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Agenda Item 10

GEF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH PAPER

Recommended Council Decision

The Council welcomed the document GEF/C.48/07/Rev.01, *GEF Knowledge Management Approach Paper*, and requested an update on progress at the fall 2015 Council Meeting.

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INTRODUCTION

1. **Knowledge¹ is a primary asset of the GEF partnership and supports its strategic objectives.** It is an essential condition for GEF finance to make a lasting impact. The GEF's added value includes supporting the development of programs and initiatives that underpin the generation and sharing of knowledge, and facilitating the synthesis, exchange and uptake of knowledge within and beyond the GEF Partnership. GEF's comparative knowledge advantage relies on its potential for distinctive multi-sectoral breadth, the diversity of the Partnership, and a long and rich history of projects to draw from. The GEF partnership model offers a unique platform from which to gather, organize and share experiences and related expertise on global environmental issues.

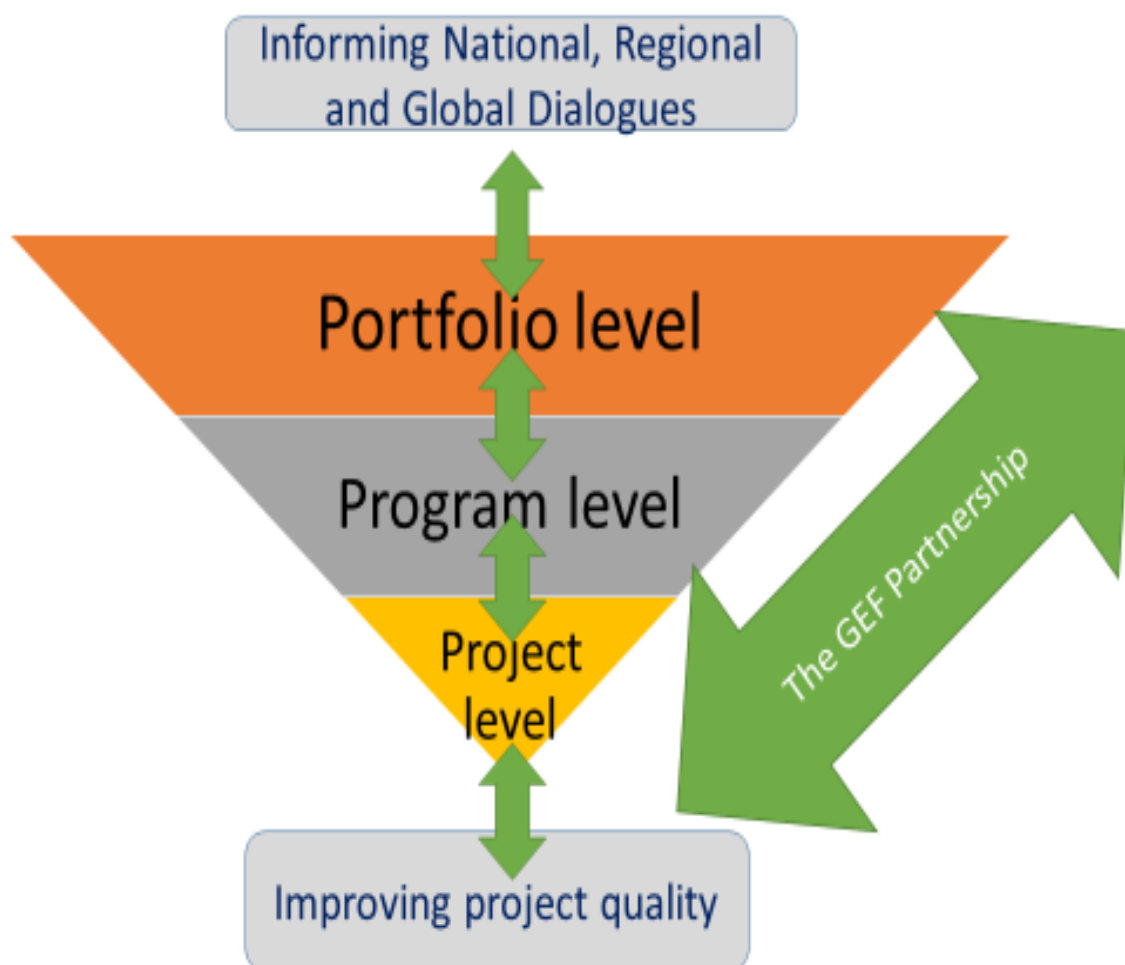
2. **The Policy recommendations in the GEF-6 Replenishment Document** (GEF/A.5/07/Rev.01) "stressed the importance of developing a knowledge management (KM) system that aims to improve the GEF partnership's ability to learn by doing and thereby enhance its impact over time". They also requested the Secretariat to improve the uptake of lessons learned in the GEF through the establishment of a learning platform and to develop a comprehensive work plan for building a KM system.

3. **This Approach Paper sets the foundation for a significant improvement in KM over the GEF-6 period and beyond.** Its purpose is to consult with Council on (i) GEF's potential added value on knowledge management, and (ii) a proposed KM guiding framework for GEF-6 and beyond, including a roadmap for 2015. On the basis of this consultation, the GEF Secretariat will work with the Agencies, STAP, IEO and other key stakeholders – such as the Conventions – on implementation planning and execution. The Secretariat will provide an update on implementation progress at the fall 2015 Council.

4. **Knowledge needs to be evidence-based.** Hence activities in support of the RBM Action Plan and GEF's knowledge work are mutually reinforcing. This report cross-references Council Document GEF/C.48/Inf.07, *Progress Report on the Implementation of the Results-based Management Action Plan*, in a number of sections: on an Annual Results and Monitoring Report (ARMR) for corporate reporting (RBM Action 2), and upgrading the IT platform (RBM Action 3), since the two work-streams are closely interrelated and self-reinforcing: RBM provides a platform for knowledge generation. Hence the two work-streams are being developed simultaneously.

¹ For the purpose of this paper, '**knowledge**' is defined as the understanding of a subject, in this case, the experience and lessons learned related to GEF Projects and programs. **Knowledge Management (KM)** is defined as the systematic processes, or range of practices, used by organizations to identify, capture, store, create, update, represent, and distribute knowledge for use, awareness, and learning across the organization and its ecosystem. "Knowledge Management programs are typically tied to organizational objectives and are intended to achieve specific outcomes which can include improved performance, competitive advantage innovation, transfer of 'lessons learned'...and the general development of collaborative practices." **Knowledge Management Systems (KMS)** are any kind of system that stores and retrieves knowledge, improves collaboration, locates knowledge sources, mines repositories for hidden knowledge, captures and uses knowledge or in some other way enhances the KM process.

5. **The GEF Partnership as a whole will play a key role in delivering better knowledge management.** The majority of GEF project-related knowledge resides with GEF partner countries and the GEF Partner Agencies. GEF project and program executing partners, along with the Conventions, are also key actors in this regard. A principal challenge is to find efficient ways to synthesize and effectively utilize this knowledge across a complex GEF network. The Secretariat plays a key role in catalyzing knowledge management between project and portfolio levels, supporting portfolio-level knowledge exchange, and uptake in key policy setting processes. GEF Agencies play a fundamental role in generating portfolio-level knowledge and facilitating uptake. GEF partner countries are central in this exchange, as the source for learning, and uptake. The Conventions are a key client for GEF knowledge products, either through formal reporting, side events, staff participation or joint analytical work, and an important source of knowledge. The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) and the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) are key assets for the partnership for knowledge generation, sharing, and uptake.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

6. The discussion below highlights the huge potential of the GEF to catalyze and gather greater learning inside and outside of the GEF Partnership, and identifies significant challenges to be overcome to realize this potential.

7. **The global context for GEF’s work presents major knowledge-related opportunities, including:**

- (a) **A demand for actionable knowledge on environmental degradation around the world – particularly on integrated nexus solutions – is increasing.** The accelerating erosion of global environmental services is highlighting the importance of finding workable solutions to complex environmental and development challenges. It is driving the recognition that solutions will be found in the nexus between these issues – rather than in traditional silos. This is generating heightened interest in GEF projects and programs that pursue integrated approaches. Partner countries and beneficiaries seek customized technical and knowledge support, validated by experience, to support investments, move forward on a sustainable development path, grow more inclusively, and reap greater rewards from regional cooperation. Furthermore, the on-going development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has increased interest on what it takes to achieve inclusive, equitable, and durable sustainable development. The GEF Partnership possesses a wealth of knowledge derived from developing and implementing projects that can deliver benefits across several potential SDG ambitions simultaneously.
- (b) **The private sector in particular, is experiencing a surge in interest in sustainability.** Many international and national companies – particularly those engaged in supply chains that rely on ecosystem services – are increasingly embracing sustainability concepts in doing business. The finance sector is also starting to internalize ecosystem-based risks and opportunities. With the help of the Non-Grant Instrument pilot² and the Integrated Approach Pilots (IAP)³, the private sector is increasingly featuring as an important partner in GEF projects. GEF can use – and in some cases already is using – its convening role to bring together private sector entities in wider partnerships with academia, the public sector and civil society to exchange knowledge. Private sector partners also have large repositories of technical knowledge and best management practices in private sector partners that can add value to GEF-supported projects and programs.
- (c) **Rapidly evolving technology platforms are transforming the ability to capture and share knowledge with lower transaction costs.** There is untapped potential for the inclusion and accessing of knowledge in KM systems, and such systems, in turn, enhance the ability to use such knowledge. This is a particular focus of the RBM Action Plan – with exciting opportunities to make better use of

² <https://www.thegef.org/content/non-grant-instruments>

³ <http://www.thegef.org/node/6213>

advances in remote sensing technologies. The spread of the internet and mobile telephony also expands learning and outreach opportunities for greater community engagement, which is essential given the value of knowledge held at the grassroots level.

- (d) **Demand for south-south knowledge exchange is increasing.** With the success of decades of capacity building behind the GEF Partnership, developing countries are in a position to lead the provision, analysis and dissemination of knowledge, as well as its integration into continuing efforts to reach our sustainable development objectives. Box 1 presents one such example.

Box 1: GEF-supported KM Examples – World Bank: South-South Knowledge Exchange among GEF-Financed Projects

Shade grown coffee has been identified as an important land management practice that provides multiple environmental and social benefits including, reducing land degradation, providing alternative sources of income and food security and, enhancing resilience to climate change. In 2014, and as part of a strategy to promote shade grown coffee in Burundi and Rwanda, a south-south knowledge exchange based on Colombia's experience in developing a sustainable coffee landscape was organized by the World Bank to enhance stakeholder ownership and strengthen organizational skills to implement and sustain shade grown coffee programs in selected areas of both countries. The knowledge exchange also presented an opportunity to exchange lessons among GEF-financed projects.

The idea behind the exchange emanated from the Burundi Sustainable Coffee Landscape project (GEF/WB), whose objective is to pilot sustainable land and water management practices in the coffee landscapes in three provinces. For Rwanda, the exchange directly benefited the GEF/WB landscape approach to forest restoration and conservation project, which aims to restore and maintain critical Rwandan landscapes that provide global environmental benefits and contribute to enhancing resilient economic development and livelihoods. The exchange was hosted by the National Coffee Federation of Colombia, and focused on discussing the results and lessons learned with respect to shade coffee production generated from implementation of the GEF/UNDP project "Mainstreaming biodiversity in the coffee sector in Colombia". The exchange also had the opportunity to learn from the GEF/WB "Integrated Silvopastoral Approaches for Ecosystem Management" project, implemented between 2002 and 2007 in this area that included a component of payment for environmental services, monitoring and silvopasture technical assistance.

Participants considered the exchange to be highly successful, thanks to the rich interaction it generated around the issue of sustainable improvement of coffee production, including shade coffee techniques. Some of the most rewarding interactions were those held on farms directly between local producers and coffee-sector research and extension experts from each of the participant countries. These impromptu field schools allowed the participants to engage in detailed dialogue around specific experiences and technical improvements, not just abstract concepts. Following the exchange, awareness was raised, skills were increased, lessons had been shared among peers and action plans were designed and being operationalized. (See the following video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oN7idf8xY_4)

8. The characteristics of the GEF partnership also offer major opportunities, including:

- (a) **Ongoing initiatives to promote knowledge exchange at the portfolio-level.** Examples include IW:LEARN, development of GEF's Focal Area Strategies, GEF Targeted Research and other research-focused projects, Interagency Meetings and Task Forces, the Adaptation Learning Mechanism, GEF learning missions with STAP involvement, and a wide range of publications⁴ and events.

⁴ A new webpage with list of publications is forthcoming.

More recently, the GEF is also building capacity for KM on gender equality and the environment through the Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender, including good practices, lessons learned, and case studies.

- (b) **The inherent depth, diversity and uniqueness of the GEF partnership.** The GEF is a data, information and knowledge sharing platform by nature: it is a unique institutional arrangement composed of recipient countries, development banks, UN agencies, civil society organizations⁵ (CSOs) and the private sector, working on a broad range of environmental issues in more than 140 countries. The spread of interconnected issues linked with multiple Conventions gives the GEF a unique ‘birds eye’ view.

Box 2: GEF-supported KM Examples – IW:LEARN

Over the last fifteen years, GEF IW:LEARN (International Waters) has grown from an informal network of a few projects and agency staff focused on IW projects, to a community, providing a centralized knowledge management system for the GEF IW portfolio, including its many stakeholders from public and private sector organizations, local, national, and international government and non-government organizations. GEF IW:LEARN has produced a number of noteworthy results across multiple service lines that foster this community—from coordinating information management through the GEF IW:LEARN website (www.iwlearn.net) and its applications to a multitude of face-to-face events nationally, regionally and large global events.

More specifically, this project provides a range of KM products and activities. A number of the core service lines are: (1) A knowledge management platform at www.iwlearn.net which is a content management system supporting knowledge sharing within the GEF IW portfolio and beyond, (2) the GEF International Waters Biennial Conferences, the 8th currently being planned (3) project-project “twinning” exchanges promoting peer-to-peer learning and South-South cooperation, (4) targeted training workshops addressing common capacity building needs for subsets of the GEF IW projects and their partners with a focus on transboundary wet ecosystems, (5) training and technical support to develop web presence for GEF IW projects, (6) Regional Dialogue processes fostering transboundary and South-South cooperation among projects and national partners within a geographical region. (7) a range of products capturing experiences and results, through videos as well as through written products, such as the Results Notes and Experience Notes, that elaborate on achievements and successful tested modalities and political processes and finally, (8) Communities of Practice within different ecosystems and or disciplines.

GEF IW:LEARN has become a global network of practitioners, catalyzing a culture of learning and systematic replication of project experiences, leading to improved implementation of GEF projects. GEF IW:LEARN contributes significantly to raising awareness among experts and policy-makers about GEF IW projects and their outcomes, thus indirectly also contributing to new investments and providing a linkage to other global processes, frameworks and initiatives on water management and transboundary water cooperation.

In its upcoming phase, GEF IW:LEARN will formalize the partnership with a range of organizations that have previously been loosely associated with GEF IW:LEARN, leading to a stronger, more sustainable Knowledge Management modality.

⁵ CSO and GEF agency partners of GEF have many years of experience in documenting and sharing experience from programs. CSOs are often at the forefront of outreach and dissemination of environment information and knowledge and stimulating government and stakeholder responses. The GEF CSO network and the SGP have worked to document and disseminate best practices of CSO implemented GEF projects. The GEF SGP has worked with CSOs in more than 120 recipient countries to enhance documentation and sharing of knowledge. Every SGP project must include a plan and budget for Knowledge management.

- (c) **The scale and scope of GEF financing.** The GEF's large portfolio of projects is a repository of knowledge that offers tremendous potential leverage. It includes 13.5 billion of GEF resources that have leveraged \$65 billion in co-financing resources for 3,900 projects in 165 countries over an operational history of now 24 years, serving all the major Conventions. In addition, the Small Grants Program has funded more than 18000 projects.

Box 3: KM at the GEF - Decision Support for Mainstreaming and Scaling up of Sustainable Land Management

This GEF/FAO project builds on a strong legacy of GEF-financing to strengthen the knowledge base for Sustainable Land Management (SLM), and gave rise to the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) methodologies now being applied by many countries for assessment of land degradation. The project has been developed and is being implemented in a partnership between 15 countries, CDE/WOCAT Secretariat, FAO, and the GEF in the development a framework to inform decision-making on SLM actions and investments.

To address land degradation issues at local, national and global levels, this project is focusing upon the generation of decision support tools to promote SLM. The project's global environmental objective is to contribute to combating desertification land degradation and drought (DLDD) worldwide through scaling up sustainable land management best practices based on evidence based and informed decision making. In line with FAO's global mandate to achieve food security for all, the project's development objective is to increase the provision of ecosystem goods and services and enhance food security in countries and regions affected by DLDD through the promotion of SLM and integrated management and efficiency in the use of natural resources. The Project objectives are being delivered through three interlinked components: (i) national and local decision-support on combating DLDD and promoting mainstreaming and upscaling of SLM best practices; (ii) global DLDD and SLM knowledge management and decision-support platform; and (iii) monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of project results.

One of the main expected outcomes of the project is the creation of a knowledge management and decision-support system for effective and reliable production and use of state of the art knowledge of DLDD assessment, SLM and integrated natural resource management best practices suitable for mainstreaming. The project will also promote wider sharing and dissemination of knowledge on SLM with non-participant countries and development partners, including sub-regional, regional and international organizations for whom the project's results can better inform their programs and investments in SLM. The project will also contribute to global issues related to the implementation of the UNCCD 10-year Strategy (2008-2018) by improving the scientific basis, by providing more harmonized methodologies for monitoring and assessment of LD processes and SLM at regional and global scales, by strengthening the GEF LD knowledge base that can benefit other GEF LD projects, and by mainstreaming and upscaling SLM practices beyond the participating countries.

9. **However, there is a common perception across the Partnership that the GEF's potential in facilitating knowledge capture, exchange and uptake across the portfolio is not fully realized.** Key challenges include:

- (a) **Gaps in knowledge capture and dissemination from project and program-level interventions.** KM is sometimes neglected, even within projects that have knowledge generation and innovation as main goals.
- (b) **Fragmentation of knowledge related to GEF projects and programs across countries, agencies and focal areas and not easily accessible to both internal and external stakeholders.** There is limited portfolio-level knowledge syntheses of project and program experiences across all GEF focal areas – or systems to share them when they exist, including lessons learned to inform key global

debates, technical lessons to inform typical project interventions⁶ and sufficient information on results achieved. As such, while the GEF is heavily engaged in many global dialogues, the perception exists that the knowledge shared does not fully reflect the potential collective experience.

- (c) **Missed opportunities for learning from experiences gained outside of the GEF partnership.** Examples include academia, think-tanks, partner countries, civil society outside of the GEF network, other funds and development agencies, the private sector, and global dialogues.

10. **Factors contributing to these challenges include:** insufficient incentives and resources for KM, absence of a system to aggregate and synthesize knowledge and results from within and across the GEF partnership; lack of structured project and institutional-level incentives and embedded processes to drive the use of knowledge generated, as well as leverage of STAP and IEO knowledge and capabilities; gaps in information technology platforms to search and find data upon which to build GEF knowledge (such as geographic referenced data); inefficient management of synergies between the GEF KM and RBM systems, and the existence of silos within the GEF Partnership and between the focal areas. IT platforms are a particular area of weakness, with limited accessibility to existing knowledge products, analytical tools, document storage, knowledge sharing capabilities, and data management capabilities.

PROPOSED KM GUIDING FRAMEWORK AND INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

11. **Purpose:** to facilitate the capture, exchange and uptake of knowledge within and beyond the GEF Partnership.

12. **Objectives:**

- (a) ***Objective 1: To inform global, regional and national policy dialogues on options and approaches to reverse the course of environmental degradation.*** This is a key driver of demand for GEF knowledge, which requires that the GEF KM approach be treated as a living framework responsive to shifts in demand over time as global dialogues evolve. Critical dialogues are taking place in a number of areas where GEF investments have yielded rich experience. Current examples include critical nexus debates on a host of issues including gender and social inclusion for sustainable development, sustainable consumption and production issues⁷, the Convention dialogues, the Sustainable Development Goals

⁶ Including, for example, common cross-cutting portfolio questions such as the GEF's experience on transforming the drivers of environmental degradation, generating multiple environmental and socio-economic benefits including gender equality and equity, integrated approaches, scaling up, integrating resilience and adaptation, its engagement with the private sector, its opportunities to strengthen its focus on mainstreaming gender equality, equity and social inclusion, and engagement with local communities and organizations including women's groups. See also Breard, P. *Knowledge Needs Assessment*. Executive Summary, Priorities. 2012.

⁷ Including, for example, the future of farming and food systems, commodity value chains and deforestation, the transition of energy sectors, sustainable cities, urban planning, increasing water scarcity and implication for water-energy-food-ecosystems security, oceans governance and coastal zone

(SDGs), and the operationalization of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The GEF can do more to gather and share lessons systematically and more effectively in all these areas - with a special emphasis on developing and disseminating knowledge on how to catalyze systemic transformations.

- (b) **Objective 2: To improve the impact of GEF-supported projects and programs.** Given the myriad activities funded by the GEF, adequate systems are needed to ensure that projects are sufficiently informed by the success and failures of other relevant activities. With the right processes and incentives for GEF-supported program and project design that encourage implementation teams to learn from relevant recent and past experiences across the GEF Partnership as well as from communities themselves, the GEF can ensure that the latest thinking is informing GEF-supported projects and programs. There is also greater potential to engage at the local and grassroots level on all aspects of knowledge management. This is also a key feature of the GEF's RBM Action Plan - knowledge on what works (and does not work) is needed to assess the impact over time of GEF grant-making.

13. **Proposed “knowledge products” to support these objectives include:**

- (a) **A new GEF “Lessons in a Nutshell” Series** – to develop short briefs and supporting multimedia materials on key areas of interest on GEF's experience to enable greater sharing of lessons within the GEF network and with interested policymakers, for example on key GEF-related themes. (Supports objectives 1 and 2)
- (b) **An expanded GEF-supported publications and multi-media series - the GEF “Global Environment” Series** – developed in partnership with the GEF Agencies, STAP, and other partners, this will continue and deepen the quality, range and accessibility of portfolio-level knowledge generated from GEF-supported projects and programs, including videos and documentaries. (Supports objective 1)
- (c) **An annual exercise to develop lessons for inclusion in the GEF's Annual Results Monitoring Report (ARMR)** – as set out in accompanying Council Document GEF/C.48/Inf.07, *Progress Report on the Implementation of the Results-based Management Action Plan*, the analysis of lessons learned in this new report format will be an important element of the GEF's KM generation. Each annual report would aim to focus on a limited number of key issues, using information and data from a wider pool of projects and programs than the current AMR Part II, and as such would be a platform for lesson-learning. (Supports objective 2).
- (d) **A new GEF knowledge products repository** that consolidates online available knowledge products developed on the basis of GEF-funded projects and programs. (Supports objectives 1 and 2)**Reinforce current KM efforts and**

management, landscape management, and the integration of resilience more deeply into national planning.

initiatives⁸, such as funding knowledge-intensive projects and programs, engaging with the Conventions, IEO evaluations, IW:Learn, GEF Country Support Program (including an e-learning capability or on-line training modules tailored to specific audiences), Interagency Task Forces, the Adaptation Learning Mechanism, GEF Learning Missions, GEF-led events, and implementing STAP's work program. The creation and role of Communities of Practice coordinated around knowledge generation and application could be key. (Supports objectives 1 and 2)

14. **A key part of the required KM effort is to enhance the supporting infrastructure to achieve these objectives.** The main elements of this effort, and steps towards implementation, will include:

- (a) **Reinforcing efforts to incentivize uptake and generation of knowledge at the program/project level across the GEF Partnership.** This includes efforts to engage through the Country Support Program, to assess KM adequacy at the concept review stage⁹, lesson-learning for future Focal Area Strategy development, implementation of the RBM Action Plan, and efforts to generate knowledge from programmatic approaches. GEF-supported programs (including the proposed Integrated Approach Pilot) typically contain a strong knowledge component addressing the component projects as well as outwards with the international communities of practice. This expands beyond support for KM products (explicit knowledge) towards support for networks, learning and knowledge sharing among practitioners (tacit knowledge) and bringing together agencies, local and national governments, civil society and academic institutions.
- (b) **Improving the capacity of GEF's technology platforms for knowledge sharing, storage, data analysis, information search.** Having a system that lowers the transaction cost of gathering either syntheses or raw information to analyze, including well-designed internet and intranet systems, is the backbone of any KM system. As set out in the accompanying *GEF Business Plan and FY16 Corporate Budget* (Council Document GEF/C.48/05), the GEF Secretariat plans to upgrade its entire IT platform by introducing new off-the-shelf software, customized to reflect the GEF's various business needs. New tools under consideration include (i) an upgraded external website platform, (ii) a client management platform tool, (iii) a new intranet, (iv) a new Project Management Information System (PMIS), (v) a data analytics tool, (vi) eLearning capabilities, and (vii) full use of document management platforms. This will include efforts to

⁸ Not included in this paper are important efforts to enable partners to have a clearer understanding of GEF's policies and procedures. Demand for such information is high. The Country Support Program is focused on meeting this demand and the Secretariat is working on improved GEF Policies and Guidelines section on the GEF website, including e-learning courses. In addition, greater efforts to communicate and disseminate these products in a variety of formats will be made as the GEF improves its communication capabilities.

⁹ A new KM question was added to the PIF review sheet for GEF-6

enable the collection and analysis of remote sensing data in data storage and analysis systems.

Box 4: Support to GEF Eligible Countries for Achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 17 Through a Globally Guided National Biodiversity Strategy and Actions Plan (NBSAP) Update Process

This UNDP/ UNEP project aims to help GEF-eligible countries build national capacity and share expertise and knowledge during the revision and implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

Implemented under the umbrella of the NBSAP Forum¹, the project facilitates learning and knowledge sharing between countries and has achieved some significant knowledge management milestones since its inception in 2014:

- The project provides customized technical support responses to more than 120 countries, based on user surveys and direct outreach, as well as on queries posted by countries on the NBSAP Forum website. The peer review facility received and serviced over a dozen requests for NBSAP peer reviews in 2014, and is in the process of scheduling more than 20 reviews for early 2015, with many more reviews anticipated over the summer.
- The project has developed a series of focused, targeted guides related to NBSAP revision on a range of topics (e.g. targets and indicators, spatial planning, mainstreaming, protected areas, and resilience), and delivered spatially-explicit data packages to the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) member states.
- Practitioners from around the globe shared 115 best practices in the development and implementation of NBSAPs (see: <http://nbsapforum.net/#best-practices-search>), and these have been widely viewed and shared. The project anticipates at least another 100 best practices documented and made available before the end of 2015.
- Fifteen (15) partners have formally expressed their support and willingness to share learning and knowledge from their multiple partners and members (BirdLife, FNI, IUCN, TNC, ASEAN, ACB, CI, FAO, Humboldt Institute, IDLO, IIED, OECD, Rare, SPREP, SANBI and WWF). These organizations are identifying and sharing across their networks emerging best practices in the revision and implementation of NBSAPs and are also enabling the NBSAP Forum's social media to rapidly expand its reach.
- The project's e-learning offerings, which are hosted in partnership with TNC, continue to be popular. In 2014, there were 4,523 total registrations for the existing e-learning courses. In the last quarter of 2014, over 120 protected area directors and climate change officers from Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru participated in a capacity building program to increase resilience of the Amazon in the face of climate change. Two new e-learning lessons developed in 2015 focus on incorporating and utilizing spatial data and mapping NBSAPs products, and more than a dozen new e-learning courses are under development.

The GEF project has been essential in helping countries fulfil their obligations to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Looking toward the future, the NBSAP Forum partners are anticipating an ongoing and even increased need for providing technical support, and for enabling rapid learning and knowledge sharing, particularly as countries move from NBSAP *revision* to NBSAP *implementation*. Potential key topics for further support include the use and incorporation of spatial data; the need for sharper clarity on how to incorporate resilience into NBSAPs; better tools for identifying and safeguarding essential ecosystem services; better clarity on how to ensure that implementation of the NBSAPs contributes to SDGs; and better support for and understanding of pathways for biodiversity mainstreaming.

¹ UNDP, UNEP-WCMC and the CBD Secretariat established the NBSAP Forum in 2012 as a global community of practice that develops capacity, shares learning and offers countries support in updating and implementing their NBSAPs. The Forum proposes to coalesce and coordinate support from numerous initiatives that can contribute to 'transformative NBSAPs' – e.g. facilitating access to biodiversity data, dissemination of knowledge, methodologies, analysis and mapping tools.

- (c) **Pursuing an open-access approach to data, information and project documentation.** The GEF's repository of raw information/data and synthesized knowledge from over 3,000 completed MSP/FSP and more than 18,000 SGP

projects is enormous, much of which is currently unavailable for public access. An important part of this work plan is to seek innovative, low-cost approaches to unlock this highly underutilized asset, along with the potential of future GEF initiatives. Many national and international institutions throughout the world, particularly in the public sector, have adopted guidelines on open access and information dissemination. As part of its KM efforts, the GEF will continue to promote free and open access to data and information produced with GEF resources,¹⁰ including making public the information and documentation relating to GEF-supported projects¹¹. At the global level, this will include greater access to elements of PMIS, IEO databases, GEF SGP databases managed by UNDP, and tracking tool data. At the project level, this will include further efforts to incentivize greater public access to information and knowledge outputs from projects. Such efforts are central to the IT upgrading effort in terms of improving information management and access through data digitalization and improved interoperability.

- (d) **Forming new partnerships with think-tanks, science organizations and academia.** In close collaboration with STAP, the GEF will explore continuing and deepening joint initiatives with key think tanks and the academic community. This could involve partnering on major events, generating new publications, contributing to relevant international policy dialogues, supporting South-South collaboration within the scientific community, and engaging on the development of future GEF Strategies. An important component of this effort could be applied, action-oriented research to address key challenges or untested assumptions underpinning GEF-supported activities.
- (e) **Maximizing knowledge generation and uptake from the evaluative work of the IEO.** One of the GEF IEO's overarching objectives is to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners, as a basis for decision making on policies, strategies, program management, and projects, and improving knowledge and performance. As outlined in Council Document GEF/ME/C.48/01, *Four-Year Work Program and Budget of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office*, during GEF-6, the IEO will focus on "mainstreaming knowledge management in its evaluations, where appropriate, to increase the utility of its evaluations by the GEF Council and a wide range of stakeholders."
- (f) **Maximizing the positive impact of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) on the GEF.** The STAP is an independent advisory body of the GEF, consisting of seven members and a Chairperson with expertise in the main focal areas of the institutions. STAP's specific contribution to this Approach Paper will include: (i) Keeping the GEF partnership informed about emerging trends and solutions to global environmental problems as well as identifying and addressing learning questions in the GEF Program; (ii) Providing scientific and technical support to the KM strategy, particularly in relation to South-South

¹⁰ See Council Document GEF/C.41/Inf.03, *GEF Practices on Disclosure of Information*.

¹¹ For example, see OECD Principles and Guidelines for Access to Research Data from Public Funding (<http://www.oecd.org/sti/sci-tech/38500813.pdf>).

knowledge exchange and GEF Communities of Practice; (iii) Contributing to the design of GEF strategies and programs; (iv) Conducting independent technical and scientific review of GEF projects and programs, and including KM as a screening criteria; and (v) Addressing untested assumptions within GEF strategies and programs, and in collaboration with GEF partners undertaking research where necessary.

- (g) **Developing new capacity and incentives in the GEF Secretariat to champion and support KM** - with responsibility shared across the Secretariat and wider GEF partnership. To support this effort, a dedicated team has been created as part of reorganization in the Secretariat, with resource requirements to support this effort as set out in the Council Document GEF/C.48/05, *GEF Business Plan and FY16 Corporate Budget*, also submitted to this Council. This includes improving the capacity of the GEF to strengthen knowledge generation on important gender and social dimensions, as part of the GEF's Gender Equality Action Plan.
- (h) **Enhancing partnership with CSOs to improve engagement of civil society in GEF KM and outreach programs.** CSOs have significant expertise and capacity in knowledge collation, synthesis, and dissemination. Harnessing the capacity of CSOs can help with KM activities at the grassroots and country level as well as international synthesis, analysis, and dissemination. The SGP is a significant mechanism for KM at local and grassroots levels and resources for KM and capacity building should be enhanced through the SGP with establishment of enhanced KM platforms and mechanisms in partnership with the GEF CSO Network. It is therefore key to engage them in KM activities.

PROPOSED ROADMAP OF ACTIONS FOR 2015

15. Table 1 below describes initial actions for 2015, with the GEF Secretariat working with the Agencies and other key stakeholders to start implementation planning and execution. A key aspect of this incremental approach will be the identification of required new incentives at all levels of the GEF partnership to meet the opportunities identified above. The Secretariat will provide an update on implementation progress at the fall 2015 Council Meeting.

| Table 1: Proposed Initial Actions | Date |
|--|--|
| 1. Set up a new KM team in the GEF Secretariat | June 2015 |
| 2. Establish an inter-agency KM Working Group to support the GEF KM Agenda | June 2015 |
| 3. GEF Secretariat internal workshop on KM forward planning | July 2015 |
| <p>4. With the KM Working Group, prepare a more detailed implementation plan (with clear targets and roles) that builds on the initial actions above. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation and assessment of STAP KM papers as guide to future GEF KM efforts • Conduct a baseline analysis of demand for actual and potential GEF-generated knowledge within and outside of the GEF partnership, including consultation with external stakeholders • Key learning questions identified and discussed in the group – taking into consideration relevant ongoing work by academic institutions.¹² • A critical inventory of current KM initiatives • A forward publication plan • A consultation on use of learning tools (including IT platforms) • A detailed plan for the knowledge products repository • A review of current and potential think-tank and academic partnerships, with plans for any new efforts | June-December 2015 |
| 5. Engage with IT upgrading effort to ensure KM support tools are part of future vision and implementation (paragraph 13g), with the open-access approach fully embedded. | Ongoing – with particular effort in rest of 2015 |
| 6. Engaging on RBM Action Plan implementation, including contributing to development of 2016 Annual Results and Monitoring Report planning. | Ongoing |
| 7. Progress report to fall 2015 GEF Council Meeting. | October 2015 |

¹² See, for example: Pretty, J et al, *The Top 100 Questions of Importance to the Future of Global Agriculture*, International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability, pp219-236, 2010, Earthscan.