



Final Evaluation of the
Global Support Programme
to the National Capacity Self-Assessments
Final Evaluation Report

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CB	Capacity Building
CD	Capacity Development
COP	Conference of the Parties
C&W Africa	Central and Western Africa
ECIS	Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
E&E	Environment and Energy
E&S Africa	East and Southern Africa
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoTL	Government of Timor Leste
GSP	Global Support Programme
IA	Implementing Agencies
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MSP	Mid-size Project
PIR	Project Implementation Report
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessments
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change
USA	United States of America
ToRs	Terms of Reference

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recognition to increase support for capacity-building in developing countries in order to achieve their sustainable development goals has grown over the last ten years. The Beijing Declaration of the Second GEF Assembly, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) and other convention decisions such as the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have stressed the importance of capacity building. In addition, more and more UN agencies, such as United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Environment Programme, are mainstreaming capacity building in their programming. Stemming from such impetus, in 2000 the GEF launched the Capacity Development Initiative to provide a broad assessment of capacity needs to address national as well as global environmental issues. As a response to this, in 2003, the GEF initiated the Strategic Approach to Enhanced Capacity Building, establishing four Pathways to capacity building, the first being a National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA).

The NCSAs were undertaken by each country and supported by GEF funding. However, after a couple of years, momentum for the capacity building agenda was waning and countries were expressing challenges in producing their NCSA. It was under this context that the Global Support Programme (GSP), was approved by GEF council in 2004 (GEF/C.22.8), and established in 2005 as a joint facility of UNDP and UNEP, funded by the GEF. It was intended to be a three-year programme which was then extended to five years. The GSP provided guidance and assistance for countries to undertake their NCSAs, through such support as training workshops, a resource kit, a newsletter, the NCSA website, an intranet website, and hands-on guidance.

Initially, each country received approximately US\$200,000 with which to undertake project activities over a period of approximately 18-24 months. Some countries received an early grant of US\$25,000 to prepare the project proposal requesting the NCSA grant. By January 2009, 1.45 million USD of the 1.85 million USD budget had been expended, leaving just under 0.4 million USD remaining in the budget¹. Between 2002 and 2010 a total of 146 countries had taken advantage of the NCSA programme, with 120 having completed their NCSAs by January 2010².

Scope of the Evaluation

The GSP underwent a mid-term evaluation (MTE) in August 2009, which assessed the results of the GSP in accordance to the OECD DAC criteria and examined in depth issues pertaining to performance, structural managerial issues as well as efficiency. Given this final evaluation was conducted the following year, it looked at the more substantive role of the GSP in supporting NCSA project teams.

¹ GSP Mid-Term Evaluation

² Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in GEF Operations, no date, available at <http://nca.undp.org>

Therefore, based on the Terms of Reference, the final evaluation looked at five key evaluation questions:

1. To what extent is there still a demand for the technical services provided by the GSP?
2. Was the use of the GSP the best strategy for the delivery of technical support?
3. To what extent has the GSP been effective in providing technical support for the implementation of the NCSAs?
4. What have been the impacts of the NCSAs?
5. To what extent, has the GSP been effective in providing sustainable support and results for the implementation of the NCSAs?

Findings

In the overall context of capacity building for developing countries to reach their sustainable development goals, there are still a great deal of demand and needs for technical support. At a more institutional level countries require assistance to respond to their commitments of the Rio Conventions, as well implementing the NCSA recommendations (action plans) and seeking funding for projects. Given the context in which the GSP was created, the establishment of such a support programme was clearly needed and relevant for countries. In order to move forward on capacity development, there is still a need and a demand for such technical support for countries. However, the GSP and its current specific mandate would no longer be relevant beyond the NCSA process, and thus beyond Pathway I of the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building.

The aim of the GSP was to provide a one-stop shop for countries that needed assistance to undertake their NCSAs. The GSP was housed in the UNDP offices in New York with a small team to implement the GSP activities and assist countries. The GSP was to engage more regional stakeholders in the assistance of technical support as a means to have sustainable support for the implementation of the capacity building recommendations in the NCSAs. Unfortunately, this did not materialize as a result of the lack of human resources, knowledge, and capacity within most of the organizations, with the exception of one in the Pacific which has a dedicated staff member to capacity development. Nonetheless, the GSP was a good modality for delivery of technical services. Project teams and stakeholders that have used the GSP held the delivery of its technical expertise in high esteem through highly professional and good technical knowledge as well as a variety of useful tools.

The GSP has indeed been effective in providing technical support for the implementation of the NCSAs. The GSP developed guidance material and provided technical backstopping to NCSA country teams, analyzed lessons learned from the NCSAs, and developed programming frameworks for the systematic implementation of cross-cutting capacity development priorities. At the end of the GSP mandate, there were 120 completed NCSAs, 14 under implementation, 11 currently drafting their Final Report and 7 cancelled out of a total of 153 approved, and 166 eligible countries. Of these NCSAs, 23 have resulted in CB2 or follow-up activities that are currently in process. However, some challenges were noted that affected its

overall effectiveness, such as the slowing momentum of the GSP and the NCSA process, as a result of changing human resources at the GSP, changing global priorities, and stakeholder involvement.

The NCSA process was a valuable exercise for countries to take an introspective look at their capacity to undertake growing environmental issues. The support provided by the GSP allowed for the countries to take on such an initiative without solely relying on external consultants. As such, countries have a better sense of their capacities and needs. However, ownership of capacity building issues are varied in each country, as such some countries need continued support to engage stakeholders and implement their NCSA recommendations. For a project with such a specific mandate, the impacts of the GSP have been notable, especially in regards to catalyzing the NCSA process in participating countries. As a result, NCSA project teams and stakeholders have reported better synergies with focal points of the other Rio Conventions, follow-up projects, increased stakeholder involvement, and a better understanding of the convention processes.

The sustainability of the GSP results highly depends on the participating countries. Given that there is still a great need and demand for technical guidance, it remains to be seen whether countries will be able to implement their NCSA recommendations and action plans. One of the weaknesses of the GSP has been its inability to engage regional institutions. As a result, this could limit the sustainability of its efforts in participating countries. In light of this shortfall, the GSP has contributed to ensuring the sustainability of its results at a more institutional level, through the development of indicators, and ensuring that the results of its work is available on the UNEP and UNDP Corporate websites. In addition, it has set up an intranet website, where countries can become members and share knowledge and insight on the implementation of their NCSA recommendations and other capacity building initiatives.

Recommendations

In order to ensure that the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building moves forward, the evaluation has three recommendations for future support programmes:

- There are still a number of needs identified by countries and their NCSAs. Although, the GSP as it stands may not provide the full support needed, countries would still benefit from support in regards to the implementation of their NCSA recommendations and actions plans especially in regards to moving towards Pathway IV of the GEF Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building.
- In order to respond to the Conventions through the implementation of their NCSA action plans, such a support programme is clearly needed in countries. As such, part of the funding for the GEF enabling activities should ensure that a GSP type of programme is in place to support countries in providing quality assessments and reports, and provide access to technical experts, workshops, materials and tools.

- In order to ensure sustainability of the work done by the GSP, increasing the capacity of regional organizations to provide technical expertise in CB in the long run would be beneficial for the implementation of CB activities, for regional monitoring of CB, and regional collaboration. The countries would benefit from having more regional resources which would promote greater country ownership and engaged more stakeholders in the process.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines capacity development as *the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time*. For UNDP, supporting capacity development is a process that consists of five steps that are embedded into a programming process: (1) Engage stakeholders on capacity development; (2) Assess capacity assets and needs; (3) Formulate a capacity development response; (4) Implement the response; (5) Evaluate capacity development. UNDP supports capacity development through advocacy and advice; methods and tools; knowledge services; programme support and partnerships.³

The recognition to increase support for capacity-building in developing countries in order to achieve their sustainable development goals has grown over the last ten years. The Second Overall Performance Study of the GEF and the Policy recommendations of the Third GEF Replenishment both stressed the continuation of capacity development through enabling activities to increase effectiveness and efficiency in recipient countries. The Beijing Declaration of the Second GEF Assembly, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) and other convention decisions such as the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have stressed the importance of capacity building.

Stemming from such impetus, in 2000 the GEF launched the Capacity Development Initiative to provide a broad assessment of capacity needs to address national as well as global environmental issues. As a response to this, in 2003, the GEF initiated the Strategic Approach to Enhanced Capacity Building. The latter is comprised of four pathways. *Pathway I* is an initial National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) to be used as a guide for future capacity developing projects, through regular GEF projects which is *Pathway II*; *Pathway III* includes the new GEF funding window for countries to implement priority cross-cutting capacity development medium-size projects. Lastly, *Pathway IV* comprises country action programmes in Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States⁴. The GEF Strategic Approach based itself on ten operational principles for effective capacity-building, the first three comprising: (1)

³ UNDP, Supporting Capacity Development: The UNDP Approach, 2008

⁴ GSP Report 2005, Mid Term Evaluation, 2009

ensuring national ownership and leadership; (2) ensuring multi-stakeholder consultations and decision-making; (3) basing capacity building efforts on self-needs assessment⁵. These principles were key to ensuring the success of the NCSA process.

The Global Support Programme (GSP), approved by GEF council in 2004 (GEF/C.22.8), was established in 2005 as a joint facility of UNDP and UNEP, funded by the GEF. It was intended to be a three-year programme, serving as a learning mechanism for capacity building with the intention of providing support to the GEF Strategic Approach. Initially its first priority has been to support countries that undertook an assessment of their capacities to meet commitments under the Rio Conventions, namely the NCSA. Such support mechanisms have included but are not limited to: e-group list-serves, the GSP-NCSA newsletter, NCSA websites, training workshops as well as a resource kit, provided by GEF Secretariat and reviewed by UNDP and UNEP. The latter included resources for all five steps of the NCSA process (inception, stocktaking, thematic assessments, cross-cutting analyses, report and action plan) as well as tools and strategies such as various matrices to be used (i.e., a Quality Management Matrix), analysis and planning tools (i.e., Problem Tree Analysis), guidance from the conventions and strategies to engage stakeholders⁶. The intention of the GSP was to provide an increased support to the countries during the elaboration of their NCSAs via the GSP, Implementing Agencies (IAs) and the GEF.

Initially, each country received approximately US\$200,000 with which to undertake project activities over a period of approximately 18-24 months. Some countries received an early grant of US\$25,000 to prepare the project proposal requesting the NCSA grant. By January 2009, 1.45 million USD of the 1.85 million USD budget had been expended, leaving just under 0.4 million USD remaining in the budget⁷. Between 2002 and 2010 a total of 146 countries had taken advantage of the NCSA programme, with 120 having completed their NCSAs by January 2010⁸.

1.2. Evaluation Purpose and Scope

The GSP underwent a mid-term evaluation (MTE) in August 2009, which assessed the results of the GSP in accordance to the OECD DAC criteria. The Mid-Term evaluation of the GSP also examined in depth issues pertaining to performance, structural managerial issues as well as efficiency. Given that the MTE was done a year prior to the present final evaluation, the GSP felt that this final evaluation should not re-examine all these same issues and should be an opportunity to rather focus on the substantive role of the GSP in supporting NCSA project teams.

⁵ GEF, Strategic Approach to Capacity Building, 2003

⁶ NCSA Resource Kit, GSP 2005

⁷ GSP Mid-Term Evaluation

⁸ Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in GEF Operations, no date, available at <http://nca.undp.org>

While taking the Mid-Term Evaluation into consideration, the final evaluation also delves back to the GSP's commencement in order to gain an overall view of the programme required for the assessment. As stated in the Terms of Reference (ToRs) found in Annex F, the requested approach for this final evaluation was therefore limited to the assessment of the demand for technical support, modalities for technical support provision, barriers to technical support requests and delivery, and quality and timeliness of technical support. In addition the ToRs requested that the final evaluation review the recommendations made in the MTE, and assess the extent to which the GSP was able to implement them.

It should be noted that in light of the MTE being completed in August 2009, the ToRs did not request that the final evaluation assess the GSP by OECD DAC. However, the UNDP Evaluation Office reviewed the submitted inception report, and commented that the final evaluation should make use of the OECD DAC criteria. As such, the evaluation team presented the evaluation questions based on the key issues covered by the ToRs, but reorganized them along the OECD DAC criteria. Therefore, the use made and the extent of the coverage of each OECD DAC criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts and sustainability) must be understood within the already agreed focus of this Final evaluation as per its ToRs.

The final evaluation therefore strives to assess the following areas and answer the following related key evaluation questions:

OECD DAC criteria	Key evaluation question
Relevance	To what extent is there still a demand for the technical services provided by the GSP?
Efficiency	Was the use of the GSP the best strategy for the delivery of technical support?
Effectiveness	To what extent has the GSP been effective in providing technical support for the implementation of the NCSAs?
Impact	What have been the impacts of the NCSAs?
Sustainability	To what extent, has the GSP been effective in providing sustainable support and results for the implementation of the NCSAs?

These questions were formulated based on the evaluation approach and needs outlined in the ToRs (see Annex F).

2. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Approach

In order to properly evaluate the GSP's support to the NCSA process, the Evaluation approach was based on the following principles and practices:

- **Stakeholders** were clearly **briefed and informed** on the rationale, objectives and scope of the evaluation in order to bring all to focus on a constructive process.
- The team promoted a **participatory approach** whereby main stakeholders were actively involved in the data collection process.
- **Interview protocols** indicating the key issues and questions were forwarded to the GSP Task Manager prior to conducting the interviews.
- An **evidence-based approach** was used.
- **Triangulation** of observations was systematically applied in order to properly validate findings.
- The review favours **pragmatic and feasible recommendations**.
- The review was built on the **findings of the mid-term evaluation**.

2.2. Methodology

2.2.1. In-depth documentation review

The evaluation team first conducted an in-depth analysis of the documentation on hand to develop a thorough understanding of the project. The documentation review was a valuable part of the data collection effort, as it supplied comprehensive information on the project and provides a historical insight on planning, design and implementation activities (see Annex A for the list of documents). The GSP provided key data and information regarding the status of the NCSAs.

2.2.2. Interviews

The evaluation team conducted interviews with key stakeholders in order to gain in-depth knowledge of the programme and validate the data, information, and findings. In total, 10 key stakeholders were interviewed during the course of the evaluation, including a representative from the GEF secretariat, representatives from UNDP and UNEP as Implementing Agencies, and representatives from project teams (see Annex C). The GSP sent out an invitation to 50 potential interviewees. This invitation was followed up by an email from an evaluation team member to set-up interviewees; however the response rate was low and there were difficulties engaging relevant stakeholders. For both UNDP and UNEP project teams, in the majority of the cases the key stakeholders had already moved on to other positions where the evaluation team was unable to contact them, despite its efforts.

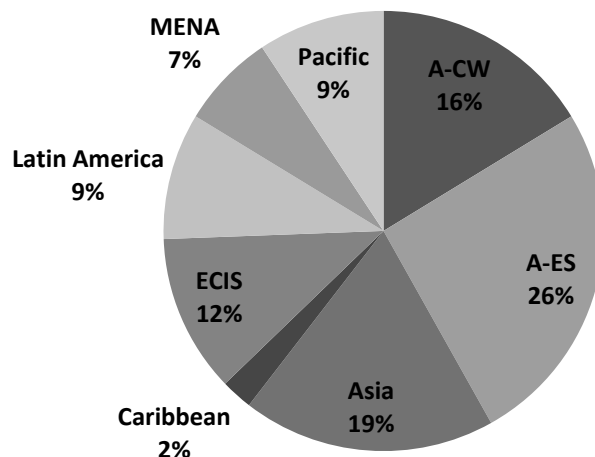
2.2.3. Surveys

An online survey was conducted with key stakeholders established by the GSP and the evaluation team namely: NCSA Project Managers, NCSA Lead Consultants, NCSA Project Coordinators, UNDP and UNEP Task Managers, UNDP and UNEP Regional Technical Advisors, UNDP Environment and Energy Focal Points, and GEF Focal Points. Within the scope of this final evaluation, these key stakeholders were selected as key informants involved in the NCSA process, in order to provide the evaluation team insight on the demands and needs of countries in which they work or have worked through this process. As such, the results from the survey reflect their assessment and expert knowledge on some of the key evaluation questions, such as but not limited to: country demands for GSP activities; current needs expressed by countries; and the likelihood of countries undertaking CB activities.

The evaluation team sent an invitation to 429 people. Some 44 emails had bounced in the original launch, and by September 10th there had been 81 visitors to the website and 42 completed surveys, giving a response rate of 11 per cent. The survey was re-launched on September 21, 2010 in order to increase the response rate, adding some new emails from those that had bounced. When the survey closed on September 30th, 100 more people had visited the website, bringing the total to 50 respondents that had completed the survey, and increasing the response rate to 13 percent. The raw data from the survey is presented in Annex D.

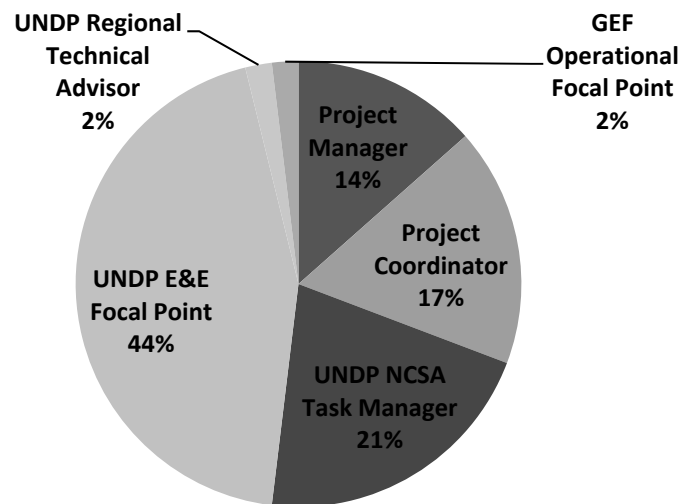
In terms of the respondents' profile, the majority came from the Africa region with 42 per cent of the total respondents, followed by Asia with 19 per cent and ECIS with 12 per cent, Latin America and the Pacific with 9 per cent, and MENA with 7 per cent (see Table 1). A complete list of countries that responded is provided in Annex D.

Figure 1: Survey Respondents Profile by Region



As per the type of respondents, the majority were UNDP E&E Focal Points for a total of 44 per cent, followed by UNDP NCSA Task Managers at 21 per cent, Project coordinators at 17 per cent, and Project Managers at 14 per cent (see Table 2). Because many of the stakeholders involved in the NCSA have moved on, the survey did not get any respondents that were UNEP NCSA Task Manager, UNEP Regional Advisor, or Lead Consultants. However, UNEP did have a higher participation in the interview processes.

Figure 2: Survey Respondents Profile by Role



2.2.4. Data Analysis

The evaluation team compiled and analyzed all collected data on results achieved and gaps reported using the evaluation matrix, found in Annex B, as the primary organizing framework and data collection tool. The team rigorously ensured full integration of strategic elements of the interviews and documentation review as well as ensured that the information was collected and cross-checked by a variety of stakeholders. Data triangulation (confirmation from various sources), was a key tool for the verification and confirmation of the information collected. Contextual elements and empirical findings completed the reported achieved results, in order to: (i) confirm some qualitative short-term (outputs) and mid-term (outcomes) results, and (ii) facilitate the interpretation of key findings and lessons learnt as well as the formulation of the subsequent preliminary conclusions. The data analysis formed the basis from which this evaluation report was written.

3. MAIN FINDINGS

3.1 Relevance

In this section, the evaluation responds to the following evaluation question: **To what extent is there still a demand for the technical services provided by the GSP?** In order to respond to this question the evaluation team assessed whether the technical services provided by the GSP are still relevant to development priorities, organizational policies, and national priorities. The evaluation team also assessed whether there is still a demand for technical services, and if there are any current challenges or constraints for countries to demand services.

Overall, capacity building services regarding environmental management, such as the ones provided by the GSP, were relevant to development priorities, organizational policies and national priorities. The need to continue work in developing capacities is highlighted in all of the Rio Conventions; furthermore, capacity development initiatives are aligned with the OECD Paris Declaration specifically in regards to the principles of ownership, alignment and mutual accountability.⁹ While the UN Development Group continues to ensure the integration of capacity development principles within Common Country Assessments and the UN Development Assistance Framework which aims to: (a) engage partners and build consensus; (b) assess capacity and needs; (c) formulate capacity development strategies; (d) implement capacity development strategies; and (e) monitor and evaluate capacity development efforts¹⁰. Additionally, the GSP was relevant to the UNDP Capacity Building Approach which establishes five steps to the capacity development process, of which step two is to assess capacity assets and needs.¹¹

Some of the overall capacity needs expressed in the NCSAs include: improving synergies across focal areas; incorporating convention obligations into national frameworks; institutional and organizational mandates, structures and frameworks; development and enforcement of policy, legal and regulatory frameworks; information collection, management and exchange; and, public awareness and environmental education.¹² The interviews and the survey have revealed that countries have similar needs in terms of assistance and guidance in regards to the Rio Conventions and their obligations. At the national level, needs expressed related to the Rio Conventions include, integrating the conventions on a national level or assistance and training for Conference of the Parties negotiations, although according to the NCSA review only about 30 countries have stated such a need, this need was expressed a few times in the survey results. In addition, countries expressed needs in regards to adaptation and mitigation assessments, and mainstreaming Rio Convention obligations into national plans and policies. The services provided by the GSP responded to some of these needs by guiding countries with their convention obligations through the NCSA support unit, as well as providing them tools,

⁹ OECD, Paris Declaration, 2005

¹⁰ UNDP, NCSA Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability, 2010.

¹¹ UNDP, found at: http://www.undp.org/capacity/our_approach.shtml

¹² UNDP, NCSA Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability, 2010.

such as the Resource Kit, for collection information on their capacity needs. A mechanism such as the GSP is still quite relevant in the context of providing guidance to countries and country offices undertaking the tasks of responding to the Rio Conventions.

Other capacity needs that were expressed by stakeholders are of a more technical nature such as the provision of training manuals for how to address global environmental issues at the national and local levels, the need for capacity in conducting technical studies, such as stocktaking, monitoring of their environment, as well as building capacity to improve coordination among national, regional, and local stakeholders. Additionally, assistance with the implementation of the NCSA recommendations within legislative, legal and financial frameworks, such as implementing Environmental Impact Assessment legislation where there is a need to build capacity of personnel and of legal advisors to formulate such legislation were also cited. When asked in the survey the level of needs for technical services for capacity building in the context of addressing global environmental issues 63 per cent stated that they have high needs and 37 per cent stated that they had moderate needs, no country offices stated that they had low or no needs. This is a clear indication that technical services and capacity building services provided by the GSP are indeed still required, and as such are still relevant.

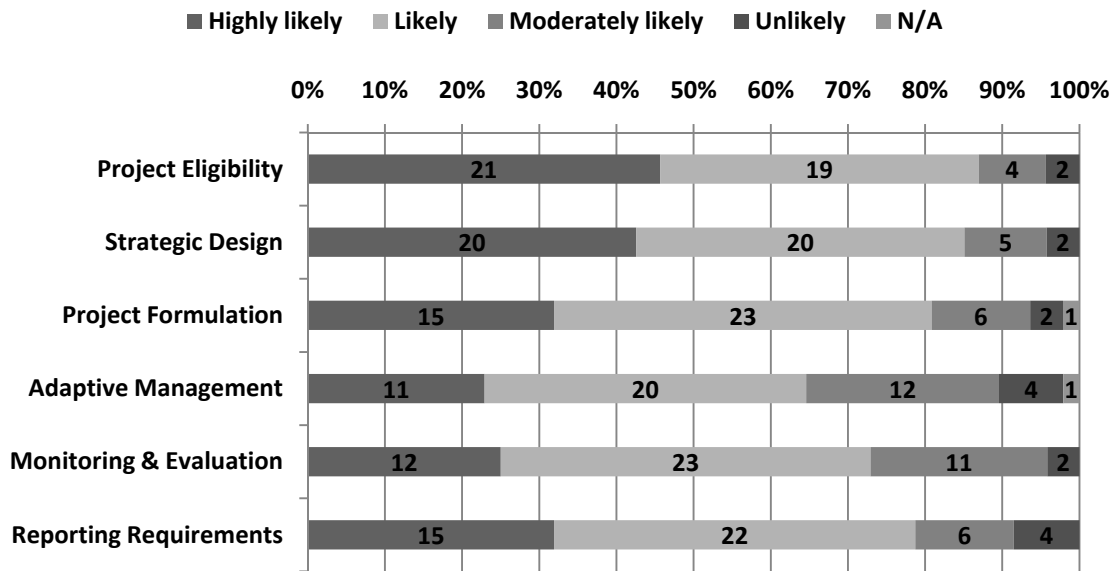
Given the needs assessed through the NCSA process, countries established action plans to improve their capacity for environmental sustainability. The survey has shown that 74% of respondents felt that countries are either *Highly Likely* or *Likely* to implement the recommendations in their NCSAs in the future. However, they expressed that for countries to move forward, technical services are needed in regards to project implementation. The interviews have revealed that there are needs in project and programme design and administration, including proposal writing and access to international consultants. One interviewee highlighted the difficulty for national technical staff to make the link between international donor priorities such as the GEF Focal Areas and national priorities during project formulation. This is directly related to a need expressed on building capacity and knowledge on how to access funding for follow-up projects and in order to implement their NCSA recommendations. Over 80 per cent of survey respondents have expressed that countries have greater needs in project eligibility, strategic design, and project formulation; however technical needs are still great for adaptive management, monitoring and evaluation, as well as reporting (see Figure 3).

The stakeholders found that there are a variety of challenges faced by countries when demanding technical services. These can be grouped into three broad categories. Firstly, problems regarding funding varied from financial disbursement delays during the NCSA process¹³ itself combined with difficulties accessing funding and financing for follow-up projects. Additionally there have been difficulties noted in obtaining co-financing in order to apply for funding. Although funding was not a direct responsibility of the GSP, the challenges faced by

¹³ PIR Solomon Island, Chad, Interviews

countries in this regard reflect capacity building needs in this domain as well as some challenges faced by countries to implement their NCSA recommendations and action plans.

Figure 3: Technical Needs Expressed by Countries



Secondly, human resource challenges included staff turnover of both national government staff and UNDP staff, and the subsequent loss of knowledge regarding technical needs. At times the other responsibilities of implementing agencies and other relevant national stakeholders took precedent over the delivery of technical assistance. One such example includes comments from the Suriname PIR where it was cited “Access to key technical stakeholders to gather information and to undertake review of draft report sections is often difficult given the other national workshops and priorities that also require their time. It was difficult to have more frequent meetings of the Technical Working Groups and resulted in delays.”¹⁴ Communication barriers also appeared to at times limit the exchange of information between key stakeholders. Along the same lines, one interviewee commented on the fact that at the same time as the NCSA there was in fact another project between UNDP and the government thus resulting in longer than normal approval times.

Finally, the third group of challenges dealt with knowledge and expertise. These included a lack of awareness of available tools promoted by the GSP. In one case, one interview respondent communicated having been completely unaware of the existence of the GSP until after the NCSA process was complete. While this may not reflect the majority view, it points to the difficulties in raising awareness of the GSP clientele. Additionally, there have been comments regarding a lack of a clear understanding of the processes and the requirements. One

¹⁴ PIR Cook Islands

respondent commented that finding support for their Action Plan and its priorities was a challenge due to the fact that they do not necessarily reflect the priorities of the GEF Focal Areas.

Support programmes such as the GSP are indeed quite relevant to development priorities, organizational policies, and national priorities. Furthermore, there is evidence, especially presented in the NCSAs, that there is still a need for technical services to build capacity to address global environmental issues. However, as the GSP was created for the purpose of providing support for the NCSAs and that a majority of countries have completed their NCSA, the demand for the GSP services are waning. On the other hand a support programme that would help countries in the implementation of their NCSA recommendations and action plans would be quite relevant to LDCs and SIDS.

3.2 Efficiency

In this section, the evaluation responds to the following evaluation question: **Was the GSP the best strategy for the delivery of technical support?** In order to come to a conclusion, the evaluation team looked at the extent to which the GSP supported and responded to the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the GSP as a delivery mechanism for technical support. And, if other alternatives would have been more appropriate in response to the needs of the countries in terms of technical support?

At inception the GSP set out to provide capacity assessment tools and guidance in the context of multilateral environmental agreements by assisting countries to prepare their NCSA proposals for the GEF, stocktaking, focal area assessments, cross-cutting analysis through sectors, as well as their final report and action plan.¹⁵ The GSP also aimed to be structured as a learning mechanism to analyse information and knowledge generated by the NCSAs, and to provide best practices and lessons learned in capacity building. To do so the GSP established a Programme Support Unit, developed tools and materials such as the NCSA Resource Kit, undertook several workshops, launched a website, established an expert roster, and sent out an NCSA newsletter.

Through its activities, the GSP supported countries to take initiative and leadership of their NCSAs. This is clearly shown in the number of NCSAs that have been completed or are currently being implemented since the inception of the Support Programme. Although the level of ownership is varied among countries, 59% of survey respondents felt that the services provided by the GSP, namely the workshops and the Resource Kit, acted as a catalyst for countries to undertake their NCSA. These results show that the GSP was indeed effective in providing the adequate support to ensure that the NCSAs were implemented. In addition, the GSP workshops have also supported multi-stakeholder consultations, while the technical support helped build capacity in self-needs assessment and promoted a learning-by-doing approach.

¹⁵ NCSA Emerging Lessons 2006

The work of the GSP did provide some insight for the GEF Secretariat regarding the formulation and implementation of the other three Pathways, through the establishment of targets and indicators, and providing lessons learned from the NCSAs. The work of the GSP on establishing indicators are of critical importance for future work on tracking and assessing capacity development and the extent to which the NCSA recommendations are being implemented in participating countries through follow-up projects, as well as how these initiatives are building capacities for countries to cope with their environmental issues. The GSP developed some innovative and useful approaches, which are evident as some of the NCSA findings are novel for developing countries, such as recognizing underlying gaps in the enabling environment, including gaps related to institutions, policy and legislation.¹⁶ Also, the Lessons Learned report and a Synthesis Report also provided additional insight for the GEF Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building, and provided insight for the GEF 5 Cross-cutting Capacity Development Strategy¹⁷.

Although the NCSAs have proven to be a valuable exercise for countries and a valuable initial step to the GEF Strategic Approach, some of the issues that have been brought to light in regards to the implementation of the NCSAs is that the NCSA guidance was too broad, which limited the NCSA country teams to focus on specifics. Also, the NCSA guidance is too product-oriented, and do not provide stronger guidance on various methodological approaches, there is a need for a more how-to plan the various self-assessment steps. Additionally, there was a lack of guidance on how to structure the Final Report.

Currently, the GEF has dedicated 44 million USD to capacity development projects, with a required at par co-financing ratio. However, the majority of the countries have not yet moved beyond Pathway I of the GEF Strategic Approach.¹⁸ Although, there are currently 23 cross-cutting capacity development projects in the GEF portfolio, several interviewees and survey respondents stated that there were still challenges to move forward to the next stage in the process after the NCSAs, and needing more guidance in terms of acquiring funding, project eligibility, and project design. In terms of a future role of the GSP, various interview respondents commented on the utility of compiling and making available lessons learned on a variety of topics, especially ones pertaining to NCSA follow-up projects. This would be a useful tool for countries and a good follow-up to the lessons learned document presented in August 2010.

On the other hand there is evidence pointing towards a possible change in the approach now that the NCSAs are almost entirely complete. A recurring comment in this regard includes further mainstreaming capacity building within all GEF focal areas rather than capacity building being part of the GEF Corporate Programs. Integrating capacity building in the GEF focal areas would assure that it remains a priority and would not be vulnerable to changing GEF priorities. However, as previously mentioned, implementing capacity building in focal areas still remains a challenge; as such a review of different approaches may be warranted in order to get a better

¹⁶ NCSA MTE, May 2009, p.25

¹⁷ NCSA Emerging Lessons 2006

¹⁸ NCSA MTE, May 2009, p. 24-25

sense of successes and challenges in achieving capacity building results. On the other hand UNDP and UNEP are showing continued support for capacity development by dedicating web sites and links to CB.

Based on the objectives of the GSP, the completion of the NCSAs has in and of itself demonstrated the strength of the programme in providing capacity building support. Of the 166 eligible countries for the NCSAs, 146 have either completed or implementing their NCSA. The NCSA process was viewed as a capacity building process in itself; as the majority of the countries had never been asked to undertake a self-assessment, which are usually conducted by an external party.

The GSP has had notable strengths in implementing the NCSAs. According to the survey, the overall responses regarding the stakeholders' views of the GSP are quite positive, with more strengths than weaknesses. The GSP's strength lies in the tools and materials provided, as well as the Resource Kit, which was generally viewed as adaptable and a good delivery mechanism for the services provided. Additionally, the GSP's roster of experts proved to be very valuable and useful for NCSA project teams that were able to get in touch with key experts. The workshops and tools provided by the programme were positively commented by some stakeholders and survey respondents. Both in the documentation as well as through interviews, the usefulness of the tools was demonstrated and highlighted as valuable to the NCSA process. One country PIR stated "the GEF Resource Kit, the Thematic Assessment reports of countries that completed NCSA and NCSA Website was a source of useful resource information in the implementation of NCSA Project to date."¹⁹ While two other interviewees stated that the support they received was highly professional and the level of technical knowledge was very good.

The first three years of the GSP benefitted from a Global Manager and a Technical Advisor, with support from a part-time Programme Associate and oversight by the UNDP Capacity Development Advisor. However, in 2007, the Global Manager left, followed shortly thereafter by the Technical Advisor, leaving the GSP to be managed by the UNDP CD Advisor (on top of his other duties) and the Programme Associate. However, the last two years of the GSP was implemented by using a senior technical consultant to undertake the day-to-day management of the GSP, allowing for a cost-effective approach to bring the GSP to a successful conclusion. One example of a cost-effective approach of the GSP was to use graduate students to synthesize data for the preparation of the NCSA Synthesis Report. Cost-effectiveness allowed the project to stretch from a three year project to a five year project, thus overseeing the completion of the majority of the NCSAs, as well as convening two additional sub-regional workshops.

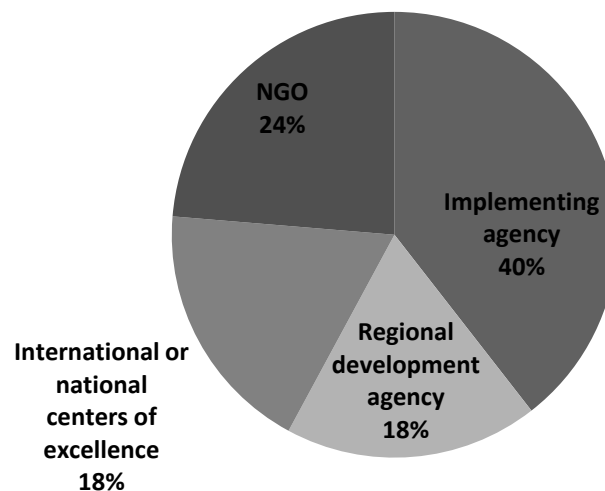
Nonetheless, some weaknesses arose in the delivery of the GSP. In more practical terms, there was a language barrier given that the majority of the tools were provided in English. Some have expressed that there was a lack of clarity regarding the next steps following the completion of

¹⁹ PIR Fiji

the NCSA. Other weaknesses communicated to the Evaluation Team included a shortage of staff and time within the GSP, and the variability in the effectiveness of the UN’s Regional Coordination Units and Country Offices²⁰. This was partly overcome by the establishment of Regional Technical Advisors thus improving the regionalization of the approach. Additional weaknesses that were expressed reflect the NCSA process, however they still have some bearing to the GSP, including: lack of ownership by some countries themselves²¹ leading to subsequent loss of interest; the lack of establishment of effective regional cooperation and partners thus affecting its sustainability; the lack of capacity of the UNDP offices to support the NCSA process and the lack of capacity of the GSP itself to deliver the support demanded, which was higher than anticipated due to the difficulties of the UNDP offices. Finally, another weakness pertains to the challenges faced in creating synergies with all the focal points of the Rio Conventions.

Overall, the GSP was a good delivery mechanism of technical support in its mandate and its approach, however, given some of the challenges presented above in regards to the implementation of the GSP and the general slowdown in the momentum of capacity building issues within the development discourse, the views of the interviews and surveys were quite split. In general, in regards to the GSP as a delivery mechanism, of the survey respondents, 21 felt that the GSP was a good delivery mechanism; however 25 felt that another alternative would have been more appropriate. Of the alternatives proposed, direct Implementing Agency support (by UNDP or UNEP) was viewed as the best alternative with 40% of the responses, rather than an overarching Global Support Programme (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Suggested Delivery Mechanisms Alternatives



In this same line of thought, some interviewees and survey respondents felt that the GSP was too centralized, given its base at the UNDP headquarters in New York City, it has been

²⁰ NCSA MTE, p. iv, 12-13, 15

²¹ NCSA MTE

suggested that more regional services available would have been more appropriate in this context, especially for the NCSA Task Managers. However, this view was not shared by all interviewees, as some felt that the centralized approach of the GSP streamlined any queries to one place. In addition, transmitting the information to a regional office would have added another level, which may have resulted in varying levels of quality of NCSAs depending on the capacity of the regional office and its resources. Some key stakeholders also felt that in the context of GEF enabling activities that serve to respond to the Convention obligations, a centralized approach is favoured in order to ensure a consistency in the support and guidance provided. On the other hand, in terms of moving forward from the NCSAs to project implementation, a regional approach is favoured when it comes to capacity building in order to support South-South cooperation, building a team of regional technical specialist in capacity building, and also to monitor capacity building at a regional level.

Although the GSP delivery mechanism was not viewed as the favoured approach, most survey respondents and interviewees would agree that a support programme with some of the GSP elements would be most useful for all of the Conventions obligations, and thus integrated in the GEF funding within its enabling activities budget. Some of the key elements of the GSP that have been mentioned are the materials and tools provided by the GSP, the workshops, the expert roster, and the direct support from the support unit staff. This could aid in establishing a clear framework or process for countries to follow, with less chance of being overseen or not noticed as was the case with some interviewees. It could also aid in clarifying the meaning of capacity-building and establishing an agreed definition which could help in awareness raising activities with national stakeholders. Additionally, mainstreaming such support could help to avoid overlap of funding in other Focal Areas adding to lengthy approval processes²². This could include more direct interaction with Focal Area experts within the implementing agencies.

One recurring theme from both survey and interview respondents was the desire for closer monitoring of countries' progress in order to capture changes in capacity development. Additionally, increased country ownership of the process was stressed. Evidence suggests that stronger country ownership (which the NCSA process appears to have lacked based on the MTE findings²³) could have helped relay the specificities of the local context of each country more clearly. One country PIR notes "for most instances assessments were undertaken by independent and international experts, who at times fail to recognize local context and situation in which the project operates"²⁴.

In regards to unexpected results, the survey has shown that the majority of the respondents did not have any unexpected outcomes or results from the technical support provided by the GSP, however some expressed that it had created more awareness at the political level, one respondent noted that the tools were actually used as awareness raising materials in the context of a press conference for a media briefing. Other countries stated that they benefited in terms of creating linkages with other initiatives, as well as with the donor community.

²² Country PIR, interview (Papua New Guinea)

²³ NCSA MTE

²⁴ PIR Solomon Islands

Overall, given the mandate of the GSP, it is viewed as a good strategy for the delivery of technical services. The centralized approach provided a one-stop-shop for guidance and technical support in the implementation of the NCSA. However, the countries and the GSP would have benefited from having more regional resources which may have been able to promote greater country ownership, engaged more stakeholders in the process, and also promote the services available by the GSP.

3.3 Effectiveness

In this section, the evaluation will aim to respond to the following evaluation question: **To what extent has the GSP been effective in providing technical support for the implementation of the NCSAs?** The evaluation team assessed this question by looking at the extent to which the GSP has achieved its expected outcomes, the level of stakeholder involvement, good or bad practices, and the integration of the MTE recommendations.

The GSP was created in 2004 as a response to technical and methodological support needed from countries with a budget of 2.9 million (1.9 funded by the GEF) to support countries in the design and implementation of their NCSAs. The GSP's main objective was *to ensure timely completion of NCSAs and provide inputs for implementation of the Strategic Approach*, and set out two immediate objectives: (1) To establish a support mechanism for NCSA activities; and (2) To establish a learning mechanism for generating, disseminating and applying methodological support for NCSAs and for future capacity building initiatives.

To achieve its first immediate outcome, the GSP created a programme support unit. Although, the GSP was housed and managed by UNDP, its purpose was to provide guidance to the NCSA process supported by both UNDP and UNEP.²⁵ The World Bank had one NCSA, however, there has been no information on its status. The GSP made several attempts to determine the status of this project, but to no avail²⁶. For many of the interviewees and survey respondents this support unit provided tailored, hands-on support they needed to advance their NCSA.

The original intention was for the GSP to undertake cooperation agreements with regional institutions to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of its outreach activities. Apart from the very limited contributions from UNDP's Regional Coordination Units, and the poorly supported and hence limited efforts of the Pacific Regional Support Mechanism, the GSP was not able to fully achieve this result.²⁷ Thus, the establishment of cooperation arrangements with regional institutions did not reflect as successful an outcome. Only one regional organization was able to provide assistance, and this is mainly a result of the fact that they had already a capacity building mandate and allocated resources within the organization that could take on

²⁵ GSP 2005 Report, p. 2

²⁶ Personal communication from GSP Manager

²⁷ NCSA MTE-final, 27.

the work. Improving on the capacity of existing regional organizations to provide technical expertise in CB would be beneficial for the implementation of CB activities and regional monitoring of CB in the future.

As a means to achieve its second immediate outcome, the GSP developed guidance material and provided technical backstopping to NCSA country teams, analyzed lessons learned from the NCSAs, and developed programming frameworks for the systematic implementation of cross-cutting capacity development priorities. The GSP has indeed been effective in regards to its general objective. At the end of the GSP mandate, there were 120 completed NCSAs, 14 under implementation, 11 currently drafting their Final Report and 7 cancelled²⁸ out of a total of 153 approved, and 166 eligible countries (see Table 1). The UNDP implemented the majority of the NCSA projects with 76 per cent, followed by UNEP with 23 per cent.

Table 1: NCSA Projects by Region

Region	Number of Eligible Countries	Number of Implementing Countries
C&W Africa	26	25
E&S Africa	19	17
ECIS	32	29
MENA	18	11
LAC	33	32
Pacific	15	12
Asia	20	22

Source: GSP Data

The GSP developed a NCSA Resource Kit, which outlined the basic steps that each NCSA country should follow. An assessment of the quality of the NCSA was undertaken by a team of independent reviewers and gave an overall rating of 3.4 on 5 (68 per cent), ranging from poor to excellent²⁹. The weakest aspect of the NCSAs was the content of the action plans, as well as the connection between environmental priorities and actions. The Resource Kit was indeed useful as 68 per cent of survey respondents felt that the tools and materials provided by the GSP were useful, however given the weakness that steamed from the independent review a section describing how to link environmental priorities and the action plan may have been needed.

The GSP also organized regional and sub-regional workshops, which aimed to facilitate the sharing of experiences and catalyzing the work of the NCSA country teams. A total of 14 workshops were convened between 2004 and 2009, two of them prior to the establishment of the GSP (see Table 2). The workshops provided information on the broader development context of the NCSAs, and help catalyze the NCSAs process in some of the countries as stated by 59 per cent of the survey respondents.

²⁸ NCSA Project Status Excel Spreadsheet (provided by GEF)

²⁹ NCSA Synthesis Report (2010), page 26.

Table 2: Workshops

Location	Region/Sub-Region	Date	Number of Participants/ Number of Countries
Bratislava, Slovakia	ECIS	14-15 September, 2004	N/A
Quito, Ecuador	LA	15-7 December, 2004	29/13
Tunis, Tunisia	MENA	17-19 June, 2005	37/10
Kingston, Jamaica	LAC	28 June – 1 July 2005	N/A
Hanoi, Vietnam	Asia	26-28 October, 2005	36/8
Colombo, Sri Lanka	Asia	8-10 November, 2005	31/7
Nairobi, Kenya	E&S Africa	6-9 December, 2005	35/17
Dakar, Senegal	C&W Africa	19-22 April, 2006	N/A
Apia, Samoa	Pacific	2-5 May, 2006	N/A
Rabat, Morocco	MENA	7-10 June, 2006	N/A
Santiago, Chile	LAC	26-29 September, 2006	N/A
Bangkok, Thailand	Asia	20-23 November, 2006	60/9
Nairobi, Kenya	Africa	4-6 November, 2009	20/14
Nadi, Fiji	Pacific	16-18 November, 2009	19/9

Source: NCSA Results and Lessons Learned

The NCSAs have resulted in 23 CB2 or follow-up activities that are currently in process (see Table 3). These GEF Medium Size Projects (MSP) are currently at different stages of the project cycle. However, given the total number of completed NCSAs (120), the ratio of follow-up projects are quite low. As previously discussed, some countries lack guidance in regards in establishing project eligibility and design. As such, unless there is some further support or guidance, there is no guaranty that countries will continue their capacity building initiatives; however 32 per cent of survey respondents felt that countries were *Highly Likely*, while 42 per cent were *Likely* to implement the recommendations of the NCSAs.

Although the GSP has supported the completion of the majority of NCSAs it has not been done without some challenges, which in turn has affected its overall effectiveness. Some have commented on slowing momentum of the GSP and the NCSA process, which has been a result of many other underlying issues, such as the availability of funding, human resources, changing priorities, and stakeholder involvement. While other national challenges such as domestic financial institutions can compromise the transfer of funds to the appropriate organizations has also contributed to some of the challenges faced by the GSP during the NCSA process. Another factor that contributed to the late start of the NCSA process and the GSP was a general slowing of momentum regarding CB after the first two or three years of GEF 4, as a result of changing human resources at the GEF.

There are indications that the GSP experienced some success in the provision of technical support. Both the 2007 GSP Progress Review and the 2006 The Emerging Lessons for Strengthening the NCSA Process identify key components needed to enhance the capacity building process namely, Stakeholder Engagement, Information & Knowledge, Planning & Policy, Planning & Policy, Organization & Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation. The collection of experiences across countries was also a success leading to the Lessons Learned as

a learning modality for the GEF itself. However, the understaffing of the GSP and Implementing Agencies reduced its effectiveness as well as sustainability³⁰.

From amongst all the stakeholder groups engaged, the private sector comes out as the one with the least involvement. This could be due to the general lack of awareness of environmental matters in the private sector and to the lack of capacity to ensure this engagement in both the GSP process and in the private sector itself. Either way, this is perceived as a weakness given the potential of the private sector to contribute to environmental matters.

The tools and technical materials, along with the NCSA Resource Kit, had proven to be very useful for countries. In a few exceptional cases, comments were received regarding the language in which the Resource Kit was written which gave difficulties to non Anglophone national technical staff. Furthermore, the technical and policy guidance, along with the workshops, have proven to be useful for broader national policy needs, as well as helpful in strategizing the follow-up to the NCSA recommendations.

However, it must be acknowledged that other evidence also indicates that the late start of the GSP appears to have limited its capacity to become an effective technical support programme given that the three year programme, which began in August 2005,³¹ began 3 years following the approval of the first NCSAs³². The long time gap between a country completing its NCSA and commencing a follow-up project is indicative of the prevailing high levels of uncertainty about a long-term commitment to the Approach. The Strategy underwent numerous revisions, often as a result of “weaknesses in the Secretariat”. The NCSA process had moved so slowly that the funding available for follow-up stand-alone capacity building projects was used to fund other projects. The GEF Secretariat, Conventions Parties and other stakeholders are anxious for an approach to capacity building, including how the activities are best undertaken within the limited funding that is available.³³

Timeliness varied, according to the state of advancement of the NCSA process in the country. Some interviewees commended the promptness of the services due to the fact that they existed prior to the start-up of the NCSA process provided, while others mentioned that the GSP came into play much too late in the process. Overall though, the majority of the survey respondents felt that the services provided by the GSP were timely, and thus the issues regarding the timeliness of the completion of the NCSAs can mostly be attributed to other factors, such as national government priorities, and funding availability.

According to 59 per cent of the survey respondents, the NCSA Resources Kit provided by the GSP was indeed quite useful in mobilizing stakeholder involvement and tends to show a good consultative process between largely government and civil society. The stakeholders most

³⁰ GSP PIR, NCSA MTE

³¹ GSP 2005 Report

³² NCSA MTE

³³ NCSA MTE, p. 50

often involved included: government ministries, various institutes, academia and civil society in general. The sector most commonly cited as not being as involved, as previously mentioned, is the private sector.

Generally speaking, the GSP has provided some good practices that have enabled participating countries to access information regarding environmental conventions, agreements and issues. There were also efforts made in providing tools and workshops, website to enhance the capacities of countries, namely the NCSA Toolkit of 2005, which have provided guidance to countries. However some interviewees and survey results have shown that there was not enough promotion of the tools compiled by the GSP. The centralized approach undertaken by the GSP was also useful in avoiding additional bureaucracy, and bringing the NCSAs up to a requested standard.

In regards to the integration of the MTE recommendations, the GSP, UNDP, UNEP and GEF have implemented, in large part, the recommendations set forth. The GEF Secretariat has indeed prepared a GEF 5 Cross-cutting Capacity Development Strategy, under the auspices of the GSP, as per recommended, however the strategy provides a broader approach than suggested. The MTE suggests that the GEF provide a functional framework, strategy, and programmatic approach in relation to both individual focal areas as well as environmental management generally. The GEF Strategy has provided a broad approach for its overall activities that will be linked to focal areas, policies, and programmes.³⁴ The GSP has set forth a NCSA Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability as recommended. The last recommendation is regarding the UNDP and UNEP agreeing on the delivery in a timely and targeted manner prescribed assistance to countries based on their needs. Currently, it is quite difficult to establish whether this recommendation has been fully implemented, given the varying status of NCSA implementation and CB2 project implementation.

Clearly, the GSP has been effective in providing support for the implementation of the NCSAs given its results achieved. However, the lack of regional support may compromise the sustainability of continuing capacity building initiatives. As such, there may be a need for another support programme that will focus on the implementation of the NCSA recommendations and actions plans.

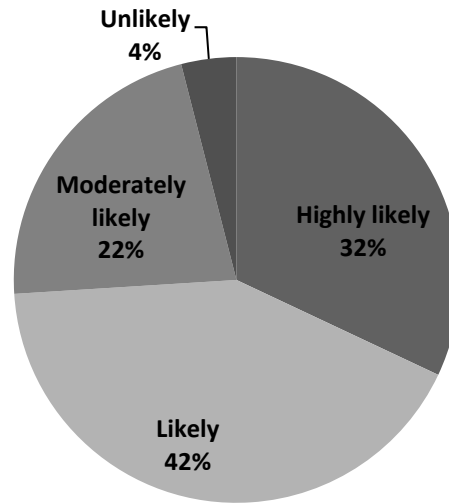
3.4 Impact

This section aims to answer the following evaluation question: **What have been the impacts of the NCSAs?** The evaluation team looked at the extent to which countries have planned, designed and/or implemented capacity building projects as a result of GSP activities, on countries following-up on the Rio Conventions, and the extent to which the GSP has been able to catalyze and support technical services to countries.

³⁴ GEF 5 Cross-cutting Capacity Development Strategy, October 2010

As aforementioned, there are currently 23 CB2³⁵ projects in the GEF portfolio (see Annex E) demonstrating willingness to follow-up on the Rio Conventions above and beyond the NCSA stage. Thus to some extent this shows that countries are utilizing the skills acquired during the NCSA process. The GSP has also generated Lessons Learned and a Synthesis Report impacting the overall learning of the GEF itself positively. In addition, according to the views of the survey respondents, the likelihood of countries pursuing follow-up projects remains high, with 74% *Highly Likely* or *Likely* to engage in follow-up projects (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: The Likelihood of Countries Engaging in Follow-up Projects



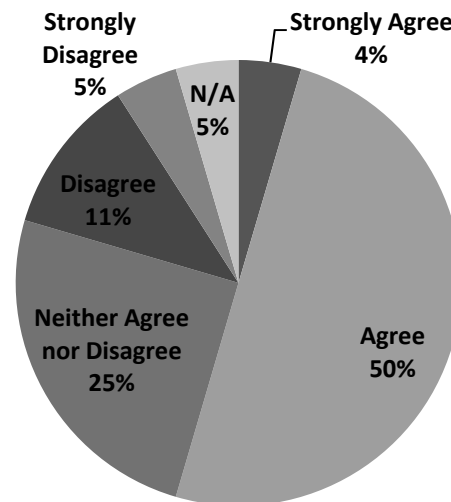
However some challenges remain concerning follow-up activities. Here a variety of survey respondents stated that: the organization of donors for programme implementation to implement the priority recommendations of the NCSA, proceeding forward with the development of regulations for Environmental Impact Assessment, the importance of referring to and citing the NCSA in other strategic documents such as development plans, the integration of the NCSA recommendations into long term planning within government; and the integration of needs into project documents relating to the different conventions.

Coupled with the above, other challenges relate to the need to develop basic project management skills such as proposal writing, and the need for the GEF to consider funding projects for the implementation of the action plan and the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation skills. One recurring comment among all respondents was indeed the inability or difficulty in mobilizing funds and/or international consultants to assist the implementation of the action plan or follow-up projects;

³⁵ GEF Strategic Priority: enhancement of cross-cutting capacity for global environmental management corresponding to the

Notwithstanding these challenges, overall it appears that the technical guidance provided by the GSP was positively acclaimed by respondents. In fact, the survey results show that 50% of respondents agreed that the technical guidance provided by the GSP helped countries to follow-up on the Rio Conventions while 4% Strongly Agree as shown below in Figure 6.

Figure 6: GSP as a help to follow-up on the Rio Conventions



One such positive feedback includes the experience of El Salvador in which it was described: “The NCSA project in El Salvador presents a unique essay to identify the synergies included in the self-assessment process at a specific area: Cerron Grande wetland area. This involved participation from local communities. The process enabled the first joint work of UN Conventions in the country. The project includes important participation of Society for the generation of technical documents. Having a coordinator and a technical assistant was good support for the project. It was really fruitful to exchange impressions with NCSA coordinators at Nicaragua, since their NCSA was almost finishing when the Project started in El Salvador.”³⁶

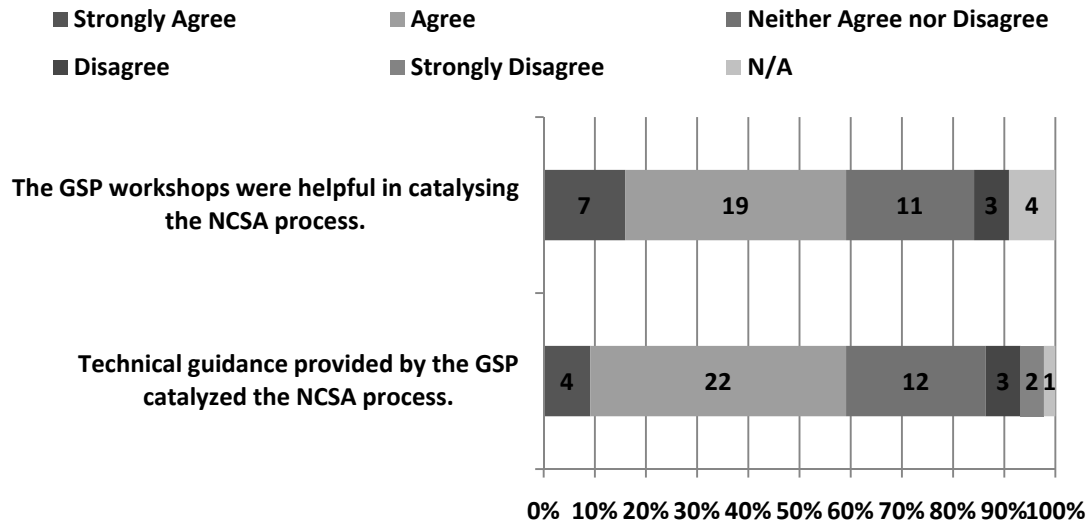
Nonetheless, the impact of the GSP on countries’ abilities to follow-up on the Rio conventions is still limited. As previously mentioned, there are still needs, whether they are technical or institutional, to support countries in their participation and commitments to the Conventions. The needs expressed are general regarding overall capacity-building at all levels and for all types of actors such as for the National Focal Points. More specifically other capacity development needs included legislative expertise for implementing the conventions and in terms of the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources; negotiation training and stakeholder engagement.

Considering the fact that the primary goal of the GSP was to provide support to the NCSA process, in terms of a catalyst, the survey has shown that, despite some of the challenges at the

³⁶ PIR El Salvador

beginning of the NCSA process, the technical guidance provided by the GSP did catalyze the NCSA process for 59 per cent of the survey respondents (see Figure 7). The workshops also successful; as 59 per cent agreed and strongly agreed that they also catalyzed the NCSA process.

Figure 7: GSP as a Catalyst for the NCSA Process



In one case, it was communicated via interview that the GSP in fact was a great help while a new country office in the Balkan region was being established, namely Montenegro, as the entire region was unstable until the end of the 1990s. This same office reported still receiving support even after the NCSA was completed.

Overall, in light of the analysis above, it can be concluded that although the GSP had a defined mandate, its impacts have been significant in regards to capacity building. The project has kept the capacity building agenda alive, it has promoted stakeholder involvement, it has permitted some countries to move beyond their NCSAs and design projects, and it has allowed for countries to gain knowledge on the Rio Conventions more specifically their needs in regards to their commitment to these Conventions. That being said, the main challenge remains with respect to funding the action plan agenda coming out of the NCSA process and the further capacity building mainstreaming this will require at the country and regional levels.

3.5 Sustainability

This section aims to answer the following evaluation question: **To what extent has the GSP been effective in providing sustainable support and results for the implementation of the NCSAs?** The evaluation looked at the extent to which the GSP constitutes a sustainable modality of country support for project implementation and the way in which it can support the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building in the long term.

Undoubtedly, as highlighted in the previous section, the need and demand for technical services remains high in terms of follow-up projects, and proceeding with recommendations of NCSAs, especially regarding access to funding as emphasized by the following quote: “At the end of the project, though the GoTL has taken ownership of the document and discusses it as a priority, there has been no effective work for implementation of it. There has been no approach to the donors with the document and with a list of priorities and it is maybe necessary to have a carry on support to the GoTL in approaching their priorities, through the GEF or through development of an investment plan, whereby contact with donors and other partners will take place, therefore ensuring implementation with the momentum of the completion of the Action Plan.”³⁷ Additionally, needs remain high regarding engaging the private sector which appears to have not received as much attention as government and civil society stakeholders. The literature also revealed a need for further country ownership and involvement of local stakeholders³⁸ although some countries recorded very high levels of involvement.³⁹

The experience of the GSP has highlighted the varying levels of technical backstopping between Implementing Agencies due to a variety of reasons (i.e., funding, staff shortage, level of regional involvement⁴⁰). Three key factors have surfaced regarding ensuring the sustainability of the result of the GSP: (i) securing strong regional partnerships or at least maintaining the capacities that have been gained through this initial process within the Agencies and countries; (ii) moving beyond the first Pathway of the Strategic Approach to the implementation of follow-up projects; and, (iii) preparing for more sector or focal area specific guidance. The promotion of capacity-building is not an end in itself, but should be mainstreamed within other initiatives⁴¹. It is important however, that at the core of each GEF Focal Area follow-up project there lays an important capacity-building objective.

Taking these three factors into consideration, although the originally centralized mechanism of the GSP aided in eliminating added levels of bureaucracy and the difficulties encountered by regional offices not possessing the capacity to properly elaborate and design GEF Mid-size projects, a recurring theme with interview and survey respondents, ensuring that CB is mainstreamed or integrated within the GEF Focal Areas would allow for a better chance to ensure the sustainability of the GSP results. In terms of longevity and a role as a centralized entity, there appears to be an emphasis from interview and survey respondents on two concrete modalities through which the GSP could continue to provide support: the dissemination of lessons learned particularly in more specific themed areas in regard to the NCSA follow-up initiatives from which countries could extract important information, techniques and knowledge from hands-on experience; and the need to monitor the capacity acquired and provide follow-up on countries regarding their NCSA implementation. A valuable

³⁷ Quote from PIR East Timor, also Burkina Faso

³⁸ NCSA MTE, Mali, Mexico PIR

³⁹ PIR, Moldova, PIR Nepal

⁴⁰ NCSA MTE final, p.15

⁴¹ NCSA Emerging Lessons 2006, Interviews

means to attending to these needs is to make the link between national and community level capacity, in particular that of civil society.

It appears that the GSP alone (or even a similar entity) is likely not capable of providing sustainable support. A more decentralized and collaborative approach between regional institutions and in-country agencies are needed to provide funding and technical guidance vis-à-vis capacity-building (i.e., partnership with state governments, research and higher education institutions, private sector, etc). In other words, if the GSP were to continue as a support modality, its role should be one that evolves with time to that of a facilitator and CB network builder, adjusting to the changing needs and context of the countries and the GEF Strategic Approach for Capacity Building. As the GSP was primarily constituted for the initial stage of the GEF Strategic Approach, the NCSA process - an assessment phase - as stated by some respondents, it is natural that as the Strategic Approach moves forward, so do the modalities of support to capacity building. The sustainability of the GSP hinges on such flexibility and its ability to attend to the changing needs of countries and their expectations in regard to GEF commitment to following-up on the other pathways of the Strategic Approach. In the end, the sustainability of the GSP work will be shown by the number of follow-up initiatives, the increasing capacity building experts available, and the increasing mobilization of that capacity in the countries supported to respond to their Convention obligations.

Although the GSP provided some significant results for participating countries, to ensure the sustainability of these, the GSP should have planned to better engage regional institutions that could provide follow-up support to the NCSAs. More regional technical coordination would strengthen the support and assist in the sustainability of GSP's results. Additionally, these regional institutions could monitor CB to provide a regional perspective on CB, as well as providing a platform for collaboration within the region.

Sustainability is also dependent on staff availability in implementing agencies and funding from both GEF and agencies. The latter is relevant to not only those countries still struggling with capacity building needs, such as Botswana, but those that have a regional office at close proximity that has allowed for more direct assistance, such as in the case of Montenegro and the regional Bratislava office. This complements what the Emerging Lessons 2006 had already highlighted: sustainability could be via building on the capacity building expertise already accumulated in the other areas as well as with their respective experts. To this end, the GSP has also set up an online clearing house to provide countries with further guidance to anyone working on the NCSA implementation (CB2). This website can provide a sustainable venue to provide continued support in the NCSA process. However, although there are currently 29 458 total users of the website, the evaluation team is unable to establish to what extent the site is useful for countries or the level of use to conclude on whether or not this modality contributes to the sustainability of the GSP results..

On the other hand, the GSP has provided modalities to build the institutional memory of the NCSA process and the GSP through the transference of the NCSA website to the UNDP Corporate website. The website will contain key reports and knowledge material to the UNDP

Energy and Environment Mainstreaming webpage (<http://www.undp.org/mainstreaming/>). UNEP has also provided information on its corporate website regarding the NCSA process and the GSP (<http://www.unep.org/dgef/NCSAs/tabid/1900/language/en-US/Default.aspx>). The access to this information via these websites will provide a continued information source for countries on the NCSA process and capacity building.

In addition, the GSP has contributed in moving the capacity development agenda forward within the UNDP, UNEP and the GEF, for instance through the promotion of the indicators established by the GSP to track and assess the extent to which the NCSA recommendations are being implemented as well as the capacities being built in the process.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Given the context in which the GSP was created, the establishment of such a support programme was clearly needed and relevant for countries. The evaluation also clearly demonstrates that there is still a need for such technical support for countries, especially in terms of implementing the NCSA recommendations (action plans) and seeking funding for projects.

Although there is still a need to provide support to developing countries for capacity building, the existence of a support programme like the GSP is quite relevant, however the GSP and its current specific mandate would no longer be relevant beyond the NCSA process, and thus beyond Pathway I of the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building.

In regards to the achieving its outcomes, the GSP was able to catalyze the NCSA process through its workshops, which have shown great success in terms of providing hands-on training with the implementing agencies. In addition, they also provide a valuable opportunity for countries to exchange and learn from one another. In addition, the Resource Kit has been valuable for country to respond to their commitments under the Rio Conventions. Such a tool provides guidance for the undertaking and completion of such obligations. In addition, they are a good tool to engage stakeholders at a national level and promote environmental issues.

One of the key assets of the GSP has been the availability of its staff to respond to questions and review NCSAs, which was complemented by the technical expert roster, which has allowed countries to have an additional resource for support and guidance. However, engaging more regional resources would increase the impact of such a support programme to engage more local and regional stakeholder and ensure a follow-up in regards to stakeholder engagement.

Overall, the GSP was a good modality for delivery of technical services. Project teams and stakeholders that have used the GSP held the delivery of its technical expertise in high esteem through highly professional and good technical knowledge as well as a variety of useful tools. However, not all countries were aware of the existence of the tools and services provided by the GSP. As such, some have stated that the GSP came too late in the process and there was a lack of publicity of the tools. Also, in regards to the GSP as a centralized delivery mechanism,

there has been two different views, however the evaluation concludes that in the context of providing technical support for a GEF enabling activity and Convention obligation, a centralized approach is better to reduce bureaucracy and ensure the quality of the documents.

The NCSA process was a valuable exercise for countries to take an introspective look at their capacity to undertake growing environmental issues. The support provided by the GSP allowed for the countries to take on such an initiative without solely relying on external consultants. As such, countries have a better sense of their capacities and needs. However, ownership of capacity building issues are varied in each country, as such some countries need continued support to engage stakeholders.

The GSP was successful in documenting and compiling lessons learned and knowledge but this remains one of the requests from stakeholders, to continue the accumulation of lessons learned in other domains. One common comment included the avoidance of overlap and the integration of GSP tools into the wider GEF support to avoid overlap of funding and to make the most of limited human resources.

In terms of providing effective technical support, most countries felt that the GSP was timely and generally effective in its support. In addition, for the countries that had a late start on their NCSAs, the fact that the GSP was able to stretch its budget from a three year project to five has ensured the completion of the majority of the NCSAs. On the other hand, human resources challenges hampered the effectiveness of the GSP during the duration of the project, which was felt by countries requesting support. One of the efficiency issues has been in the delivery of the funding to countries and the closing of some projects. Some countries need additional support for the management and delivery of such funds.

Overall, it can be stated that the GSP did act as a catalyst for the undertaking and completion of the majority of the NCSAs. Its workshops, tools and materials have been valuable for countries to ensure the delivery of their NCSAs. They have provided an opportunity to share with other countries and engage stakeholders in the NCSA process.

As mentioned above, for a project with such a specific mandate, the impacts of the GSP have been notable. NCSA project team members and stakeholders have reported better synergies with focal points of the other Rio Conventions, follow-up projects, increased stakeholder involvement, and a better understanding of the convention processes.

One of the weaknesses of the GSP has been its inability to engage regional institutions. As a result, this could limit the sustainability of its efforts in participating countries. Although, most would argue that capacity has been built over the five years the project lasted, in order to ensure that capacity building needs are met within the context of growing environmental uncertainty and challenges, continued effort is needed to ensure that actions and political will are maintained. On the other hand, the GSP has contributed to ensuring the sustainability of its results at a more institutional level, through the development of indicators, and ensuring that the results of its work is available on the UNEP and UNDP Corporate websites.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of a support programme for enabling activities has shown to be relevant and a valuable tool for countries. In regards to capacity development, the evaluation has identified a number of needs expressed by countries. In order to ensure that the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building moves forward, the evaluation has three recommendations for future support programmes:

- There are still a number of needs identified by countries and their NCSAs. Although, the GSP as it stands may not provide the full support needed, countries would still benefit from support in regards to the implementation of their NCSA recommendations and actions plans especially in regards to moving towards Pathway IV of the GEF Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building.
- In order to respond to the Conventions through the implementation of their NCSA action plans, such a support programme is clearly needed in countries. As such, part of the funding for the GEF enabling activities should ensure that a GSP type of programme is in place to support countries in providing quality assessments and reports, and provide access to technical experts, workshops, materials and tools.
- In order to ensure sustainability of the work done by the GSP, increasing the capacity of regional organizations to provide technical expertise in CB in the long run would be beneficial for the implementation of CB activities, for regional monitoring of CB, and regional collaboration. The countries would benefit from having more regional resources which would promote greater country ownership and engaged more stakeholders in the process.

Annex A: List of Documents Reviewed

GSP Steering Committee Minutes

GSP Sub-Regional Workshop Reports

GSP Progress Implementation Reports

GSP Mid-term Evaluation, May 2009

GEF, Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in GEF Operations - 2010

GEF Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building, GEF/C.22.8, October 2003

NCSA Synthesis Report - 2010

NCSA Resource Kit

NCSA Progress Implementation Report 2006

NCSA Progress Implementation Report 2010

NCSA questionnaires - 2008

NCSA questionnaires - 2009

NCSA Contact spreadsheet NCSA Project Status Spreadsheet

OECD, Paris Declaration, 2005

UNDP, NCSA Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability, 2010.

UNDP, NCSA Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability, 2010.

UNDP, Supporting Capacity Development: The UNDP Approach, 2008

Annex B: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Collection Method	Data Sources
Evaluation Question: To what extent is there still a demand for the technical services provided by the GSP?			
Are the technical services provided still relevant in to development priorities, organizational policies, and national priorities?	• Current needs expressed by developing countries for capacity building in environmental management	Documentation review Survey	Convention Documents Capacity Building literature NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
	• Extent to which the GSP technical services are still relevant to the needs identified.	Survey	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
What is the current demand for technical services and programme activities?	• Needs expressed by countries for technical services	Survey Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
	• Needs expressed by countries for programme activities	Survey Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
	• Type of technical services needed	Survey Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
Is there an opportunity for the GSP to provide technical services for Pathway IV of the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of project proposals underway by countries following the NCSA • Needs expressed for Pathway IV 	Documentation review Survey Interview	GEF pipeline MTE NCSA PIR NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
Are there any constraints or challenges for countries to demand technical services?	• Evidence of constraints and challenges expressed by countries	Survey Interview	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
Evaluation Question: Was the use of the GSP the best strategy for the delivery of technical support?			
To what extent does the GSP support and respond to the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building?	• Needs expressed by the GEF council and developing countries at the inception of the Strategic Approach to Capacity Building.	Documentation review Interviews	GEF Council Documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
	• Level to which the GSP responded to the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building at its inception	Documentation review Interviews	GEF Council Documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current views of the GEF council and developing countries on the Strategic Approach to Capacity Building 	Documentation review Interviews	GEF Council Documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level to which the GSP can respond to the Strategic Approach to Capacity Building in the future? 	Documentation review Interviews	GEF Council Documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
What are the strengths and weaknesses of the GSP as a delivery mechanism for technical support?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengths identified 	Documentation review Interviews Surveys	NCSA PIR Council meeting minutes MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weaknesses identified 	Documentation review Interviews Surveys	NCSA PIR Council meeting minutes MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
Would other alternatives have been more appropriate in responding to the needs of the countries in terms of technical support?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of alternatives identified by countries and stakeholders 	Interviews Surveys	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
Evaluation Question: To what extent has the GSP been effective in providing technical support for the implementation of the NCSAs?			
<p>To what extent have the objectives of the GSP been achieved?</p> <p>General objective: To ensure timely completion of NCSAs and provide inputs for implementation of the Strategic Approach.</p> <p>Immediate Objective 1: To establish a support mechanism for NCSA activities.</p> <p>Immediate objective 2: Establish a project advisory committee and a project technical group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of NCSAs completed 	Documentation review	NCSA website NCSA PIR 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of advancement of uncompleted NCSAs 	Documentation review	NCSA website NCSA PIR 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of the development and use of the GSP as a modality for Pathway IV and a country focused programme technical support programme developed. 	Documentation review Interviews	NCSA website GEF secretariat GSP staff and management IAs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of countries that have received backstopping from the GSP 	Documentation review	NCSA PIR 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of efficiency in receiving technical guidance from GSP 	Surveys Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which policy and technical guidance from the SP has been used by the countries 	Surveys Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of timeliness of the technical guidance 	Surveys Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of efforts to establish cooperation arrangements with regional institutions 	Documentation review Interviews	MTE Council Meeting Minutes NCSA PIR IAs GSP staff and management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of use of technical materials and tools by countries and national experts. 	Surveys Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
To what extent did the GSP catalyze the NCSAs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State of the NCSAs prior to the GSP 	Documentation review	GEF council documents MTE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level to which the GSP catalyzed the NCSA 	Interviews	NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
To what extent were relevant stakeholders been involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type and Level of involvement of stakeholders in countries 	Documentation review Interviews Survey	NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type and Level of involvement of stakeholders in GSP by IA's and GEF 	Documentation review Interviews	NCSA PIR Council meeting minutes MTE GEF Secretariat Implementing Agencies
Are there any good or bad practices for the delivery of technical support?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good practices identified 	Documentation review Interviews	GEF documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bad practices identified 	Documentation review Interviews	GEF documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
Have there been any unexpected results from GSP activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of unexpected results from GSP 	Documentation review Interviews	GEF documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GSP staff and management Implementing agencies GEF secretariat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of unexpected results from countries 	Documentation review Survey	GEF documents NCSA PIR MTE NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders GSP staff and management Implementing agencies GEF secretariat

To what extent have the recommendations of the Mid-term evaluation been implemented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level to which all three recommendations have been implemented during the final period of the GSP. 	Interviews	GSP staff and management Implementing agencies GEF secretariat
Evaluation Question: What have been the impacts of the NCSAs?			
To what extent did the GSP have an impact on countries following-up on the Rio Conventions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of response of countries on convention decisions regarding capacity building 	Documentation review	Convention documents GEF documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of other activities undertaken by countries in support of the Rio Conventions 	Documentation review Survey	Convention documents GEF documents NCSA Project Teams Stakeholders
To what extent have countries planned, designed and/or implemented capacity building projects as a result of GSP activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of projects planned, designed, and being implemented 	Documentation review Surveys	NCSA PIR MTE NCSA project teams
To what extent has the GSP been able to catalyze and support technical services to countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of use of technical services of GSP 	Interviews Survey	NCSA project teams Stakeholders
Evaluation Question: To what extent, has the GSP been effective in providing sustainable support and results for the implementation of the NCSAs?			
To what extent does the GSP constitute a sustainable modality of country support to project implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs expressed by countries for technical services for project implementation 	Interviews Survey	NCSA project teams Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of current technical services needed by countries for capacity building 	Interviews Survey	NCSA project teams Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability of the GSP to respond to the specific needs of countries 	Interviews	NCSA project teams Stakeholders GEF secretariat GSP staff and management IAs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of the GSP within the IAs and the GEF on a long-term basis 	Interviews	GEF secretariat GSP staff and management IAs
In what way can the GSP support the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building in the long-term?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs expressed by IAs, countries, GEF for the support of the GSP 	Interviews	NCSA project teams Stakeholders GEF secretariat GSP staff and management IAs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of a role for the GSP in the long-term to support the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building 	Interviews	GEF secretariat GSP staff and management IAs

Annex C: List of Interviewees

Organization	Name	Position	Date
GEF Secretariat			
GEF Secretariat	Danielius Pivoriunas	Senior Operations Officer, Capacity Building	August 26th
Implementing Agencies			
GSP	Kevin Hill,	GSP Manager	September 1st
UNEP - GEF	Maryam Niamir-Fuller	Director of the Division of Global Environment Facility Coordination	September 9th
UNEP – GEF	Adamou Bouhari	UNEP Focal Point	September 13th
UNEP – GEF	Shakira Khawaja	Fund Management Officer. Division of GEF Coordination	September 16th
UNEP – GEF	Martin Okun	Fund Management Officer	September 16th
UNEP – GEF	Abdul Majeid Haddad	Task Manager of GSP and NCSA Process, Nairobi, Kenya UNEP/GEF (2004-2008), currently Climate Change Officer with UNEP for Western Asia	September 28th
Project Team Members			
Botswana	Leonard Dikobe	Environment Unit, NCSA	August 24th
Montenegro	Selim Lika	Programme Manager GEF Projects	September 3rd
Suriname	Bryan Drakenstein	Programme Officer, Environment Focal Point	September 9th

Annex D: Survey Questions and Raw Data

Country

Region	Country		
A-CW	Ghana	Asia	Bhutan
A-CW	Cape Verde	Asia	Lao PDR
A-CW	Togo	Asia	Afghanistan
A-CW	Sao Tome e Principe	Asia	Thailand
A-CW	Guinee (Conakry)	Asia	Malaysia
A-CW	Burkina Faso	Asia	Nepal
A-ES	Malawi	Caribbean	Haiti
A-ES	Lesotho	ECIS	Montenegro
A-ES	Rwanda	ECIS	Croatia
A-ES	Namibia	ECIS	Bosnia and Herzegovina
A-ES	Botswana	Latin America	Venezuela
A-ES	Seychelles	Latin America	Nicaragua
A-ES	Zambia	Latin America	Guinea Equatorial
A-ES	South Africa	Pacific	Fiji Islands
A-ES	Kenya	Pacific	Papua New Guinea
MENA	Libya	Pacific	Indonesia
MENA	Tunisia		
MENA	Egypt		

Role in NCSA project (Select all that apply to you)

	Responses	Per cent
Project Manager	7	14%
Project Coordinator	9	17%
Lead Consultant	0	0%
UNDP NCSA Task Manager	11	21%
UNEP NCSA Task Manager	0	0%
UNDP E&E Focal Point	23	44%
UNEP Regional Advisor	0	0%
UNDP Regional Technical Advisor	1	2%
GEF Operational Focal Point	1	2%
Total	52	100%

In the context of capacity building for the global environment in your country, what is your current level of needs for technical services?

	Responses	Per cent
High	32	63%
Moderate	19	37%
Low	0	0%
None	0	0%
Total	51	100%

What are some examples of your needs?

- Assessing Synergies between Rio Conventions, CC Adaptation and mitigation assessment, Mainstreaming Obligations under Rio Conventions in policies, plans and programs, Development of training manual and guidelines to address global environment issues at both national and local levels
- Better capacities in terms of sustainable environment planning and management and sustainable use of natural resources. Coordination of different institutions and government bodies with objective to better address environment issues. Financial mechanism to support environment actions. Awareness raising and bringing environmental issues to attention to wider public.
- We need some workshops and trainings in different areas of the environment.
- Need technical support in methodologies for conducting strategic studies on experience of other developing countries as related on impact and response to CC scenarios and disaster management.
- More training on capacity building from within, more awareness on the environmental international conventions that our country has signed on and ratified.
- Setting up the institutional and organisational framework for UNCCD reporting, improving the understanding and development of National Inventory Report of GHG
- Many strategic documents, Support in implementation of existing documents; educations; capacity buildings; equipments, training courses in project design and implementation of projects.
- See the final NCSA Reports for Namibia.
- Negotiation expert
- My understanding on the Rio Conventions was not deep enough during the course of project implementation and this limitation impeded me in providing high quality technical and policy advisory service for effective NCSA implementation at national and institutional level.
- Technical capacity on biodiversity, climate change, water resources, etc.
- Policy and institutional capacity development. Legal framework enhancement, environment education and awareness. Environment Mainstreaming in development and national investment process
- Tools for Capacity Assessment and on-going monitoring of needs and achievements.

- The country is short of sufficient qualified experts to address many of the needs under the various GEF and environment projects. Capacity retention is also a serious issue with a high turnover as well as high brain drain.
- Climate Change (Knowledge and interest from the Government)
- Competent of the UNCCD and UNFCCC national focal points
- Creating enabling environment (policies & legal frameworks), Institutional strengthening (e.g., planning, implementation, developing systems , strategies and manuals for management and oversight)
- Technology, finance, sectoral integration of Rio Conventions
- Capacity to develop skills identified and action the recommendations
- How to organize and strategise within UNDP to support the government for their capacity building for the global environment
- Needs exist in the major areas covering the different conventions, both at high and lower level
- practically all aspects of environmental protection
- Knowledge about Climate Change Adaptation and how to link with Disaster Risk Reduction
- Climate Change Adaptation, CDM and Mitigation, REDD issues.
- Institution development
- Mainstreaming biodiversity consideration, financial framework/mechanisms for climate change and biodiversity management, technical capacity for the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. Capacity development activities at individual level, amongst staffs of Ministry of Environment in order to effectively manage policy/strategy of environment management. Strength the capacity of secretary permanent (coordination unit of convention of RIO etc). Promote legal context that is favourable to manage sustainable environment. Reinforce capacity of decentralized actors, such as regional, provincial, local department, municipality actors in their decision making and planning development that integrates sustainable natural resource management
- Clarification des mandats des différents organismes en charge de l'environnement au niveau systémique, institutionnel et individuel
- Assistance au développement de projets et la mobilisation des ressources pour leur mise en œuvre
- J'ai eu à suivre le projet NCSA avec de très faibles connaissances en procédure du GEF et des outils de gestion, de suivi et évaluation des projets GEF. C'est pourquoi j'ai besoin d'avoir des connaissances et pratiques du suivi et de l'évaluation des projets
- Besoin de réorganisation de la représentation du Ministère de l'Environnement dans les îles et dans les communes, afin de mieux planifier et mettre en œuvre les programmes environnementaux
- La langue du pays étant le portugais, et l'Anglais étant la langue dominante dans les fora internationaux, il s'avère nécessaire que nos interlocuteurs atteignent un minimum des compétences nécessaires pour positionner le pays dans ses assises. Un renforcement de capacité technique en la matière serait hautement souhaitable.
- 1 - La sensibilisation, l'information et l'éducation des acteurs à tous les niveaux ;
2 - La mise en place d'un cadre juridique, législatif et réglementaire
3 - bonne gouvernance,
4 - constitution de base de données

- 5 - disponibilité en ressources humaines ;
- 6 - recherche scientifique et technologique ;
- 7 - renforcement des capacités des acteurs de la société civile ;
- 8 - amélioration des mécanismes de transfert de technologie ;
- 9 - Sauvegarde et gestion des ressources naturelles ;
- 10 - amélioration du cadre de vie de la population ;
- 11 - systématisation de l'approche genre dans les politiques environnementales ;
- 12- Renforcer de la prévention et de la gestion des risques naturels .
- La mise en réseau des différents acteurs : Centres de Recherche, Universités, département techniques des Ministères (Ex: Banque Nationale de Gênes, différentes autres banques de gènes spécialisées).
- Renforcement des capacités en gestion des Aires protégées, des ressources en eau, gestion des ressources forestières, renforcement institutionnel
- Les besoins sont énormes tant en terme du personnel, de capacités intrinsèques, de coordination intra-ministère et inter-ministère. Besoin d'encouragement des processus de capacitation au niveau de la décentralisation en cours dans de nombreux pays. Besoin de clarifier les rôles et missions de chacune des institutions
- Siguen existiendo vacios en la comprensión de conceptos relacionados con CC, bienes y servicios ambientales, economía ambiental y gestión ambiental urbana
- Monitoreo, estadísticas, investigaciones, etc.
- Nicaragua es un país que enfrenta serios retos ambientales y uno de ellos es la capacidad de las diferentes instancias o sectores para entender y abordar la problemática ambiental. Se debe fortalecer las capacidades de los diferentes sectores para proporcionar respuestas integrales.
- Asistencia técnica en el campo de manejo de herramientas: consultorías, cursos, seminarios, elaboración de informes, intercambio de experiencias

What is the likelihood of your country undertaking or planning to implement priority recommendations from your NCSA in the future?

	Responses	Per cent
Highly likely	16	32%
Likely	21	42%
Moderately likely	11	22%
Unlikely	2	4%
Total	50	100%

What are some examples of your needs?

- As above
- Writing GEF proposals

- The addition of SLM as focal area requires that people are aware of this and therefore eligibility of project activities
- Capacity development for institutions and personnel to undertake priority actions related to CC
- Availability of funding, international consultant to do funding proposals.
- We didn't completed NCSA, but climate changes and biodiversity issues are our high priority.
- See the final NCSA Reports for Namibia. Top priority now is for the development of the regulations for the EIA under the EMA.
- Legal Expert for domesticating Environmental convention
- CoP Negotiations Training.
- The country is doing the best it can to implement all of the ACTION Plan recommendations.
- collaboration of the focal points of the Rio Conventions
- When developing strategic documents e.g., development plan, reference is made to the NCSA
- It depends on how GEF will consider the NCSA action plan while providing grant for projects
- Financial resources to address recommendations
- Strategic Environment Impact (SEA)
- Some of the needs are gradually being integrated in project documents relating to the different environment conventions
- proceed with development of second national communication to UNFCCC
- Incapacité à la mobilisation de fonds pour la mise en oeuvre du Plan d'Action.
- Le pays est actuellement dans la dynamique d'organiser une table ronde des bailleurs en vue de mobiliser les ressources pour la mise en oeuvre des programmes. Un programme de renforcement de capacité appuyé par le PNUD est en cours de mise en oeuvre. les recommandations prioritaires de NCSA pour s'inscrire dans ces cadres
- Les leçons tirées de l'évaluation indépendante des interventions du PNUD en matière de l'environnement ont révélé le souci des partenaires nationaux de fournir des réponses aux recommandations en revoyant à la fois leurs dispositifs et mécanismes de gestion de projet
- Il ya une réelle volonté politique, mais les ressources n'ont pas forcément suivi ces recommandations
- l'AAP dont bénéficie le pays est vraiment une porte d'entrée pour la mise en oeuvre de ses recommandations.
- 1 - La sensibilisation, l'information et l'éducation des acteurs à tous les niveaux ;
2 - La mise en place d'un cadre juridique, législatif et réglementaire favorisant l'utilisation durable et le partage juste et équitable des ressources naturelles ;
3 - Le renforcement des capacités en matière de bonne gouvernance, capacités scientifiques, formation en formulation des projets et en négociation internationale ;
4 - Le renforcement de la constitution de base de données (structures décentralisées et déconcentrées) et la dotation en moyens matériels de collecte, d'archivage, de Stockage, d'analyse et de la communication (NTIC, SIG) pour une meilleure élaboration des politiques et une prise de décision efficace ;
5 - La disponibilité des ressources humaines et l'amélioration de leurs capacités en

éducation environnementale, communication, gestion, suivi évaluation, décentralisation, gouvernance locale, techniques de Lutte Contre la Désertification et de protection de la biodiversité, etc. ;

6 - Une intégration des résultats de la recherche scientifique et technologique dans l'élaboration des politiques et des processus de prise de décision ;

7 - Le renforcement des capacités des acteurs de la société civile et leur contribution à la professionnalisation des ONG pour la préservation, la sauvegarde de l'environnement ;

8 - Une amélioration des mécanismes de transfert de technologie ;

9 - Sauvegarder et gérer rationnellement les ressources naturelles ;

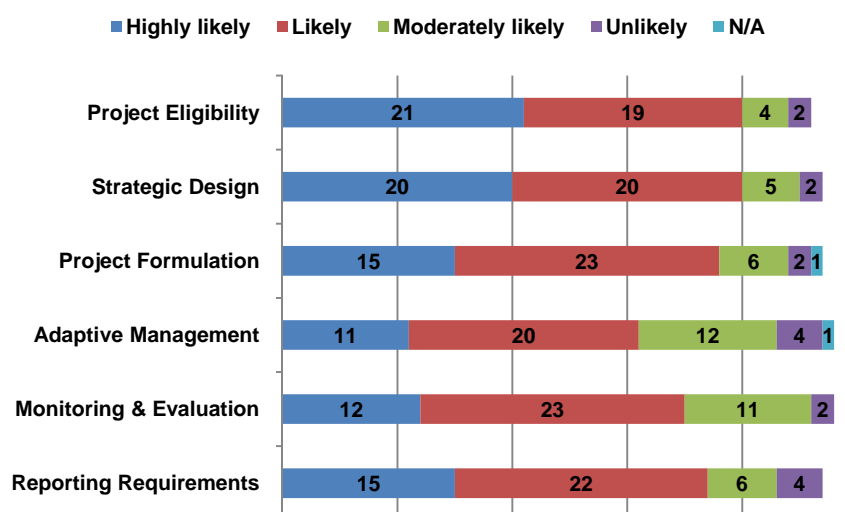
10 - Améliorer le cadre de vie de la population pour une gestion durable de l'environnement ;

11 - Systématiser l'approche genre dans les politiques environnementales pour une gestion durable de l'environnement ;

12- Renforcer la capacité des différents acteurs à la prévention et gestion des risques naturels pour une meilleure prise de décision.

- Expertise en matière de formulation de projets (biodiversité, désertification changements climatiques: Atténuation et adaptation.)
- Manque de ressources financières de la part du Gouvernement pour le financement des activités de formation et de développement des capacités une gestion durable de l'environnement;
- Ejemplos de directrices, guias, modelos de elaboracion de las recomendaciones

In your view, what is the likelihood that the type of support provided by the GSP responds to an expressed need, e.g., understanding eligibility or strategic design issues, project development guidance resolving project blockages, monitoring, or reporting requirements?



To what extent are there any constraints or challenges for your country to demand technical services from the GSP?

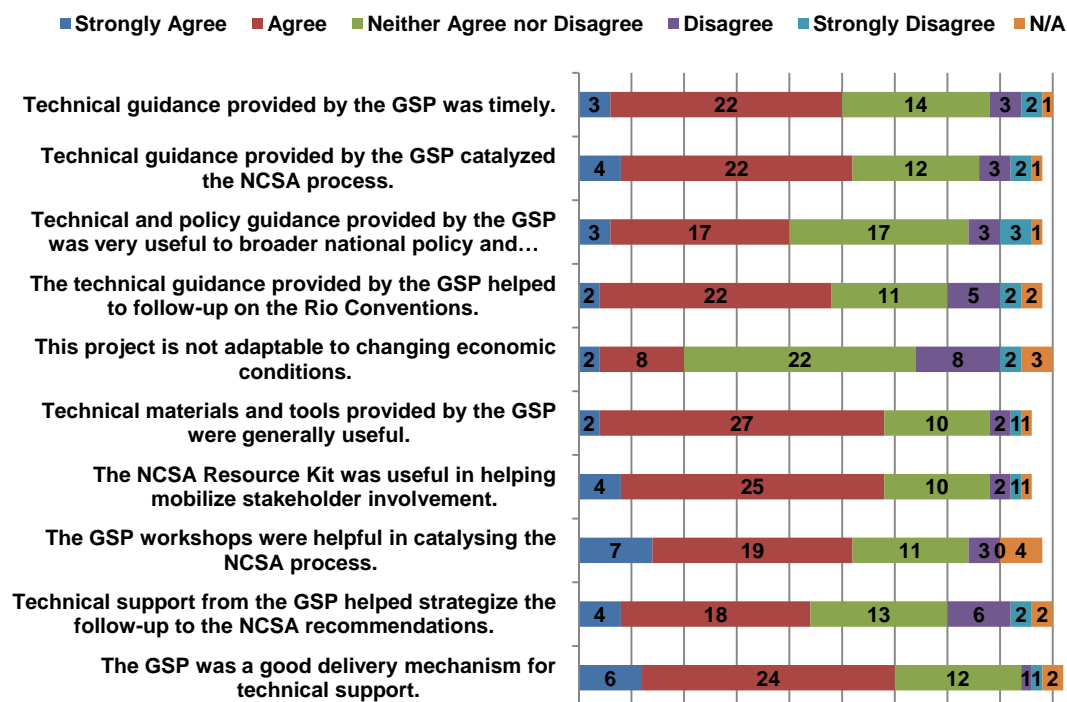
	Responses	Per cent
Many	14	29%
Some	14	29%
Few	9	18%
None	12	24%
Total	49	100%

Please elaborate

- Changes in government has resulted in having a NCSA focal point who is not very conversant with what the project was aimed at and therefore may not be in a position to request for support.
- The country endeavours to build its own capacity, however, due to financial and technical constraints this need will take a long time to be achieved
- provision of co-financing, problem of networking all stakeholders in the process of application
- lack of stuff
- Limited publicity in work of the GSP limits use of their services.
- Comments and feedback from GSP on the technical report prepared by national project team were useful but due to the low technical capacity of the Project Implementation Partner plus misinterpretation of the given direction, process for improvement of quality of the NCSA country report took much longer time than planned.
- lack of technical expertise, inadequate legal and institutional arrangements, lack of financial resources, lack of political commitment etc
- GSP appears detached from the Regional Service Centers hence falling outside the regular stream of Technical Backstopping for country offices.
- The country was not aware that we could request for technical services from the GSP we shall endeavour to do so.
- GSP did not consider UNDP staff turnover, so, when a new staff came in, he/she try to implement the minimum requirement without understanding the whole concept.
- Get all the focal points of the Rio Conventions to work together
- Limited knowledge on who to contact particularly if the issue is inter sectoral
- At the CO we do not confidence in GSP for providing any support or guidance as there was no support provided at all during NCSA process in Nepal
- Some of the constraints may be related to the limited capacity to update / identify those precise needs and be able to correctly absorb the assistance being provided
- difficultés dans les outils et moyens de communication
- Pas de difficultés majeures détectées

- la compréhension du processus de l'évaluation; 2. la pratique de l'évaluation peu familière; 3. la dissémination des résultats et leçons apprises du fait de l'absence de cadre de concertation adapté
- L'insularité d'une part et la fragmentation du pays en 10 îles d'autre part rendent les liaisons difficiles
- L'expertise à fournir ne maîtrise pas le portugais, parfois même pas le français, ce qui constitue un grand obstacle. Le non-appropriation de la contrepartie nationale des enjeux de l'environnement et des engagements du pays au niveau international
 - Insuffisance de coordination des structures de mise en œuvre ;
 - Insuffisance de Communication / Échanges d'informations ;
 - Renforcement des capacités en infrastructures (laboratoire, ...)
 - Absence de liens entre Évaluations environnementales et Conventions ;
 - Problèmes de mobilisation de financements ;
 - Insuffisance de connaissances des procédures des partenaires financiers ou bailleurs de fonds;
 - Insuffisance des ressources humaines et matérielles ;
 - Insuffisance des textes juridiques, législatifs et réglementaires.
- Manque d'appui technique de GSP au projet national pour la finalisation des rapports d'évaluations.
- El país se encuentra en disyuntiva sobre la aceptación de la cooperación internacional. Los cambios ministeriales son demasiado dinámicos (cambios trimestrales en promedio) por lo que la idea o visión se pierde. Adicionalmente, si es firmado un acuerdo, los plazos de implementación son elevados y la ejecución de los fondos conlleva tiempo para asegurar que sólo sean utilizados basado en lo establecido en los acuerdos sin que tomen un carisma netamente social de soluciones inmediatas que no resuelven la raíz de los problemas
- De los ministerios o departamentos involucrados con el tema medioambiental, poquísima gente tiene conocimientos sobre el tema ni mucho menos sobre la elaboración, gestión y demás de proyectos sobre el medio ambiente

The following questions ask for your opinion as a stakeholder of the Global Support Programme.



Would other alternatives to the GSP as a delivery mechanism have been more appropriate in responding to the needs of the countries in terms of technical support?

	Responses	Per cent
Yes	25	54%
No	21	46%
Total	46	100%

If yes, which one(s):

	Responses	Per cent
Implementing agency	15	39%
Regional development agency	7	18%
International or national centers of excellence	7	18%
NGO	9	24%
Others	5	13%
Total	38	100%

Others (please specify):

- I am not sure if it would have made a difference
- Training the UNDP CO staff to provide these services would have been much better
- I am not sure if it would have made a difference
- Training the UNDP CO staff to provide these services would have been much better through Regional Centers
- El país no se ha beneficiado de PMS

Have there been any unexpected results from the technical support provided by the GSP?

	Responses
Yes	8
No	36
Total	44

Please provide some examples.

- During the implementation process, a number of developments have taken place like the agreement within the donor community to agree on joint implementation of programmes which has brought together strategic partnerships and hence greater appreciation of the NCSA process
- Development of awareness raising materials and organization of press conference for media briefing
- Does not apply as we have not received any assistance from GSP
- Linkage to other initiatives
- Consideration should be given to the uniqueness of each country
- There was no support provided
- Une prise de conscience au niveau politique le plus élevé
- L'assistance technique a permis de booster la préparation de certains PIF/PPG CB2 dans les pays les plus avancés et les plus intéressés.
- Se logró apoyar más allá de las convenciones estipuladas

Comments

- Le SGP aurait pu être plus efficace si la communication était plus appropriée Le SGP donnait l'impression d'être un organisme qui, après avoir développée des outils pour le NCSA, faisait un suivi en étant loin des acteurs parties prenantes du processus. Le SGP n'a pas joué un rôle efficace dans la mise en oeuvre des plans d'action NCSA.
- Je suis heureux de saisir cette opportunité qui m'est offerte pour donner un avis sur le GSP. Je salue la qualité des appuis apportés par GSP dans le processus NCSA et souhaite des appuis similaire dans la mobilisation des ressources pour la mis en oeuvre la stratégie qui en est découlée.

- le problème de pérennisation et de constitution d'une masse critique de compétences nationales se présente. Comment pourrait-on prendre en compte de ces genres de préoccupations.
- I think the NCSA process was a good process, but in our case we experienced funding constraints and were not able to finish on time. Training should also target the CO so that the office can provide timely advice and guidance.
- Fue un mecanismo de apoyo oportuno y muy concreto
- Thanks
- Le pays a réalisé des études d'inventaire et a formulé la stratégie et le plan d'action des capacités à renforcer pour la gestion de l'environnement national et mondial, et a procédé à la formulation d'une requête qui a été soumise entre autre au FEM, pour financer les gaps relevés.
- Il serait intéressant de mobiliser ces ressources, sinon il en va de la crédibilité du FEM
- The NCSA for Namibia was useful and the tools proved to be okay given that Namibia was among the first countries to conduct the NCSA. The NCSA will be much more useful if there are follow-up capacity enhancement projects. It beats the purpose for documenting capacity gaps without providing support to fill or help build to some of those gaps. Capacities that take into consideration the specific needs of the UNFCCC need to be addressed.
- How do COs tap the support of the Global Support Team. Their functions are not well disseminated.
- NIL
- Nous espérons que la mise en oeuvre du plan d'action soit faite dans le plus bref délai.
- I assume GSP might have been very useful means of providing technical support to countries like Afghanistan where the capacities are very low at all levels in terms of environment and its management. It is such pity that Afghanistan has not been able to tap into GSP technical resources. In Afghanistan Environment and poverty are strongly linked to one another. In other words bulk of the population around 80% relies on environment resources and any damage to environment means increased poverty. The latest is key constraints against sustainable development in the country
- The NCSA process in Botswana appeared misguided with limited systematic tools for assessment of capacity. It was disheartening noting that so many development agencies have done capacity assessments, that there are tools world-wide for these assessments BUT the GSP does not seem to have found the need to develop a generic tool to capture some of the common aspects of capacity assessments.
- No additional comments
- I am a Project Manager of a project which is a direct follow up of the NCSA process in Bulgaria. However, I was not involved directly in the NCSA itself and I cannot provide accurate answers to some of the questions in this survey since I lack background information.
- None
- Hasta la fecha el país no se ha beneficiado del PMS, convendría darle esta oportunidad
- Continued support with regards to technical services and financial resources is required to implement, monitor/evaluate and reporting.

- I am a UNEP Fund Management Officer and took over the NCSA portfolio over a year ago and worked on trying to complete and close projects and continue with ongoing and stalled projects. We have managed to complete and close 26 of the 34 projects with 8 ongoing ones which we hope will be completed by 2011. The challenges we face is communication with the countries and capabilities in the countries to complete the various reports. Also once the main output (NCSA report) is completed, the countries tend to ignore the final reports and hence projects take long to close.
- There was no support or guidance received from GSP regarding NCSA process in Nepal. It was only because of immense efforts made by the CO and continuous follow ups provided, helped to finalize the NCSA report on time
- The support process was well conceived. The high mobility of the people in charge of the process in Cape Verde may unnecessarily have reduced understanding of the process and increased the time to completion.
- L'ANCR aurait pu être un processus catalysant les énergies pour la mobilisation des ressources humaines et financières des pays et la mobilisation des autorités gouvernementales pour la mise en oeuvre des plans d'action mais malheureusement l'ANCR est resté enfermé dans un cadre restreint de méthodologie académique.
- Should there be a follow up of NCSA, then it has to be related to Climate Change. And the support should be an action type of support, not developing a document.
- The GSP is a very good and highly needed initiative. The GSP technical services provided to the programme were based on the requests from the project and the response was positive and useful each time a request was made. Furthermore, the GSP played a proactive role in the exchange of experience and information among NCSA projects in the different countries. Although, the GSP has succeeded in establishing a network among project managers, the network did not include the E&E focal points in the UNDP COs who were not necessarily informed about the technical services and advise that this is received from GSP. This has weakened the CO ability to play its role in the oversight and quality assurance of the project on the national level especially taking into consideration that the project managers are working more on behalf of the government rather than UNDP. In order to avoid such situation in the future, maybe the GSP can have the full responsibility of the oversight of the project; follow up with the project managers and coordination with the government.
- NCSA has provided avenues to evaluate capacity of our local institutions and has come out as an important add-on to institutional capacity building efforts of the country.
- Nil
- The GSP has provided support to the NCSA and the current CB 2 whenever needed. It has helped also in exchanging experiences with other countries and show casing success stories.
- Ces projets NCSA n'ont pas été bien suivis, avec peu de moyens pour envisager des missions. Il y a eu des périodes le GSP n'avait pas grand monde pour appuyer les pays dans notre région, peu de pays ont pris ce travail avec sérieux comme indiqué précédemment si c'était à refaire, il faudrait clairement orienter les projets pour éviter d'avoir des doublures avec les rapports propres à chaque convention.

- Burkina Faso was one of the first country completed NCSA process in 2008. However, the funding for implementation of action plan has not been available for a long duration of time. In addition, a number of times, we have been told different information regarding the availability of funding, which created distrust amongst national counterparts toward UNDP. It is crucial that as an execution agency to be able to provide timely and firm information in order to deliver the result in the field.

Annex E: List of Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (CB2) Projects

Country	Project Name	GEF Agency	GEF Grant	Co-financing Total
Armenia	Developing Institutional and Legal Capacity to Optimize Information and Monitoring System for Global Environmental Management in Armenia	UNDP	475,000.00	130,000.00
Belize	Strengthening Institutional Capacities for Coordinating Multi-Sectoral Environmental Policies and Programmes	UNDP	472,500.00	152,400.00
Bhutan	Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System	UNDP	475,000.00	222,692.00
Bulgaria	Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria's Regional Development Process	UNDP	499,000.00	2,128,900.00
Croatia	Common Data Flow System and Indicators to Enhance Integrated Management of Global Environmental Issues in Croatia	UNEP	477,000.00	477,000.00
Egypt	Mainstreaming Global Environment in National Plans and Policies by Strengthening the Monitoring and Reporting System for Multilateral Environmental Agreements	UNDP	475,000.00	812,000.00
Gambia	Adoption of Ecosystem Approach for Integrated Implementation of MEAs at National and Divisional Level	UNEP	493,000.00	168,000.00
Ghana	Establishing an Effective and Sustainable Structure for Implementing Multilateral Environmental Agreements	UNDP	475,000.00	284,300.00
Jamaica	Piloting Natural Resource Valuation within Environmental Impact Assessments	UNDP	470,250.00	132,000.00
Jordan	Developing Policy Relevant Capacity for Implementation of the Global Environmental Conventions in Jordan	UNDP	475,000.00	500,000.00
Kenya	Enhanced Regulatory and Information Systems for Integrated Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)	UNEP	487,500.00	277,000.00
Kyrgyzstan	Capacity Building for Improved National Financing of Global Environmental Management in Kyrgyzstan	UNDP	425,000.00	220,000.00
Lao PDR	Meeting the Primary Obligations of the Rio Conventions through Strengthening Capacity to Implement Natural Resources Legislation	UNDP	500,000.00	549,850.00
Moldova	Strengthening Environmental Fiscal Reform for National and Global Environment Management	UNDP	475,000.00	475,000.00
Montenegro	Capacity Building For Environmental Policy Institutions For Integration Of Global Environment Commitments In The Investment And Development Decisions/Projects	UNDP	500,000.00	590,000.00
Morocco	Mainstreaming Global Environmental Aspects in the planning and monitoring processes of the National Human Development Initiative (NHDI) in Morocco	UNDP	460,000.00	200,000.00
Namibia	Strengthening Capacity to Implement the Global Environmental Conventions in Namibia	UNDP	475,000.00	260,000.00
Nicaragua	Mainstreaming the Multilateral Environmental Agreements into the Country's Environmental Legislation	UNDP	465,000.00	133,700.00
Philippines	Strengthening Coordination for Effective Environmental Management (STREEM)	UNDP	475,000.00	515,000.00
Romania	Strengthening Capacity to Integrate Environment and Natural Resource Management for Global Environmental Benefits	UNDP	470,000.00	730,000.00
Seychelles	Capacity Development for Improved National and International Environmental Management in Seychelles	UNDP	400,000.00	100,000.00
Tajikistan	Environmental Learning and Stakeholder Involvement as Tools for Global Environmental Benefits and Poverty Reduction	UNDP	470,000.00	470,000.00
Uzbekistan	Strengthening National Capacity in Rio Convention Implementation through Targeted Institutional Strengthening and Professional Development	UNDP	475,000.00	165,000.00

Source: GEF Project Database <http://www.gefonline.org/>

Annex F: Terms of Reference

Final Evaluation of the Global Support Programme to the National Capacity Self-Assessments: Terms of Reference

Introduction

The Global Support Programme (GSP) is an initiative of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) that was established to support countries that undertook an assessment of their capacities to meet commitments under the Rio Conventions. The latter projects, known as National Capacity Self-Assessments (NCSAs), have their foundation in the 1999 Capacity Development Initiative. A total of 146 NCSAs were implemented, 111 by UNDP, 33 by UNEP and one by the World Bank. The GSP has been in operation since 2005, and implemented as two separate projects by UNDP and UNEP, both of which are coming to an end on 30 September.

Purpose

In keeping with monitoring and evaluation policies, an evaluation of this project by an independent consultant is required. The objective of this evaluation is to assess the results and impacts of the GSP, including efforts to ensure the sustainability of support activities, identifying lessons learned from the implementation of the GSP, and make recommendations to improve the modalities by which the GSP objectives are delivered. The final evaluation should assess the extent to which the GSP contributed to the achievement of global environmental objectives. The evaluation will assess the GSP results and impacts against the objectives and activities as outlined in the GSP project documents (both the UNDP and UNEP project documents). The programme activities of the GSP are generically referred to as technical support to the NCSAs.

Background

The first NCSAs began in 2002, and on the recommendation of the 1999 Capacity Development Initiative were structured to assess the individual, organizational, and systemic capacities needed to strengthen the underlying foundations of actions needed to achieve Rio Convention objectives. In 2003, the GEF adopted the Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building”, which outlined the GEF’s four approaches to capacity building, known as pathways. The first pathway was the NCSAs, which was to provide countries with a comprehensive baseline of the full set of capacities needed to meet and sustain Rio Convention objectives. The second pathway represents the capacity building components or focal area projects. Pathway III was the new GEF funding window for countries to implement priority cross-cutting capacity development medium-size projects. The fourth and last pathway was a targeted umbrella programme to support sustainable land management in Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Each country received approximately US\$200,000 with which to undertake project activities over a period of approximately 18-24 months. Some countries received an early grant of US\$25,000 to prepare the project proposal requesting the NCSA grant.

Approach of the evaluation

The evaluation should begin with a desk review of key GSP documents, including but not limited to the Resource Kit, Workshop Reports, Scorecard Guidelines, the annual project implementation reviews, and the Mid-Term Evaluation. The evaluation would include select interviews with NCSA project coordinators and other NCSA stakeholders to fill information gaps. The Mid-Term Evaluation was recently completed in August 2009 and recommended that it be considered the Final Evaluation of the GSP. However, in light of the no-cost extension of the GSP and availability of funds, a Final Evaluation was seen as an opportunity to undertake a more in-depth focus of the substantive role of the GSP is supporting NCSA project teams. In this respect, the evaluation should assess the demand for technical support, modalities for technical support provision, barriers to technical support requests and delivery, and quality and timeliness of technical support. The Final Evaluation would also review the recommendations made in the Mid-Term Evaluation and assess the extent to which the GSP was able to implement them.

The Final Evaluation will:

- Assess the demand for GSP activities

At the time of the establishment of the GSP, there was a demand for the technical services and programme activities. Does this demand exist today, and if so, what does it look like? What is the enabling environment surrounding countries' demand for technical support to assess and strengthen their underlying capacities to meet global environmental objectives? In this respect, the evaluation would make an assessment of the systemic constraints to technical support delivery.

- Assess the GSP strategy of technical support delivery

The Final Evaluation will assess the strategic logic of providing technical support to the NCSAs through a global support programme, as opposed to alternative delivery mechanisms, such as through the implementing agencies, regional development agencies, international or national centers of excellence, or even non-governmental organizations. The Final Evaluation will *not* assess the institutional arrangements of the implementing agencies as this was undertaken in the Mid-Term Evaluation.

- Assess the effectiveness of technical support to NCSA implementation and sustainability

The evaluation would assess the extent to which GSP activities have been able to catalyze the NCSAs. To what extent can the support activities under the GSP constitute a sustainable modality of country support to project implementation? This assessment should not be limited to the past twelve months of GSP activity, but to the extent appropriate and practical, go as far back as possible to fill any information gaps.

- Assess the impacts of the NCSAs

The NCSAs formed the basis of rationalizing and prioritizing country action to meet Rio Convention objectives. To the extent possible and through surveys and interviews, the Final Evaluation will assess the extent to which the NCSAs catalyzed follow-up action. This includes, but should not be limited to, the development and implementation of Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (CB2) projects. This assessment should be undertaken in such a way that it constitutes an indirect measure of the contribution of the GSP.

- Identify good and bad practices

Based on the findings, the Final Evaluation will summarize a set of good *and* bad practices for technical support delivery. The rationale is to juxtapose what worked and why against what did not work and why so that the evaluation represents a good learning tool.

Methodology

An independent consultant will be recruited to undertake this evaluation over a time frame of 60 days, beginning as early as 1 July and ending no later than 15 September 2010.

The evaluation will be based on:

- Review of relevant documentation such as the project document, questionnaires, workshop reports, GSP materials, responses to country requests, country data, progress reports, and the programme web sites.
- Interviews with representatives from the GEF Secretariat, Implementing Agencies, and NCSA project teams and stakeholders.
- Survey of NCSA project teams and stakeholders.

Final Evaluation Report outline

1. Executive summary (maximum 4 pages)
2. Introduction (1-2 pages)
3. Background (Project description. 1 page)
4. Evaluation purpose and methodology (2 pages)
5. Major Findings (12-16 pages)
 - a. Demand for technical support to NCSAs
 - b. GSP Strategy
 - c. Effectiveness of technical support to NCSA implementation and sustainability
 - d. NCSA impacts
6. Lessons learned (Good and bad practices, but organized thematically. 5-6 pages)
7. Recommendations (2-3 pages)
8. Annexes
9. References

Timing

The proposed schedule would be carried out within the following timeframe:

- Initial conversation with GSP Manager (1 July 2010)
- Compilation and analysis of relevant documents (1-6 July 2010)
- Detailed methodology for the Final Evaluation (12 July 2010)
- Design, implementation and review of surveys, including selection of countries and strategies for interviews (12 July – 6 August 2010)
- First draft evaluation (20 August 2010)
- Final Evaluation report (10 September 2010)

Qualifications

- Masters degree in environment-related or environment disciplines, economics or other relevant discipline.
- 10-15 years of professional experience in climate change, capacity development or environment, economics and/or development related field is required.
- Demonstrated project/programme evaluation skills and experience.
- Demonstrated ability to undertake capacity development, climate change, energy research drawing on case studies as well as analyze data, country trends and lessons learned.
- Fluency in English, both in oral and written. Additional language skills, in particular French and/or Spanish, are advantageous. Working knowledge of other UN language will be an asset
- Working experience within UN and UNDP in particular is an advantage.