



**FOURTH OVERALL PERFORMANCE STUDY OF THE
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY:**

**Independent Monitoring and Evaluation
Review**

AUGUST 2009

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1. Introduction

This study contributes to the Fourth Overall Performance Study of the Global Environment Facility (OPS4), which has been commissioned by the GEF Council as an input to the discussions and negotiations of the fifth replenishment of the GEF. The overall goal of OPS4 is to assess the extent to which the GEF is achieving its objectives and to identify potential improvements; this study contributes to that goal with regard to issues related to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in the GEF. Because evaluation of the GEF's M&E function by the GEF Evaluation Office (GEF EO) has the potential for perceived conflicts of interest, this portion of OPS4 was contracted out to an objective third party, ICF International. This Independent M&E Review is the result of that third-part review.

The purpose of the Independent M&E Review was to determine the degree to which the GEF is achieving its two overarching M&E objectives, as stated in the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy:

- 1) *Promote accountability for the achievement of GEF objectives through the assessment of results, effectiveness, processes, and performance of the partners involved in GEF activities. GEF results will be monitored and evaluated for their contribution to global environmental benefits.*
- 2) *Promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners, as a basis for decision-making on policies, strategies, program management, and projects, and to improve knowledge and performance.*

The review also focused specifically on two aspects of M&E in the GEF: M&E governance and M&E implementation, as described below.

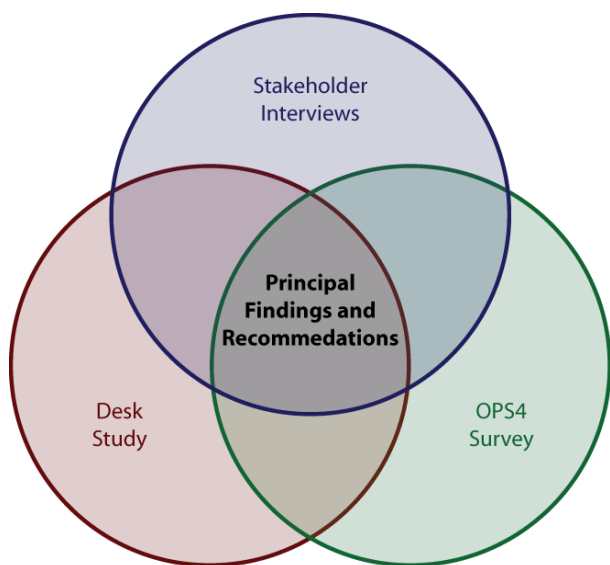
- **M&E governance**—is the processes of decision-making related to GEF M&E policies, including interactions between network partners and definition/distribution of roles and responsibilities.
- **M&E implementation**—is the processes through which GEF M&E activities and responsibilities are undertaken, including theory of change, guidance, indicator development, results, measurement, and so on. The GEF M&E policy makes clear that responsibility for M&E is shared among the partners in the GEF system. Therefore, the review explored the extent to which this shared responsibility was understood by the partners and implemented in reality.

The availability of resources for execution of M&E activities was also examined.

2. Methodological Approach

The overall purpose of the Independent M&E Review was to develop an understanding of how the GEF EO and the GEF Secretariat are together executing the GEF's M&E responsibilities as detailed in the *GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy* (2006). Focusing on M&E governance and M&E implementation, eight evaluation items were identified to evaluate the M&E function within the GEF, as shown in Exhibit 1.

To evaluate these items, the Independent M&E Review utilized three sources of evidence: a desk study, surveys, and stakeholder interviews. These components taken together provide the evaluative evidence for the principal findings and recommendations, as shown in the figure below.



Three Components of the GEF EO Review

These components are described as follows:

- **Desk Study**— Over twenty-five documents pertaining to M&E in the GEF were reviewed. As identified in the Terms of Reference (TOR) for this review (see Annex 1), the Desk Study took into account the peer review panel's report on the evaluative function of the GEF, technical papers on other aspects of monitoring and evaluation

Exhibit 1: Evaluation Items

M&E Governance:

1. The degree to which the GEF EO is responsive to GEF Council needs and requests, and communicates appropriate information about evaluative evidence and quality of M&E systems to the Council.
2. The effectiveness of the working relationships established between the GEF EO and the GEF Secretariat, and between GEF EO and the GEF Agencies.
3. The degree to which GEF M&E activities and practices are open and transparent to project stakeholders.

M&E Implementation:

4. The overall value provided to GEF stakeholders by the GEF EO processes and products. For instance, do the processes and products contribute to project success? Do processes and products focus on the right issues?
5. The effectiveness of GEF EO guidance to GEF stakeholders on M&E roles and responsibilities, expectations, processes, and methods. This also includes the degree to which the minimum requirements for monitoring and evaluation and indicators for measuring results are well understood and support consistent measurement of results.
6. The effectiveness of the quality control and oversight of M&E activities provided to the GEF Agencies by the GEF EO and GEF SEC.
7. The effectiveness of GEF EO support for organizational learning about M&E in the context of GEF projects, country portfolios, and GEF focal areas.

M&E Resources:

8. The degree to which sufficient resources are available to support GEF monitoring and evaluation activities and responsibilities.

within the GEF system and parallel activities among the GEF Agencies, and emerging findings of OPS4. Reviewed documents fell into three basic types:

1. Background and context for the review (e.g., *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*, 2006)
2. Internal, stakeholder, and independent evaluations of GEF M&E (e.g., *The Evaluation Function of the Global Environmental Facility Final Report*, 2009, prepared by the Peer Review Panel, and the *Response of the GEF to the Peer Review of the GEF Evaluation Function*, 2009)
3. M&E best practices and lessons learned from GEF stakeholders.

A list of documents reviewed is contained in Annex 3.

- **Surveys**—Results from two surveys were used for the Independent M&E Review:
 1. The OPS4 Survey, conducted by the GEF EO, which included several questions pertaining to M&E
 2. The specialized M&E Survey developed by the Independent M&E Review team. Roughly 85 stakeholders responded to the OPS4 Survey while about 35 stakeholders responded to the M&E Survey.

While the survey results are not considered statistically significant due to the limited number of respondents, when reviewed in conjunction with the desk study and the stakeholder interviews, the survey data can provide meaningful insight into GEF M&E performance.

- **Stakeholder Interviews**—To provide additional context, personnel responsible for evaluation and monitoring within the GEF Agencies were asked to participate in stakeholder interviews. Stakeholders from each GEF Agency participated in roundtable telephone interviews.

Findings were developed by the evaluation team in a series of working sessions. During these sessions, evidence from each of the three components was reviewed, common themes among the components were identified, and each theme was then considered within the framework of the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

The full methodology for this assessment is provided in Annex 2.

3. Findings

As described above, the M&E function within the GEF as it pertains to governance and implementation was assessed by the review team by conducting a desk review, surveys, and stakeholder interviews. Section 3.1 summarizes the overall key findings, while detailed evidence from each component of the review are provided in Section 3.2.

3.1 Key Findings

Framework Set by the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy

M&E at the GEF is guided by *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (M&E Policy)*, a policy document developed in 2006 by the GEF EO through a consultative process with other GEF network members. The M&E Policy outlines roles and responsibilities for M&E within the GEF, as well as minimum requirements and criteria for M&E at the project level. According to the policy, the GEF EO “has the central role of ensuring the independent evaluation function within the GEF, setting minimum requirements for monitoring and evaluation (M&E), ensuring oversight of the quality of M&E systems on the program and project levels, and sharing evaluative evidence within the GEF.”

The GEF Secretariat plays a role in carrying out the M&E function, namely monitoring and reporting at the GEF portfolio level, along with review of GEF M&E requirements in project proposals.

The GEF EO and Secretariat are supported by extensive M&E efforts at the GEF Agency and project proponent level; however, only the performance of the GEF EO and Secretariat are specifically examined in this assessment.

The M&E function as it relates to governance and implementation was the focus of this assessment. Key findings in these areas are presented below, as well as in the area of availability and distribution of resources for M&E.

M&E Governance

- **The GEF EO functions independently.** The desk review, surveys, and stakeholder interviews all confirmed that stakeholders generally felt that the GEF EO functions independently from policy-making and project assistance processes. In addition, stakeholders felt that the separation of the evaluative function from the GEF Secretariat has been a positive development that has resulted in better, more objective evaluation results.
- **The GEF EO is responsive to the GEF Council.** The GEF EO is perceived in the GEF network as being responsive to requests from the GEF Council, but at times responding to these requests means that time/resources are not available to focus on other important issues. The independence of the GEF EO is sometimes questioned in the context of the influential role held by GEF Secretariat and the CEO.
- **GEF network members have insufficient upstream input to the decisions of the GEF EO about what areas to focus on in evaluations.** Stakeholders requested additional upstream input on what the GEF EO evaluates, and reported that evaluation ideas communicated to the GEF EO have generally not been taken up. The direct line of accountability from the GEF EO to the Council may be a

contributing factor in this perception. While the GEF EO is certainly restricted by a limited budget and cannot reasonably be expected to respond to every evaluation request, more consultation on the development of the evaluation agenda for each year could be beneficial.

- **With respect to monitoring, decision-making has not been shared or consultative.** The GEF EO engaged in a consultative process to develop policy and articulate roles and responsibilities; such a process has not been undertaken to create common understanding and a community of practice around monitoring. This lack of process may contribute to frustrations about increasing workload for monitoring and confusion about how to meet requirements efficiently, as described under M&E Implementation below.
- **Roles and responsibilities for monitoring, while delineated in the M&E Policy, are not fully understood by GEF stakeholders.** Although roles and responsibilities for monitoring are defined in the M&E Policy, consultations with stakeholders showed that there is uncertainty about these delineations in practice or implementation. (See also the related finding about portfolio monitoring under M&E Implementation.) In particular, there is a perception among the GEF Agencies that there is overlap between their own monitoring responsibilities and the responsibilities of the GEF Secretariat at the project level. For instance, GEF Agencies felt that in many cases, GEF Secretariat site visits would be duplicative of GEF Agency work and unlikely to lead to additional value added.

M&E Implementation

- **The GEF EO provides good value.** The majority of stakeholders believe that the EO focuses on the right evaluation issues, and stakeholders described EO reports as well-written and of high-quality. Results from GEF EO evaluations are also seen as more useful for improving overall strategic direction for the GEF (e.g., input for the RAF, or on other policies, criteria, procedures, etc.), although somewhat less useful for improving project results or country portfolios.
- **The GEF EO's evaluation practices are consistent with best practices.** There is broad consensus among GEF network members that standards, norms, and other guidance developed by GEF EO are consistent with international best practices in evaluation and support consistent measurement of results. For instance, the Peer Review is an example of the GEF adopting an emerging best practice in the evaluation field.
- **Monitoring at the portfolio level has yet to be clearly defined.** The M&E Policy states that monitoring may take place on three levels: 1) project (mainly of implementation process and activities, the delivery of outputs, and progress toward outcomes); 2) portfolio (mainly of trends in implementation and outcome); and 3) national and global level (mainly of global environmental impact). The GEF Secretariat has not yet fully defined its role vis-à-vis monitoring the GEF portfolio (or at the national/global levels), for which the GEF Agencies acknowledged the need for additional guidance. This lack of a clear definition has led to frustrations about the

extent and type of data the GEF Agencies must report, as well as misunderstandings about the role of the GEF Secretariat in monitoring individual projects. GEF Agencies generally agreed that the burden for monitoring has increased since OPS3 as a result of additional requirements for reporting coming from the GEF Secretariat, even though these higher levels of monitoring have not been clearly defined.

- **Some information flow issues have been associated with the GEF Secretariat related to monitoring data.** GEF Agencies reported some deficiencies with respect to data management and information flow with the GEF Secretariat. These deficiencies may be attributed, at least to some degree, to the relatively recent transition of monitoring to the GEF Secretariat, combine with extensive changes in staffing in the GEF Secretariat over the past few years. These staff changes mean the loss of historical working relationships, forcing staff to form new relationships in a challenging time. One GEF Agency did report, however, that their interactions with the GEF Secretariat had improved in the past year as a result of some new hires.
- **Communication, information and knowledge sharing, and a sense of community of practice as it relates to M&E are inadequate in the GEF network.** One facet of this finding is that the link between monitoring and evaluation work is not as strong as it should be. Recommendations are made through project-level evaluations and reported to the GEF EO, but it is not clear that those lessons are then transmitted to the GEF Secretariat. This disconnect makes generation and dissemination of effective lessons learned somewhat difficult.

Similarly, helpful feedback—particularly based on monitoring data reported to the GEF Secretariat—is not perceived to be received, which further puts to question whether reported data are serving their intended purpose.

The GEF Agencies would like an increased level of consultation with the GEF EO when carrying out evaluations. In particular, insufficient advance notice is given to project teams to enable their participation in evaluations. In general, these findings all imply that the nascent nature of the M&E community of practice within the GEF continues to warrant attention.

- **M&E could be better integrated into the project cycle.** Evidence also exists that stakeholders felt that M&E processes could be better integrated into the project cycle and that the monitoring process is not working as well as the evaluation process.

M&E Resources

- **Resources are not always distributed or utilized adequately to maximize M&E functions and results.** There is tension between core activities (evaluation, consultation) versus peripheral attributes (high cost production reports, potentially overlapping site visits), as well as tension between providing oversight and building collaboration in terms of M&E governance.

3.2 Detailed Evidence

This section provides a more in-depth discussion of the evidence that emerged from the three components of the Independent M&E Review. The evidence from each of these

components was synthesized to develop the principal findings discussed in the previous section.

3.2.1 Desk Study Findings

From the documents reviewed during the Desk Study—including primarily the peer review report on the GEF evaluation function (2009), referred to hereafter as the “Peer Review”—the following evidence was gathered. These have been organized below according to the evaluation areas described in the methodology section of this report.

M&E Governance	
The degree to which the GEF EO are responsive to GEF Council needs and requests, and communicate appropriate information about evaluative evidence and quality of M&E systems to the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The independence of the EO has improved its ability to make evaluative judgments free from pressure.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council’s approval of the work program and budget for FY 10 indicates the Council’s acceptance of the work program proposed by the GEF EO. However, the Council also indicated a desire to stay in touch with the structure of the program and its associated budget by requesting an annual budget presentation for consideration at the annual Council meetings in June.
The effectiveness of the working relationships established between the GEF EO and the GEF Secretariat, and between GEF EO and the GEF Agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An element of the working relationship between the GEF EO and the GEF Sec is the independence that is required for the effective functioning of GEF EO. From the documents reviewed, this independence of the GEF EO seems to be adequately established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some residual feeling that GEF EO may be influenced by the GEF Secretariat. The Peer Review notes that the legal foundation of the independence “is precarious,” and that the Council should take steps for establishing a firmer legal basis for the separation. However, the subsequent adoption by Council of the Recommendations Concerning Certain Appointment, Reappointment and Performance Objective Reviews Processes seems to create more independence and separation for the EO by establishing similar processes for the selection and appointment of the GEF CEO and the GEF EO Director. The desire for more consultation with the partners emerges from many sources. The Peer Review suggests that the GEF EO explore additional “upstream” interaction with country personnel and GEF Agencies. Multiple stakeholders asked for more consultation before the publication of reports.
The degree to which GEF M&E activities and practices are open and transparent to project stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparency into the front-end of the project cycle—especially where decisions are made about resources—does not exist in a consistent way.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders felt that there is more communication taking place with evaluation activities out of the GEF EO than with monitoring activities out of the GEF Secretariat.
M&E Implementation	
Overall value provided to GEF stakeholders by the GEF EO processes and products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is consistent evidence in the documents reviewed that GEF stakeholders find value in the policies and processes provided by the GEF EO.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Peer Review found “a high degree of satisfaction of many

	stakeholders with the credibility of EO products.”
The effectiveness of the quality control and oversight of M&E activities provided to the GEF Agencies by the GEF EO and GEF Secretariat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence in the documents reviewed that stakeholders feel the evaluation activities are of high quality but that monitoring quality control is somewhat variable. However, the Peer Review found that emerging work of the EO on the quality of supervision and reviews of terminal evaluations suggest that M&E quality continues to improve throughout the system.
The effectiveness of GEF EO guidance to GEF stakeholders on M&E roles and responsibilities, expectations, processes, and methods. This also includes the degree to which the minimum requirements for monitoring and evaluation and indicators for measuring results are well understood and support consistent measurement of results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The definition of minimum requirements is a step in the right direction, but harmonizing GEF requirements with GEF Agency requirements is an ongoing challenge. There also appears to be a need to define portfolio monitoring in more detail, and to ensure that project lifecycles allow for proper integration of monitoring and evaluation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Peer Review report identified the need for more stakeholder consultation in the development of the GEF EO work plan. The desire for increased stakeholder consultation in decision-making processes was observed in a number of consultation records.
The effectiveness of GEF EO support for organizational learning about M&E in the context of GEF projects, country portfolios, and GEF focal areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEF EO follows structured information dissemination policies and procedures. A significant part of the GEF EO budget is dedicated to information sharing and knowledge management activities. However, there has not been a formal evaluation of dissemination effectiveness (GEF EO has incorporated lessons learned from other GEF Agencies’ studies of information dissemination effectiveness).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Much information exists but it is not easily accessible to those who could use it and it is not in formats that encourage its usefulness.
M&E Resources	
The degree to which sufficient resources are available to support GEF monitoring and evaluation activities and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEF EO, in the self-assessment prepared as input to the Peer Review, states that EO resources are adequate. However, GEF EO also acknowledges that the current resources are not sufficient to incorporate all the Peer Review recommendations about additional levels of consultation and stakeholder interaction, as well as additional field work to keep evaluations in touch with project realities. For instance, the Peer Review notes that budget constraints limit field work and the report advises that “annual budgets should secure adequate allocation of funds for relevant fieldwork” and the GEF EO acknowledges that additional fieldwork would be beneficial.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council’s request that the GEF EO present its budget annually <i>may</i> be seen as a warning that budget constraints will continue into the foreseeable future.

3.2.2 Survey Evidence

Responses were collected from two separate surveys to better understand the M&E function in the GEF. The first survey was conducted by the GEF EO for OPS4 and included several questions pertaining to M&E. In addition, a separate survey was developed specially for stakeholders interested in providing more extensive input to the

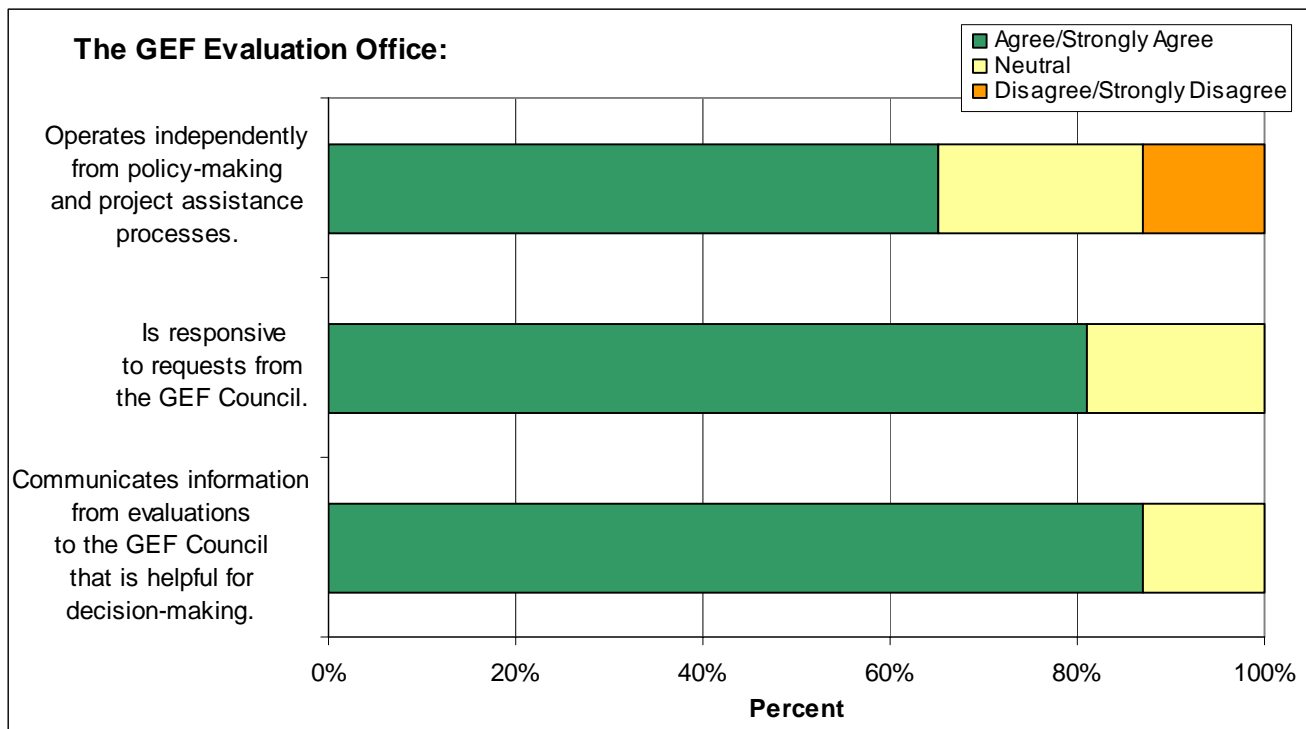
Independent M&E Review. A complete list of the M&E questions from the surveys is included in Annex 4.

Due to the limited number of respondents, the survey results are not considered statistically significant. However, when reviewed in conjunction with the desk study and interviews, the survey data can provide meaningful insight into GEF M&E performance. Therefore, the following evidence should be reviewed with that in mind.

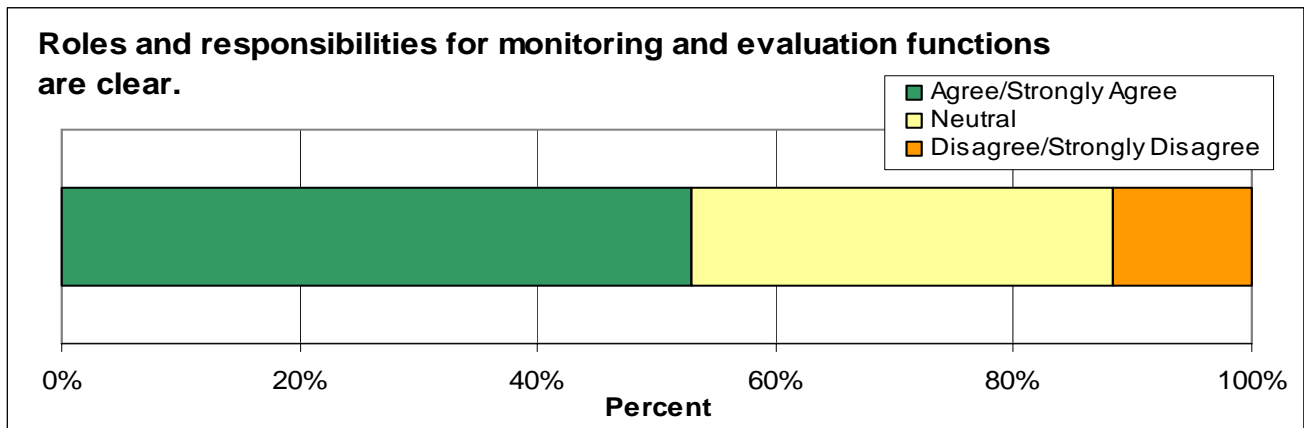
For both surveys (i.e., the general OPS4 survey and the specialized M&E survey), stakeholders were asked to answer questions by indicating whether they agree or disagree with the statements provided. Stakeholders were also given the opportunity to provide additional comments related to monitoring and evaluation, or specifically the evaluation of projects and programs, the evaluation of norms and standards, quality control of GEF Agencies, governance, and resources for monitoring and evaluation. The figures below graphically depict the results of some of the survey question responses; the full survey results are given in tabular format in Annex 5. The graphs show the percent of respondents that (1) agreed/strongly agreed, (2) felt neutral, or (3) disagreed/strongly disagreed with the statements provided.

M&E Governance

A majority of respondents agreed that the GEF EO operates independently from policy-making and project assistance processes. There is also broad consensus that the GEF Evaluation Office is responsive to requests from the GEF Council and that the GEF Evaluation Office communicates information from evaluations to the GEF Council that is helpful for decision-making. A few stakeholders expressed concern that the GEF EO is inappropriately influenced by the GEF Council.

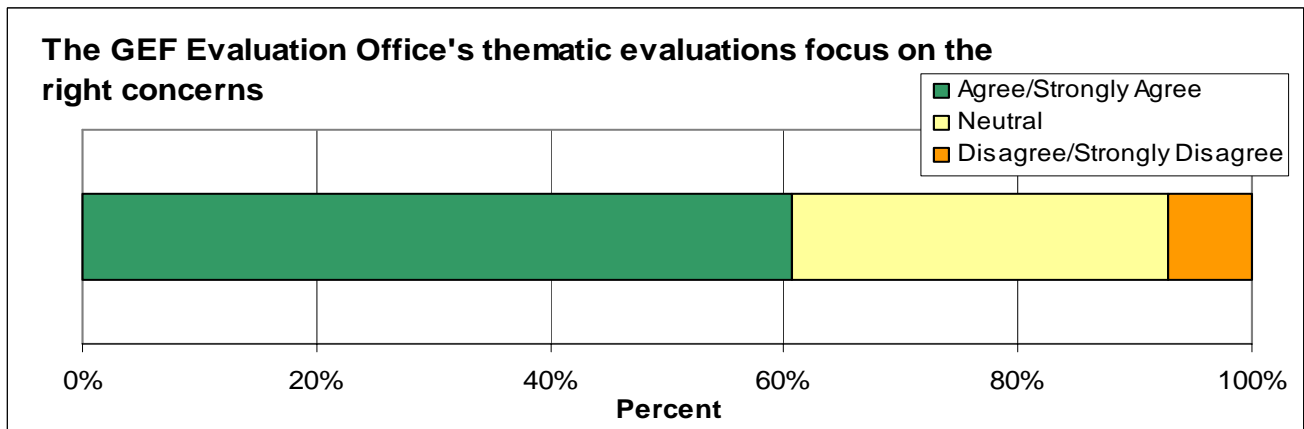


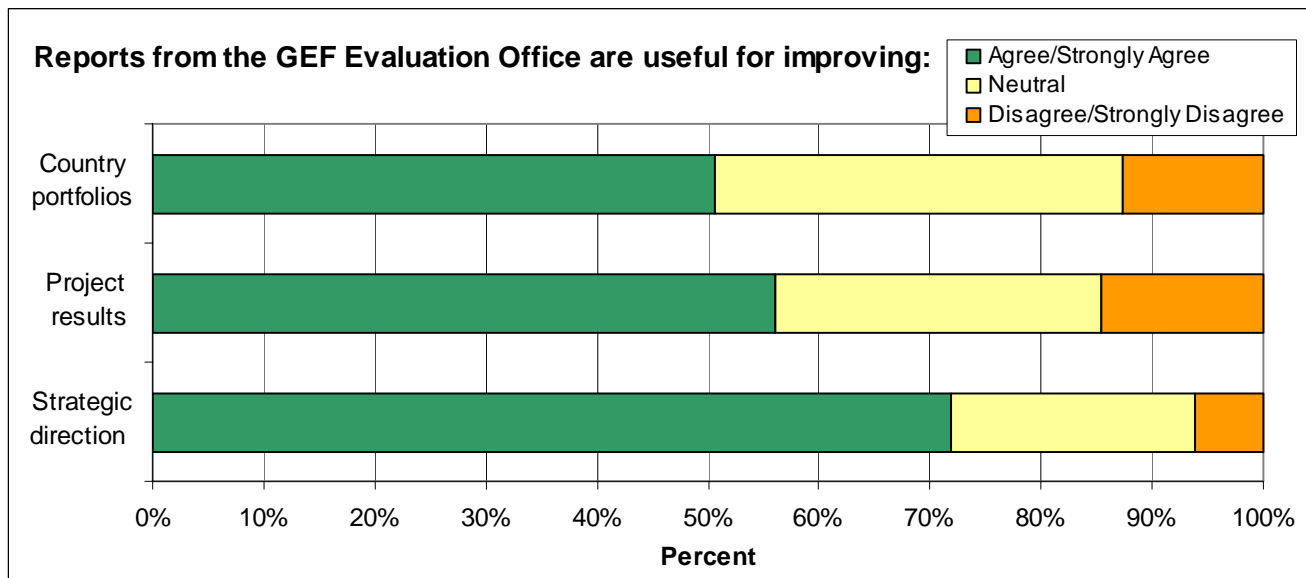
There was mixed response, however, on the clarity of roles and responsibilities for the M&E function in the GEF. Although these roles are clearly articulated in the GEF EO’s M&E Policy document, it seems that there is a perception among some network members that the division of responsibilities has not yet been fully articulated.



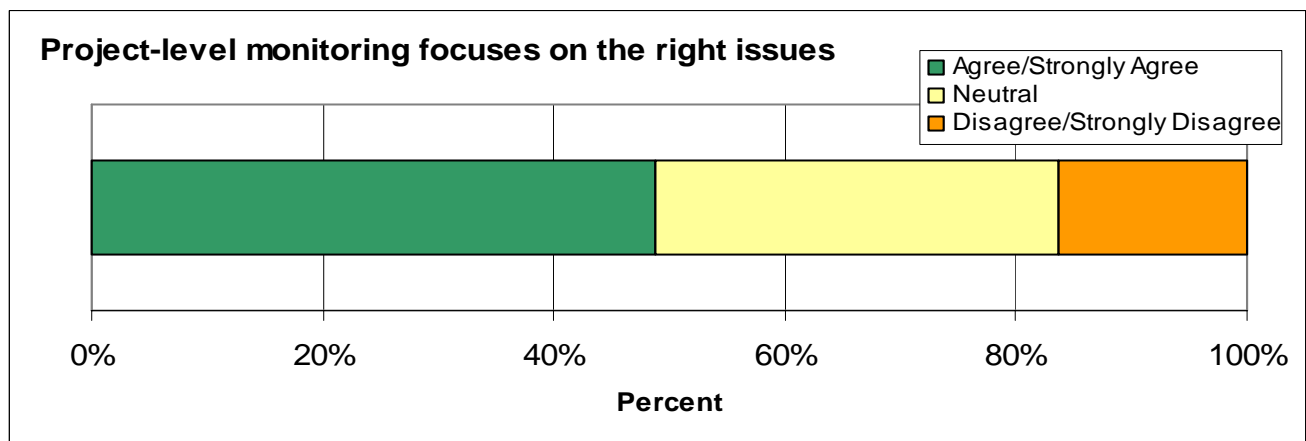
M&E Implementation

The results of the survey indicate that stakeholders in the GEF network generally believe that the GEF EO provides value. While not overwhelmingly, the majority of respondents also believe that the EO focuses on right evaluation issues. Respondents indicated that the results from GEF EO evaluations are particularly useful for improving strategic direction for the GEF (e.g., policies, criteria procedures, etc.), although somewhat less useful for improving project results or country portfolios.

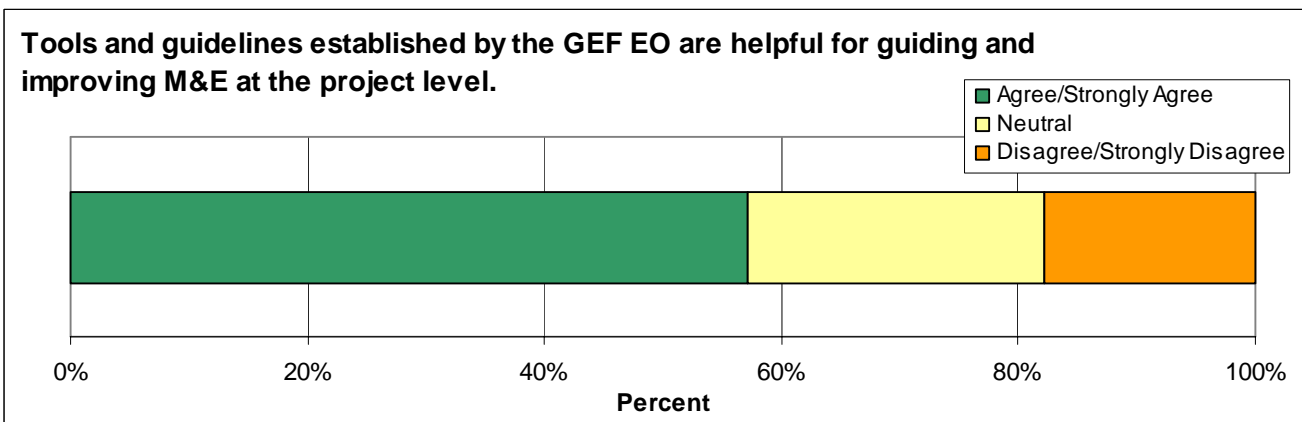
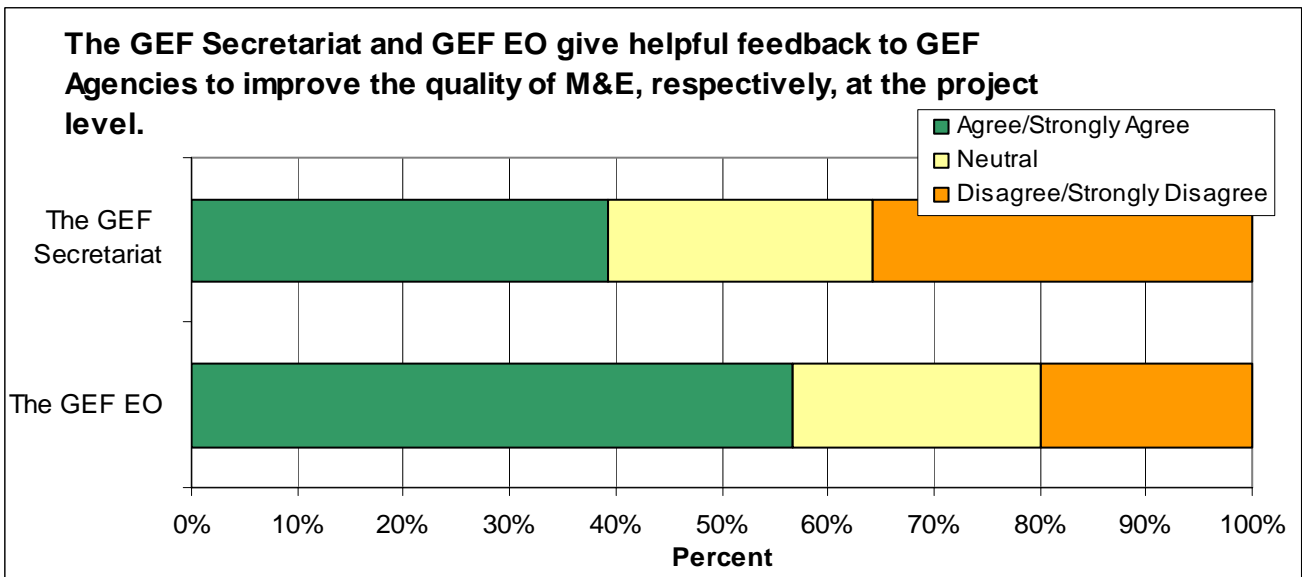
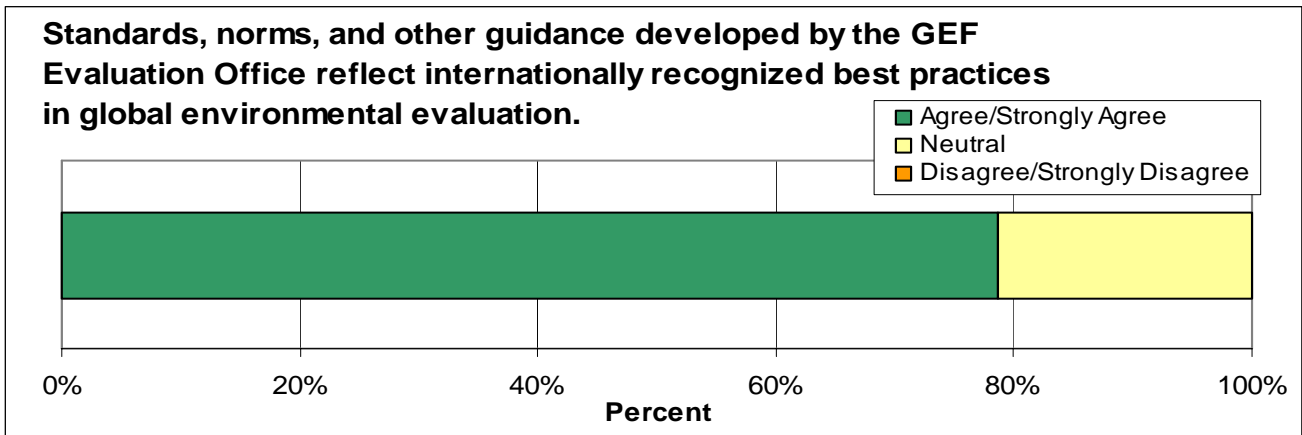




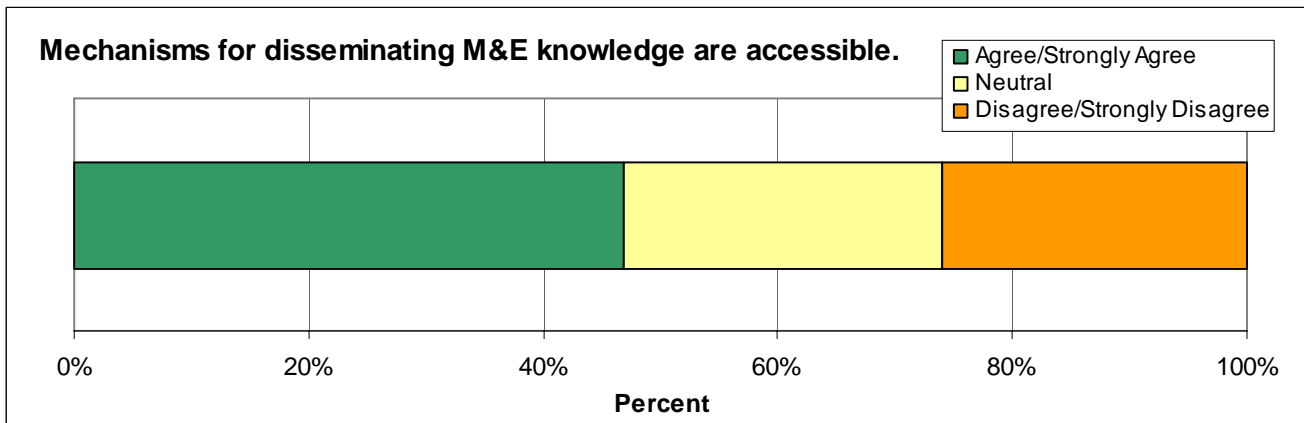
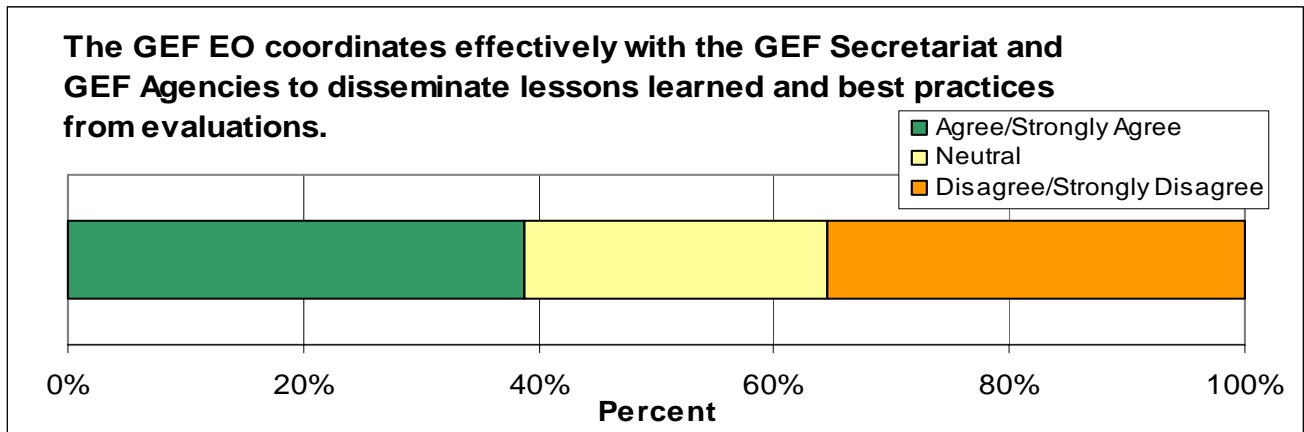
With regard to the monitoring function performed by the GEF Secretariat, about half of the respondents agreed that project-level monitoring focused on the right issues. This slightly lower score for the GEF Secretariat may reflect the relative infancy of the Secretariat in this monitoring role. On the issue of definition of clear definition of focal area indicators, perceptions were more favorable, although there was some difference of opinion regarding the appropriateness of those indicators (see Annex 5).



In terms of guidance provided by the GEF EO on M&E, there was widespread agreement that the standards, norms, and other guidance developed by GEF EO is consistent with international best practices in evaluation and support consistent measurement of results. At the project level, however, tools and established guidelines are not consistently perceived as helpful for improving M&E. In addition, the response was mixed in terms of the helpfulness of interaction between the GEF EO and GEF Secretariat on one hand and project stakeholders on the other hand with regard to improving the quality of M&E at the project level. One comment received explained that, “the focus of both [the Secretariat and EO] is to assess ‘what’s wrong’ not to actually learn and improve.”

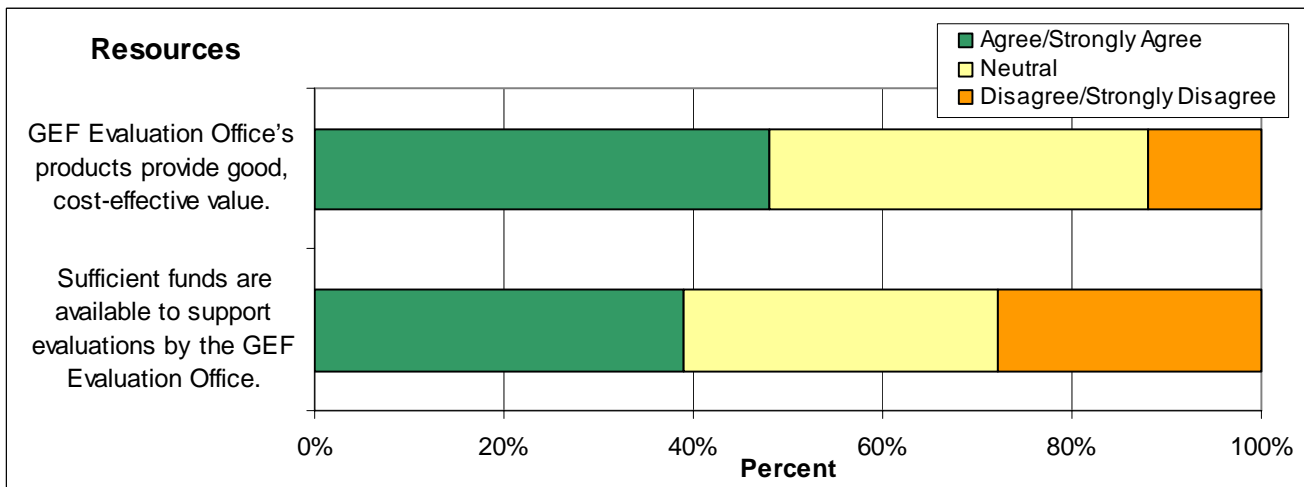


Dissemination of the knowledge gained through M&E processes is another area where improvement seems to be needed. Coordination between the GEF EO, GEF Secretariat, and GEF Agencies with regard to disseminating information is seen as inadequate. While the majority of respondents agreed that knowledge about best practices gained through M&E are useful for improving project performance, most respondents felt that the mechanisms for disseminating this knowledge were not sufficient.



M&E Resources

Resources and fund are another area of concern for GEF stakeholders. Less than half of the stakeholders felt that the products of the GEF Evaluation Office provide good, cost-effective value and only half feel sufficient funds are available to support evaluations. For each focal area, less than half of the stakeholders agree that sufficient funds are available to support program evaluations (see Annex 5).



3.2.3 Stakeholder Interview Evidence

To enrich the findings from the online surveys and the desk study, interviews were conducted with individuals at each of the GEF Agencies with responsibilities related to monitoring and evaluation. Over 15 representatives at the World Bank, UNEP, UNDP, UNIDO, AfDB, EBRD, IDB, and IFAD were consulted.¹

In general and as expected, the Independent M&E Review Team found the most concentrated interest in the former Implementing Agencies, largely accountable to the length of time of their involvement and the breadth of their project portfolios. Because some of the former Executing Agencies do not have projects that have yet reached the implementation or evaluation stage, their exposure to and interaction with the GEF EO was more limited. That said, several key themes emerged through the interviews with the GEF Agencies.

M&E Governance

Among those interviewed for this assessment, the independence of the GEF EO is widely regarded as a positive development. However, some downsides were perceived as a result of changing the GEF EO's line of reporting directly to the Council, namely that the primary focus on the Council's needs means that some important issues in the network are not being examined. Resource constraints will always dictate that some issues go unevaluated, but the act of shifting the GEF EO's accountability to the Council may have overly impacted the focus of evaluations.

While some stakeholders expressed no concerns regarding the monitoring process as coordinated by the GEF Secretariat, others noted database deficiencies and information flow problems. Some GEF Agencies attributed some of these issues to the extent of changes in the GEF Secretariat over the past few years, particularly in the form of staff turnover. These staff changes mean the loss of historical working relationships, forcing staff to form new relationships in a challenging time. One GEF Agency did report, however, that their interactions with the GEF Secretariat had improved in the past year as a result of some new hires.

Another common message was that the link between monitoring and evaluation work was not as strong as it should be. Recommendations are made through project-level evaluations and reported to the GEF EO, but it is not clear that those lessons are then transmitted to the GEF Secretariat. This disconnect makes generation and dissemination of effective lessons learned somewhat difficult.

M&E Implementation

The Independent M&E Review Team's discussions with the GEF Agencies revealed their discontent with the level of consultation that the GEF EO undertakes with the GEF Agencies when carrying out evaluations. This dissatisfaction is partly related to poor communication practices, whereby insufficient advance notice is given to project teams to enable their participation in evaluations. This is a critical shortcoming for a number of reasons. First, important learning can happen through involving the project team in the evaluation process, for example when project staff can see problems first-hand. And

¹ GEF Agency staff at ADB and FAO were also contacted.

secondly, including the project team helps to ensure buy-in to the findings at the end of the process, which can help facilitate the uptake of recommendations.

With respect to monitoring processes and the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Agencies agreed that the burden for monitoring has increased since OPS3 as a result of additional requirements for reporting coming from the GEF Secretariat. At the heart of this observation is the perception among the GEF Agencies that the GEF Secretariat has not yet clearly defined its role vis-à-vis monitoring the GEF portfolio; clarifying what it means to monitor the *portfolio* and what information is required for the GEF Secretariat's functions (such as decision making or accountability) could help bridge this gap. The GEF Agencies also felt that project site visits planned by the GEF Secretariat were duplicative of GEF Agency work and unlikely to yield additional value added given the difficulty of assessing a project in a short period of time, particularly without prior experience.

Among the GEF Agencies, there was a lack of clarity as to how some of the data required by the GEF Secretariat to be reported by the GEF Agencies is used. The GEF Agencies commented that the information reported should be relevant and necessary, since reporting increasing amounts of monitoring data has resource implications.

M&E Resources

Some stakeholders do not perceive that resources are distributed or utilized adequately to maximize M&E functions and results. Some stakeholders observed that limitations on resources make reduction of redundant efforts and processes between the GEF and the GEF Agencies more important. Duplication of efforts (producing one set of project documents for the GEF Agency and a different set for the GEF, for instance) consumes resources needlessly.

There is also a perceived tension between resources devoted to core activities (evaluation, consultation) versus peripheral attributes (high quality/cost production of reports, potentially overlapping site visits, and so on). One GEF Agency noted that while the GEF EO's evaluations were well-written and high quality, the resources used to produce glossy reports could be effectively redirected. Another GEF Agency suggested a use for those resources in noting that the lack of translation of some GEF EO reports into other languages was a barrier to those reports being read by some GEF Agency staff.

4. Recommendations

The GEF EO has indicated in its response to the Peer Review of the GEF evaluation function (2009) that it will be reviewing and revising the M&E Policy through a consultative process with other GEF network members, including the GEF Secretariat and the GEF Agencies. That process of revision will incorporate the lessons from the Peer Review—an input to this study—as well as those lessons learned through OPS4. Given that context, the Independent M&E Review Team recommends the following to also be considered during that revision process:

M&E Governance

- **The GEF EO should engage more regularly in upfront consultation with GEF network members, particularly the GEF Agencies, regarding the evaluation work plan.** Although the GEF EO is officially accountable to the Council, soliciting and incorporating more input from other stakeholders on what issues might be important to evaluate could be an important contribution to improving trust, performance, and results in the GEF.

M&E Implementation

- **The GEF Secretariat and the GEF EO should together develop a better understanding of and guidance on the minimum expectations for monitoring at the portfolio level.** The lack of a clear definition of what is meant by monitoring at the portfolio level² has led to frustrations about the extent and type of data required to be reported by the GEF Agencies, as well as misunderstandings about the role of the GEF Secretariat in monitoring projects versus the portfolio. Although the roles and responsibilities are delineated in the GEF M&E Policy, this delineation has not been clear in practice or implementation, which leads to redundancies and overlap. Given the limited resources at hand for monitoring, an effort must be made to better understand these roles in order to increase the value-added for monitoring at all nodes of the GEF network. Undertaking an upstream consultative process similar to that which was undertaken for evaluation a couple of years ago could be a useful exercise for the GEF Secretariat in order to build consensus around the division of responsibilities and comparative advantage between the GEF Agencies and the GEF Secretariat, as well as around data and reporting requirements.
- **The GEF EO should consider evaluating large-scale learning such as the uptake of new knowledge in the GEF.** The GEF EO generates a wide range of evaluation products, from country portfolio reviews to impact assessments to thematic reviews, but has yet to specifically evaluate knowledge management within the GEF system and the uptake of new knowledge generated through the evaluation process. This review could establish the levels of knowledge creation, expected uses and benefits of that knowledge, evidence of the knowledge being used, and so forth. Such a review could be a valuable asset for the GEF EO in refining its plans for future

² As well as the national/global level, to a certain extent.

evaluation and dissemination, as well as generally contributing to improving the *process* for results generation in the GEF.

- **Responsibility for knowledge management, sharing, and learning should be clearly articulated.** Since OPS3, some improvements have been made in knowledge management, but more forward progress is still required. The GEF might consider identifying or strengthening a staff role within the GEF EO or Secretariat for knowledge management. Responsibilities would include establishing the overall vision and plan and coordinating implementation for knowledge management within the GEF system. Clearly delineating responsibility for learning could, for example, serve to better create a community of practice for sharing of information and lessons learned across the GEF Agencies and focal areas.

M&E Resources

- **To optimize resources, the GEF EO should consider redistributing resources and removing redundancies that do not contribute significant additional value.** Resources for evaluation are limited but generally adequate. Given its limited resources, the GEF EO may need to look at ways to optimize the distribution of its resources between core and peripheral activities, and to execute its oversight responsibility in increasingly cost-effective ways by, for instance, relying even more on its partners' evaluation and monitoring capabilities.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

The Key Activities of the Scope of Work for this Review are:

- Adequate follow-up of issues that are raised by stakeholders through the email address OPS4@thegef.org that should not be handled by the GEF Evaluation Office, because that would constitute a conflict of interest, will be responded to adequately, taken care of and gathered and analyzed.
- Inclusion in the surveys that are prepared by the OPS4 team for consultation with the GEF stakeholders of questions on the two areas of conflict of interest identified above (M&E and governance), and interact with the peer review panel and the consultants responsible for the other three studies to ensure that their questions are taken into account.
- On the basis of preparatory work by a research assistant specially assigned to this task, analyze the data on stakeholder opinions on the two issues identified above (M&E and governance).
- Prepare and finalize a technical paper on the issues emerging from the stakeholder consultations on the two issues constituting a potential conflict of interest. A draft of this technical paper will be presented to and discussed in the Quality Assurance Review group for OPS4, which includes professional peer reviewers.
- If and when necessary, the consultant will interact with the Senior Independent Evaluation Advisors for OPS4.
- The final version of the technical paper will be presented to the Director of the Evaluation Office. Although issues of clarification and presentation may be discussed, the consultant will bear full responsibility for the content of this report and it will be published on the website of OPS4.
- Prepare a short summary of main findings and conclusions of the technical paper for inclusion into the OPS4 report.
- The work should take into account the peer review panel's report, the technical papers on the other issues posing a potential conflict of interest and other emerging findings of OPS4.

Annex 2: Methodology

1. Overview

Context

The Global Environmental Facility's Evaluation Office (GEF EO) has the central role of ensuring the evaluation function within the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), of setting minimum requirements for monitoring and evaluation, of ensuring oversight of the quality of M&E systems on program and project level and of sharing evaluative evidence within the GEF partnership.

Part of this responsibility includes conducting the Fourth Overall Program Study (OPS4) for the GEF Council. OPS4 is reviewing all aspects of GEF performance, including the performance of the EO in executing its evaluation responsibilities. To avoid potential conflict of interest, the GEFEO has retained an independent evaluator to conduct this aspect of OPS4.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the Independent M&E Review was to determine the degree to which the GEF is achieving its two overarching M&E objectives, as stated in the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2006):

- 3) *Promote accountability for the achievement of GEF objectives through the assessment of results, effectiveness, processes, and performance of the partners involved in GEF activities. GEF results will be monitored and evaluated for their contribution to global environmental benefits.*
- 4) *Promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners, as a basis for decision-making on policies, strategies, program management, and projects, and to improve knowledge and performance.*

The review also focused specifically on two aspects of M&E in the GEF: M&E governance and M&E implementation, as described below.

- **M&E governance**—is the processes of decision-making related to GEF M&E policies, including interactions between network partners and definition/distribution of roles and responsibilities.
- **M&E implementation**—is the processes through which GEF M&E activities and responsibilities are undertaken, including theory of change, guidance, indicator development, results, measurement, and so on. The GEF M&E policy makes clear that responsibility for M&E is shared among the partners in the GEF system. Therefore, the review explored the extent to which this shared responsibility was understood by the partners and implemented in reality.

The availability of resources for M&E was also examined.

Audience

The primary audience for the Independent M&E Review component of OPS4 is the GEF Council. Other stakeholders who will be interested in the review include the GEF

Secretariat and the GEF Agencies. Local communities within project areas are considered to be secondary stakeholders, as are governments (primarily government agencies in developing countries with an interest in the success of their projects), civil society organizations and NGOs. It is expected that these stakeholders will be able to derive lessons for effective M&E policy and practice from this evaluation.

2. Review Focus

The focus of this review is M&E governance and implementation as these apply to the achievement of the two GEF EO objectives of a) promoting accountability for the achievement of GEF objectives and b) promoting learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners.

In developing a response to these issues, the review team constructed a set of eight evaluation items, which emerged from a review of the GEF M&E policy.

Evaluation Items

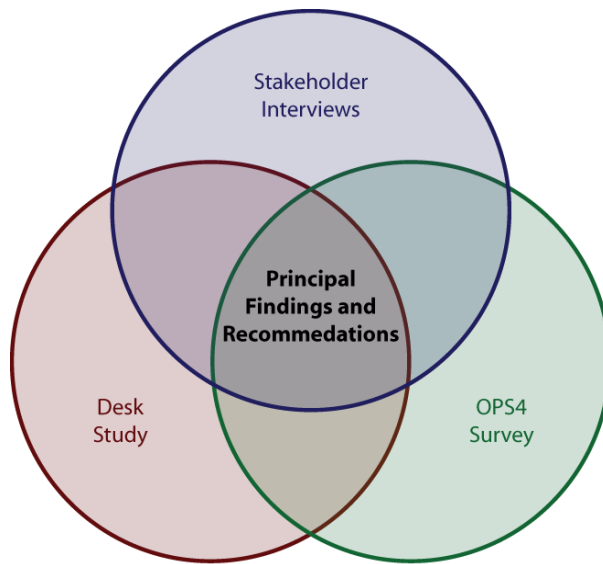
These are the key evaluation items that are the subject of this review.

1. The overall value provided to GEF stakeholders by the GEF EO processes and products. For instance, do the processes and products contribute to project success? Do processes and products focus on the right issues?
2. The degree to which the GEF EO are responsive to GEF Council needs and requests, and communicate appropriate information about evaluative evidence and quality of M&E systems to the Council.
3. The effectiveness of the working relationships established between the GEF EO and the GEF Secretariat, and between GEF EO and the GEF Agencies.
4. The degree to which GEF M&E activities and practices are open and transparent to project stakeholders.
5. The effectiveness of the quality control and oversight of M&E activities provided to the GEF Agencies by the GEF EO and GEF SEC.
6. The effectiveness of GEF EO guidance to GEF stakeholders on M&E roles and responsibilities, expectations, processes, and methods. This also includes the degree to which the minimum requirements for monitoring and evaluation and indicators for measuring results are well understood and support consistent measurement of results.
7. The effectiveness of GEF EO support for organizational learning about M&E in the context of GEF projects, country portfolios, and GEF focal areas.
8. The degree to which sufficient resources are available to support GEF monitoring and evaluation activities and responsibilities.

3. Independent M&E Review Approach

3.1 Three Components

There are three components that provided the evidence for the Independent M&E Review (Figure 1).



Three Components of the GEF EO Review

- A desk study of relevant GEF, GEF EO, and GEF stakeholder documents.
- Surveys, with questions pertaining to the M&E function included in the OPS4 survey, as well as a separate M&E survey component.
- Semi-structured interviews with M&E stakeholders in the GEF Agencies.

These three components are addressed in more detail below.

3.1.1 Desk Study

Desk Study Documents

- Documents that were included addressed:
 - Background and context for the review (e.g., The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, 2006)
 - Internal, stakeholder, and independent evaluations of GEF M&E (e.g., Peer Review of the GEF Evaluation Function)
 - M&E best practices and lessons learned from GEF EO stakeholders (e.g., Peer Review of the UNDP Evaluation Office)
- To select the documents to be reviewed during the desk study, the GEF document archives were reviewed by the project team. Additional suggestions for review were requested from GEF EO personnel and from GEF EO stakeholders.

A list of the key documents considered during the Desk Study is included in the Annex 3.

Desk Study Data Analysis

The Independent M&E Review Team collected and reviewed the relevant documents in light of the evaluation questions. Specific points from each document pertaining to each question were entered into a document tracking worksheet. The summary information was then provided to the review team.

3.1.2 OPS4 Survey

Survey Sample

All GEF stakeholders were invited to participate in the overall OPS4 survey. A subset of those respondents—those determined to have closer relationships to the M&E function of the GEF—received a separate invitation to participate in the M&E-specific survey component.

Survey Development and Delivery

The overall survey was developed with the entire OPS4 team. The Independent M&E Review Team submitted items concerning the M&E review and these were incorporated.

The M&E-specific survey component was developed by the Independent M&E Review team. The items in the survey were reviewed with the entire OPS4 team but the final decision on inclusion and format of the items was the sole responsibility of the Independent M&E Review team.

The survey was developed and administered using SurveyMonkey, a web-based survey tool. Data were collected from the online tool and analyzed.

3.1.3 Stakeholder Interviews

Sample for Stakeholder Interviews

Personnel in the evaluation and monitoring offices of the GEF Agencies were selected to participate in stakeholder interviews. Key individuals were identified through consultation with the GEF EO and M&E staff at each GEF Agency. When possible, focus group sessions with multiple stakeholders from a GEF Agency were held.

Stakeholder Interview Protocol and Data Collection

Stakeholder interviews were semi-structured around five key items:

- How is M&E working within the GEF system?
- What's working well?
- What needs improvement?
- How do things compare to 4 years ago?
- Differences between GEF SEC (monitoring) vs. EO (evaluation) performance?

The following protocol was adopted by the independent M&E survey team:

1. An e-mail was sent from the review team to potential respondents requesting their participation.
2. Respondents were asked to complete the OPS4 survey, including the M&E specific component before the interview.
3. Phone interviews were then scheduled and held with the respondents. In most cases, multiple respondents from each GEF Agency participated in the interview.

3.2 Principal Findings and Recommendations

When each of the components was complete, the evidence from each was provided to the Independent M&E Review Team. From these materials, each member of the Independent

M&E Review Team first independently prepared a list of the most important findings and recommendations that responded to the findings.

The Independent M&E Review Team then met together in several working sessions to develop the consolidated Principal Findings and Recommendations. During these sessions, themes common to the three components were identified and discussed. Each theme was then considered within the framework of the GEF M&E Policy. Those themes that the team collectively considered significant were then included in the report findings.

6. Limitations of the Methodology

Because the response to the survey was limited, sufficient data do not exist to provide the basis for a statistically significant quantitative assessment of M&E performance.

Annex 3: Major Documents Reviewed During Desk Study

Over twenty-five documents were reviewed during the Desk Study portion of the project. Many of these documents, such as the summaries of OPS4 stakeholder consultations and emerging conclusions from other OPS4 review areas, provided input that reinforced other areas of this review. For instance, a stakeholder comment in an OPS4 consultation or a conclusion from one of the OPS4 clusters may have confirmed or amplified a theme emerging from the M&E survey results. However, several documents contributed more substantively to the desk study. These included the following:

Documents Providing Background and Context

- *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2006)*

The M&E Policy provides an overview of the GEF Evaluation Office and describes their principles, mission, key functions, and activities. This document provided the overall context and framework for this evaluation.

- Four-Year Work Program and FY10 Budget of the GEF Evaluation Office (GEF/ME/C.35/4/Rev.1)
- Recommendations Concerning Certain Appointment, Reappointment and Performance Objective Reviews Processes (GEF/C.35/9)

Internal, stakeholder, and independent evaluations of GEF M&E

- Annual Monitoring Report (GEF/C.35/Inf.3)
- Annual Performance Report 2008 (GEF/ME/C.35/Inf.5)
- The Evaluation Function of the Global Environment Facility - Final Report (GEF/ME/C.35/Inf.4)
- The Response of the GEF to the Peer Review of the GEF Evaluation Function, July 23, 2009
- Self Assessment Using the Normative Framework for the Peer Review of the GEF Evaluation Office

Best Practices and Lessons Learned from GEF Stakeholders

- *UNDP Peer Review (December 2005)*

This report, which attempted to answer the question, “Does a multilateral agency’s (i.e. UNDP) evaluation system produce evaluations which are credible, valid, and usable for learning and accountability purposes?” provided some grounds for comparison of the GEF EO with other international evaluation groups. This Peer Review provides an example of the peer review process emerging as a best practice in evaluative circles.

- *UNDP Evaluation Policy (May 2006)*

The purpose of the UNDP Evaluation Policy is to establish a common institutional basis for the evaluation function. The Policy describes guiding principles, norms, and

key concepts of the UNDP evaluation approach and establishes roles and responsibilities of the key constituents of the evaluation system.

- *UNEP Lessons Learned from Evaluation (2007)*

The purpose of this paper was to develop a ‘Framework of Lessons from Evaluation’ to enhance the quality of lessons, improve their utilization, and aid their dissemination and communication. The goal is to ensure that lessons learned from evaluations are actually understood and utilized. The method for this study involved a review of the UNEP EOU lessons database; the use of ‘mind-mapping’ software and ‘problem tree’ techniques to identify common problems, issues, and or constraints; and the establishment of a Framework.

Annex 4: Questions from the Surveys

OPS4 Survey

The following M&E items were included in the OPS4 survey:

- Project-level monitoring focuses on the right issues.
- Support provided by the GEF Secretariat to Agencies improves the quality of monitoring at the project level.
- Mechanisms for disseminating monitoring and evaluation knowledge are accessible.
- Knowledge about monitoring and evaluation good practices is useful for improving project performance.
- The GEF Evaluation Office's evaluations focus on the right issues.
- Support provided by the GEF Evaluation Office to the GEF Agencies improves the quality of evaluation at the project level.
- Reports from the GEF Evaluation Office are useful for improving:
 - Strategic direction (e.g. in focal areas, operational programs, priorities)
 - Project results
 - Country portfolios

Monitoring and Evaluation Survey

The following items were included in the M&E survey:

- The role of survey respondents
- Type of involvement respondents have had with the GEF
- Project monitoring and implementation reports are a key element in current project success.
- Monitoring and evaluation processes are well-integrated into the project lifecycle.
- The GEF Evaluation Office's thematic evaluations focus on the right concerns.
- Information from the GEF Evaluation Office's thematic evaluations is useful for improving
 - Management practice and decision-making
 - GEF policies, criteria, and procedures
 - Project results
- The GEF Evaluation Office
 - Operates independently from policy-making and project assistance processes.
 - Develops useful organizational learning to improve results and results management.
 - Coordinates effectively with the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies to disseminate lessons learned and best practices from evaluations
- Clarity of indicators for each focal area

- Appropriateness of indicators for each program area
- Tools and guidelines established by the GEF Evaluation Office are helpful for guiding and improving monitoring and evaluation at the project level.
- Minimum requirements for monitoring and evaluation, as defined by the GEF Evaluation Office, support consistent measurement of results.
- Standards, norms, and other guidance developed by the GEF Evaluation Office reflect internationally recognized best practices in global environmental evaluation.
- GEF Secretariat gives helpful feedback to GEF Agencies to improve the quality of monitoring at the project level.
- The GEF Evaluation Office gives helpful feedback to GEF Agencies to improve the quality of evaluation at the project level.
- The GEF Evaluation Office communicates information from evaluations to the GEF Council that is helpful for decision-making.
- The GEF Evaluation Office is responsive to requests from the GEF Council.
- Roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation functions are clear.
- Council decisions related to recommendations from monitoring and evaluation reports are effectively implemented by the GEF Secretariat.
- Implementation of recommendations from evaluations is supported by the GEF Evaluation Office.
- Sufficient funds are available to support evaluations by the GEF Evaluation Office.
- GEF Evaluation Office' products provide good, cost-effective value.
- Sufficient funds are available to support program evaluation for:
 - Biodiversity
 - Climate Change
 - International Waters
 - Land Degradation
 - Ozone depleting substances
 - Persistent organic pollutants

Annex 5: Survey Results

OPS4 Stakeholder Survey

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	I don't know/ No Opinion
1. In the GEF						
Project-level monitoring focuses on the right issues.	6	33	28	12	1	4
Support provided by the GEF Secretariat to Agencies improves the quality of monitoring at the project level.	6	18	26	16	9	11
Mechanisms for disseminating monitoring and evaluation knowledge are accessible.	6	32	22	19	2	5
Knowledge about monitoring and evaluation good practices is useful for improving project performance.	14	43	16	8	2	3
The GEF Evaluation Office's evaluations focus on the right issues.	4	42	19	12	2	8
Support provided by the GEF Evaluation Office to the GEF Agencies improves the quality of evaluation at the project level.	6	28	26	11	2	12
2. Reports from the GEF Evaluation Office are useful for improving:						
Strategic direction (e.g. in focal areas, operational programs, priorities)	12	47	18	4	1	4
Project results	11	35	24	11	1	4
Country portfolios	11	29	29	9	1	7

Additional comments from the OPS4 survey on monitoring and evaluation:

- *The office of evaluation has no technical specialists in any of the focal areas it is supposed to evaluate nor many people with real operational experience rendering much of what they produce too separated from reality.*
- *The evaluation team may involve more local experts and key representatives of local environmental NGOs ...*
- *More flexibility + capacity building could contribute to move away from approaches which are sometimes designed to comply rather than to contribute to project objectives*
- *The monitoring role--and in general the value added--of GEF Secretariat is questionable. They do not have the expertise nor staff capacity to meaningfully contribute beyond the original role of managing portfolio level work programs and submissions to the Council.*
- *The monitoring done by the evaluation office should highlight at the national level the concerns of the focal points and issues that are related to project implementation. When these issues are highlighted by the office they should be address by the GEF in a timely manner.*
- *The EO is not providing support to agencies on M& E at all. Guidelines are more like instructions and prepared without consultation. The GEFSEC also provides no support on M& E, and certainly not at project level! It should however do more at portfolio monitoring level. All GEF M& E is focused on reporting, mainly to Council, and not on all the good elements of learning and adaptive management.*
- *Monitoring of projects should also measure contributions to relevant national programs and livelihoods of communities.*

- *We (council) receive too much information to be able to digest it. This is NOT an issue of too much analysis being done, it is an issue of trying to present too much at one time. Also, it might be useful to have some open dialogue between convention secretariats and the EO- especially the FCCC since their COP is routinely critical of GEF without really focusing on what is done v/s what can be done.*
- *Specific and user-friendly guidance on the monitoring of key indicators for each strategic program should be prepared and disseminated.*
- *The evaluation Office is apparently involved with evaluation of performance of the project. In my view evaluation should also be directed to make assessments on what the GEF is doing. Issues such as GEF governance, relations with conventions, secretariat etc.*
- *The work of the GEF Evaluation office has been comprehensive and excellent quality.*
- *La llegada de los materiales de evaluación a los puntos focales es del tipo "pull": se llega a ellos si uno visita el sitio y si se interesa. Si fuese del tipo "push" llegando a la casilla de correo de cada uno, con ejemplos concretos y a partir de algo corto e identificable, tal vez se le prestaría más atención. Una newsletter con párrafos introductorios y links a las evaluaciones sería más eficaz, particularmente en el caso en que los PF son funcionarios no rentados para la tarea que le dedican una atención horaria compartida con otras tareas a veces más urgentes.*
- *Creo que falta mayor divulgación y una CAPACITACION ESPECIAL para los funcionarios de los países en desarrollo para que aprovechemos más estas herramientas y conocimientos que existen para mejorar nuestra gestión interna en la evaluación de los proyectos. Una vez son aprobados por el GEF, el país pierde la capacidad de estar informado en todas las etapas, rara vez se le informa de cambios o ajustes y su vigilancia o control se ven mermados.*

M&E Survey

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	I don't know/ No Opinion
1. Evaluation of Projects and Programs						
Project monitoring and implementation reports are a key element in current project success.	14	10	8	2	0	2
Monitoring and evaluation processes are well-integrated into the project lifecycle.	1	15	10	9	0	1
The GEF Evaluation Office's thematic evaluations focus on the right concerns.	0	17	9	2	0	8
2. Information from the GEF Evaluation Office's thematic evaluations is useful for improving:						
Management practice and decision-making	3	19	8	3	0	3
GEF policies, criteria, and procedures	6	23	6	0	0	2
Project results	3	10	15	5	0	3
3. The GEF Evaluation Office:						
Operates independently from policy-making and project assistance processes.	6	15	8	2	1	5
Develops useful organizational learning to improve results and results management.	4	19	9	3	0	2
Coordinates effectively with the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies to disseminate lessons learned and best practices from evaluations.	3	9	8	11	0	6
4. For each focal area, indicators for measuring results are clearly defined						

OPS4 – Monitoring and Evaluation Review

Biodiversity	3	19	5	1	0	5
Climate change	2	16	1	7	0	8
International waters	3	11	4	4	0	11
Land degradation	2	15	3	4	0	9
Ozone depleting substances	2	14	5	1	0	11
Persistent organic pollutants	1	12	6	3	0	11
5. For each focal area, indicators to measure results are appropriate						
Biodiversity	1	13	6	4	0	9
Climate change	2	10	5	5	1	10
International waters	2	6	9	4	0	11
Land degradation	0	13	5	3	0	12
Ozone depleting substances	1	8	9	0	0	14
Persistent organic pollutants	0	8	7	2	0	15
6. Do you agree with the following statements?						
Tools and guidelines established by the GEF Evaluation Office are helpful for guiding and improving monitoring and evaluation at the project level.	1	15	7	4	1	5
Minimum requirements for monitoring and evaluation, as defined by the GEF Evaluation Office, support consistent measurement of results.	2	16	9	1	0	5
Standards, norms, and other guidance developed by the GEF Evaluation Office reflect internationally recognized best practices in global environmental evaluation.	2	20	6	0	0	6
7. Quality Control for GEF Agencies:						
The GEF Secretariat gives helpful feedback to GEF Agencies to improve the quality of monitoring at the project level.	3	8	7	7	3	8
The GEF Evaluation Office gives helpful feedback to GEF Agencies to improve the quality of evaluation at the project level.	2	15	7	4	2	6
8. Governance						
The GEF Evaluation Office communicates information from evaluations to the GEF Council that is helpful for decision-making.	3	21	5	0	0	7
The GEF Evaluation Office is responsive to requests from the GEF Council.	7	14	6	0	0	9
Roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation functions are clear.	3	15	12	4	0	2
Council decisions related to recommendations from monitoring and evaluation reports are effectively implemented by the GEF Secretariat.	2	12	8	2	1	11
Implementation of recommendations from evaluations is supported by the GEF Evaluation Office.	2	10	5	4	0	15
9. Resources						
Sufficient funds are available to support evaluations by the GEF Evaluation Office.	3	4	6	3	2	17
GEF Evaluation Office' products provide good, cost-effective value.	1	11	10	3	0	11
10. Sufficient funds are available to support program evaluation for:						
Biodiversity	2	4	5	2	2	20
Climate Change	2	5	5	2	2	20

International Waters	2	3	6	2	2	20
Land Degradation	2	3	6	2	2	20
Ozone depleting substances	2	3	7	1	1	21
Persistent organic pollutants	2	2	6	2	1	21

Additional comments on evaluation of projects and programs:

- *There is a concern that the GEF EO is far too close to the GEF CEO, with highly non-transparent consultation processes. This concern has been verified by mistakenly leaked emails between the CEO and the EO Director. The same also meet individually behind closed doors. The perceived lack of independence and impartiality of GEF EO is a grave concern.*
- *There are several project evaluations in which recommendations have been directed at the GEF Secretariat and GEF EO. Lessons from these evaluations could benefit the entire GEF system. There is no follow-up on the recommendations of these evaluations. What needs to be done is regular reviews of the evaluations submitted by the GEF agencies and synthesis for the GEF Secretariat issues that require follow-up.*
- *Being a Focal Point, I find that the GEF procedures are very cumbersome. It takes many months, if not years, to prepare a basic project. The time that it takes renders the initial project almost obsolete. Although the GEF country coordinators do an excellent job of keeping GEF Focal Points closely informed about the current and upcoming meetings and their results.*
 - *The monitoring and evaluation needs to be more robust and transparent.*
 - *As a final analysis, the GEF programs in the pipeline are very slow and need to be speeded up. Red tape and un-necessary paper work needs to be reduced.*
 - *Apart from the above suggestions, I remain satisfied with the GEF performance.*
- *The evaluation offices activities are focused on high-level issues, meaning they have little direct impact on enhancing project and programme performance at country or regional levels.*
- *On ne perçoit pas très bien les évaluations qui sont faites au niveau des agences d'exécution. Les choses sont très théoriques entre le Fem et les agences et ces derniers ont une très grande emprise sur les pays.*
- *La evaluación ayuda a verificar si los proyectos estan en linea con las prioridades politicas del país*

Additional comments on evaluation of norms and standards:

- *Indicators are appropriate in all cases, but far more precision and less risk of mistakes for issues with easily measurable global pollutants.*
- *Regarding the appropriateness of the indicators, I would like to emphasize that in order to demonstrate GEF's impact/results in an integrated manner and aggregately it is vital to streamline the results indicators. This can be realized by well-defining minimum set of indicators, which will commonly be monitored and evaluated for all projects in each focal area. At the same time, each and every GEF agencies should put into practice the collection of results indicators thus determined for all its projects and programs. In this respect, the number of indicators should be limited. (Not like the current situation where more than 10 indicators are specified for certain focal area.)*
- *The M&E policy is fine. The other guidelines (on TEs) are way too prescriptive. Not any other tools provided!*

Additional comments on quality control of GEF Agencies:

- *The GEF Secretariat lacks the capacity and competence to advise the agencies on monitoring or project development in general.*
- *In principle, the evaluation mechanisms of the agencies should be working closely with the GEF EO*
- *The Secretariat gives no feedback (nor should they as they are not the ones doing project monitoring) - though lessons on portfolio level would be useful.*
- *The EO has thus far not shared their reviews of any TEs so how can it be used? The aggregated feedback on weaknesses is too generic to apply to all agencies for meaningful feedback.*
- *The focus of both [the Secretariat and EO] is to assess “what’s wrong” not to actually learn and improve.*
- *No IA has ever shared the feedback they get from the GEF secretariat.*

Additional comments on governance:

- *In many cases too short time to assess effectiveness.*
- *Implementation of agreed recommendations is the role of the secretariat. One must assume that the EO helps out where needed*
- *The role of EO has been clear. The role of GEFSEC in M& E is increasingly unclear - both for portfolio and project.*
- *Sometimes the role of implementing agencies is not clear when also an executing agency is (was) involved. There is also in some cases no apparent involvement of IA/EA evaluation departments in project evaluations.*
- *Los puntos focales no tenemos conocimiento de la comunicacion entre la oficina de Evaluacion y la Secretaría*

Additional comments on resources for monitoring and evaluation:

- *The GEF has a very expensive evaluation structure. It is good to rely on the work of the independent evaluation offices of the GEF agencies, where such independence exists (esp. WB, ADB, UNDP, IFAD).*
- *The budget proposals claim that the job can be done as described. The cost overrun of OPS4 and its uneven record indicates that more funds may be needed. At the moment I trust the budget. I would tend towards being more strict with- and hence using more resources on water and land degradation since these projects have weak justification for providing and measuring global environmental benefits.*
- *Le fait de ne pas avoir les rapports disponibles dans les différentes langues de travail des Nations Unies ne permet pas une exploitation optimum des produits du Bureau de l'évaluation.*