Independent Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

Semiannual Evaluation Update

GEF Council 59

December 2020

Presentation outline

1. Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7) – Progress to date
2. Managing evaluations during COVID-19
3. Recently completed evaluations and knowledge products
4. Agenda Item 9 – Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations
5. Agenda Item 10 – Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector
6. Agenda Item 11 – Medium-Sized Projects
7. Agenda Item 12 – Knowledge Management

Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7) – Progress to date

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OPS7: Purpose

A

Provide **evidence** for GEF-8 replenishment

B

Assess to what extent the GEF is achieving its objectives of enhancing **global environmental benefits**

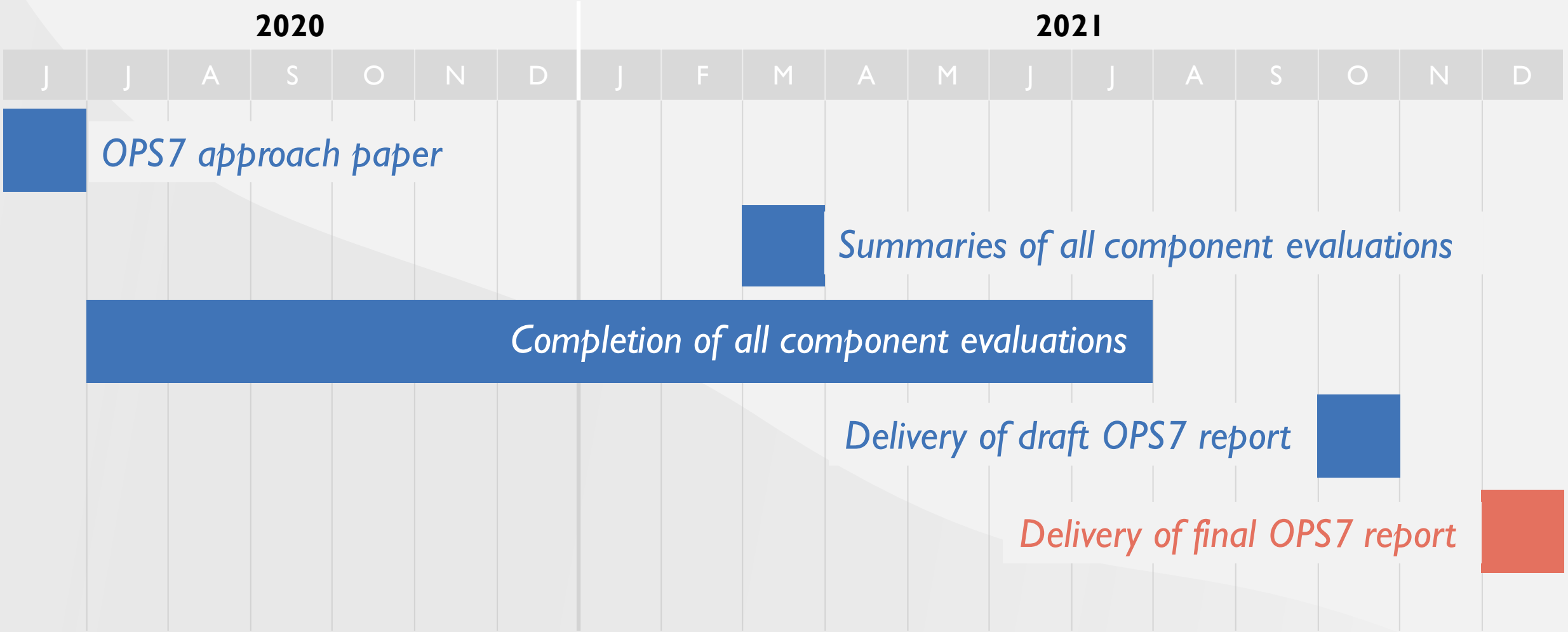
C

Identify potential areas for **improvement**

D

Assess the GEF's **progress** in implementation and achievement of the GEF 2020 Strategy

Schedule


2020
2021
J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D
OPS7 approach paper
Summaries of all component evaluations
Completion of all component evaluations
Delivery of draft OPS7 report
Delivery of final OPS7 report

Ongoing work

2020 | **2021**

D | J | F | M | A | M | J

- *Fragile and conflict-affected situations*
- *Evaluation of medium sized projects*
- *Terminal evaluation*
- *GEF interventions in artisanal and gold mining*
- *LDCF evaluation*
- *Knowledge management*

- *Institutional policies and stakeholder engagement*
- *Results-based management and portal*
- *Innovation in the GEF*
- *Agency self-evaluation systems*
- *Third joint GEF-UNDP SGP evaluation*
- *Evaluation of GEF country support program (CSP)*
- *GEF support to SFM and REDD+ projects*
- *GEF engagement with micro-, small-, medium-size enterprises*
- *Formative review of the GEF integrated approach*
- *Climate change resilience mainstreaming*
- *Annual Performance Report 2021*
- *LDCF/SCCF AER*
- *SCCF evaluation*
- *Enabling activities*
- *Governance*

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Managing IEO evaluations during COVID-19

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Adapting evaluation process during COVID-19

Mixed methods approach

Using socio-economic data, such as World Bank's household surveys (LSMS)

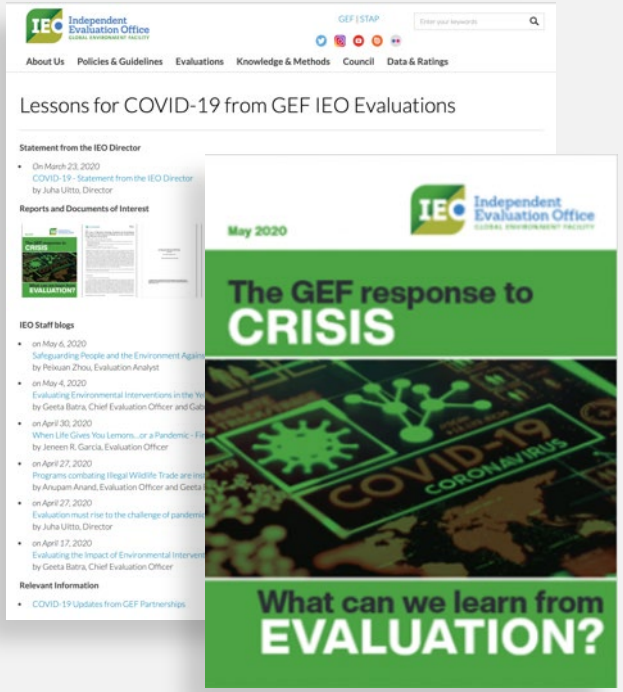
Conducting remote interviews and surveys

Applying geospatial data to measure relevance, effectiveness, efficiency

Hiring local consultants for field verification (Costa Rica, Mozambique, Philippines…)

Mining IEO case studies

Evaluation lessons for COVID-19



Recently completed evaluations and knowledge products

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3

Recently completed evaluations and knowledge products

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Terminal evaluations

Terminal evaluations

Findings

The establishment of minimum evaluation requirements have led to improvements in evaluation quality standards

Aligned with good practices criteria

92% evaluations rated in satisfactory range for quality (2017-2020)

Variations in the evidence presents challenges for consistency in evaluative judgments

Terminal evaluations

Findings

Credible evidence and few data gaps

6% disconnect between the GEF-IEO validations and TEs submitted

UNIDO, FAO, and IFAD are well positioned to graduate and not require 100 percent TE validation by IEO

Terminal evaluations

Final remarks

IEO should perform fewer validations for Agencies that meet quality standards

IEO should share more information on the validation process and guidelines with the Agencies

IEO should provide targeted guidance and capacity building to newer Agencies

IEO could develop a searchable qualitative database (on findings, recommendations, lessons learned)

IEO should continue to validate TEs as part of other evaluations (country, thematic, strategic country clusters)

IEO Knowledge Products

IEO Independent Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

Learnings

Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF • December 2020

es or have a substantial fisheries component.

- To what extent does the GEF ensure long-term sustainability of its interventions?

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SEVENTH OVERALL PERFORMANCE STUDY OF THE GEF 1

Agenda Item 9

Evaluation of GEF Support in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations

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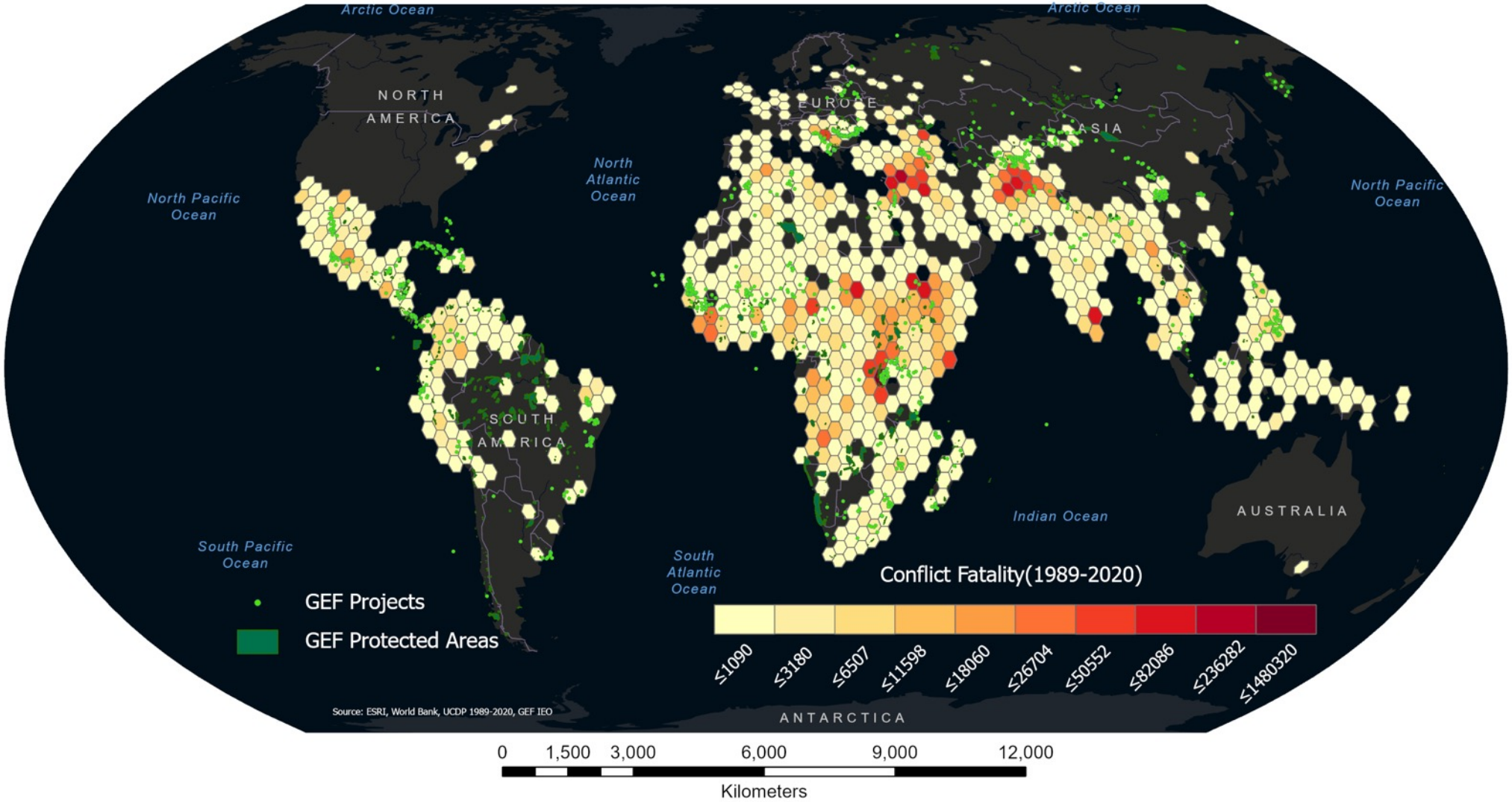
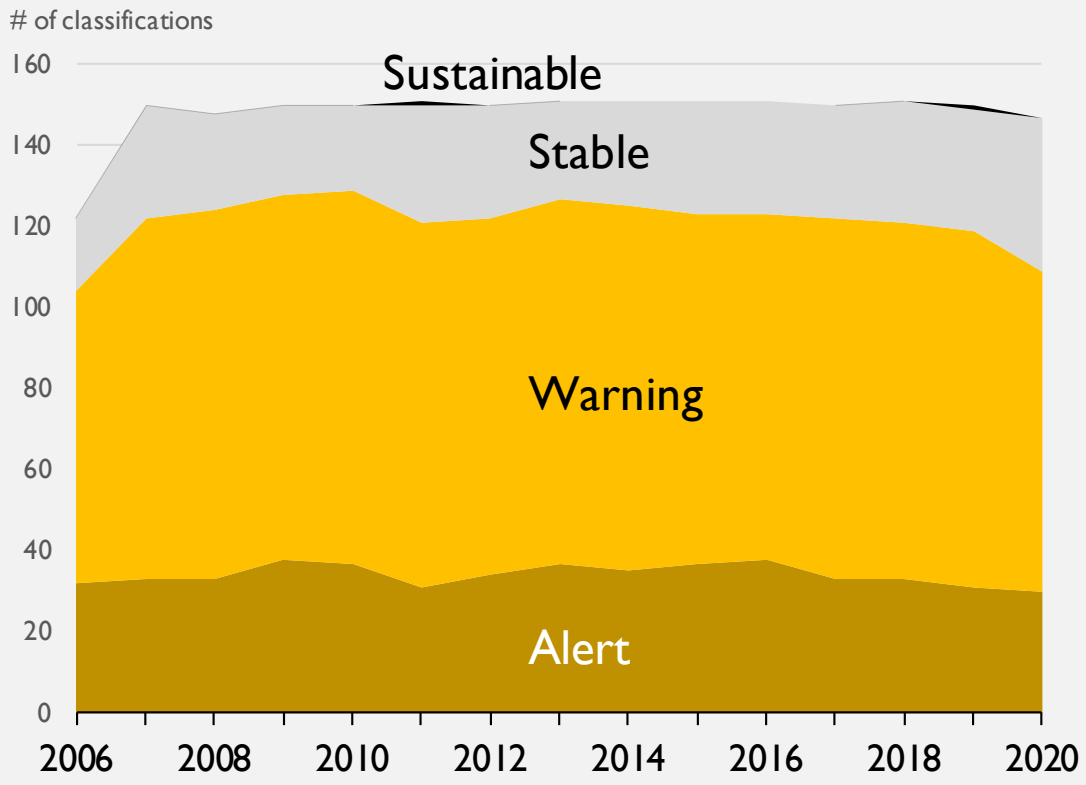
Conflict hotspots and location of GEF interventions

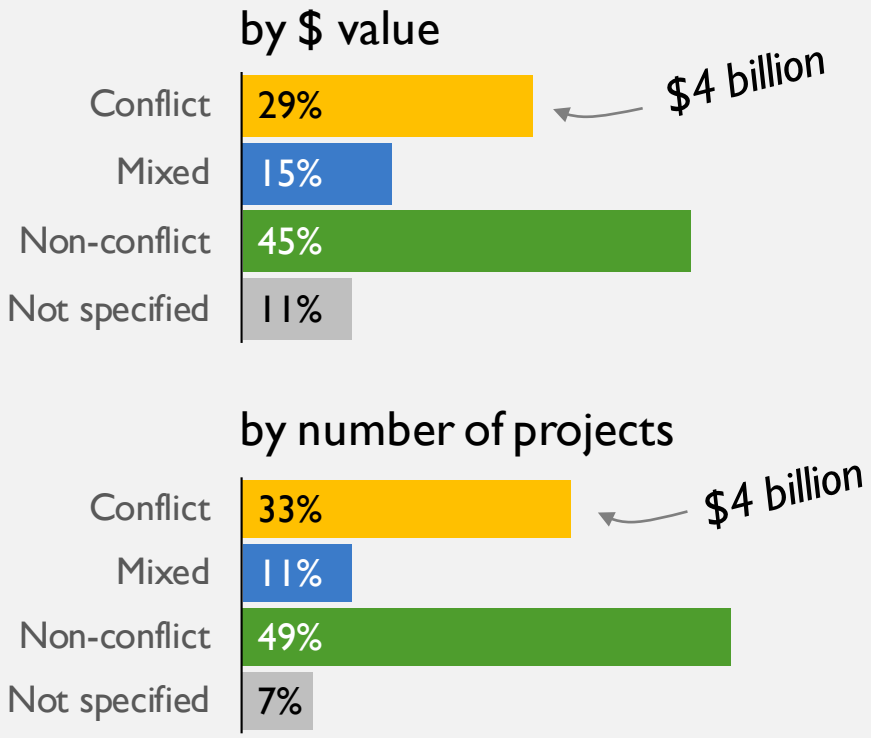


Majority of GEF projects are in fragile and conflict-affected situations

Fragility of countries and territories receiving GEF funding



Share of GEF projects in countries affected by major armed conflict



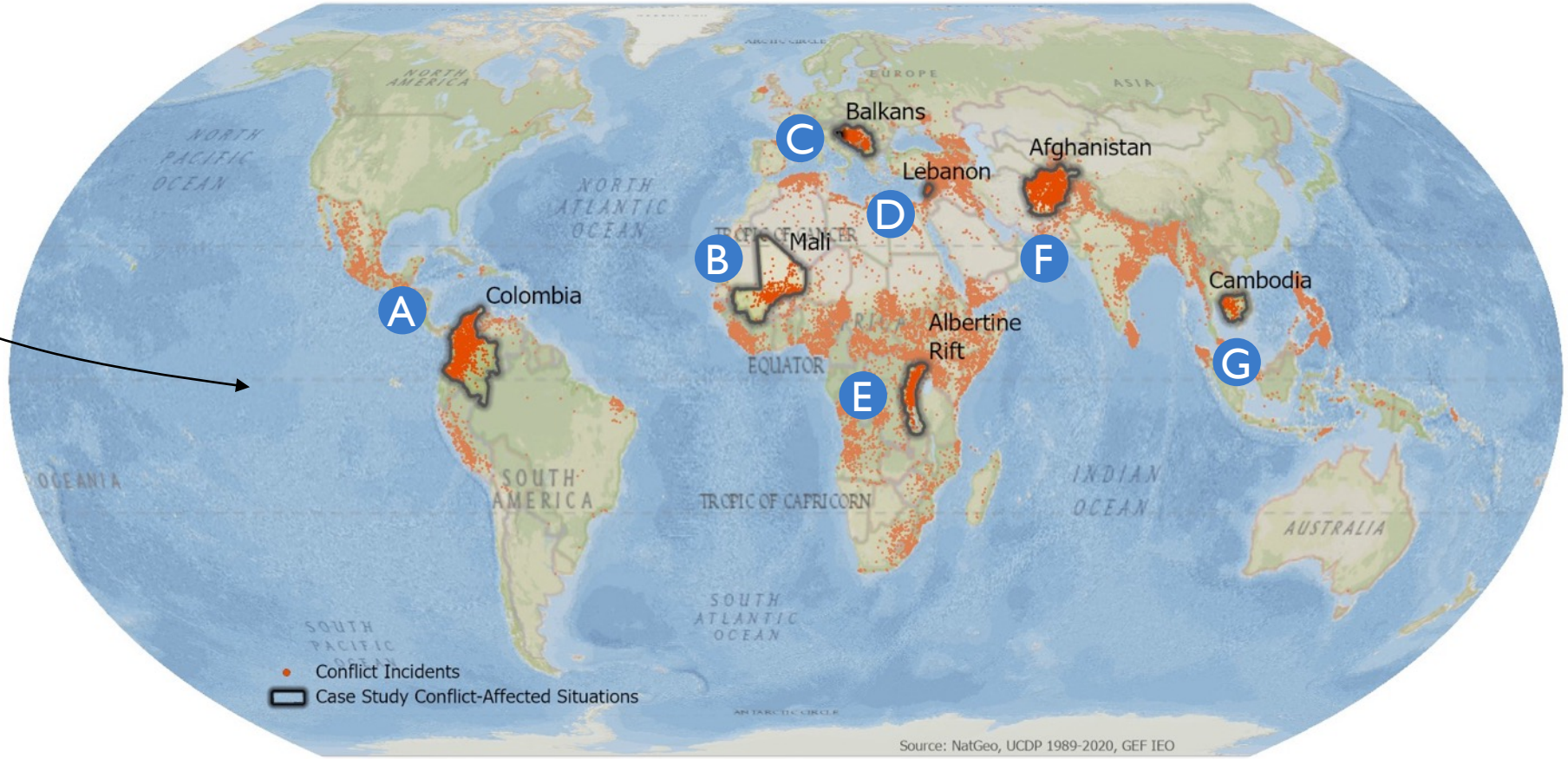
Portfolio

4,136 GEF projects

Case studies across seven conflict and fragile situations

Evaluation methods
document analysis
statistical analysis
remote sensing
interviews

GEF Case Study Situations and Conflict (1989-2020)



Findings

Key pathways by which conflict and fragility affect GEF projects

Physical insecurity

Social conflict and mistrust

Economic drivers

Political fragility and weak governance

Coping strategies

Fragility

Main Findings

Inconsistent identification of conflict-related risks

The GEF has so far not developed conflict-sensitive safeguards, policies, and guidance necessary to systematically manage these risks

Half of the GEF Agencies have developed policies, strategies, and toolkits

Fragility

Impacts

The shift in priorities associated with conflict can negatively affect the relevance of projects

Conflict impacts human rights, indigenous peoples, gender and GEF's ability to engage with the private sector

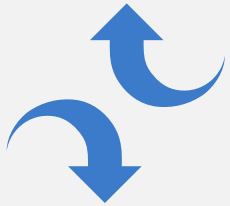
Increased likelihood that a project will be cancelled and dropped

Increases the duration of a project's delays

Negatively affects outcomes, sustainability, implementation, execution, monitoring

Risk management strategies

Acknowledgement



Avoidance

Mitigation

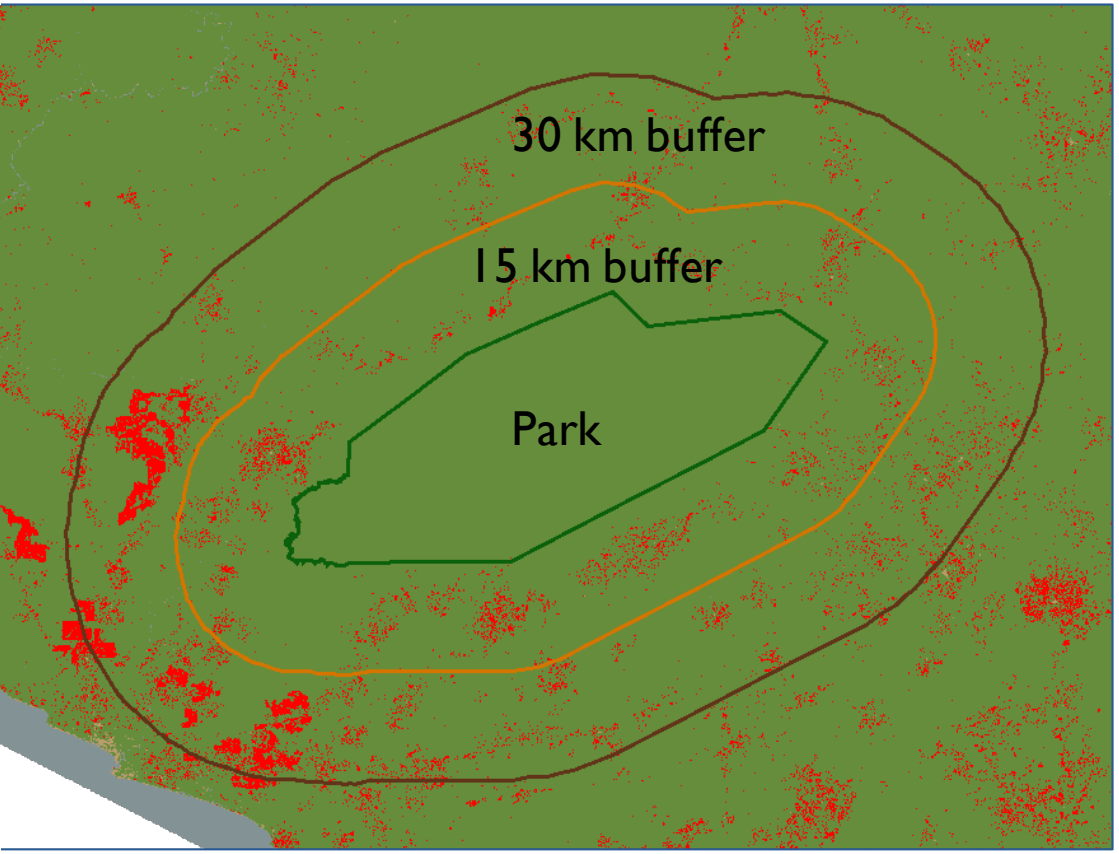
Peacebuilding

Learning

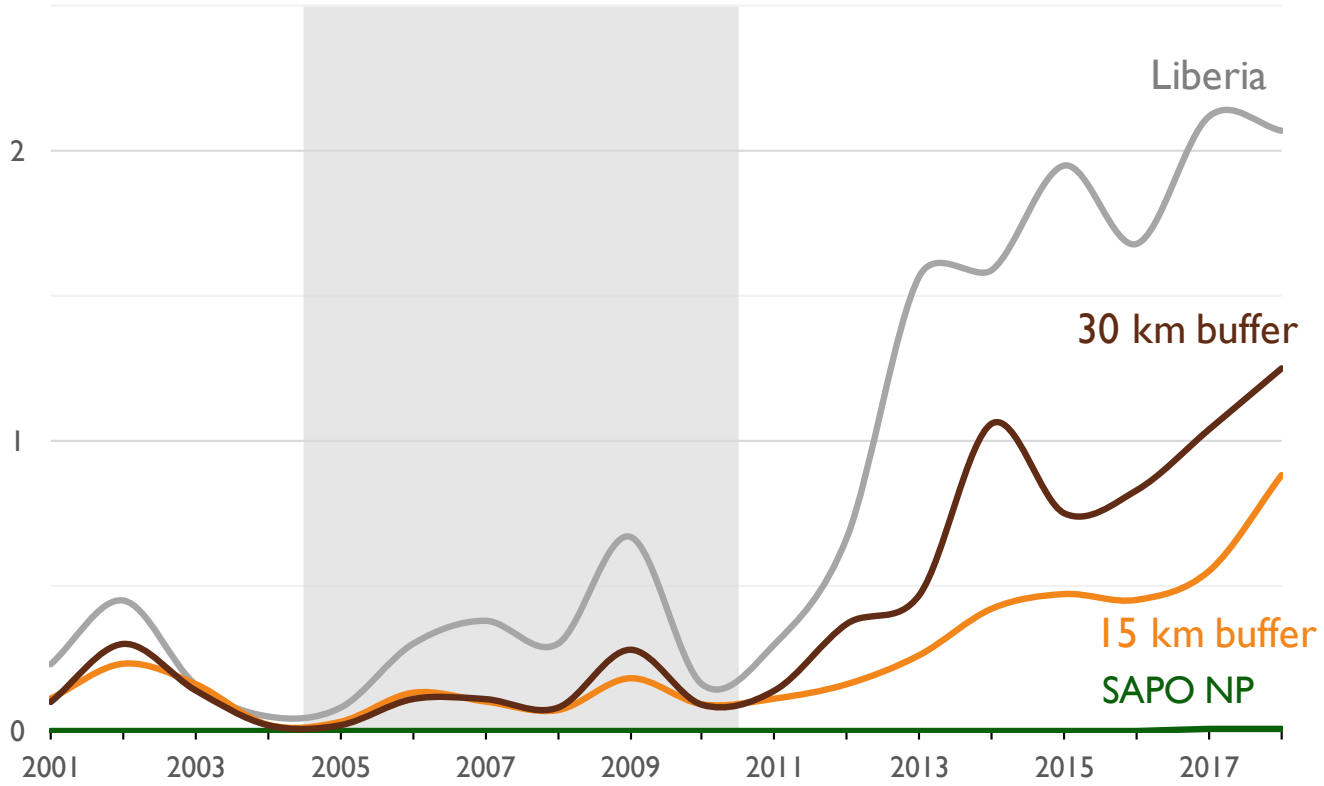
Fragility

Case: Liberia

Liberia: SAPO National Park



Percentage of forest loss



Fragile and conflict affected situations

Recommendations

1. *The GEF Secretariat should use the project review process to provide feedback to Agencies to identify conflict- and fragility-related risks to a proposed project and develop measures to mitigate those risks.*

2. *To improve conflict-sensitive programming while also providing flexibility to Agencies and projects, the GEF Secretariat could develop guidance for conflict-sensitive programming.*

3. *To improve conflict-sensitive design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of GEF projects, the GEF Secretariat together with the Agencies should leverage existing platforms for learning, exchange, and technical assistance.*

4. *The current GEF Environmental and Social Safeguards could be expanded to provide more details so that GEF projects address key conflict-sensitive considerations.*

5. *The GEF Secretariat could consider revising its policies and procedures so that GEF-supported projects can better adapt to rapid and substantial changes common in fragile and conflict-affected situations.*

Agenda Item 10

IEO Evaluation of GEF Interventions in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector

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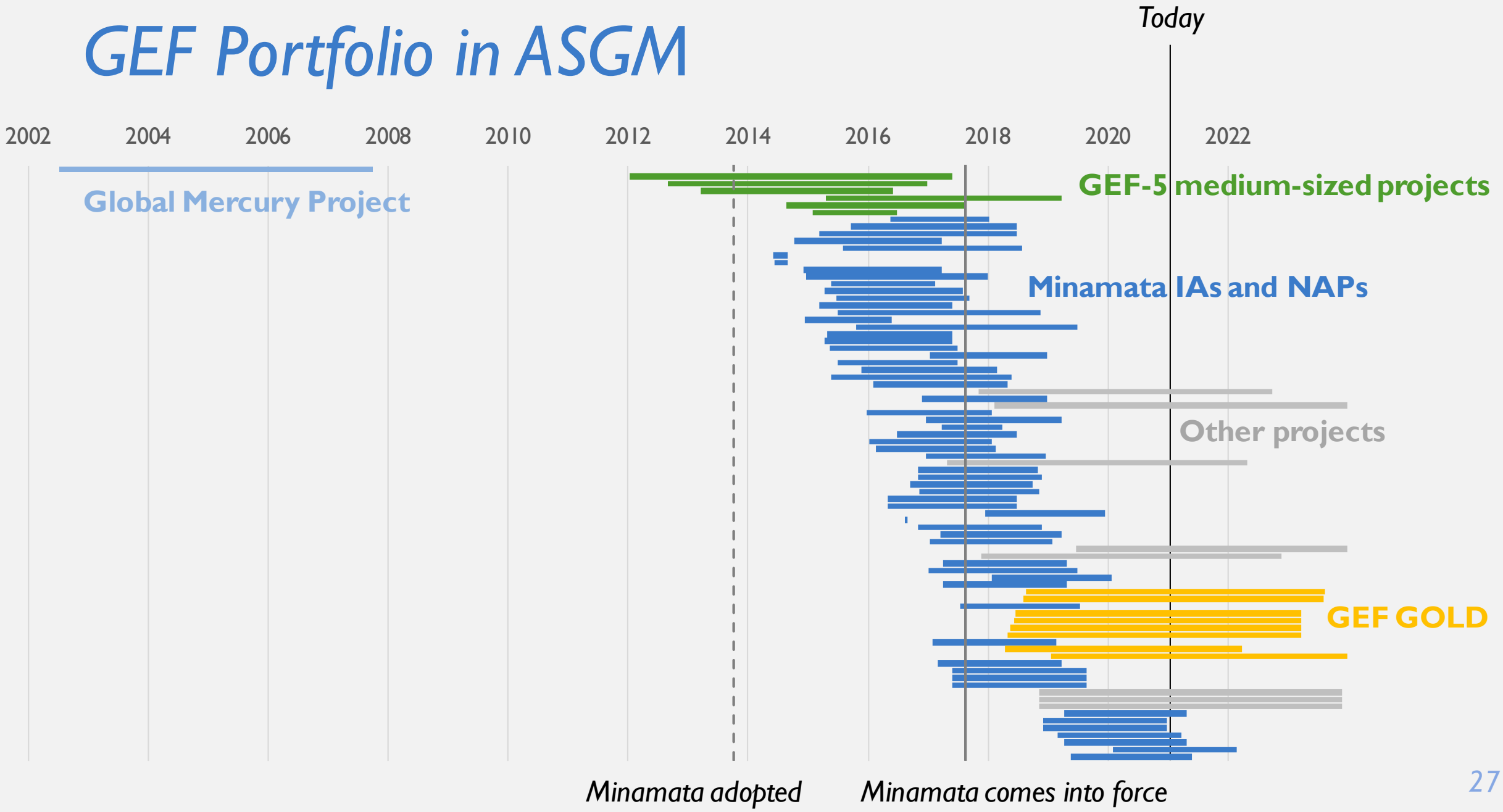
GEF Portfolio in ASGM



Artisan and small-scale gold mining

Findings: post-completion evaluations

GEF-5 pilot MSPs achieved sustained mercury use reductions in some cases

Formalization gained momentum after Project closure

Artisan and small-scale gold mining

Example

"Sin Mercurio" project in Ecuador and Peru

Material ready for cyanidation process in processing plant in Ecuador.

Lessons learned from past projects

Miners need **access to finance** to transition to non-mercury technologies.

Access to finance is GOLD program's largest component.

Formalize miners through improved policy and streamlined bureaucratic process.

With formalization, miners will have **more access to financial products** and markets to invest in non-mercury technologies.

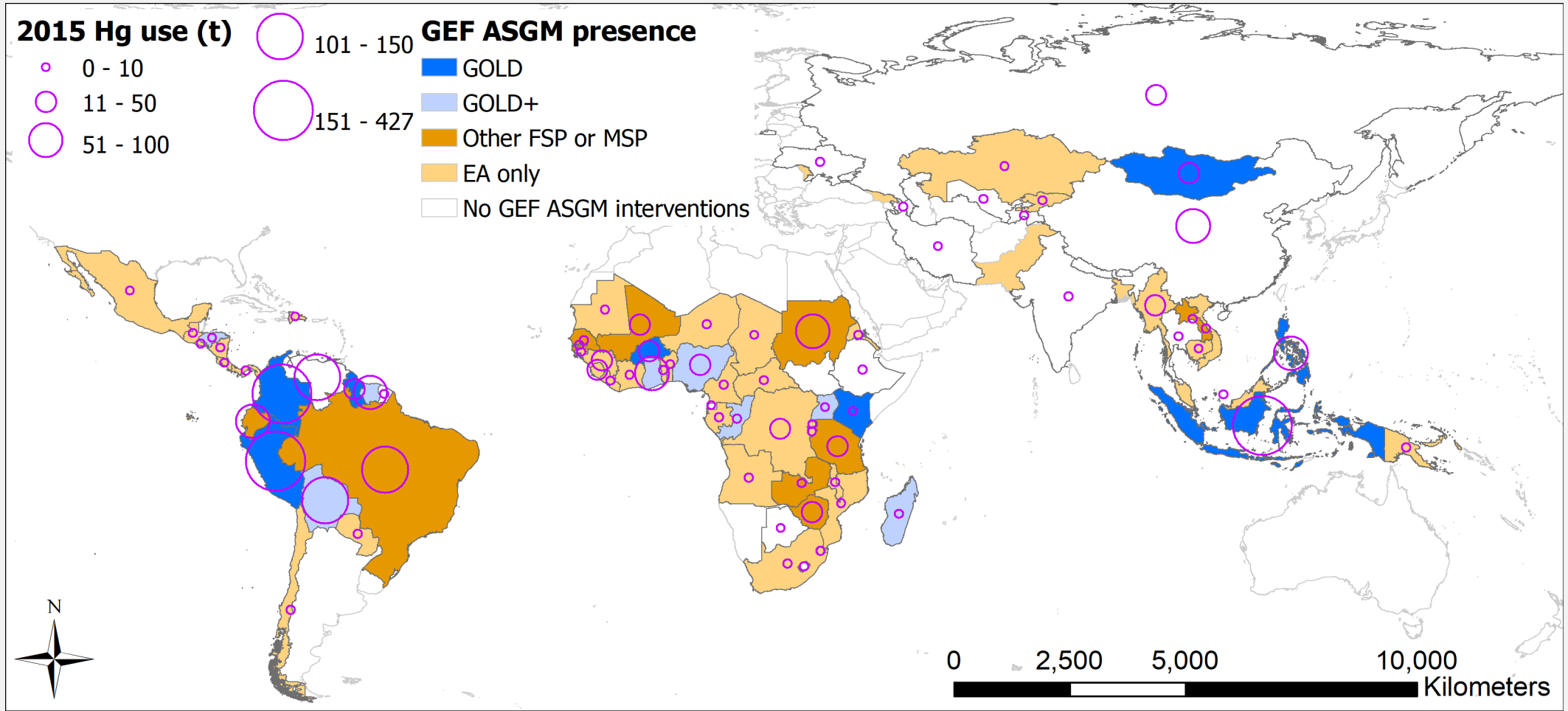
With access to finance, miners will **shift away from mercury** towards other, cleaner technologies.

Disseminate lessons learned to other areas and miners not involved in GOLD to further reduce mercury use.

Artisan and small-scale gold mining

Findings: project design in ongoing projects

GOLD program aligned to Minamata Convention and covers many top mercury use countries



Artisan and small-scale gold mining

Findings: ongoing project design

Targets for mercury reductions will be difficult to monitor and verify, partially due to a scarcity of high-quality baseline data

Shift to working with downstream supply chain stakeholders, including private sector

Global project promotes strong program collaboration and learning

Addresses policies and safeguards through the planetGOLD Criteria and gender through project level gender analyses

Programs very focused on mercury reductions and few projects include interventions to address associated environmental issues

Majority of mercury reductions expected through broader adoption and replication

Subtitle

Recommendations

1. *Encourage more large mercury users to become involved in Minamata Convention*

2. *Promote interventions that assist governments in implementing ASGM policies*

3. *Seek opportunities for multi-focal area ASGM co-benefits and interventions.*

4. *Further the use of the planetGOLD website to disseminate lessons learned from previous projects and communicate status of projects.*

Agenda Item 11
Evaluation of the Role of Medium-Sized Projects (MSP) in the GEF Partnership

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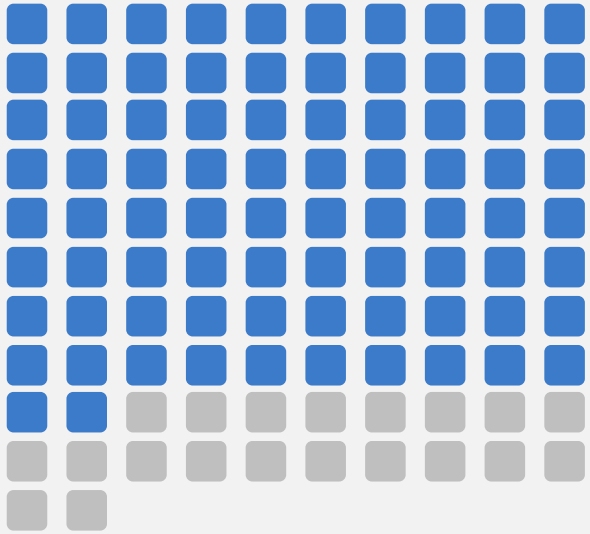
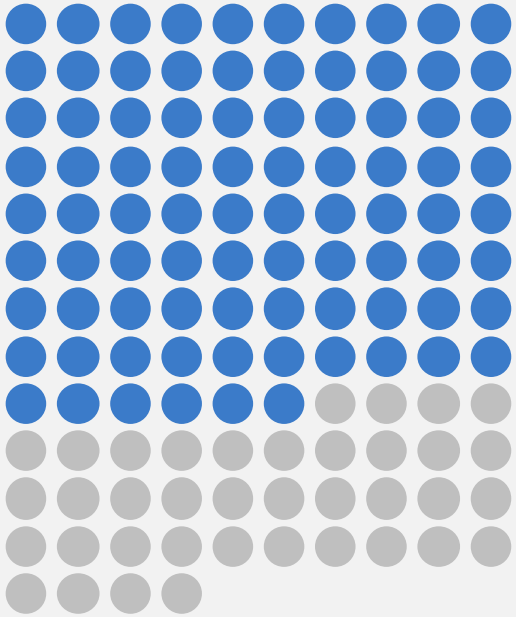
Medium-sized projects

Evaluation scope: GEF-4 and onwards

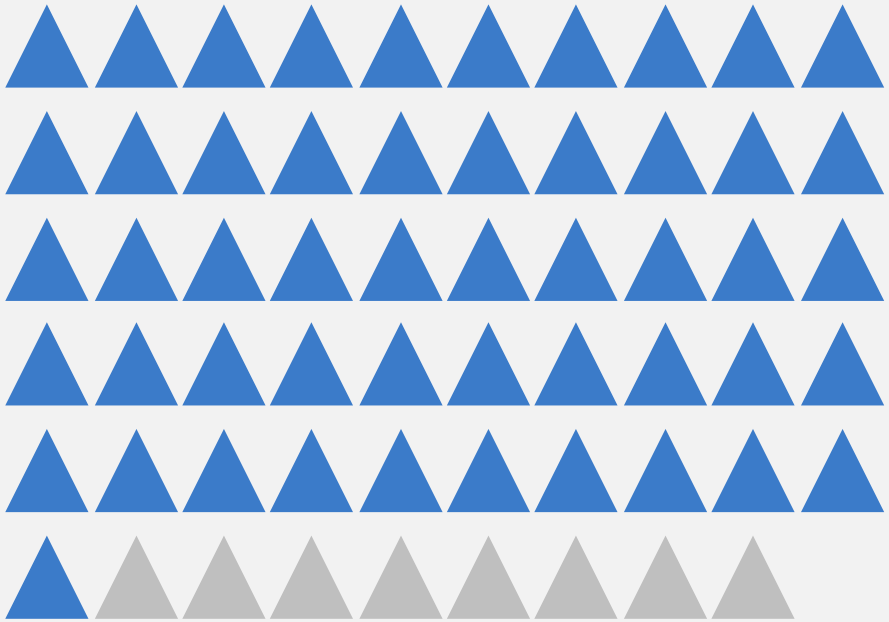
819 (80%) of the 1,024 MSPs



$958 million (77%) of the $1.24 billion in MSP grants



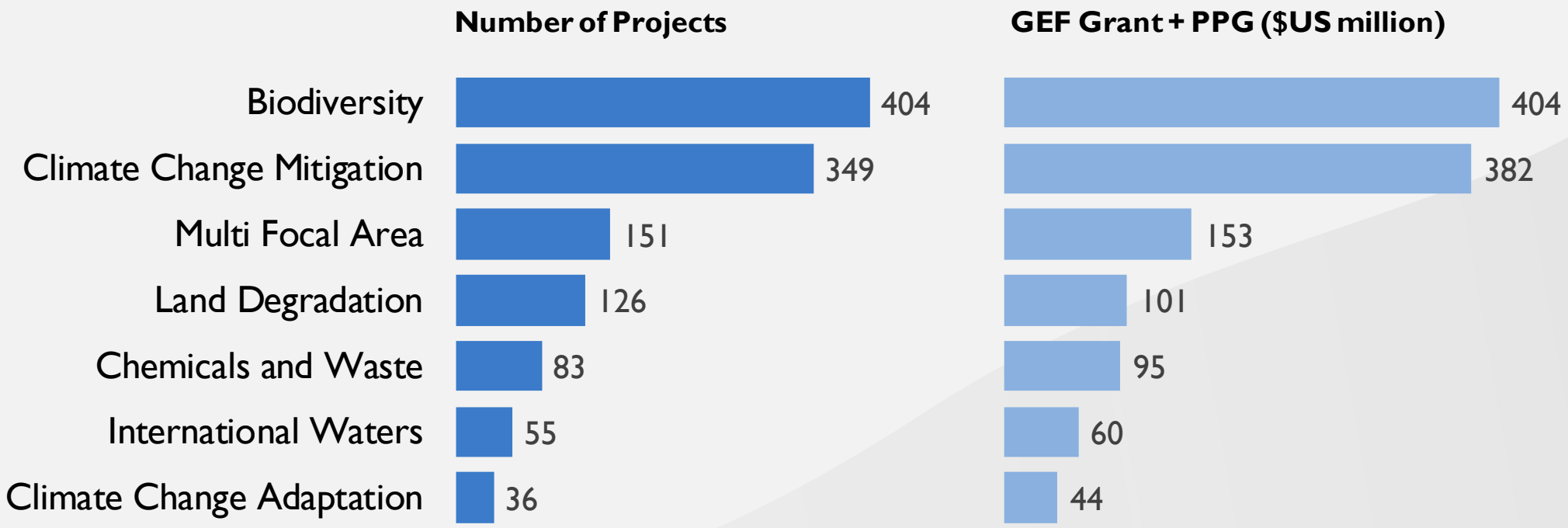
$5.1 billion (86%) of the $5.9 billion in MSP planned cofinancing



Data as of September 15, 2020

Medium-sized projects

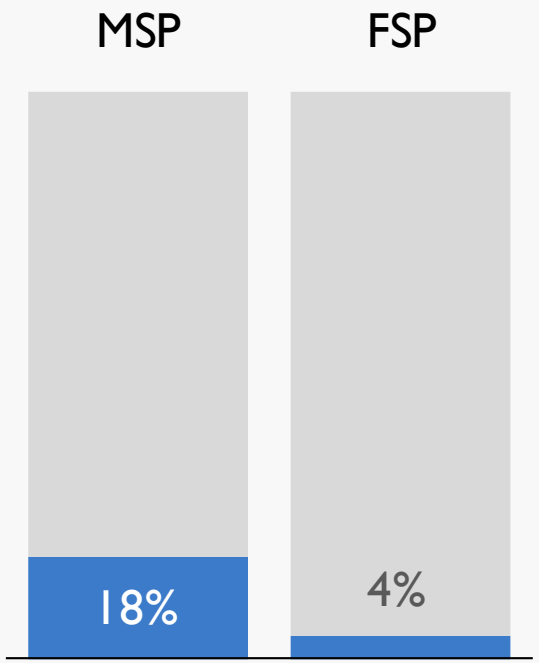
Portfolio



Medium-sized projects

Findings

A broad representation of CSO executing agencies



MSPs remain **relevant** to the GEF partnership

An entry point into the GEF

Used for capacity building and developing knowledge products

Address funding gaps

Perform on par with or slightly higher than FSPs

A catalyst for financing innovation and scaling up

Approval process is efficient

2

The $2 million limit seems appropriate for smaller agencies and countries

Use of modality affected by the STAR allocation system

Medium-sized project

Example

Payments for Environmental Services and Sustainable Financing Schemes in the Danube Basin

Medium-sized projects

Recommendation

The medium-sized projects should continue to be primarily used for developing innovative projects. Midterm and final evaluations should be conducted on MSPs designed as innovative or transformative, to provide lessons for scaling up or replication

Agenda Item 12
Evaluation of Knowledge Management in the GEF (2020)

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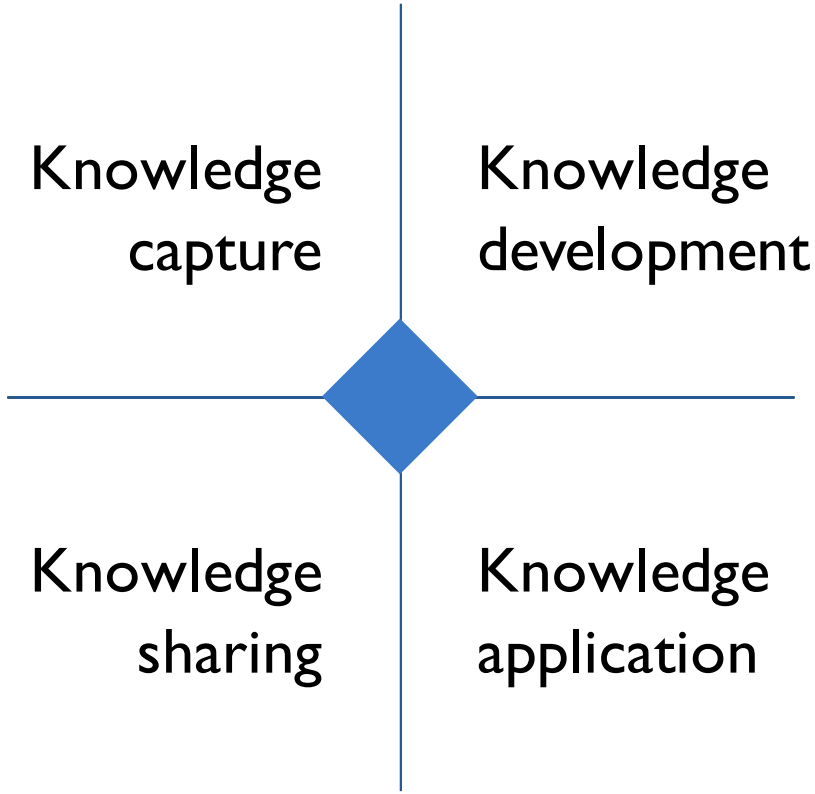
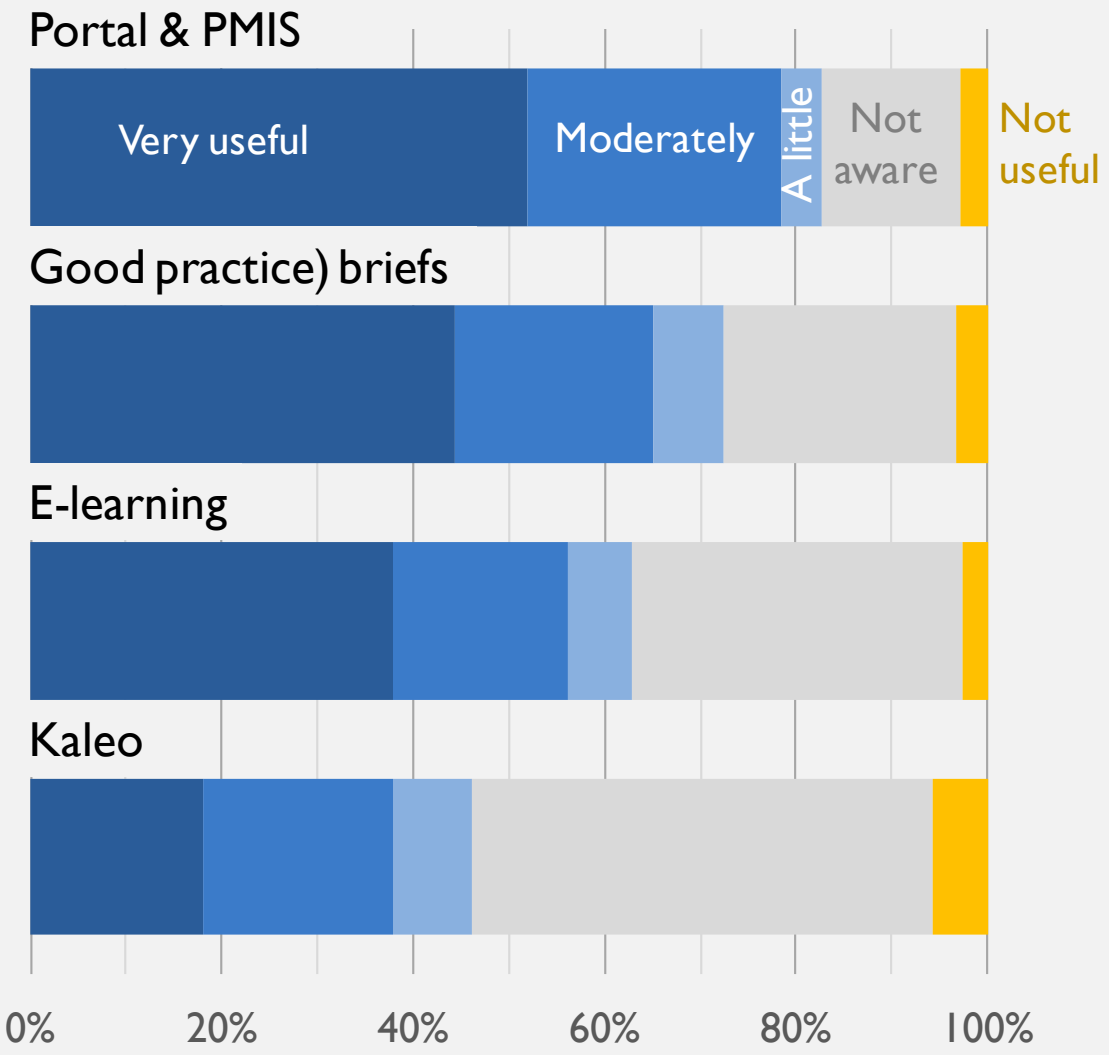
Knowledge management at the GEF

Progress in each step, several new products





Challenges remain

Capturing data and information from GEF projects and programs

Limited ability of GEF Portal to aggregate and extract lessons

Need for detailed KM project-level guidance and examples

KM Strategy and partnership members' roles

Absence of KM strategy and clear role of KM Advisory Group and other members of partnership

Capacity to connect with GEF Agency systems and platforms

Knowledge management at the GEF

Programmatic approaches incorporate knowledge and learning

- ✓ Program-level approaches to KM facilitate knowledge sharing across projects, countries, and agencies
- ✗ Systematic KM approaches and consistent set of KM indicators absent in some programs

Central knowledge and learning platforms are not limited to programs:	**Focal areas**: IW:LEARN **Cross-cutting themes**: GEF Gender Partnership

GEF-6 and GEF-7 examples

Integrated Approach Pilots

Impact Programs

GOLD Program

Coastal Fisheries Initiative

Recommendations

1. *The GEF partnership should develop a clear KM strategy.*

2. *The GEF partnership should invest in a technical solution that strengthens the KM system.*

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