

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COUNCIL'S DISCUSSIONS
47TH GEF COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 28-30, 2014, WASHINGTON, D.C.**

The following is a record prepared by the GEF Secretariat of comments, understandings, and clarifications of certain points made by Council Members during discussions of the agenda items and related decisions. The Joint Summary of the Chairs records the decisions agreed by the Council. These points are supplemental to the Joint Summary of the Chairs.

Agenda Item 1 Opening of the Meeting

1. The CEO and Chairperson of the GEF, Naoko Ishii, opened the meeting noting that it was the first Council meeting in GEF-6 following a successful Assembly in Cancun. For this work the GEF has more resources than before, a set of exciting strategies and a strong policy reform agenda. She highlighted that the coming year is critical because of the negotiations towards an agreement on Climate Change in 2015, the post-2015 negotiations on sustainable development and the first year of GEF-6 work. Ishii recalled that during the recent UNSG Climate Summit, she saw a coalition of the willing among a broad range of stakeholders, the GEF as a key participant in the discussion on sustainable cities, the GEF recognized for its work in forests and the GEF as a contributor to the work on adaptation, including its synergies with other focal areas. She reaffirmed the support of GEF to the GCF and the development of complementarities among the two mechanisms. She also stressed the need for the GEF to position itself as a valuable and relevant actor in the broader sustainable development framework. She further mentioned key challenges facing GEF-6 in implementing a programming approach that cuts across the GEF focal areas, specially taking the environment out of its own silo. The CEO stressed the importance of countries setting their strategies on how to utilize the GEF resources early. The CEO outlined the ongoing restructuring of the Secretariat as equipping the organization to deliver on its commitments and face the related challenges. Finally, Ms. Ishii announced that FUNBIO had just been approved by the Accreditation Panel to progress to the final stage of the accreditation process to become a GEF Project Agency.

Agenda Item 2 Election of a Chairperson

2. Mr. Winston Thompson, the Council Member representing the Pacific Islands Constituency was elected as a Chairperson for this meeting. Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure for the GEF Council Meeting, the position of elected Chairperson alternates between recipient Council Members and non-recipient Council Members.

Agenda Item 3 Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Council adopted the provisional agenda as presented.

Agenda Item 4 Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) FY14: Part I

4. Some Council Members, noting the variations between some Agencies with respect to the time elapsed between CEO endorsement and first disbursement of their respective project portfolios, requested that the reasons for these variances be reflected in future AMRs.

5. Council Members requested that reporting on cumulative achievements of GEF-6 corporate targets be reported on an annual basis in the AMRs.

Agenda Item 5 Results-based Management: Action Plan

6. Several Council Members welcomed the positive direction in which further development of the RBM framework is moving. A few Council Members pointed out that while the action items were outlined, specific components for actions were not detailed. The Secretariat clarified that it will report on progress in the implementation of the Action Plan with specific components and how it complies with the timeline as specified in the document.

7. Council Members emphasized the need to prioritize the rationalization of results frameworks, indicators, and tracking tools by the time GEF-6 projects are ready for CEO endorsement.

Agenda Item 6 GEF-6 Non-Grant Instrument Pilot and Updated Policy for Non-Grant Instruments

8. Some Council Members noted that, while they welcomed the introduction of non-grant instruments for the public sector, the Pilot should nevertheless be considered a key element of the GEF's private sector engagement strategy. Some Council Members noted the importance of the GEF continuing to be predominantly a grant-providing facility.

9. Many Council Members emphasized the importance of strong communication and outreach about the Pilot in order to ensure that potential recipients, from both public and private sectors, have sufficient knowledge and opportunity to take advantage of the Pilot. The Secretariat agreed that strong and proactive communication is necessary to promote the NGI, and will seek to utilize both existing and new communication channels within the GEF network to achieve this objective.

10. A number of Council Members, while acknowledging the demand-driven nature of the Pilot, expressed a desire to see proposals under the Pilot from different focal areas, as indicated in the indicative selection criteria. The Secretariat was also requested to ensure that innovation in the application of GEF-6 focal area strategies should be included as one of the selection criteria and that this be reflected in the guidelines for project proposals under the NGI.

Agenda Item 7 Improving the GEF Project Cycle

11. Several Council Members suggested that a review and analysis on the bottlenecks of the delayed projects should be reported to the next Council meeting.

12. Some Members also expressed a desire to be able to see ‘child projects’ once these are designed. The Secretariat is currently developing a site in the PMIS to share and highlight when child projects are received for CEO endorsement. All Council Members will be able to use this site to view a child project document to comment and ask questions.

13. Some Members asked questions regarding the implementation of the Cancellation Policy, including how the Secretariat would make public when a cancellation had occurred.

Agenda Item 8 The Country Support Programme Implementation

14. The Council expressed strong support for the Secretariat to continue to implement the Country Support Programme.

15. A few Council Members suggested that the IEO evaluate the Country Support Programme as part of OPS-6.

Agenda Item 9 Gender Equality Action Plan

16. Several Council Members sought clarification on the gender anchor function of the Secretariat that will include bringing in external gender specific expertise to help develop a long term solution.

17. Some Council Members noted the importance of developing a gender marker/screening system, which builds on existing GEF Agencies’ systems.

18. Some Council Members highlighted importance of involving beneficiaries, including local women’s groups, for project preparation and management.

***Agenda Item 10 Conversation with the Executive Secretaries of the Conventions –
Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions***

19. Four Executive Secretaries of the Multilateral Environmental Conventions for which the GEF serves as a/the financial mechanism addressed the GEF Council and presented their views regarding the contribution of the GEF to the global environment and development agendas. The following representatives were present: Ms. Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); Mr. Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions; and Ms. Fatoumata Keita-Ouane, Executive Secretary of the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention.

20. Ms. Figueres praised the GEF as a foundational force in the integration of the broad agendas of environment and development, as a pioneer and then mainstreamer of global environmental issues, and as a unique leader in the promotion of synergies among environmental conventions. She thanked the GEF for its unique role servicing several MEAs. She pointed out that climate change affects all human endeavors and that it is central to the goals of other conventions. There is no other option but to work to achieve an agreement in 2015 that will substantially reduce emissions. Ms. Figueres argued that although international environmental efforts are being made in the right direction, they are still not enough. She expects an agreement that will fundamentally transform every country's socio-economic context by supporting national sustainable development interests while being globally responsible. Finance is key: 90 trillion dollars will be invested in infrastructure around the world over the next 15 years and what matters is that such investment should be in resilient infrastructure. She highlighted the fundamental role of the GEF in tackling three main challenges: 1) To promote the continuation of investments in climate change adaptation; 2) To ensure that no country is left behind in the transformation into a low carbon economy, in particular SIDS and LDCs; 3) To work with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), by being innovative, working across focal areas and ensuring no country is left out, so that the GCF can scale-up the successful experiences of the GEF on climate change in the time that is needed.

21. Mr. Dias argued that although the challenges facing biodiversity are similar to those facing climate change, the sense of urgency is not "appreciated" for the former as well as it is increasingly for the latter. Mr. Dias recognized the increase in actions in the right direction through the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), but warned that the Aichi targets on biodiversity are unlikely to be met by the end of the decade with the current efforts. Referring to the recent Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD in Korea, Mr. Dias recalled the various achievements reached by the Parties, including the reaffirmation of earlier commitments to double international funding, as well as to increase domestic resource mobilization. Mr. Dias underlined that the GEF could contribute to mainstreaming of biodiversity through an assessment of lessons learned, the provision of best guidance to countries on implementation, and further synergy among the Conventions as well as integration among the Convention and its Protocols. He pointed out that the GEF could help the CBD in mainstreaming disaster prevention through conservation and restoration, improving payment for ecosystem services, strengthening health links to biodiversity, and helping developing countries to mobilize resources, among other initiatives.

22. Mr. Payet affirmed that chemicals have a great potential to make our lives easier and more productive through corporate consumer goods, but we must understand the potential impacts of chemicals in our lives. He thanked the GEF for its increased support to Chemicals in GEF-6, also by moving away from just persistent organic pollutants (POPs) towards a wider framing of chemicals and waste. He called upon the GEF to help implement plans on chemicals and waste. Mr. Payet highlighted the important role of the GEF in influencing the negotiation process for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by showcasing examples of synergistic approaches and by emphasizing the efficiency that could be brought through integrated implementation of the SDGs. He also pointed out that the GEF could be fundamental in developing capacities to ensure continuity of achievements.

23. Ms. Keita-Ouane highlighted the inter-linkages among chemicals, including mercury, public health and development. She affirmed the important role of the GEF as the financial mechanism for the Minamata Convention, helping to promote ways that facilitate the implementation of Convention goals. Ms. Keita-Ouane noted the participation of the GEF in regional and sub-regional workshops on Mercury. She pointed out examples through which GEF's integrated approaches constitute a new possibility for the Conventions to work synergistically and to avoid thinking in silos, while underlining the importance of promoting capacity building on Mercury, green chemistry and sustainable production issues.

Agenda Item 11 Progress Report on the Pilot Accreditation of GEF Project Agencies & Timeline for Further Discussion of Accreditation

24. Several Council Members, referring to the proposed timetable for further Council discussion regarding the future of accreditation, expressed concerns about the Secretariat's proposal for such a discussion to begin in June 2017. Several Council Members stressed that the current accreditation criteria and parameters need to be revisited and emerging lessons learned from the pilot need to be considered by the Council within a year, in order to decide how to move forward on this issue.

25. A number of Council Members noted the need for an assessment of the optimal place of national, regional and international agencies within the partnership, as an "options paper" that would also include proposals to streamline and speed-up the accreditation process, learning from the experience of other international funds. It could also provide recommendations on how to work effectively with more partner agencies, including national agencies.

26. Several Council Members requested that the Terms of Reference of the evaluation of the pilot accreditation process be shared with the Council.

27. The Secretariat and the IEO indicated they would proceed accordingly.

Agenda Item 12 Progress Report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office Director

28. Several Council Members requested the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) to undertake an evaluation of the GEF Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Network, including its role in the context of GEF work. In response, the IEO recognized the importance of conducting a comprehensive evaluation on the CSO Network and confirmed its commitment.

29. A few Council Members requested the IEO to incorporate gender specific data as evaluation criteria in all its work.

Agenda Item 13 Report of the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel

30. Several Council Members requested that in implementing its more selective approach to program review STAP contemplates the possibility that Council Members can request more in-depth STAP reviews of specific GEF projects or programs on an as needed basis. Once 30% of

the GEF-6 resources have been programmed, STAP's Chairman will include in her report an assessment of the scientific and technical "quality enhancement" function to the GEF Network under this selective approach, for Council's review.

Agenda Item 14 Work Program

31. Several Council Members reiterated the importance of STAP guidance provided in the work program, as Agencies are reminded to take such guidance into consideration during project preparation and in the further development of project proposals.

32. Several Council Members commented on the need to ensure that harmonization among technology transfer initiatives be done within and outside the GEF, particularly in establishing linkages with UNFCCC and UNEP's technology center.

Agenda Item 15 Stocktaking of Integrated Approach Pilots Preparation

33. The Secretariat presented the progress in the preparation of the Integrated Approach Pilots (IAPs): (i) taking deforestation out of commodities supply chain, (ii) food security in Sub-Saharan Africa, and (iii) sustainable cities. Several Council Members welcomed the innovative and holistic approach and requested regular progress update on their development. The Secretariat confirmed that the IAPs will likely be presented for approval at the next Council Meeting in June 2015.

34. At the request of several council members, the Secretariat will provide regular updates on the development and implementation of the IAPs.

***Agenda Item 16 Report of the Selection and Review Committee
(Closed door Executive Session)***

Agenda Item 17 Other Business

35. The Council recognized and expressed its appreciation to Erik Bjernebye of Norway for his distinguished service to the GEF over 15 years in various capacities including Council Member and Alternate as well as focal point for Norway.

Agenda Item 18 Joint Summary of the Chairs

36. The Council adopted the Joint Summary of the Co-Chairs.