

SUMMARY

GEF Council consultation meeting with Civil Society Organizations – 15 November 2010

Eugene Black Auditorium, World Bank H Building, Washington DC

A GEF Council-CSO consultation was organized on 15 November 2010 prior to the 39th GEF Council and was attended by more than 80 participants encompassing representatives from civil society, GEF Council members, GEF Agencies and GEF Secretariat. The highlights of the main discussions and panels are summarized below:

CSO Dialogue with Monique Barbut, GEF CEO

Moderator : Faizal Parish, Central Focal Point, GEF NGO Network

In her opening remarks, Monique Barbut welcomed CSO's input and sharing of experiences between the GEF stakeholders and CSOs. She highlighted that two key discussion points during the Council Meeting that will address CSO's role and engagement are –funding for the Small Grant Program and the working paper on enhancing the engagement of civil society. In engaging the CSOs, plans include more consultations with stakeholders in development the GEF portfolio, requiring the GEF operational focal point to conduct at least one meeting a year with the Network members in every country; and reforms that will facilitate more communication sharing amongst stakeholders. Monique mentioned that other papers that are related to CSOs are the Results Based and Knowledge Management and the Broadening of Agencies under Article 28. She added that 2011 is the 20th anniversary of the GEF and GEF is planning to organized several events/activities. As CSOs are an integral part of this partnership, their suggestions are most welcomed as it will ensure that their voice is heard in all the decisions that are taken.

During the dialogue, among the key issues that were raised by the CSOs included the replenishment of the LDCF and SCCF to which Monique replied that although GEF has not been able to convince the donor countries to agree on a 4 year pledge, here are high expectations at the pledging session on 18 Nov. In responding to a question on her expectation for the paper on Article 28, Monique responded that the one key important issue that should be addressed are environmental and social safeguards for new agencies that would likely also be applied to existing GEF agencies. On the issues on IPs, Monique reiterated that GEF will develop a policy document on IPs that will be enforced for all GEF Agencies. With regards to the most important areas for the GEF NGO Network to work in partnership with GEF in the next 5 years, Monique commented that GEF NGO's support is important in establishing an effective communication channel; particularly during convention meetings such as climate change negotiations. GEF NGO Network can also give support in the CSOs organization and representation in the GEF process at local, national and regional levels.

SESSION 1: ENHANCING CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN GEF

Panel 1 - Enhancing CSO Participation in GEF

Moderator : Rex Horio, Regional Focal Point, Pacific Region, GEF NGO Network

This panel explored the key reforms proposed or needed to effectively implement GEF's Public Involvement Policy as well as experience with CSO in the implementation of GEF programmes. Representing the GEF Secretariat, William Ehlers highlighted key changes proposed to 39th council to enhance CSO engagement GEF is ? annual meeting with CSOs at country level, the voluntary NGO Trust Fund and Article 28. GEF will also encourage more effective engagement with Indigenous Peoples through development of a policy on IPs. Faizal Parish representing the GEF NGO Network presented key recommendations that are outlined in the Network's paper for Council including review of the GEF Public Involvement Policy and development of the IP policy. He proposed a timetable to undertake work prior to the council meetings in November 2011. He also reiterated that effective CSO participation should be ensured at the country level. Michelle Zador from the Conservation International shared on the success of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership fund which has funded civil society's conservation efforts in biodiversity over the last 10 years. In his remark, Frank Fass-Metz, the GEF Council Member from Germany, mentioned the high value that the German government placed on the contributions of civil society and the important roles of the GEF NGO Network. He emphasised on the importance of GEF5 to move towards more ownership of the recipient countries and the broadening of the partnership to include new agencies using a common approach and a level field to all agencies. He also indicated the importance of including CSO's in the National Portfolios Formulation Exercises (NPFE).

From the perspective of a GEF agency, Kristin McLaughlin of UNEP gave her views on the CSO participation. UNEP has been engaging the CSO participation through policies, guidelines and checklist for social and environmental safeguards, gender and IPs. Other avenues include engagement of CSOs at three levels; at the country planning level, the GEF sub-regional and national dialogues and implementation phase. On CSO participation in Small Grant Programme, Prabhot Sodhi who is the National Coordinator, GEF/UNDP SGP India shared the successful hosting of the SGP and its benefits by a CSO, Centre for Environmental Education, as well as the significant environmental and social benefits generated through SGP in India.

Panel 2 – Towards Development of a GEF Policy on Indigenous Peoples

Moderator : Johnson Cerda, Indigenous Peoples Focal Point, Latin America, GEF NGO Network

At the GEF Assembly in May 2010, Indigenous peoples called for the development of a GEF Policy on Indigenous peoples. This panel explored elements of such a policy from the perspective of representatives of indigenous peoples. John Hough of UNDP presented the existing UNDP's programme, trust funds and operational guidelines which supports the IPs consultative and participatory processes. Representing the IPs, Esther Camac of Asociacion Ixacavaa De Desarrollo E Informacion Indigena, Costa Rica, pointed out that there are significant gaps in the GEF to ensure participation of indigenous peoples. She further stressed that sovereignty, strengthening of cultural identity and traditional Int. Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests, Philippines, reiterated the importance of having a GEF policy on IPs to protect rights of indigenous rights and this should be complied by all GEF

projects. She recommended 5 elements which should be the main parts of the policy. Finally, Yoko Watanabe of GEF Secretariat shared on the various options that currently IPs have to access GEF funding and opportunity to participate in GEF related activities and GEF related documents (CBD, GEF5 biodiversity strategy) on IPs participation. Lastly, she mentioned that GEF is committed to work with the GEF NGO Network and IPs Representative in formulating an IP Policy.

SESSION 2: ENHANCING THE PARTICIPATION OF THE CONVENTIONS IN THE GEF PARTNERSHIP

Panel 3 : What is the future for GEF in Climate Finance?

Moderator : Dr. Lou Leonard, *Climate Change Director, WWF-US*

The future architecture for climate finance will be discussed at COP16 in Cancun in late November 2010. The panel discussed what the nature of the emerging architecture is and how GEF fits in. The implications for civil society engagement was also discussed. Keith Kozloff of Dept. of Treasury, USA, highlighted the various future architecture for climate financing and that the US Government supports the GEF strategies on climate change mitigation which include low carbon emission, clean technology fund and forest investment programme. He also mentioned the international support for fast-track financing for climate change of \$30billion for 2010-2020 and that the long term goal of generating USD100 billion/year and financing the New Copenhagen Green Climate Fund. On the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund, Marcia Lavanggi elaborated on the status, governing structure and some of the issues/problems faced in running the fund. Bonizella Biagini of the GEF Climate Change Team, stressed that the lessons learnt through the years of experience in handling funds for mitigation and climate adaptation as well as LCCF & SCCF are important to guide the future financial architecture. From the perspective of UNFCCC, Yolanda Velasco said that there are signs of consensus and political will to have the Climate Change fund with a strong possibility towards establishing the fund in Cancun. He mentioned about the 3 roles that the CSO can play – delivery of projects to achieve significant impacts, technical input and design in the fund operation and in project/programme monitoring and reporting. From the civil society perspective, Jorge Gastelumendi of The Nature Conservancy urged countries to consider bottom-up approach in the finance architecture as has been practiced through the national trust funds for 15 years.

Panel 4: CSOs as Key Partners in Convention of Biodiversity Implementation

Moderate : Andrew Deutz, *Director of International Government Relations, The Nature Conservancy*

This panel explored the key emerging issues from the CBD COP10 (held in Japan in late October 2010). It mapped out the challenges and opportunities to enhance working relations between the Conventions and GEF and the role of Civil Society in convention implementation.

Statement by Ahmed Djoulaf, *Executive Secretary, CBD Secretariat*

In his statement, Ahmed said he was pleased with the remarkable demonstration of commitment of all stakeholders in the Nagoya meeting, especially, the CSOs. The Council General Assembly sees this as an important plan for the biodiversity conservation for the next 10 years. He highlighted the Secretariat's work plans that have been put in place in adapting national action plans to the Strategic Action Plan for biodiversity conservation. He also shared the funding provided to support the South-South cooperation. CBD has requested GEF assistance in implementation of the Resource mobilization strategy. He stressed on the important role of the GEF NGO Network in GEF 5 and GEF 6 activities which include the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan for biodiversity conservation.

Tom Lovejoy, Chair of GEF STAP highlighted the economic importance of biodiversity and the need to bring economics of ecology high in the agenda. From the perspective of the CBD Secretariat, Neil Pratt shared on opportunities for enhanced participation of CSOs, including IPs in implementation of the CBD and its processes in the GEF partnership. He also mentioned that CBD secretariat is also establishing the cooperation with the local authorities, scientific communities, youth and to establish much more intense and energized relations with various NGO networks, especially with the GEF NGO Network.

From the perspective of CSO, Guenter Mitlachter of GEF NGO Network remarked that GEF plays an important role in bringing together different stakeholders groups (CSOs working on different issues/agenda, financing agencies, etc.) in the main Rio Conventions, but that there should be greater support for joint activities between the conventions. On behalf of GEF Secretariat, Gustavo Fonseca, pointed out that GEF is looking at strategy to see how CSOs/IPs can be better integrated in the implementation of conventions; in the case of CBD, they will be assisting countries with grants to enhance countries ability to develop National Biodiversity Strategies where CSOs will have a role. GEF will also team up with various NGOs to protect critical ecosystems and endangered habitats.

Closing

In his closing remark, Faizal Parish, Central Focal Point of the GEF NGO Network thanked the GEF CEO for her support to strengthen the role of CSO to work with GEF Secretariat, agencies and recipients and facilitate options for the CSOs to link with the conventions. The CSOs are happy to hear about the proposed environmental and social safeguard to be introduced for all GEF agencies. He highlighted that the experience of CSO in implementing SGP programme and the strong support from the German council for CSOs engagement have put in place for CSOs engagement. The Network looked forward to the development of a new framework & minimum standards for IPs over the next 12 months. In the effort to synergise the 3 conventions, he urged the GEF to engage with CSO for contributions and to apply the Nagoya's successful framework/mechanism. The Network is happy with the good attendance of the council members to the meeting which proved that the council members are serious on CSOs engagement in GEF. The Network thanked all who come and GEF Sec for organizing and the translators for doing a great job.

In his closing remark, Danielius Pivoriunas on behalf of GEF Secretariat thanked and congratulated the Network for coming up with a great programme. It has been good and intense discussion on the various topics that GEF should address.