

GEF Council Meeting

June 5 – 7, 2012

Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 5

Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having considered document GEF/C.42/03, *Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions*, welcomes the report and requests the GEF network to continue working with recipient countries to reflect the guidance and national priorities in their respective GEF programming and activities.

Executive Summary

This document reports on developments of interest to the GEF Council under the following multilateral environmental conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the MP). The document also provides information on relations between the GEF Secretariat (the Secretariat) and other international conventions and institutions.

Highlights reported include:

- (a) Current status of the preparations and submissions to the CBD Secretariat of the Fourth National Biodiversity Reports, 2nd National Reports on Biosafety, and the GEF Support to the revision of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP). A brief report on joint activities implemented with the CBD Secretariat, including attendance and contributions to workshops organized by the CBD Secretariat.
- (b) A brief summary of highlights from attending the UNCCD Conference of Parties (COP) 10 with details on contributions and interventions made. A response to COP10 elements of decisions that are relevant to the GEF guidance is provided, including details of actions taken since the COP10.
- (c) A brief summary of progress on National Communications submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat is provided. A proposed GEF response to the seventeenth session of the UNFCCC COP17 guidance is provided including details on implementation of some decisions. The details of the GEF's reports to the COP17 and meetings are provided including meetings attended and issues discussed.
- (d) An update on the measures taken to implement the provisions of the Stockholm Convention and progress for submission of National Reports. The report also provides details on the implementation of COP5 decisions. A summary of meetings attended and issues discussed is provided; the report includes details on webinar developed which stimulated direct access to GEF resources from several countries.
- (e) A brief summary of the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Parties and the 66th Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund (MLF) for the Implementation of the MP is presented with details of contributions from the Secretariat.
- (f) Highlights and relevant details for the Adaptation Fund Board's 16th and 17th meetings held during reporting period are presented. The report includes the summary of decisions taken, the projects approved, and other decisions adopted that are relevant to the operations of the Board.
- (g) A brief report on the participation in the events organized by the United Nations Forum

on Forests (UNFF) and Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

- (h) Highlights of projects with synergies generated across focal areas including brief summaries of projects and programs approved during Intersessional Working Program in February and projects for the incoming Council meeting are presented.

Table of Contents

I. Convention on Biological Diversity	1
Ratification.....	1
National reporting	1
Meetings and events.....	1
II.UN Convention to Combat Desertification	3
Reporting	3
Decisions of the Conference of the Parties	4
Meetings and Events.....	6
Joint Activities	7
III.UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.....	8
Ratification.....	8
National reporting/National Communications	8
Reporting to COP.....	15
Meetings and events.....	16
IV.Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.....	16
Ratification.....	16
National reporting	16
Reporting to COP.....	17
Meetings and events.....	17
V.Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	18
Meetings and events.....	18
VI.Relations with Other International Institutions.....	18
Adaptation Fund Board.....	18
Accreditation decisions	19
Regional Accreditation Workshops	19

Project approvals.....	19
Other decisions.....	20
Resources	20
VII.United Nations Forum on Forests	21
VIII.Synergies Generated Between Conventions through Funded Projects	21

1. This document reports on developments of interest to the GEF occurring since the 41th GEF Council meeting in November 2011 within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the MP). The report also provides information on the GEF Secretariat's (the Secretariat) relations with other conventions and institutions.

I. Convention on Biological Diversity

Ratification

2. For the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Bahrain deposited its instrument of access on February 7, 2012, and became Party to the Protocol on May 7^t, 2012. Uruguay deposited its instrument of ratification on November 2, 2011, and became Party on January 13, 2012. 51 Parties to the Cartagena Protocol have signed the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and Latvia deposited its instrument of ratification on November 30, 2011, and Czech Republic on February 13, 2012.

3. For the reporting period, 92 Parties to the Convention have signed the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). Rwanda deposited its instrument of ratification on March 20, 2012, Jordan on January 10, 2012, Gabon deposited its instrument of acceptance on November 11, 2011.

National reporting

4. As of April 12, 2012, 181 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have submitted their fourth national reports to the Convention Secretariat, including 170 final versions. Reports can be found at <http://www.cbd.int/reports/search/?type=nr-04>.

5. As of April 30, 2012, the CBD Secretariat has received 109 out of the 123 countries their 2nd National Report on Biosafety using funding provided by the GEF.

Meetings and events

6. The Secretariat continues to contribute to the work of the Expert Group on the assessment of the amount of funds needed for the implementation of the CBD for the GEF-6 replenishment period through provision of information and commentary on draft documents.

7. The Secretariat attended the “Quito Workshop on Innovative Financing for Biodiversity” on March 6-9, 2012, in Quito, Ecuador organized by the CBD Secretariat, the government of Sweden and the Government of India. The objective was to examine the various options for expanding the financial base for biodiversity, and the pros and cons of the different schemes (e.g., PES schemes, trust funds, PPP arrangements, certification, taxation, etc, in addition to Official Development Funding (ODA)). The workshop was attended by some 50 participants, spanning from government representatives, CBD Secretariat, Civil Society Organizations

(CSOs), select agencies (World Bank, UNEP, UNDP, AfDB), The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (the TEEB Initiative) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). While there was considerable support to significantly expanding ODA for biodiversity, the degree of agreement on innovative instruments varied across sectors represented in the meeting and among countries. The report from the workshop, conducted under Chatham House rules, will be made available for CBD-related meetings. Alongside the workshop proceedings, the Secretariat met with the expert group on the Financial Needs Assessment for the sixth replenishment of the GEF to further discuss the documents being produced, and an ongoing dialogue will continue leading to COP11 in India.

8. The GEF Country Support Programme (CSP) continued to collaborate with the CBD Secretariat in the organization of sub-regional workshops on biodiversity and finance in conjunction with the GEF Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECW). Three workshops on biodiversity and finance for preparation of WGRI4 and COP11 were organized in Sweimah, Jordan on February 18, 2012, in San Jose, Costa Rica on March 9, 2012 and in Tirana, Albania on March 30, 2012 respectively. In his note to the fourth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/4/6), the Executive Secretary of the Convention recommended that the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) take note of the positive collaboration between the Convention Secretariat and the GEF in organizing a series of sub-regional workshops on resource mobilization; and expresses its gratitude to the European Union, Japan, the Netherlands, and Spain for their generous financial support.

9. The Secretariat participated at the 16th meeting of Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical and Technical Advice (SBSTA) and the 4th meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation (WGRI) in the lead up to COP11. Discussions were held with the CBD Secretariat on a wide range of issues related to COP11, the GEF-6 needs assessment, and the GEF support to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) revision process. The Secretariat informed participants at WGRI that 92 countries (63% of GEF-eligible countries) have had their proposals approved for the NBSAP revision process.

10. The GEF CEO participated in the Global Launch event of the United National Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020 on December 17, 2011, which was organized by the United Nations University, CBD Secretariat, and the Japan Ministry of Environment and others in the city of Kanazawa, Ishikawa prefecture in Japan. With participants from more than 30 countries, the event reaffirmed the global commitment to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets within the next decade. During her opening speech, the GEF CEO highlighted key progresses made by the GEF in supporting concrete actions to implement of the Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets, and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). She informed the public regarding the GEF's dedicated new trust fund, the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund to support countries moving swiftly to ratify and implement the Nagoya Protocol. She also noted the GEF's support towards more than 100 countries in updating the NBSAP to achieve the agreed Aichi Targets.

11. The Secretariat participated in the Global Platform on Business and Biodiversity event which was organized by the CBD Secretariat, Keidanren (Japan Business Federation), Japan Ministry of Environment, and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on 15th of

December 2011 in Tokyo, Japan. The Secretariat was invited to talk at the special lunch session on the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, and introduce the new GEF trust fund on the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund, including its objective and mechanism to support countries to ratify and implement the Nagoya Protocol. The event was well attended by more than 300 participants, including private companies from diverse sectors.

II. UN Convention to Combat Desertification

Reporting

12. A major highlight of the GEF-UNCCD relations during the reporting period was the participation in the tenth session of the Conference of Parties to the UNCCD held in Changwon, Republic of Korea, on October 10 -22, 2011. During a three-hour plenary, the GEF introduced the report on its financing activities related to sustainable land management, followed by reactions from Parties. Several Parties welcomed the report, and commended the GEF Secretariat on the quality and depth of information presented. Parties overwhelmingly welcomed the amendment of the GEF instrument to enable the GEF to serve as a financial mechanism for the UNCCD, and the associated reforms such as provision of financing for enabling activities.

13. A key highlight of the Report was the GEF financing for Enabling Activities under the Land Degradation Focal Area. For the first time ever, all GEF eligible and affected Parties by the UNCCD can access up to US\$150,000 each for enabling activities to support the implementation of the Convention and the 10-Year Strategy. Based on consultation with the UNCCD Secretariat, the GEF will only finance enabling activities related to reporting process, and formulation and alignment of National Action Programs (NAPs) within the 10-Year Strategy. Modalities have been put in place by the Secretariat for accessing the funds, and communicated to all the GEF Operational Focal Points. The modalities include three options: (i) Direct Access to the GEF resources, (ii) through a GEF Agency or (iii) through an umbrella project developed by UNEP. For the first two options, standard templates have been developed jointly with the UNCCD Secretariat and posted on the GEF website. The GEF and the UNCCD secretariats are closely cooperating in order to ensure that Parties take full advantage of these funding options available and progress on the priority activities for implementing the Convention.

14. The Report also complements information provided to the Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS), which was included in the global synthesis submitted to the Committee for Review of Implementation of the Convention at its 9th Session (CRIC-9).

15. The Secretariat consulted the UNCCD Secretariat on options to expand the pilot initiative in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDs) countries of the medium sized GEF project "Facilitate National Reporting to Rio Conventions" (FNR-Rio) and was advised to take advantage of the ongoing pilot tracking exercise on the full set of UNCCD impact indicators and to also explore options to use web-based online reporting systems for the joint reporting initiative.

Decisions of the Conference of the Parties

16. Taking into account details of GEF activities as presented in the report, the COP deliberated and adopted decision 11/COP.10 on “*Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility*”. The decision includes specific calls for actions in the following areas:

- (a) GEF support for enabling activities to enhance timely completion of NAP alignments and reporting review process by affected country Parties
- (b) Effective utilization of GEF resources under the STAR by all eligible country Parties
- (c) Eligible Parties to harness synergies with other GEF funding windows
- (d) Increase allocation to the LD focal area by GEF donors
- (e) UNCCD Executive Secretary and GEF CEO to revisit the existing Memorandum of Understanding for possible amendments

17. The GEF and UNCCD Secretariats have initiated dialogue on actions from the decision as part of our ongoing collaboration. The table 1 below highlights Secretariat’s responses to elements of the decision, including actions taken since the COP.

Table 1: Decisions adopted by COP10 and GEF response

COP Decision	GEF’s Response
4. <i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to also support the alignment of subregional action programmes and regional action programmes with the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy), in the context of enabling activities and their implementation;	The GEF notes this invitation, and considers it as a matter to be deliberated in the context of future replenishment discussions.
5. <i>Encourages</i> eligible Parties, taking into account the cross-sectoral nature of land degradation, to use existing potential to harness synergies across the Global Environment Facility focal areas in order further to reinforce the importance of sustainable land management for integrating environmental and developmental aspirations globally;	The GEF welcomes this COP decision urging countries to take full advantage of all relevant funding windows in the GEF as a means of fostering synergistic implementation of the Conventions, in particular the STAR.
6. <i>Invites</i> the Convention institutions and the Global Environment Facility secretariat to assist eligible Parties in building capacities to mobilize and use Global Environment Facility resources in a timely fashion;	The GEF agrees that it is important to continue facilitating and supporting countries to access and effectively utilize GEF resources for implementing the Convention. In this regard, the GEF Secretariat trusts that UNCCD National Focal Points will take advantage of the Extended Constituency Workshops (ECWs) as an opportunity to help them understand how to best engage with their counterparts on

	identifying and developing GEF projects.
7. <i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility, in further enhancing resource allocation during future replenishments, to consider increasing allocations to the land degradation focal area, depending on the availability of resources;	The GEF notes this invitation, and considers it as a matter to be deliberated in the context of future replenishment discussions.
8. <i>Requests</i> the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the United Nations Environment Programme, the Global Mechanism and the Global Environment Facility, to further explore the feasibility and modalities of a global programme of support to the national, subregional and regional action programme alignment and reporting process, taking into consideration the feedback received from Parties at the tenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;	The GEF notes the spirit of this request, and will provide whatever information is necessary to the Secretariat of the UNCCD for them to explore their global support program. We understand that this means we will not be providing financial support to this item.
9. <i>Urges</i> Parties to access the Global Environment Facility funding available for enabling activities, in accordance with Global Environment Facility procedures, to meet their obligations under the Convention, either (a) through a Global Environment Facility agency, (b) via direct access or (c) under an umbrella project;	The GEF welcomes this decision by the COP, and will make every effort to process requests by countries on basis of the modality used and merit of the proposals.
10. <i>Encourages</i> Parties to seek support from all possible sources, including the Global Environment Facility, for country-driven activities to implement the results of national capacity self-assessments and other relevant capacity assessment initiatives;	Noted
11. <i>Encourages</i> affected eligible country Parties to increase their efforts to submit project proposals to multilateral financial institutions, in particular with respect to the resources allocated under the Global Environment Facility and its System for Transparent Allocation of Resources;	Noted
12. <i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to further simplify its procedures for access to land degradation focal area allocations in the interest of full and timely utilization by the eligible country Parties;	Noted
13. <i>Requests</i> the Executive Secretary to consult with the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility on whether amendments to the existing Memorandum of Understanding between the UNCCD and the Global Environment Facility are required, and on possible proposals in light of recent developments, and to report to the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties.	The GEF welcomes this request and is prepared cooperate fully with the UNCCD Secretariat as required.

18. Full texts of the COP decisions are available at: [http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/official-documents/Pages/SessionDisplay.aspx?k=COP\(10\)](http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/official-documents/Pages/SessionDisplay.aspx?k=COP(10)).

Meetings and Events

19. Given that the GEF Assembly in May 2010 adopted a decision for the GEF to become a financial mechanism of the UNCCD, the Tenth Session of the Conference of Parties held in Changwon, Republic of Korea was the first COP in which GEF participated in that capacity. The Secretariat therefore had a strong presence and active engagement in events organized under the auspices of the Rio Ecosystems Pavilion. The GEF had a very successful participation in the COP, including by providing guidance to negotiators on matters related to the GEF as input for the decision by the COP on document pertaining to collaboration with the GEF, by raising the profile of the organization through more than 15 well attended events, and participating in the exhibition organized by the Korean government. Highlights of GEF activities include the following:

- i. The Secretariat participated in a *High Level Panel on Mid-term evaluation of the strategy on Sustainable Land Management*, during which delegates discussed the proposed UNCCD vision on how to continue implementing the Convention's strategy on Land Degradation and Desertification for the years ahead. This strategy aims at forging a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The Secretariat also participated on the panel which reviewed challenges related to resource mobilization, noting that financing decisions require needs assessments, the identification of existing flows and gaps and estimates of the overall need. Hence the need to reinforce the notion that SLM needs to be promoted because it enables land users to maximize the economic and social benefits from the land while maintaining or enhancing its ecological support functions.
- ii. As part of the official COP10 Program, a *Joint UNCCD-GEF Question and Answer session* was held to address real and perceived concerns of Parties regarding the GEF policies and procedures. The two-hour session attracted more than 150 Parties from all regions, with GEF Secretariat and UNCCD Secretariat staff addressing a range of issues, including the following:
 - (a) Project Cycle and Procedures to access resources, country-drivenness, role of OFPs, role of GEF Agencies, templates, and the timeline/milestones from PIF to CEO Endorsement
 - (b) Programming of GEF Resources at National Level including national portfolio formulation exercises, incremental financing and co-financing, and baseline investments
 - (c) STAR allocations and rules (based on published booklet)
 - (d) Strengthening country relations including OFP links, National Dialogue Initiatives, Regional constituency meetings, and Extended Constituency Workshops

- (e) Financing for enabling activities, including modalities for accessing the resources by Parties.

20. *The Rio Ecosystems Pavilion* is an initiative of the Secretariats of the three Rio Conventions and the GEF Secretariat, intended to highlight the potential to create synergies across convention implementation objectives. The Pavilion has been convened in every COP for the past 3 years and will take this process all the way to Rio+20 in June of 2012. For this edition, the GEF was a lead partner, with the CBD Secretariat providing logistic and organizational support. The Pavilion provided a very useful venue for GEF to engage in substantive dialogue parties, key partners and the general public, in a more informal setting. The package of events added great value to the content of the COP, and we held in an interactive manner, with lively discussions with the audience following the presentations. Some highlights of GEF-led sessions in the Ecosystems Pavilion include the following:

- (a) **Sustainable Forest Management Day** – The GEF and several partners convened more than 40 participants to discuss approaches on how to create synergy between the Rio conventions to harness multiple benefits from forests. The event was based on the GEF SFM/REDD+ incentive mechanism through which \$225 million have been leveraged for forests, including around \$40 million from the incentive mechanism.
- (b) **GEF Programmatic Approaches** - Together with the World Bank, UNDP, ICRAF, the Africa Regreening Initiative, and participating countries, the GEF organized sessions on science and policy options for implementation of Sahel and West Africa Support Program of the Great Green Wall Initiative, progress with Strategic Investment Program/TerrAfrica, and the proposed MENA Desert Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program (DELP). These sessions highlighted the importance of approaching problems of land degradation and desertification in an integrated manner, taking into account climate variability and change, and impacts on biodiversity to provide long-term sustained benefits on the environment.
- (c) **Reflection on the long-standing GEF partnerships with countries for SLM** – The Asian Development Bank, Global Mechanism, and a range of partners engaged with representatives from countries involved in two partnership programs with the GEF: the PRC-GEF partnership on combating land degradation and the Central Asian Countries' Initiative for Land Management (CACILM). Discussions focused on how to advance initial successes in SLM to a larger scale to bring about sustained impact in these regions, leading to concrete actions proposed by the countries on future co-operation with GEF.

Joint Activities

21. Along the lines of the Joint Plan of Action agreed upon between the two institutions in January 2011, the Secretariat in collaboration with the UNCCD Secretariat developed a new book entitled “Land for Life: Securing Our Common Future”, which conveys how sustainable

land management (SLM) practices are helping shape a sustainable future for people and the planet. With the provision of free photography from Yann Arthus Bertrand, and generous support from the Government of Korea for printing costs, the richly illustrated coffee-table book was launched at the Pavilion. The launch event at COP 10 attracted more than 150 delegates, which made it the most popular event in the Pavilion. Over the course of a few days, 400 copies in English and 250 in French of the book were picked-up by delegates. It was hailed as the “most beautiful SLM book in decades”, and members of the EU delegation expressed their opinion that this was “just another proof of the excellent quality of what the GEF produces”.

III. UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

Ratification

22. From November 2011 until May 2012, there were no new countries who became Parties to the UNFCCC.

National reporting/National Communications

23. The total number of submitted national communications from non-Annex I Parties is shown below:

- (a) Initial national communications: **142** (as at February 6, 2012)
- (b) Second national communications: **69** (as at April 5, 2012)
- (c) Third national communications: **3** (as at March 20, 2012)
- (d) Fourth national communications: **1** (as at December 14, 2009)

Full details of reports submitted are available on the UNFCCC website

(http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/submitted_natcom/items/653.php):

24. At its seventeenth session, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted five decisions with specific guidance to the GEF. The relevant decision paragraphs and the initial responses by the GEF Secretariat are presented in Table 2 below. Further details will be provided in the GEF report to COP 18.

Table 2: Decisions adopted by the COP17 and GEF's response

COP decision	GEF's Response
Decision 2/CP.17, Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (advance version available on http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a01.pdf)	
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>44. <i>Urges and requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to make available support to non-Annex I Parties preparing their first biennial update reports as early as possible in 2012 and on the basis of agreed full-cost funding;</p>	<p>The GEF finances biennial update reports, through the regular avenue of financing national communications. The GEF has prepared policy guidance on the issue of national communications, which has been distributed to all Parties through their GEF focal points. The policy can also be found on the GEF website.</p>
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>48. <i>Further invites</i> developed country Parties, the entity or entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism, including the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, multilateral, bilateral and other public donors, and private and nongovernmental organizations that are in position to do so, to submit to the secretariat, as appropriate, the following information on financial, technology and capacity-building support available and/or provided for the preparation and/or implementation of nationally appropriate mitigation actions:</p> <p>(a) Whether the support available is for the preparation and/or implementation of nationally appropriate mitigation actions;</p> <p>(b) The source of the support, including, where applicable, the name of the developed country Parties in question and the executing entity channeling the support, including contact information;</p> <p>(c) The amount and type of support available, and whether it is financial (e.g. grant or facilitated loan), technology and/or capacity-building support;</p> <p>(d) The status of delivery;</p> <p>(e) The types of action that may be supported and the process for the provision of support;</p>	<p>The GEF will provide this information, through its regular reporting to the COP.</p> <p>The Secretariat and the UNFCCC Secretariat have agreed to continue to collaborate to facilitate data provision and to explore opportunities for integrating relevant information in the Finance Portal.</p>

COP decision	GEF's Response
<p>49. <i>Invites</i> Parties and entities referred to in paragraphs 46 and 48 above to provide the secretariat, subsequent to the matching of action with support, information on both internationally supported mitigation actions and associated support;</p>	
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>68. <i>Encourages</i> the operating entities of the financial mechanism of the Convention to provide results-based finance for the actions referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 73;</p>	<p>The GEF provides financing for mitigation actions in the forest sector under the Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry objective and under the Sustainable Forest Management & REDD+ Investment Program, including for developing national strategies, action plans, policies and measures, and capacity building.</p>
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>140. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to support the operationalization and activities of the Climate Technology Centre and Network without prejudging any selection of the host;</p>	<p>The GEF strategy to support the Climate Technology Centre and Network was presented as part of the Long-Term Program of the Poznan Strategic Program on Technology Transfer, approved by the GEF Council in 2010 and presented in the GEF report to COP 16. In line with the Long-Term Program, the GEF Council has approved the Pilot Asia-Pacific Climate Technology Network and Finance Center project by ADB and UNEP in May 2011. The GEF will continue to support regional and national climate technology centre and network projects.</p>
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>152. <i>Encourages</i> the relevant bodies established under the Convention, including, inter alia, the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group and the Global Environment Facility as an operating entity of the financial mechanism, to continue to elaborate and carry out work on capacity-building in an integrated manner, as appropriate, within their respective mandates;</p>	<p>The GEF continues to provide resources for capacity building activities, through its regular financing of projects.</p>
<p>Decision 3/CP.17, Launching the Green Climate Fund (advance version available on http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a01.pdf)</p>	
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>18. <i>Recognizes</i> the need to facilitate the immediate</p>	<p>A COP17 Decision requested the UNFCCC and GEF secretariats to take administrative steps to establish an interim Green Climate Fund (GCF)</p>

COP decision	GEF's Response
<p>functioning of the Green Climate Fund and ensure its independence, requests the UNFCCC secretariat jointly with the Global Environment Facility secretariat to take the necessary administrative steps to set up the interim secretariat of the Green Climate Fund as an autonomous unit within the UNFCCC secretariat premises without undue delay after the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties so that the interim secretariat can provide technical, administrative and logistical support to the Board until the independent secretariat of the Green Climate Fund is established;</p>	<p>Secretariat. Based on this request, the GEF CEO and UNFCCC Executive Secretary established a Steering Committee to develop and guide Interim Secretariat activities. The Interim Secretariat has been working together since late December 2011 and has developed a preliminary GCF work program and administrative budgets. Two notices, developed by the Interim Secretariat, have been dispatched to Parties inviting nominations to the GCF Board. The Interim Secretariat has also made preparations and drafted documents in anticipation of the 1st GCF Board meeting scheduled for 31 May to 2 June 2012. The Interim Secretariat is also working with the Interim Trustee to make arrangements for a new Trust Fund to support GCF activities.</p>
<p>Decision 5/CP.17, National adaptation plans (advance version available on http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a01.pdf)</p>	
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>22. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism, through the Least Developed Countries Fund, to consider how to enable activities for the preparation of the national adaptation plan process for least developed countries Parties, while maintaining progress for the least developed countries work programme, which includes the national adaptation programmes of action;</p> <p>25. <i>Further invites</i> the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism for the operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund, to submit information to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, through the secretariat, by 13 February 2012, on how they could enable activities undertaken as part of the national adaptation plan process in least developed country Parties, for compilation by the secretariat into a miscellaneous document for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its thirty-sixth session;</p>	<p>The GEF submitted, on February 13, 2012, information on how to enable activities as part of the NAP process in the LDCs for consideration by SBI 36. The submission notes that the GEF and its Agencies have the experience and the operational modalities required to support the NAP process in LDCs through the LDCF.</p> <p>The GEF welcomes further guidance from the COP to clarify whether enabling activities in support of NAPs are to be adopted in the LDC work programme and whether such activities are to be prioritized for financing under the LDCF. Moreover, the GEF notes that additional, designated contributions to the LDCF would be necessary to allow the GEF to support the NAP process in LDCs in addition to NAPA implementation.</p>
<p>Decision 9/CP.17, Least Developed Countries Fund: support for the implementation of elements of the least developed countries work programme other than national adaptation programmes of action</p>	

COP decision	GEF's Response
(advance version available on http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a02.pdf)	
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>1. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention entrusted with managing the Least Developed Countries Fund:</p> <p>(a) To continue to provide information to the least developed countries to further clarify project baselines and the application for accessing funding from the Least Developed Countries Fund in order to develop and implement projects under national adaptation programmes of action to address the effects of climate change;</p> <p>(b) To support the development of a programmatic approach for the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action by those least developed country Parties that wish to do so;</p> <p>(c) To further explore opportunities to streamline the Least Developed Countries Fund project cycle, particularly during the project preparation stage;</p> <p>(d) To further improve the provision of information to least developed countries on the project development process for projects being considered under the Least Developed Countries Fund;</p> <p>2. <i>Requests</i> the Least Developed Countries Expert Group to provide further specification for each of the elements of the least developed countries work programme other than the national adaptation programmes of action, in consultation with the Global Environment Facility and report to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its thirty-sixth session, with a view to informing the Conference of the Parties on guidance to be provided to the Global Environment Facility on support for the implementation of the elements of the least developed countries work programme other than the national adaptation programmes of action;</p>	<p>The GEF has continued to reach out to LDC Parties with a view to enhance communications and facilitate access to resources under the LDCF. The GEF Familiarization Seminar, held in Washington, on January 17-19, 2012, as well as several Expanded Constituency Workshops organized between November 2011 and May 2012, have offered important opportunities in this regard.</p> <p>The GEF has invited LDCs, in collaboration with GEF Agencies, to propose programmatic approaches for NAPA implementation and it will continue to share information about the relevant modalities, processes and procedures.</p> <p>The GEF takes note of the request to clarify project baselines and to explore opportunities to streamline the LDCF project cycle. The GEF will present a detailed response to this request in its report to COP 18.</p> <p>The Secretariat participated in the 21st LEG meeting in Thimphu, Bhutan, March 9 to 13. The GEF will provide, in its report to COP 18, further information about its collaboration with LEG, particularly on the other elements of the LDC work programme.</p>

COP decision	GEF's Response
<p>Decision 11/CP.17, Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties and additional guidance to the Global Environment Facility (advance version available on http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a02.pdf)</p>	
<p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p>1. Requests the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention:</p> <p>(a) To continue to work with its implementing agencies to further simplify its procedures and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the process through which Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) receive funding to meet their obligations under Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Convention, with the aim of ensuring the timely disbursement of funds to meet the agreed full costs incurred by developing country Parties in complying with these obligations and to avoid gaps between the enabling activities of current and subsequent national communications, recognizing that the process of preparation of national communications is a continuous cycle;</p> <p>(b) To continue to enhance the transparency of the project review process throughout the project cycle;</p> <p>(c) To clarify the concept of additional costs as applied to different types of adaptation projects under the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund which seek to respond to climate change risks;</p> <p>(d) To continue to provide financial resources to developing countries for strengthening existing and, where needed, establishing national and regional systematic observation and monitoring networks under the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund;</p> <p>2. <i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility, in the context of technology needs assessments, to continue to provide financial support to other non-Annex I Parties as appropriate to conduct or update their technology needs assessments, noting the availability of the updated Handbook for Conducting Technology Needs Assessments for Climate Change;</p>	<p>Para 1(a) and (b): The GEF continues to work with its Agencies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the process for countries to access resources to meet their obligations under Article 12, paragraph 1 of the Convention.</p> <p>Para 1(c): The GEF takes note of the request to clarify the concept of additional costs and will present in detail the steps taken in response to this request in its report to COP 18.</p> <p>Para 1(d): The GEF will continue to provide support for systematic observation and monitoring networks in the context of projects and programs financed under the LDCF and the SCCF. The GEF will provide a more detailed update of such support in its report to COP 18.</p> <p>Para 2: TNA support is included in the Long-Term Poznan Strategic Program.</p> <p>Para 3: The GEF report to COP 18 will include information on the steps taken to implement guidance provided in paragraphs 1 and 2.</p>

COP decision	GEF's Response
<p>3. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, in its regular report to the Conference of the Parties, to include information on the steps it has taken to implement the guidance provided in paragraphs 1 and 2 above;</p>	
<p>Thirty-fifth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 35), Draft conclusion proposed by the Chair, Agenda item 11: Development and transfer of technologies (available on http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/sbi/eng/134.pdf)</p>	
<p>The Subsidiary Body for Implementation,</p> <p>1. [...] noted the report of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on the progress made in carrying out the Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer, including its long-term implementation, as invited by the SBI at its thirty-fourth session.</p> <p>2. [...] acknowledged the support provided by the GEF for the implementation of technology transfer pilot projects and for the conduct of technology needs assessments (TNAs) [and] the progress made in implementing the long-term programme on technology transfer. Furthermore, it urged the GEF and Parties to expedite the process for the early implementation of projects submitted before 30 September 2009.</p> <p>3. [...] encouraged Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention to develop and submit project proposals, particularly for technologies for adaptation.</p> <p>4. [...] welcomed the results of the TNAs that are being prepared under the Poznan strategic programme in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) [and] noted information provided orally by the Climate Technology Initiative's Private Financing Advisory Network on its collaboration with UNEP to assess any projects identified under the TNAs to determine their suitability for private-sector investment in order to accelerate implementation.</p>	<p>Progress on paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of the conclusions of SBI 35 agenda item 11 were presented in a progress report compiled by the GEF for the period of October 2011 to February 2012, in accordance with SBI 34 agenda item 12 conclusions. The progress report was submitted for the GEF Council approval by mail on March 7, 2012.</p>
<p>SBI 34, Draft conclusion proposed by the Chair, Agenda item 12: Development and transfer of technologies</p>	

COP decision	GEF's Response
(available on http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/sbi/eng/110.pdf)	
<p>The Subsidiary Body for Implementation,</p> <p>2. [...] recommended that the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session, invite the GEF to continue to provide financial support to other non-Annex I Parties as appropriate to conduct or update their TNAs, noting the availability of the updated handbook Conducting Technology Needs Assessments for Climate Change.</p> <p>3. [...] noted the importance of projects on technologies for adaptation, including on the development and strengthening of local knowledge, and invited the GEF, Parties and relevant organizations in a position to do so to provide financial support for project proposals, including those for pilot projects, of the types supported by the Poznan strategic programme related to technologies for adaptation.</p> <p>4. [...] invited the GEF to provide reports on the progress made in carrying out its activities under the Poznan strategic programme, including its long-term implementation, for consideration by the SBI at its thirty-fifth and subsequent sessions, for the duration of the Poznan strategic programme.</p>	<p>The GEF presented its progress in carrying out activities under the Poznan strategic Program to COP 17. The GEF presented a summary of the report to the COP at SBI 35.</p>

Reporting to COP

25. The Secretariat prepared and submitted its report to the Seventeenth Conference of the Parties (COP 17) to the UNFCCC. This report describes the achievements of the GEF, contains a special section on the GEF partnership with Africa, and one on COP guidance to the GEF during the reporting period from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. The report also contains the GEF responses to several conclusions of SBI 34. This report is available on: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/07.pdf>

26. The Secretariat submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat a report entitled "Implementation of the Poznan Strategic Program on Technology Transfer: A Progress Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its Thirty-Sixth Session" on 21 March 2012, upon GEF Council approval. The report is available on: http://www.thegef.org/gef/reports_UNFCCC.

Meetings and events

27. The Secretariat participated in COP 17 in Durban, South Africa, from November 28 to December 12, 2011. Highlights of GEF activities during the COP included a high-level Panel Discussion on African Land, Water and Forests, hosted by the GEF CEO; a gala awards dinner and announcement of winners of the GEF-supported, South Africa Clean Technology Competition; and activities associated with the GEF-UNIDO project *Greening COP 17*.

28. The Secretariat participated as an observer organization in the second Technology Executive Committee (TEC) Meeting held on February 15-17, 2012 in Bonn, Germany.

29. The Secretariat participated in the 21st Meeting of Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) in Thimphu, Bhutan, on March 9-13, 2012. The meeting focused on COP 17 Decisions pertaining to least developed countries and the LDCF, particularly the least developed countries work programme and National Adaptation Plans.

30. The Secretariat participated in the GCF meeting held on March 19-23, 2012 in Bonn, Germany.

31. The joint retreat between GEF and UNFCCC Secretariats was held on March 22-23, 2012 via video conference to discuss themes of mutual interest including strategic cooperation between the two institutions, financial mechanism issues, mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer, National Communications, and capacity development. Both heads of the Secretariats took part and agreed to further enhance cooperation and communication. A summary of the retreat is available on the GEF website at: http://www.thegef.org/gef/climate_change.

IV. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

Ratification

32. From November 2011 until May 2012, Zimbabwe has ratified the Stockholm Convention. The status of ratifications can be retrieved at:
<http://chm.pops.int/Countries/StatusofRatifications/tabid/252/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

National reporting

33. Article 15 of the Convention requires each Party to the Convention to report to the COP on the measures it has taken to implement the provisions of the Convention and on the effectiveness of such measures in meeting the objectives of the Convention. For the first reporting round, the Secretariat has received 48 national reports (including 1 from the EU) and for the second reporting round, as of the 15th of March 2012, 92 national reports (including 1 from the EU). The national reports submitted online can be retrieved at:
<http://chm.pops.int/Countries/NationalReports/tabid/751/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Reporting to COP

34. As the financial mechanism of the Stockholm Convention on POPs, the GEF submits a report on its activities at each COP. As of March 2012, all reports on GEF activities have been provided prior to each COP of the Stockholm Convention. Two other reports on GEF activities in support of early convention implementation and the 6th session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for the Stockholm Convention have been submitted respectively.

35. The Secretariat will begin preparation of the report to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants in mid 2012. This sixth meeting is scheduled to take place in 2013 in Geneva (6-10 May).

Meetings and events

36. In an effort to encourage parties to access financing for the preparation of their updated National Implementation Plan, the GEF Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Stockholm convention designed a webinar on the Financial Mechanism: COP5 decisions and updating NIPs. The webinar was presented by staff of both secretariats. Since that time the Secretariat has received six direct access applications and two agency access applications.

37. The third session of the INC to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury was held in Nairobi, Kenya from the 31st of October to the 4th of November 2011. The GEF participated in the contact group on financial resources and technical and implementation assistance. The contact group had a general discussion on article 15 and 16 and on document UNEP (DTIE)/Hg/INC.3/4 - Further comparative analysis of options for financial mechanisms to support the global legally binding instrument on mercury. The sessions of the contact group served mainly to solicit initial reactions from governments to the two articles and to the considerations contained in document UNEP (DTIE)/Hg/INC.3/4. The interventions focussed, in particular, on preferences in relation to the two options contained in article 15. No negotiation of text took place during the work of the contact group at INC3. The plenary at INC3 recognized the need for intersessional work on financial resources and technical and implementation assistance as outlined in the mandate for the intersessional work. In line with the decision of INC3, the expert meeting was chaired by the INC3 contact group co-chairs, with participation of experts from the five United Nations regions as follows: three from Africa, five from Asia-Pacific, two from Central and Eastern Europe, three from Latin America and the Caribbean, and six from Western Europe and Others Group. The Expert Meeting was held in Belgrade, Serbia, April 11-13, 2012.

38. The fourth session of the INC to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury will be held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from June 27th to July 2nd 2012. The GEF CEO will participate at the opening segment of the INC and the GEF is planning to organize in collaboration with its project partners, a side event to update participants on the status of approved mercury projects and other potential projects that would inform the INC process.

39. The Consultative Process on Financing Options for Chemicals and Waste concluded its work on October 3-7, 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand. The outcome of the consultative process was

submitted by the co-chairs to the Executive Director of UNEP. Based on this outcome the Executive Director of UNEP presented his final report to the 12th special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Nairobi, Kenya February 20-24, 2012. The Council adopted a decision requesting the Executive Director to continue to provide support to the consultative process and to prepare a draft proposal on an integrated approach to financing sound management of chemicals and wastes for consideration and possible decision at the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, in 2012, and at the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in 2013. The Executive Director's proposal will be presented at a meeting of the consultative process scheduled to take place in Mexico City, Mexico on May 30-31, 2012. The Secretariat has been invited to attend the meeting.

40. In regards to the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), the GEF programming is focused on the Emerging Policy Issues identified at the 2nd session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM2) in Geneva, Switzerland May 11-15, 2009. The Secretariat attended the SAICM Open-Ended Working Group meeting in Belgrade, Serbia, November 15-18, 2011 to prepare for the ICCM3 in Nairobi, Kenya, September 17-21, 2012.

V. Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Meetings and events

41. The Joint Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol was held in Bali, Indonesia, November 21-25, 2011. The GEF participated at the meetings. This meeting was a replenishment meeting of the Multilateral Fund with an agreed amount of \$450 million.

42. The Secretariat participated in the 66th Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund (MLF) for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol was held on April 16-20, 2012 in Montreal, Canada. This meeting was the first of three for the year where the committee reviewed business plans and 22 project proposals.

43. The Secretariat initiated a dialogue with the Chief Officer of the MLF Secretariat for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol to move towards increasing the cooperation of the GEF and the MLF in regard to financing projects that yield benefits for Ozone, Chemicals and Climate. The Secretariat has prepared a paper that will be presented to the 42nd Council.

VI. Relations with Other International Institutions

Adaptation Fund Board

44. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) met twice during the reporting period: the 16th meeting was held on December 12-14, 2011 in Durban, South Africa and the 17th meeting on

March 14-16, 2012 in Bonn, Germany. Both meetings were preceded by meetings of the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) and the Ethics and Finance Committee (EFC).

Accreditation decisions

45. At its 16th meeting, the Board accredited the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) of Jordan and Ministry of Natural Resources (MINIRENA) of Rwanda as National Implementing Entities (NIEs), the first for the Middle East and fourth for the African region respectively. In addition, the Board also accredited the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE), making the entity the Board's tenth MIE. At its 17th meeting, the Board also approved decisions to accredit the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) from Kenya, Instituto Mexicano de Tecnologia del Agua (IMTA) from Mexico, and Unidad para el Cambio Rural (UCAR) from Argentina, bringing the total number of NIEs to eleven.

Regional Accreditation Workshops

46. Pursuant to decision 5/CMP.6, the Board continues its collaboration with the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to organize regional workshops to familiarize countries with the accreditation process to support the direct access modality. During the reporting period, the second workshop, for the Latin America and Caribbean region was held in Panama City, Panama on November 10-12, 2011. The workshops have allowed participants to receive targeted guidance on the requirements for accreditation from expert members of the Board's advisory body, the Accreditation Panel.

Project approvals

47. At its 16th meeting, the Adaptation Fund Board approved grant funding for six projects/programmes, with a total value of USD\$39.5 million. Notably, the Board approved its second direct access project, which will be implemented in Uruguay by its NIE, Agencia Nacional de Investigacion e Innovacion. Titled "Building Resilience to Climate Change and Variability in Vulnerable Smallholders," the USD\$9.97 million project contributes to building national capacity to adapt to climate change and variability by focusing on the extensive livestock sector and targeting specifically vulnerable stakeholders. The Board also approved three projects that will be implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in Georgia, Samoa, and the Cook Islands, as well as two projects that will be implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Tanzania and Madagascar.

48. At its 17th meeting, the Adaptation Fund Board approved grant funding with a total value of USD \$6.53 million for one programme in Papua New Guinea, to be implemented by the United Nations Development Programme. The Board also approved a grant of US\$29,000 for an NIE, the National Environment Fund of Benin for formulation of a project concept titled "Adaptation of Cotonou Lagoon ecosystems and human communities to sea level rise and extreme weather events impacts." The project concept, which the Board has endorsed, addresses the vulnerability of Cotonou's lagoon, along with key economic and socio-administrative

infrastructures to mitigate climate risks by protecting shores against floods, among other measures.

Other decisions

49. The Secretariat was requested to produce an analysis on the lessons learned on the project/programme review process, as well as more detailed guidance on preparing a request for project/programme funding. At the request of the Board, a short version of the document has been made available on the Adaptation Fund website.

50. The Board also approved a Project Performance Report (PPR) Template, a new reporting process, and an amended disbursement schedule.

51. The Board considered a proposed investigative procedure/function to address cases of financial mismanagement by Implementing Entities. The secretariat will present a revised proposal at the 18th meeting.

52. In an effort to enhance transparency in the project/programme review process, the Board also decided at its 17th meeting to request the secretariat to post online publicly the final technical reviews prepared by the secretariat for each project/programme proposal being considered by the PPRC before the meeting at which that project/programme will be considered.

53. The Board continued discussion on the cap on proposals by MIEs, and decided to maintain the general cap of 50% on all MIEs for funding as established in decision B.12/9, as well as the country cap of US\$10 million. In anticipation of the cap being reached, the Board decided to prioritize proposals based on their date of recommendation by the PPRC, their submission date, and their “net” cost.

Resources

54. With the seven new approvals, the Board has approved 18 project/programmes for funding to date, amounting to USD\$115.7 million. The cumulative funding decisions for projects submitted by MIEs represent 38% of the sum of cumulative project funding decisions and funds available to support funding decisions, or US\$255.8 million.

55. The future of the Adaptation Fund was a major topic of discussion during its latest Board meeting, given the fall in the price of Certified Emissions Reductions (CERs), which comprise the Fund’s primary funding source through a levy on the Clean Development Mechanism. To ensure that the work of the Fund is sustained, and to allow the continued financing of adaptation projects given the demand of more than US \$300 million, the Board decided to set a fundraising target of US\$100 million until the end of 2013. The Fund will be soliciting comments from the public regarding optimal fundraising strategies, which will target governments, the private sector, and individual donors.

56. The Adaptation Fund Board also welcomed its new chair at its 17th meeting, Luis Santos of Uruguay, who represents the Latin America and Caribbean constituency. He replaces outgoing chair Ana Fornells de Frutos of Spain.

57. An intern was recruited to support communications at the Adaptation Fund Board secretariat and started on January 4, 2012.

58. The 18th Board meeting will take place in Bonn, Germany on June 26-29, 2012. The Board decided to reduce the number of Board meetings per year to three. The 19th Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 2012.

VII. United Nations Forum on Forests

59. The Secretariat participated in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), meeting held December 5, 2011 in Durban, South Africa. The CPF is a voluntary arrangement among 14 international organizations and secretariats with substantial programs on forests. One of the main objectives of the CPF is to support the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and its member countries. The CPF's mission is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forest and strengthen long term political commitment to this end. The CPF provides major inputs to the UNFF and other important international forest dialogues, including the conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification. It produces joint statements and papers on key forest issues on the international agenda. The statements can be found at: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf/2087/en/>.

60. At the meeting, representatives from the CPF member organizations discussed the work program of the Advisory Group on Finance namely preparation of an update report on new and emerging financing initiatives. Subsequently the GEF has been part of the work group drafting the report.

61. The Secretariat participated in the UNFF Facilitative Process workshop on January 30 – February 3, 2012 in Niamey, Niger. This workshop brought together representatives from LFCCs and SIDS to develop strategic approaches to mobilize financial resources for SFM.

VIII. Synergies Generated Between Conventions through Funded Projects

62. The issue of synergies among the Rio conventions and the GEF has been a topic of interest to the Council and on the basis of the request received during previous Council meetings the current section is added to this report. Synergies among project objectives and activities planned can be done at the institutional level as reported in earlier sections of this report.

63. At the project level, the synergies can be seen in the different projects, especially in the multifocal area projects. In this context, the following highlights from the February intersessional and the current work programs show that indeed the projects aim to maximize the

complementarity of the activities that lead to achieving global environmental benefits following the objectives set under the different conventions.

64. While the February 2012 Intersessional Working Program included only two multifocal area projects, the Work Program for this Council meeting features 25 Multi-Focal Area projects, presenting a diverse and innovative set of initiatives focusing on GEF strategies that deliver multiple benefits across a variety of ecosystems and landscapes, and addressing multiple Conventions and focal area objectives and ensuring synergies between results achieved.

65. In February there was one project that utilizes sustainable forest management approach to address the causes of deforestation and forest degradation by providing support at landscape level to strengthen ecosystem services provision while at the same time promoting sustainable livelihoods and contributing to rural sustainable development. In the current work program there are 17 projects utilizing the SFM/REDD+ Incentive Mechanisms to address the causes of deforestation and forest degradation through multi-focal area projects that bring together investments coming from Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation, and Land Degradation.

66. The Multi-Focal Area projects continue to show demand from countries to address the pervasive drivers of CO₂ emissions, demonstrating that climate mitigation objectives are of value in many types of projects. Among the 25 Multi-Focal Area projects, 13, including one PPP program, address climate change mitigation objectives, with expected total benefits of 291million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent.

67. Highlights of several significant projects demonstrating synergies among different conventions proposed for the past two work programs include:

(a) The “*Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Dry Ecosystems to Guarantee the Flow of Ecosystem Services and to Mitigate the Processes of Deforestation and Desertification*” Project in Colombia is a multifocal Sustainable Forest Management project that uses biodiversity and land degradation focal area resources with SFM/REDD+ incentive funds to reduce the trend of dry forest loss and improve their sustainability in the Caribbean region and the Inter-Andean Valley of the Magdalena River which have been particularly affected, principally due to the expansion of agricultural activities. The project will lead to declaration of 17 local and regional PAs covering 72,000 ha of tropical dry forest; implement SLM activities in 1,600 ha of private lands; and reduce dry forest deforestation in 5 watersheds covering 123,596 ha avoiding GHG emissions of 1,797,287 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent over a 5-year period.

(b) The “*Expansion and Strengthening of the Protected Area Subsystem of the Outer Islands of Seychelles and its Integration into the broader land and seascape*” project aims to promote the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by integrating a National Subsystem of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (CMPAs) into the broader land- and seascape while reducing the pressures on natural resources from competing land uses.

- (c) Nine Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) will collaborate under the joint UNEP/UNDP multi-focal area project, *Implementing Integrated Land, Water & Wastewater Management in Caribbean SIDS* to pursue an integrated "ridge-to-reef" approach for multiple environmental benefits by linking sustainable forest landscape management to international waters, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation.
- (d) The *Securing Forest Ecosystems through Participatory Management and Benefit Sharing* project in Mongolia is a multifocal Sustainable Forest Management project that aims to improve participatory forest and wildlife management in seven Aimags in the northern and central part of the country through mainstreaming biodiversity conservation objectives and SFM objectives into productive forest management practices. The project scales up innovative and proven participatory forest management practices which support community use rights and improve forest management practices to maintain natural forest cover and ensure sustainable harvesting of timber and non-timber products.
- (e) Three projects combine climate change mitigation, land degradation, and SFM/REDD+. A representative project from the Kyrgyz Republic entitled *Sustainable Management of Mountainous Forest and Land Resources under Climate Change Conditions* would contribute to the sustainable management of mountainous silvo-agro-pastoral ecosystems by influencing production practices employed by the forestry and agriculture sectors (including pastures), and supporting climate change mitigation by improving management of natural forests, rehabilitating degraded lands and promoting conservation agriculture. Innovations and incentives through participatory monitoring, community driven approaches, and knowledge exchange will be provided.
- (f) A major innovation for the SFM/REDD+ Incentive Mechanism is the World Bank Multi-Trust Fund project in Rwanda, *Landscape Approach to Forest Restoration and Conservation (LAFREC)*. This project, driven by high level government support and ownership, draws on lessons from a previous GEF project on critical ecosystem, to propose a landscape approach to restore and maintain critical landscapes that provide global environmental benefits and contribute to enhanced resilient economic development and livelihoods, as reflected in the NAPA priorities.
- (g) The project entitled *Sustainable Forest Management approach in the Multiplying Environmental and Carbon Benefits in High Andean Ecosystems*, in Ecuador and Peru will focus on producing multiple global environmental benefits in the high Andean ecosystems of upper montane forest, Paramo and Puna, especially by improving estimation of and promoting soil carbon which is thought to be higher than expected as well as developing economic incentives for improved practice aligned with cost-effective MRV systems.

68. Synergies are also created through programmatic approaches or projects under programmatic approach. Some details of these projects covered include:

- (a) The *MIF-IDB Public-Private Partnership Program* will make targeted equity investments in funds to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, and biodiversity in Latin America. The investments will contribute to energy savings, new renewable energy supply, reduction of GHG emissions, preservation of natural resources, protection of biodiversity, and development of sustainable business models.
- (b) One project addresses climate change mitigation, chemicals, and international waters. The UNIDO project titled *Implementation of Eco-industrial Park Initiative for Sustainable Industrial Zones in Vietnam* aims to bring clean technologies and practices to industrial parks in Vietnam to minimize hazardous waste generation and GHG emissions, and to improve water usage and reduction of pollutant discharge into surrounding water bodies.
- (c) The UNEP project in the Russian Federation on Conserving Biodiversity in the Changing Arctic is a sub-project of the multi-focal area programmatic approach GEF-Russian Federation Partnership on Sustainable Environmental Management in the Arctic under a Rapidly Changing Climate which was approved in November 2011. This project is expected to achieve tangible multiple global environmental benefits related to biodiversity and climate change mitigation including: increased management effectiveness of existing protected areas (covering 7.2 million ha), establishment of new protected areas (covering up to 3.1 million ha), and improved management of other unprotected ecosystems.