

REPORT OF THE 2017 GEF CSO FORUM



Victoria, **Seychelles**

April 18, 2017

The RFP – GEF CSO Network, Eastern Africa
Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility (EMLI)
www.bwaisefacility.org

Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
FSP	Full Size Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEFIEO	Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF
GEFSEC	GEF Secretariat
MSP	Medium Size Project
OFP	Operational Focal Point
OPS	Overall Performance Study
RFP	Regional Focal Point
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources

1. Background

The global environment challenges are constantly changing thence requiring dynamic but coherent policy approaches with requisite resources to ensure equilibrium and halt any further degradation. Although some scholars have argued that, 'Nature doesn't need people, people need nature', the assertion seems true although the conclusion sounds uneven. Nested polycentric frameworks reinforced with cross chain of interplay between state, and non-state actors provide one such window of opportunity to address key challenges of the global environment.

The GEF CSO Network, a union of non-state actors is blending with the global environmental architecture such as the GEF family to safeguard the global environment and promote sustainable development.

2. Introduction

The 51st GEF Council request GEFSEC to initiate discussions on the seventh (7th) replenishment of resources of the GEF Trust Fund for the period 2018-2022 also known as GEF-7. So far, the 1st meeting has been held in Paris, which discussed a number of issues relating to; GEF performance, financing modalities and strategic position for GEF-7. It is against this background that the 2017 CSO Forum was organized to reflect on the GEF-7 replenishment process whilst maintaining a key role of CSOs in safeguarding the global environment.

Specifically, the Forum promoted networking among non-state actors, shared the outcomes of the 1st replenishment meeting, adopted the 2016 CSO Forum report and identified the strategic role of the GEF CSO Network in GEF-7.

3. Proceedings

The Forum took place at Berjaya Resort & Spa and was attended by 18 participants composed of GEFSEC, UNDP, GEF CSO Network members and non-members. Mr. Bakiika, on behalf of the regional focal point for the GEF CSO Network for Eastern African region opened the meeting at 9.10am. Dr. Michele, the executive director of Sustainability for Seychelles, welcomed participants to the workshop and moderated the opening session.

Mr. Bakiika, on behalf of Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility (EMLI), the Regional Focal Point (RFP) for Eastern Africa GEF CSO Network made a presentation on the role of the GEF CSO Network in the GEF Family. He shared both the governance and management structures of the GEF CSO Network, reminding participants of the changes undertook by the Network specifically on establishing the position of Chair and Vice-Chair while repealing the position of the Central Focal Point. He also informed the Forum about the Network achievements and membership procedure to join the Network and urged CSOs participants that had not joined the network to do so. The CSO representative in Seychelles pledged to apply to join the GEF CSO Network. It should be noted that GEF CSO Network has no representation in some of the key Indian Ocean countries (i.e. Madagascar, Seychelles and Comoros). He commended the good working relations between GEF CSO Network and Governments.

Robert further shared the planned actions for FY 2016/17 which included, inter alia,

- Developing a report card for GEF countries and Agencies on their engagement with civil society;
- Establishing CSO-government policy platforms for selected countries with SGP support;

- Collaborating with SGP on production of knowledge management materials;
- Undertaking **elections** for the RFP-GEF CSO Network for East Africa for period 2018-2022

The last item captured the attention of most of the Forum participants. Robert informed that the mandate of the current RFP was ending on June 16, 2017 and members of the Network were to undertake their obligation to elect a new RFP. Robert on behalf of the out-going RFP, informed the Forum that they will seek another term.

Robert made an oral presentation of the report of the 2016 CSO Forum held in Antananarivo, Madagascar on 26 July 2016. He pointed out that the ECW did not discuss some of the Forum recommendations due to the already pre-designed agenda which omits a session for reporting back. He mentioned the recommendations made to GEFSEC, Governments and list of key emerging issues to be considered in the GEF 7 replenishment. Charles from UNDP commented on one of the issues 'increasing allocation for SGP'. In his guidance, Charles informed the forum that SGP welcomes and supports 'strategic projects' to a tune of USD 150,000. He further informed that CSOs could apply twice in a GEF cycle provided the total grants does not exceed USD 50,000. The report of the 2016 CSO Forum was unanimously adopted.

The second session on CSOs and GEF 7 replenishment process was chaired by Ms. Azeb Kelemework Bihon from Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations. She invited Robert and Suzan to make their presentations. Robert gave a background to the session and informed the Forum that also CSO representatives participate as observers, in the replenishment meeting, there was a need to explore modalities for enhanced participation in replenishment process.

Suzan from GEFSEC made a joint presentation that highlighted both the strategic position of GEF 7 and the Paris Replenishment meeting. Her presentation made insights into GEF 7 programming (i.e. Impact programs with sharper focus and 4 higher level integrative framework).



Extract from a Presentation by William at ECW Session in Seychelles, 2017

List of integrative framework

Land, Agriculture & Food Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food systems - Agricultural Commodity Supply Chains - Landscape restoration - Amazon sustainable landscapes - Inclusive conservation - Healthy Oceans
Accelerating de-carbonization and reducing economic footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy systems - Sustainable cities - Green infrastructure
Reduced Pollution and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circular economy - Industrial chemicals - Agricultural chemicals
Natural Capital-based Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural capital - Green finance - Environmental security - Wildlife for sustainable development



(Extreme Left) Suzan, GEFSEC making a presentation to the CSO Forum

Suzan informed the Forum that STAR might continue to form the basis of allocation and recipient countries could benefit in full flexibility. The forum noted that consultations informing the programming were on-going.

Dr. Nadir Suliman from Sudanese Environment Conservation Society (SECS) made a presentation on 'barriers to non-state actors' engagement in GEF Business'. He underscored enormous challenges (e.g. limited role in MSP & FSP to awareness raising and limited funding, minimal country consultations on GEF programming among others) faced by the members of the GEF CSO Network limiting their active role at the national level. He urged the Network to enhance the role of the member organizations so as to directly contribute to GEF Programs at the regional & national level.

He further informed that at times, representation of CSOs in GEF implemented projects depend on personal attitude of the government officials and not institutionalized. Some countries do not have non-state actors represented in GEF National steering committee. Nadir provided some recommendations which included;

- Improve access to funding by improving flexibility of STAR allocation to Small Grants Program in GEF 7 so as to have financial capability in implementing projects with the grassroots communities;
- Enhance capacity building in terms of training and programs oriented exchange learning visits for non- state actors;
- Ensure non- state actors are engaged in planning, implementing & monitoring of GEF Projects;
- Encourage Public Private Partnership so as to strengthen co-financing in GEF Projects.

A panel was later convened to deepen the discussion with representatives from Madagascar, Somalia and Kenya. Nirina from the Junior Chamber International of Madagascar shared experience on how her organization contributed to improved health through analyzing community needs and thereafter responding by undertaking projects. She also informed the forum about their effort to protect biodiversity through reforestation in Madagascar but did not know of the financial support of the SGP.

Hussein Ahmed from Somali Environmental and Rural Development Agency informed the forum that due to very low environmental education and awareness in Somali, people fostered wide environmental degradation in addition to the high demand of forest products. He also informed that no SGP experience exists in Somali since GEF projects were limited to only the GEF agencies like UNDP. He however, shared the concept of green energy to which he requested the forum to help identify potential donors. Mr. Griffins Ochieng from Centre for Environment Justice and Development, Kenya, shared his experience as an IPEN member organization. He highlighted the dilemma of chemicals especially Mercury. He further informed the Forum of how International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) continues to build capacity of CSOs on chemical issues while unifying them for global policy advocacy in the chemicals conventions such as Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants. He notified the Forum that he will be participating at the triple COPs of the Basel, Rotterdam & Stockholm Convention in Geneva from 24 April to 5 May 2017.



Cross-section of forum participants during group work

During a plenary discussion, one participant recommended that countries undertake mandatory allocation of resources to SGP to enable CSOs play a key role in GEF 7. Participants were organized into 2 groups so as to encourage broad based participation and the following guiding questions focused their deliberations.

- How should CSOs increase relevance at country level (OFPs, Convention Focal Points, and Agencies) in context of GEF Programming?
- What should the GEF CSO Network do differently to meet growing membership needs?
- Review & prioritize the emerging

issues to be considered under GEF 7 during the CSO Forum 2016.

The recommendations were as follows:

Increasing CSO relevance

- ❖ Increase communication and coordination in order to enhance information sharing and knowledge among CSOs;
- ❖ Enhance capacity of CSOs in advocacy, monitoring & evaluation and evidence based reporting;
- ❖ Allocate some of the country resources to SGP to enable CSOs play an active role;
- ❖ Support continuous training for CSOs in GEF focal areas, project management, advocacy, and knowledge management.

The GEF CSO Network

- ❖ Institutionalization of CSOs networks at national level where possible or cooperate and strengthen the existing ones (networks) and have GEF CSOs networks chapters;
- ❖ Establish contact persons /points in each country;
- ❖ Increase the participation of CSOs in GEF meetings

Priority emerging issues for consideration in GEF 7:

Ranking	Emerging issue to be considered under GEF 7	Reason for suggesting priority issues.
1.	Enhance climate change actions that build resilience	-Climate change rhetoric is at an ever adverse stage and resilience is sustainable
2.	Widen and improve accessibility of funds for grassroots organization by increasing the SGP allocation to match needs of recipient countries	The marginalized and under empowered individuals require necessary allocation of resources undertake local actions with global environmental benefits
3.	Promotion of climate Smart Agriculture to increase Food security	Climate smart Agriculture and increased food production would address rampant food insecurity issues in the region
4.	Enhancement of trans-boundary management of water services in urban areas	-The rise of urban population. - Funds availability while addressing water pollution and promote water-use management
5.	Enhance capacity building with focus on targeted transformative needs of recipient countries	The knowledge sharing acquired during capacity building will adopt new technologies
6.	Enhancement of afforestation/reforestation	Encourage favourable condition for conservation and favourable rainfall
7.	Management of chemical waste	Technologies to cut carbon emission and promote conservation
8.	Promotion of sustainable energy production and utilization	Global natural resource management promoted for sustainability and accountability for next generation

Annex 1: Programme

Tuesday, 18 April, 2017. Victoria, Republic of Seychelles

8.30-9.00 am Registration

9.00-10.00 am Opening session

The opening session will be facilitated by Dr. Michele Martin, *Executive Director*, Sustainability for Seychelles.

The purpose of the session will be to recall the objectives of the CSO Forum, and its expected outcomes and present the report of the ECW held in Madagascar in 2016.

- Opening prayer
- Self-introductions
- **Welcome address, Dr. Michele Martin**, CSO Rep. Seychelles
- **Opening remarks, Robert Bakiika**, GEF CSO Network, Regional Focal Point for Eastern African - Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility (EMLI)
- **Remarks by Representative GEFSEC**

1. **Keynote address: The Strategic Position of GEF-7** by Rep. GEFSEC
2. **Presentation of the 2016 CSO Forum Report** by RFP-GEF CSO Network

10.00-10.20 Tea/Coffee Break (Group photo)

10.20-11.20 Session 2: CSOs and the GEF-7 Replenishment

This session will explore the CSO engagement in the GEF-7 replenishment. Noting that only 2 CSO representatives (Recipient & Donor countries) are invited to participate as observers, this session will explore the key role of the GEF CSO Network and explore modalities for enhanced participation in replenishment process.

The session will be facilitated by Ms. Azeb Kelemework Bihon from *Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations*, Ethiopia

Featured **10 minute** presentations:

1. Presentation: Highlights of the Paris replenishment meeting for GEF-7 by **Rep. GEFSEC**
2. Presentation: Barriers to Non-state actors engagement in GEF business by **Mr. Nadir Suliman**, Sudanese Environment Conservation Society

Panel discussion

- Nirina Ambinintsoa Ratsitoarison Rakotondrasoa, *Junior Chamber International*, Madagascar
- Hussein Ahmed, Somali Environmental and Rural Development Agency, Somalia
- Griffins Ochieng, Centre for Environment Justice and Development, Kenya

11.20-13.00 Group work and development of key messages to the ECW

Annex 2: Participants List

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