

GEF EXPANDED CONSTITUENCY WORKSHOP Southern America

WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT

27 - 29 APRIL 2011

ESTELAR ALMIRANTE HOTEL | **CARTAGENA COLOMBIA**

20 AÑOS CELEBRAMOS NUESTRO VIGÉSIMO ANIVERSARIO
FONDO PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE MUNDIAL
INVERTIMOS EN NUESTRO PLANETA

Programa de Apoyo
a los Países

Taller de Circunscripción Ampliado
para países de América Latina
27 al 29 de Abril de 2011 – Cartagena, Colombia

Logos of participating organizations: UN, GEF, IFAD, ADB, and others.

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OVERVIEW

Welcoming Remarks	<u>Chair:</u> Carlos Castaño, Colombia OFP <u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat
Government of Colombia	Mr. Carlos Castaño - Deputy Minister of Environment
GEF Secretariat	Mr. William Ehlers – Team Leader External Affairs
Introduction to the Workshop	<u>Chair:</u> Carlos Castaño, Colombia OFP
Objectives, Agenda, Materials and Resources	<u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat GEF Secretariat – William Ehlers

OPENING CEREMONY

The meeting opened with welcome remarks from the GEF Operation Focal Point of Colombia, Deputy Minister of Environment Mr. Carlos Castaño, followed by the opening speech of Mr. William Ehlers, a representative of the GEF Secretariat. The Deputy Minister first welcomed the participants to Colombia and expressed his gratitude to the GEF Secretariat and participating countries for agreeing to meet in Cartagena. He noted the importance of the GEF resources in supporting the countries' initiatives in different focal areas, such as: the protection of biodiversity; the fight against climate change and land degradation; the phasing out of persistent organic pollutants; and ozone depletion. Mr. Castaño mentioned how the diverse geographical and cultural conditions of Colombia created challenges that have been addressed with international cooperation funds, recognizing the importance of GEF's contributions. He also highlighted the relevance of this workshop because the review of the recently approved GEF-5 policies and procedures would allow countries to fine tune national strategies, as well as prepare the countries in understanding the topics that will be discussed during the upcoming GEF Council Meeting of June, such as the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund, an important subject matter for the countries of the region. Mr. Castaño mentioned that Colombia has been working in identifying priorities with the purpose of developing better proposals in different focal areas that should be reviewed and approved by the GEF Council. After explaining that Colombia will host the COP 10th of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Mr. Castaño invited the countries' representatives to attend. Finally, due to previous commitments, Mr. Castaño apologized for not being able to stay the rest of the workshop, but he wished a successful meeting to all the attendants.

Introductory remarks by the GEF Secretariat were presented by Mr. William Ehlers, expressing his appreciation to Colombia for hosting the workshop as well as to the countries' representatives for their attendance. Mr. Ehlers noted that the "Expanded Constituency Meeting" (ECW), one of the activities of the reformed Country Support Program (CSP), is now entirely managed by the GEF Secretariat, a huge departure from from previous meetings

(called sub-regional workshops). The ECWs included the participation of the Convention Focal Points and Civil Society representatives in addition to the GEF Operational and Political Focal Points. He also mentioned the GEF CEO's guidelines relative to the type of projects the GEF is willing to finance during the present period (GEF-5), specifically projects that could provide tangible results, with few consultants and concrete investments. Additionally, Mr. Ehlers mentioned the following issues that future proposals should have in order to increase the likelihood of being included into a work program: (i) clear articulation of the baseline, its finances, and the incremental activities proposed for GEF financing; (ii) clear description on the baseline's construction and allocation of funds; (iii) compliance with the comparative advantage of Agencies in terms of: their institutional mandates and strategies; the amount of co-financing the Agency brings to the project; and the Agency's program and staff capacity in the country; (iv) compliance with the GEF-5 strategic objectives as well as responsiveness to the results-driven agenda; (v) demonstration of country ownership regarding the use of STAR allocations after confirming that the proposed PIF is the best use of such resources (i.e. establish that it was the best use of the allocation, in particular, for those countries with full flexibility to use their STAR allocations). Afterwards he invited the participants to work together toward delivering quality projects and results.

Workshop objectives, Agenda and Materials Resources:

The GEF Secretariat presented an introduction to workshop objectives and agenda. The goals of the meeting were to keep these stakeholders abreast of GEF strategies, policies and procedures and to encourage coordination. The meeting agenda was approved by participants with one modification: it was requested that the session 9 on GEF and Civil Society be presented at the end of the first day, replacing session 5 on Small Grants Program, moved to the end of the second day. GEF Secretariat indicated that all the material related to the different sessions of the meeting will be distributed to the participants at the end of the second day on a flash drive. Participants were also invited to an Informal Anniversary Reception at the end of the day to celebrate 20th Anniversary of the GEF.

SESSION 1	
<p><u>GEF - An Introduction (history, structure)</u></p> <p><i>Q&A session</i></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Silvia Merega, Argentina PFP</p> <p><u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat</p> <p><u>Rapporteur:</u> Chris Briggs, UNDP</p> <p>GEF Secretariat – William Ehlers</p>
<p><u>GEF 5 – System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR)</u></p> <p><i>Q&A session</i></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Ximena George-Nascimento, Chile OFP</p> <p><u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat</p> <p><u>Rapporteur:</u> Carolina Jaramillo, IDB</p> <p>GEF Secretariat – Henry Salazar</p>

1.1 GEF - AN INTRODUCTION (HISTORY, STRUCTURE)

This session was dedicated to the introduction to the GEF and followed by an open discussion. The presentation by the GEF Secretariat summarized GEF, discussing: the history and the role of GEF; its mission and the focal areas; the cross cutting issues and the allocation of their funds; connections with Global Environment Benefits (GEB), the Least Develop Countries Fund (LDCF) and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) funds; and the organizational structure of the GEF and the GEF Agencies. The following are some of the questions raised by the participants:

- The representatives from Bolivia asked about the World Bank's (WB) management of resources, as well as how the work programs are conformed. The GEF Secretariat explained that the WB is both Trustee and IA and all GEFSEC are employees of WB. The Trustee was responsible of managing the resources. These resources are provided by the donors according to their individual payment schedules. The Trustee then informs the GEF Secretariat about the availability of resources so that the work program can be prepared appropriately. Once the Council agrees upon a project, the Trustee puts the money aside for that project.
- The representative from Chile asked about the Strategic Pilot on Adaptation (SPA) and the 100 million promised for projects under the SCCF. The GEF Secretariat explained that the SPA already finished and that this pilot was not going to receive more funds since other funds (such as the Adaptation Fund and the SCCF) have the specific objective of addressing adaptation issues. The GEF Evaluation Office (EO) explained that there is only 35M available for the SCCF; evaluation of the SCCF showed that funding these projects are virtually impossible without a foreseeable schedule of payments.
- The representative from Uruguay inquired about three issues: (i) the intent of UNESCO of being a new GEF Project Agency; (ii) the selection process of the STAP members; and (iii) the availability of SCCF funds. The GEF Secretariat responded as follows: (i) UNESCO as well as other organizations have expressed interest in becoming GEF Project Agencies, which will depend on the GEF Council's decision after review of the document addressing article 28 of the GEF Instrument for broadening the GEF partnership; (ii) according to UNEP, STAP is hosted by UNEP and STAP members are people from the Academy that review PIF twice per year - this is to guarantee the technical soundness of the proposal; the selection process is transparent and participatory, but very slow; (iii) SCCF replenishment is done on a voluntary basis from donors, so the predictability of those resources is very low.
- The representative from Colombia asked about (i) which organizations have showed interest in becoming GEF Project Agencies, besides UNESCO; and (ii) how does GEF manage the dollar value of money it is due to receive, specifically what happens for projects that suffer due to the devaluation of dollar in local currencies, resulting in receiving less money than expected. With regards to the first question, the GEF Secretariat responded that so far, no additional request of interest has been received, considering that the criteria have not been approved yet by the GEF Council. Although the process has not officially started, the pilot phase would have ten organizations (five national and five international). On the second question it was explained that the Trustee manages the exchange rate and it normally does not provide any support to countries with exchange rate problems.
- The representative from Brazil asked about the review process for multi-focal projects. UNEP responded that the project is reviewed by as many focal area specialists as needed, depending on the focal areas involved in the proposal.

- The representative from Bolivia asked whether the STAP was going to hire more staff to cope with complex projects, citing the Gran Chaco project's review process, which took over one year, as an example. The response was that STAP does not look at all projects and so increase in work load, and therefore staff, is not expected.

1.2 GEF 5 – SYSTEM FOR TRANSPARENT ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES (STAR)

The presentation by the GEF secretariat gave a comprehensive overview of the new allocation system under GEF5, including a number of significant changes compared to the RAF under GEF 4. Instead of focusing on how the calculations were done, the focus of this session would be the operational procedures. The following are some of the questions and concerns expressed by the participants:

- The representative from Paraguay asked about: (i) whether or not the set-aside funds could be used for regional projects; (ii) the floor and cap for POPs projects regarding the STAR; and (iii) the sources of the SGP's funds. The GEF Secretariat responded that: (i) it is expected for countries to allocate part of their STAR allocations as set-aside funds would be used only to cover those activities/components regional in nature, so no country would be willing to finance from its respective allocation; (ii) neither STAR allocation nor a floor / cap for POPs projects currently exist; (iii) depending on the number of years that a country has had the SGP as well as on the amount of funds received, a country could be eligible to receive resources from the core funds, although countries could decide to allocate funds to their SGP programs from their respective STAR allocations.
- The representative from Uruguay asked: (i) whether or not fees for the Agencies were included within the STAR allocations; (ii) if there was a possibility to reduce the Agencies' fees; and (iii) how the marine resources are considered in the calculation of the STAR allocation for biodiversity. The GEF Secretariat responded that: (i) fees paid to the Agencies are included in the STAR allocations; (ii) decreasing the Agencies' fees are possible, noting that increasing fees is highly discouraged although it is up to the Agencies to accept proposals with a lower fee; (iii) GEF-5 will account for 25% of the global benefit index in biodiversity, increased from 20% for the GEF-4 after recognizing the importance of marine resources.
- The representative from Ecuador requested clarifications on (i) the co-financing policy and (ii) the Nagoya Protocol. The GEF Secretariat responded that (i) regarding co-financing, the ratio 1:4 has been the historical trend, but the analysis is made case by case; and (ii) operational procedures for the Nagoya Protocol will be reviewed and eventually approved during the forthcoming GEF Council meeting, so it would be more pertinent to discuss the details once the final decision has been reached.
- The representative of the Inter-American Development Bank requested information about the availability of funds for the forthcoming work program as well as for the others. The GEF Secretariat responded that, as explained during the previous session, the Trustee informs the GEF Secretariat about the availability of resources when the time to conform the work program is close, allowing the GEF Secretariat to prepare it accordingly.
- The representative of the CSOs from Colombia expressed his concern regarding the low participation of the civil society in the formulation and participation of GEF projects, since the system of allocation of

resources started in the previous replenishment period. The GEF Secretariat responded that, for civil society organizations, the GEF has supported the Small Grants Programme (SGP). Additionally, since the system of allocating resources was put in place, it is up to the governments to decide which national organization would execute the projects. In fact, some countries have decided to allow CSOs to implement FSP and MSP. Therefore, that is an issue of each country's competence.

- The representative of FAO clarified that 9% of the 10% of the fee corresponds to the project management cycle while the rest (1%) is dedicated to cover the expenses for corporate activities. It was also said that the Agencies are subsidizing the GEF in order to make it work.

Final remarks:

- Under the system of allocation of resources, countries have gained more responsibility in distributing their resources in a cost efficient manner, according to their individual allocations. Availability of funds is subject to the donors' contributions, considering that each country has its own payment schedule.
- Some countries expressed discomfort in paying for the agencies' fees from their STAR allocations. Raising this issue during the next Council meeting was suggested, considering that this decision (fees to be paid from the countries' STAR allocations) was taken by the GEF Council. Agencies reacted to this proposal by saying that it will be difficult to lower the fee because it has been shown through several reports that Agencies are subsidizing GEF operations within the countries.
- Countries requested more in-depth information on the co-financing policy.

SESSION 2

GEF Project Cycle and Review Process and the GEF Programmatic Approach

Q&A session

Discussion

Chair: Roberto Elissalde, Uruguay OFP

Vice Chair: GEF Secretariat

Rapporteur: Robert Erath, UNEP

GEF Secretariat – Mark Zimsky

2.1 GEF PROJECT CYCLE AND THE PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

A presentation was made by the GEF Secretariat on the process of preparing and submitting projects to the GEF as well as on the Programmatic Approach (PA). The question and answer session that followed focused on more detailed information on direct access and the timeline for the Project Cycle (PC) process. Many countries, while acknowledging that progress has been made to reduce the time for project preparation, said that the process remains very complex and pointed out that countries have different internal capacities. Some of the questions included:

- The representative from Bolivia asked (i) a clarification on what happens with the fee when a project is cancelled; (ii) whether or not the Agency fee includes support for FSP development; (iii) if there will be MSPs and FSPs in GEF-5 - if so, he wondered if there are limitations to project size; and (iv) in LD 20 countries will participate in large initiative LADA, how does this affect STAR? The GEF Secretariat responded that (i) it has to be discussed between Agency and country and addressed on a case by case basis to calculate how much was used. Then, the unused funds have to be returned to the Trustee; (ii) yes it does; (iii) MSPs are for projects less than 1million dollars while FSPs are for projects more than 1 million dollars. The size of the project is not predefined and it has to be decided according to the nature and magnitude of the situation to be addressed. UNDP also clarified that in the case of Bolivia, the SGP was capped at 4.5M as a FSP; (iv) further clarification from FAO: LADA is not a PA but a regional project with a single PIF.
- The representative from Colombia asked (i) who proposes the initial idea for a Programmatic Approach and how is it presented to the GEF; (ii) whether or not a PA could go with several Agencies and owned by the country; and (iii) if a country could have a PA idea and align this with an existing program, such as national environmental programs. The GEF Secretariat responded that (i) there is not a unique manner to propose a PA: it depends on the country, the topic and the Agency as well as their internal processes; (ii) yes, a PA is country driven and can be done with the participation of several Agencies; and (iii) there is not a program for countries to sign up to, but from the onset, the country is part of its development. Once the PA framework is approved, the individual projects are approved without going through the full PC.
- The representative form Uruguay asked whether or not PA funds are independent from STAR. The GEF Secretariat responded that for proposing a PA, it is necessary for the involved countries to use their STAR resources. PA may be regional in nature, e.g. the Great Green Wall Initiative in Africa, but also could be developed by one country, such as it has been the case of India or China (which by the way, have enough resources to propose a PA). The challenge is to integrate individual PIFs in a program that will have a higher collective impact than the individual PIFs.
- The representative of the IADB clarified that the document GEF/C.39.9 October 2010 from last Council Meeting November 2010 clearly describes rules for use of fees clarifying agency involvement and investment in the PC. The involvement for each project is from cradle to grave, much longer than the formal PC.
- The representative from ECOS said that the web page clarifies beyond a doubt the difference between PA and regional project
- The representative from UNEP said that a PA can be regional or thematic in nature. A regional example was described by the GEF representative; a thematic example can be like Cuba's Country Program Partnership in the LD focal area to implement their UNCCD National Action Plan.

Final remarks:

- The two main conclusions on PC are: (i) one doesn't have to become specialists on PC, but know the basics; and (ii) the GEF has done an effort to simplify the PC, which is not easy to align with the available resources.

- Conclusions on PA: during GEF 3 and 4 a few initiatives on PA have been introduced. The main objective for fostering PA during GEF 5 is to have a window for a higher impact with more sustainability than with individual projects.

SESSION 3

[GEF and the conventions:](#)
[Reports to the conventions](#)
[Technology Transfer](#)
Q&A session
Discussion

Chair: Oscar Rivas, Paraguay PFP
Vice Chair: GEF Secretariat
Rapporteur: Rikke Olivera, FAO
 GEF Secretariat – William Ehlers

3.1 GEF AND THE CONVENTIONS

During this session the GEF Secretariat presented the linkages between the GEF and the conventions on Climate Change, Biodiversity, POPs and Land Degradation, as well as the aspects of technology transfer that were agreed at the COP meeting of Poznan that guided the GEF action on this issue. It also included clarifications related to Enabling Activities and reports to different conventions, their modalities and co-financing. Some of the more specific questions included:

- The representative from Ecuador asked about the mechanism to access funding for enabling activities for Biodiversity (BD), as well as the co-financing requirements. The GEF Secretariat replied that funding for enabling activities in BD can be accessed through: (i) an umbrella project coordinated by UNEP; (ii) a GEF Agency with the comparative advantage; (iii) direct access. It was also clarified that co-financing is required.
- The representative from Uruguay mentioned that the country already presented the third national communication, which they will be happy to share as per specific request. Now they want to proceed with the fourth communication, so they want to know why the amount for national communications coming from the set-aside is \$500,000 dollars. The GEF Secretariat responded that this amount is the result of the negotiations held during the replenishment process. Once the total amount is decided, the donors allocate specific amounts for each focal area (including their own objectives) as well as to other activities. The final result determined that countries could use up to \$500,000 USD for national communications from the set-aside funds in order to have enough funds for all the countries. Any amount beyond this cap should be covered by the country using its STAR allocation in climate Change (CC) with the correspondent justification.
- The representative from Brazil asked if the funds available for enabling activities for BD covered the review of the national BD strategy or the national report to the CBD. The GEF Secretariat responded that the funds will cover all the reporting obligations under the CBD.

3.2 TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

- The representative from Colombia asked how patents are managed within technology transfer, considering that patents are not always accessible. The GEF Secretariat responded that after several studies, it has been determined that patents are not the most critical barrier to overcome. There are several accessible technologies that do not require payment or patents, so the main barrier is the lack of specific knowledge about the technology options. Therefore, the idea is to look for these opportunities. Additionally, south – south cooperation is also able to receive financial support under this area.
- The civil society representative from Peru said that traditional knowledge in communitarian crops is a clear example of south – south cooperation that deserved to be highlighted.
- The representative from Uruguay expressed the country’s willingness to create a regional center for technology transfer in order to enhance the countries’ knowledge on climate change and related issues (mitigation and adaptation).

SESSION 4

Country Support Programme

Q&A session

Discussion

Chair: Pablo Drouet , representing the OFP for Ecuador

Vice Chair: GEF Secretariat

Rapporteur: Carolina Jaramillo, IADB
GEF Secretariat – Henry Salazar

4.1 COUNTRY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

GEF Secretariat presented the content of the renewed Country Support Programme (CSP), which in GEF-5 is being managed by the GEF Secretariat. CSP’s main objective is to provide enhanced support to recipient countries, particularly country focal points, and build their capacity to operate with the GEF, particularly with regard to resource programming. CSP includes the National Portfolio Formulation Exercise, Direct Support to Operational Focal Points, Multi-stakeholder Dialogue, Expanded Constituency Workshops, Constituency Meetings, Knowledge management and Familiarization Seminars. Some of the questions included:

- The representative from Chile expressed her concern on the fact that constituency meetings will be reduced to one under the new CSP. The GEF Secretariat responded that this was a decision taken by the GEF Council. However, it was considered that there would be other opportunities to carry out constituency meetings meeting for a second time in a year. An example of this is to have it back-to-back with the Expanded Constituency Workshops, such as the current one. Finally, there will be an evaluation about the convenience / inconvenience of the new modality, but it is still too premature to take such evaluation.

- The civil society representative from Colombia asked whether or not it will be possible to use the NPFE to have a participatory consultation on the national portfolio. He wanted to know this because according to him, in Colombia, the CSOs have not been consulted in prioritizing the potential initiatives. The GEF Secretariat responded positively, but also clarified that it is up to the government who they want to invite. Having said that, it is expected that the result of the NPFE will include a participatory process.
- The representative from Colombia reacted by saying that thanks to the GEF support, it is possible to execute the environmental policy within the country, so that has been the rationale behind the prioritization process for allocating resources to the existent initiatives.
- The representative from Uruguay mentioned that after the GEF Assembly in his country in May 2010, the political pressure to formulate GEF initiatives increased. As a result, the programming process also sped up. Therefore, their NPFE was done without GEF support. However, they perceived the processes to access GEF funds excessively complex, creating difficulties to countries to use the available funds. The representative from Paraguay seconded this motion. The GEF Secretariat responded that we have to follow World Bank's procedures because we are embedded within them. However, the GEF was expected to expedite the processes in the near future.
- The representative from Ecuador mentioned that considering the previous experience during GEF-4, they strongly recommended carrying out the programming exercise. By the same token, they requested the GEF Secretariat to present other successful histories in other countries. The GEF Secretariat explained that among all the requirements, the fulfillment of the fiduciary standards is the most difficult to pass, so that among 41 proposals, only two have been approved. This has been a learning process for all. Since the moment when the application is received until it is approved, it could be between 6 and 7 weeks until the disbursement is done, but everything depends on the limitations associated with the circumstances of each country.
- The representative from FAO wondered how to react to a request done by a country on the NPFE execution. Could it be that the Agency and / or the GEF Secretariat would support the country in executing the NPFE? It was answered that some countries had requested the GEF Secretariat support so the GEF Secretariat had been as proactive as possible. The GEF Secretariat has assisted with the elaboration of documents in two countries, but its participation is restricted by funding limitations.
- The representative from Chile presented the experience of the constituency in this regard. Specifically she mentioned that Agencies are invited to the beginning of the prioritization process in order to get a better understanding on their areas of work. Then, there is a review and elaboration of the document that is presented to the country's authorities. Finally, the GEF Secretariat is invited to comment on the document. The overall experience can be marked as positive.

Final remarks

- The programming exercises are not only useful, but also can be replicated in other countries. These exercises are voluntarily in nature, are not a condition to receive GEF funds, and they have the full support of the GEF Secretariat.

- The process of accessing funds to carry out the NPFE is perceived by the countries as extremely complex and difficult. However, it is also evident that the main barriers had been overcome, so the process could be as short as of 6 – 7 weeks.
- Those countries that have decided to invite Agencies and GEF Secretariat to participate are happy with their involvement while carrying out the NPFE. Countries are encouraged to invite civil society to participate in the process, as well.

SESSION 5	
<p><u>GEF Small Grants Programme</u> <i>Q&A session</i> <i>Discussion</i></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Antonio González, Peru OFP <u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat <u>Rapporteur:</u> Jesús Quintana, IFAD</p> <p>GEF Secretariat – William Ehlers</p> <p>National SGP Coordinator – Emilia Bustamante (Peru)</p>
<p><u>GEF and Civil Society</u> <i>Q&A session</i> <i>Discussion</i></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Antonio González, Peru OFP <u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat <u>Rapporteur:</u> Jesús Quintana, IFAD</p> <p>GEF Secretariat – William Ehlers</p>

5.1 SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

The first presentation was by the GEF Secretariat on the scope, funding and results of the Small Grants Program in the region. This was followed by the presentation of the national SGP coordinator from Peru, Emilia Bustamante, who presented the evolution of SGP in her country. Some of the questions included:

- The representative from Paraguay asked if it would be possible to allocate additional funds to their SGP program, different from those coming from the core fund. The GEF Secretariat responded that any country could use their STAR allocations to complement the resources coming from the core fund, but it will be important to consider both, the cap limitations posed per the total STAR allocation and the absorptive capacity of the country to properly execute the allocated funds. It was also clarified that if a country decides to use the STAR allocation of a specific focal area, the projects that can be financed with those resources are limited to that focal area.
- The representative from Argentina asked (i) what type of costs can be covered to execute national strategy; and (ii) as co-financing is sometimes difficult, would it be possible to avoid this requirement?

The GEF Secretariat responded that (i) funds will cover all eligible costs, including management costs; and (ii) co-financing should be at least 1:1, and resources could come from different sources, including international donors and government.

- The representative from Chile mentioned that her country was up graded, or in “Category III” (more than 15 years and above US\$ 6 m), so activities should be financed from STAR only. Chile has therefore decided to organize its own national program, and is now preparing the PIF (UNDP will not manage it). It is an innovative approach, learning from the past, and will be focused on national ownership.
- The representative from Uruguay said that SGP is very important for them, and clarified that they will complement from STAR resources (the program small as to have a proper management unit). They would like to follow Chile’s example creating an autonomous program, not linked to GEF agencies. The GEF Secretariat commented that the Government must always provide a national coordinator, and stressed that when appropriate, countries must contact the GEF Secretariat in case of conflicts or disagreements.
- It was also mentioned that UNDP continues to be the GEF Agency, except in Argentina and Chile, where they have chosen to have the SGP be implemented by a national entity. This also means that UNDP supervises activities under SGP in those countries whose program is run by them.

5.2. GEF AND CIVIL SOCIETY

GEF Secretariat’s presentation on “GEF’s Partnership with Civil Society Organizations” outlined GEF policies on involvement with civil society organizations and highlighted the role the civil society organizations can play in the GEF projects for better performance and impact at the ground level. During the questions and answers session, there were queries primarily regarding how to improve the participation of CSOs in GEF projects, and how reinforce their role as implementing partners. Some of the questions included:

- The CSO representative from Colombia emphasized the importance of encouraging the participation of civil society in the NPFE process, in order to make the process more transparent and democratic. This request is should be done considering that CSOs have expertise and can collaborate with capacity building exercises. He also expressed that it will be important to start SGP in Colombia, considering that it was approved while ago.
- The CSO representative from Uruguay recognized the importance of GEF in LAC. Therefore, he asked if it has been considered to establish set aside in GEF for CSOs. The GEF Secretariat responded that SGP is made specifically for CSOs and a big portion of its resources come directly from the set-aside funds.
- The CSO representative from Peru asked about the processes for strengthening CSOs’ participation within the GEF. The GEF Secretariat responded that the day before starting the GEF Council Meetings, there is a full day dedicated to CSOs issues. This consultation happens with the participation of several CSOs representatives financed by the GEF, including . GEF NGO Network regional representatives, as well as other national representatives. CSOs also participate in GEF meetings such as multistakeholder dialogues and / or other workshops, such as this ECW.

SESSION 6

<p>GEF Focal Area and Cross Cutting Strategies</p> <p><u>Biodiversity</u> – Mark Zimsky, GEF Secretariat</p> <p><u>Land Degradation</u> – Rikke Olivera, FAO</p> <p><u>International Waters</u> – Chris Briggs, UNDP</p> <p><u>Sustainable Forest Management - REDD-Plus</u>- Robert Erath, UNEP</p> <p><u>Climate Change</u> – Carolina Jaramillo, IADB</p> <p><u>Chemicals</u> – Rikke Olivera, FAO</p> <p><u>Capacity Building</u> – William Ehlers</p> <p>Q&A</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Graciela Conesa, Argentina OFP</p> <p><u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat</p> <p><u>Rapporteur:</u> Jo Albert, World Bank</p> <p>GEF Secretariat</p> <p>GEF Agencies</p>
<p><u>GEF Agencies Panel</u></p> <p>Topic: Sustainable Forest Management</p> <p>Q&A</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Gilda Torres, Paraguay OFP</p> <p><u>Vice Chair:</u> GEF Secretariat</p> <p><u>Rapporteur:</u> Claudio Volonte, GEF Evaluation Office</p> <p>GEF Secretariat – Mark Zimsky</p> <p>GEF Agencies</p>

6.1 GEF FOCAL AREAS AND CROSS CUTTING STRATEGIES

This session included 2 presentations by the GEF Secretariat and 5 presentations by the Agencies. FAO made the presentation on Land Degradation and Chemicals, UNDP on International Waters, UNEP talked about SFM/REDD+, and IADB made a presentation on Climate change mitigation. Additionally, the GEF Secretariat presented Biodiversity, as well as the GEF strategic approach to Capacity Building.

During questions and answers, more clarity was requested on the type of projects that are eligible under different focal areas, and specifically on Nagoya Protocol. Some of the specific questions included:

- The representative from Argentina asked if productive landscapes outside protected areas are able to receive financial support from the GEF. The GEF Secretariat responded that there is one objective in the BD focal area to mainstreaming biodiversity considerations in productive landscapes, so the answer is yes.
- The representative from Chile requested additional clarifications on the incentive mechanism and operative procedures for SFM/REDD+, including the payment of the fee. UNEP responded that besides the need of being aligned with the objectives of SFM, the country should be willing to utilize funds of at least two out of the three focal areas with individual allocations under the STAR. If the project is selected and approved, it will receive 1 dollar from SFM's special account for each 3 dollars allocated by the country. The PIF for a SFM/REDD+ project is pretty similar to any other PIF, the main difference is that using the

drop-down menu, the components, activities and resources for the involved focal areas have to be determined as appropriate. The Agency fee will be paid proportionally according to the focal areas involved in the project.

- The representative from Colombia asked if it would be possible for his country to request financial support for an ozone depletion substances project. The GEF Secretariat answered that this focal area provided financial support to economies in transition (eastern European countries) exclusively.
- The representative from Paraguay requested additional clarifications on the capacity development projects, the financial sources and how these are related to the NCSAs. The GEF Secretariat answered by saying that countries could present projects on capacity development based on the findings of their own NCSAs. Additionally, countries could use their STAR allocations. If this happens, it is expected that the project components will reflect the additional financing by showing more activities related to the focal area where the funds are coming from.
- The representative from Peru asked if HCFC technologies are able to receive financial support from the GEF. The IADB representative responded that provided the above mentioned technologies were going to mitigate / abate some Green House Gases (GHG), the answer would be yes.
- The representative from Uruguay mentioned that the country has successful experiences in International Waters (IW) projects. However, he also expressed concerns regarding the fact that apparently the IW focal area will not receive financial resources in the forthcoming work program. The GEF Secretariat explained that as IW doesn't have a binding convention, there is no legal (urgent) obligation for the GEF to finance projects immediately, as it is the case for projects under the other focal areas (BD, CC, LD and POPs). Under the current financial situation of high uncertainty, it was decided momentarily to focus the financial support for projects in those focal areas with a binding convention, considering that the GEF has an immediate legal obligation to finance them. It is expected that soon the financial flows will improve, so IW projects will be financed again on regular basis.
- Several countries' representatives expressed their concern about the limited resources they received for formulating projects in different focal areas other than IW or POPs. The GEF Secretariat recognized that although it is true that resources are scarce compared to the magnitude of problems they are intended to solve, countries need to transmit this concern in the right place (during the replenishment negotiations) to the right audience (the donors).

6.2. GEF AGENCIES PANEL

The second part of this session 6 included a Panel discussion among Agencies on Sustainable Forest Management in this sub-region. The topic for the panel discussion was chosen based on the survey carried out by the GEF Secretariat before the workshop, and the objective of the session was to provide the Agencies an opportunity to talk about their comparative advantages with this important topic. The GEF Secretariat presenter indicated that there were three points that would be discussed in this agenda item: (i) how to access these resources?; (ii) how to design and prepare this type of projects; and (iii) to receive feedback from participants, in particularly regarding

the multi benefits characteristic of this GEF program and how these benefits can be emphasized. Each of the GEF Agencies present in the meeting presented their activities regarding forestry. Only two specific comments were raised:

- The representative from Paraguay mentioned that there was a discussion within Mercosur regarding land degradation and the experience within the region. Mercosur expressed full political support to this initiative. There were four points of interest: (i) the UN-REDD process was described (Paraguay is a member of the council of UN REDD); (ii) a new concept, *transboundary forestry issues*, should be introduced; (iii) Environmental Payment Services should not only have to deal with carbon, nor only conservation, but as a way for sustaining national institutions and for communities living with forests; and (iv) opportunities and failure of carbon market (possible negative impacts) require further research. The GEF strategy should be complementary to the UN- REDD plus strategies.
- The representative from Colombia said that there is a need to identify gaps, which may be related to limited knowledge. He stressed that donors are putting too much emphasis on measuring, reporting and verification but not enough on improving the management and support of forestry. Similarly, he expressed that there has been support on capacity development so countries are now ready for implementation, but one area where capacity is still low is on carbon measuring. Finally, he said that the REDD discussion and implementation could be a bridge between the mitigation and adaptation of climate change.

SESSION 7

Pre-PIF Process and How to Prepare A PIF

Chair: Eduardo Bouzout, Uruguay PFP

Vice Chair: GEF Secretariat

Rapporteur: GEF Agency/Convention Focal Point

GEF Secretariat – Mark Zimsky, Henry Salazar

GEF Agencies: Rikke Olivera, FAO

7.1 PRE-PIF PROCESS

The GEF Secretariat gave a presentation of the newly launched pre-PIF tracking system available in PMIS. The GEF Secretariat pointed out that pre-PIF process was created at the request of Council as a response to concerns and complaints from some of the countries that the Agencies were not very responsive to countries during the Project Concept preparation stage. The discussion that followed clarified the voluntary nature of the tracking system and sought more details of the process and its sequencing. Participants were encouraged to look at the demonstration video available on the GEF website. No questions were asked on this session.

7.2. HOW TO PREPARE A PIF

Ms. Rikke Olivera from FAO presented a hands-on session on how to prepare a PIF. In addition, her presentation included the GEF-5 strategies for focal areas and in particular the Results Based Framework, focusing on identifying the correct idea for GEF financing and then identifying the necessary information to fill in the PIF.

This was followed by a presentation by the GEF Secretariat Program Manager, Mark Zimsky. He commented on how the GEF Secretariat reviews the PIF and what type of feedback the GEF Secretariat provides to agencies at this point of project processing. The representative from FAO introduced each of the sections in the PIF and then the GEF Secretariat commented on how the GEF Secretariat reviews it. Both presenters mentioned that the PIF should have enough information to satisfy the requirements of the GEF Secretariat and the Council. It was clarified that Agencies and the Secretariat were available to help with the preparation of the PIF as appropriate. Some of the questions presented during the discussion were:

- The representative from Paraguay asked if (i) the pre-PIF information reached both, countries and Agencies; and (ii) if the CSO participation is registered somewhere in the PIF format. The GEF Secretariat responded (i) yes and (ii) section B.5 (*Identify key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable*) requests information about public consultation and participation, including CSOs.
- The representative from Peru asked about the length of the PIF document. The GEF Secretariat responded that although brevity is important, more relevant was the clarity and technical soundness of the proposal. Having said that, long PIFs are not encouraged. It was also emphasized that due to the results-oriented approach that is now used to design GEF projects, less text and more concrete indicators that lead to results are required in the PIFs documents.
- The representative from Brazil asked about the time and procedure to analyze a PIF for Sustainable Forest Management. The GEF Secretariat responded that 10 business days is the time that program managers have to provide comments once the PIF is officially submitted by the GEF Agency (providing that the documentation is complete). Additionally, it was clarified that a PIF on SFM is reviewed by as many thematic specialists as multiple focal areas are involved.
- The representative from Colombia asked (i) how to report in the PIF format the contribution that the Agency expressed is willing to do, and what happens when the commitment is not materialized; and (ii) if a loan can be considered as co-financing. The GEF Secretariat responded that (i) there is a table that has to be filled out with the financial information, including amounts and sources. When the amounts are not fully materialized, it is expected that the Agency—in close collaboration with the country— will look for alternative financial sources. The final decision on whether or not the project can be endorsed is analyzed case by case; and (ii) the answer is yes.

SESSION 8

Adaptation Fund

Q&A session

Discussion

Chair: Ricardo Irarrazabal, Chile PFP

Vice Chair: GEF Secretariat

Rapporteur: UNDP

Adaptation Fund Secretariat – Marcia Levaggi

8.1 ADAPTATION FUND (AF)

With regards to the Adaptation Fund (AF), the presentation covered governance of the fund, accreditation process and criteria, and how national governmental institutions could be involved in the accreditation process. Some of the questions covered during the discussion were:

- The representative from Paraguay asked about who selects the national Designated Authority. The AF responded that this is a decision taken by the country and it does not necessarily have to rest in the Ministry of Environment.
- The representative from Uruguay asked whether it would be possible to have better guidance on how to go through the accreditation process. The AF responded that a toolkit is being developed with the purpose of guiding the countries in a friendly manner on this issue.
- The representative from Argentina asked about the timeframe for using the individual allocation of 10 million and how many projects will be considered for June. The AF responded that the cap of 10 million is provisional but necessary for putting order the distribution of funds that are still very limited. The amount of projects to be considered for June would be approximately 15.
- The representative from Chile asked how many times the accreditation panel meets, as well as what type of information is available regarding the approved projects. The AF responded that the Panel meets approximately every 3-4 months and the next meeting will be in June. The information on approved projects is publicly available at the web (http://www.adaptation-fund.org/funded_projects).
- The representative from Paraguay asked how to access funding to design a project. The AF responded that the preparation grant is provided exclusively to national institutions (not to multilateral institutions). The average amount is \$30,000 dollars and the process of requesting these funds has two steps.
- The representative from Colombia commented the experience and lessons learnt from the execution of one of the first adaptation projects financed by the GEF (not by the AF). Firstly, it was stressed that the concept of adaptation within the project has to be very clear, and the activities should be clearly different from development activities. It should include describing in detail the climatic scenario, as well as the vulnerability to climate variations. It would be useful to know the country's information availability, as well as how the community participation could play a role in the project's execution. Finally it was highlighted the relevance of producing knowledge throughout the project's life cycle.

SESSION 9

Monitoring and Evaluation Policy

Q&A session

Discussion

Chair: Sandra Bessudo - Advisor to the President of Colombia on Environment

Vice Chair: GEF Secretariat

Rapporteur: Helen Negret –UNDP

GEF Evaluation Office - Claudio Volonte

9.1 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

GEF Evaluation Office (GEF EO) gave the presentation on the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy at the GEF. The discussion that followed focused on country evaluations and the more specific information on the evaluation criteria. It was also planned to have an interactive session on the process and lessons learnt from the evaluation on the National Capacity Self Assessments with the purpose of asking the opinion of the delegates on a number of issues. However, as the agenda was already behind the schedule, this interactive session was not held. Some of the questions presented during the discussion were:

- The representative from UNDP asked why the OICS evaluation excluded Barbados and noted there had only been enabling activities and regional projects. The GEF Evaluation Office responded that there was a specific reason and would review the file on this and provide further information.
- The representative from Bolivia asked if the Agencies are evaluated and if so, what were the main criteria. Also if the evaluation reports were available on the website. The GEF EO explained that there is a system each year that provides information on quality. In addition, the initial three GEF Agencies (UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank) present a performance report that includes the progress on achievement towards objectives (based on indicators) for each project, as well as issues on implementation. The new GEF Project Agencies (if approved) will also start doing this. There are also evaluations on the GEF Agencies oversight that had resulting in improvement where needed. It was also indicated that the GEF EO is also evaluated through the UN system of peer review.

CLOSING CEREMONY

The Latin America Constituency GEF Expanded Constituency Workshop closing remarks were presented by the Advisor to the President on Environment, Ms. Sandra Bessudo. She felt honored to be the host country, and mentioned that the workshop served the countries to exchange experiences and share lessons on how to make a more cost-effective use of the GEF funds. She recognized that the topics discussed would help Colombia in consolidating ideas and projects that may be coordinated by the new Ministry of Environment that will be created soon, as well as to strengthen the institutional capacity and public policies on environment in the country. Ms. Bessudo acknowledged that the GEF is crucial for the countries to tackle challenges on several aspects related to the environment and its global effects, such as the sustainable use of forest, the adequate management of climate

change (especially with the forthcoming ending of Kyoto), and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, among others. Ms. Bessudo declared that with the STAR, countries have more ownership in managing GEF resources, and praised the GEF for the initiative of the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund, which will benefit the mega-diverse countries in the region. She said that the access to the Adaptation Fund has increased the possibilities to countries to address problems already identified in several documents. Finally she expressed that the Government of Colombia would like to encourage the GEF Secretariat to continue developing these types of meetings, which benefit the countries immensely.