

**AUDIT TRAIL OF COMMENTS
ON THE DRAFT APPROACH PAPERS FOR THE
FINAL OPS5 REPORT**

August 29, 2013

**Audit Trail on the Draft Approach Papers for the Final OPS5 Report:
Comments from the Senior Independent Evaluation Advisors (SIEA)**

Section	Comment	GEF EO Reply
General Comments on Second Batch of Approach Papers		
Overall Comments	<p>There is a growing understanding and acceptance by the public and major players within the private sector that climate change is posing serious threats to humanity and to the economy. Yet, resistance to change blocks an effective global response. Dr. Naoko Ishii has captured the urgency and scale of the challenges in her eloquent vision statement. She calls for transformational change within the GEF and by the world community while emphasizing the central role that GEF must play as the champion of the global commons. She commits to strengthening the GEF to support innovation by using its technical expertise, its resources and its network. She calls for new ways of working together between the private and public sectors and recognizes the need to attract new partners, strengthen existing coalitions between the GEF’s network of partners and cement trust with the Multilateral Conventions, which the GEF serves. She notes the centrality of country ownership and the importance of improving knowledge sharing among countries. She calls for a resolute focus on achieving results to position GEF as a partner of choice – an effective and lean organization.¹ It is a compelling call to action.</p>	No reply needed.
	<p>The Panel has commented on each approach paper. We are concerned that the approach papers lack the sense of the leader’s urgency. OPS5 presents an opportunity to support by identifying where action needs to be taken to accelerate transformation.</p>	<p>Approach papers need to be as factual and analytical as possible. The urgency can be introduced again in the reporting, as was done in the first report of OPS5.</p>
	<p>The Approach Paper for OPS5 follows the overall objectives of previous overall performance studies. It sets the goal for OPS5 as “To assess the</p>	No reply needed.

¹ See Dr. Ishii’s vision statement *Time for Transformational Change*

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	<p>extent to which the GEF is achieving its objectives and to identify potential improvements.”² The sub-studies and the final report need to test whether the objectives of the GEF are relevant and sufficient to meet current environmental and political economy challenges. How do the achievements of the GEF since OPS4 not only meet or surpass achievements before 2009 but also how are those achievements to be judged relative to the rate of change in climate and environmental conditions?</p>	
	<p>We would encourage the teams involved in each of the studies to explore advances from other institutions and discipline in their topic areas. For example: Knowledge management and results based management studies could draw from systems thinking in managing and evaluating international programs. New lessons are merging from collective impact partnerships and new civil society–private sector partnerships, and advances in outcome based program management have created new institutional entities that cross borders and jurisdictions within countries. Knowledge management practice in the private sector is innovative and involves common platforms across global offices that facilitating sharing good practice in real time.</p>	<p>This suggestion will be followed as much as possible, given the short time-line for the work of the sub-studies, and if possible additional work on promising avenues will be considered.</p>
<p>Assessment of GEF’s Policy on Gender Mainstreaming</p>		
<p>Overall Comments</p>	<p>The GEF Policy as described is fractured between various approaches to the elimination of discrimination. There are three broad types of discrimination: intent, unequal treatment and systemic (often referred to as institutional discrimination.) The GEF policy as described confuses these types of discrimination and potential remedies.</p> <p>Terms such as “mainstreaming” and “gender disaggregated statistics” and their purpose need precise definition to be useful in evaluating whether or not on-the-ground equality of final results have been produced.</p>	<p>The GEF relies on its Partner Agencies to mainstream gender and therefore does not provide a definitive definition of gender mainstreaming in its projects, leaving it to the Agencies, but rather focuses on processes in place. The Policy recognizes “that each GEF Partner Agency has a different gender policy, strategy or action plan, with varying application to GEF Projects” but also instructs the GEF Secretariat to work with its Partner Agencies to strengthen gender mainstreaming, ensuring that Agencies have established a Gender policy, processes and capacity that satisfy the seven requirements spelled out in the Policy.</p>

² Approach Paper for the first OPS5 Report.

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		<p>In addition, the “various approaches” on Gender mainstreaming described in the SIEA comments reflect a lack of consensus on the definition of Gender mainstreaming, in the academia, policy realm and in the development and environmental fields and among their related institutions.</p>
	<p>The evaluation needs to be clearer regarding what analytical instruments at the beginning of project are required to identify whether the potential for adverse impact exists or not. During and at the end of a project, the evaluation needs to measure whether systems have been designed and actions taken to “do no harm” at a minimum.</p>	<p>Given the lack of international consensus on the analytical instruments needed, the sub-study adopts as first approach to determine whether Terminal Evaluations for GEF projects reviewed by this sub-study have included these analytical instruments in their design.</p>
	<p>Can OPS5 also rely on information obtained from these terminal evaluations where OPS4 states were not conducted in a systematic manner?</p>	<p>Terminal Evaluations are used to reveal trends in gender mainstreaming in the GEF projects, including whether gender mainstreaming analytical instruments were used in a systematic manner. In this context, the possible differences in findings between OPS4 and OPS5 Terminal Evaluations will be of interest. The implementation of the Policy will be assessed through other components.</p>
<p>Key Findings</p>	<p>It had been stated that one of the main objectives of the gender mainstreaming policy to be adopted by GEF was to ensure that project benefits resulted in not only “global environment benefits” but also “local benefits”. Though in Table 2 under the evaluation criteria and questions, there is reference to benefits to gender, there seems to be a lack of focus and attention on whether there is benefit derived at local level. Therefore the assessment should have addressed this concern more effectively.</p>	<p>As stated in the approach paper, gender mainstreaming was addressed in the context of “local benefits”, where it was articulated as a linkage between global environmental benefits and local benefits, prior to its inclusion in a stand-alone cross-cutting Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.</p> <p>Gender components from the “local benefits” approach were thus integrated in the subsequent Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, such as the recommendation for gender sensitive social assessment and the use of disaggregated indicators.</p>
	<p>OPS4 assessed gender mainstreaming in GEF in a technical document and the OPS4 findings and recommendations are listed in the approach paper. Under this on page 3 it says, “Social & gender issues in GEF strategies and projects are not addressed systematically and the GEF cannot rely completely on the social and gender policies of its agencies”. Further down</p>	<p>We agree and the approach paper now includes a link to the review of the GEF Secretariat assessment of its Partner Agencies’ implementation of its Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, which will be confronted with evaluative evidence from these agencies and from the sub-study itself.</p>

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	<p>on page 4, it is stated that GEF will depend on the GEF partner agencies capacity to implement gender. These statements appear to be contradictory. If GEF were to rely on the partner agencies to implement gender mainstreaming, then it needs to take necessary steps to strengthen the capacity of the partner agencies. This is not sufficiently addressed.</p>	
	<p>This position is further confusing where the proposed assessment indicates that a specific assessment of the GEF secretariat will be conducted to ensure that gender mainstreaming issues are addressed. But there is no such assessment or evaluation proposed on the GEF partner agency staff regarding their capacity for gender mainstreaming. If as the approach paper says clearly that the gender mainstreaming process will depend on the GEF partner agencies, then assessing their capacity is a priority.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>
	<p>Under the OPS4 recommendations, the GEF council approved a series of policies to address the concerns. Such the report does not specify to what extent this policy response has been implemented. Have all recommendations as depicted in Table 1 on page 2, been followed and implemented?</p>	<p>Agreed. The current version of the approach paper includes an assessment of the GEF Secretariat’s responsiveness to the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. It will examine the Secretariat’s progress in meeting the gender mainstreaming capacity-building requirements stipulated in the Policy, a review of the Secretariat’s assessment of the existing ten GEF Agencies compliance with the policy, and an evaluation of the new GEF Project Agency accreditation process.</p>
	<p>A questioning of the Gender policy itself should be an important line of inquiry.</p>	<p>Agreed. The approach paper now includes an assessment of the appropriateness of the GEF’s Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. GEF Agency and third party evaluations of the GEF Agencies’ gender mainstreaming policies, strategies and action plans will be conducted to assess the appropriateness of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming for the GEF.</p>
<p>GEF Engagement with Civil Society Organizations</p>		
<p>Overall comments</p>	<p>The sub study on GEF engagement focuses on question 8 of OPS5 final report, “What are the trends in involvement of civil society”. Our comments will focus on the scope of the approach paper – has it covered all critical questions necessary for substantive coverage of engagement with CSO’s and Indigenous people?</p>	<p>GEFEO is also noting with interest the developments within the accreditation process. Review of the accreditation process, including RBM systems to monitor new agency’s engagement with CSOs, will be undertaken at a future time once the process is complete. The EO has also noted with interest the approval of two Agencies that are</p>

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	<p>The approach paper explains the GEF mandate for engagement with civil society in project implementation by describing the policy on public involvement in GEF projects and the policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environment and Social Safeguards. The policies are translated into action through multiple institutional mechanisms to involve CSO and indigenous people in projects such as the Small Grants projects, and CSO engagement in project and program design. From the Panel’s perspective, the new GEF accreditation program to establish eligibility for national, regional and civil society organizations GEF financed projects appears to be a positive initiative. We will be interested to see what results frameworks will be put in place to guide and align investment in those organizations towards GEF, Convention and country priorities.</p>	<p>CSOs: WWF and CI are soon to be eligible for direction implementation.</p>
Key Findings	<p>The paper fails to address a few main issues. One is that while the GEF are projects spread in different countries; each country identifies and defines its CSO’s by its own measurement standards. The partner countries have different laws regulating the activities of the CSO’s. These regulations can pose challenges for CSO’s involvement in international projects. Unfortunately the approach paper does not address this issue. Further the extent to which CSO cooperation is dependent or controlled by country circumstances is not addressed in the key evaluation questions.</p>	<p>Within the limitations of this study, it would be difficult for the GEFEO to evaluate sovereign country policies and engagements with CSOs. For this reason, there is not a specific key question directed at country conditions for GEF and CSO engagement. To address this important well-raised issue, the GEFEO is engaging Operational Focal Points (OFPs) at Extended Constituency Workshops (ECWs) and through an E-Survey for information on in-country barriers and enablers for CSO engagement.</p>
	<p>From the paper, it seems clear there has not been any sustained assessment/ evaluation of CSO participation in GEF financed projects. The paper mentions (page 4) that OPS4 did not delve specifically into civil society engagements with GEF. This implies that despite strong directives, the attention to CSO engagement has been scant. Further apart from the evaluation that is to be carried out, the approach paper provides no indication that steps have been taken up to OPS5 to strengthen the ties between GEF and CSOs. There appears to be little evidence of any substantive CSO involvement in GEF projects. In one place it is said that 174 projects have been implemented with GEF/ CSO participation, but no specifics are given on the intensity and level of the participation.</p>	<p>The portfolio analysis forthcoming in the CSO evaluation will have more detailed information on the ways and extent to which the GEF has engaged with CSOs. The portfolio for analysis has been extended to 226 projects with some form of CSO engagements.</p>

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	<p>The approach paper notes that the Project Monitoring Information System does not allow “tagging” of projects – (para. 16). If this is the case and if “engagement of civil society” is a broadly interpreted, doubt is cast on how GEF can monitor, learn from and evaluate the level and effectiveness of engagement between GEF financed interventions and CSO’s.</p>	<p>The evaluation will describe using the information available, lessons learned from previous engagements and degree of effectiveness of projects with CSO involvements.</p>
	<p>Under 2.2 on page 4 – “GEF engagement with civil society and indigenous people”, it is mentioned that gathering a list of projects that engage with civil society is not a straightforward task for GEF. When the approach paper mentions that GEF has close engagement with CSO’s, what then does it imply? Could it be that even basic interviews or discussions are categorized as engagement? The paper is vague on the categorization of projects with GEF and CSO’s. This should be addressed. The risks and limitations of the study need to be more clearly explained.</p>	<p>By reviewing TEs associated with projects that have CSO engagement, the EO hopes to gain more information on exactly what is meant by ‘engagement’. The portfolio analysis will define the categories of engagement. A section on limitations has been added to the approach paper.</p>
	<p>Under the “proposed evaluation study” section (page 5) – For Key question 1: “What are the trends in involvement of CSO’s in projects”, a sub question on country regulations for CSO’s involved in donor projects, might be relevant.</p>	<p>The evaluation will try to get at country regulations through the survey to country OFPs and PFPs.</p>
	<p>Any field level engagement on trends should be examine whether greater inclusion of CSO’s has benefited women-oriented organizations, whether women are represented in authentic decision-making positions in the key CSO partnerships and whether the CSO is gender intelligent in its own development and environment work.</p>	<p>While reviewing TEs from the GEF-CSO engagement portfolio, the study will pay particular attention to the gender issue, also for inclusion of information into the ‘Gender Mainstreaming’ evaluation</p>
	<p>The emphasis on local CSOs needs to be addressed in terms of opportunity cost to global action of not including global CSOs. Many large development and relief organizations have gone through profound organizational change to become global in their membership and decision-making. For some time they have been highly motivated to seek partnerships based on mutuality and equity with organizations outside of their immediate family. Five forces have contributed to this change: accumulated learning about</p>	<p>The portfolio analysis of projects involving CSOs will reveal the extent to which global vs local NGOs are acting as executing agencies and any differences in effectiveness, relevance and efficiency. The SGP evaluation will also be able to contribute information on the role of local NGOs in generating global environmental benefits and sustainability of projects.</p>

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	<p>sustainability, growing size and expertise of non-northern NGOs, scarcity of global resources, donor trends and opportunities for collaboration on global issues offered by global IT systems³. Evaluations need to address issues of omission as well as commission. The involvement of Global CSOs ought to be considered relative to what the major global environmental and development organizations can and have contributed to GEF goals.</p>	
Knowledge Management in the GEF		
<p>The Scope of the Sub-study</p>	<p>The approach paper is less explicit about the scope of the sub-study. It is noted that there are no “Scope” contained in the approach paper, but the “Objectives” can be read as the scope, that is:</p> <p>“The objectives of the Knowledge Management sub-study are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assess the extent to which the GEF’s Knowledge Management Initiative is addressing the barriers ➤ Assess the extent to which the GEF’s Knowledge Management Initiative is making progress in achieving its stated objectives. ➤ Assess the extent to which the stakeholders perceive the present Initiative, along with other knowledge management activities supported by the GEF. ➤ Compare GEF’s KM Initiative with KM efforts of other multilateral organizations” <p>From the “Objectives” stated above, the sub-study will mainly focus on the GEF’s Knowledge Management Initiative (KMI) instead of all knowledge management activities supported by the GEF. If this narrower focus is realistic and agreed, the scope of the sub-study should be clearly defined in the paper. Therefore, it is suggested that a statement on the scope be included in the approach paper outlining what is covered and what is not covered by the sub-study. The limits of the evaluation should also be acknowledged within the scope.</p>	<p>Information on the scope of the sub-study as also noted in the comments is already provided in the objectives. We used this approach for the sake of brevity. A section on scope is included in the final approach paper.</p>

³ Marc Lindenburg and C. Brynant, *Going Global: Transforming Relief and Development NGOS* (Kumarian Press: 2001) Page 159.

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Assess the Added Value of KMI	<p>The sub-study attempts to collect the evidence to assess the KMI. In the section “Methodology” of the paper, the methods for evidence collection are proposed:</p> <p><i>“The study will review in detail all KMI activity reports and supporting documentation available from the Secretariat, including..., and will examine GEF knowledge outputs which have been disseminated since launch of the KMI in 2010. In addition, OPS5 field study teams will employ a concise set of KMI-focused questions to guide interviews.....</i></p> <p><i>The study will be based upon qualitative analysis, supplemented by quantitative data which may be available on certain aspects of KM, including trends related to publication of knowledge products, downloads of GEF knowledge products and databases, page views of online sites, and citations in professional literature or relevant community of practice resources. Trends in the use of social media (blogs, Twitter, etc.) and communities of practice for knowledge-sharing will also be examined.”</i></p>	No change required.
	<p>We note that majority of the evidence to be collected involve knowledge-sharing activities or knowledge outputs, such as publication of knowledge products, the number of documents downloaded, and the communities of practice for knowledge-sharing, etc. While these are critical evidence of the adoption of knowledge-sharing practices, they may not be adequate to assess the added value of KMI and fully address the key question for Final OPS5 Report.</p>	<p>This is true. We are also relying on interviews of the key stakeholders and informants on utility and added value of knowledge sharing activities. No change required.</p>
	<p>Under cross-cutting policies, KMI was developed in parallel with implementation of a GEF Results-Based Management (RBM) framework. KMI in the GEF cannot be understood as a standalone issue, but has to be embedded in RBM framework. It means that further works are required in the sub-study to develop an analytical framework linking knowledge management efforts to RBM.</p>	<p>True, the sub-study is being taken jointly with the sub-study on RBM. The staff involved in these two sub-studies and the instruments used for data collection are the same. The reason why KM is being treated separately is that there is a risk for it to get less attention when covered only within the framework of the RBM sub-study. No change required.</p>

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Knowledge Management in GEF Network at Different Levels	Since the GEF exists as a network of organizations collaborating to achieve its objectives, this would allow an assessment of the value added of knowledge management in GEF at the local, regional and global level. It is not enough clear in the approach paper how to deal with the issue on knowledge management in GEF network at different levels.	Information is being gathered on this topic through interviews with the stakeholders in the countries (including both national and local scales) and at the global level. The sub-study will identify at what levels within the GEF network each of the various findings apply (local, regional or global).
Evaluating the Health of the GEF Partnership		
Overall comments	The sub-study will use Social Network Theory as a framework to assess the GEF partnership. The power of Social Network Theory stems from its difference from traditional sociological studies. It emphasizes the relationships and ties among the actors within a network as opposed to the attributes of the individual actors. Social Network Theory is frequently used in sociological and political science research to explain many real-world phenomena. However, it's use in evaluation is rare. It is difficult to find a really good evaluation example that has assessed the health of the network as a whole. We are optimistic that the sub-study has the potential to assist GEF in addressing systemic issues in OPS 5.	The Evaluation Office used network analysis for the recently completed Impact Evaluation of GEF in the South China Sea. The use of this method was crucial for some of the key findings of the evaluation. Network analysis will allow a better understanding on the intensity and quality of interactions among actors and the effect of these interactions on the network. Network analysis is one tool that this evaluation will use; it will also include in-depth interviews with stakeholders and desk review of appropriate documents.
	The terms of “network” and “partnership” need further clarification. It is sometimes not easy to understand why the two terms are used in the different places of the paper. It would be helpful to give a concrete definition of the GEF network and “partnership” since they are the main concepts of the study. There are differences between the two. Without clarity in the definitions and disciplined use of the terms, confusion easily created at the expense of revealing insights about how to design and manage effective partnerships and networks.	The focus of the evaluation has been more precisely defined to include GEF Secretariat, Agencies and for some issues Country Focal Points. Network analysis will be applied mostly to her first two.
	The sub-study will use social network theory as a framework to assess the GEF partnership. The proposed “Framework for Analysis” includes three aspects: Roles, Relationships between network members, Network Dynamics (Para 18, 20 and 23). For implementation, the sub-study will have three components (Para 26, 27 and 28): (1) Historical mapping of partnership structure and function (2) Assessment of changes in	No reply needed.

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	<p>partnership health (3) Assessment of factors affecting partnership health.</p> <p>The paper would benefit from more clarity on how the “Framework for Analysis” can be used to address the 4 sub-questions. And relationship between the 3 aspects in the framework and the 3 components for the implementation is not explicit. You might want to consider a matrix (relating 4 sub-questions, 3 aspects in the framework and 3 components for the implementation) could be formulated to guide this sub-study.</p> <p>The sub-study “defines the scope of the partnership to be assessed as mainly comprised of the actors who have an operational role in the GEF project cycle, namely the Secretariat, the agencies, and the country focal points. Relationships with other actors will be assessed only to the extent that they influence this partnership.” (Para 7) It may be reasonable for the sub-study that the GEF partnership be viewed narrowly, not including the private sector and civil society organizations. However, in face of the current slow economic recovery, business and civil society engagement and private-public partnership will play an even greater role especially in bridging financial gaps in order to deliver global environmental benefits. GEF is making an effort to be more innovative in encouraging and facilitating private-public partnerships. Therefore, the sub-study report needs to be carefully reviewed to avoid giving the impression to outside readers that the GFE partnership is only concerned with internal GEF system.</p>	<p>The approach paper has reorganize subtitles and questions to explicitly indicate how the different components, sub-questions and aspects of the network are related.</p> <p>The scope of this evaluation is to examine the health of the GEF “inner partnership”, in other words to focus on the interactions among operational partners. Aspects related to partnerships with other institutions or agents would be part of other review such as the review addressing engagement with Civil Society Organizations and the engagement with the private sector.</p>

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Results Based Management in GEF		
Overall Comments	<p>The key objective of the study is to assess the extent to which the RBM approach is meeting the needs of the GEF partnership as judged by an assessment of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Progress in the improvement of systems and tool for monitoring results; ➤ The extent to which those systems are used for decision-making and adaptive management across the partnership; ➤ The extent to which the RBM approach is appropriate and realistic and ➤ The extent to which it had taken into accounts other organizational experience. <p>The focus in the objectives on managerial use is key. Experience tells us that most RBM systems in the development context remain project idiosyncratic and exact significant costs for data collection that is rarely used except for compliance or at best, for allocation purposes. The survey tool of managers needs to take into consideration the fact that most monitoring systems have not been designed to help managers to do their substantive work. In fact, results systems are often found to be a hindrance because they are designed too soon and on rigid software platforms like Oracle and SAP which are very expensive to change after design and apparently have little capacity for horizontal relationships.</p>	<p>Indeed this is where we are trying to focus: how the information being gathered through the RBM is being used within the partnership.</p> <p>Thanks for the suggestions on the nature of the questions that need to be addressed to the managers.</p>
	<p>Meanwhile expectations of development managers have changed and increased. Out of necessity they have to be more innovative and adaptive in reacting to fast-paced change and increased complexity. They have to do more with fewer resources. The trend seems to be that little effort is expended on designing information systems to support new management roles implicit in managing for results. Little value is placed on helping managers to think about what it means to manage multidisciplinary teams which are inherent in managing for outcomes or to use results information to encourage reflective thinking within those team at the senior executive</p>	<p>Thanks for the observation.</p>

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	<p>level. Most organizations expend serious money in better and better systems for marginal gains in the quality of information while spending few resources on building managerial capacity to interpret the data they do have. Therefore managers surveyed will not likely have an understanding of strategic results based management and may not be able to make an informed judgment on the utility of the system for adaptive management.</p>	
	<p>Taking this situation in consideration, the results evaluation team could consider designing the survey instrument on managerial use of the results systems to be flexible enough to encourage managers to think about systemic approaches and use of data in real time. Some test of managerial capacity to actually use evidence in interventions with staff and stakeholders would be useful. For example, look for whether managers in interaction with staff and partners use the data from GEF systems to ask evaluative and innovative questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What happened and why? ➤ What could have been done differently given real time results? ➤ Whether there is an opportunity for innovation? ➤ What institutional changes would be necessary to support different interventions in order to get the results desired? <p>Or do they just check for completion of tasks on time and budget?</p>	<p>Thanks for the suggestion.</p>
	<p>The survey might also test whether or not managers are able to compare results through a common currency of indicators among the five focal areas and the four strategic goals. This can be done by aligning a selection of projects against the goals and then comparing their results frameworks. This often reveals that the same results are measured with slightly different indicators or the same indicators are differently defined making comparisons impossible.</p>	<p>Thanks for this interesting suggestion on how to tackle this aspect. Given the time constraints, the sub-study will not able to go in this depth. However, there is a need to look into this issue in the future-work of the Office.</p>

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	<p>It would be useful to identify that the types of managers under consideration: project managers, middle level sector managers, senior leadership? GEF partner management? Country managers and leaders?</p>	<p>Thanks for the suggestion. The evaluation team would see how this may be addressed. At the moment the number of managers to be interviewed might not be sufficient to give an analysis based on typologies of managers.</p>
	<p>As in the Senior Evaluation Advisory Team’s earlier discussions with the GEF evaluation office, we would like to reaffirm the concept of alignment as being more than “falls under a priority” of the GEF or the government. Alignment is at the heart of evidence-based management. It means that results metrics used example to the overarching strategy and its higher level metrics of host country (s) program and the GEF Results Framework as outlined in the replenishment documents for GEF5.</p> <p>The approach paper states that: <i>“In addition, a project proposal should also be aligned with the priorities of the recipient countries where it is being implemented. While an elaborate project appraisal process ensures that the projects funded by the GEF are aligned with the GEF priorities, a requirement that each project proposal be endorsed by the country government ensures alignment with the country priorities. The actual level of alignment is, however, an empirical question.” (Para. 15)</i></p>	<p>These observations have been noted.</p>
	<p>The coverage of the alignment of the GEF funded program results frameworks to the country(s) instruments needs to be strengthened. In the spirit of both Paris and Busan, country ownership is central to the international community’s conceptions of what constitutes development effectiveness. Issues around harmonizing projects to county priorities are very complex for donors and especially for the GEF that works through other agencies such as the World Bank and UNDP they are doubly complex. It is that very complexity that led the international community to commit in the MDGS and the Monterrey, Rome, Paris and even Busan agreements to improve results on a global scale with less cost more harmonization and with more engaged governments. Country endorsement of the project does not</p>	<p>The question of alignment with national priorities is indeed an important issue. While the RBM sub-study is not able to fully address all aspects of this topic (it could be a study in itself), relevant questions on alignment will be asked during interviews with in-country stakeholders which will provide some evidence for the RBM sub-study.</p>

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	<p>mean the project is supporting government priorities. A clear line of site of a few but vital measurable indicators from the project to appropriate country environmental strategy and program priorities metrics demonstrates alignment when the country uses those metrics for its own learning, decisions and investments. If authentic alignment does not exist, that is a “finding.” Without the finding, there will be no incentive to find solutions to the lack of alignment and the effects that its absence has on sustainability.</p>	
	<p>While the approach paper states that the sub-study will not provide the answers to the key questions, a minimum analytical framework or matrix, relating key questions with the “building blocks” should be included in the approach paper. The analytical framework will reflect how the key aspects will be examined and how the data will be interpreted against the key questions.</p> <p>The analytical framework should not be complicated, but the team’s intended efforts for data collection and analysis should appear focused. The analytical framework should (1) address the evaluation questions; (2) take into account the key aspects of the evaluation questions (such as: new financing channels, comparative advantage, resource mobilization, donor performance, etc.); (3) explain the use of different approaches (i.e., database, document review, interview, etc.); and (4) indicate explicitly the information sources and availability; and (5) explain how the analysis can be used and by whom for what.</p>	<p>Given the fact that the higher level questions can only be addresses through “common sense” rather than internationally agreed upon benchmarks or comparative evaluative findings, the analytical framework cannot spell out in detail how data will lead to findings.</p>
	<p>A section on limitations to be added in the paper A section noting the limitations in the methodology as well as any problems or challenges in the implementation should be added in the approach paper to manage the expectations surrounding the paper and to reduce risks by identified anticipated findings.</p>	<p>A section on limitations has been added.</p>

Section	Comment	GEF EO Reply
Review of the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel		
Overall Comments	<p>Focusing on the key question 7 of the Final OPS5 Report, the approach paper does a good job in elaborating the three sub-questions. A matrix, which consists of a breakdown of the issues to respond to each of the three sub-questions, is formulated to guide this sub-study. The three sub-questions deal with the most important aspects regarding the role of STAP. If it is possible to answer all of them, the sub-study will provide a good input for the Final OPS5 Report.</p> <p>However, while the three inter-related “evaluation components” with associated sub- questions are described in the approach paper (Para 10), the paper seems a bit less detailed in this section which deals with the main activities, work plan and deliverables for each components.</p>	<p>No reply needed</p> <hr/> <p>The final version of the approach paper presents a more detailed set of activities by which the questions will be answered.</p>
Take into account a template for verification of STAP’s self-assessment	<p>The second component of the sub-study consists of an independent verification of STAP’s self-assessment. This component will be carried out by the GEF Evaluation Office. It is suggested that a template or framework for verification of STAP’s self-assessment (including criteria, aspects, key issues, etc.) be considered as an essential tool to ensure evaluation process transparent enough.</p>	<p>Yes we agree, there has to be both transparency and comparability.</p>
“Hard” versus “Soft” evidence	<p>Given the complexity of STAP itself and broad objectives of OPS5, the quantitative or “hard” evidence may not be sufficient. To be relevant and useful, it is realistic for the sub-study to make use of the perception-based or “soft” evidence from transparent sources, such as the opinions of different stakeholders gathered through the interviews.</p>	<p>Yes agree, the review will have to include a judicious combination of “hard” evidence and give considerable attention to perceptions. In fact in an evaluation of this kind perceptions are key as attitudes and behavior of the actors are strongly influenced by perceptions.</p>
	<p>There is a need to discuss how to deal with “soft” evidence for this type of strategic level evaluation. It is noted that in the second component of the sub-study, some findings will based on the opinions of different stakeholders gathered through interviews with current and past STAP members, selected Council members, current and previous members of the STAP Secretariat, the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies, the scientific bodies of Conventions and other relevant organizations. As the credible evidence is</p>	<p>Agree, as indicated in reference to the previous comment, the evaluation will combine the use of hard evidence with an assessment of perceptions.</p>

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	<p>the basis for evaluation judgments, although the opinions of different stakeholders are important evidence to assess the key roles of STAP, it is better that the opinions are not to be used as the only source of evidence to present the findings. If the perception-based evidence cannot be triangulated with the other evidence, it should be made explicit in the report.</p>	
<p>A section of limitations to be added in the paper</p>	<p>It is suggested that a section noting the limitations in the methodology as well as any problems or challenges in the implementation could be added in the approach paper.</p>	<p>A section has been added to the approach paper on challenges and laminations of the evaluation.</p>
<p>Sub-study on GEF Engagement with the Private Sector</p>		
<p>Overall Comments</p>	<p>The sub-study addresses key question 8 of the Final OPS5 Report: “To what extent is the GEF support able to mobilize stakeholders on the ground? What are trends in involvement of the private sector and of civil society organizations?” It will provide the context setting of GEF engagement with the private sector and an update of the evaluation findings of GEF and GEF Agency Evaluation Offices. The sub-study will also intend to provide findings and conclusions for consideration in the GEF-6 replenishment exercise. The approach paper provides a good overview on the context of GEF engagement with the private sector and brings together the information from available evaluative sources as well as gives a detailed work plan for the implementation phase to come</p>	<p>No comment</p>
<p>Further interpret key question and identify related sub-questions</p>	<p>It is noted that GEF engagement with the private sector should be considered in a broader context, both at the strategic level and project level. We find that further interpretation of key question 8 need more works, which could be done by means of identifying related sub-questions. It is suggested that the sub-questions to specify the aspects behind the key question are to be elaborated.</p> <p>Some examples of sub-questions are as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key roles the GEF-5 Private Sector Strategy plays in 	<p>A meeting of an Expert Panel on the private sector took place on July 1-2, 2013 (see attached minutes). The Panel was presented with findings gathered to date and guided the EO with the development of an evaluative framework for Phase II of the sub-study. The EO will take on the sub-questions recommended by the SIEA along with guidance from the Panel which includes including evidence from TEs to inform, for ex :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the key lessons by FA for GEF6 FA strategies and signature programs?

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	<p>strengthening GEF engagement with the private sector?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What factors or conditions have contributed or hindered private sector involvement in GEF operations (positive factors and negative factors)? • What are the situations with regard to GEF engagement with private sector in different focal areas? Why does private sector involvement in some focal areas work better than in others? • How can the GEF incentivize the private sector involvement? • What steps should be taken to facilitate the GEF engagement with the private sector? • What are potential challenges in promoting GEF engagement with the private sector? 	<p>2. What is an appropriate role for GEF engagement vis a vis existing platforms?, etc.</p>
<p>Taking up the debate on the GEF engagement with the private sector</p>	<p>It is observed that there are some different points of view regarding the GEF engagement with the private sector. For example, the positive views emphasize that GEF needs to be more innovative in terms of how to encourage and facilitate private sector involvement. But some others point out that there were unrealistic expectations of GEF’s ability to attract additional private capital.</p>	<p>The EO will try to differentiate stakeholders presenting various viewpoints in the final report and address where GEF has been and has most potential to be successful in future private sector engagement.</p>
	<p>It is noted that the mixed evaluative evidence is described in the approach paper: “Documented evaluative evidence can be mixed; for example, the review of the Earth Fund found that there were unrealistic expectations of that platform’s ability to attract additional private capital. Review of GEF’s forays into support for solar photovoltaic also found that it scale up was difficult. Meanwhile, program level evaluations and external reviews from initiatives such as energy efficiency, ozone depleting substances and efficient lighting indicate positive trends in involvement with the private sector leading to broader market change.” (Para 18)</p> <p>In order to increase the usefulness and the credibility of OPS5, we suggest the sub-study should be conducted in a complete and balanced manner with the intention being to ensure that different perspectives are represented and addressed.</p>	<p>The stub study will reference and attribute to the greatest extent possible the source of evaluative information as the basis for credible findings and recommendations.</p>

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Assessment of GEF Project Cycle		
Overall Comments	<p>According to the TORs for the Assessment of GEF Project Cycle, the past evaluations concluded that the lag time for proposals awaiting approvals had become unacceptably long. In 2007 the GEF council approved a new project cycle. The rationale of this was to reduce the lag time between PIF approval and CEO endorsement that was taking 22 months during OPS4. This lag time was to be reduced to 18 months for OPS5 according to the GEF meeting in 2010. However, there are no concrete indicators to verify that this has happened.</p>	<p>This will be verified through analysis of the PMIS data. Preliminary findings on this topic have already been included in the first report of OPS-5.</p>
	<p>During OPS4 and after, start up delays, slow implementation in project cycles has been reported in majority of projects. According to Annual Performance reports, over 40% of projects have been completed more than a year late. If it has not been sufficiently corrected for OPS5, then this same trend is continuing. These delays can negate the whole purpose of a project impact. Therefore it is imperative to have verification through evaluation processes to ensure project cycles are completed effectively and in a timely manner.</p>	<p>The extent to which project are completed in a timely manner is already being done and reported on by the GEF EO. Extension of project completion dates is a symptom and by itself it does not tell whether delayed completion is desirable. Extension of project completion dates may be required due to factors that are controllable, partially controllable or beyond the control of the management. The focus needs to be on assessing the reasons for project extensions and its consequences. In several instances extensions do allow the management to complete project activities and, therefore, allow projects to achieve their desired results. In other instances they may lead to lower impacts.</p>
	<p>According to the report, a sub-study by the performance evaluation Team will be done to determine various factors affecting project cycle performance. No definite time frame when this sub study report will be available. It might be too late to do corrections for the OPS5 replenishment process.</p>	<p>The sub-study is planned to be completed in September 2013.</p>
	<p>The sub-study too will rely on getting data from the PMIS dataset and other available datasets for the quantitative analysis -is the PMIS dataset up to date with information of projects up to April 2013 and does the PMIS cover all indicators? - Will the PMIS dataset have all the required indicators for project cycle performance?</p>	<p>The key indicators pertain to time lags at different stages/ mile stones of the project cycle. PMIS – despite its weaknesses – remains the best source of data on this topic. This is especially true for GEF-4 and GEF-5 period.</p>

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Joint GEF/UNDP SGP Evaluation: Preparing for GEF (TOR)		
Opening Remarks	<p>The TORs for the Joint UNDP-GEF Small Grants Program will test the implementation of the recommendations of the 2008 evaluation of the SGP. They indicate that there will be an analysis of trends concerning networking, management, M&E, focal areas and capacity development; there will be a specific analysis of those programs that have graduated from small to full size programs (FSP). Efficiency and effectiveness will be tested. Sustainability will be tested in phase 2 when the evaluation examines whether or not the program has led to "scaling up" or replication. There is also a desire to look at whether or not systemic changes have resulted.</p>	No reply needed
	<p>The TORs indicate a low-key approach to the evaluation that will focus on effectiveness and efficiency issues. There is some coverage of gender in the second phase, although the assumption, indigenous groups and women only come into sight at the micro level for GEF is a controversial assumption. There is mention of comparison of the SMG program with other UN small grants programs. It might also be worth examining trends in philanthropic foundations strategy and funding.</p>	<p>The TORs neither mention nor assume that indigenous people and women only come into sight at the micro level for GEF. They merely state, at paragraph 32, that the Joint GEF/UNDP SGP Evaluation also represents a good opportunity to gather evaluative evidence for contribution to the parallel OPS5 sub-study of the GEF gender strategy and can provide evidence on the forms in which GEF engages with indigenous peoples.</p>
Paragraph 5	<p>The description of the SMG program is very positive: “SGP contributes to resolving global environment and sustainable development challenges by providing small grants to communities and CSOs for projects aligned with the strategic priorities of the GEF and within the framework of sustainable development. SGP supports community-level initiatives across the range of global environmental issues addressed by the GEF with the added integration of actions that lead to poverty reduction and empowerment. Participation, democracy, flexibility and transparency are cornerstones of the SGP approach. SGP’s niche lies in its innovative community-based approach, strong country-drivenness, and Strategic international connectivity as a global programme, creating transformative impact Community, national and international levels.” The description above is strong endorsement of the DGP. It may need to</p>	<p>The Joint Steering Committee (JSC) of the evaluation had the same assessment. As a result, in the TORs version approved by the JSC on May 22, 2013 the language of paragraph 5 was rephrased in a more neutral manner, to avoid pre-evaluative judgments. The whole document has been reviewed and rectified in the same way.</p>

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	<p>be less evaluative in tone in order to communicate a more neutral stance by UNDP and GEF evaluation offices at the beginning of the evaluation.</p>	
Paragraph 13	<p>(iii) " Are the M&E systems in SGP at central as well as local level adequately tracking SGP's contributions to global environmental benefits, as well as other important contributions? "</p> <p>Is there something missing with the M&E "contributing to other important contributions"?</p> <p>The M&E systems need to be simple enough to be managed by local groups with small knowledge budgets and often little RBM or M&E experience. Yet if the evaluators are to test contribution they must look for the metrics that indicate the grants to contribute knowledge on a higher plane. Is there a mathematical relationship? Is the final destination clear to the NGOs and CSOs so they can develop their M&E to show contribution to a higher plane? If the metrics are not available, then what common criteria will the team use to judge contribution that may be more qualitative or episodic?</p>	<p>The question was rephrased emphasizing on the usefulness of the M&E systems to the local groups.</p>
	<p>Depending on the reality of the SGP, it could be that the evaluation might want to instead ask if the M and E systems are useful to the local groups in learning and in helping them to build confidence in their progress and are strong enough to be used to attract others to support or join their mission.</p>	<p>The question was reformulated in order to include factors favoring or hindering up-scaling, replication and mainstreaming.</p>
Paragraph 16	<p>(ii) "To what extent have SGP good practices and lessons been effectively up-scaled, replicated or mainstreamed?"</p> <p>One purpose of MfDR is to identify what can be scaled up, replicated and mainstreamed. It is also to identify what could not be scaled up and why...contributing both lessons from interventions that did not work about why they did not work...thus saving time and effort of others who might try the same intervention. Too often valuable lessons are swept under the table in efforts to avoid the embarrassment of failure. This is unfortunate</p>	<p>Thanks for these suggestions, we will look into the feasibility of it and will certainly do it if feasible.</p>

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	<p>as some interventions can only be tested in application. The question could be written as follows: To what extent have SGP intervention results been captured to identify what can or cannot be scaled, replicated and mainstreamed and why?</p> <p>The team might want to try looking at learning from failure as an efficiency issue looking at the % of projects that did go to scale etc. also as an indicator of efficiency.</p> <p>Finally, UNDP and GEF are to be commended for undertaking a joint evaluation and for ensuring that local consultants are involved for the country studies. Joint evaluations and country representation have the potential to reduce transactions for already stretched host governments, widen the perspective from which judgments are made, promote sharing of insights on methods and spread the knowledge gained by virtue of the evaluation to a broader audience.</p>	