



**SUMMARY OF NGO INTERVENTIONS AT GEF COUNCIL  
JUNE 2007**



**Agenda Item 8: Country Portfolio Evaluation: Samoa**  
**By Rex Horoi (Regional Focal Point for Pacific)**

The GEF NGO Network acknowledged the validity and reliability of the Portfolio Evaluation Report of Samoa and would like to thank the Office of Monitoring and Evaluation and GEF Secretariat for their good work. We would like the Council to take note of the following points and to ensure that any follow-up work in the Pacific SIDS should use the Samoan experience as a guide.

- 1) Need to involve civil society organizations, NGOs and CBOs in the evaluation process in Pacific SIDS to enhance and develop capacity in this sector but more importantly to utilize local skills and knowledge in monitoring and evaluation of GEF projects.
- 2) So as to encourage public participation and enhance country-driven programming, the Implementing Agencies need to encourage and engage meaningfully with governments and civil society and NGOs in the planning, design and implementation of projects at country level.
- 3) While dealing with Pacific SIDS in the design and implementation of GEF projects, high transaction costs should not be an impediment to later approval of project proposals but more importantly be taken as a necessary integral cost component of the projects.
- 4) Pacific SIDS including SIDS in other parts of the world share common vulnerabilities in terms of their small size, isolation from main markets, vulnerability to natural disasters, ecological fragility and high transportation costs, to mention but a few. All these add to their disadvantage when it comes to GEF project implementation. Thus the urgency of forming a new innovative alliance with the GEF becomes not only a viable alternative to addressing resource allocation under RAF for Pacific SIDS but a new way of doing business, moving away from the “business as usual” approach. The NGO Network welcomes the GEF Pacific Alliance Partnership and hopes that when implemented, meaningful engagement of NGOs and other civil society organizations, including their respective value-added roles, will be considered by national governments in the region. We also hope that SIDS in other regions will follow suit.

Thank you chair for exhausting your patience.



#### **Agenda Item 14: Work Program**

**By Yabanex Batista (Regional NGO Focal Point for North America)**

GEF Project ID 2757 --- “Strategic Investment Program for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa (SIP)”

The project is welcome and will face major challenges on the ground, which will be overcome if sufficient building capacities are fulfilled in regional organizations such as COMESA, ECOWAS, SADC as well as national ministries, local governments, civil societies and communities.

The project should indicate:

- The strategy and process to ensure that necessary capacities exist for the implementation of the project.
- The adequate technical support structure to be set up across countries and agencies to deliver such capacities.
- The commitments from the GEF Implementing Agencies listed in the project proposal to deliver the building capacities for the regional institutions, national ministries, local governments, civil societies and communities involved in the project implementation.

#### **Public Private Partnership (PPP) Initiative’s Trust Fund**

**By Yabanex Batista (Regional NGO Focal Point for North America)**

Whereas the GEF NGO Network supports the development of PPPI, they hoped that as a result there would be strategic and effective partnerships between GEF and the private sector. NGOs have considerable experience with the private sector. We support the proposal that NGOs be represented in the governing body of PPPI but request that two rather than one position be allocated to enable adequate representation of the wide range of geographical and technical perspectives. We recognize the innovative nature of the program and the ability to build new partnerships to address key issues.

However, we have some concerns on bio-fuels and hope that the proposed activities will be guided by the safeguard proposal contained in the Focal Area Strategy. We hope that mechanisms can be put in place to encourage equitable participation and access of the private sector by GEF recipient countries. We encourage appropriate linkages with existing partnerships be established to promote private sector contributions to the environment such as the Business Council for Sustainable Development.



**Technical paper of the on-going GEF Small Grants Program evaluation on the SGP management cost**

**By Rajen Awotar (Regional Focal Point Eastern Africa)**

The SGP presently covers 101 countries and will be expanded to 124 countries in the near future.

The GEF 4 implementation provides for the graduation of a certain number of countries during the coming years. The network views this graduation policy with much concern. It appears that only successful countries will be graduated out of the SGP. For us this graduation is equivalent to punishing them for their success. We request clear-cut policies about the graduation process. The process should not penalize developing countries. This will mean that to retain the SGP in place these countries will have to allocate funds from their already overstretched budgets.

The policy of adding 20 additional countries without providing matching funds is equivalent to slashing the SGP budgeted grant. This will obviously have detrimental effects on the overall SGP and for developing countries.

We again request that the SGP be fully “owned by CBOs / NGOs” and that all National Steering Committees (NSCs) are chaired by a civil society representative drawn from the NSCs.

**Agenda Item 16: Focal Area Strategies and Strategic Programming for GEF-4**

**Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy and Strategic Programming for GEF-4**

**By Yabanex Batista (Regional NGO Focal Point for North America)**

The Biodiversity Focal Area must explicitly recognize the role of indigenous groups in catalyzing the sustainability of protected area systems. We recommend that Paragraph 13 of the Biodiversity Strategy (Page 12), be modified as follows to reflect this:

- “d) Full recognition of the support to protected areas conservation and management made by communities and indigenous groups living in, and near, protected areas.

**Climate Change Focal Area Strategy and Strategic Programming for GEF-4**

**By Faizal Parish (Regional Focal Point for South East Asia)**

**Summary**

We support the continued strong emphasis within GEF to address issues related to climate change and the proposal to mainstream adaptation into all focal area programs.



However, we have concerns about the limited focus of the proposed GEF-4 strategy on climate change and believe that it will restrict the flexibility of governments to address top national and international priorities to mitigate climate change.

The current draft GEF-4 strategy on climate change seems to be mainly “business as usual” with all focus on mitigation of GHG emissions through energy efficiency/renewable energy.

No additional resources are identified for adaptation to climate change and there is no attention or resource allocation for mitigation of GHG emissions from Land Use and Land Use Change (LULUCF).

Since countries will make priorities for GEF-4 expenditure on climate change through the RAF mechanism, the priorities in the GEF-4 climate change strategies should be flexible and reflect country priorities.

The UNFCCC COP, through a number of decisions, has emphasized the importance of adaptation and the need for GEF to support it. This has been reiterated at many fora including a number of national prioritization exercises related to GEF-4 RAF. Similarly, discussions at UNFCCC (COP12 and SB26) have indicated an overwhelming need to reduce emissions from deforestation and other aspects of LULUCF. UNFCCC COP 12 specifically requested GEF to “explore options for undertaking land use and land-use change projects within the climate change focal area of the Global Environment Facility, in light of past experience”.

### **Recommendation 1**

**There should be a review of the cost-effectiveness of GEF and other projects in reducing emissions through energy efficiency and urban transport.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**A new strategic program on reducing emissions from LULUCF be established including options for countries to undertake strategic assessments, develop strategies to reduce emissions from the LULUCF sector, undertake pilot projects to assess effectiveness of different options. Focus should be placed on reducing emissions from natural ecosystems important for carbon storage (such as peatlands and forests) as well as adjusting land management practices to enhance sequestration and storage. Appropriate links should be made with land degradation and biodiversity focal areas.**



### **Recommendation 3**

**The proposed strategic program on forest conservation as a means to protect carbon stocks and avoid carbon dioxide emissions should be broadened to include other ecosystem types of importance for carbon storage – in particular peatlands/wetlands and focus on the assessment of appropriate management measures which will maintain stocks and reduce emissions.**

### **Recommendation 4**

**GEF should focus its limited resources on the rigorous assessments of the impact of the bio-fuel sector on global environment and climate change and development and promotion of appropriate safeguards and standards --- rather than implementing investment projects for bio-fuel plantations.**

### **Recommendation 5**

**GEF should continue to support projects on adaptation within the GEF trust fund resources --- with a focus on those projects, which can generate multiple benefits for the global environment, including reducing emissions from ecosystem degradation, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem rehabilitation.**

### **Recommendation 6**

**Civil society should be actively involved in the development of adaptation strategies for all GEF projects to ensure effective engagement and enabling local and traditional knowledge to contribute to the development of adaptation strategies.**

### **Agenda Item 18: Operational Guidelines for the application of the Incremental Cost Principle**

**By Felipe Villagran (Regional Focal Point for Meso America)**

We welcome the improvements to the Incremental Cost Policy

We are not sure that the incremental and Global Environmental Benefits (GEB) will not continue to be written at the end of the project design by experts and consultants, as this is the first time that the GEB are being taken seriously. It will require specialists to address them in the project proposal.

We are very concerned that there are no safeguards in place to ensure that the recipient government and executing agencies will comply with the GEB. With all due respect, we would like, in the strongest terms, to exhort the CEO to ensure that they are in place. For instance, in the case of IBRD, the only legal binding document between the country and the Bank is the legal document. We recommend that this legal instrument include an annexure containing the GEB and the evaluation criteria.