FIGURE 2.8 **International waters portfolio project distribution by theme**



NOTE: Projects may relate to more than one theme.

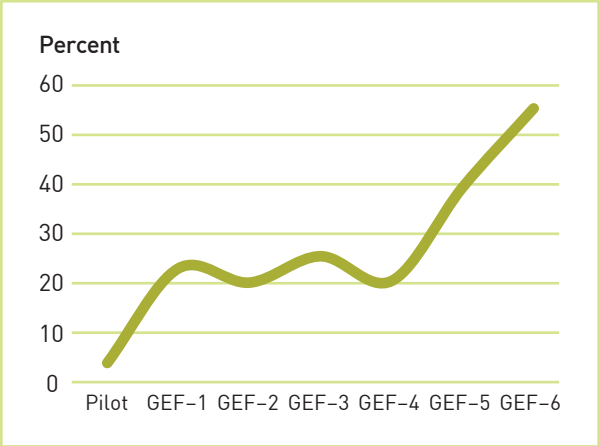
example, there was evidence of broader adoption of policies promoted by three projects on the prevention of alien species introduction; the Marine Electronic Highway (GEF ID 1270) tested in the Malacca Straits represented ground-breaking experimentation on precision navigation; and the 11 portfolio projects on persistent toxic substances facilitated the negotiations for the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions.

Fisheries projects

After a slow start from the pilot phase to GEF-2, the portion of the international waters portfolio devoted to fisheries had a strong growth spurt in GEF-3 (figure 2.9), becoming the most subscribed theme in the portfolio, with 66 projects and investments totaling $467 million (28 percent of the total international waters GEF investment), and leveraging significant cofinancing of $2.4 billion.

This large effort aims at reversing alarming trends of increasing overfishing and destruction of marine biodiversity—many continental shelf fisheries are already beyond recovery—and increasing pressure on oceanic living resources.

FIGURE 2.9 **Fisheries projects by GEF period as percentage of GEF grant allocations, as of June 2016**



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

Through these projects, the GEF has become a major world player in protecting marine biodiversity and spearheading responsible fisheries. This crucial contribution of the international waters focal area to marine biodiversity conservation deserves recognition—particularly for its ability to address fisheries depletion issues at all levels while taking into consideration the transboundary nature of most pelagic living marine resources and their ecosystems.

Synergies with the biodiversity focal area are emerging in the portfolio, with two multifocal area programs dealing with coastal fisheries at the national level approved in GEF-6. The bulk of the action on fisheries has been on stress reduction with a focus on African and East Asian large marine ecosystems. The number of projects dealing with freshwater fisheries is low, accounting for only 6 percent of all fisheries projects. The special attention given to the critical theme of fisheries in SIDS has achieved important results, particularly in the Pacific warm pool SIDS cluster. Agreement on the Pacific Tuna Treaty brought significant environmental as well as social and economic benefits to the islands.

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE AND DISTRIBUTION

International waters projects develop at three geographical levels:

- **Global:** mostly projects providing focal area support
- **Regional:** the bulk of foundational projects and some SAP implementation stress reduction projects
- **National:** stress reduction projects as part of SAP implementation, including demonstration projects

Regional projects represent the large majority of international waters investments. Projects are fairly balanced across the regions, although with a priority on Africa (figure 2.10).

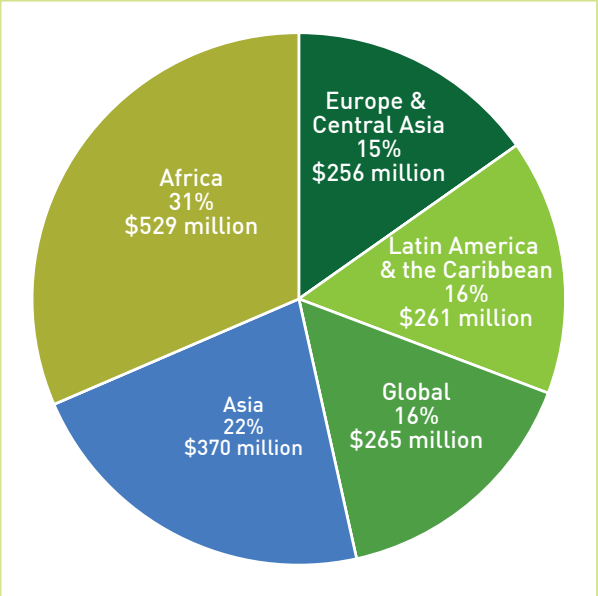
MULTIFOCAL AREA PROJECTS

International waters projects adopting a multifocal area approach are growing in both number and in amount of GEF investment (table 2.3). Of the 64 multifocal area programs/projects approved to date, 50 percent belong to programs.

By number, multifocal area projects show a slightly more balanced distribution than the international waters single focal area projects between marine and freshwater initiatives; however, in terms of GEF funding, there is a clear prevalence of the marine domain and of fisheries (figures 2.11 and 2.12). This prevalence emerged primarily in GEF-5.

The growth of GEF multifocal area investments is a response to the growing recognition of the need to address the multiple drivers of change, and the interlinkages across sectors in the environmental continuum, by fostering integration and synergies across focal areas.[6] Twenty percent of the 64

FIGURE 2.10 **Regional distribution of portfolio projects, as of June 2016**



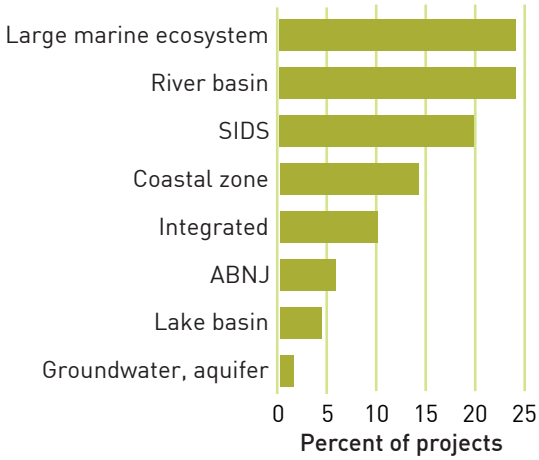
SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

TABLE 2.3 **Multifocal area projects approved with an international waters component, by GEF replenishment period, as of June 2016**

GEF period	No. of projects	GEF grant (million $)	Cofinancing (million $)
GEF-3	8	34.55	141.41
GEF-4	18	59.39	419.47
GEF-5	29	70.34	660.37
GEF-6	9	55.68	364.87
Total	64	219.96	1,586.12

SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

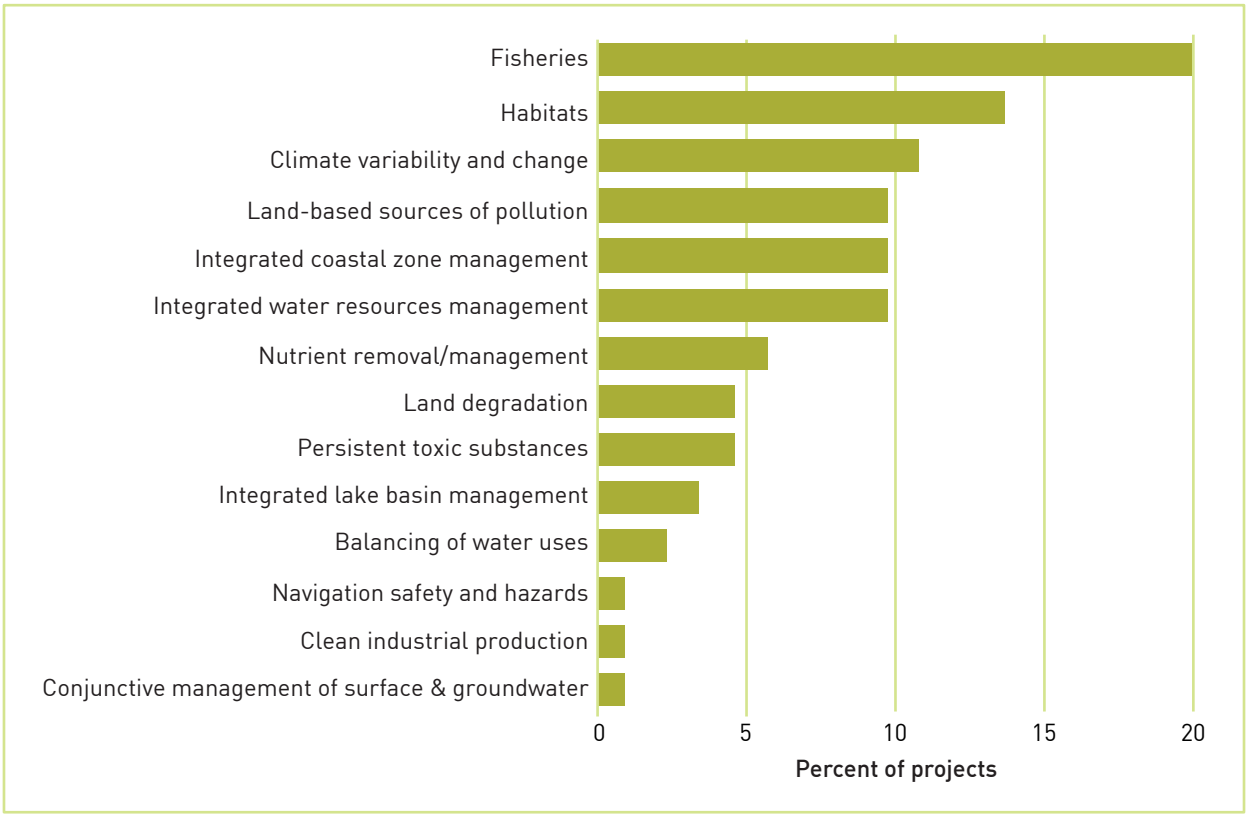
FIGURE 2.11 **Focus of multifocal area projects with an international waters component, as of June 2016**



NOTE: ABNJ = area beyond national jurisdiction. Projects may relate to more than one type of waterbody.

[6] The STAP pointed out that the GEF would be able to achieve transformational outcomes only by breaking away from single technology and/or single sector approaches toward a focus on systemic approaches (GEF STAP 2013).

FIGURE 2.12 Multifocal area projects with international waters component distribution by theme



NOTE: Projects may relate to more than one theme.

multifocal area projects are in coastal fisheries, with similar percentages in large marine ecosystems and river basins.

It should be noted that the GEF, as pointed out by a stakeholder interviewed for this study, "does not presently have a defined concept that outlines the rationale, components, outcomes, etc., for what constitutes a major fraction of the GEF multifocal area portfolio." With STAP support, the GEF is developing guidance for Agencies and countries specifying the purpose, components, objectives, and criteria for review and eligibility for multifocal area projects. A STAP stakeholder noted that "the growth of the multifocal area portfolio is creating problems in determining success when you have multiple end points that you want to improve." Experience in the international waters focal area can help in this regard. As one stakeholder noted, "Not having an MEA [multilateral environmental agreement] to service has helped the focal area in being creative and flexible." Experts from other focal areas expressed the view that a multifocal area program or project should not just be disparate layers or components, with an international waters project added onto a biodiversity or climate change one, but should instead reflect system thinking. They noted that the GEF could strengthen this system approach in the international waters TDA process, thus capturing all complementarities and synergies.

PROGRAMS

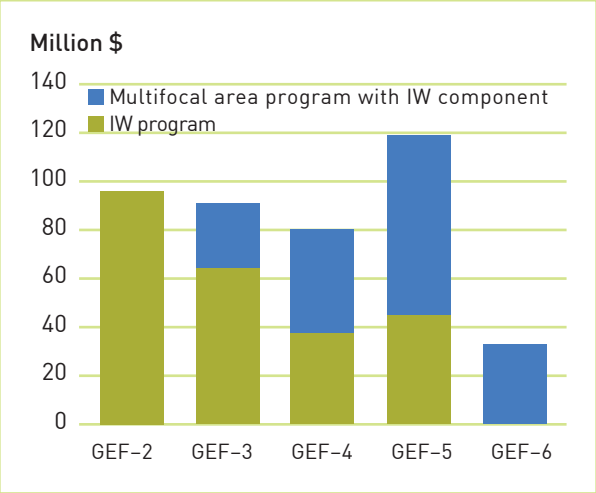
Prior to the consolidation of GEF policies on the programmatic approach funding modality in

2008 and its refinement in 2014, the international waters focal area had already experimented with similar multiproject programs as a funding modality, as this approach was particularly suited for supporting and accelerating SAP implementation in GEF-2 and GEF-3. The Black Sea and Danube Strategic Partnership, the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem, the Strategic Partnership for Sustainable Fisheries Management in the Large Marine Ecosystems in Africa, and the World Bank–GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the Large Marine Ecosystems of East Asia are examples of this early experience. These involved large initiatives involving multiple projects directed to address either a specific major threat (e.g., nutrients in the Black Sea) or the multiple stresses degrading water resources in a transboundary ecosystem (e.g., the Mediterranean Sea case). The partnership initiatives were broadly successful in leveraging large investments and catalyzing replication of practices, behaviors, and technologies.

After the GEF Council approved the programmatic approach, international waters programs grew in number and amount of investment (figure 2.13). In GEF-5, seven programs were approved. To date in GEF-6, two new programs have been approved. None of the international waters programs approved in GEF-4, GEF-5, or GEF-6 relate to SAP implementation.

GEF funding allocated to international waters and multifocal area programs with an international waters component totals $422 million, with total leveraged cofinancing of $3.076 billion—this exceeds a 7:1 ratio.[7] The geographic distribution

FIGURE 2.13 **Funding of single- and multifocal area programs in the international waters portfolio by GEF replenishment period, as of June 2016**



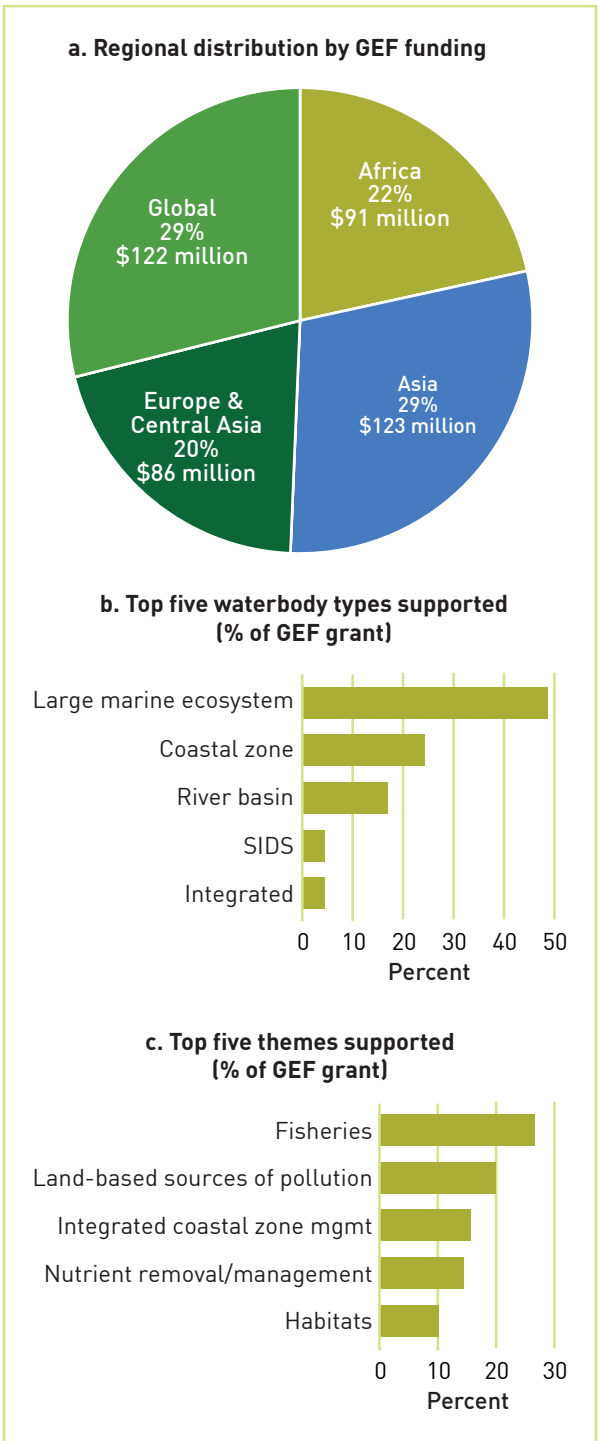
SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.
NOTE: IW = international waters.

across regions both in terms of number of projects and grant funding is well balanced, with regional projects most prevalent (figure 2.14a).

The distribution of programmatic approaches and "precursor" international waters programs across goals, waterbodies, and themes is consistent with trends for the entire international waters portfolio, expectedly showing even higher prevalence of stress reduction over foundational projects, and of marine over freshwater waterbodies (figure 2.14b). Distribution across themes is more balanced (figure 2.14c), with fisheries still the most subscribed; GEF funding for programs addressing this theme totals $143 million, with $1.0 billion in cofinancing. The preponderance of programs involving land-based sources of pollution reflects investments in pollution reduction during GEF-2

[7] The programs include programmatic approach and earlier funding modalities, such as phased projects. For multifocal area programs, the GEF grant amount includes only the international waters allocation and the cofinancing includes only weighted cofinancing (based on the percentage of the international waters financing in the GEF grant amount).

FIGURE 2.14 Characteristics of international waters programs, as of June 2016



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.
NOTE: Projects may relate to more than one waterbody/theme.

and GEF-3; the emphasis on nutrient removal/management is a more recent area of interest.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND FOCAL AREA SUPPORT

A unique feature of the international waters focal area is its portfolio of projects (34 projects, or 11 percent of the entire focal area portfolio) directed at improving the quality of projects, at capturing existing knowledge on water issues of emerging global concern, at assessing global international waters baseline conditions and priority concerns, and at making knowledge and experiences gained through international waters projects available to all.[8]

OPS5 recognized the knowledge management portfolio of the international waters focal area, noting the efforts made in learning from its own experiences and in the systematic exchanges among projects and partners aimed at improving project performance. Interviewees cited international waters as a very good example of building databases, innovating through knowledge management, thinking across jurisdictions and focal areas, and leading to cross-focal area thinking.

Additionally, the study team attended the Eighth GEF Biennial International Waters Conference, organized by IW:LEARN in Negombo, Sri Lanka, in May 2016. The team found the conference to be a useful and effective mechanism for disseminating experiences gained through international waters projects, strengthening the ties of a large network of stakeholders, and bringing together the project managers of many ongoing international waters initiatives. The creation of a large

[8] Included among this last group, which are primarily IW:LEARN projects, are five child projects that ensure coordination and exchange across their respective programs.

supply of experienced international waters project managers is one of the major results achieved by IW:LEARN, and a valuable resource for the focal area.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL AND REGIONAL AGREEMENTS

The international waters focal area has provided substantial support to a set of water-related global and regional treaties, action programs, and other soft laws (figure 2.15).[9] One of the strengths of the focal area is that it deals with waterbodies in a holistic manner, ensuring a collective response to relevant agreements, whether bilateral, multilateral, regional, or global in nature.

The present analysis focuses on the GEF's support, through its international waters focal area, of a set of global and regional freshwater and marine-related agreements. The analysis excludes the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the major multilateral environmental agreements, since most—if not all—international waters marine projects foster compliance with UNCLOS provisions, and all international waters projects foster biodiversity conservation and integrity by addressing freshwater and marine water pollution, freshwater ecosystem protection, coastal habitat protection and rehabilitation, and promotion of fisheries restoration.[10]

The trends emerging from the analysis of freshwater and marine-related agreements confirm earlier findings. The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) continues to receive the most support from GEF international waters. GEF support to marine conventions (excluding the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, or MARPOL) and fisheries-related agreements has increased substantially over time. Worth noting in this regard is the significant amount of cofinancing leveraged by international waters projects, which has particularly benefited the GPA and the Regional Sea Conventions.

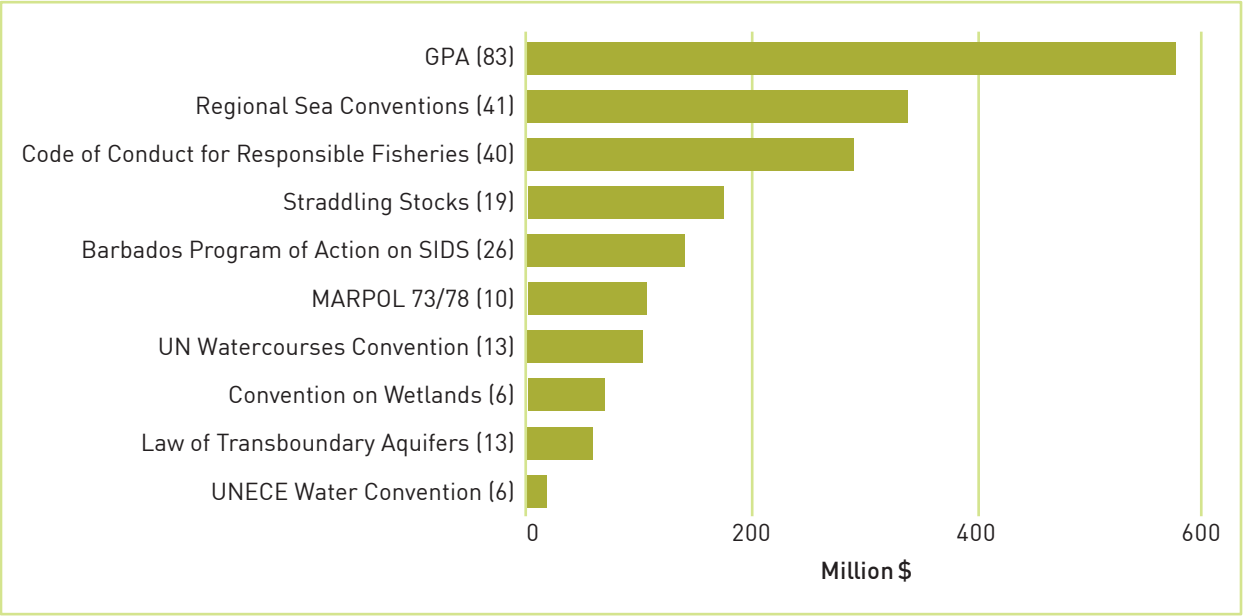
Two recent events have further strengthened the framework of international water law, adding to the relevance of transboundary freshwater governance. Two agreements, open to all, are now in force: the 1992 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (UNECE Water Convention) and the 1997 Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (UN Watercourses Convention). Both treaties cover international watercourses (i.e., freshwater), whether on the surface or underground, shared by two or more states. The two conventions are fully coherent and mutually reinforcing, with the 1997 treaty focusing more on allocations, and the 1992 convention on environmental protection.[11] GEF international waters

[9] A 2002 evaluation concluded that the GEF could be seen as a—or possibly the—major facilitator of implementation and increased adoption of international water laws, action plans, and regional environmental protection agreements through its international waters focal area.

[10] A number of interviewees noted that the international waters focal area supports the goals and outcomes of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. This is not necessarily recognized in the practice of GEF operations. For example, the Amazon Forests Protected Area does not make any reference to the role of water, nor to the international waters SAP presently under the process of endorsement by all Amazon countries.

[11] One of the strengths of the UNECE Water Convention is that it has an active intergovernmental framework

FIGURE 2.15 GEF international waters portfolio support to global and regional environmental agreements



SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses are numbers of projects. Straddling Stocks = UN Agreement on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks; MARPOL 73/78 = International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 as modified by the Protocol of 1978; UN General Assembly Resolution 66/104 on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers. The analysis excludes the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, (UNCLOS) and the major multilateral environmental agreements since most international waters marine projects foster compliance with provisions of UNCLOS, and that all international waters projects foster biodiversity conservation and integrity, by addressing freshwater and marine water pollution, freshwater ecosystem protection, coastal habitats protection and rehabilitation, and promotion of fisheries restoration.

continues to support implementation of the provisions of both conventions in a number of situations, and based on interviews, will continue to do so through its projects. In particular, the Meeting of the Parties to the 1992 UNECE Water Convention sees GEF international waters as a strategic partner. Some GEF projects in the UNECE region are parts of the program of work agreed under the convention, and the Meeting of the Parties has adopted a decision to further strengthen cooperation with GEF international waters (Decision VI/4). As the UNECE Convention Secretariat noted in an interview, the entry into force of both instruments may create opportunities for more strategic synergies with GEF international waters, given the common goal of promoting transboundary cooperation in the governance and protection of the world's freshwater resources. The GEF has supported a number of other regional agreements.

(a Meeting of the Parties, several technical subsidiary bodies, an Implementation Committee and a Secretariat), which keeps under continuous review the implementation of the Convention and the evolution of cooperation, and develop policy tools, capacity building activities and projects on the ground to support Parties and non-Parties in their efforts to jointly manage their shared waters. As a codification convention, the 1997 treaty contains no such provisions.

THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

A successful GEF initiative implemented by the United Nations Development Programme, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) had, as of May

2016, disbursed a total of $26.4 million in grant resources to support 1,027 small-scale initiatives related to international waters, working with local communities and nongovernmental organizations. The cofinancing leveraged for these projects totaled $38 million.

The geographic distribution of these community-level actions reveals a prevalence in African least developed countries, with other concentrations in the Mekong Basin countries, Central America, and SIDS. Small grants have primarily targeted coastal habitats, inland and coastal fisheries, reduction of land-based pollution, freshwater, and forest management. Thus, a multitude of SGP initiatives address international waters issues. In many well-documented cases, these SGP efforts have brought about broader adoption and scale-up of good practices and behaviors (Chen, Akhta, and Currea 2016).

2.3 GEF-6 review of quality at entry

This review of international waters project quality at entry is based on project concept documents— i.e., project identification forms/program framework documents (PIFs/PFDs) and World Bank project concept notes—for all international waters GEF-6 entries in the portfolio of approved projects. The review focused on the following:

- Alignment with the international waters GEF-6 strategy
- Clarity in the description of objectives and outcomes
- Baseline/indicators framework
- Gender

The cluster of 18 GEF-6 projects so far approved develop in five directions:

- Setting the foundations for cooperation in new transboundary waterbodies in Europe and Central Asia (White Drin, Dniester) through two single international waters/multifocal area projects
- Advancing implementation of agreed SAPs in a transboundary aquifer system (the Nubian Aquifer), three river basins (Kura, Volta, Orange-Senqu), and two large marine ecosystems (Arafura and Timor Sea, the Gulf of Mexico)
- Supporting fisheries management in West Africa, the Pacific Islands, the Southwest Indian Ocean, the Caribbean, and the Arafura-Timor Sea (six projects, three of which are child projects)
- Support for coastal fisheries management in six countries on four continents, and in Madagascar (two multifocal area programs)
- Focal area support dealing with approaches to the water nexus and the global commons (two knowledge projects)

The review yielded the following observations:

- **Proof of adherence to the GEF-6 international waters strategies and programs is limited to the initial list (Table A of PIFs).** While the strategic fit to GEF-6 programs was clear for many of the concepts reviewed, some confusion exists for others in terms of the GEF cycle and in identification of the correct program. Overall, the cluster analyzed will foster achievement of all international waters strategic objectives, with the exception of IW-1 Program 2 (high-altitude melting glaciers). The largest number of entries (eight, or 45 percent) relate to IW-3 Programs 6 and 7 on coasts and fisheries: five of these are regional projects, providing the opportunity to open up new perspectives on marine

governance approaches, reconciling large marine ecosystems with jurisdictional frameworks, such as the Coastal Fisheries Initiative.

- **The level of detail provided in the proposals is quite variable, with marked differences among Agencies.** It appears that Agency modalities prevail over GEF standards. Some of the project concepts contain so little information, review was not possible. In a number of cases, the descriptions of the objectives and outcomes are too generic.
- **The baseline indicators framework is difficult to assess from the scant information contained in the proposals.** Proposals should distinguish between the adoption of the international waters Indicators, which are normally established as part of the implementation of foundational projects; and the selection of indicators related to the achievement of project outcomes (which are those to be found in results frameworks, built on a solid baseline). Precise definition of project outcomes may not be an easy task at the proposal stage, but the widely differing approaches taken by the various Agencies reflect uncertainty—and possibly the need for policy guidance.
- **Gender is considered in many of the proposals, and first steps in application of the GEF Gender Policy are being taken in these projects.** The concepts do not contain details on activities or methodologies, but do mention mainstreaming, assessments, and disaggregated indicators.
- **The focal area continues to focus on knowledge management in GEF-6.** As noted, two of the projects approved focus on the global environment commons and on integrated solutions for energy, water, and land.

3: Assessment

This chapter presents an assessment of the relevance and results of the international waters focal area. It is based largely on the evaluative evidence contained in the various OPS reports and other periodic reporting by the GEF's Independent Evaluation Office, the analysis of the portfolio summarized in chapter 2, the review of quality at entry of GEF-6 projects approved to date by the Council, and information provided in interviews with stakeholders. In addition, a rapid review of all terminal evaluations of completed projects provided information on performance, use of indicators, and final reporting.

3.1 Continuing relevance of the focal area

Based on the evidence collected by this study, the GEF's international waters focal area remains highly relevant. It is contributing to the enhancement of regional security and is supporting the sustainable use and protection of transboundary waters, their living resources, and dependent ecosystems. The focal area not only helps protect transboundary water resources but also contributes toward easing present tensions, improving the livelihoods of the vulnerable, and sustaining economic and social development consistent with the 2030 Agenda.

With the global agreement on the SDGs—including target 6.5 on transboundary freshwater cooperation—reached in September 2015, the GEF international waters focal area has an enhanced role and responsibility. Its support to beneficiary countries in the achievement of these goals, as well as numerous other targets, will be important. The recent enforcement of the 1997 UN Water Convention and the opening up to global adoption of the 1992 UNECE Water Convention are further indications of the growing international priority of transboundary freshwater. This reinforced framework of international water law can present opportunities for strategic synergies with the GEF international waters focal area. Moreover, the intergovernmental structure of the UN Water Convention can provide a political sounding board, as well as political support, for the GEF's international waters work, strengthening its ability to operate in complex transboundary contexts.

Analysis of the evolution of the international waters strategic priorities over time found that the focal area evolved through the GEF-4, GEF-5, and GEF-6 replenishment cycles to embrace changing global priorities. It has expanded its actions to address new environmental threats to sustainable development, experimented with new approaches and funding modalities, and contributed to the global water discourse. Coherence with its mandate, and its flexibility in adjusting to the rapidly evolving context, are the strengths of this focal area. Its uniqueness is recognized by international waters stakeholders, intergovernmental organizations, and others, who note that the work in this area has become irreplaceable.

Moreover, the relevance of international waters to sustainable development is growing in view of mounting pressures on watersheds and marine resources; increased transboundary tensions over freshwater; the imperative to mainstream resilience to climatic variability, which affects vulnerable populations and ecosystems; the need for a collective response to a call for action on freshwater, including transboundary, of the SDGs; increased recognition of the water-food-energy-ecosystem-security nexus; and the recently strengthened international water law framework.

The relevance of recently approved projects to the achievement of the international waters GEF-6 strategic goals has also been assessed. The small cluster of GEF-6 projects at this stage

- Increases the number of transboundary waterbodies with GEF support;
- Promotes stress reduction in six waterbodies and supports sustainable fisheries in parts of the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans;
- Supports improved management of coastal fisheries in seven countries on four continents;
- Improves knowledge of the global commons and of the water nexus.

Through these projects, the focal area addresses all GEF-6 strategic programs except that on high-altitude melting glaciers. The conclusion is that, based on the few project concepts approved to date, the focal area is responding to the GEF-6 programming directions.

3.2 Results

PERFORMANCE

Outcomes

This study looked at 129 completed projects with terminal evaluations, which included both international waters projects and multifocal area projects with international waters financing. Of these, 127 projects have been rated on overall outcome achievement, based on the extent to which project objectives were achieved; the relevance of project results to GEF strategies, goals, and country profiles; and the efficiency with which project outcomes were achieved.

Seventy-five percent of the completed projects in the international waters portfolio have outcome ratings in the satisfactory range. This performance is similar to ratings reported across all focal areas in APR 2015 (GEF IEO 2017).

- Seventy-nine percent of regional projects have satisfactory outcomes, as compared with 64 percent of national projects.
- Success rates were higher in Asia (80 percent), and lowest in Europe and Central Asia (65 percent).
- Focal area support projects (including research and scientific projects) had the highest outcome ratings (89 percent; see box 3.1 for a sample project); stress reduction projects (including demonstration) and foundation projects had a success rating of 72 percent.

Sustainability

A slightly higher percentage of marine projects (n = 53) as compared to freshwater projects (n = 51) received satisfactory outcome ratings: 77 percent versus 71 percent. The complex transboundary settings and frequently pronounced transboundary tensions that accompany freshwater

BOX 3.1 Sample focal area support project with outcomes rated as satisfactory

Fostering a Global Dialogue on Oceans, Coasts, and SIDS, and on Freshwater-Coastal-Marine Interlinkages project (GEF ID 2722) is an example of a focal area support project with high outcome ratings. It aimed to foster global South-South dialogue through the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands to achieve the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation targets related to oceans, coastal areas, and islands (with a special focus on SIDS) and the interlinkages between freshwater and the coastal and marine environments. The project made significant inputs to UN initiatives, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. By applying lessons learned from the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, the Global Island Partnership is now a recognized program of the CBD Island Biodiversity Work Program. At the national level, the project's policy analysis led to policy decisions in Mexico (Policy on Integrated Ocean and Coastal Management) and Japan (Basic Act on Ocean Policy).

SOURCE: Henocque 2008.

BOX 3.2 Sample freshwater project with outcomes rated as satisfactory

The Danube Regional Project: Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Trans-boundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin (Tranche 2) (GEF ID 2042) was designed and implemented in the context of the expansion of the European Union (EU) and under the acceptance of the EU Water Framework Directive as a legally binding mechanism for Danube water quality management. The project reinforced national capacities, ensured greater regional coordination on water management policy, and set the direction for national policies in the region. It contributed to a reduction of nitrogen and phosphate emissions into the Danube River of more than 20 percent and more than 30 percent, respectively; and conditions in the northwest shelf of the Black Sea are showing signs of restoration.

SOURCE: Fox and de Mora 2007.

projects might partly explain the difference. In well-documented cases of supportive political and economic contexts, freshwater projects have been able to achieve significant outcomes; box 3.2 provides one such example.

Sixty-two percent of projects for which ratings are available (n = 125) have sustainability ratings of moderately likely or higher, based on the likelihood of project benefits continuing past project closure. This figure is similar to sustainability ratings across all GEF completed projects. The percentage of national projects (n = 33) with sustainability rated of moderately likely or above is larger than for either regional (n = 66) or global (n = 26) projects: 67 percent compared to 62 percent and 54 percent. Latin America and the Caribbean (n = 17) was the region with the largest percentage of projects with sustainability rated as moderately likely or above (76 percent); 68 percent of projects in Europe and Central Asia (n = 25), and 58 percent of projects in both Africa (n = 33) and Asia (n = 24) were so rated. Box 3.3 presents an example of an Asian project whose outcomes are likely to be sustained.

Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) design and implementation ratings address the quality of design and implementation of M&E systems in completed projects. One hundred and twenty-nine projects from the international waters portfolio have been rated on M&E design, and 109 projects on M&E implementation. Of these, 53 percent have

BOX 3.3 Sample project with outcomes rated as likely to be sustained

The Hai River Basin Integrated Water Resources Management project (GEF ID 1323) is an example of project with a likely sustainability rating. The project aimed to catalyze an integrated approach to water resource management and pollution control in the Hai Basin to improve the Bohai Sea environment. The project introduced a new concept of real water saving that targeted a reduction in consumptive use of water. Institutional mechanisms were introduced to promote cooperation between different sectors. The project's approaches have been adopted by project partners, and captured in national policies, the five-year plan, and the Hai River Basin Integrated Water Resources Master Plan. Notably, the national policy called for "increasing fiscal investment in water resources development." The government has planned ongoing support of the Hai Basin Evapotranspotation Centre to further develop and apply the project's approach to controlling the consumptive use of water.[1]

[1] Evapotranspotation (ET) is the process by which water is transferred from the land to the atmosphere by evaporation from the soil and other surfaces and by transpiration from plants. ET management is the principal innovative approach to sustainable water quantity management introduced under the project, which focused on reducing the amounts of ET in the Hai Basin to sustainable levels.

SOURCE: World Bank 2011.

M&E design ratings in the satisfactory range; and 56 percent have satisfactory M&E implementation ratings. These figures are slightly lower than those for the overall GEF portfolio as cited in APR 2015: 59 percent and 62 percent, respectively; however, the differences are not statistically significant.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENTS

The overall achievements of the international waters focal area have been noted in the OPSs conducted by the GEF's Independent Evaluation Office over the years, and by stakeholders interviewed, as well as by the portfolio and terminal evaluation reviews conducted as part of this focal area study. Notably, the terminal evaluation review conducted for this study found the following:

- 67 percent of projects have resulted in broader adoption of outcomes through replication, mainstreaming, and scaling-up
- Demonstrated ability to leverage high cofinancing (1:6)
- Step-wise long-term approach to transboundary cooperation
- Successful knowledge management through its focal area support projects, and in particular IW:LEARN
- 76 percent of its projects have achieved policy and process outcomes such as regional agreements across countries sharing a waterbody

Among the achievements to which the focal area has contributed are rehabilitation of the Black Sea northwest shelf dead zone; adoption of the Ballast Water Convention on Alien Species, which will enter into force in 2017; the Pacific Tuna Treaty; the Guarani Aquifer Agreement; and demonstration projects that have supported the process leading to the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions. An example of a project achieving regional policy-level change has been the Implementation of the Benguela LME [Large Marine Ecosystem] Action Program for Restoring Depleting Fisheries and Reducing Coastal Resources Degradation (GEF ID 3305). This project helped institutionalize the Secretariat of the Benguela Current Commission and assisted the secretariat in getting the

Benguela Convention signed. The governments of Angola, Namibia, and South Africa jointly fund the commission, which is a vehicle for countries to implement an integrated multisector and multi-country approach to ocean management.

Expanded country coverage

The international waters focal area operates in all GEF-eligible countries, with projects evenly distributed across regions. It is engaged in the following:

- Facilitating cooperation over transboundary water issues in the majority of the world's large marine ecosystems and major river and lake basins (79 waterbodies)
- Directing its investments toward stress reduction in all major high seas fisheries
- Elimination of marine dead zones due to excess nutrients in East Asia, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean
- Strengthening river commissions and other regional bodies
- Promoting multisectoral approaches to surface and groundwater management and a multiplicity of transboundary management arrangements in Africa, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, SIDS, and South Asia

As investments in SAP implementation and stress reduction grow, also national international waters projects grow in numbers and allocations, with 85 projects in 45 countries, with the bulk of the funding going however to 10 countries only, with China receiving the largest allocation (30 percent or $102 million).

From processes to stress reduction

The international waters portfolio shows an increasing trend of growing investments in stress reduction, with acceleration in GEF-5, with 52 projects approved, and continuing in GEF-6. In the early GEF periods, stress reduction projects were mostly stand-alone demonstrations. Beginning in GEF-3, stress reduction was supported almost exclusively as part of SAP implementation through programmatic approaches precursor initiatives—specifically, strategic partnerships and investment funds—while stand-alone demonstrations disappeared from the portfolio in GEF-5 and GEF-6. Projects related to processes peaked in GEF-4, with 21 such foundational projects approved. Investment in such projects dropped drastically in GEF-5 and GEF-6, with only 2 (out of a total of 18 projects) approved so far in GEF-6.

This decrease in investments in foundational projects addressing new waterbodies does not signify that the GEF is completing its work in this area. On the contrary, the goal of facilitating cooperation in all major transboundary water systems is far from having been achieved, particularly in the freshwater domain. The 166 transboundary aquifers larger than 5,000 square kilometers or the 286 transboundary river basins mapped by the Transboundary Waters Assessment project (TWAP; GEF ID 4489), demonstrate this gap. One possible explanation for the reduction in foundational projects resides in the actual allocations to projects of the focal area, which after an initial growth, starting with GEF-3 remained between a minimum of $280 million (GEF-4) and a maximum of $356 million in GEF-5, with a decline in real terms. This constraint is noted in the OPSs, which recommend expanding international waters funding in view of the focal area's high relevance and good performance.

A factor influencing the growth of stress reduction projects may be the general emphasis and urgency placed by the GEF on achievement of on-the-ground, measurable impacts. Proper consideration should be given to the importance of facilitating the policy, legal, and institutional frameworks and guiding principles needed to enable strategic action on the ground and the broader adoption of successful practices, technologies and behaviors.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

The International Waters Inter-Agency Task Force in 1997 developed three types of indicators now broadly applied within and outside the GEF: process, stress reduction, and environmental status indicators. These indicators are applicable to all waterbody rehabilitation programs and projects. Environmental status indicators are measures of actual performance or success in restoring and protecting a targeted waterbody. They require long-term monitoring to be meaningful. The international waters policies for foundational projects recommend that waterbody-specific environmental status indicators be agreed upon by all countries sharing the waterbody (the baseline to be provided by the science contained in the TDA), with the commitment to monitor them for the long term in order to assess the effectiveness of the remedial actions undertaken. Unfortunately, this procedure is rarely followed in practice in international waters projects, which precludes a quantitative assessment of what has been achieved so far. An effort was made by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office to assess the impacts achieved in the South China Sea and surrounding areas (this evaluation is discussed in chapter 2); this assessment would have benefited from an analysis of these indicators if they had been available. Geospatial methods create new opportunities to measure environmental status change. Box 3.4 describes a recent application of geospatial methods in assessing impact of GEF support to Lake Victoria.

EFFECTIVENESS

A catalyst for integration

As noted in several evaluations, and confirmed in this study, the international waters focal area follows a stepwise, long-term ecosystem-based approach to the building of transboundary cooperation and the restoration and protection of transboundary waterbodies. This, together with its reliance on science and knowledge management, and its systemic view of the many interconnected variables controlling water, place the focal area in a unique position as a catalyst of integration: the SAPs, agreed upon by the governments of the countries sharing a waterbody, based on the science and systemic approach of the TDA.[1]

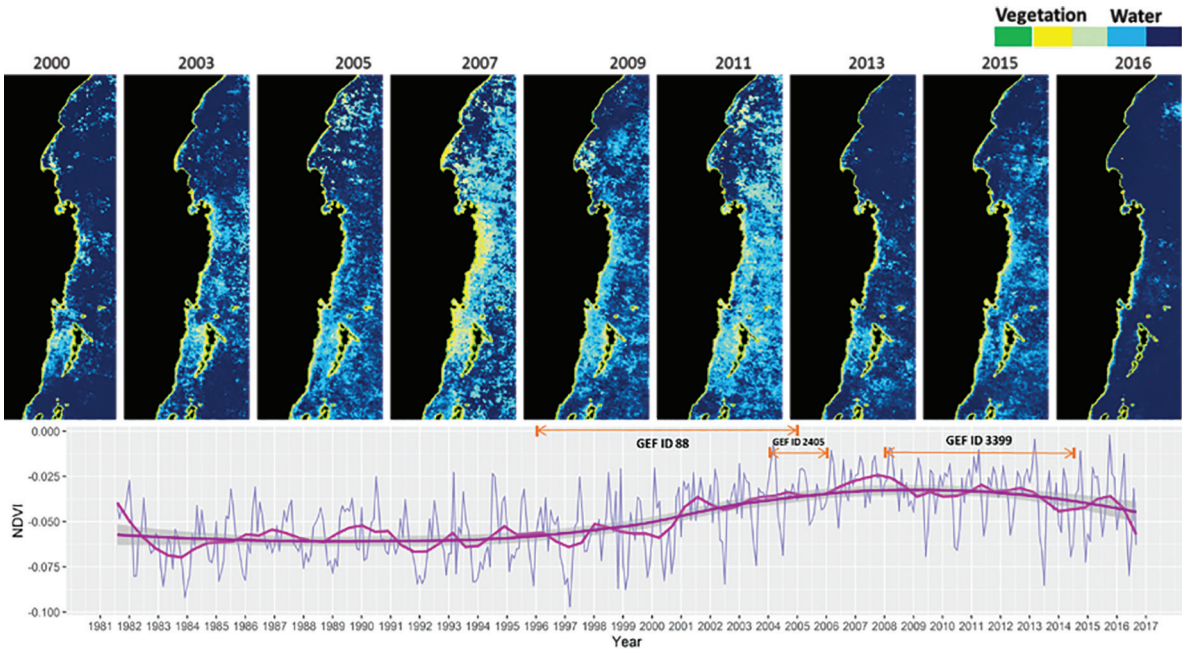
International waters foundational projects have provided the evidence that solutions to water concerns lie not just in improving water supply and treatment, or in protecting aquatic ecosystems and environmental flows, but also—and often primarily—in distant sectors such as food and energy production, trade, land use and urban planning, industrial processes, and forest management. Interviews with other focal area leaders have indicated that this opportunity is recognized in principle. They emphasized the need for strengthening the TDA system approach to embrace a broader spectrum of variables. Interviewees noted three potential areas of cooperation (mitigation, adaptation, and the private sector) between international waters and GEF climate change–related

[1] The systemic approach is present in TDAs, although not fully developed.

BOX 3.4 Demonstrating impact in international waters: Lake Victoria

Context. Lake Victoria, with a surface area of about 68,800 km^2, is the second largest freshwater body in the world. It is a transboundary resource shared by Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Burundi and Rwanda are a part of the upper watershed that drains into Lake Victoria through the Kagera River. The water hyacinth is an invasive weed first reported in Lake Victoria in 1988. It spread across the lake, cutting off communities and putting the economic and food security of millions at risk. Over the past two decades, the GEF has supported the Lake Victoria ecosystem through three primary interventions: the **Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project** (1996–2005; GEF ID 88, World Bank), the **Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program Development for the Lake Victoria Basin** project (2004–06; GEF ID 2405, World Bank), and the **SIP: Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project II** (2008–15; GEF ID 3399, World Bank). The overall objective of these interventions was to address major threats facing the Lake Victoria ecosystem, including nutrient load management in the upstream areas to lessen the nutrient load and clear the water hyacinth on site. The first project included Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda and applied various control methods, including the use of natural enemies of the water hyacinth. Since the Kagera River is the primary source of inflow into Lake Victoria and of the hyacinth infestation, the second and third projects were expanded to Burundi and Rwanda. Remote sensing methods were used to observe changes in hyacinth infestation (see figure).

Results. Overall vegetation in Lake Victoria has entered a declining phase since 2008, as measured on the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI). As of end 2016, levels of vegetation productivity have been reduced from a peak observed in 2007–08, which was 58 percent higher than the 1981 level, to a level 20 percent higher than that observed in 1981.



action.[2] Similar opportunities for cooperation also exist with the biodiversity focal area, to which all international waters projects already greatly contribute—although the reverse may not be the case, with freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity being the most threatened. Obvious, and crucial, synergies exist with the land degradation focal area, as noted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Convention Secretariat in an interview.

The protection of the Earth's finite and mostly transboundary water resources requires cooperation among countries and synergistic integrated action across sectors. On the other hand, access to water in sustainable quantity and quality is essential to achieve many of the SDG goals and targets, adapt to the impacts of climate change, achieve energy security, protect soil and forests, and combat desertification. The GEF-6 strategy takes an important first step toward a fully systemic approach by introducing the requirement at SAP implementation to unravel and address conflicts at the water-food-ecosystem nexus to increase water security.[3] Within this context, the role of international waters with its transboundary mandate acquires importance in a number of situations, as facing these multiple stresses requires strengthened cooperation among countries and a collective response to the multiple priority stresses for individual waterbodies by states rather than by single themes or single state.

The call for integration across focal areas is implicit in a recent STAP paper that highlights the organizing concept of "source to sea systems," linking river basins and marine ecosystems (GEF STAP 2016). The paper notes that there is evidence of substantial ecosystem degradation in the source-to-sea continuum, linked by flows of water, sediment, pollutants, materials, biota, and ecosystem services from the land, via rivers, lakes, and groundwater reservoirs toward deltas and estuaries, coasts, and the open seas. Existing governance and management arrangements face significant challenges in addressing such system connections, particularly in the marine space. Apart from the complexity of this all-embracing approach, obstacles to implementation of the source-to-sea approach are posed by the sectoral international law framework provided by UNCLOS and the 1997 UN Water Convention.[4]

A collective response to international water law

Although it does not serve any one specific international agreement, the international waters focal area has provided, through its projects, relevant support to the collective response to global and regional water-related agreements—from global binding conventions, to regional instruments, programs of action, and codes of conduct—and supported countries in the drafting,

[2] In the area of mitigation, for example, opportunities and challenges exist regarding marine debris (waste to energy projects, collection techniques); blue carbon space, mangroves, and carbon stocks funded by international waters that deliver mitigation benefits; aquaculture that reduces greenhouse gas emissions; climate-smart agriculture and sound water management that reduces emissions (e.g., rice paddies and methane emissions).

[3] This requirement should be extended to the preparation of future TDAs and the periodic updates of existing ones.

[4] The MedPartnership project (GEF ID 2600) is a notable example of successful application of the source-to-sea approach to the protection of a large marine ecosystem. This project is the first to consider the entire basin draining to the sea, including the coastal aquifers and dependent ecosystems, and takes into account the land-marine interface within the governance framework provided by the Barcelona Convention and its protocols.

formulation, and signature of a number of regional waterbody-based agreements.

The present study has shown that, after the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and UNCLOS, the focal area's largest support goes predictably to the marine fisheries-related agreements, followed by the GPA and treaties related to freshwater, SIDS, habitats, and navigation. The importance of this contribution cannot be overestimated. The merits of international waters reside in the collective nature of the response, with projects supporting compliance to the interlinked provisions of different related treaties and soft guidance enhancing their effectiveness and mutually reinforcing sectoral agreements, and in the channeling of compliance efforts to where they are most needed. This is in line with, and an example of, the present drive toward more integrated guidance from the different sectoral multilateral environmental agreements.

The STAP was asked to assist in identifying an indicator of agro-ecosystem resilience that might serve the CBD, UNCCD, and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). "This is a signal that single MEAs [multilateral environmental agreements] do not work," affirmed the STAP chair during an interview for this study, continuing, "Times are changing as we are seeing with the SDGs and the interest that is occurring naturally across conventions." A case in point, highlighted by the UNCCD Secretariat in an interview, is the global indicator on land degradation (SDG indicator 15.3.1, Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area) adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2016 and for which the UNCCD is the custodian agency. Data for this indicator will be derived using three of the six progress indicators adopted by the UNCCD parties, namely land cover/land cover change, land productivity, and carbon stocks above and below ground. These indicators are also being considered for reporting on the CBD's Aichi biodiversity targets as well as in monitoring commitments under the UNFCCC. Water plays a pivotal role in all three aspects covered by these indicators. The following are of particular interest for international waters in this regard:

- The synergies with the two international freshwater conventions recently entered into force that may open up new opportunities for increased effectiveness and coverage of focal area freshwater interventions
- The process of integration among the three major global conventions, in particular the UNCCD and the UNFCCC, as exemplified by the adoption of the SDG global indicator on land degradation with its implications for the other conventions and for water

International waters portfolio analysis and terminal evaluation review have provided evidence on the one hand of the important contributions of the focal area to international water law, and—on the other—the almost total absence of references to this in project-related documents. While the guidance provided by international water law is often explicitly recognized in and informs the GEF international waters strategies, project designers do not seem to directly draw design elements from these guiding instruments.

A regional strategy and national solutions

A cluster of stand-alone predominantly national actions nested within a regional strategic framework constitutes international waters SAPs. Their full implementation will almost without exception require multifocal area interventions. Food security, energy production, protection of ecosystem services and biodiversity, soil conservation, and resilience to climate variability and change are all controlled in numerous ways by the availability of water resources of sufficient quantity and quality.

The converse is also true. Solutions to transboundary water concerns require national actions in multiple focal areas.

National actions as part of a SAP respond to regional priorities that need to be reconciled with national priorities. This is the regional versus national dilemma arising from international waters SAP implementation. Solving the dilemma is in the interest of the countries. In fact, managing the transboundary, regional dimension of natural resources—and of water in the first place—is not an option, but a cornerstone of sustainable development.

The large majority of marine and freshwater resources on Earth are transboundary. To be sustainable and effective, their management must be considered within a transboundary physical, biological, political, and socioeconomic context—i.e., the river basins and related aquifers, and/or the coastal-marine ecosystems, interlinked within an environmental continuum by the flow of water. The international waters focal area, through its ecosystem approach and TDA-SAP consensus-building process, provides countries with the framework needed to direct part of their investments of GEF System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) funds, where they are most needed to balance transboundary conflictive water uses, while accruing multiple global environmental benefits and providing a collective response to regional and global environmental agreements—in particular to the three major global conventions—and fostering climate resilience and sustainable development.[5] The programmatic approach funding modality is particularly suited to facilitate the joining of forces of focal areas in the implementation of SAPs.

However, the GEF portfolio has not shown progress in this area.

Interviewees pointed out obstacles that have so far prevented countries from accessing STAR funds to complement international waters initiatives:

- Because they often deal with regional bodies such as river basin commissions, the Regional Sea Conventions, etc., international waters projects may lose contact with the countries
- GEF focal points may not be able to exercise their coordinating role
- Convention focal points are not consulted
- Coordinators of other focal areas do not understand that SAP implementation is in many cases no longer regional

The idea of giving some priority, or of dedicating some STAR funding to SAP national actions particularly in land degradation and climate change, has not apparently made any progress, neither in countries nor in the GEF.[6]

An unbalanced portfolio

The evolution of the international waters portfolio over time has led to an imbalance between freshwater and marine projects, with a marked prevalence of GEF investment in marine projects, particularly fisheries. The number of freshwater projects has remained constant since GEF-2, with decreasing investment. In GEF-5 and GEF-6, investments in marine issues were twice those for

[5] Cooperation is already active within the chemicals and waste focal area, which is not part of the STAR system.

[6] Improving coordination with bilateral donors is another way to solve the SAP implementation regional versus national dilemma. There are very good examples of coordination and complementary actions between GEF international waters and France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and the European Union in the Mediterranean region. These examples are not linked, however, to a systematic effort/mechanism.

freshwater, with over 50 percent going to fisheries projects. Marine fisheries now account for 66 projects and $466 million in GEF funding, making this the largest object of GEF international waters investment. This increase coincided with the GEF-4, GEF-5, and GEF-6 cycles, starting in 2008. The reasons for the strong prevalence of marine projects—and, within the marine cluster, of fisheries projects—may lie in the relatively less complex transboundary settings of the marine domain, the short-term economic and social benefits that may be derived from improved ecosystem-based sustainable fishing, and the clear benefits that can be gained in terms of biodiversity conservation. Other factors may also play a role, such as the desire of development banks to engage in this less risky and more profitable field, or a deliberate choice to steer the portfolio toward an "oceans" focal area.

The resulting prevalence of investments in marine fisheries and ocean affairs may limit the focal area's ability to assist countries in facing the challenges posed by climatic variability and water scarcity hitting vulnerable populations. The focus on freshwater could be increased, as it is nested within the concept of international waters. The evolution of environmental sciences has revealed the interconnected nature of land and sea within a continuum, where the health of marine ecosystems and their living resources—particularly including coastal fisheries—largely depends on the quality and quantity of freshwater flows. The results of the GEF Transboundary Waters Assessment Program have shown that most freshwater on Earth is to be found in transboundary river basins and aquifers—resources that can only be managed sustainably if considered within transboundary contexts. The livelihoods of the people of the Sahel, and of many others living in water-stressed regions, will increasingly depend on the sustainable joint management of their transboundary and interconnected river-aquifer systems.

Recognizing the obstacles to cooperation

Fostering cooperation among riparian/littoral countries of shared waterbodies presents a number of hurdles that delay or even prevent action altogether. Among these is the significant investment of resources in project or program preparation, when an Agency needs to bring countries together and help them agree to join forces around difficult issues—as is often the case with scarce freshwater in downstream contexts. This coordination is in itself a great achievement, "but for the GEF it is just the beginning," was the view expressed in several interviews. Because it is not funded, PIF preparation is a risky operation for Agencies, which may tend to give preference to easier, more predictable contexts for action. Setting a limit of 18 months is not sufficient, and not all Agencies have grant funding to cover the costs of PIF preparation. There is consensus among the Agencies that some equivalent of the former project development facility (PDF A) should be considered; many stakeholders agreed that a lack of risk financing for assisting in PIF preparation is a shortcoming of the GEF system.[7] This lack of flexibility reportedly hinders the focal area's ability to work where it would be most needed, as in areas of freshwater conflicts or scarcity, or where upstream/downstream and sovereignty issues are critical (e.g., in Central Asia, South Asia, the Fertile Crescent, and Central America). Policies would need to be changed or adjusted to enable international waters projects to work in water conflict areas step by step, including overcoming barriers to cooperation through national projects.

[7] This might be one of the reasons for the slow or no response to new strategic objectives that require Agencies to build capacity, hire experts, and invest their own resources.

Private sector: not yet a partner

There has traditionally been much interest in involving the private sector in international waters initiatives both as a major stakeholder in water resources and as a source of additional funding. The results to date have not been encouraging, however. At its recent International Waters Conference in Sri Lanka in 2016, IW:LEARN explored ways to further and deepen the relationship between international waters–funded projects and the private sector. Changing private sector behavior is also the focus of new initiatives in the fisheries sector. According to interviews, efforts are being made to engage with the beverage industry in addressing resource constraints along its supply chains; this is an issue that most global players have begun to identify as a threat to sustainable long-term investment.

Projects involving areas beyond national jurisdiction are potentially a good example of private sector engagement, together with a medium-size project linking private sector and coastal management plans, reconciling the needs of the industry with the needs of ecosystems (PEMSEA).

It should also be noted that accepting private sector funding can be problematic, as the GEF can only receive funding from the private sector as project cofinancing, or in establishing trust funds.

Participation in the partnership

All Agency representatives interviewed in this study called for a revitalization of the partnership and greater participation in developing strategies. They note that there is much capacity within the GEF partnership that is not being utilized. Agencies reported that they are not involved in any kind of strategic planning. Further, with the expansion of the GEF partnership and the addition of new Agencies, the dynamics of the International Waters Task Force have changed and it has had to adjust its coordination functions accordingly.

The present large number of GEF Agencies—while expanding the experience, know-how, and networks from which to draw inspiration and opportunities for action—challenges the capacity of the system to act synergistically. This is particularly true for international waters, a focal area not guided by the priorities of a specific convention. Lack of Agency participation in the definition of focal area strategies may be another reason for the slow—at times, perfunctory—response to the strategic directions indicated by the Secretariat.

4: Concluding remarks and issues for consideration

This study has attempted to present a picture of the past achievements, present engagement, and future potential; and the assets, problems, and constraints of the international waters focal area. It was based on a review of the evolution of the focal area strategies over time, evaluative evidence, an analysis of the portfolio and terminal evaluations and interviews with 43 stakeholders from the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Agencies, the STAP, external executing agencies, convention and basin commission secretariats, and managers of GEF projects.

4.1 Concluding remarks

- After 25 years of operation, 296 projects approved and $1.68 billion in grant funding disbursed, the international waters focal area of the GEF is widely recognized as an **important global player in promoting multicountry cooperation** over shared freshwater and marine water resources. Its relevance to contemporary challenges remains strong, and the effectiveness of its investments and methods—and of its uniquely successful IW:LEARN mechanism—has been demonstrated.
- New developments have further reinforced the **relevance of the focal area** and provided a strengthened policy framework for the development of its activities:
  - The agreement, reached in September 2015, on the SDGs for 2030, which cover targets on freshwater resources, including transboundary cooperation, and on the protection of marine resources
  - The enforcement of the 1997 UN International Watercourses Convention, and the opening to global adoption of the 1992 UNECE Water Convention
  - The process of integration among the three major environmental conventions, including common comprehensive SDG indicators, indirectly related to water

  These landmark developments reflect growing international concern over water security and on the health and productivity of the oceans and seas.
- **Focal area disbursements have remained approximately constant** since the mid-1990s at comparatively low levels and decreasing in absolute terms. Recommendations in previous GEF OPSs calling for an expansion of international waters funding have not been implemented. Addressing new emerging challenges, facilitating cooperation in new transboundary waterbodies, the SDG process, and the global water policy framework suggest the need to revisit the resource envelope for the focal area.

- **Marine resources and oceans** have received by far the largest share of international waters resources, well over those dedicated to freshwater issues. **Fisheries** are now the most subscribed theme of international waters interventions, with 66 projects and $466 million in grant funding from the GEF, or 28 percent of the GEF's total international waters grants allocation. The trend toward increasing funding to the less contentious marine issues—not called for by the well-balanced GEF-4, GEF-5, and GEF-6 international waters strategies, nor encouraged by the OPSs—began in 2008 and continues to this day. Given the constantly modest level of international waters funding, the growth of the marine portfolio occurs at the detriment of other no less important—and indeed possibly more pressing—priority themes in the freshwater domain. This evident and growing imbalance in the international waters portfolio calls for attention, as it might jeopardize the ability of the GEF to assist countries facing the challenges, tensions, and dramatic choices posed by climatic variability and water scarcity affecting vulnerable populations.

4.2 Emerging issues

Several issues emerged during the study and were recurrent themes in the interviews conducted. These touch on internal policy reforms that may bring about improvements in the performance of the international waters focal area in responding to present challenges to sustainable development.

- Include an **expanded explanation of strategic fit** in project concepts, as well as a section illustrating project adherence to existing regional and global agreements, and its contribution to implementation of their provisions and achievement of the SDGs.
- Apply **more flexibility in considering the best ways to create an enabling environment** for cooperation in areas of higher water stress or political transboundary tensions. Support should not be denied to those countries willing to cooperate, and a step-by-step approach should be adopted to bring all countries to the table.
- The **history and achievements of completed projects, together with the experiences gained and lessons learned from them, should be fully captured** in a final report produced by the project team.
- The design of all projects, including those not following the international waters TDA-SAP approach, should make an effort to **produce science-based baseline conditions and related simple and measurable indicators**. The description of the baseline and indicator logic could be part of project concepts, to be detailed quantitatively at project endorsement stage.
- Support and attention should be given to a **new generation of TDAs** planned as part of the ongoing phase of IW:LEARN. The design should adopt a systemic approach and involve multiple focal areas; unravel water nexus conflicts under climate scenarios; and incorporate the social and economic local, national, and regional dimensions; and gender equality conditions based on sex-disaggregated data.
- Ensure sufficient time and support to **build capacity for action on new priority areas**. Innovations and improvements in terms of the relevance introduced in international waters strategies should either be permanent or be allowed to develop their impacts on the portfolio for an extended period of time beyond the four-year duration of a replenishment cycle. Time, and investment in capacity, is needed for countries and Agencies to absorb and develop

an understanding and ownership of newly introduced practices and fields of action.

- **No new themes should be added without a concurrent increase in the focal area allocation**. One way to prepare the ground for action on new priority themes in terms of resources and capacity would be to start by funding a project—possibly of a multifocal area nature—to assess the characteristics, needs, global relevance, and focal area implications of any new priority, and thus provide solid elements for decision making and resource planning. A review of GEF international waters action on oceans and ice melting would be required based on the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Climate Change and the Oceans and the Cryosphere due in 2019.
- Consideration should be given to **providing financial support for the preparation of PIFs and PFDs in complex, multicountry contexts** such as those characterizing many international waters projects, in particular foundational ones.

To foster integration within the GEF, and to better coordinate with STAR programming as called for in international waters SAPs, the following measures could be considered:

- Invite representatives of the GEF focal areas and of the major global conventions to **react to proposed international waters strategic priorities well in advance of their adoption**.
- Introduce in future international waters strategies a **reference to the points of view of the various conventions and to shared priorities**, paving the way for consultations on major international waters initiatives at the national level with convention focal points.
- Consider **application of the comprehensive set of SDG indicators** of land cover, land productivity, and carbon stocks in international waters programmatic approaches, as these are being considered for adoption by all three major multilateral environmental agreements.
- Promote dialogue with countries, relevant conventions, focal areas, and donors on the establishment of **priority environmental status indicators** as part of foundational international waters projects. This effort could be associated with the periodic updating of TDAs.

Annex A: Stakeholders interviewed

A.1 GEF Secretariat

Anil Bruce Sookdeo, Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Coordinator

Astrid Hillers, Senior Environmental Specialist

Christian Severin, International Waters Focal Area Coordinator

Claude Gascon, Manager, Program Unit

Cyrille Frederic Marie Barnerias, Senior Environmental Specialist

David Rodgers, Climate Change Mitigation Focal Area Coordinator

Gustavo Fonseca, Director, Program Unit

Herbert Acquay, Manager, Policy, Partnerships and Operations

Leah Karrer, Senior Environmental Specialist

Steffen Hansen, Environmental Specialist

Mohammed Bakarr, Lead Environmental Specialist

A.2 STAP

Jakob Granit, Former Panel Member, International Waters

Lev Neretin, Program Officer

Rosina Bierbaum, STAP Chairperson

Thomas Hammond, STAP Secretary

A.3 GEF Agencies

Adriana Dinu, GEF Executive Coordinator, United Nations Development Programme

Alexandra Ortega, GEF Technical Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank

Andrew Hume, Director, GEF Agency, World Wildlife Fund

Andrew Hudson, Head, Water & Ocean Governance Programme, United Nations Development Programme

Christopher Warner, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, World Bank

Donna Spenser, CReW Project, Inter-American Development Bank

Isabelle Van der Beck, GEF International Waters Portfolio Manager, United Nations Environment Programme

Johanna Polsenberg, Director, Ocean Health Index, Conservation International

Karin Shepardson, GEF Executive Coordinator, World Bank

Michael Collins, GEF Coordinator, Inter-American Development Bank

Miguel Morales, Vice President/Managing Director, CI-GEF Project Agency, Conservation International

Paula Caballero, Senior Director, World Bank

Tehmina Akhtar, SGP Deputy Global Manager, United Nations Development Programme

A.4 Executing agencies

Andres Sanchez, Economist, Organization of American States

Cletus Springer, Director, Department of Sustainable Development, Organization of American States

A.5 Other partners

Francesca Bernardini, Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Water Convention

Ivan Zavadsky, Executive Secretary, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River

Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

A.6 International waters project managers

Alejandro Peyrou, Director, Intergovernmental Coordination Committee of the Plata River Basin, Plata Basin Framework Project

Birane Sambe, Regional Coordinator, Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem Project, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/United Nations Environment Programme

Daniel Nzyuko, Regional Project Coordinator, United Nations Environment Programme/ United Nations Development Programme/ GEF Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS Integrated Water Resources Management Project

Lorenzo Galbiati, Project Manager, MedPartnership project, United Nations Environment Programme MAP

Mohamed Bazza, Project Manager, Groundwater Governance, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Novak Cadjenovic, Project Coordinator, Lake Skader-Shkoder Integrated Ecosystem Management Project, World Bank

Osman Mustafa Ahmed, Project Counterpart, Director of Nile Groundwater Basin, Sudan Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Electricity

Patrick M. Debels, Regional Project Coordinator, Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project, United Nations Office for Project Services

Silvia Raffaelli, International Technical Coordinator, La Plata Basin Framework Project, United Nations Environment Programme–Organization of American States

Viktor Subotić, Senior Advisor, Lake Skader-Shkoder Integrated Ecosystem Management Project, World Bank

Annex B: GEF programs with international waters components, as of June 2016

GEF ID	Program category[a]	Focal area	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[b]	
							GEF	Co-financing
1014	Parent	IW	R	WB	Danube/Black Sea Basin Strategic Partnership on Nutrient Reduction, Tranche I	GEF-2	79.00	308.58
1094	Phased	IW	R	WB/UNDP	Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project, Tranche 1	GEF-2	17.15	93.70
2093	Parent	IW	R	WB	SP-SFIF: Strategic Partnership for a Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund in the Large Marine Ecosystems of Sub-Saharan Africa (Tranche 1, Installment 1)	GEF-3	29.27	160.64
2454	Parent	IW	R	WB	World Bank/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the Large Marine Ecosystems of East Asia (Tranche 1 of 3 tranches)	GEF-3	35.70	701.57
2584	Phased	IW	R	WB	Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project (NTEAP), Phase II	GEF-4	6.70	71.99
2601	Parent	MF	G	WB	World Bank-GEF Investment Fund for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Partnership, Tranche 1, 1st Allocation	GEF-3	27.00	0.14
3420	Parent	MF	R	WB	PAS GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	GEF-4	10.00	57.26
3423	Parent	MF	G	IFAD/ UNIDO/ UNDP/ UNEP/ WB	MENARID Integrated Nature Resources Management in the Middle East and North Africa Region	GEF-4	11.00	30.11
3647	Parent	MF	R	ADB/ UNDP/ FAO/ WB	CTI The Coral Triangle Initiative	GEF-4	21.84	132.06
3977	Parent	IW	G	WB	MED Mediterranean Environmental Sustainable Development Program (Sustainable MED)	GEF-4	31.29	133.17
4487	Parent	IW	R	WB	LME-AF Strategic Partnership for Sustainable Fisheries Management in the Large Marine Ecosystems in Africa	GEF-5	25.00	135.00
4580	Parent	MF	G	FAO/ UNEP/ WB	ABNJ Global Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction	GEF-5	26.13	128.15
4635	Parent	MF	R	WB	LME-EA Scaling Up Partnership Investments for Sustainable Development of the Large Marine Ecosystems of East Asia and their Coasts	GEF-5	23.75	398.69

GEF ID	Program category[a]	Focal area	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[b]	
							GEF	Co-financing
4664	Parent	MF	N	UNEP	Arctic GEF-Russian Federation Partnership on Sustainable Environmental Management in the Arctic under a Rapidly Changing Climate (Arctic Agenda 2020)	GEF-5	7.17	85.96
4680	Parent	MF	R	AfDB	LCB-NREE: Lake Chad Basin Regional Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Energy Efficiency	GEF-5	6.42	53.41
4936	Parent	IW	R	UNDP	EAS Reducing Pollution and Rebuilding Degraded Marine Resources in the East Asian Seas through Implementation of Intergovernmental Agreements and Catalyzed Investments	GEF-5	20.06	343.91
5395	Parent	MF	R	UNDP/ UNEP/FAO	R2R- Pacific Islands Ridge-to-Reef National Priorities – Integrated Water, Land, Forest and Coastal Management to Preserve Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services, Store Carbon, Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods	GEF-5	11.24	59.95
9060	Parent	MF	G	FAO/ WWF-US/ UNDP/ WB/CI/ UNEP	CFI: Coastal Fisheries Initiative	GEF-6	26.41	159.06
9433	Parent	MF	N	WWF-US/ WB	S3MR Sustainable Management of Madagascar's Marine Resources	GEF-6	6.42	23.00

SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

NOTE: Focal areas: IW = international waters; MF = multifocal. Scope: G = global; N = national; R = regional. GEF Agencies: ADB = Asian Development Bank; AfDB = African Development Bank; CI = Conservation International; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IFAD = International Fund for Agricultural Development; UNDP = United Nations Environment Programme; UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme; UNIDO = United Nations Industrial Development Organization; WB = World Bank; WWF-US = World Wildlife Fund–US.

a. For program categories and definitions, see GEF IEO (2016).

b. GEF funding includes GEF grant and project preparation grant (PPG). For multifocal area programs, the amount recorded here reflects the international waters portion of the grant and a weighted proportion of the PPG, based on the GEF grant's international waters funding. Cofinancing for multifocal area programs includes only cofinancing for the international waters component of the program.

Annex C: GEF projects with international waters components, as of June 2016

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
14	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Regionally-Based Assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances	GEF-2	3.00	1.69
59	IW	FSP	R	WB	Ship-Generated Waste Management	Pilot	13.02	38.00
68	IW	FSP	R	WB	Oil Pollution Management Project for the Southwest Mediterranean Sea	Pilot	19.10	1.74
72	IW	FSP	N	WB	Gulf of Aqaba Environmental Action Plan	GEF-1	3.00	8.97
73	IW	FSP	R	WB	Water and Environmental Management in the Aral Sea Basin	GEF-1	12.53	9.00
88	IW	FSP	R	WB	Lake Victoria Environmental Management	GEF-1	36.80	42.60
113	IW	FSP	R	WB	Lake Ohrid Management	GEF-1	4.41	21.27
176	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Strategic Action Programme for the Binational Basin of the Bermejo River	GEF-1	3.22	2.74
340	IW	FSP	G	UNEP/ UNDP/WB	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme(SAP) for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden	GEF-1	19.34	17.65
341	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Developing the Implementation of the Black Sea Strategic Action Plan	GEF-1	1.84	0.13
342	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Developing the Danube River Basin Pollution Reduction Programme	GEF-1	4.19	9.80
392	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Support for Regional Oceans Training Programmes	Pilot	2.58	0.88
393	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Water Pollution Control and Biodiversity Conservation in the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem (LME)	Pilot	6.00	0.51
394	IW	FSP	N	UNDP	Protection of Marine Ecosystems of the Red Sea Coast	Pilot	2.80	0.00
395	IW	FSP	N	UNDP	Lake Manzala Engineered Wetlands	Pilot	5.26	6.63
396	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Prevention and Management of Marine Pollution in the East Asian Seas	Pilot	8.03	3.40
397	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Black Sea Environmental Management	Pilot	9.30	23.30
398	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Pollution Control and Other Measures to Protect Biodiversity in Lake Tanganyika	Pilot	10.00	0.00
399	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Danube River Basin Environmental Management	Pilot	8.50	35.00
405	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Black Sea Environmental Management	Pilot	0.69	0.04
459	IW	FSP	N	WB	Coastal Contamination Prevention and Sustainable Fisheries Management	GEF-1	8.70	28.41

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
460	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Preparation of A Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Dnieper River Basin and Development of SAP Implementation Mechanisms	GEF-1	7.26	7.26
461	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Determination of Priority Actions for the Further Elaboration and Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Mediterranean Sea	GEF-1	6.29	5.93
462	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Preparation of A Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) for the Tumen River Area, Its Coastal Regions and Related Northeast Asian Environs	GEF-1	5.20	2.15
514	IW	MSP	G	UNEP	The Role of the Coastal Ocean in the Disturbed and Undisturbed Nutrient and Carbon Cycles	GEF-2	0.72	0.46
530	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of the Pacific Small Island Developing States	GEF-2	12.29	8.12
531	IW	FSP	N	WB	Rural Environmental Project	GEF-2	3.00	13.40
532	IW	FSP	G	UNDP/WB	Strengthening Capacity for Global Knowledge-Sharing in International Waters	GEF-2	5.41	6.18
533	IW	FSP	R	WB	Western Indian Ocean Islands Oil Spill Contingency Planning	GEF-2	3.50	1.49
583	IW	FSP	N	UNEP	Integrated Watershed Management Program for the Pantanal and Upper Paraguay River Basin	GEF-2	6.62	9.79
584	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA)	GEF-2	6.79	6.67
585	IW	FSP	R	WB	Wider Caribbean Initiative for Ship-Generated Waste	Pilot	5.78	0.00
586	IW	FSP	N	UNEP	Integrated Management of Land-Based Activities in the São Francisco Basin	GEF-2	4.77	17.44
587	IW	FSP	N	WB	Ship Waste Disposal	Pilot	30.00	34.80
596	IW	FSP	G	UNDP/ UNEP/WB	Addressing Transboundary Environmental Issues in the Caspian Environment Programme (Phase I)	GEF-2	8.74	11.25
597	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Building Partnerships for the Environmental Protection and Management of the East Asian Seas	GEF-2	16.22	12.32
610	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Removal of Barriers to the Effective Implementation of Ballast Water Control and Management Measures in Developing Countries	GEF-2	7.61	2.80
612	IW	MSP	G	WB	World Water Vision - Water and Nature	GEF-2	0.70	13.15
613	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Environmental Protection of the Rio de la Plata and Its Maritime Front: Pollution Prevention and Control and Habitat Restoration	GEF-2	6.01	4.75
614	IW	FSP	R	UNDP/ UNEP	Demonstrations of Innovative Approaches to the Rehabilitation of Heavily Contaminated Bays in the Wider Caribbean	GEF-2	9.41	25.85
615	IW	FSP	R	WB	Mekong River Basin Water Utilization Project	GEF-2	11.35	5.30
633	IW	FSP	N	WB	Agricultural Research, Extension, Training (ARET) Project	GEF-2	2.50	9.92
767	IW	FSP	R	UNDP/WB	Reversal of Land and Water Degradation Trends in the Lake Chad Basin Ecosystem	GEF-2	10.29	9.33

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
789	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) Toward Achievement of the Integrated Management of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (LME)	GEF-2	15.46	23.56
790	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Reducing Environmental Stress in the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem	GEF-2	14.74	10.21
791	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Formulation of a Strategic Action Program for the Integrated Management of Water Resources and the Sustainable Development of the San Juan River Basin and its Coastal Zone	GEF-2	3.93	1.43
806	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Building Environmental Citizenship to Support Transboundary Pollution Reduction in the Danube: A Pilot Project	GEF-2	0.75	0.83
807	IW	MSP	N	UNEP	Persistent Toxic Substances, Food Security, and Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North	GEF-2	0.75	2.01
842	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Environmental Protection and Sustainable Management of the Okavango River Basin	GEF-2	5.77	1.86
849	IW	MSP	R	UNEP	Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment in Sub-Saharan Africa	GEF-2	0.75	0.98
867	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Transfer of Environmentally-sound Technology (TEST) to Reduce Transboundary Pollution in the Danube River Basin	GEF-2	0.99	1.41
884	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Reduction of Environmental Impact from Tropical Shrimp Trawling through Introduction of By-catch Technologies and Change of Management	GEF-2	4.78	4.37
885	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand	GEF-2	16.75	17.64
886	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Implementation of Strategic Action Program for the Bermejo River Binational Basin: Phase II	GEF-2	11.04	8.73
922	IW	FSP	R	WB	Baltic Sea Regional Project, Tranche 1	GEF-2	5.85	6.62
963	IW	FSP	R	IDB	Environmental Protection and Maritime Transport Pollution Control in the Gulf of Honduras	GEF-3	5.35	6.50
970	IW	FSP	R	WB	Groundwater and Drought Management in SADC	GEF-3	7.35	6.12
974	IW	FSP	R	WB	Environmental Protection and Sustainable Integrated Management of the Guarani Aquifer	GEF-2	13.94	13.36
985	IW	MSP	N	UNDP	Developing Renewable Ground Water Resources in Arid Lands: a Pilot Case - the Eastern Desert of Egypt	GEF-2	0.83	1.01
1017	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Partnership Interventions for the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for Lake Tanganyika	GEF-3	14.20	43.50
1032	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Sustainable Management of the Shared Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) and Adjacent Regions	GEF-4	7.73	47.59
1074	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB: Anatolia Watershed Rehabilitation Project - under WB-GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-2	7.30	38.11
1080	MF	FSP	N	WB	Integrated Water and Ecosystems Management Project	GEF-3	2.62	15.13
1082	MF	FSP	R	WB	Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Project - SWIOFP	GEF-3	9.54	17.51

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
1093	IW	FSP	R	WB/UNDP	Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends in the Niger River Basin	GEF-3	13.38	29.64
1094	IW	FSP	R	WB/UNDP	Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project, Tranche 1	GEF-2	17.15	93.70
1109	IW	FSP	R	WB/UNDP	Senegal River Basin Water and Environmental Management Program	GEF-2	7.63	13.95
1111	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area	GEF-3	5.84	11.02
1123	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB: Wetland Restoration and Pollution Reduction Project - under WB-GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-2	7.85	5.78
1159	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB: Agricultural Pollution Control Project - under WB-GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-2	5.45	5.65
1164	IW	FSP	N	UNEP	Support to the National Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment, Tranche 1	GEF-2	6.19	16.98
1188	IW	FSP	R	UNDP/ UNEP	Combating Living Resource Depletion and Coastal Area Degradation in the Guinea Current LME through Ecosystem-based Regional Actions	GEF-3	21.45	43.97
1223	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Removal of Barriers to the Introduction of Cleaner Artisanal Gold Mining and Extraction Technologies	GEF-2	7.12	13.05
1229	IW	FSP	N	WB	EBRD/GEF Environmental Credit Facility (formerly entitled Slovenia: National Pollution Reduction Project)	GEF-3	9.99	45.84
1247	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Addressing Land-based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-LaB)	GEF-3	4.51	6.90
1248	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Reducing Pesticide Run-off to the Caribbean Sea	GEF-2	4.59	5.52
1252	IW	FSP	R	WB/FAO	Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem	GEF-3	12.78	18.91
1254	IW	FSP	R	UNEP/ UNDP	Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management (IWCAM) in the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean	GEF-3	14.39	98.27
1270	IW	FSP	R	WB	Marine Electronic Highway Demonstration	GEF-3	8.77	7.50
1323	IW	FSP	N	WB	Hai River Basin Integrated Water Resources Management	GEF-3	17.35	112.99
1346	IW	FSP	N	UNIDO	Integrated Assessment and Management of the Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem	GEF-4	4.98	95.57
1351	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB Reduction of Nutrient Discharges - under WB-GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-3	12.85	19.47
1353	MF	FSP	N	UNEP	Nature Conservation and Flood Control in the Yangtze River Basin	GEF-3	4.00	22.95
1355	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB Agricultural Pollution Control Project - under WB-GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-2	5.25	5.79
1375	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Reducing Transboundary Degradation in the Kura-Aras Basin	GEF-4	3.62	10.86

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
1420	MF	FSP	R	UNEP	Reducing Dependence on POPs and other Agro-Chemicals in the Senegal and Niger River Basins through Integrated Production, Pest and Pollution Management	GEF-3	2.24	4.46
1426	IW	MSP	N	UNEP	Development and Implementation of Mechanisms to disseminate Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Integrated Transboundary Water Resources Management in Latin America and the Caribbean	GEF-3	0.97	0.67
1444	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Development and Implementation of the Lake Peipsi/Chudskoe Basin Management Plan	GEF-2	1.00	3.78
1460	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin - Phase I (Danube Regional Project Phase 1)	GEF-2	5.35	6.60
1462	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Programme for the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems: Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems Project (ASCLMEs)	GEF-3	12.92	18.47
1531	IW	FSP	G	WB	Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management	GEF-3	11.73	11.30
1537	MF	FSP	R	UNDP	Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin of Albania, FYR-Macedonia and Greece	GEF-3	2.29	8.64
1576	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Demonstrations of Innovative Approaches to the Rehabilitation of Heavily Contaminated Bays in the Wider Caribbean	GEF-1	4.46	16.00
1580	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Control of Eutrophication, Hazardous Substances and Related Measures for Rehabilitating the BLACK SEA Ecosystem: Phase 1	GEF-2	4.35	3.95
1591	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Regional Program of Action and Demonstration of Sustainable Alternatives to DDT for Malaria Vector Control in Mexico and Central America	GEF-2	7.50	6.72
1618	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Towards a Convention and Action Programme for the Protection of the Caspian Sea Environment	GEF-3	6.45	25.80
1661	IW	FSP	R	WB	Danube/Black Sea Strategic Partnership - Nutrient Reduction Investment Fund: Tranche 2	GEF-2	1.75	0.00
1665	IW	MSP	G	WB	Towards a Lake Basin Management Initiative and a Contribution to the Third World Water Forum: Sharing Experiences and Early Lessons in GEF and non-GEF Lake Basin Management Projects	GEF-3	0.97	1.25
1851	IW	MSP	R	UNEP	Protection of the North West Sahara Aquifer System (NWSAS) and related humid zones and ecosystems	GEF-3	0.60	0.82
1889	IW	FSP	N	WB	Hazard Risk Mitigation and Emergency Preparedness Project	GEF-3	7.35	11.18
1893	IW	FSP	G	UNDP/ WB/UNEP	Strengthening Global Capacity to Sustain Transboundary Waters: The International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN), Operational Phase	GEF-3	6.63	5.52
1909	IW	FSP	R	FAO	Protection of the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (LME)	GEF-4	8.79	17.81

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
2020	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Formulation of an Action Programme for the Integrated Management of the Shared Nubian Aquifer	GEF-3	1.00	6.95
2041	IW	MSP	R	UNEP	Managing Hydrogeological Risk in the Iullemeden Aquifer System	GEF-3	0.96	0.78
2042	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Strengthening the Implementation Capacities for Nutrient Reduction and Transboundary Cooperation in the Danube River Basin (Tranche 2)	GEF-3	12.24	12.88
2044	IW	FSP	R	WB	Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea - World Bank-GEF Nutrient Reduction Investment Fund: Tranche 3	GEF-3	0.00	237.18
2095	MF	FSP	R	UNEP	Sustainable Management of the Water Resources of the la Plata Basin with Respect to the Effects of Climate Variability and Change	GEF-4	10.39	51.03
2098	IW	FSP	R	WB	Western Indian Ocean Marine Highway Development and Coastal and Marine Contamination Prevention Project	GEF-3	11.70	15.00
2101	MF	FSP	N	WB	Marine and Coastal Environment Management Project (MACEMP)	GEF-3	5.37	52.75
2129	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Demonstrating and Capturing Best Practices and Technologies for the Reduction of Land-sourced Impacts Resulting from Coastal Tourism	GEF-3	6.01	23.46
2131	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project	GEF-3	11.64	79.09
2132	MF	FSP	R	WB	WB-GEF MED Neretva and Trebisnjica Management Project - under Investment Fund for the Mediterranean Sea LME Partnership	GEF-3	6.32	9.86
2133	IW	FSP	R	WB	Lake Skader-Shkoder Integrated Ecosystem Management	GEF-4	5.00	15.21
2135	IW	FSP	N	WB	Guangdong - Pearl River Delta Urban Environment	GEF-3	10.00	432.38
2138	IW	FSP	R	WB	Livestock Waste Management in East Asia	GEF-3	7.70	17.01
2141	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB Reduction of Enterprise Nutrient Discharges Project - RENDR - under WB-GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-3	9.37	13.12
2143	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB Water Quality Protection Project - under WB-GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-3	8.90	11.37
2188	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	East Asian Seas Region: Development and Implementation of Public Private Partnerships in Environmental Investments	GEF-3	1.00	0.81
2261	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Building Partnerships to Assist Developing Countries to Reduce the Transfer of Harmful Aquatic Organisms in Ships' Ballast Water (GloBallast Partnerships)	GEF-4	6.39	17.70
2263	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Control of Eutrophication, Hazardous Substances and Related Measures for Rehabilitating the Black Sea Ecosystem: Tranche 2	GEF-3	6.00	5.33
2364	MF	FSP	R	UNEP	Integrated and Sustainable Management of Transboundary Water Resources in the Amazon River Basin Considering Climate Variability and Climate Change	GEF-4	5.50	32.03

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
2405	IW	MSP	R	WB	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program Development for the Lake Victoria Basin	GEF-3	1.00	5.60
2474	IW	MSP	G	UNEP	Promoting Ecosystem-based Approaches to Fisheries Conservation and LMEs	GEF-3	1.00	0.74
2517	MF	FSP	R	IDB	Sustainable Environmental Management for Sixaola River Basin	GEF-3	2.17	10.11
2544	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Implementation of The Dnipro Basin Strategic Action Program for the reduction of persistent toxics pollution	GEF-4	2.74	7.81
2571	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Distance Learning and Information Sharing Tool for the Benguela Coastal Areas (DLIST-Benguela)	GEF-3	0.77	0.80
2584	IW	FSP	R	WB	Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project (NTEAP), Phase II	GEF-4	6.70	71.99
2586	IW	FSP	R	UNDP/ UNEP	PAS: Implementing Sustainable Integrated Water Resource and Wastewater Management in the Pacific Island Countries - under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	GEF-4	9.75	90.58
2600	MF	FSP	G	UNEP	Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem-Regional Component: Implementation of Agreed Actions for the Protection of the Environmental Resources of the Mediterranean Sea and Its Coastal Areas	GEF-4	10.53	28.33
2602	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF MED: Alexandria Coastal Zone Management Project (ACZM)	GEF-4	7.50	647.00
2617	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Establishment of a Basin Management Framework for the Integrated Management for the Tisza Transboundary River Basin	GEF-4	1.00	0.93
2631	MF	FSP	N	IFAD	MENARID: Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Water Management Practices	GEF-4	1.52	5.11
2632	MF	FSP	N	IFAD	MENARID: Participatory Control of Desertification and Poverty Reduction in the Arid and Semi Arid High Plateau Ecosystems of Eastern Morocco	GEF-4	1.06	3.18
2700	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Implementation of Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA)	GEF-4	11.58	33.37
2701	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Development and Adoption of a Strategic Action Program for Balancing Water Uses and Sustainable Natural Resource Management in the Orange-Senqu River Transboundary Basin	GEF-4	7.00	32.06
2706	IW	FSP	G	UNEP/ UNDP	Implementing Integrated Water Resource and Wastewater Management in Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS	GEF-4	9.99	39.42
2722	IW	MSP	G	UNEP	Fostering a Global Dialogue on Oceans, Coasts, and SIDS, and on Freshwater-Coastal-Marine Interlinkages	GEF-3	0.99	1.12
2732	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	MENARID: Institutional Strengthening and Coherence for Integrated Natural Resources Management	GEF-4	0.75	2.66
2746	IW	MSP	G	UNDP	Promoting Replication of Good Practices for Nutrient Reduction and Joint Collaboration in Central and Eastern Europe	GEF-4	1.00	1.40

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
2750	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB-GEF POL Ningbo Water and Environment Project - under WB/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the LME of East Asia	GEF-3	5.35	140.10
2758	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF POL: Coastal Cities Environment and Sanitation Project - under WB/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the LME of East Asia	GEF-3	5.35	21.68
2759	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF POL: Manila Third Sewerage Project (MTSP) - under WB/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the LME of East Asia	GEF-3	5.35	87.81
2860	IW	FSP	N	UNEP	Regional Framework for Sustainable Use of the Rio Bravo	GEF-4	4.16	10.31
2864	IW	MSP	N	UNDP	Accruing Multiple Global Benefits through Integrated Water Resources Management/ Water Use Efficiency Planning: A Demonstration Project for Sub-Saharan Africa	GEF-4	1.00	11.82
2929	MF	FSP	R	UNDP	Reducing Conflicting Water Uses in the Artibonite River Basin through Development and Adoption of a Multi-focal Area Strategic Action Programme	GEF-4	1.66	3.15
2970	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB: Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project-under the WB-GEF Investment Fund for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-3	5.50	76.10
2972	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF POL: Liaoning Medium Cities Infrastructure - under WB/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the LME of East Asia	GEF-3	5.35	187.70
2979	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF POL: Second Shandong Environment - under WB/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the LME of East Asia	GEF-3	5.35	201.50
3025	IW	FSP	R	WB	World Bank/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the Large Marine Ecosystems of East Asia (Tranche 1, 2nd Installment)	GEF-4	0.00	0.06
3128	IW	MSP	N	UNEP	Integrated Water Resources Management of the São Francisco River Basin and Its Coastal Zone	GEF-4	1.00	4.79
3138	IW	MSP	G	UNDP	Applying an Ecosystem-based Approach to Fisheries Management: Focus on Seamounts in the Southern Indian Ocean	GEF-4	1.00	4.76
3148	IW	FSP	N	WB	DBSB Agricultural Pollution Control Project - under the Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River and Black Sea	GEF-3	5.00	15.00
3181	IW	MSP	G	UNDP	Pollution Reduction through Improved Municipal Wastewater Management in Coastal Cities in ACP Countries with a Focus on SIDS	GEF-3	1.00	1.20
3187	IW	MSP	N	UNEP	Demonstration of Sustainable Management of Coral Reef Resources in the Coastal Waters of Ninh Hai District, Ninh Thuan Province, Viet Nam	GEF-4	0.41	0.53

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
3188	IW	MSP	N	UNEP	Demonstration of Community-based Management of Seagrass Habitats in Trikora Beach East Bintan, Riau Archipelago Province, Indonesia	GEF-4	0.40	0.39
3223	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF POL: Shanghai Agricultural and Non-Point Pollution Reduction project (SANPR) - under WB/GEF Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in the LME of East Asia	GEF-4	5.00	29.89
3229	IW	FSP	G	WB	World Bank-GEF Investment Fund for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Partnership, Tranche 1, 2nd Installment	GEF-4	0.91	0.00
3271	IW	MSP	R	WB	SP-SFIF Regional Activities of the Strategic Partnership for a Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund in the Large Marine Ecosystems of Sub Saharan Africa - Tranche 1	GEF-3	1.00	0.33
3305	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Implementation of the Benguela Current LME Action Program for Restoring Depleted Fisheries and Reducing Coastal Resources Degradation	GEF-4	5.45	68.95
3309	IW	MSP	N	UNEP	Participatory Planning and Implementation in the Management of Shantou Intertidal Wetland	GEF-4	0.40	0.52
3313	IW	FSP	N	WB	SP-SFIF: Kenya Coastal Development Project	GEF-3	5.22	36.47
3314	IW	FSP	N	WB	SP-SFIF: Sustainable Management of Fish Resources - under the Strategic Partnership for a Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund in the Large Marine Ecosystems of Sub-Saharan Africa	GEF-3	6.26	18.90
3321	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Mainstreaming Groundwater Considerations into the Integrated Management of the Nile River Basin	GEF-4	1.00	2.89
3340	IW	MSP	G	UNDP	Good Practices and Portfolio Learning in Transboundary Freshwater and Marine Legal and Institutional Frameworks	GEF-4	1.00	1.21
3341	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Regional Dialogue and Twinning to Improve Transboundary Water Resources Governance in Africa	GEF-4	1.00	1.92
3342	IW	MSP	G	UNEP	Development of Methodologies for GEF Transboundary Waters Assessment	GEF-4	0.99	1.31
3343	IW	MSP	G	UNEP	Enhancing the Use of Science in International Waters Projects to Improve Project Results	GEF-4	1.00	1.03
3398	MF	FSP	R	WB	SIP: Eastern Nile Transboundary Watershed Management in Support of ENSAP Implementation	GEF-4	2.70	8.29
3399	MF	FSP	R	WB	SIP: Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project II	GEF-4	6.02	90.09
3401	MF	FSP	R	UNEP	SIP: Equatorial Africa Deposition Network (EADN)	GEF-4	1.03	1.70
3519	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Reducing and Preventing Land-based Pollution in the Rio de la Plata/Maritime Front through Implementation of the FrePlata Strategic Action Programme	GEF-4	3.00	14.59
3522	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	CTI Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action Programme (ATSEA) - under the Coral Triangle Initiative	GEF-4	2.65	6.25
3523	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	CTI West Pacific-East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project - under the Coral Triangle Initiative	GEF-4	1.00	3.67

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
3524	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	CTI Sulu-Celebes Sea Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SCS)	GEF-4	2.98	3.23
3558	IW	FSP	R	WB	SP-SFIF: West Africa Regional Fisheries Program (WARFP)	GEF-3	10.45	46.00
3559	IW	FSP	R	WB	Strategic Partnership for a Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund in the Large Marine Ecosystems of Sub-Saharan Africa (Tranche 1, Installment 2)	GEF-4	5.60	0.00
3589	MF	FSP	R	ADB	CTI Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle: Southeast Asia under Coral Triangle Initiative	GEF-4	2.09	5.16
3591	MF	FSP	R	ADB	PAS: Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific - under the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Program	GEF-4	3.00	5.33
3619	IW	FSP	R	FAO	CTI Strategies for Fisheries Bycatch Management	GEF-4	3.20	8.22
3620	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	The Caspian Sea: Restoring Depleted Fisheries and Consolidation of a Permanent Regional Environmental Governance Framework	GEF-4	5.00	42.64
3639	IW	FSP	G	UNDP/ ADB	CTI GEF IW: LEARN: Portfolio Learning in International Waters with a Focus on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands and Regional Asia/Pacific and Coral Triangle Learning Processes - under the Coral Triangle Initiative	GEF-4	2.94	3.03
3645	IW	MSP	R	UNEP	MENARID: Reducing Risks to the Sustainable Management of the North West Sahara Aquifer System (NWSAS)	GEF-4	1.00	2.27
3669	MF	FSP	N	WB	MENARID: Second Natural Resources Management Project	GEF-4	4.55	27.06
3690	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Protection and Sustainable Use of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System	GEF-4	2.36	3.40
3725	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF MED: Coastal Cities Pollution Control (APL 2)	GEF-3	6.40	196.00
3726	IW	FSP	G	FAO	Groundwater Governance: A Global Framework for Country Action	GEF-4	1.75	2.70
3749	MF	FSP	R	UNDP	Towards Ecosystem Management of the Humboldt Current Large Marine Ecosystem	GEF-4	3.14	11.04
3766	IW	FSP	R	IDB	Testing a Prototype Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CReW)	GEF-4	20.38	251.70
3809	IW	FSP	G	WB	Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Strategic Ecosystem Management	GEF-4	3.10	15.89
3900	IW	FSP	G	UNDP/ UNEP	MENARID: GEF IW LEARN: Strengthening IW Portfolio Delivery and Impact	GEF-4	4.32	5.20
3924	MF	FSP	G	WB	Development Market Place 2009: Adaptation to Climate Change (DM 2009)	GEF-4	0.20	0.48
3974	IW	FSP	N	WB	MED: Tunisia Northern Tunis Wastewater Project	GEF-4	8.03	60.60
3978	IW	FSP	G	WB	MED: Regional Coordination on Improved Water Resources Management and Capacity Building Horizontal Adaptable Programmatic Programme (H-APL)(TA)	GEF-4	5.64	13.87
3980	MF	FSP	N	ADB	CTI Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management Sector	GEF-4	1.86	101.29

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
3990	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	MED: Integration of Climatic Variability and Change into National Strategies to Implement the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean	GEF-4	2.45	6.18
3991	IW	FSP	N	WB	MED: Enhanced Water Resources Management	GEF-4	6.68	28.12
4001	IW	FSP	G	WB	MED: Sustainable Governance and Knowledge Generation	GEF-4	3.10	4.40
4027	IW	MSP	G	WB	Global Partnership with Fisheries Industry for the Sustainability of Living Aquatic Resources	GEF-4	1.00	2.98
4029	MF	FSP	G	UNDP	Integrated Natural Resource Management in the Baikal Basin Transboundary Ecosystem	GEF-4	2.75	33.25
4092	IW	FSP	N	WB	WB/GEF POL: Huai River Basin Marine Pollution Reduction	GEF-4	5.00	32.83
4198	IW	FSP	N	WB	MED: Integrated Coastal Zone Management-Mediterranean Coast	GEF-4	5.38	20.00
4212	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Global Foundations For Reducing Nutrient Enrichment and ODFLB Pollution in Support of GNC	GEF-4	1.80	2.40
4256	MF	MSP	G	UNEP	Making Ocean Life Count	GEF-4	0.65	10.30
4280	IW	FSP	N	WB	SP-SFIF: West Africa Regional Fisheries Program APL B1	GEF-3	2.00	6.10
4343	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	EAS: Implementation of the Yellow Sea LME Strategic Action Programme for Adaptive Ecosystem-Based Management	GEF-5	7.56	225.48
4452	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Standardized Methodologies for Carbon Accounting and Ecosystem Services Valuation of Blue Forests	GEF-5	4.58	23.27
4483	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Enabling Trans-boundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Extended Drin River Basin	GEF-5	4.60	221.83
4489	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	A Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme: Aquifers, Lake/Reservoir Basins, River Basins, Large Marine Ecosystems, and Open Ocean to Catalyze Sound Environmental Management	GEF-5	5.14	31.86
4528	IW	FSP	N	WB	West Africa Regional Fisheries Program in Ghana	GEF-4	3.50	51.30
4533	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Development of Tools to Incorporate Impacts of Climatic Variability and Change in Particular Floods and Droughts into Basin Planning Processes	GEF-5	4.28	22.46
4581	MF	FSP	G	FAO	Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)	GEF-5	21.30	116.7
4582	MF	MSP	G	FAO	ABNJ: Strengthening Global Capacity to Effectively Manage Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)	GEF-5	0.49	2.27
4658	IW	FSP	N	UNDP	Integrated Adaptive Management of the West Bering Sea Large Marine Ecosystem in a Changing Climate	GEF-5	3.36	10.08

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
4659	MF	FSP	N	WB	LME-EA: Coastal Resources for Sustainable Development: Mainstreaming the Application of Marine Spatial Planning Strategies, Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use	GEF-5	3.00	54.42
4660	MF	FSP	G	FAO/UNEP	ABNJ: Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation of Deep-sea Living Marine Resources and Ecosystems in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)	GEF-5	2.63	27.28
4690	IW	FSP	R	WB	Capturing Coral Reef and Related Ecosystem Services (CCRES)	GEF-5	4.50	27.81
4746	IW	FSP	R	UNDP/ FAO	Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	GEF-5	10.20	84.93
4748	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Improving Lake Chad Management through Building Climate Change Resilience and Reducing Ecosystem Stress through Implementation of the SAP	GEF-5	6.13	28.88
4766	MF	FSP	N	UNIDO	Implementation of Eco-industrial Park Initiative for Sustainable Industrial Zones in Vietnam	GEF-5	0.76	10.64
4795	MF	FSP	N	UNEP	ARCTIC: Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) for Major Arctic Rivers to Achieve Multiple Global Environmental Benefits	GEF-5	0.92	7.84
4796	MF	FSP	N	UNEP	ARCTIC: Improvement of Environmental Governance and Knowledge Management for SAP-Arctic Implementation	GEF-5	0.92	15.10
4799	MF	MSP	R	UNIDO	Implementing Integrated Measures for Minimizing Mercury Releases from Artisanal Gold Mining	GEF-5	0.28	0.76
4856	MF	FSP	G	WB	Oceans Finance Facility to Finance Effective Management and Transitional Reform of Oceanic Fisheries[b]	GEF-5	2.85	11.98
4932	MF	FSP	R	UNEP/ UNDP	Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWEco)	GEF-5	9.64	31.18
4940	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Protection of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-based Sources and Activities (WIO-SAP)	GEF-5	11.05	77.69
4953	MF	FSP	R	IUCN	Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project	GEF-5	2.22	3.81
4964	MF	FSP	N	WB	ARCTIC: Environment Project (Financial Mechanism for Environmental Rehabilitation in Arctic)	GEF-5	1.83	76.67
4966	IW	FSP	R	WB	Sustainable Groundwater Management in SADC Member States	GEF-5	8.30	42.61
5110	IW	MSP	R	WB	LME-EA: Applying Knowledge Management to Scale up Partnership Investments for Sustainable Development of Large Marine Ecosystems of East Asia and their Coasts	GEF-5	1.00	1.25
5133	MF	FSP	R	WB	Senegal River Basin Climate Change Resilience Development Project	GEF-5	4.00	17.15

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
5208	MF	FSP	N	UNEP	R2R: Advancing Sustainable Resources Management to Improve Livelihoods and Protect Biodiversity in Palau	GEF-5	0.17	0.68
5269	IW	FSP	R	WB	Adriatic Sea Environmental Pollution Control Project (I)	GEF-5	6.77	23.20
5271	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities	GEF-5	5.65	34.55
5278	IW	FSP	G	UNDP	Strengthening Global Governance of Large Marine Ecosystems and their Coasts through Enhanced Sharing and Application of LME/ICM/MPA Knowledge and Information Tools	GEF-5	2.58	13.25
5281	MF	FSP	N	WB	LME-EA Philippine Rural Development Program	GEF-5	2.00	185.24
5284	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Integrated Water Resources Management in the Puyango-Tumbes, Catamayo-Chira and Zarumilla Transboundary Aquifers and River Basins	GEF-5	4.11	20.48
5293	MF	FSP	N	UNIDO	Save the Source: Catalyzing Market Transformation of Breweries from a Major Natural Resource Consuming Industry to a Pro-active Steward for Resource Efficient Cleaner Production	GEF-5	2.84	14.44
5301	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Enabling Country of the Transboundary Syr Darya Basin to Make Sustainable Use of their Ground Water Potential and Subsurface Space with Consideration to Climate Variability and Change	GEF-5	3.60	17.50
5304	IW	FSP	R	FAO	Sustainable Management of Bycatch in Latin America and Caribbean Trawl Fisheries (REBYC-II LAC)	GEF-5	6.00	17.20
5310	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins	GEF-5	1.05	6.17
5348	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	Conserving Biodiversity and Enhancing Ecosystem Functions through a "Ridge to Reef" Approach in the Cook Island	GEF-5	0.16	0.54
5381	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	R2R: Implementing a "Ridge to Reef" Approach to Protecting Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functions in Nauru (R2R Nauru)	GEF-5	0.16	0.49
5393	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Sustainable Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the West Pacific and East Asian Seas	GEF-5	2.29	19.86
5397	MF	FSP	N	FAO	R2R: Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management	GEF-5	0.15	0.48
5398	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	Implementing a "Ridge to Reef" Approach to Preserve Ecosystem Services, Sequester Carbon, Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods in Fiji (Fiji R2R)	GEF-5	0.16	0.64
5400	IW	FSP	G	UNEP	Targeted Research for Improving Understanding of the Global Nitrogen Cycle towards the Establishment of an International Nutrient Management System INMS	GEF-5	6.15	56.58
5401	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries Refugia in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand	GEF-5	3.10	12.72

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
5404	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	R2R: Testing the Integration of Water, Land, Forest & Coastal Management to Preserve Ecosystem Services, Store Carbon, Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods in Pacific Island Countries	GEF-5	10.62	87.71
5405	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	EAS: Scaling up the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia	GEF-5	10.64	157.27
5452	IW	FSP	N	WB	Guangdong Agricultural Pollution Control	GEF-5	5.10	208.20
5487	MF	FSP	R	AfDB	Integrated Development for Increased Rural Climate Resilience in the Niger Basin	GEF-5	9.81	61.00
5508	MF	MSP	G	UNDP	Transforming the Global Maritime Transport Industry towards a Low Carbon Future through Improved Energy Efficiency	GEF-5	0.95	5.63
5513	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms (SAPPHIRE)	GEF-5	11.28	333.43
5517	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	R2R Implementing an Integrated Ridge to Reef Approach to Enhance Ecosystem Services, to Conserve Globally Important Biodiversity and to Sustain Local Livelihoods in the FSM	GEF-5	0.16	0.59
5526	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Support to the Cubango-Okavango River Basin Strategic Action Programme Implementation	GEF-5	6.30	336.34
5535	IW	FSP	R	UNDP/ UNEP	Improving IWRM, Knowledge based Management and Governance of the Niger Basin and the Iullemeden Taoudeni Tanezrouft Aquifer System (ITTAS)	GEF-5	13.73	77.96
5538	IW	FSP	R	UNEP	Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea	GEF-5	15.30	56.06
5542	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Catalyzing Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of Shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CMLE+)	GEF-5	12.95	134.15
5544	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	R2R Reimaanlok Looking to the Future: Strengthening Natural Resource Management in Atoll Communities in the Republic of Marshall Islands Employing Integrated Approaches (RMI R2R)	GEF-5	0.31	3.51
5550	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	R2R Implementing a Ridge to Reef Approach to Protect Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functions	GEF-5	0.16	0.64
5551	MF	FSP	N	FAO	Resilient Islands, Resilient Communities	GEF-5	0.16	0.42
5552	MF	FSP	N	UNDP	Application of Ridge to Reef Concept for Biodiversity Conservation, and for the Enhancement of Ecosystem Service and Cultural Heritage in Niue	GEF-5	0.16	0.41
5556	IW	FSP	R	WB	West Balkans Drina River Basin Management	GEF-5	4.57	25.89
5561	IW	FSP	N	WB	GEF Mainstreaming Integrated Water and Environment Management	GEF-5	9.70	95.00
5622	MF	FSP	N	WB	LME-EA Coral Triangle Initiative Project (COREMAPIII-CTI)	GEF-5	2.00	9.24
5663	MF	MSP	N	UNDP	R2R Integrated Environmental Management of the Fanga'uta Lagoon Catchment	GEF-5	0.16	0.61

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
5674	IW	FSP	R	AfDB	Lakes Edward and Albert Integrated Fisheries and Water Resources Management Project	GEF-5	8.30	23.43
5729	IW	FSP	G	UNDP/ UNEP	GEF International Waters Learning Exchange and Resources Network IW LEARN	GEF-5	5.13	12.12
5748	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Integrated Water Resources Management in the Titicaca-Desaguadero-Poopo-Salar de Coipasa (TDPS) System	GEF-5	6.71	40.73
5753	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Realizing the inclusive and sustainable development in the BCLME region through the improved ocean governance and the integrated management of ocean use and marine resources" Short Title – Improving Ocean Governance and Integrated Management in the BCLME	GEF-5	11.20	163.92
5765	IW	FSP	R	WWF-US	Integrated Transboundary Ridges-to-Reef Management of the Mesoamerican Reef	GEF-5	9.17	69.46
5768	IW	FSP	R	FAO	Enabling Transboundary Cooperation for Sustainable Management of the Indonesian Seas	GEF-5	4.15	25.11
5771	IW	MSP	R	WWF-US	Improving Mangrove Conservation across the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) through Coordinated Regional and National Strategy Development and Implementation	GEF-5	1.99	4.52
5772	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of African Network of Basin Organization (ANBO), Contributing to the Improved Transboundary Water Governance in Africa	GEF-5	2.10	8.43
5787	IW	MSP	N	EBRD	Bizerte Lake Environmental Project Lagoon and Marine de Pollution	GEF-5	2.00	110.72
5827	IW	MSP	G	FAO	Coordination of the Global Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction ABNJ Program	GEF-5	0.46	0.95
5905	IW	FSP	R	WB	First South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish 1)	GEF-5	15.50	57.40
6920	MF	FSP	R	UNDP	Implementation of the Arafura and Timor Seas Regional and National Strategic Action Programs	GEF-6	5.43	30.85
6952	IW	FSP	N	UNIDO	Implementation of the Strategic Action Program of the Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem	GEF-6	13.20	127.93
6962	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Advancing IWRM Across the Kura River Basin through Implementation of the Transboundary Agreed Actions and National Plans	GEF-6	5.48	194.88
6964	IW	FSP	R	WB	Volta River Basin Strategic Action Programme Implementation Project	GEF-6	7.40	36.14
6970	MF	FSP	R	WB	Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP)	GEF-6	3.56	14.22
6993	MF	MSP	G	UNIDO	Integrated Solutions for Energy, Water, Energy and Land	GEF-6	1.00	0.95
8029	IW	FSP	N	WB	West Africa Regional Fisheries Program SOP C1	GEF-5	7.00	23.05
9054	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Support to the Orange-Senqu River Strategic Action Programme Implementation	GEF-6	11.07	121.00

GEF ID	Focal area	Type	Scope	GEF Agency	Project title	GEF period	Funding (million $)[a]	
							GEF	Co-financing
9060	MF	FSP	G	FAO/ WWF-US/ UNDP/ WB/CI/ UNEP	CFI: Coastal Fisheries Initiative	GEF-6	26.41	159.06
9121	IW	MSP	N	UNDP	Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the White Drin and the Extended Drin Basin	GEF-6	1.00	7.85
9160	IW	MSP	R	WB	Regional Partnership for African Fisheries Policy Reform (RAFIP)	GEF-6	2.00	12.00
9165	IW	FSP	R	UNDP	Enabling Implementation of the Regional SAP for the Rational and Equitable Management of the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer System (NSAS)	GEF-6	4.14	22.30
9246	MF	FSP	R	UNDP	Integrated Environmental Management of the Rio Motagua Watershed	GEF-6	3.25	25.78
9250	MF	FSP	N	WB	Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3)	GEF-6	2.71	11.00
9359	IW	MSP	R	UNDP	Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Dniester River Basin	GEF-6	2.00	8.66
9360	IW	FSP	R	WB	West Africa Regional Fisheries Program, Additional Financing	GEF-6	10.00	121.37
9391	MF	MSP	G	IUCN	The Global Environmental Commons. Solutions for a Crowded Planet	GEF-6	0.71	0.82
9433	MF	FSP	N	WWF-US/ WB	S3MR Sustainable Management of Madagascar's Marine Resources	GEF-6	6.42	20.20
9451	MF	FSP	R	WB	Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project	GEF-6	6.18	102.00

SOURCE: GEF Project Management Information System.

NOTE: Focal areas: IW = international waters; MF = multifocal. Type: FSP = full-size project; MSP = medium-size project. Scope: G = global; N = national; R = regional. GEF Agencies: ADB = Asian Development Bank; AfDB = African Development Bank; CI = Conservation International; EBRD = European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IDB = Inter-American Development Bank; IFAD = International Fund for Agricultural Development; IUCN = International Union for Conservation of Nature; UNDP = United Nations Environment Programme; UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme; UNIDO = United Nations Industrial Development Organization; WB = World Bank; WWF-US = World Wildlife Fund–US. This table includes international waters and multifocal area projects with international waters components that had reached at least the approval stage as of June 28, 2016. It does not include 9 canceled projects with international waters components. To avoid double counting, 15 programs are excluded (parent projects that already have child projects in the portfolio); however, two GEF-6 programs (GEF ID 9060 and 9433) are included that did not have any child projects as of June 2016. Similarly, two phased programs from GEF-2 and GEF-4 with no child projects (GEF ID 1094 and 2584) are also included here. Small Grants Programme projects are not included.

a. GEF funding includes GEF grant and project preparation grant (PPG). For multifocal area projects, the amount recorded here reflects the international waters portion of the grant and a weighted proportion of the PPG, based on the GEF grant's international waters funding. Cofinancing for multifocal area projects includes only cofinancing for the international waters component of the project.

b. Retitled at PPG stage as Ocean Partnerships for Sustainable Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation - Models for Innovation and Reform (P128437).

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