

## **Notes to the Sub-Regional Consultation, Dakar, 20-21 April 2006**

### **Day 1, 20 April 2006**

#### **Opening Session**

On behalf of the GEF Secretariat, GEF IAs and EAs, co-Chair Moctar Toure of the GEF Secretariat welcomed the delegates to the Sub-Regional Consultation for Central and Western Africa. Mr. Toure noted that this two-day sub-regional consultation is the first of a series of sub-regional consultations to be held globally. The purpose of these consultations are two-fold: (1) to better inform and discuss with GEF partner countries, changes within the GEF environment including the new Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) that comes into effect 1 July 2006, and (2) to identify needs and areas for capacity building interventions to support GEF Operational Focal points (OFPs), particularly in light of their enhanced roles under the new RAF.

Mr. Toure briefly re-counted the history of the GEF and noted that during its existence, various trends in the international environment and development community, and changes brought about by new environmental Conventions, etc. have necessitated changes in GEF policies and approaches. The newest of these changes is the new Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) which is a new mechanism that necessitates discussion and analysis of its implications for countries involved, and also discussion as to how tap into potential opportunities brought about by the RAF. Mr. Toure emphasized that the role of focal points will become even more critical under the new RAF with respect to interface, facilitation, coordination and planning of GEF resource allocations and securing of co-financing. He also indicated that changes if effectively implemented under the RAF, may enable countries to play a more active role in the GEF and to plan and coordinate better at the national and regional levels.

Mr. Toure recognized that questions and issues may arise with respect to the operational details in implementing the RAF but there is insufficient time to address all of these issues during the two-day consultation; however, participants were assured that GEF Secretariat and IA/EA representatives would be available outside of the formal sessions to respond to questions and provide clarifications. Mr. Toure ended his opening remarks by assuring delegates that the GEF and its IA/EAs are available to support and work with the countries to ensure better ownership of GEF at the country and regional levels. He also expressed his hope that the workshop would be remembered as a major step in the history of GEF and wished successful deliberations over the next two days.

H.E. Helen Esuene, Minister of Environment, Nigeria, extended greetings from the President and Government of Nigeria and commended the efforts of the West Africa constituency and GEF Council towards fostering a healthier and more productive environment for the present and future generations. H.E. noted that the volume of GEF projects in sub-Saharan countries is relatively minimal which may be partly attributed to the intricate GEF project cycle and inadequate in-country capacity for GEF project development, and further indicated that many project concepts are stalled at the regional evaluation level. H.E. noted that M&E is critical for effective project implementation and

that after initial endorsement, most project proponents including GEF IAs and EAs do not provide adequate feedback on projects until more funds or the next phase are required/forthcoming. All of these elements render the work of OFPs extremely challenging. Therefore H.E. requested consideration of a mechanism that would help to ensure that IAs and EAs continue to engage and support OFPs in relevant activities beyond project endorsement; that budgetary provision be made in all projects for OFPs to be involved in M&E activities; and that the GEF Secretariat provide regular feedback on the approval status of endorsed projects and make available a database of country projects to enhance M&E. Regarding the RAF, H.E observed that the RAF links the award or resources to a country's potential to generate benefits and performance and expressed concern that countries with higher capacities and countries with large populations should possibly be given special consideration in this regard. H.E. expressed great disappointment regarding the Tokyo meeting where no agreement was agreed on the replenishment level for GEF4 but nevertheless pledged her country's continued support to the GEF reform process as it allows countries to know in advance the amount they are qualified for, which may in turn facilitate long term planning and coordination of environmental projects for national and global benefits.

H.E.Jacques Andoh Alle, Minister of Environment, Water and Forests, Cote d'Ivoire, expressed his hope that these consultations might provide a window on opportunities to be presented by GEF to finance environmental projects in the water and forestry sectors as these are two critical environmental sectors for developing countries and countries in transition. H.E strongly emphasized the need for a cross-cutting approach in all environmental projects and stressed the importance of having OFPs and PFPs present at this meeting and working closely together. H.E. commended the holding of the sub-regional consultation in order for beneficiary countries to better understand and tap potential opportunities presented by the RAF. With respect to the Country Support Programme (CSP), H.E. noted that the allocations per country per annum appear to be insufficient and may only enable the holding of one or two workshops at best. H.E. expressed his commitment to the process and wished successful deliberations and a better understanding by all of the new RAF.

H.E. Minister Thierno Lo, Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection extended a warm welcome to the meeting participants on behalf of the President, Prime Minister and the Government of Senegal. H.E. noted that his presence is a reflection of Senegal's interest and commitment to the GEF process, particularly with respect to resource allocation and mobilization, and noted the close relationship between GEF and NEPAD where the strategic elements of NEPAD are in line with the objectives of GEF. H.E. recalled that GEF is a result of successful international relations, is a good financial mechanism to implement Agenda 21, and that Senegal has benefited from GEF's interventions in several focal areas. H.E. expressed his hope that the consultations will contribute to building country capacity and enhancing understanding the GEF and RAF process, and declared the meeting officially open.

The Co-Chair thanked the Ministers for their honorable presence which reflects their respective countries' commitment to the GEF process, and for their addresses in which they highlighted various issues to be discussed and debated over the next two days.

Delegates introduced themselves. Attendees included representatives of the GEF countries of Central and Western Africa, GEF Secretariat, GEF IAs, and UNDP Senegal. (Annex I: Final Participant List)

### **Presentation on “GEF Update”**

Sam Wedderburn (World Bank)

Mr. Wedderburn recounted and elaborated on GEF's history, institutional framework, replenishment cycle, focal areas and respective strategic priorities and relevant conventions; multi-pronged capacity building approach; project eligibility criteria; funding categories; project cycle, and important recent developments/directions including new funds for Adaptation.

Key points:

- The advent of RAF results in no change to GEF project eligibility criteria/requirements.
- GEF should not be viewed as a sole financier but rather a co-financier that plays a catalytic role in co-financing. No definitive ratio for co-financing exists; however, recent studies have indicated that over the course of GEF, the average co-financing ratio has been approximately 4.5 to 1.
- The independent GEF Evaluation Office was recently established and is leading a joint evaluation on the GEF project cycle and intends to undertake impact assessment studies in the near future.
- GEF has adapted a multi-pronged capacity building approach including inter alia the National Capacity for Self Assessment (NCSA) that may result in stand-alone capacity building projects or inclusion of capacity building activities in projects.
- Until two years ago, GEF mainly addressed Climate Change Mitigation. New funds have been created to address Climate Change Adaptation.

[As the meeting agenda was behind schedule, the Q&A/discussion session on GEF was withdrawn from the agenda, and the agenda advanced to the presentation on the RAF].

### **Presentation on “Introduction to the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF)”**

Mr. Moctar Toure, GEF Secretariat

Mr. Toure pointed out the context for the presentation – the GEF Council had adopted a specific Resource Allocation Framework that applies to Biodiversity and Climate Change for the GEF4 replenishment period and had asked the Secretariat to consult with countries regarding its implementation. After a brief introduction of the origins and development of the RAF, the presenter provided details on the indicators used for determining country and group allocations under the RAF. He also highlighted some

specific features of the RAF and the enhanced role of Operational Focal Points under the RAF.

Key points:

- Allocations to the country and the group for each 4-year replenishment period are based on a formula and subject to a ceiling and a minimum allocation.
- Allocation formula is based on Global environmental priorities and Country-level performance which are measured by the GEF Benefits Index (GBI) and GEF Performance Index (GPI) respectively.
- Focal area Envelopes for biodiversity and climate change are distributed to countries in a similar manner:
  - 5% for Global and Regional
  - 5% SGP and Cross-cutting capacity building
  - 90% Country and Group allocations (of which at least 75% to individual country and the remainder to the group)
- The ceiling for each country is 10% of the biodiversity envelope and 15% of climate change envelope.
- The minimum allocation for each country is \$1 million for each focal area for 4 years.
- Allocations to country and groups are not entitlements; they are only available for well developed projects.
- Only of 50% of the 4 year allocation may be disbursed in the first two years.
- The RAF will be reviewed independently by the Office of Evaluation:
  - Mid-Term Review after two years of implementation
  - A review in conjunction with OPS4.

#### **Question and Answer / Discussion period:**

Q: Overall, countries expressed concern that the launch of the RAF is imminent but that countries have not been properly consulted in the process and are being presented with a complex instrument that they must learn to work with within a very short amount of time. Countries felt it would have been advisable to have first taken stock of the projects and programmes that have been successful to date, which have failed and for what reason, etc. and that that information should have been taken into account when countries' performance was assessed. There was a strong perception of overall reduced resources, questions regarding the principle of fairness in establishment of the allocations, concerns regarding ceiling and minimums, concerns regarding pooling of funds toward regional projects at the sake of national projects, and a general perception that GEF does not fully understand what is implied in this reform process and the constraints under which the countries operate. There was a general sense of frustration and resignation that the countries were being asked to accept a financial mechanism that they felt was not supported by the majority of the GEF Council.

A: GEF representatives acknowledged the frustrations of the countries. They mentioned that all countries are represented in the Council and that the Council deliberated on the RAF over 3 years prior to reaching a decision on the RAF. The

GEF Secretariat indicated they are here to explain the RAF as adopted by the Council and are not in a position to change the RAF system adopted by the Council. The Secretariat representative encouraged Focal Points to be forward looking and to use this meeting to determine how they can best utilize the new opportunities created by the new funding mechanism. Further, the Secretariat representative clarified that the Secretariat has some flexibility with regard to the implementation of the RAF, specifically with issues discussed in the second presentation, how resources are managed under the RAF. GEF encouraged a close ongoing dialogue on the RAF among GEF, the IA/EAs and countries particularly in the lead-up to the GEF Assembly. In response to some of the participants' comments that RAF was in the end approved without the support of the majority of the Council, it was noted that a decision had been made to undertake a mandatory review of the RAF after the first two years of its implementation.

Q: Countries noted that Biodiversity and Climate Change have been identified as the two GEF focal areas of the RAF and inquired how the RAF would impact the other GEF focal areas. It was noted that it is critical to maintain/ensure synergies among GEF thematic areas.

A: It was confirmed that since RAF is something of a pilot, it is therefore limited to only climate change and biodiversity. Close monitoring of the implementation of the RAF over the next two years will help determine whether RAF should extend beyond the initial four years, and to other focal areas such as land degradation, POPs and international waters. Countries were assured the GEF will work to ensure synergies among thematic areas.

Q: It was noted that the RAF window covers Climate Change mitigation only, not adaptation. Clarification was sought regarding the new funds for adaptation:

A: Among the new Climate Change Adaptation funds, only the SPA funds projects with expected national *and* global environmental benefits in one of the GEF focal areas. Incremental cost reasoning as applied to traditional projects is therefore applied to SPA projects. The US\$50 million that has been allocated to the SPA will come from the Global and Regional allocation under the RAF, not country or group allocations. All other Adaptation funds do not require that global environmental benefits be a priority rationale for the project; projects supported by these funds need only to show additional national benefits. Although the other Climate Change Adaptation funds are not funded by the GEF Trust Fund, they are subject to GEF procedures as GEF is the caretaker of the Funds. Adaptation Funds may be used to support activities in several sectors including infrastructure, health and agriculture projects but it is assumed that amounts are complementing large existing infrastructure projects.

Q: Countries raised numerous concerns regarding the transparency of the RAF and indicative allocations.

A: The GEF Secretariat responded that the final GEF4 allocations will only be available after the conclusion of the GEF4 replenishment negotiations. As

requested by the Council, the GEF Secretariat is consulting with countries bilaterally on the implementation of the RAF. As part of this consultation, the Secretariat has sent each operational focal point the allocations for the respective country based on GEF3 amounts. It was mentioned that the Council decided at the November 2006 meeting against public disclosure of the allocations until the final indicative allocations for GEF4 are available. The Council has agreed to publicly disclose the final country/group indicative allocations for GEF4 and the GEF Benefits Index used to determine these allocations. In addition, the GEF Performance Index will be disclosed through a weblink to the relevant data at the World Bank. The 5% set aside for regional/global projects is small compared to historical amounts for projects. Many regional projects are expected to be funded from the joint contribution of countries from their allocations. It was noted that respect to minimum and ceiling amounts, ceiling amounts were deemed necessary given that countries like China and Brazil access significant amounts of GEF funds and in this context, it is advantageous to establish country limits. To establish the minimum country allocation of US\$1 million provides opportunity to some countries who have never received funds from GEF.

Q: Countries requested clarification on the concept of resource pooling among countries for the development of a regional project. Specifically, they inquired as to whether pooling essentially mean diverting funds from national programmes to a regional project? i.e., will there be additional funds available for regional programmes? Countries noted that for example, in the area of climate change, countries often stand to benefit possibly more on regional projects than national projects and requested GEF's re-consideration of continued support to programmes such as Green World Sahara which is considered well-structured and already off the ground.

A: Countries will need to decide whether they wish to participate in a regional project. Funds for the development of regional projects may come out of the "5% global pool". The GEF Secretariat acknowledged that they expect that there will be significantly higher demand for global and regional projects than what is available. However, it was emphasized that GEF resources are intended to have a catalyst mission and cannot be expected to fully finance country expectations."

**Response to supporting initiatives as Green World Sahara?**

Q: Countries requested clarification on the information sources used to determine the allocation rankings.

A: The GEF Secretariat clarified that the data selection, analysis and approach used to determine the GEF Benefits Index, GEF Performance Index and country/group allocations was fully elaborated in last fall's Council documents and discussed by Council. These documents are available on the GEF website at [www.thegef.org/raf.html](http://www.thegef.org/raf.html).

The GEF Secretariat explained that GEF Performance Index contains three components. The portfolio component is based on the relative success of GEF projects under implementation in each country. Since not all eligible countries

have GEF projects, this data has been supplemented by the information on the relative success of environment-related projects at the World Bank. The environment sector indicator which accounts for 70% of the GPI is based on an assessment of current policies and institutions related to the environment in each country. They explained that this assessment is done by the World Bank as part of its annual assessment of in each of its member countries which is used by the World Bank to allocate its resources for IDA (International Development Association) countries. Similarly, the Broad Framework Indicator, which is an assessment of governance in each country, is based on the World Bank Assessment.

The GEF Benefits Index for climate change is developed from data available from the World Resources Institute. The GEF Benefits Index for Biodiversity is developed from data available from IUCN, Conservation International, WWF, Birdlife International and Fishbase.

- Q: Several comments/questions were raised regarding the issue of performance of countries: How is performance assessed under RAF; how much is tied to a country's governance, project and programme performance; how is the performance of Implementing Agencies reflected in the RAF.
- A: The Secretariat responded that the GEF Performance Index, which assesses the performance of each country, consists of three parts: a portfolio component, the environment sector, and broad framework. Assessment of policies and institutions in the environment sector account for the largest share (70%) of each country's GPI. It was explained that the broad framework indicator which reflects governance related issues accounts for (20%) of GPI. The portfolio component accounts for 10% of the index and largely reflects the progress in implementing projects. They are not as significant a factor now. The performance of IAs is not explicitly included in the GPI. The results of an evaluation of GEF Implementing and Executing Agency performance will be available next June. UNDP also expressed its commitment to strengthen the weaker UNDP Country Offices in the sub-region.
- Q: Various concerns were expressed regarding the apparent disincentives being created by RAF. It was suggested that the RAF provides a country allocation based on performance, but does not include any mechanism or recommendation as to how a country may improve its performance and country allocation in the future.
- A: The GEF Secretariat said that country performance and benefits assessments are done based on a well defined manner. Countries are not permanently locked into their allocation amounts. Instead reallocations done every two years using updated indicators mean country allocations can and will change based on these assessments. Countries can use their allocations for improving their capacity to generate global environmental benefits.

- Q: Countries requested guidance on how to best determine their four year plans, i.e., would this mean that all projects would need to be planned immediately for the next four years?
- A: The RAF is being launched in July 2006. However, countries are not expected to immediately develop a four-year plan. Countries are encouraged to plan and try to get projects into the first few work programs. A process of “revolving planning” will be necessary in this RAF.
- Q: Countries were concerned about the expanded role of Focal Points, noting that support to OFPs has been inadequate to date and that proposals on the table for future support to OFPs –particularly what will be made available under the direct financial component of the Country Support Programme- do not fully recognize the real requirements of OFPs. There was concern that some focal points had not received support during the past four years and asked for assurance that OFPs would receive direct financial support in this cycle.
- A: It was requested that capacity building and support activities to the FPs be addressed in the next session, which would focus on those issues.
- Q: Countries inquired as to how the evaluation of the RAF will be undertaken? Would evaluation teams be sent to countries? How would OFPs be engaged?
- A: Terms of Reference for the evaluation are still to be developed; however, the evaluation will not solely entail a desk review.
- Q: What efforts are being made by GEF to better engage the private sector? For example, the GEF is working with the private sector under the Montreal Protocol,...
- A: [answer???

### **Presentation on “Managing Resources under the GEF’s RAF”**

Moctar Toure

The presenter highlighted the role of operational focal points in establishing national priorities and managing GEF resources under the RAF and the information support that the GEF would provide to focal points to carry out their roles.

Key points:

- The CEO has sent OFPs guidelines on managing resources under the GEF RAF with a specific focus on the role of OFPs.
- The CEO has also sent OFPs a list of concepts currently under various stages of development in each country.
- OFPs are asked to reendorse concepts based on a national consultative process.
- Reendorsement of concepts indicates country priorities and that these concepts may utilize country/group allocations.
- Countries are encouraged to endorse a sufficient number of concepts to ensure that their allocations will be utilized. (Based on historical experience, GEFSEC recommends over-programming levels of 130-150% of 4 year allocations)



- GEFSEC will manage programming levels for the group at 150% of 4 year allocation.
- Countries that expect project approvals in first few work programs of GEF4 are encouraged to send initial list of re-endorsements by a target date of 15 September 2006.
- Countries need to confirm the amount to be allocated from the country/group allocation towards the regional project for regional projects; GEF agency implementing a regional project will work with participating countries to determine burden sharing across countries for these projects.
- The rules on Utilization of allocations
  - “50% rule” -- only 50% of allocations can be committed during the first two years.
  - Unused allocations from the first two years are carried over to the next two years;
  - all remaining unutilized funds at the end of four years will revert to GEF.

#### **Question and Answer / Discussion:**

- Q. Envelopes were distributed to country delegates comprising the document “Detailed Report for XXX Country List of Project Concepts under Development”. Countries sought clarity on these tables; specifically, what projects will be considered under GEF4 versus GEF3 and how GEF4 allocation figures were derived. Countries were concerned because for example, a project submitted in earlier years and still included on the country project list, could now effectively consume a large proportion of limited resources under GEF4 thereby precluding introduction of new projects. Countries also perceived the 50%/50% rule as an additional constraint on planning and implementation as the originally anticipated field of activities may now be compromised; they inquired as to whether the 50% rule will apply to projects submitted to GEF3 that have gone through Technical Review because if so, this could necessitate changes to the project document.
- A: The GEF Secretariat explained that the estimated allocations in the tables are based on GEF3 allocations. When GEF4 figures are available, countries will receive updated tables. All projects that have not been approved in GEF3 that are biodiversity and climate change has to be funded based on the RAF. Once a project has been approved for a project, they will not be taken away because the funds have not been disbursed. The list of projects provided to countries includes some projects that may be funded in GEF3. The expected work programme entry date and the technical review status indicated for a project provides a status about the when the project is expected to be ready for approval. They explained that for a number of countries that have been active in the GEF, concepts currently under development may account for a significant portion of their four year allocations. Since it takes time to develop projects for approval, countries are encouraged to continue planning and developing new projects beyond their allocations to allow for delay and cancellations. Many of the concepts that are initiated towards the end of each replenishment period will come up for approval at the beginning of the next cycle. The 50% rule applies to all GEF4 approvals without regard to

when the project was initiated or the technical review status of projects. They said that this may necessitate changes in the project document in some cases.

- Q: Countries sought clarification on the 15 September deadline for project re-endorsement. Many countries felt that the timeframe is too short to accommodate national consultations to agree on priorities, discussions with other countries for proposed global projects, discussions with IAs/EAs, etc.
- A: The GEF Secretariat representative clarified that the target date of 15 September 2006 is not a “drop-dead” deadline for country endorsement of projects. The country/group indicative allocations are valid for the duration of the 4 year replenishment period and countries that do not meet the target date will not lose their allocations. It was clarified that projects that are confirmed/endorsed by 15 September 2006 will be processed expeditiously; therefore, countries that expect projects to be ready for approval in the first few work programs are encouraged to meet this target date.
- Q: The presentation encourages countries to endorse a total of proposed concepts and projects greater than the indicative allocation by 15 September 2006. Countries inquired who decides what needs to be dropped or approved or if all proposals are approved.
- A: It was suggested that Operational Focal Points will facilitate a national consultative process which include all relevant national stakeholders and the Implementing and Executing Agencies and that Operational Focal Points will transmit the decisions of these consultative processes as project endorsements.
- Q: Countries noted that RAF calls for earmarked projects to be “high quality projects” and sought clarification on this requirement, questioning whether high quality might now be compromised by funding limitations now imposed on new projects.
- A: It was noted that producing a “high quality project” is not a new requirement, that countries have been informed about relevant indicators, and that countries should work closely with IAs in the project development stage.
- Q: Concerns were raised about the level of funding for the Small Grants Programme and also inquired how its operations would change under the RAF?
- A: It was explained by the Secretariat that the Small Grants programme will not change operationally under the RAF. During GEF3, the Council has approved approximately \$170 million for the Small Grants program in a number of tranches. These resources were managed by UNDP in each country in conjunction with national steering committees. The SGP program will continue to operate in a similar manner in GEF4. The introduction of the RAF only changes the modality of funding the SGP. The SGP program in GEF4 is expected to be funded from 4 sources as outlined in the programming document for GEF4 replenishment: (a) 5% of the biodiversity focal area envelope (b) 5% of the climate change focal area (c) share of the resources in the other focal areas and (d) additional voluntary contributions from country and group allocations of

countries. UNDP will develop and propose each tranche of the SGP program and ensure that the SGP programs in countries that make additional voluntary contributions to the SGP includes these contributions in addition to the normal amounts.

## **Day 2: 21 April 2006**

### **Presentation on “Briefing on the Country Support Program (CSP) for Focal Points” Stephen Gold (UNDP/GEF) and Carmen Tavera (UNEP)**

Mr. Gold recounted the history of the development of the CSP, its objectives, components and budget. This project is implemented by UNDP and UNEP and is guided by an inter-agency advisory committee. Component 1 which comprises direct financial support to the FPs, is implemented by UNEP. Components 2 and 3 which address training and knowledge management are implemented by UNDP. Of the US\$12 million budget, the majority of funds are allocated to Component 1 with US\$8,000 allocated annually per country in addition to funding for two travels to constituency meetings for each GEF focal point.

Ms. Tavera elaborated on Component 1 - direct financial support to focal points. Mr. Sizer encouraged countries to submit their workplan for the first year as soon as possible. Following agreement on the workplan, funds will be disbursed to the countries. Funding will also be made available for two constituency meetings. Additionally, Component 1 will support the travel of six new focal points to GEF familiarization seminars, generally held in Washington D.C.; the budget for this inception training is US\$120,000 for the life of the project.

Mr. Gold elaborated on Component 2 - training, knowledge management and information exchange. Activities will include the development of tools and methods including guidance material, manuals, case studies, etc. based on the outcome of NCSAs, surveys of existing tools, other needs assessment analyses at national and constituency levels, and this consultation. Mr. Gold referenced the document “GEF National Coordination – Lessons Learned” as an example of a reference tool of six country experiences and available in 5 languages, and indicated that a Handbook for Focal Points has been developed and will be made available in the coming weeks in multiple languages. Under Component 3, FPs will have the opportunity to participate in at least one regional consultation, exchange or workshop each year beginning in 2007.

Mr. Gold emphasized that the main objective of the working group sessions is for countries/focal points to self-assess capacity to implement the RAF and to convey their needs as FPs with respect to capacity building, information exchange and training, and that this feedback would be the basis for the detailed workplans under Components 2 and 3 of the CSP to be developed. He indicated that the results of the needs assessment from all of the Sub-regional Consultations would be presented during the GEF Assembly in August 2006.

## **Question and Answers / Discussions**

Q: Countries requested clarification of the start of implementation of Components 1-3 of the Country Support Programme.

A: The four year implementation period under Component 1 commences from the date the MOU is signed between the country and UNEP. Activities under Components 2 and 3 will begin in 2007.

Q: Clarification was requested as to how much of the new Country Support Programme in total has been allocated towards direct financial support to the OFPs; whether the annual allocations of US\$8,000 will be sufficient based on real needs, inflation and rising costs; if there are directives as to how they should or should not be spent; whether Political Focal Points could benefit from this allocation. Countries expressed concern that the standard amount of US\$8,000 has been applied to all countries regardless of country specificities and real needs of the OFPs.

A: It was clarified that the majority of the CSP budget is dedicated to Component 1, providing for annual OFPs allocations, travel and familiarization seminars. Broad expenditure categories have been provided to countries in the MOA templates prepared by UNEP but the categories are only indicative to assist in planning; countries may decide on how to best distribute their annual resources. Country allocations may be used to support PFPs. Some funds may be used for Internet connectivity but countries are requested to not use funds on computers, as equipment is assumed to have been provided by the host institution. The IAs recognize that the "one size fits all" model is not ideal but that a simplified model will reduce transaction costs and expedite the process overall, thereby ensuring earliest disbursement of funds from UNEP to national institutions. Countries were reminded that the purpose of PDFs is project development so consultations in this regard should not necessarily come out of the \$8,000. Also, it was clarified that in addition to the US\$8,000 allocated under the CSP, the UNDP/GEF National Dialogue Initiative remains active and continues to support national consultations per year; therefore interested countries may come forth with proposals/requests.

Q: Countries expressed concern that only a handful (six) of focal points may potentially benefit from the allocation of US\$120,000 for GEF Familiarization Seminars, and inquired as to the selection criteria for the seminar attendees. Countries also inquired as to whether existing focal points who have never benefited from such seminars, could also benefit?

A: Given limited resources, priority is placed on new focal points. However, the number (6) is not fixed in stone especially if there is a high rotation of focal points. The number will depend on real demand.

Q: Countries advocated the recruitment of Assistants to support OFPs and also budgetary provision for Assistants to participate at forum such as these consultations to facilitate follow-up support to OFPS.

A: This suggestion was noted.

Funke Oyewole provided an overview of the purpose of the working group sessions, stressing that the CSP is a work in progress and therefore input and feedback are extremely welcome from countries. 1 Anglophone and 3 Francophone groups were established with view to trying to maintain constituency groupings. Additionally, NGO representatives formed a fifth group.

**Working Group 1:** Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome & Principe, Togo

The Group cited various obstacles that have hampered development of OFPs and development of OFP institutional memory, notably:

- little consistency among support to OFPs across countries; support varies significantly from country to country
- no formal training programme in place for OFPs; no training needs assessment undertaken; focal point guide not available; not all countries have received support under NCSA
- difficulties with IAs and EAs; communications-wise; also, some projects initiated by IAs resulting in a reduced sense of ownership
- countries have limited access to GEF website and therefore GEF updates
- archives are principally on paper
- no systematic access or computer equipment
- confusion and blurred responsibility between role of convention focal points and GEF focal points

In response to the RAF, the Group noted that the role of the OFP has increased and the OFP must become more autonomous and empowered –through training and financial means- to better take the lead on organizing national consultations and planning country priorities.

It was recommended that the (role of the) OFP be built into a national institution and that the institution be given the operational and financial means to operate; it was further recommended that perhaps GEF take the lead in this regard. In the meantime, more immediate means to enhance support include translation, duplication and distribution of GEF documents to all concerned parties; provision of annual training to all OFPs in all countries (familiarization to GEF). It was required that familiarization seminars not be limited to six individuals or just the new FPs.

**Working Group 2:** Gambia, Nigeria, Liberia

A. Regarding coordinating and facilitating GEF activities and resources:

The Group recommended the establishment of a GEF National Committee chaired by the OFP with wide membership (UNFCC FP, UNCBD FP, NSCD FP, Office of the Presidency, NGO community, UNDP, Academia, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs). The role of the committee would be to establish criteria on how to prioritize

projects for submission to GEF; review and endorse project proposals; sensitize stakeholders on GEF issues; assist in development of concept papers for submission to GEF; promote synergies in different focal areas. The role of the OFP should be enhanced; specifically, involving the OFP in M&E; the FP must be continuously informed. It would be important to identify the real cost of a National Coordination Committee which should comprise a Chair and Secretary. Additional support staff should be invited to GEF meetings to assist in follow-up and support to the OFP.

B. Regarding building institutional memory within national executing agency/government ministries: The group identified constraints including lack of training; lack of access to the GEF website; lack of database of GEF documents; lack of guidelines for development of GEF project proposals for focal areas. Recommendations to strengthen institutional memory included the establishment of a global system to track status of projects; wide and easy availability of access to GEF awareness materials; access to Internet; document storage means such as e-library methods.

C. Regarding mainstreaming global environmental concerns into national sustainable development strategies: The group indicated that National Committees are generally in place to facilitate project approval process, but that they are not engaged in M&E. The group indicated that draft proposals would ideally be circulated to relevant Ministries but that high document reproduction have generally precluded adequate documentation dissemination.

D. Regarding collating knowledge and training needs of GEF project proponents and other key stakeholders: The group eagerly requested that a comprehensive needs assessment be conducted in all areas, noting conflict resolution training in particular as it would help OFPs to deal with conflicts arising during the work of national committees.

**Working Group 3:** Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal

A. Regarding coordinating and facilitating GEF activities and resources: The group noted that institutions associated are UN agencies, NGOs, CBOs, research institutions, Government. There are eight primary activities (dissemination of information, development of policies on implementation; project development, project implementation; financing, implementation, monitoring, capacity building) and each party has a special role in each of these eight major activities. National Coordination Committees exist but no GEF Coordination Committee per se. The group noted that it would be ideal to actively involve Ministries in key institutions, to sensitize them and to secure the participation of the Ministry of Finance in particular. The group recommended that a GEF inter-organizational group be established in countries where one does not exist. The Group seeks support in order to establish such a committee at country level.

B. Regarding Institutional memory within national executing agency/government ministries: The group indicated that no single team is responsible for coordination of GEF activities. There is a need for assistance to GEF Focal Points for project

development; collection, archiving and dissemination of GEF information and documents; availability and/or upgrading of computer equipment to meet archiving and information database requirements. Training in ICT and archive science is considered essential particularly in relevant Ministries. The group noted that in view of the expanded role and limited resources available to OFPs, additional capacity building opportunities be afforded to OFPs.

**Working Group 4:** Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo

A. Regarding coordinating and facilitating GEF activities and resources: Existing National Coordination Committees include various stakeholders (e.g., UNDP, UNEP, Ministries, National and International NGOs, FAO, WB, UNIDO, ADB, regional Institutions); however, to a lesser extent, national NGOs and the private sector. The group stressed the importance of engaging relevant Ministries. The group recommends that for the establishment of GEF National Coordination Committees, this committee should be formalized through a legal act from the highest authority.

B. Regarding institutional memory within national executing agency/government ministries: The group noted that obstacles to proper development of institutional memory include lack of formal training, inadequate archiving tools (documents in hard copy but not specifically in GEF archives in particular); lack of equipment; lack of knowledge and experience in computer science.

C. Approval of projects – no role.

D. Regarding collating knowledge and training needs of GEF project proponents and other key stakeholders: The group indicated that knowledge requirements have not been identified in all countries but that there is a unanimous expressed need for capacity building; e.g., through the development and dissemination of manual and procedures for FPs; training in website development and electronic archiving systems.

**Working Group 4:** NGOs

The NGO group identified capacity building and project development as two critical areas that necessitate training. The group requested that NGOs be more involved in activities to have the opportunity to develop and/or encourage synergies between NGOs and OFPs since NGOs and OFPs should not be seen as competitors but as complementary partners and it could prove mutually beneficial to develop GEF projects related to the work of national NGOs.

**Presentation: “Evaluation and Results in the GEF”**

Siv Tokle, GEF Evaluation Office

Ms. Tokle elaborated on the mandate and scope of the GEF Evaluation Office, the role of GEF FPs with respect to M&E, project evaluation, and evaluation of the RAF.

Key points:

- GEF M&E office evolved into the GEF Evaluation Office as monitoring is more of a project management activity.
- There is no standard M&E tool among the GEF IAs. Respective IA M&E tools are applied at the project level but are compiled at portfolio level when being evaluated.
- M&E funds are included in project budgets and are generally 1% of full sized project budgets, 10% of MSP budgets.
- The RAF will be reviewed after two years of implementation. Comments raised at this consultation will be taken into account as the TOR are being developed for the evaluation.

Q: Countries inquired as to whether a budget exists for M&E by stakeholders and what the roles of stakeholders and specifically, the OFPs, are in M&E.

A: The budget for stakeholder M&E must be factored into the project design and this decision must be taken at the local level. The role of the OPF in M&E should also be determined during the project design stage.

Q: Countries inquired as to how M&E information is and/or should be circulated among partners in co-funding arrangements

A: M&E and reporting are the primary responsibility of the recipient country.

### **Closing remarks**

Ms. Funke Oyewele closed the consultation by thanking participants for their frank concerns, and encouraged further continuous dialogue among stakeholders, re-iterating that the GEF Secretariat, IAs and EAs are available to support OFPs to the extent possible during this period of transition to the RAF, and to maximize opportunities available to support OFPs under the CSP.