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December 13, 2024

68th GEF Council Meeting
December 18 to 20, 2024
Virtual Meeting

Agenda Item 11

RELATIONS WITH THE CONVENTIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS¹

¹ This Council document has been revised to reflect the outcomes of the 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 29), which took place from November 11 to 22, 2024, and of the fifth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (Plastic INC-5) to Develop a Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the Marine Environment, which was held from November 25 to December 1, 2024, both after the posting of the original Council document GEF/C.68/09.

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having considered document GEF/C.68/09_Rev.01, *Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions*, welcomes the report and requests the GEF network to continue to work with recipient countries to reflect the guidance and national priorities in their GEF programming and activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This document provides the Council with an update on the activities of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in support of the following multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs): the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), the Minamata Convention on Mercury, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol), and the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). Covering the period from April 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024, the document further provides information on relations between the GEF Secretariat and other international conventions, institutions, and fora. Given that a number of major meetings of the above MEAs took place after the reporting period and before the Council meeting, the document includes a summary of some deliberations that took place after the reporting period. The Secretariat also plans to issue an addendum to this report to present a summary of other major meetings.

2. During the reporting period, a number of MEA-related meetings took place, with participation of the GEF Secretariat personnel. The 16th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 16), the eleventh meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CP-MOP 11), and the fifth meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (NP-MOP 5) were held in Cali, Colombia, from October 16 to November 1, 2024.

3. CBD COP 16 reviewed progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), with 119 national targets and 44 national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) submitted as of November 1, 2024. Among key outcomes, COP 16 adopted a decision on the operationalization of the multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism from use of digital sequence information (DSI) on genetic resources and established a dedicated Fund — the Cali Fund, which will be hosted by the United Nations. Due to lack of quorum, the meeting was suspended on November 2, 2024, with several decisions left unadopted, including on resource mobilization and the financial mechanism. The GEF organized a Ministerial dialogue and pledging session for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF). \$163 million in new pledges were announced by Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the Province of Québec, bringing the total pledges to date to \$396 million.

4. Further updates are provided in this document on the following major meetings:

- i. 19th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF 19), which took place from May 6 to 10, 2024 in New York, United States.

- ii. 26th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-26) and fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-4), held in Nairobi, Kenya, from May 13 to 29, 2024.
- iii. 10th World Water Forum, held from May 18 – 25, 2024 in Bali, Indonesia.
- iv. Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS 4), held in Antigua and Barbuda on May 27 to 39, 2024.
- v. 60th session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) from June 3-13, 2024 (SB60), in Bonn, Germany.
- vi. Intersessional open-ended expert groups meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to Develop a Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the Marine Environment, held in Bangkok, Thailand from August 24 to 28, 2024.
- vii. 10th GEF International Waters Conference (IWC10) from 21-26 September, 2024, in Montevideo and Punta del Este, Uruguay.

5. The GEF CEO and senior level officials took part in key MEA engagements to discuss priorities, explain how the GEF has responded to relevant decisions and guidance, explore GEF engagement potential, address questions and concerns raised by Parties and member States regarding the GEF support, and to help raise the level of ambition for action.

6. The provision of finance to countries continued with the approval of GEF-8 programming, continuation of GBFF programming GEF and consultations with countries continued through the GEF Country Engagement Strategy.

7. Highlights reported in this document include:

- i. CBD: Updates on Secretariat’s participation in COP 16, NP-MOP 5, CP-MOP 11, and their preparatory meetings, including the Fourth and Fifth meetings of the SBI, the 26th meeting of the SBSTTA, the third meeting of the Advisory Committee on Resource Mobilization (ACRM), meetings of the Informal Advisory Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, and the Second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources (OEWG-DSI).
- ii. UNFCCC: Updates on Secretariat’s participation in SBSTA and SBI meetings and related consultations and meetings, LDCF/SCCF support to address climate adaptation and resilience priorities of countries, continued efforts to support the timely implementation of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement, including support for Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and Capacity-

- building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT); submission of national reports; and ratifications.
- iii. UNCCD: Updates on responses to the COP 15 Decision on the collaboration with the GEF, and meetings between the GEF Secretariat and the UNCCD Secretariat.
 - iv. Stockholm Convention: Updates on ratifications and accessions, and national reporting.
 - v. Minamata Convention: Updates on collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention, ratifications and accessions, and national reporting.
 - vi. Special Programme: Updates of the eighth round of the program.
 - vii. International Waters including BBNJ Agreement: Updates on the operationalization of the GEF-8 International Waters Focal Area funding of ratification support and early action activities for the BBNJ Agreement, and on signatures, ratifications, accessions, acceptances and approvals.
 - viii. Summary of relations and activities associated with other international institutions: the UN Forum on Forests, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution (Plastic INC), ABAS, and multilateral climate funds and related processes.
8. An annex with the full list of GEF's up-to-date responses to decisions from most recent COPs including CBD COP 15, UNFCCC COP 28, UNCCD COP 15, and Minamata COP 5.

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INTRODUCTION

1. This document reports on action by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to support the implementation of decisions and initiatives within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). The report further provides information on the GEF Secretariat's relations with other institutions, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other multilateral funds.

2. This document reports on action by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to support the implementation of decisions and initiatives within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). The report further provides information on the GEF Secretariat's relations with other institutions, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other multilateral funds.

3. This document reports on activities undertaken by the GEF Secretariat since the last report presented to the 67th GEF Council held in June 2024. It covers the period from April 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024. It also reports on one meeting held after the reporting period, due to its importance for the attention of the GEF Council.

4. During the reporting period, The 16th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 16), the eleventh meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CP-MOP 11), and the fifth meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (NP-MOP 5) were held in Cali, Colombia, from October 16 to November 1, 2024.

5. Other major Convention-related meetings took place during the reporting period. The twenty-sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-26) and fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-4) was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from May 13 to 29, 2024. The 60th session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) took place from June 3 to 13, 2024 (SB60), in Bonn, Germany. Further events pertaining to other international institutions are further reported on below.

6. The Executive Secretaries of the UNCCD, CBD, Minamata and Stockholm Conventions, and Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel and the Senior

Director of the Programs Coordination of UNFCCC addressed the GEF Council in June 2024 on the status of negotiations, guidance provided to the GEF and collaboration across multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in the implementation of GEF-8 and in preparation for GEF-9.

7. The provision of finance through the GEF in line with COP guidance and decisions of relevance continued in the reporting period, as well as consultations with countries and Agencies conducted by the GEF Secretariat.

8. The GEF remains committed to working with the Conventions, countries, and partners to maintain momentum and action on the ground.

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Summary of Key Activities

9. The 16th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 16), the eleventh meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CP-MOP 11), and the fifth meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (NP-MOP 5) were held in Cali, Colombia, from October 16 to November 1, 2024.

10. A delegation of the GEF Secretariat led by the CEO participated in CBD COP 16, which was preceded by several preparatory meetings during the reporting period, including the Fourth and Fifth meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI), the twenty-sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), the third meeting of the Advisory Committee on Resource Mobilization (ACRM), meetings of the Informal Advisory Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, and the Second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources (OEWG-DSI). Further details on COP 16 outcomes and GEF engagement in preparatory meetings and during COP 16 are provided below.

11. COP 16 considered the GEF report to the COP². It also considered the report on the sixth review of effectiveness of the financial mechanism³, which concluded that

- a. the GEF has made significant progress between GEF-6 and GEF-8 in its conformity with COP guidance, its role in resource mobilization and in supporting the implementation of activities that achieve the objectives of the CBD, including its

² GEF, 2024, [Report of the Global Environment Facility to the sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity](#).

³ CBD, 2024, [Report on the sixth review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism](#), CBD/COP/16/7.

policies and procedures. GEF is generally effective in catalyzing and enhancing national implementation measures to fulfil Convention objectives;

- b. the GEF's effectiveness is limited by the: (i) availability of financial resources for eligible countries from donors; (ii) lack of strategic prioritization of focus areas or priorities from the COP; and (iii) the need for more country ownership or a stronger country-driven approach to GEF-financing within the GEF system.
- c. the resources of the financial mechanism are provided in a relatively predictable manner due to the implementation of the STAR allocation and improvements have been made in terms of timely disbursements of funds to eligible countries and the streamlining of the GEF project cycle will likely have a positive impact on the timely disbursements of funds;

12. Due to lack of quorum, COP 16 was suspended and did not adopt guidance to the GEF.

13. During COP 16, the GEF organized a Ministerial dialogue and pledging event for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) on October 28, 2024. \$163 million in new pledges were announced by Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom, and Québec, bringing the total pledges to date to \$396 million from 12 contributors.

14. The Acting Executive Secretary for the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mr. David Cooper, participated in the 67th GEF Council and second GBFF Council meetings in June 2024. He reported about progress and expectations for the upcoming CBD COP 16, and the crucial role of the GEF in achieving the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). He also expressed appreciation for the rapid actions taken since COP15 to establish the GBFF and for initial contributions. He called to continue this support through multilateral channels such as the GEF in contribution to the goals of the CBD and to ensure the success of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

COP 16 Outcomes and GEF Engagement

15. CBD COP 16 reviewed progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), with 119 national targets and 44 national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) submitted as of November 1, 2024. Among key outcomes, COP 16 adopted a decision on the operationalization of the multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism from use of digital sequence information (DSI) on genetic resources and established a dedicated Fund — the Cali Fund, which will be hosted by the United Nations., and administered through the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund. Due to lack of quorum, the meeting was suspended on November 2, 2024, with several decisions left unadopted, including on resource mobilization, the financial mechanism, and mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review.

16. The GEF Secretariat was highly active at the COP. The GEF delivered its report to the COP, and participated in contact groups on resource mobilization, GEF guidance, DSI, and other

related topics. The GEF CEO and staff took part in various facilitated discussions and questions and answers sessions with Parties, facilitators, Ministers, and other stakeholders as requested, responding to numerous questions as Parties considered the landmark DSI decision and the agenda items on resource mobilization and financial mechanism.

17. Over the two weeks, GEF Secretariat staff led or participated in more than 40 side events covering a wide range of topics from the GEF and GBFF support to the implementation of the KMGBF and Nagoya and Cartagena Protocols, to gender, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) participation in the GEF, GEF enabling activities, Integrated Programs, and high-integrity biodiversity credit markets.

18. The GEF organized a Ministerial dialogue and pledging event for the GBFF on October 28, 2024. Representatives from Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the Province of Québec announced new financing for the fund that supports implementation of the KMGBF. They were joined by representatives of the GBFF's other early contributors including Canada, Japan, Luxembourg, and Spain, and from countries that have received support to date from the GBFF, among them Brazil, Gabon, Mexico, and Fiji, plus representatives of IPLCs, major philanthropies, and implementing agency partners such as the World Bank. The President of COP 16 and the Executive Secretary of the CBD also participated in the event.

19. The GEF organized a full-day conference "Target 18: Creating the Right Incentives for a Nature-Positive Future" on October 27, 2024, in the Green Zone. Co-hosted with the Government of Colombia, the CBD, Conservation International, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, International Conservation Caucus Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, the World Bank, and the World Economic Forum, this conference focused on the potential of positive incentives, reforms of harmful subsidies, and alignment of policy for achievement of Target 18 of the KMGBF. A detailed report and a summary video of the conference are available from the [IISD website](#).

20. The GEF co-hosted a pavilion with RedLAC, Cafe, AP-Net, and their constituent conservation trust funds. [The GEF Partnership Pavilion](#) served as a space for collaboration amongst conservation trust funds, GEF recipient countries, GEF Secretariat, GEF agencies, and other GEF partners and stakeholders. More than 30 events were hosted at the pavilion.

21. The GEF Secretariat convened the following seven official side events:

- Programming update of GEF-8 and the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund
- GEF support to the Nagoya and Cartagena Protocols
- Enhancing GEF and multilateral support to IPLC-led biodiversity action
- Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program: results and lessons after 10 years

- A conversation with the GEF CEO
- Achieving KMGBF Target 18: opportunities, barriers, and the way forward
- GEF and blended finance to support KMGBF implementation

CBD meetings and GEF Engagement

22. GEF Secretariat staff participated in the twenty-sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-26) and fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-4) held in Nairobi, Kenya, from May 13 to 19, 2024. SBSTTA-26 and SBI-4 adopted 9 and 15 recommendations to COP 16, respectively, but many remained heavily bracketed. GEF staff introduced the interim GEF report to CBD COP 16 at SBI-4. GEF staff also organized a side-event on GEF-8 programming and the GBFF, answering questions on the operationalization, capitalization and modalities to access support from the latter.

23. GEF Secretariat staff continued to participate in meetings of the Informal Advisory Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources. Four virtual meetings were held in the reporting period, including a meeting on the DSI Fund governance and host on April 16, 2024.

24. GEF Secretariat staff participated in the second and last Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources (DSI OEWG), which was convened from August 12 to 16, 2024, in Montreal, Canada. The mandate of the DSI OEWG was to further develop and operationalize the mechanism the multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of DSI, including a global fund, that was established at CBD COP 15 (decision 15/9) for decision at CBD COP 16. DSI OEWG forwarded a draft decision to COP 16 with many elements remaining to be solved. The host of the global fund was among the outstanding issues. The GEF and GBFF were considered as an option among others, with divergent views expressed in this regard.

25. GEF Secretariat staff participated in the joint UNEP-UNDP-CBD Secretariat workshop on the GEF-8 Umbrella Programme to Support NBSAP Update and the 7th National Reports, which was held at the CBD Secretariat, in Montreal, Canada, from August 26 to 29, 2024. The workshop took stock of delays in the roll-out of the GEF-7 Global Biodiversity Framework Early Action Support, which was approved as 20 one-step medium-sized projects over April to June 2022 (Total GEF grant: \$44.7 million). The workshop was instrumental in moving towards an improved co-execution of this GEF-8 Enabling Activity, which was approved by Council in June 2023 and endorsed by the CEO in January (UNDP) and March (UNEP), 2024 (Total GEF grant: \$78.5 million). It also identified avenues to better respond to countries' needs expressed in the regional dialogues convened by the CBD and as part of the GEF-7 Early Action Support.

26. GEF Secretariat staff actively participated in the third meeting of the Advisory Committee on Resource Mobilization (ACRM-3) which was established by COP 15, through paragraph 43 of decision 15/7. The purpose of the meeting was to address the final pending issue within the Committee's mandate, namely, to develop recommendations regarding the adequate entity to receive and disburse the revenue to be generated by the DSI mechanism established under decision 15/9. Specifically, the Committee was tasked to explore whether and how those functions could be assigned to: (a) a dedicated financing mechanism for the Convention under the authority of the COP; (b) the GBFF established under the GEF; or (c) another alternative. GEF Secretariat staff presented options on how the GEF could respond to a request from the COP to host the DSI global fund and how these options would meet the various possible criteria established by the Committee for the identification of an adequate host. GEF staff answered, over two days, many questions from Committee members. Members of the Advisory Committee did not reach a consensual recommendation regarding which specific entity would be the most adequate host for the DSI global fund. ACRM-3 thus forwarded to COP a report reflecting the information provided to Committee, the exchanges among experts, and a list of possible criteria that might need to be met by any potential host of the DSI global fund.

27. The GEF Secretariat supported the CBD Secretariat in the preparation of the information sharing webinar on DSI held on October 3, 2024, related to the Advisory Committee on Resource mobilization recommendations to COP16.

28. GEF Secretariat staff participated in SBI-5 held in Cali, Colombia, from October 16 to 18, 2024. SBI-5 piloted an open-ended forum for voluntary country review of implementation. It considered the agenda item "Review of implementation of the KMGBF, including means of implementation", which took stock of progress in submission of NBSAPs and national targets aligned with the KMGBF. SBI-5 adopted a recommendation noting with appreciation the support provided to many Parties by the GEF and its implementing agencies for facilitating the revision or updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, while noting with concern that not all eligible Parties were provided with support or timely support.

29. During SBI-5 and COP 16, some Parties expressed concerns over delays or insufficient ownership in the roll-out of GEF enabling activities to support NBSAP update or revisions. GEF Secretariat, including the GEF CEO, met with UNEP and UNDP over the course of SBI-5 and COP 16 to ensure these concerns are swiftly addressed. The Secretariat personnel also met and discussed specific country concerns regarding delays and access challenges in bilateral meetings and regional discussions.

Roll out of Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) Programming

30. During the reporting period, all four projects submitted in the first GBFF selection round by Brazil, Gabon and Mexico in March 2024 received the approval for implementation start, for a total GBFF financing of \$39.8 million. The second GBFF Council held in June 2024 approved the first Work Programme of the GBFF, including three projects for a total of \$37.8 million, including GEF project financing and Agency fees. All comments from Council members and the STAP were

addressed within two months following the GBFF Council and the CEO endorsed all three projects by August 2024. The fourth project from the first selection round, due to its budget size being less than \$5 million, was endorsed by the CEO in July 2024, following a four-week electronic review by the GBFF Council.

31. For the second selection round, 18 Project Preparation Grant (PPG) requests from 21 countries were approved on May 9, 2024, including 11 PPG requests from 13 least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS). The Secretariat applied the technical criteria agreed by GBFF Council to review and select these PPG requests, which collectively request \$70 million in total GBFF funding. In total, across the first two selection rounds, \$110.4 million, or 52.3 percent, of the \$211 million of the first programming tranche has been approved or set-aside pending Council/CEO approval.

32. The third selection round of PPG request opened on August 8 , 2024 and closed on September 30, 2024.

33. On July 3 and September 5, 2024, the GEF and the CBD Secretariats co-hosted information webinars on the preparation of project proposals for the GBFF for National Focal Points of the CBD, Nagoya and Cartagena Protocols. In the reporting period, the GEF Secretariat hosted several webinars for GEF Agencies and GEF OFPs. The recordings of all webinars are available on the [GEF website](#).

Ratifications and Accessions

34. As of March 31, 2024, there were 196 Parties to the CBD, 173 Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 54 Parties to the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and 141 Parties the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the CBD. Detailed information on the list of Parties to the Convention and its protocols can be found from [this link](#).

35. Since the last report to the GEF Council, Costa Rica became Party to the Nagoya Protocol on September 25, 2024.

National Reporting

36. GEF support to seventh National Reports to the CBD was approved by the GEF Council in June 2023 as part of the “Umbrella Programme to support the revision and updating of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and the production of the seventh National Reports” (Total GEF Project Financing: \$72,035,000). A total of 139 countries are supported by UNDP and UNEP under this this Umbrella Programme with \$100,000 of national-level grants and additional global technical assistance. Seventh national reports are due in February 2026.

37. On September 23, 2024, the GEF CEO notified all GEF Operational Focal Points that GEF-8 funding is available (i) to support eligible Parties to the Cartagena Protocol in the preparation of their Fifth national reports on the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol, and (ii) to support eligible Parties to the Nagoya Protocol in the preparation of their First national report on the implementation of their obligations under the Nagoya Protocol. This funding will be provided from resources that were set-aside for Enabling Activities. At the time of finalization this report, UNEP was finalizing the collection of letters of endorsement and preparing to submit the corresponding umbrella project. National reports are due in February 2026.

38. The Convention Secretariat has received no additional sixth national reports since the last report to Council. The list of national submissions received can be found on [this page](#).

UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Summary of Key Activities

39. During the reporting period, efforts continued to implement the guidance received from Parties during the UNFCCC COP 28, held from November 30 to December 12, 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Updates to the responses by the GEF Secretariat to these decisions are contained in Annex I, Table 3. In line with the reporting requirements as detailed in the joint Memorandum of Agreement between the GEF Council and UNFCCC COP, the GEF submitted its annual report to COP 29 on August 5, 2024, covering the fiscal year from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

40. The GEF Secretariat continued to engage with the UNFCCC Secretariat on several important issues related to the negotiation process, as well as with several of the UNFCCC Constituted Bodies, including the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF), the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) and National Adaptation Plan Technical Working Group, the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and the Advisory Board of the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN).

41. On enabling activities, the GEF Secretariat continued to work closely with countries requesting support for BTR preparation and through the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). As of September 30, 2024, the GEF had approved BTR support to 106 countries to prepare 150 BTRs, for a total financing of \$102.2 million. 14 countries were supported during the reporting period, and two additional countries submitted BTR funding requests which are currently under review. On capacity building support, the CBIT portfolio comprises 100 projects covering 90 countries – through 92 national projects, one regional project that covers four countries, and seven global projects – for a total amount of to \$168.0 million.

42. During the reporting period, as part of the global support for South-South cooperation, the first-ever Global Transparency Forum took place in Tokyo, Japan, from May 20 to 21, 2024 hosted by the Government of Japan. The Forum focused on catalyzing positive momentum and serving as a platform to exchange knowledge, successes, and lessons learned in preparation for the first set of BTRs due on December 31, 2024, as well as the submissions of the new set of NDCs (NDC 3.0) in early 2025. The Forum was attended by 180 participants, with representatives from COP Presidencies, developing countries, donor countries, and additional support providers.

SBs and Preparation for COP29

43. GEF Secretariat staff participated in person at the 60th session of the UNFCCC SBI and SBSTA from June 3 to 13, 2024, in Bonn, Germany. The GEF delegation highlighted various tasks carried out to respond to guidance from COP 28 and its continued efforts to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement, including in relation to its role regarding the implementation of the Paris Agreement’s Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF). Over the two weeks, GEF Secretariat staff responded to Parties requests for updates and clarifications in relation to the status of its provision of financial support for reporting activities under the Convention and the Paris Agreement and provided inputs when requested in relation to other substantive negotiation tracks.

44. GEF staff also participated in several mandated event and side events during SB 60, including the “UNFCCC Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue”, the “In-session Workshop on Linkages Between the Technology Mechanism and Financial Mechanism”. In addition, the GEF contributed to the “In-person workshop on support available to developing country Parties for preparing their BTRs and enhancing sustainable institutional capacity and national reporting systems within their Governments for implementing the ETF, and in providing guidance on the application process for transparency-related projects”, organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat.

Additional Meetings and Consultations

45. The GEF participated in the 2024 Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) Forum, Accelerating climate action and resilience through gender-responsive financing and the 35th SCF meeting. Both meetings were held in Arusha, Tanzania from September 2 to 6, 2024. At the 35th SCF meeting, the initial draft guidance to the GEF was discussed with a draft compilation document on the views of parties prepared for negotiation at COP 29. The Finance Forum examined issues related to gender responsive climate financing.

46. The GEF Secretariat participated in the four “Regional online workshops on support available to developing country Parties for preparing their biennial transparency reports and enhancing sustainable institutional capacity and national reporting systems within their governments for implementing the ETF, and in providing guidance on the application process for transparency-related projects,” organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat from April 15 to 18, 2024. The GEF Secretariat also participated online in the seventh Workshop of the Cluster Lusophone in Luanda, Angola, on April 12, 2024.

47. The GEF Secretariat participated in the NAP Expo 2024 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 22 to 25 April, 2024. The GEF provided updates on its support to implementation of Nation Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and other adaptation planning processes. The GEF also engaged in several meetings with Parties and other multilateral funders and partners on good practices for adaptation planning. The GEF Secretariat participated in the 46th meeting of the UNFCCC LDC Expert Group held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on August 21 and 22, 2024. The GEF provided updates on its support to countries on their NAP formulation and implementation process.

Ratifications and Accessions

48. As of September 30, 2024, the UNFCCC had been ratified or acceded by 198 Parties, including 197 States and the European Union. The details can be found from [this link](#).

National Reporting

49. The following is the total number of National Communications (NCs) submitted from non-Annex I Parties, as of September 30, 2024:

- (a) Initial National Communications: 154
- (b) Second National Communications: 146
- (c) Third National Communications: 109
- (d) Fourth National Communications: 36
- (e) Fifth National Communications: 5
- (f) Sixth National Communications: 2

50. Full details are available at this UNFCCC website.

51. The following is the total number of Biennial Update Reports (BURs) submitted from non-Annex 1 Parties, as of September 30, 2024:

- (a) First Biennial Update Reports: 106
- (b) Second Biennial Update Reports: 44
- (c) Third Biennial Update Reports: 28
- (d) Fourth Biennial Update Reports: 13
- (e) Fifth Biennial Update Reports: 4

52. Full details are available at this UNFCCC website.

53. The following is the total number of BTRs submitted from non-Annex 1 Parties, as of September 30, 2024:

(f) First Biennial Transparency Reports: 3

54. Full details are available at this UNFCCC website.

UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

Summary of Key Activities

55. In the reporting period, the GEF Secretariat continued to follow up on the UNCCD COP 15, held from May 9 to 20, 2022, in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, in particular on the COP decision regarding collaboration with the Global Environment Facility. Updates to the responses by the GEF Secretariat to these decisions are contained in Annex I, Table 3.

56. In accordance with the invitation made in decision 9.COP/15, the GEF Secretariat has prepared the report for submission to the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16). The report is consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding between the GEF Council and the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD and reports on activities of the GEF as they relate to sustainable land management for the period from January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024 and provides an update on the achievements in the GEF-8 replenishment cycle to date.

57. The report has been circulated to GEF Council for decision by mail on September 26, 2024. Upon Council approval, the report has been submitted to the UNCCD Secretariat.

Ratifications and Accessions

58. As of September 30, 2024, the UNCCD had been ratified or acceded by 197 parties, including 196 States and the European Union. The details can be found from [this link](#).

National Reporting

59. In GEF-8, eligible countries can apply for enabling activities to support national reporting of up to \$120,000 including GEF agency fees. Enabling activities are financed out of global set-asides. The funding can be made available up to two years in advance of the 2026 reporting deadlines to allow for sufficient time to collect and analyze the necessary data for parties' reporting to the UNCCD. GEF Operational focal points have been informed of the arrangements and procedures on how to access the available funds. [See this announcement](#) for more details.

60. In addition, GEF secretariat will be supporting parties through a global support project (GSP IV) executed by the Global Mechanism to organize regional workshops and support a helpdesk for the online PRAIS reporting system.

Additional Meetings and Consultations

61. The GEF Secretariat participated in the intergovernmental working group (IWG) on the mid-term evaluation of the UNCCD Strategic framework 2018 - 2030. The IWG supervises the independent assessment of the UNCCD conducted by a consultant. It also ensures linkages and synergies with all parallel processes that are relevant to the evaluation. GEF Secretariat staff participated in the final meeting of the IWG held in Bonn from June 25 to 28, 2024 and commented on the final report of the IWG.

62. The GEF Secretariat has been requested by the UNCCD Secretariat to co-lead the Finance Day at the COP 16 jointly with the Islamic Development Bank. In this context, several online meetings with counterparts and the host government were held in preparation of the day, which will take place on December 11, 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Summary of Key Activities

63. The Executive Secretary and the GEF Secretariat undertook to support the development of a PCB global program to fulfil the guidance to the GEF at COP 10 and 11.

64. The Executive Secretary addressed the 67th Council in person and shared his perspectives on targets for phasing out PCBs by 2025 and 2028, on the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) and opportunities for synergies, on intersessional work, and outlook on priorities for GEF-9.

Ratifications and Accessions

65. During the reporting period, there were no new ratifications of the Convention. The current number of ratifications is 186. The status of ratifications is available from this [link](#).

National Reporting

66. Article 7 of the Stockholm Convention states that each Party shall develop and endeavor to carry out a plan for the implementation of its obligations under the Stockholm Convention, which needs to be transmitted to the COP within two years of the Convention's entry into force. Article 7 also calls for a review and update of the plan on a periodic basis and in a manner specified by the Conference of the Parties. As of October 31, 2024, the status of Submission of NIPs and updates are as follows.

NIP Phase	Number of Parties that have submitted NIP and NIP updates	Change since the last report
Initial NIP	177	0
NIP Update for COP 4 amendments	116	2
NIP Update for COP 5 amendments	107	4

NIP Update for COP 6 amendments	74	2
NIP Update for COP 7 amendments	54	3
NIP Update for COP 8 amendments	39	4
NIP Update for COP 9 amendments	26	6

MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

Summary of Key Activities

67. Three new Parties joined the convention bringing the number of Parties to 151. During the 67th Council Meeting in June 2024, the Executive Secretary addressed the Council and shared her views on the slow rate of programming for the chemicals and waste focal area, highlighted synergies with the biodiversity focal area and the CBD mandates and invited the Council to consider the outcomes of the Minamata COP-5 in the GEF-9 replenishment.

68. The Executive Secretary also detailed the decision of the COP to transmit to the GEF Council the report of the second review of the financial mechanism. This decision, MC-5/11 and the report of the review are annexed to this document. These documents can be found on the following links:

- i. [Decision MC-5/11: Review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury](#)
- ii. [Report of the second review of the financial mechanism, covering the period August 2019–July 2022](#)

69. At the 67th GEF Council the Council approved the new enabling activity of the Minamata Convention, which is the review the implementation of Article 7 of the Minamata Convention.

70. The GEF Secretariat has made the arrangements to receive applications of these new enabling activity requests.

Ratifications and Accessions

71. During the reporting period, Ethiopia, Liberia and the Maldives became parties to the Convention.

72. Opened for signature and ratification in October 2013, the Convention has 128 signatures and 151 Parties, as of October 31, 2024. The status of signatures and ratifications can be found on the Minamata Convention website.

National Reporting

73. The Minamata Convention Secretariat has created a website to house national reports from Parties, including Minamata Initial Assessments (MIAs), National Action Plans (NAPs) for

the ASGM sector, National Implementation Plans (NIPs) and reports submitted pursuant to Article 21 of the Convention.

74. There are currently 82 MIAs submitted, 37 NAPs, 4 NIPs and 99 first full national reports and 82 second short national reports submitted under Article 21.

- i. MIAs that have been submitted are available at this [link](#).
- ii. NAPs that have been submitted are available at this [link](#).
- iii. NIPs that have been submitted are available at this [link](#).
- iv. Reports submitted pursuant to Article 21 are available at this [link](#).

SPECIFIC INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

75. The GEF Secretariat participated in the Fourth Round of the SIP Cross-Secretariat Task Team Meeting which was held online on September 16 and 17, 2024.

76. The main objective of the SIP Cross-Secretariat Task Team Meeting was to review a total of 30 complete applications submitted for the fourth round of applications for funding from the SIP.

SPECIAL PROGRAMME

77. The GEF Secretariat participated in the Internal Task Team meeting coordinated by the Special Programme Secretariat which took place virtually on October 2 and 3, 2024.

78. The main objective of the meeting was to review a total of 17 complete applications submitted for the eighth round of applications for funding from the Special Programme.

MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON SUBSTANCES THAT DEplete THE OZONE LAYER

79. There was no engagement with the Montreal Protocol during the reporting period.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS, INCLUDING AGREEMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION (BBNJ)

Summary of Key Activities

80. The GEF International Waters Focal Area occupies a critical space in international environmental finance, supporting countries in jointly managing transboundary freshwater and marine ecosystems, including areas beyond national jurisdiction.

81. In the capacity of the GEF Trust Fund as part of the Financial Mechanism for the BBNJ Agreement, GEF Council Decision 14/2023 authorized the use of up to \$34 million from the GEF-8 International Waters Focal Area Objective 2: Advance management in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction for ratification support and early action activities for the BBNJ Agreement.

82. This section includes information on activities related to the GEF International Waters (IW) Focal Area support that took place in the period from December 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024 as well as support to the BBNJ Agreement from the GEF IW Focal Area covering the same period.

GEF International Waters Focal Area Engagement

83. The GEF Secretariat co-convened and participated in the Global workshop on Funding and Financing Transboundary Water Cooperation and Basin Development hosted by UNECE in Geneva on December 5 and 6, 2023. It brought together some 200 representatives from countries, river basin organizations (RBOs), international financial institutions, climate finance mechanisms, the private sector, as well as various UN entities and NGOs working on water and financing representing countries, and rivers basins. The workshop explored how to further mobilize both public and private capital and bolster financial support for cross-border water cooperation and management.

84. The GEF Secretariat took part in the 10th World Water Forum, May 18 – 25, 2024 in Bali Indonesia. Held every three years, the Forum is the largest global event on tackling development challenges in and related to the water sector. This year’s Forum emphasized the need to work together to promote efficient and integrated water resources management for shared prosperity. Sub themes included water for humans and nature; disaster risk reduction and management; governance, cooperation, and hydro-diplomacy; sustainable water finance; and knowledge and innovation.

85. This year’s Stockholm World Water Week (August 25 – 29, 2024) focused on “Bridging borders: Water for a Peaceful and Sustainable Future” focuses on water cooperation for peace and security” and therefore closely aligned with the work in the international waters focal area and addressing the interconnectedness of water, food security and nutrition, energy security, ecosystems health and development and the need for cooperation across these interconnected system on local, national, regional and global levels. The GEF Secretariat and the GEF International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN) presented in a number of key sessions on transboundary cooperation on surface and groundwater, source-to-sea management, innovative finance, and earth observation technologies.

86. The GEF Secretariat is an active participant in the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition (TWCC) and took part in its meetings in July and August, 2024. The Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition’s overall objective is to promote and support both the sustaining and the advancement of transboundary water cooperation in the context of the UN Water Conferences, the Water Action Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, notably SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, in light of growing risks, including those linked to climate change.

87. The GEF Secretariat participated in multiple intergovernmental dialogues and conferences over the reporting window that strengthened the GEF's engagement in ocean conservation and transboundary management of marine resources. This included: a) the 2024 United Nations Ocean Decade Conference from April 10 to 12, 2024 in Barcelona, Spain; b) the 9th Our Ocean Conference from April 15 to 17, 2024 in Athens, Greece; c) the Large Marine Ecosystems Consultation Meeting (LME23) from June 3 to 5, 2024, in Paris, France, and; d) the High Level Event on Ocean Action: Immersed in Change from June 7 to 8m 2024 in San Jose, Costa Rica. Relatedly, the GEF Secretariat has also been engaged with organizing partners for the Third UN Ocean Conference to be held in from June 9 to 13, 2025 in Nice, France.

88. The GEF Secretariat International Waters Focal Area has also strengthened engagement with the respective ocean focal points at the CBD Secretariat and the UNFCCC Secretariat over the reporting window. The GEF provided written input into the CBD Secretariat led Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies held from June 11 to 14, 2024 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. This SOI Global Dialogue focused on catalyzing regional leadership in implementing major global frameworks for the ocean, especially the Global Biodiversity Framework and the BBNJ Agreement. The GEF also provided written input and participated on a panel as part of the UNFCCC Secretariat led Ocean and Climate Change Dialogues as part of the June 2024 SBSTA meeting in Bonn, Germany.

89. From September 21 to 26, 2024, the GEF Secretariat participated in the 10th GEF International Waters Conference (IWC10) in Montevideo and Punta del Este, Uruguay. The IWC is a biennial GEF IW portfolio-wide learning and knowledge exchange event to share practical experience, address emerging IW priorities and improve overall project performance. It is also a major deliverable of the current phase of the GEF IW:LEARN project. Under the theme "Transformative actions and impacts for the water and ocean SDGs: the GEF IW response to the global challenge", IWC10 brought together more than 400 GEF project managers, technical experts, participating country representatives, NGOs, and staff representing 12 GEF Agencies. About 100 active IW projects participated. IWC11 will take place in the Asia-Pacific region in 2026.

BBNJ Meetings Outcomes and GEF Engagement

90. From June 24 to 26, 2024 in New York City, the GEF Secretariat participated in the Organizational Meeting for the Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction and the Convening of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement. The main outcomes of the Organizational Meeting included the election of co-chairs and identification of thematic clusters of discussion and Preparatory Commission meeting dates.

BBNJ Agreement Additional Meetings and Consultations

91. The GEF CEO approved the first GEF funding supporting the BBNJ Agreement on June 14, 2024. The funding consisted of an umbrella Enabling Activity for national level support for

ratification and implementation readiness of the BBNJ Agreement in four countries, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Palau. As of September 20, 2024, more than twenty additional countries have signed GEF Letters of Endorsement requesting national level ratification support and implementation readiness of the BBNJ Agreement through the umbrella Enabling Activity modality via three Implementing Agencies: FAO, UNDP, and UNEP. GEF-8 national level umbrella Enabling Activity support is being allocated in consultation with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs (DOALOS) of the United Nations Secretariat.

92. In line with GEF Council decision GEF Council Decision 14/2024, the three Implementing Agencies, FAO, UNDP, and UNEP, are also currently developing a global and regional GEF Medium Sized Project that further assists national level efforts for BBNJ Agreement ratification support and implementation readiness. The project is being developed in consultation with DOALOS and other relevant global and regional stakeholders.

93. Since April 1, 2024, the GEF Secretariat has continued to hold bilateral conversations with GEF recipient countries related to accessing GEF-8 BBNJ Agreement support. GEF Secretariat staff have also participated in briefing sessions to explain the role of the GEF Trust Fund as part of the BBNJ Agreement Financial Mechanism and to explain the process for accessing GEF-8 BBNJ Agreement support. These included virtual participation at workshops organized by Tara Ocean Foundation on April 11, 2024, CARICOM on April 12, 2024, and Oceano Azul Foundation, Portugal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) from May 13 to 15, 2024.

94. On June 25, 2024 between official sessions of the Organizational Meeting for the Preparatory Commission of the BBNJ Agreement, the GEF Secretariat and DOALOS held a lunch time official briefing at the United Nations to present the DOALOS and GEF support to countries for BBNJ Agreement ratification and implementation readiness. More than 100 participants attended the session.

95. The GEF Secretariat, DOALOS, and FAO, UNDP, and UNEP, have continued to hold virtual meetings to discuss coordination for the GEF-8 BBNJ Agreement support. DOALOS and the GEF Secretariat also co-hosted a second informal virtual meeting on May 28, 2024 with governments and organizations to exchange information on on-going and planned support in relation to the BBNJ Agreement. A first informal virtual meeting was held on April 3, 2024.

96. The GEF Secretariat has also participated in all BBNJ Regional Workshops organized by DOALOS, with online participation at the Pacific Regional Workshop held from July 8 to 11, 2024 in Suva, Fiji, and recorded video remarks at the North-East and South-East Asia Regional Workshop held from September 16 to 20, 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. The GEF Secretariat will participate in the four remaining Regional Workshops through the end of 2024.

97. Through the invitation of DOALOS, the GEF Secretariat is now also a regular participant at meetings where the BBNJ Agreement is on the agenda for the United Nations inter-agency coordination mechanism for oceans, UN-Oceans.

Ratifications and Accessions

98. As of September 30, 2024, the BBNJ Agreement had 104 signatories and 13 Parties. It will enter into force 120 days after the date of deposit of the sixtieth instrument of ratification, approval, acceptance or accession.

99. During the reporting period, 11 new Parties ratified the BBNJ Agreement: Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Maldives, Mauritius, Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Seychelles, Singapore, and Timor-Leste.

100. The current status of signatures and of ratification, accession, acceptance and approval is available from [this link](#).

RELATIONS WITH MULTILATERAL CLIMATE FUNDS

101. Collaborative efforts to strengthen complementarity and coherence with the other major multilateral climate funds (MCFs) saw good progress during the reporting period. Following the announcement by the MCF Heads at UNFCCC COP 28 in 2023 of their commitment to work together to develop an ambitious and concrete action plan to enhance access to climate finance and to increase the joint impact of the MCFs' work, the four funds worked swiftly during the reporting period to design and agree on an Action Plan and to consult with the respective governing bodies.

102. To develop the Action Plan, staff from the Secretariats of the GEF, the Adaptation Fund (AF), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) met in Washington, D.C. at the GEF Secretariat's offices for a four-day writing workshop, held between April 8 and 11, 2024. To support this strengthened engagement between the MCFs, specific governance structures were established, including a Committee of the MCFs Heads and a Taskforce comprised of several working groups with participants from the funds' secretariats. The Heads Committee met twice, on April 21, 2024 and virtually on May 8, 2024. Principals discussed their joint and respective priorities while exchanging views on the content and objectives of the Action Plan, the timeline for implementation, and next steps.

103. The Action Plan was presented to the 67th GEF Council. The GEF Council welcomed the document and requested the GEF to continue to work with recipient countries to reflect the guidance and national priorities in their GEF programming and activities. The Action Plan was also presented to the CIFs Trust Fund Committee in June 2024, to the GCF Board in July and October 2024 and to the AF Board in October 2024, with the view of taking stock of actions by the Fund Heads at COP 29.

104. In parallel with the consultation with the MCFs Governing Bodies, the MCFs started the work to implement the initial set of activities. As such, specific working groups with staff from the four Secretariats were established by the MCF Taskforce, to focus on specific Action Plan deliverables. These include, inter alia, the preparation of mapping of the respective project cycles of the four Funds to identify areas of potential harmonization; advancing the work of the

Collaborative Platform on harmonization of results metrics and indicators; the design of a joint platform to access programs and project information across the MCFs; the definition of modalities for joint work in the context of country-driven investment platforms; and the planning of joint engagements and institutional presence at COP 29.

Adaptation Fund

105. The Adaptation Fund (AF) was established under the Kyoto Protocol of UNFCCC with the AF Board (AFB) as its operating entity. Since the 2019, the AF has been formally serving the Paris Agreement. In accordance with Decisions 1/CMP.3 and 1/CMP.4, and in line with the amended and restated memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the CMP and the Council of the GEF regarding secretariat services to the Adaptation Fund Board (AFB), adopted in Decision 3/CMP.15, the GEF has continued to provide secretariat services to the AFB in the reporting period through a dedicated team of officials that serve as the AFB Secretariat in a functionally independent and effective manner.⁴

106. The GEF Secretariat continued to provide cross-support services to the AFB Secretariat for the technical review of project and programme proposals submitted for the forty-third meeting of the AFB, which took place from October 8 to 11, 2024.

107. Under the structured framework of the joint MCF draft Action Plan, the collaboration between the AF and GEF Secretariats has become more strategic and systematic during the reporting period. The organizations also continued collaboration on joint events and relevant thematic workstreams as needed, including gender mainstreaming in adaptation finance, knowledge management and evaluations. A member of the AFB secretariat participated in the GEF Gender Partnership meeting that took place during the 67th GEF Council meeting, as well as in a [gender workshop, together with GCF and GEF, organized by the UN Women and the UNFCCC on accelerating gender in the NDCs held in May 2024](#).

108. The GEF and AFB secretariats continued exchanging information on implementing the new cost recovery measures for World Bank Financial Intermediary Funds, which was released in March 2021.

Green Climate Fund

109. Efforts to advance the implementation of the Long-Term Vision between the GEF and the GCF (LTV) continued during the reporting period, specifically around joint and collaborative programming. The GEF 67th Council approved a large financing tranche for the Great Green Wall initiative (GEF ID 11455), which was designed together with, and included a substantial co-financing amount from the GCF. In addition, following the Joint Programming Consultations (JPC) efforts that took place in 2022 and 2023 in Rwanda and Uganda respectively, GEF and GCF

⁴ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/GEF.C.57.10_Adaptation%20Fund_MoU%20with%20GEF%20for%20Secretariat%20services%20to%20AFB.pdf.

advanced discussions and advance planning in relation to additional JPCs in Jamaica, Bangladesh and Fiji, the initial group of pilot countries that were identified to test joint programming efforts in collaboration with the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance, following COP 26, in Glasgow. Consultations continued during the reporting period with the NDC Partnership, which assumed the functions of Secretariat of the Taskforce's new Centre for Access to Climate Finance.

Climate Investment Funds

110. The GEF Secretariat personnel participated in the second and third Workshops on MCF Collaboration under the CIF's Climate Resilience Program (CRP) to help inform its design based on MCF coordination, from July 21 to 24 in Tokyo, Japan, and on October 7 and 8 in Hamburg, Germany.

Group of 20 (G20)

111. During the period of this reporting, the GEF Secretariat concluded its participation in the in two G20 discussion groups, the Sustainable Financing Working Group (SFWG) and the Task Force Clima (TF CLIMA), under the Brazilian presidency.

112. The G20 Sustainable Finance Working Group (SFWG) was engaged in accelerating the global sustainable finance agenda. Under the G20 Brazilian Presidency in 2024, the SFWG has built on prior achievements and worked on four priorities: i) optimizing the operations of the International Environmental and Climate Funds to deliver sustainable finance; ii) advancing credible, robust and just transition plans; iii) analyzing implementation challenges related to sustainability reporting standards, including for SMEs and EMDEs; and iv) financing Nature-Based Solutions.

113. The GEF Secretariat delegations actively engaged with the G20 work and provided inputs to the expert group's papers and statements for the respective group meetings. Secretariat staff participated in all meetings for the working groups, as well as a series of side events in Brasilia, Belem, Rio de Janeiro and Washington.

114. The final report of the SFWG, entitled 2024 G20 Sustainable Finance Report (<https://g20sfgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-G20-Sustainable-Finance-Report.pdf>) includes a chapter on optimizing the operations of the International Environmental and Climate Funds to deliver sustainable finance, that addressed a review of the vertical climate and environmental funds (VCEFs), notably the GCF, AF, GCF, and GEF. The report indicates that these funds are vital for supporting climate and environment action in emerging markets and developing economies. They serve as channel for directing financial resources to countries most in need, facilitating the implementation of climate and biodiversity action plans and projects in alignment with the goals of international environment agreements. Despite accounting for a small share of international climate financing, these funds represent one of the largest sources of targeted multilateral catalytic finance for climate and the environment.

115. To inform the G20 SFWG, an independent High-Level Expert Group (iHLEG) was established to conduct an independent review of the operations of the vertical environmental and climate funds. The iHLEG played a crucial role in addressing the operational efficiency and accessibility of these funds, providing recommendations to make their operations more efficient, enhance collaboration, and effectively mobilize private capital to fulfil their mandates and achieve significant outcomes. It was organized according to the Terms of Reference prepared by the Presidency and Co-Chairs and agreed upon by members.

116. The final report of the iHLEG (<https://g20sfgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/G20-IHLEG-VCEF-Review.pdf>), based on an assessment of the mandate and activities of each Fund, proposed a strategy to enable the VCEFs to deliver at their full potential and enhance their impact; including the following recommendations:

- i. the VCEFs should build on work to date on specific measures to improve efficiency, including in accreditation processes, project approval times, and accelerated disbursements, with particular attention on increasing access for LDCs and SIDs, and on engaging the private sector;
- ii. the VCEFs should collaborate to harmonize procedures in support of their integration and reduction of transaction costs;
- iii. the VCEFs should work together—strategically and sequentially—based on their comparative advantages, leveraging and connecting with existing sources of climate finance, public and private;
- iv. the VCEFs should proactively support country platforms, shifting from a focus on individual projects to country-driven strategies and investment plans for system transformation; and
- v. the VCEFs should seek to operate as a system on upstream country programming and pipeline development, leveraging each VCEF’s comparative advantages, including its monitoring, reporting, and learning.

117. Monitoring of the effective implementation of the report’s recommendations will be conducted over the next G20 presidencies in collaboration with the VCEFs and noting its voluntary nature. The work on the recommendations to advance the actions envisaged in the report will be consolidated in the upcoming G20 Sustainable Finance Reports.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

UN Forum on Forests

118. GEF Secretariat staff continued to actively participate in work of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), notably for the preparation of UNFF19 and its main outcomes: the Midterm Review of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF), the Declaration of the High-

Level Segment and the Omnibus Resolution. The last GEF contribution was to ensure the adopted texts were consistent with the GEF instrument.

119. A GEF team attended UNFF 19 from May 6 to 10, 2024 to support CPF work and discuss as needed with UNFF member countries.

120. GEF Secretariat staff also participated in one CPF meeting held on May 6, 2024. The main topics discussed were mainly focused on possible new CPF Joint Initiatives, the preparation of the new CPF Work Plan 2025-2028, and planning for major events (notably CBD COP16 and UNFCCC COP29).

121. The GEF approved the Medium Size Project supporting the CPF Joint Initiative “Strengthening Conservation of Primary Forests through Partnership Enhancement and Coordination of Support”. This project proposal, supported with \$2 million from the GEF and involving IUCN, UNFF Secretariat, FAO and Griffith University and Wildlife Heritage, is now under implementation (until 2026) and will be officially launched at CBD COP16.

Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS

122. During the reporting period the GEF participated in the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS 4) held in Antigua and Barbuda from May 27 to 30, 2024. Held under the theme “Charting the course toward resilient prosperity”, the Conference aimed to assess the ability of SIDS to achieve sustainable development, including the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. The Conference, which is held every 10 years, resulted in setting a new 10 year global agenda for SIDS called [‘Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity’ \(ABAS\)](#).

123. ABAS outlines SIDS’ priorities and ambitions, including to:

- i. Build resilient economies by, developing and expanding SIDS’ productive capacity, increasing trade and investment, promoting resilient and sustainable tourism, and promoting sustainable ocean-based economies;
- ii. Foster safe, healthy, and prosperous societies by, among other actions, strengthening health systems, building strong institutions, and achieving gender equality, empowering youth, and leaving no one behind;
- iii. Ensure a secure future by, among others, fostering sustainable energy transitions, developing integrated water resources management, enhancing food security, building resilient infrastructure, and enhancing transportation and connectivity; and
- iv. Achieve environmental protection and planetary sustainability, with international support, by: urgently taking action on climate change; conserving and sustainably using the ocean and its resources; conserving, restoring, and sustainably using biodiversity; and mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR).

124. With a view to achieving the priorities laid out in the ABAS by 2034, the ABAS lists concrete actions across ten thematic areas: building economic resilience; scaling up climate action and support; scaling up biodiversity action; conserving and sustainably using the ocean and its resources; mainstreaming DRR; achieving safe and healthy societies; improving data collection, analysis, and use; promoting science, technology, innovation, and digitalization; fostering productive populations; and enhancing partnerships. The document also outlines the commitment to ABAS's systematic monitoring and evaluation over the next ten years.

125. The GEF used the SIDS 4 Conference as an opportunity for strategic engagement with countries and partners, to reaffirm GEF's support to SIDS across a number of thematic areas and to discuss mechanisms to enhance access to GEF financing in view of GEF-9.

126. The GEF will closely follow the implementation of the ABAS to ensure GEF eligible recipient SIDS are supported to achieve their priorities under the new agenda. In this regard, the GEF has taken part in the first Inter-Agency Consultative Group meeting following the SIDS 4 Conference where the ABAS Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks (led by UN-DESA and UN-OHRLS) as well as piloting of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index were discussed.

Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC)

127. There are no updates for this reporting period.

Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Develop a Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the Marine Environment

128. At its [fourth session \(INC-4\)](#) in April 2024, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) decided to establish two ad hoc intersessional open-ended expert groups, with both groups open to the participation of all Members of the Committee. In addition, the decision requested the INC Secretariat, in consultation with the INC Chair, to invite selected technical resource persons to help inform the work of the expert groups. The Head of the GEF Division of MEAs and Funds was nominated as one of the technical resource persons.

129. The two expert groups were established to inform and help advance the work of the Committee.

130. The Technical Resource Persons and member States representatives participated in the three virtual preparatory meetings prior to the in-person expert meeting in Bangkok, Thailand from August 24 to 28 2024.

131. At the Bangkok meeting, the GEF technical resource person provided updates on the different modalities available within the GEF family of funds for establishing support for plastics, based on the three scenarios presented for considerations, as well as information of current GEF support for plastics.

ANNEX I: DECISIONS AND GUIDANCE OF THE CONFERENCES OF PARTIES TO THE CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD, STOCKHOLM CONVENTION AND MINAMATA CONVENTION, AND GEF'S RESPONSES

Table 1: Decisions Adopted by CBD COP 15 and GEF's Response

COP 15 Guidance	GEF's Response
<p><i>Preambular paragraphs</i></p> <p><i>The Conference of the Parties,</i></p> <p><i>Reaffirming</i> the importance of the full application of the provisions of Article 21 and of access to the financial mechanism for all eligible Parties for the full implementation of the Convention, and welcoming the valuable role of the Global Environment Facility as the institutional structure operating the financial mechanism of the Convention on an interim and ongoing basis,</p> <p><i>Emphasizing</i> the importance for the Global Environment Facility, as appropriate, to ensure that its policies and procedures related to the consideration and review of funding proposals be duly followed in an efficient and transparent manner,</p> <p><i>Recalling</i> Article 21, paragraph 3, of the Convention, providing that the Conference of the Parties shall review the effectiveness of the financial mechanism,</p> <p><i>Reaffirming</i> the commitment of the Conference of the Parties to periodically review the effectiveness of the financial mechanism in implementing the Convention in the memorandum of understanding with the Council of the Global Environment Facility contained in decision III/8,</p> <p><i>Reaffirming also</i> decision XI/5, paragraph 7, on the quadrennial arrangement for the review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism,</p> <p><i>Recalling</i> decision 14/23, paragraph 13, regarding the terms of reference for the sixth review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting,</p> <p><i>Reaffirming</i> the importance of the review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism in the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, strategies and programmes,</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

COP 15 Guidance	GEF's Response
1. <i>Welcomes</i> the report of the Council of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting;	Appreciate the welcoming of the report.
2. <i>Takes note</i> of the importance of realistic assessment of funding necessary and available for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols for the eighth replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility, aligned with the draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the time of the decision of the eighth replenishment; ⁵	Noted.
3. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to include in its report to the Conference of the Parties and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocols an explanation of how the eighth replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility, ⁶ through the elements of its programming directions is contributing to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols and to the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ⁷ and its monitoring framework; ⁸	This COP report explains how GEF-8 Programming Directions have contributed to implementation of the Convention and its Protocols and the goals and targets of the KMGBF. The report also explains how the GEF is supporting implementation of the monitoring framework through the GEF-7 Global Biodiversity Framework Early Action Support and the GEF-8 Umbrella Programme to support the revision and updating of the NBSAP and the production of the 7th National Reports.
4. <i>Urges</i> the Global Environment Facility to support Parties in their effort to enhance policy coherence as part of biodiversity mainstreaming to facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;	Elements of the GEF-8 Programming Directions support policy coherence and a progress update are provided in this report after the table of responses.
5. <i>Adopts</i> the four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities of the Convention on Biological Diversity for the eighth replenishment period (July 2022 to June 2026) of the Global Environment Facility, aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, contained in annex I to the present decision;	Noted.
6. <i>Welcomes</i> the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility and notes that its associated programming directions and strategy, including for the	Appreciate the welcoming of the record GEF-8 replenishment and strategic alignment with the post-2020 GBF.

⁵ The executive summary is available in CBD/SBI/3/6/Add.2/Rev.1 and the full report is available in CBD/SBI/3/INF/44.

⁶ Replenishment of the Global Environment Facility refers to replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund

⁷ Decision 15/4, annex.

⁸ Decision 15/5, annex I.

COP 15 Guidance	GEF's Response
<p>biodiversity focal area, have taken into account the draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the time of the decision of the eighth replenishment;</p>	
<p>7. <i>Urges</i> relevant Parties to make prompt and full use of the programming directions and resource allocation for the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility;</p>	<p>This guidance is for Parties.</p>
<p>8. <i>Requests</i> the Executive Secretary to collaborate with the Global Environment Facility and related agencies, as appropriate, in:</p> <p>The fast-tracking of the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular for the intermediate phase (2023-2024) of the Resource Mobilization Strategy and in the reporting of progress of the mobilization of new and additional resources to the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting; and</p> <p>The development and implementation of the relevant integrated programmes and the country engagement strategy for the eighth replenishment period, promoting the involvement of biodiversity-related conventions and instruments at national level, and to promote synergies and complementarities with other relevant financial instruments, such as the Green Climate Fund, towards the effective implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.</p>	<p>GEF has collaborated with the Executive Secretary on these issues and is an active member of the Advisory Committee on Resource Mobilization, providing information and inputs to the Committee and attending its virtual and in-person meetings.</p>
<p>9. <i>Adopts</i> the consolidated previous guidance to the Global Environment Facility contained in annex II A to the present decision, decides to retire the previous decisions and elements of decisions, as related to the financial mechanism and limited only to those provisions related to the financial mechanism and <i>also adopts</i> additional guidance to the Global Environment Facility contained in annex II B to the present decision;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>10. <i>Decides</i> to adopt, at its sixteenth meeting, a four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols aligned with Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to inform the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (2026-2030);</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>11. <i>Requests</i> the Executive Secretary to prepare elements of a draft four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities for the</p>	<p>This guidance is for the Executive Secretary.</p>

COP 15 Guidance	GEF's Response
implementation of the Convention and its Protocols aligned with Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in anticipation of the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (2026-2030), for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its fourth meeting;	
12. <i>Requests</i> the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its fourth meeting to prepare proposals for a draft four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in anticipation of the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (2026-2030), for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting;	This is for the SBI.
13. <i>Adopts</i> the terms of reference for a full assessment of the amount of funds that are necessary to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in accordance with the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties, in fulfilling their commitments under the Convention for the ninth replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility, as contained in annex III to the present decision;	GEF stands ready to participate in the assessment as requested.
14. <i>Requests</i> the Executive Secretary to ensure completion of the assessment according to the terms of reference as contained in annex III, in time for consideration by the fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, and subsequently by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting;	This is for the Executive Secretary.
15. <i>Invites</i> developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to identify related national funding priorities, including nationally prioritized funding needs that could be considered as eligible for funding under the financial mechanism specifically for the period July 2026 to June 2030, and submit the results to the Executive Secretary for inclusion in the funding needs assessment;	This is for recipient Parties.
16. <i>Invites</i> the governing bodies of the various biodiversity-related conventions, further to paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of decision XII/30 and paragraph 10 of decision XIII/21, to repeat the exercise described therein for the development of strategic guidance for the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility in time	This invites action by the governing bodies of various biodiversity-related conventions, to be considered by CBD COP 16.

COP 15 Guidance	GEF's Response
for consideration by the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity at its sixteenth meeting;	
<p>17. <i>Adopts</i> the terms of reference for the sixth quadrennial review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism contained in annex III to the present decision, and requests the Executive Secretary to ensure the report on the sixth quadrennial review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism to be prepared three months in advance in time for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting.</p>	<p>GEF provided all requested information and stands ready to further participate in the review of effectiveness as requested.</p>
<p>18. <i>Calls upon</i> the Global Environment Facility to further reform its operations to ensure adequacy, predictability, and the timely flow of funds by establishing easy and effective access modalities, including by scaling fast-track systems, and by facilitating new contributors.</p>	<p>This is consistent with the GEF-8 policy recommendation on streamlining and a process is underway to address this issue. The 66th GEF Council, having considered <i>Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle</i>⁹, approved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * An increase in the cap for Medium-Sized Projects from \$2 million to \$5 million, and; * Requested the Secretariat and an ad hoc working group of interested Council Members and Alternates equally representing donors and recipient countries, to elaborate additional measures for streamlining the GEF project cycle, taking into account ongoing efforts to enhance coordination and harmonization across the climate and environment funds, in consultation with GEF Agencies, GEF Focal Points and others as appropriate, for consideration by Council at its 67th and 68th meetings. <p>Two additional processes are also underway: harmonization of processes and practices with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and implementing a simplified project and program cycle for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF). These processes will also inform additional</p>

⁹ GEF, 2024, [Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle](#), Council Document GEF/C.66/08/Rev.03.

COP 15 Guidance	GEF's Response
	<p>measures and further potential actions on streamlining.</p> <p>Further, the 67th GEF Council took the following decision on Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle: Report from the Working Group on the Streamlining Process:¹⁰</p> <p>a) Appreciates the work of the Council Working Group and supports its continued work up to the next Council meeting in December 2024;</p> <p>b) Endorses continued work by the Secretariat as outlined in this report, with support from Agencies and others as appropriate;</p> <p>c) Encourages Agencies to also identify areas for further streamlining and efficiencies within their own processes and communicate these to the Secretariat and Working Group;</p> <p>d) Endorses further development of proposals for decision in December 2024, considering advance consultation requirements for any proposals requiring changes to policy and guidelines.</p>
<p>Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF)</p> <p>19. <i>Recognizes</i> the urgency to increase international biodiversity finance, and to establish a dedicated and accessible fund in 2023 for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework that can quickly mobilize and disburse new and additional resources from all sources, commensurate with the ambition of the Framework;</p> <p>20. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to establish, in 2023, and until 2030 unless the Conference of the Parties decides otherwise, a Special Trust Fund to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to complement existing support and scale up financing to ensure its timely implementation, taking into account the need for adequacy, predictability, and the timely flow of funds;</p>	<p>This guidance in paragraphs 20-28 has been addressed through the following consultation process and Council decisions. A further update on GBFF programming progress since these decisions were taken follows after this table of responses to the COP guidance.</p> <p>In response to the COP guidance, the GEF Secretariat led an extensive consultation process in the first half of 2023 towards the establishment of the GBFF. The process included multiple consultations with the GEF Council, with Multilateral Development Banks and International Financial</p>

¹⁰ GEF Council Decision 24/2024, *Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle: Report from the Working Group on the Streamlining Process*.

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<p>21. <i>Also requests</i> the Global Environmental Facility to prepare a decision to be considered by the Council on the approval of a GBF Fund, with its own equitable governing body, to be dedicated exclusively to supporting the implementation of the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;</p> <p>22. <i>Further requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to advance the necessary institutional and governance arrangements, to allow for this GBF Fund to receive, in addition to ODA, financing from all sources;</p> <p>23. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to design and implement a project cycle with a simple and effective application and approval process, providing easy and efficient access to resources of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund;</p> <p>24. <i>Calls upon</i> the Global Environment Facility to approve these decisions at the next possible session of the Council and its ratification at the next possible session of the Assembly in 2023;</p> <p>25. <i>Calls for</i> immediate substantive contributions from all sources, in line with target 19 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;</p> <p>26. <i>Requests</i> the Global Environmental Facility to engage all Multilateral Development Banks and International Financial Institutions in the design and operationalization action of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, with the view of leveraging additional resources from and for the Fund and channel them through new and existing biodiversity portfolios, which need to be aligned with the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;</p> <p>27. <i>Also requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to report on the progress in establishing, and the operations and performance of, the Global Biodiversity</p>	<p>Institutions, with the private sector and with the CBD Secretariat, as well as briefings for civil society representatives, the GEF Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group and GEF Agencies. CBD focal points were closely associated through regular joint notifications with the CBD Secretariat.^{11,12,13}</p> <p>At the 64th GEF Council meeting held in Brazil from June 26-29, 2023, the GEF Council, approved the arrangements proposed for the establishment of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GEF/C.64/05/Rev.01), with the aim to support the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework¹⁴. In response to COP guidance, the GBFF was established with its own equitable governing body, the GBFF Council, with observers representing key stakeholders, an Auxiliary Body, along with the possibility for Council to consider establishing Advisory Group(s). The GBFF was also set up to receive financing from all sources, including non-sovereign contributions.</p> <p>In addition, the 64th GEF Council, approved the Programming Directions of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GEF/C.64/06/Rev/02), with the aim to support the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including the principles set forth therein by which</p>

¹¹ CBD, 2023, [Consultations on the establishment of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Fund by the Global Environment Facility](#), Notification [2023-041 \(SCBD/IMS/NP/YX/GT/90953\)](#).

¹² CBD, 2023, [Updated draft documents on the establishment of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Fund by the Global Environment Facility](#), Notification [2023-056 \(SCBD/IMS/NP/YX/GT/90953\)](#).

¹³ CBD, 2023, [Council documents on the establishment of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund by the Global Environment Facility](#), Notification [2023-062 \(SCBD/IMS/NP/YX/GT/90953\)](#).

¹⁴ GEF, 2023, [Establishment of a New Trust Fund: The Global Biodiversity Framework Fund](#), Council Document GEF/C.64/05/Rev.01.

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<p>Framework Fund, to future meetings of the Conference of the Parties;</p> <p>28. <i>Decides</i> to assess the progress made in establishing, and the operations and performance of, the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, and to consider and adopt further guidance to the Global Environment Facility and to the governing body referred to paragraph 21 above, on the modalities and operation of the GBF Fund, at its future meetings;</p> <p>28. <i>Decides</i> to undertake and act upon, at its eighteenth meeting, a stocktake review on the operations and performance of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund regarding its scale, speed, accessibility, and future arrangements.</p>	<p>resources will be allocated.¹⁵ The Programming Directions include height Action Areas designed to complement existing support and enable the scaling up of finance in support to KMGBF implementation.</p> <p>At the Seventh GEF Assembly, held in Vancouver, Canada from August 22 to 26, 2023, the GEF Assembly ratified the establishment of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund.</p> <p>The First Council meeting of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) took place in Washington, DC from February 8-9, 2024. The GBFF Council approved the GBFF Resource Allocation Policy (GEF/GBFF.01/03/Rev.03).¹⁶</p> <p>In addition, during the same meeting, the Council approved the GBFF Project Cycle Policy (GEF/GBFF.01/04/Rev.02), which applies to all GBFF projects as of the effective date of its approval. The Council delegated the authority to the GEF CEO to approve projects up to \$5 million. Streamlined from the GEF Project and Program Cycle Policy, the GBFF project cycle policy is designed to increase efficiency through a simplified single project modality, while preserving the GEF principles of accountability, transparency, and compliance.</p> <p>At the same meeting, the Council considered document GEF/GBFF.01/06, Terms of Reference for Advisory Group(s) and Auxiliary Body for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund. As Council</p>

¹⁵ GEF, 2023, [Programming Directions for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund](#), Council Document GEF/C.64/06/Rev.02.

¹⁶ GEF, 2024, [Policy on Allocation of Resources for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund](#), Council Document GEF/GBFF.01/03/Rev.03.

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	<p>member shared various views, this agenda item was further discussed at the Second Council meeting of the GBFF held in Washington, DC from June 17-21, 2024, and approved in Decision GBFF 05/2024 Terms of Reference for Advisory Group(s) and Auxiliary Body: "The Council, having considered document GEF/GBFF.02/04, Terms of Reference for Advisory Group(s) and Auxiliary Body for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, approves the document and requests the Secretariat to: a) Make provisions to establish the Advisory Group of Non-Sovereign Participants; b) Make provisions to establish the Auxiliary Body; and c) Report to the Third GBF Fund Council on progress made on their establishment."</p>
<p>Annex I FOUR-YEAR OUTCOME-ORIENTED FRAMEWORK OF PROGRAMME PRIORITIES OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY FOR THE EIGHTH REPLENISHMENT PERIOD (2022-2026) OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY TRUST FUND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Objective</p> <p>1.The present four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities provides guidance to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the eighth replenishment period (GEF-8), 2022–2026, and is within the context of the GEF mandate to provide resources to achieve global environmental benefits and the mandate provided to GEF by the Conference of the Parties. It utilizes the Convention and its Protocols, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to set priorities for the financial mechanism. In particular, the goals and targets of the Framework provide direction for the outcomes of this four-year framework, bearing in mind that GEF-8 and GEF-9 will together cover the expected eight years to the 2030 deadlines of the targets, while recognizing that the three objectives of the Convention should be considered by GEF when designing and implementing biodiversity strategy and programming directions.</p> <p>2.In that regard, it is envisaged that following the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity</p>	<p>This report demonstrates how the GEF-8 Programing Directions have contributed to implementation of the KMGBF.</p>

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<p>Framework and the conclusion of the GEF-8 replenishment under their respective processes, GEF will include in its report to the Conference of the Parties an explanation on how GEF-8, through the elements of its programming directions, is contributing to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, and to each goal and target of the Framework and its monitoring framework.</p> <p>3.This four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities recognizes that the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is an overarching framework of high relevance to all biodiversity-related conventions and agreements, and seeks to promote the implementation of complementary measures that may enhance programmatic synergies and efficiencies, among the Convention, its Protocols and other biodiversity-related conventions and agreements, relevant to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the mandate of the Global Environment Facility.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">B.Elements</p> <p>4.The four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities for the period 2022–2026 consists of the following elements to which effective implementation support is to be provided:</p>	
<p>(a) The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including its goals and targets which define the outcomes being sought;</p>	<p>GEF-8 Programming Directions is geared towards providing support to the KMGBF. In addition, the GBFF supports the implementation of the KMGBF. The GEF Trust Fund and the GBFF each has its own focused support to the KMGBF with clear complementarity, as articulated in the GBFF Programming Directions.</p>
<p>(b) National biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs);</p>	<p>The GEF approved \$72.04 million of financial support (exclusive of agency fees) for NBSAP revisions in 139 countries in GEF-8. This support follows on to the GEF-7 Early Action Grants which supported 138 countries with a total of \$38.2 million to</p>

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	undertake initial activities to, among others, revise their NBSAPs.
c) National biodiversity finance plans;	A global program of support to fund national biodiversity finance plans was approved in November 2022 at the 63 rd GEF Council and all remaining eligible countries were added to this program in the first quarter of 2023. A total of 91 countries are being supported with a total of \$38.2 million in project financing (excluding Agency fee).
d) The implementation of the three objectives of the Convention;	The GEF Biodiversity Focal Area strategy, in combination with the 11 Integrated Programs, provides a comprehensive level of support to the implementation of the three objectives of the CBD. This is demonstrated in this report.
<p>(e)The implementation support mechanisms adopted under the Convention associated with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework related to: mobilizing sufficient resources from all sources towards implementing the Framework and achieving its goals and targets; mainstreaming; capacity-building and development; generation, management and sharing of knowledge for effective biodiversity planning, policy development and coherence, decision-making and implementation; and technical and scientific cooperation, technology transfer and innovation. Examples include:</p> <p>(i)The strategy for resource mobilization, including the establishment of a global biodiversity framework fund by GEF;¹⁷</p> <p>(ii)The long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development;¹⁸</p> <p>(iii)The Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2023–2030);¹⁹</p> <p>(iv)The Gender Plan of Action (2023-2030).²⁰</p>	<p>As noted above, the development of biodiversity finance plans is being funded in 91 countries. Objective 3 of the GEF-8 Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy is dedicated to domestic resource mobilization, and the GEF-8 blended finance program is advancing innovative finance for biodiversity, such as a regional facility for sovereign Debt for Nature Conversions, as detailed in the dedicated section. The GBFF has been established with the first two selection rounds announced in February 2024.</p> <p>All GEF investments provide significant support to capacity building and contribute to the long-term capacity building framework.</p> <p>Mainstreaming of biodiversity remains a significant priority within the Biodiversity Focal Area strategy, and the 11 IPs that have been approved by the GEF Council will</p>

¹⁷ Decision 15/7.

¹⁸ Decision 15/8, annex I.

¹⁹ Decision 15/12, annex.

²⁰ Decision 15/11, annex.

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	<p>make significant contributions to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, often through mainstreaming actions.</p> <p>In support of the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity, the GEF-8 Sustainable Cities Integrated Program aims to catalyze urban system transformation by supporting cities and local governments to scale up their political commitment, undertake integrated urban planning, implement policies, and invest in nature-positive, climate-resilient, and carbon-neutral urban development. GEF projects are all required to address gender in their design as part of the GEF Policy on Gender Equality²¹ and the Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards²². All GEF projects are notably required to conduct a gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assessment, and to develop a gender action plan or equivalent. Therefore, the entire GEF portfolio is contributing to the Gender Plan of Action.</p>
(f)The mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review; ²³	<p>As part of the Biodiversity Focal Area strategy, resources have been set aside outside of the STAR to support NBSAP revision and national reporting for the CBD, the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya Protocol. In GEF-8, the GEF approved \$72 million of financial support (exclusive of agency fees) for NBSAP revisions and the preparation of the 7th national reports to the CBD in 139 countries. This support follows on to the GEF-7 Early Action Grants which supported 138 countries with a total of \$38.2 million to undertake initial activities to, among others, revise their</p>

²¹ GEF, 2018, [Policy on Gender Equality](#), GEF Policy SD/PL/02.

²² GEF, 2024, [Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards](#), GEF Policy SD/PL/03.

²³ Decision 15/6

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	NBSAPs and/or align their national monitoring framework with the KMGBF.
(g)The enabling conditions outlined in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework required for its implementation;	The section on enabling conditions required for implementation focuses on "Support mechanisms and strategies under the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols" and "provision of adequate, predictable and easily accessible financial resources from all sources on a needs basis." It further requires cooperation and collaboration in building the necessary "capacity and transfer of technologies to allow Parties, especially developing country Parties, to fully implement the framework." GEF projects and programs embed the strengthening of these enabling conditions in their project design particularly as it relates to cooperation and collaboration for capacity building.
(h)The Implementation Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety ²⁴ and the Capacity-building Action Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; ²⁵	Objective Two of the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area strategy supports capacity building for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol. In the reporting period, no countries have requested GEF-8 support under this objective of the GEF strategy.
(i)The guidance to the Global Environment Facility on programme priorities to support the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its fourth meeting, contained in appendix I.	Objective Two of the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area strategy supports capacity building and priorities for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. In the reporting period, one GEF-8 project in Brazil was approved under this objective of the GEF strategy and is described in the report. In addition, one GEF-8 project to support national implementation and associated capacity building was submitted for funding by Burkina Faso and this project is under review. Finally, two GBFF Project Preparation Grant requests dedicated to support the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in Belize and were approved.

²⁴ Decision CP-10/3, annex.

²⁵ Decision CP-10/4, annex.

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<p><i>Additional strategic considerations</i></p> <p>5. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should support the rapid and effective implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by contributing to resource mobilization from all sources, including through increased GEF funding, which is adequate, predictable, sustainable, timely and accessible and through allocations dedicated to the Biodiversity Focal Area and co-benefits for biodiversity across other focal areas and global programmes, including integrated programmes, recognizing the need for streamlined programming and approval process to enable timely disbursement of resources.</p>	<p>Resource mobilization will be facilitated through GEF support to the development of national biodiversity finance plans, through the GBFF, and through co-financing leveraged through the 11 IPs and the relevant focal area supported projects and programs. In addition, GEF's blended finance program is designed specifically to attract private sector investment and has reached very high co-financing ratios historically with high participation of the private sector. An analysis of this co-finance leveraged so far is provided in this report.</p>
<p>6. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should recognize the contribution of multi-country, regional, transboundary and global projects, to the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, its Protocols and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including to the implementation of global initiatives adopted under the Convention and its Protocols, and multi-country, regional, transboundary and global initiatives that leverage contributions from biodiversity-related conventions and agreements.</p>	<p>Regional, transboundary, and global projects are eligible for support in GEF-8 from the GEF Trust Fund to help implement the KMGBF. All 11 Integrated Programs include global or regional coordination projects.</p>
<p>7. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should recognize that the implementation of biodiversity-related conventions and agreements in the context of national biodiversity priorities and strategies will contribute to the three objectives of the Convention and its Protocols and the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.</p>	<p>GEF-8 biodiversity and programming directions responded to GEF-eligible guidance suggested through the CBD COP to GEF from the biodiversity-related conventions and agreements. The biodiversity related conventions also provided feedback and comments on the programming directions and Biodiversity Focal Area strategy as it was being developed during the GEF-8 replenishment process.</p>
<p>8. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should take into account coherence with, and synergies among, country-driven programmes and priorities set out in national biodiversity strategies and action plans to support implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.</p>	<p>GEF-8 supported biodiversity-relevant projects and programs must demonstrate how they are supporting country NBSAP priorities.</p>

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<p>9. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should be developed in a fully transparent and inclusive manner, with a view to ensuring that projects to be funded by the GEF during its 8th replenishment in recipient Parties are to be developed on a context-specific and country-driven basis, addressing the priority needs of recipient countries.</p>	<p>The development of the GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions was a fully participatory and inclusive process.</p>
<p>10. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should promote agreed global environmental benefits and development pathways that benefit biodiversity and are also, carbon-neutral and pollution-free, including through coherence and synergies among the GEF integrated programmes and focal areas of biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, climate change (both mitigation and adaptation), and chemicals and waste, and within the context of country driven programmes and priorities.</p>	<p>GEF-8 programming directions, including the 11 IPs, the Biodiversity Focal Area strategy, and other relevant strategies have emphasized synergies across all focal areas and in particular biodiversity benefits. A target of 60 percent of total GEF resources advancing the objectives of the CDB has been set for GEF-8, as measured by the Rio Markers methodology. As detailed in this report, 81 percent of GEF-8 approved funding up to June 2024 had benefits for biodiversity.</p>
<p>11. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should promote and implement, as appropriate, the ecosystem approach, and/or nature-based solutions as defined by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session.</p>	<p>The ecosystem approach is central to the Biodiversity Focal Area strategy and Nature-based solutions are identified as priority areas of support in numerous integrated programs of the GEF-8 programming directions including Blue and Green Islands, Ecosystem Restoration, Healthy Oceans, Net Zero Nature Based Accelerator, Wildlife Conservation for Development, as well as the biodiversity and international waters focal area strategies.</p>
<p>12. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should promote, synergies, cooperation and complementarity in the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity with those of the other conventions served by GEF, as well as with other biodiversity-related conventions and agreements, recognizing the important contributions that these instruments can make to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, its Protocols and the, Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and vice versa.</p>	<p>GEF-8 biodiversity and programming directions responded to GEF-eligible guidance suggested through the CBD COP to GEF from the biodiversity-related conventions and agreements. The biodiversity related conventions also provided feedback and comments on the programming directions and the Biodiversity Focal Area strategy as it was being developed during the GEF-8 replenishment process. The integrated nature of GEF programming in the biodiversity strategy in GEF-8 will also</p>

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	provide co-benefits to other conventions served by GEF.
<p>13. During the GEF-8 period, GEF should further interact and cooperate with multilateral development banks and other public and private financial institutions to integrate the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as the contributions of the other biodiversity-related conventions within their activities and report on funding contributing to their implementation.</p>	<p>GEF is proactively working with the multilateral development banks that are GEF agencies to secure their engagement in GEF-8 programming that is consistent with their respective comparative advantage.</p> <p>For example, four of the five blended finance projects supporting the implementation of the KMGBF approved during the reporting period are implemented by multilateral development banks.</p> <p>During the development of the GBFF, GEF undertook numerous consultations with the multilateral development banks to solicit their input to the formation of the GBFF. The GBFF has a portfolio level target of 25 percent to be programmed by multilateral development banks and international financial institutions.</p> <p>With the first selection rounds of the GBFF, two PPG requests from multilateral development banks have been approved, for approximately seven percent of total resources set aside from the two selection rounds.</p> <p>In the reporting period, multilateral development banks have strengthened their commitments to integrate the objectives of the CBD into their own programming, as manifested in the UNFCCC COP 26 Joint MDB Statement on Nature, People and Planet²⁶, and the launch, at UNFCCC COP 28, of the MDB Common Principles for Tracking Nature-Positive Finance²⁷.</p>

²⁶ <https://ukcop26.org/mdb-joint-statement/>

²⁷ <https://www.ebrd.com/documents/environment/mdb-common-principles-to-nature-positive-finance-tracking.pdf>

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<p>14. The GEF-8 outcome and impact indicators and associated monitoring processes should be effectively used to assess the contribution of the GEF-8 to the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention, the Protocols of the Convention, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including through measuring the co-benefits for biodiversity across all relevant GEF activities.</p>	<p>The COP report provides information on how GEF has performed with regards to the GEF core indicators and notes their linkage to the relevant KMGBF targets. In addition, co-benefits to biodiversity are presented in the report including GEF reporting on the Rio Markers.</p>
<p>15. The GEF in its eighth replenishment period should explore ways to significantly improve the access to funding for all recipient countries.</p>	<p>This is consistent with the GEF-8 policy recommendation on streamlining and a process is underway to address this issue. The 66th GEF Council, having considered document GEF/C.66/08/Rev.03 <i>Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle</i>²⁸, notably: a) approved an increase in the cap for Medium-Sized Projects from \$2 million to \$5 million, and; b) requested the Secretariat and an ad hoc working group of interested Council Members and Alternates equally representing donors and recipient countries, to elaborate additional measures for streamlining the GEF project cycle, taking into account ongoing efforts to enhance coordination and harmonization across the climate and environment funds, in consultation with GEF Agencies, GEF Focal Points and others as appropriate, for consideration by Council at its 67th and 68th meetings.</p> <p>At the 67th GEF Council took the following decision on Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle: Report from the Working Group on the Streamlining Process:²⁹</p> <p>a) Appreciates the work of the Council Working Group and supports its continued work up to the next Council meeting in December 2024;</p> <p>b) Endorses continued work by the Secretariat as outlined in this report, with</p>

²⁸ GEF, 2024, [Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle](#), Council Document GEF/C.66/08/Rev.03.

²⁹ GEF Council Decision 24/2024, *Streamlining the GEF Project Cycle: Report from the Working Group on the Streamlining Process*.

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	<p>support from Agencies and others as appropriate;</p> <p>c) Encourages Agencies to also identify areas for further streamlining and efficiencies within their own processes and communicate these to the Secretariat and Working Group;</p> <p>d) Endorses further development of proposals for decision in December 2024, considering advance consultation requirements for any proposals requiring changes to policy and guidelines.</p> <p>Two additional processes are also underway: 1. the joint action plan development by the multilateral climate funds, including the GCF, Climate Investment Funds, Adaptation Fund, and the GEF, including assessment of harmonization of processes and practices among the funds, and 2. implementing a simplified project and program cycle for the GBFF. These processes will also inform additional measures and further potential actions on streamlining.</p>
<p>16. The GEF in its eighth replenishment period should explore ways to improve the access to funding for indigenous peoples and local communities.</p>	<p>GEF-8 Biodiversity Focal Area strategy includes additional funding of \$25 million for the Inclusive Conservation Initiative which provides access to GEF funds for IPLCs. (\$25 million was also allocated to this initiative in GEF-7).</p> <p>Within the GBFF Programming Directions, Action Area 2, "Support to IPLC Stewardship and Governance of Lands, Territories, and Waters" focuses on providing support to IPLC-led stewardship and governance in accordance with national legislation. In addition, an aspirational programming share of 20 percent to support IPLC stewardship at the portfolio level by 2030 from the total resources allocated under the GBFF.</p> <p>The first and second selection rounds of the GBFF have approved 22 PPG requests</p>

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	totaling \$110.4 million in GEF Project financing, of which 35 percent is expected to support actions by IPLCs.
17. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy and programming directions should promote engagement with recipient countries to support national resource mobilization and the development and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans.	A global program of support to fund national biodiversity finance plans was approved in November 2022 by the Council and all remaining eligible countries were added to this program in the first quarter of 2023.
18. The GEF-8 biodiversity strategy, programming directions and policy recommendations should reinforce the GEF's efforts to mobilize and engage with different stakeholders including the private sector.	Stakeholder engagement is required of all GEF projects, and a stakeholder participation plan is a requirement for all CEO endorsements. In GEF-8, each of the 11 Integrated Programs has its own set of private sector objectives, identifying the major platforms for engagement, key entry points, and expected modalities of engagement that can optimize the contributions of the private sector.
19. To improve its efficiency and effectiveness in delivering sustainable results during the GEF 8 replenishment period, the GEF should continue to improve its policies regarding governance and the standards its implementing partners are held to.	The GEF's governance includes mechanisms to hold implementing partners to GEF policy and standards, including the four key GEF minimum standards: fiduciary, environmental and social safeguards, gender equality and stakeholder engagement. In 2023, a review of implementing partners' adherence to these standards was undertaken and submitted to Council (GEF/C.64/Inf.09). Agencies with identified gaps were required to develop action plans and reports on action plan progress are provided to Council (e.g. see: GEF/C.66/Inf.10) In addition, gap analyses on social inclusion (GEF/C.66/10) and in fragility, conflict and violence-affected situations (GEF/C.66/09) were prepared and deliberated by Council in February 2024. At its 67 th meeting The Council, having considered document GEF/C.67/06, Gap Analysis of GEF Policies and Key Social Inclusion Issues – Timetable for Policy Actions, took note of the timetable presented and requests the Secretariat to

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	proceed in accordance with the timetable and approach presented.

Table 2: Decisions Adopted by UNFCCC COP 28 and CMA 5, Conclusion of SBI 59 and GEF's Response

COP 28 Decision ³⁰ / CMP 18 Decision ³¹ / CMA 5 Decision ³² / SBI 59 Conclusion ³³	GEF's Response
COP 28 Decisions (2023)	
Decision 4/CP.28: Long-term Climate Finance	
<p>Paragraph 8: <i>Welcomes</i> the recent pledges to the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, the Adaptation Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund;</p>	Noted with appreciation.
<p>Paragraph 10: <i>Emphasizes</i> the need for further efforts to enhance access to climate finance, including through harmonized, simplified and direct access procedures, to address the needs of developing country Parties, in particular for the least developed countries and small island developing States;</p>	<p>The GEF-8 Replenishment Policy Recommendations include a decision to explore areas for streamlining the GEF project cycle, with an objective of reducing transaction costs and facilitating faster access to GEF resources by countries.</p> <p>In response to such decision and similar guidance received from the COP at different sessions, the GEF continues to pursue efforts to enhance access to climate finance both internally, through streamlining of its operations, policies and procedures, and externally through its engagement with the other major multilateral climate funds towards increased complementarity and collaboration.</p> <p>Two related processes are underway. First, the GEF has been actively involved in the mapping the streamlining potential of processes and practices between the</p>

³⁰ COP 28 decisions are available at: <https://unfccc.int/event/cop-28>

³¹ CMP 18 decisions are available at: <https://unfccc.int/event/cmp-18>

³² CMA 5 decisions are available at: <https://unfccc.int/event/cma-5>

³³ SBI 59 conclusions are available at: <https://unfccc.int/event/sbi-59>

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	<p>multilateral climate funds (MCFs). This exercise, which started with the Long-Term Vision on complementarity, coherence and collaboration between the GEF and the GCF (LTV), is now being expanded to include also the Adaptation Fund (AF) and the Climate Investment Funds (CIFs), following the joint declaration by the four heads of the MCFs at COP 28.⁵</p> <p>Second, the GEF partnership has been exploring ways to enhance its internal effectiveness. One important measure that was considered and approved by the GEF Council at its 66th Council Meeting involved increasing the cap on the size of Medium-Sized Projects (MSPs) from US\$ 2 to 5 million.⁶ The financing ceiling for MSPs was initially set at US\$ 1 million and was later raised to US\$2 million in 2012.⁷ This most recent increase in the MSP cap is expected to enable a much greater number of projects and value of GEF financing to benefit from the more streamlined one-step approval process.</p> <p>In addition, with the establishment of a simplified project and program cycle for the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), which is managed by the GEF Secretariat, it is expected that experiences with the deployment of these further simplified processes will be assessed and will inform the extent to which further simplification measures can be applied to the GEF Trust Fund project cycle.</p>
<p>Paragraph 13: <i>Also reiterates</i> that a significant amount of adaptation finance should come from the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, the Adaptation Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund;</p>	<p>In administering the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund, the GEF stands ready to work with both donors and recipient Parties to increase the share of global adaptation finance that it receives and channels in its capacity of operating entity of the Financial Mechanism.</p>
<p>Paragraph 17: <i>Reiterates</i> that the secretariat, in collaboration with the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, United</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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<p>Nations agencies and bilateral, regional and other multilateral channels, will continue to explore ways and means to assist developing country Parties in assessing their needs and priorities in a country- driven manner, including their technological and capacity-building needs, and in translating climate finance needs into action.</p>	
<p>Decision 5/CP.28: Matters relating to the Standing Committee on Finance</p>	
<p>Paragraph 13: <i>Notes with concern</i> that the draft guidance for the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism prepared by the Standing Committee on Finance was not considered owing to a limited number of submissions and requests Parties and other constituted bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement to provide elements for the draft guidance well in advance of future sessions of the Conference of the Parties and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement to enable the Committee to fulfil its mandate in this regard.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Decision 6/CP.28: Report of the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Green Climate Fund</p>	
<p>Paragraph 10: <i>Also requests</i> the Board to continue to enhance coherence and complementarity of the Green Climate Fund with other relevant bilateral, regional and global funding mechanisms and institutions, wherever feasible and to the extent possible, inter alia through joint programmes, outreach, and information-sharing, thereby improving access to climate finance and lowering transaction costs for developing countries.</p>	<p>While this guidance is not directed to the GEF, this is noted. Ongoing efforts to continue to enhance coherence and complementarity with the GCF and with other multilateral climate funds have been outlined above in this table of responses and also in the body of this Report.</p>
<p>Decision 7/CP.28: Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Global Environment Facility</p>	
<p>Paragraph 1: <i>Welcomes</i> the report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-eighth session and its addendum, including the response of the Global Environment Facility to the guidance received from the Conference of the Parties;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>

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<p>Paragraph 2: Notes the work undertaken by the Global Environment Facility during its reporting period (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023), including:</p> <p>(a) Approval of 34 climate change projects and programmes under the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund;</p> <p>(b) Continued integration of climate change priorities into its other focal areas and integrated programmes and the expected avoidance or sequestration of 1,007.4 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent achieved through such integration;</p> <p>(c) Continued implementation of the long-term vision on complementarity, coherence and collaboration with the Green Climate Fund;</p> <p>(d) Actions following cases of mismanagement of funding from the Global Environment Facility in projects managed by one of its implementing agencies;(e) Continued work to implement the recommendations in decision 24/2020 of the Council of the Global Environment Facility;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation of recognition of the work undertaken.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3: <i>Welcomes</i> the successful start of the implementation of the eighth replenishment cycle, including the 11 integrated programmes, and <i>encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to track and regularly report to the Conference of the Parties the climate-related benefits of the integrated programmes;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation. The GEF continues to track the climate-related benefits of the integrated programmes regularly from initial GEF Council approval of the of the Program Framework Document (PFD) to the terminal evaluation. Climate benefits figures are captured at project, program and portfolio level through Core Indicator 6 (Greenhouse Gas emissions mitigated or avoided, reported in tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e), and reported in the GEF annual report to COP.</p>
<p>Paragraph 4: <i>Also encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to maximize global environmental benefits through its projects and programmes with a focus on the co-benefits relating to climate change;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 5: <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue its support to developing countries in implementing the</p>	<p>Regarding mobilization of finance for reporting and enabling activities under the UNFCCC, the GEF continued to review and approve projects in a timely manner during</p>

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<p>reporting requirements under the Convention, consistent with its current mandates;</p>	<p>the reporting period. The GEF Trust Fund continued to support National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), through the programming of medium-sized and full-sized projects.</p> <p>Following the work conducted in the previous reporting periods to define and communicate modalities of support provision for BTRs, the GEF Secretariat continued to work closely with countries requesting support for BTR preparation, with the view to allow sufficient lead time for countries to prepare and submit their first BTR by the due date of no later than December 31, 2024. As of March 31, 2024, the GEF has approved BTR support to 103 countries for 144 BTRs, and three additional countries have submitted requests for GEF financial support for BTR preparation.</p> <p>The GEF also continued to provide funding to support countries through the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). Each CBIT proposal submitted to the GEF Secretariat has received support, upon technical clearance, in line with the Paris Agreement decision to provide support upon request. As of March 31, 2024, the entire CBIT portfolio includes 96 projects covering 88 countries, 88 national projects, one regional project (covering four countries), and seven global projects, totaling \$159.7 million, including GEF project financing, Agency fees, and PPGs. Progress made on the CBIT, including portfolio analysis and outlook, is presented to the 67th Council in an information document.</p>
<p>Paragraph 6: <i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to consider ways to better serve different regions, including by taking into account the needs of and challenges faced by developing countries in implementing the transparency requirements under the Convention;</p>	<p>The GEF continues to engage with recipient countries, agencies and partners to continuously improve the way it serves different regions with the implementation of the enhanced transparency framework. Specific information regarding the support available from the GEF for this purpose are being incorporated in the briefing packages provided to countries during GEF's Country</p>

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	<p>Support Program activities, such as national dialogues and expanded constituency workshops.</p> <p>In addition and in response to guidance received, inter alia, at COP 28, the GEF continues to be actively engaged with a wide range of outreach activities with UNFCCC Secretariat and other partners, to further disseminate to Parties information on support available. This include, most recently, the participation of the GEF Secretariat in the delivery of the four “Regional online workshops on support available to developing country Parties for preparing their biennial transparency reports and enhancing sustainable institutional capacity and national reporting systems within their governments for implementing the ETF, and in providing guidance on the application process for transparency-related projects”, organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat between April 15 and 18, as well, as the virtual participation in the 7th Workshop of the Cluster Lusophone, organized by UNDP, in Luanda, Angola, on April 12, 2024.</p>
<p>Paragraph 7: <i>Also encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to strengthen its Small Grants Programme to provide better support for youth, women and girls, local communities and Indigenous Peoples;</p>	<p>The GEF SGP continues to serve as an important element of the GEF's larger and increasing efforts to support inclusion and strong engagement of civil society stakeholders and partners. SGP 2.0 Implementation arrangements for GEF-8, approved by the GEF council³⁴ incorporates renewed provisions to strengthen support to youth, women, and IPLCs through: (i) targeting women and women groups as SGP grant beneficiaries; (ii) supporting women's voice at all levels including in the SGP national governance structure and SGP project design and implementation; (iii) supporting Indigenous Peoples to benefit from, engage</p>

³⁴ GEF/C.63/06/Rev.01: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-11/EN_GEF.C.63.06.Rev_01_GEF%20Small%20Grants%20Programme%202.0%20Implementation%20Arangements.pdf

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	<p>in and lead SGP grant activities; and (iv) accelerating approaches to ensure youth perspectives in community, national and international discourses, promoting youth participation in the SGP project design and implementation, and targeting youth and youth groups as SGP grant beneficiaries.</p> <p>Additionally, emphasis on youth, women, and IPLCs were part of the criteria in the selection of two new GEF SGP Implementing Agencies in 2023, and the finalization of the SGP 2.0 Operational Guidelines as well as the new SGP 2.0 Results Framework that, for the first time, includes SGP-specific indicators with the intention to better reflect and monitor social inclusion and livelihood outcomes. The GEF Secretariat is also launching a new the SGP CSO Challenge Program that is prioritizing youth and youth-led civil society organizations, women and women groups as well as Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) and offer financing and opportunities for cross learning and creating new strategic partnerships for the GEF to deliver on GEBs.</p>
<p>Paragraph 8: <i>Welcomes</i> with appreciation the financial pledges to the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund made by Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, equivalent to USD 179.06 million;</p>	<p>The GEF takes notes of the appreciation and looks forward to additional contributions to the LDCF and SCCF in the GEF-8 period.</p>
<p>Paragraph 9: <i>Commends</i> the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund for their enhanced support to developing countries and in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States for addressing the adverse impacts of climate change;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation of recognition of the work undertaken.</p>
<p>Paragraph 10: <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, in administering the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund, to continue to support the least developed countries and small island developing States to utilize programmatic approaches to implement policies, programmes and projects identified</p>	<p>Noted. The GEF continues to be supportive of programmatic approaches to adaptation in least developed countries and small island developing states, aligned with priorities identified in their NAPs, NDCs and their national priorities. The GEF has also been organizing regional adaptation strategy and</p>

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in their national adaptation plans and adaptation components of nationally determined contributions;	programming workshops in LDCs and SIDS to discuss project based as well as programmatic approaches to utilization of LDCF and SCCF resources.
<p>Paragraph 11: <i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to encourage its implementing agencies to facilitate more active engagement of women, youth, local communities and Indigenous Peoples in the formulation and implementation of its projects and programmes;</p>	<p>Noted. The GEF continues to encourage the Implementing Agencies (IAs) to increase the engagement and support to women, youth, local communities, and Indigenous Peoples. The policies on Stakeholder Engagement, Gender Equality, Environmental and Social Safeguards, and the Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, are designed to complement and reinforce key dimensions of these stakeholders engagement with the GEF, particularly in the design and implementation of GEF projects and programs. The GEF also provides platforms, such as the 7th GEF Assembly, COPs, GEF Seminars and Workshops, for Implementing Agencies to showcase positive results from their projects arising from engaging and supporting women, youth, local communities and Indigenous Peoples. In addition, programs and initiatives such as the Small Grants Program (SGP) and the Gustavo Fonseca Leadership Program (FLP) specifically focus on youth, women and IPLCs engagements and their empowerment.</p>
<p>Paragraph 12: <i>Welcomes</i> the continued support by the Global Environment Facility for climate-friendly innovation, and technology development and transfer and related capacity-building, including in partnership with private sector actors and others, and requests the Global Environment Facility to continue to provide such support, in particular for technology needs assessments, and technology action plans and their implementation;</p>	<p>The development and transfer of low-carbon and climate-resilient technology has been a key cross-cutting theme for the GEF since its establishment and continues to be at the core of the programming directions for GEF-8.</p> <p>In this reporting period, the GEF has been working closely with the GEF Agency on the submission and approval of the CEO Endorsement document for Phase V of the Global Technology Needs Assessment Project. Out of the 17 participating countries, twelve countries have used their STAR resources for the development of their TNAs.</p>
<p>Paragraph 13: <i>Also requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to consider ways to enhance its ongoing work to fund activities</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage, consistent with its current mandates;	
<p>Paragraph 14: <i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue its efforts to further streamline, consolidate and increase the efficiency of its operations, including by simplifying the information requirements for designing and implementing its projects and programmes;</p>	<p>The GEF Secretariat takes note of the encouragement to continue its efforts streamline its operational procedures and increase efficiency of access to its funds, in consultation with the other GEF partners, particularly the GEF implementing agencies. The GEF-8 Replenishment Policy Recommendations include a decision to explore areas for streamlining the GEF project cycle, with an objective of reducing transaction costs and facilitating faster access to GEF resources by countries.</p> <p>In response to such decision and to similar guidance received from the COP at different sessions, the GEF continues to pursue efforts to further simplify information requirements for designing and implementing its projects and programmes. As already reported in the previous reporting period, in the first half of the GEF8 cycle the GEF has revised and streamlined all its funding application templates, including the forms available for the submission of Project Information Form (PIF) for mid- and full-size projects, the Program Framework Document (PFD) for multi country programs, and the template to request Enabling Activity funding for reporting obligations from the GEF Climate Change Set Aside. From the preliminary observations over the first year of GEF8, the use of the new templates has resulted in substantially shorter project submission documents.</p> <p>In addition, one significant measure that was considered and approved by the GEF Council at its 66th Council Meeting (February 2024) was increasing the cap on the size of Medium-Sized Projects (MSPs) from US\$ 2 to 5 million.⁸ The financing ceiling for MSPs was initially set at US\$ 1 million and was later raised to US\$2 million in 2012.⁹ This most recent increase in the MSP cap is expected to</p>

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	<p>enable a much greater number of projects and value of GEF financing to benefit from the more streamlined one-step approval process.</p> <p>In addition, with the establishment of a simplified project and program cycle for the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), which is managed by the GEF Secretariat, it is expected that experiences with the deployment of these further simplified processes will be assessed and will inform the extent to which further simplification measures can be applied to the GEF Trust Fund project cycle.</p>
<p>Paragraph 15: <i>Welcomes</i> the ongoing efforts of the Global Environment Facility to improve its fiduciary standards, to which its implementing agencies are accountable;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 16: <i>Also welcomes</i> the ongoing efforts of the Global Environment Facility to continue assessing and addressing the risks induced by the current level of funding concentration among some of its implementing agencies;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 17: <i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue to show appropriate flexibility with respect to geographical restrictions in implementing agencies to reduce agency concentration and enable wider geographical reach of its projects, in a country-driven manner;</p>	<p>In line with the GEF-8 Policy Recommendations, the GEF Secretariat will monitor and report on the achievement of an aspirational ceiling for any one Agency of no more than 30 percent of approved amounts in GEF-8.</p>
<p>Paragraph 18: <i>Also encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to open a targeted round of implementing agency expansion within the Global Environment Facility partnership with a focus on underserved regions, with regard to implementing agency coverage, in line with existing policies and procedures;</p>	<p>The GEF continues to monitor the geographic and thematic coverage of the 18 GEF Agencies, in accordance with the GEF-8 Replenishment Resolution adopted by Replenishment Participants and its Council approved policies and procedures. The GEF has been successful in the diversification of funding among the existing Agencies and rolling out a new Country Engagement Strategy in support of this objective, including further empowerment of Operational Focal Points. The GEF Council took a decision in June 2023 for the GEF to continue to monitor the strength of the partnership along the five</p>

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	dimensions of geographic coverage, thematic coverage, effectiveness, efficiency, and engagement, with an updated analysis to be considered by the GEF Council in advance of the GEF-9 replenishment negotiations.
<p>Paragraph 19: <i>Further encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to enhance the coherence and complementarity with other climate finance delivery channels with a view to enhancing the impact and effectiveness of its work and decreasing transaction costs, inter alia through streamlining and simplifying, where feasible and to the extent possible, its procedures and guidelines and takes note of these ongoing efforts;</p>	<p>The GEF continues to engage actively with the other Multilateral Climate Funds (MCFs), in response to guidance received from the COP at different sessions, and with the view of increasing complementarity and collaboration, towards harmonization.</p> <p>Building on the ongoing engagement with the GCF, which is framed within the “Long-Term Vision on Complementarity, Coherence and Collaboration” initiative between the GEF and the GCF (LTV)¹⁰, GEF efforts to increase ease and speed of access to climate finance for developing countries are now being expanded to also include the Adaptation Fund (AF) and the Climate Investment Funds (CIFs). Concrete elements of these increased efforts include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A Joint Declaration by the four Heads of the MCFs, which was presented at COP 28 during a joint side event and which outlined a series of concrete commitments by the 4 funds to enhance access and increase impact. 2) A joint Pavilion at COP 28 which was co-organized a joint pavilion at COP 28, as a shared space to promote collaboration and to act as a one-stop-shop for countries, partners and stakeholders to interface with the 4 MCFs. 3) A collaborative workshop of the 4 Fund’s Secretariats, hosted by the GEF in Washington DC at the margins of the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings on April 8 to 11, 2024, which had the objective of kickstarting the joint work presented by the Heads at COP 28 and further elaborating on the engagement modalities the between the MCFs. The workshop also served to prepare a specific Action Plan outlining a set of time-bound deliverables for this collaboration, to

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	<p>be submitted by each Fund to their respective Governing Bodies in 2024.</p> <p>In addition to the efforts outlined above, the GEF-GCF LTV bilateral work also advanced in the reporting period. One additional Joint Programming Consultation (JPC) was carried out, as part of the initial pilot in 5 pioneer countries which is co-organized together with the Taskforce for Access to Climate Finance. The three-day event hosted by the Ugandan Government in Kampala, and co-organized by GEF and GCF, highlighted a number of promising areas for co-programming, which are now being pursued, offering important learning opportunities that can later be fed in the broader coordination efforts with all MCFs.</p>
<p>Paragraph 20: <i>Notes</i> the adoption of the private sector engagement strategy of the Global Environment Facility at the 59th meeting of the Council of the Global Environment Facility and <i>encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to reinforce its efforts to mobilize and engage with private sector actors during its eighth replenishment cycle;</p>	<p>GEF's engagement with the private sector during the eighth replenishment cycle focused on the engagement of private sector actors at all scales, with an emphasis on landscape or value chain collaboration in key sectors relevant to the GEF's integrated programs, as well as the stand-alone projects. 93% of GEF projects now engage the private sector.</p>
<p>Paragraph 21: <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, from existing allocations in the Blended Finance Global Programme, to further explore risk-taking and to foster innovation in the context of its programming in order to use its concessional financing more effectively and mobilize additional private funds;</p>	<p>The programming of resources under the GEF's Blended Finance Global Program continued during the reporting period. As of March 31st, 2024, out of the GEF-8 envelope of US\$ 196 million, US\$ 132 million have now been programmed in 8 highly innovative operations of which 5 projects are under the CCM focal area. The projects selected seek to support new technologies like Green Hydrogen in Chile, support financial structures that target Scope 3 emissions, or focus on replicability and scale up of existing technologies in renewable energy and energy efficiency with high participation of the private sector. The latter is the case of the DBSA's Private Sector Energy Efficiency Programme Phase 2 that will establish a risk-sharing facility to foster commercial lending for energy efficiency improvements by SMEs</p>

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	<p>in South Africa. In this project, the co-financing achieved is above USD 500 million resulting in a co-financing ratio of 1:34 (of which 1:33.4 is from the Private sector).</p> <p>The IFC/GEF Green Global Supply Chain Decarbonization Platform is a first-of-its-kind project that targets Scope 3 emissions across an entire value chain. The platform proposes a financial mechanism that blends the financing from the IFC, a textile and apparel Brand (private sector company) and the GEF to provide long-term, green-linked loans to manufacturers, suppliers of the brand across emerging markets. The project will also take this opportunity to systematically move participating supplier factories to safer chemical alternatives in production and to provide substantial climate mitigation outcomes (3 million tCO₂e), while benefitting 150,000 people.</p>
<p>Paragraph 22: <i>Welcomes</i> the policy on gender equality adopted by the Council of the Global Environment Facility and encourages the Global Environment Facility to ensure that all its implementing agencies apply this policy;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 23: <i>Also encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to further explore ways to provide support for assessing the needs and priorities of developing countries in a country-driven manner, including technology and capacity-building needs, and for translating climate finance needs into action;</p>	<p>The GEF continues to provide support to developing country Parties in assessing their needs and priorities in a country-driven manner, including technology and capacity-building needs, and in translating climate finance needs into action. Among other efforts, the GEF continues to provide resources for transparency-related capacity-building through the CBIT, for technology needs assessments (TNAs), and for other support initiatives as part of its Country Support Program, such as national dialogues and expanded constituency workshops (ECWs), in an effort to enhance the abilities of developing countries to assess their needs and priorities and to translate climate finance needs into action.</p>
<p>Paragraph 24: <i>Invites</i> Parties to submit to the secretariat their views and recommendations on elements of guidance for the</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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Global Environment Facility via the submission portal no later than 12 weeks prior to the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (November 2024);	
<p>Paragraph 25:</p> <p><i>Requests</i> the Standing Committee on Finance to take into consideration the submissions referred to in paragraph 24 above in preparing its draft guidance for the Global Environment Facility and to include in its annual report to the Conference of the Parties information on the steps it has taken to implement the guidance provided in this decision;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 26:</p> <p><i>Takes note</i> of decision 11/CMA.5 and decides to transmit to the Global Environment Facility the guidance from the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement contained in paragraphs 2–12 of that decision.</p>	Noted.
Decision 9/CP.28: Enhancing climate technology development and transfer through the Technology Mechanism	
<p>Paragraph 5:</p> <p><i>Invites</i> Parties to explore ways of enhancing the provision of technical and logistical support to their national designated entities and improving national-level coordination, including of national designated entities with operational focal points of the Global Environment Facility, national designated authorities of the Green Climate Fund, and designated authorities and national implementing entities of the Adaptation Fund;</p>	Through the CTCN, NDEs have been encouraged to liaise with their respective GEF OFPs and enhance collaboration through scaling up of projects and to develop common approaches to decision making on technology development and transfer-related matters. For example, GEF national dialogues and ECWs have been used as entry points to facilitate further coordination with GEF OFPs and explore potential cooperation in a country-driven manner. Specifically, in the reporting period, the NDEs of XXX participated in the national dialogues in their respective country.
<p>Paragraph 9:</p> <p><i>Notes</i> the insufficient transfer and deployment of technology in developing countries, <i>encourages</i> the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network to continue collaborating with the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism and relevant financial institutions with a view to enhancing the capacity of developing countries to prepare project proposals and facilitating their access to available funding for technology development and transfer and for implement the results of their technology needs assessments and technical assistance</p>	The development and transfer of low-carbon and climate-resilient technology has been a key cross-cutting theme for the GEF since its establishment. It continues to be at the core of the programming directions for GEF-8. The GEF continues to explore opportunities for further collaboration in support of technology development and transfer with the TEC and the CTCN, as consistent with national priorities and based on country demand.

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of the Climate Technology Centre and Network, and strengthening the transfer and deployment of technology, and calls for regional balance in this work.	
Decision 10/CP.28: Linkages between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism	
<p>Paragraph 1: <i>Welcomes</i> the enhanced collaboration between the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund and invites them to continue their collaboration;</p>	Noted with appreciation.
<p>Paragraph 2: <i>Notes</i> the collaboration with the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism included in the joint work programme of the Technology Mechanism for 2023–2027 and invites the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network to use such collaboration to support technology development and transfer in developing countries with measurable, time-bound and result-oriented actions;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 3: <i>Welcomes</i> the funding for technology development and transfer provided and mobilized by the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility in partnership with the Climate Technology Centre and Network;</p>	Noted with appreciation.
<p>Paragraph 4: <i>Notes with appreciation</i> the information provided by the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism on the linkages and collaboration between them in their reports to the Conference of the Parties and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 7: <i>Welcomes</i> the ongoing work of the Climate Technology Centre and Network as part of its project selected for support under the Challenge Program for Adaptation Innovation of the Global Environment Facility as well as the collaboration of the respective national designated entities and operational focal points in the context of the project;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 8: <i>Also welcomes</i> the collaboration between the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism on identifying ways</p>	Through the CTCN, NDEs have been encouraged to liaise with their respective GEF OFPs and enhance collaboration through scaling up of projects and develop common

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<p>to enhance information-sharing and streamline coordination processes among national designated entities, national designated authorities of the Green Climate Fund and operational focal points of the Global Environment Facility and emphasized the importance of continued coordination among those national focal points;</p>	<p>approach to decision making on technology development and transfer-related matters. For example, GEF national dialogues and ECWs have been used as entry points to facilitate further coordination with GEF OFPs and explore potential cooperation in a country-driven manner. Specifically, in the reporting period, the NDEs of XXX participated in the national dialogues in their respective country.</p>
<p>Paragraph 9: <i>Encourages</i> the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network to consider opportunities to support developing countries in accessing funding from the Global Environment Facility and/or the Green Climate Fund for work on climate technology incubators and accelerators, taking into account the specific needs of the least developed countries and small island developing States;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 10: <i>Invites Parties</i>, the UNFCCC constituted bodies, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism and other relevant stakeholders to submit via the submission portal by 1 February 2024 views on maintaining and enhancing collaboration and cooperation between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism, including on linkages between the Mechanisms, taking into account the guiding questions contained in the annex;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 12: <i>Also requests</i> the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network, in consultation with the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, to organize an in-session workshop at the sixtieth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (June 2024) to take stock of the linkages between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism taking into account the views expressed in the submissions referred to in paragraph 10 above.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Decision 11/CP.28: Annual technical progress report of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building for 2023</p>	
<p>Paragraph 2: <i>Invites Parties</i>, as appropriate, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, the constituted bodies under</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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the Convention, United Nations organizations, observers and other stakeholders to consider the recommendations referred to paragraph 1 above and to take any necessary action, as appropriate and in accordance with their mandates.	
Decision 12/CP.28: Terms of reference for the second review of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building	
<p>Paragraph 3: <i>Invites</i> Parties, constituted bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, representatives of relevant processes under the Convention, and non-Party stakeholders to submit via the submission portal by 29 February 2024 views on the second review of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building based on the terms of reference contained in the annex for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its sixtieth session (June 2024).</p>	Also noted.
CMP18 Decisions	
Decision 3/CMP.18: Matters relating to the Adaptation Fund	
<p>Paragraph 2: <i>Notes</i> the following information, actions and decisions relating to the Adaptation Fund Board presented in the report referred to in paragraph 1 above: (k) the continued enhancement of complementarity and coherence with other climate funds and building of linkages with other constituted bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement;</p>	While this guidance is not directly addressed to the GEF, this is noted as it relates to the ongoing efforts of the Multilateral Climate Funds to enhance complementarity and coherence and their collective impact.
<p>Paragraph 15: <i>Welcomes</i> the work of the Adaptation Fund Board on complementarity and coherence with other multilateral climate funds with respect to accreditation and other areas of operations and encourages the Board to continue this work with a view to simplifying its access modalities, as appropriate;</p>	While this guidance is not directly addressed to the GEF, this is noted as it relates to the ongoing efforts of the Multilateral Climate Funds to enhance complementarity and coherence and their collective impact.
CMA 5 Decisions	
Decision 1/CMA.5: Outcome of the first global stock take	
<p>Paragraph 50: <i>Recalls</i> the United Nations Secretary-General's call made on World Meteorological Day on 23 March 2022 to protect everyone on Earth through universal coverage of early warning systems against extreme weather and climate change by 2027 and invited development</p>	In line with its adaptation strategy (2022-2026) priority theme of 'Climate information and early warning systems', the GEF Secretariat continues to work closely with partners of the Hydromet Alliance and the Systematic Observations Financing Facility

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partners, international financial institutions and the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism to provide support for implementation of the Early Warnings for All initiative;	(SOFF) to ensure coordinated and impactful support for LDCs and SIDS that is also aligned with the Early Warnings for All Initiative.
<p>Paragraph 75: <i>Emphasizes</i> the ongoing challenges faced by many developing country Parties in accessing climate finance and <i>encouraged</i> further efforts, including by the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, to simplify access to such finance, in particular for those developing country Parties that have significant capacity constraints, such as the least developed countries and small island developing States;</p>	The GEF takes note of this guidance and reaffirms its commitment to the ongoing efforts to simplify, improve and increase access. Ongoing activities relevant for these efforts, both in terms of internal operational streamlining and external harmonization with other MCFs are described above in this table, in the section responding to COP guidance to the GEF (see responses to paragraphs 14 and 19 of Decision 7/CP.28: Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Global Environment Facility).
<p>Paragraph 82: <i>Recognizes</i> the importance of the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism and the Adaptation Fund in the climate finance architecture, <i>welcomes</i> the new pledges to the Fund made at this session, <i>urges</i> all contributors to fulfil their pledges in a timely manner and invites the contributors to ensure the sustainability of the resources of the Fund, including the share of proceeds;</p>	Noted with appreciation for the recognition.
<p>Paragraph 83: <i>Strongly urged</i> the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism to make full use of their current replenishment, calls on multilateral development banks and other financial institutions to further scale up investments in climate action and calls for a continued increase in the scale, and effectiveness of, and simplified access to, climate finance, including in the form of grants and other highly concessional forms of finance;</p>	Noted. As of March 31, 2024, with less of two years or 50% worth of programming time within the GEF8 cycle, 44% of the GEF8 Climate Change Focal Area resources have been committed to new projects and programs in developing countries.
<p>Paragraph 95: <i>Underscores</i> the importance of reforming the multilateral financial architecture, inter alia, multilateral development banks, acknowledges the updated vision statement by the World Bank to create a world free of poverty on a livable planet and by the multilateral development banks to strengthen collaboration for greater impact, and calls on their shareholders to expeditiously implement that vision and continue to</p>	Noted.

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significantly scale up the provision of climate finance in particular through grants and concessional instruments;	
<p>Paragraph 105: <i>Encourages</i> the Technology Executive Committee, the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism to enhance the involvement of stakeholders as they take action to strengthen the linkages between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism;</p>	<p>The GEF takes note of this guidance and stands ready to support the involvement of stakeholders as consistent with national priorities and the GEF's mandate.</p>
<p>Paragraph 110: <i>Decides</i> to establish a technology implementation programme, supported by, inter alia, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, to strengthen support for the implementation of technology priorities identified by developing countries, and to address the challenges identified in the first periodic assessment of the Technology Mechanism, and invites the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its sixty-first session (November 2024) to take into account the technology implementation programme in its consideration of the Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer, with a view to recommending a draft decision on the matter for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement at its sixth session;</p>	<p>The GEF takes note of this guidance and reaffirms its commitment to support the implementation of technology options as consistent with national priorities and based on country demand.</p>
<p>Paragraph 120: <i>Requests</i> the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism and the Adaptation Fund to further enhance support for capacity-building in developing countries and to provide updates thereon in their annual reports to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement and encourages Parties to further enhance support for capacity-building, including through international cooperation;</p>	<p>The GEF continues to support capacity building needs by integrating capacity building elements into its projects and programmes, in a country-driven manner.</p> <p>Enabling activities and CBIT projects are entirely devoted to building and installing capacity-building under the Convention and the Paris Agreement. In addition, all approved GEF projects and programs, with very few exceptions, include components, outcomes and activities aimed at building and installing capacity to either limit or deal with the impacts or climate change, at national or local level.</p> <p>The large majority of projects with climate mitigation objectives addresses technical training, education and public awareness, enhancement of policies and enabling environments and institutional capacity building. Projects supported by the CBIT focus</p>

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	<p>on institutional capacity building and GHG inventories, emission database management and systems for collecting, managing and utilizing activity data and emission factors. For climate adaptation projects, efforts include capacity building for implementation of adaptation measures in various relevant sectors, education, training and public awareness, and enhancement of enabling environments.</p> <p>Additional capacity support is also made available, specifically for climate change adaptation, through the GEF regional adaptation programming and strategy workshops in LDCs and SIDS, as provided for under its new dedicated program for the GEF 8 cycle.</p> <p>The GEF continues to track and report in its annual report to the COP activities that are related to the UNFCCC capacity-building framework and its 15 priority areas, as listed in in decision 2/CP.7.</p>
<p>Paragraph 188: <i>Encourages</i> the relevant operating entities of the Financial Mechanism and the constituted bodies under or serving the Paris Agreement to continue to provide, within their mandates, capacity-building support for the preparation and communication of the next nationally determined contributions.</p>	<p>The GEF stands ready to provide capacity-building support for countries to prepare and implement their next round of NDCs. Countries can access resources from their GEF STAR allowances for this purpose and can continue to use CBIT resources for objectives that are closely related. Indeed, as of March 31, 2024, about 59.8 percent of CBIT country projects have included objectives related to NDC enhancement and policy analysis/review.</p> <p>The GEF has been invited by the UNFCCC Secretariat and the UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centers (RCCs) to participate and contribute to several workshops and events intended to raise awareness and present the type of support available from different international organizations and development partners for the preparation and implementation stages of the new round of NDCs, which is due for submission to the UNFCCC at the end of 2025.</p>

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	<p>In addition, several ongoing GEF projects and programs include activities that are ultimately designed to support the in-country processes contributing to the preparation of the new or updated NDCs. One such example is the Net-Zero Nature-Positive Accelerator Integrated Program, under which 12 countries have been selected globally to implement national climate projects. These countries, representing a balanced regional distribution, are receiving financing from the GEF to prepare or enhance the ambition of their long term low-emission development plans and NDCs through support targeting, inter alia, socio-economic modeling and data analysis, enabling informed decision making and identification of the most cost-effective, socially-just and climate-positive policy reforms, to be prioritized for inclusion in the upcoming or successive rounds of NDC updates.</p>
Decision 2/CMA.5: Global goal on adaptation	
<p>Paragraph 25: <i>Recognizes</i> the importance of the timeliness and predictability of adaptation finance and the need to accelerate efforts to enhance access to adaptation finance, with a focus on facilitating direct access by harmonizing and simplifying access procedures.</p>	Noted.
Decision 4/CMA.5: Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme referred to in decision 4/CMA.4	
<p>Paragraph 10: <i>Requests</i> the secretariat to organize, under the guidance of the co-chairs of the work programme, future global dialogues and investment-focused events in a manner that enables effective engagement of participants, including by (c) enhancing the investment-focused events, with a view to unlocking finance, including through presentations by Parties to potential financiers, and by inviting to the events more multilateral development banks, financial institutions and representatives of relevant multilateral climate funds, including the Green Climate Fund.</p>	Noted. The GEF stands ready to participate and contribute to this work programme.
Decision 8/CMA.5: New collective quantified goal on climate finance	
<p>Paragraph 14:</p>	Noted.

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<p><i>Invites</i> Parties, constituted bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, climate finance institutions, observers and other stakeholders, including from the private sector, to submit views in advance of each technical expert dialogue and meeting under the ad hoc work programme via the submission portal.</p>	
<p>Decision 9/CMA.5: Matters relating to the Standing Committee on Finance</p>	
<p>Paragraph 11: <i>Invites</i> Parties, constituted bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, climate finance institutions, observers and observer organizations, and other stakeholders, particularly from the private sector, to submit via the submission portal by 31 March 2024 their views on the issues to be addressed during the workshops under the Sharm el- Sheikh Dialogue on Article 2, paragraph 1(c) of the Paris Agreement</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Decision 11/CMA.5: Guidance to the Global Environment Facility</p>	
<p>Paragraph 1: <i>Recommends</i> that the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-eighth session transmit to the Global Environment Facility the guidance contained in paragraphs 2–12 below;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 2: <i>Welcomes</i> the support provided in accordance with Article 13 of the Paris Agreement through the Global Environment Facility to developing countries in relation to their implementation of the enhanced transparency framework during the reporting period (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023), including support for: (a) Preparing biennial transparency reports, including through the combined application process for preparing multiple biennial transparency reports and the expedited process for projects related to biennial transparency reports; (b) Implementing 89 projects under the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency in 87 countries aimed at building national capacity to implement the enhanced transparency framework;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation for the recognition of the efforts by the GEF to support the implementation of Article 13 of the Paris Agreement.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3: <i>Underlines</i> the importance of providing adequate and predictable support to developing countries for preparing biennial transparency reports;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 4:</p>	<p>The GEF has continued to provide timely support to developing countries for the</p>

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<p><i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue efforts to provide, in an expeditious manner, adequate, predictable and timely financial support to developing countries for preparing biennial transparency reports, and to enhance collaboration with its implementing agencies to promote timely delivery of support;</p>	<p>preparation of their BTRs during the reporting period. Following the work conducted in the previous reporting periods to define and adequately communicate modalities of support provision for BTRs, the GEF Secretariat continued to work closely with countries requesting support for BTR preparation, with the view to allow sufficient lead time for countries to prepare and submit their first BTR by the due date of no later than December 31, 2024. As of March 31, 2024, the GEF has approved BTR support to 103 countries for 144 BTRs, and three additional countries have submitted requests for GEF financial support for BTR preparation.</p> <p>The GEF also continued to provide funding to support countries through the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). Each CBIT proposal submitted to the GEF Secretariat has received support, upon technical clearance, in line with the Paris Agreement decision to provide support upon request. As of March 31, 2024, the entire CBIT portfolio includes 96 projects covering 88 countries, 88 national projects, one regional project (covering four countries), and seven global projects, totaling \$159.7 million, including GEF project financing, Agency fees, and PPGs. Progress made on the CBIT, including portfolio analysis and outlook, is presented to the 67th Council in an information document.</p>
<p>Paragraph 5: <i>Underscores</i> the importance of the Global Environment Facility exploring alternative programming modalities, procedures and processes for facilitating and expediting access to financial resources for enabling activities;</p>	<p>The GEF takes note of this guidance and reaffirms its commitment to its ongoing efforts to simplify and increase access to its resources, including for enabling activities. Operational improvements implemented in previous reporting periods within GEF8 included: (i) the revision and streamlining of all funding application templates (including the forms available for the submission of PIFs for MSPs and FSPs, PFDs, and the template to request enabling activities), (ii) the introduction of the possibility for Parties to request their entire resource envelope for</p>

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	<p>enabling activities and reporting within one 4-year GEF cycle (which includes one national communication and two BTRs), with one single bundle application, (iii) the establishment of coordination practices between the GEF and its agencies to ensure support is provided to as many developing countries as possible, (iv) the provision of online and in-person workshops together with the UNFCCC, the CBIT Global Support Programme (CBIT-GSP) and GEF agencies to developing countries about support provided by the GEF to enabling activities and the CBIT, (v) bilateral meetings with developing countries, upon request, to further explain modalities of support and offer advice and troubleshooting as needed.</p> <p>These measures have contributed to shorten application to approval times substantially, with averages for new submission now ranging between 1 and 3 months.</p>
<p>Paragraph 6: <i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to include in its annual report to the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-ninth session (November 2024) information on lessons learned with respect to enabling activities, in particular the costs, access modalities and delivery of support to prepare the first biennial transparency reports;</p>	<p>Noted, the annual report of the GEF to the COP will include information to address this guidance.</p>
<p>Paragraph 7: <i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility in administering the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund to take into account, in the context of its adaptation strategy, the United Arab Emirates Framework for Global Climate Resilience referred to in decision 2/CMA.5, and to explore ways to support Parties in achieving the global goal on adaptation;</p>	<p>Noted. The GEF appreciates the importance of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience to guide the achievement of the global goal on adaptation and the review of overall progress in achieving it, as well as guide and strengthen efforts toward reducing vulnerability and enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience. As such, the GEF will continue to observe and engage in relative discussions under the UNFCCC process, as relevant, related to the development of this goal, including with a view of informing the GEF's climate change adaptation strategy for the next GEF cycle.</p>
<p>Paragraph 8:</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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<p><i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to consider including in its annual report to the Conference of the Parties information on support provided for research development and demonstration;</p>	
<p>Paragraph 9: <i>Also encouraged</i> the Global Environment Facility to further explore ways to provide support for assessing developing countries' needs and priorities in a country-driven manner, including technology and capacity-building needs, and for translating climate finance needs into action;</p>	<p>The GEF continues to provide support to developing country Parties in assessing their needs and priorities in a country-driven manner, including technology and capacity-building needs, and in translating climate finance needs into action. Among other efforts, the GEF continues to provide resources for transparency-related capacity-building through the CBIT, for technology needs assessments (TNAs), and for other initiatives such as expanded constituency workshops (ECWs), in an effort to enhance the abilities of developing countries to assess their needs and priorities and to translate climate finance needs into action.</p>
<p>Paragraph 10: <i>Further encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to further strengthen its approach to mobilizing private finance, including through blended finance, with a view to de-risking scalable projects in developing countries and contributing to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement;</p>	<p>The programming of resources under the GEF's Blended Finance Global Program continued during the reporting period. As of March 31st, 2024, out of the GEF-8 envelope of US\$ 196 million, US\$ 132 million have now been programmed in 8 highly innovative operations of which 5 projects are under the CCM focal area. The projects selected seek to support new technologies like Green Hydrogen in Chile, support financial structures that target Scope 3 emissions, or focus on replicability and scale up of existing technologies in renewable energy and energy efficiency with high participation of the private sector. The latter is the case of the DBSA's Private Sector Energy Efficiency Programme Phase 2 that will establish a risk-sharing facility to foster commercial lending for energy efficiency improvements by SMEs in South Africa. In this project, the co-financing achieved is above USD 500 million resulting in a co-financing ratio of 1:34 (of which 1:33.4 is from the Private sector).</p> <p>The IFC/GEF Green Global Supply Chain Decarbonization Platform is a first-of-its-kind project that targets Scope 3 emissions across</p>

COP 28 Decision ³⁰ / CMP 18 Decision ³¹ / CMA 5 Decision ³² / SBI 59 Conclusion ³³	GEF's Response
	<p>an entire value chain. The platform proposes a financial mechanism that blends the financing from the IFC, a textile and apparel Brand (private sector company) and the GEF to provide long-term, green-linked loans to manufacturers, suppliers of the brand across emerging markets. The project will also take this opportunity to systematically move participating supplier factories to safer chemical alternatives in production and to provide substantial climate mitigation outcomes (3 million tCO₂e), while benefitting 150,000 people.</p>
<p>Paragraph 11: Encourages the Global Environment Facility to participate in the workshops referred to in paragraph 14 of decision 18/CMA.5;</p>	<p>Noted, the GEF intends to participate to the referenced workshops.</p>
<p>Paragraph 12: Requests the Global Environment Facility to consider ways to enhance the institutional capacity of developing country Parties to assist them in meeting their reporting requirements under the Paris Agreement in accordance with its Article 13, in the context of its enabling activities, and to report thereon in its annual report to the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-ninth session.</p>	<p>The GEF has continued to program resources to assist developing countries in strengthening their institutional capacity in relation to the reporting requirements under the Paris Agreement. As mentioned above in this table, the primary objective of the CBIT is indeed that of building such institutional capacity.</p> <p>Analysis of the CBIT portfolio shows that, as of March 31, 2024, CBIT support is primarily being used by countries to develop the necessary institutional arrangements and build their technical capacity to track mitigation progress (80.4 and 90.2 percent of projects, respectively). Also, 28.3 percent of projects include developing projections or scenario modeling as a component. This is encouraging as it indicates that CBIT is assisting countries with some of the more advanced and complex aspects of the transparency requirements under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement.</p>
<p>Decision 12/CMA.5: Matters relating to the Adaptation Fund</p>	
<p>Paragraph 2: Notes the following information, actions and decisions relating to the Adaptation Fund Board presented in the report referred to in paragraph 1 above: (k) the continued enhancement of complementarity and</p>	<p>While this guidance is not directly addressed to the GEF, this is noted as it relates to the ongoing efforts of the MCFs to enhance</p>

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coherence with other climate funds and building of linkages with other constituted bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement;	complementarity and coherence and their collective impact.
<p>Paragraph 15:</p> <p><i>Welcomes</i> the work of the Adaptation Fund Board on complementarity and coherence with other multilateral climate funds with respect to accreditation and other areas of operations and encouraged the Board to continue this work with a view to simplifying its access modalities, as appropriate.</p>	While this guidance is not directly addressed to the GEF, this is noted as it relates to the ongoing efforts of the MCFs to enhance complementarity and coherence and their collective impact.
Decision 14/CMA.5: Enhancing climate technology development and transfer to support implementation of the Paris Agreement	
<p>Paragraph 5:</p> <p><i>Invites</i> Parties to explore ways of enhancing the provision of technical and logistical support to their national designated entities and improving national-level coordination, including of national designated entities with operational focal points of the Global Environment Facility, national designated authorities of the Green Climate Fund, and designated authorities and national implementing entities of the Adaptation Fund;</p>	Through the CTCN, NDEs have been encouraged to liaise with their respective GEF OFPs and enhance collaboration through scaling up of projects and develop common approach to decision making on technology development and transfer-related matters. For example, GEF national dialogues and ECWs have been used as entry points to facilitate further coordination with GEF OFPs and explore potential cooperation in a country-driven manner. Specifically, in the reporting period, the NDEs of XXX participated in the national dialogues in their respective country
<p>Paragraph 9:</p> <p><i>Notes</i> the insufficient transfer and deployment of technology in developing countries, encourages the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network to continue collaborating with the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism and relevant financial institutions with a view to enhancing the capacity of developing countries to prepare project proposals and facilitating their access to available funding for technology development and transfer and to implement the results of their technology needs assessments and technical assistance of the Climate Technology Centre and Network, and strengthening the transfer and deployment of technology, and calls for regional balance in this work.</p>	The development and transfer of low-carbon and climate-resilient technology has been a key cross-cutting theme for the GEF since its establishment. It continues to be at the core of the programming directions for GEF-8. The GEF continues to explore opportunities for further collaboration in support of technology development and transfer with the TEC and the CTCN, as consistent with national priorities and based on country demand.
Decision 15/CMA.5: Annual technical progress report of the Paris Committee on Capacity- building for 2023	
Paragraph 2:	

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<i>Invites</i> Parties, as appropriate, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, the constituted bodies under the Convention, United Nations organizations, observers and other stakeholders to consider the recommendations referred to paragraph 1 above and to take any necessary action, as appropriate and in accordance with their mandates.	Noted.
Decision 16/CMA.5: Agenda Item 12: Terms of reference for the second review of the Paris Committee on capacity-building	
<p>Paragraph 4: <i>Invites</i> Parties, constituted bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, representatives of relevant processes under the Convention, and non-Party stakeholders to submit via the submission portal by 29 February 2024 views on the second review of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building based on the terms of reference contained in the annex for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its sixtieth session (June 2024).</p>	Noted.
Decision 17/CMA.5: Work programme under the framework for non-market approaches referred to in Article 6, paragraph 8, of the Paris Agreement and in decision 4/CMA.3	
<p>Paragraph 8: <i>Recalls</i> decision 8/CMA.4, paragraph 8, which invited interested Parties, relevant bodies, institutional arrangements and processes under the Convention and the Paris Agreement related to, inter alia, mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building, including United Nations bodies, multilateral, bilateral and other public donors, and private and non-governmental organizations to provide information on financial, technology and capacity-building support available or provided for identifying, developing or implementing non-market approaches for recording on the UNFCCC web- based platform;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 16: <i>Requests</i> the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, as the convenor of the Glasgow Committee on Non-market Approaches, to invite interested Parties, relevant bodies, institutional arrangements and processes under the Convention and the Paris Agreement related to, inter alia, mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building, including United Nations</p>	Also noted.

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<p>bodies, multilateral, bilateral and other public donors, and private and non-governmental organizations, to have a focused exchange of views on financial, technology and capacity- building support available or provided for identifying and developing non-market approaches, including on enhancing access to various types of support and identifying investment opportunities and actionable solutions that support the achievement of nationally determined contributions, as part of the in-session workshop referred to in paragraph 15(c) above.</p>	
<p>Decision 18/CMA.5: Provision of financial and technical support to developing country Parties for reporting and capacity-building</p>	
<p>Paragraph 1: <i>Welcomes</i> the action taken by the Global Environment Facility to provide support to developing country Parties for preparing their biennial transparency reports and building their institutional and technical capacity for implementing the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation of the recognition.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3: <i>Appreciates</i> the efforts of the Global Environment Facility in developing an expedited process for projects combining multiple reports, including biennial transparency reports and national communications;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation of the recognition.</p>
<p>Paragraph 4: <i>Acknowledges</i> the increase in the allocation to the climate change focal area set aside for enabling activities, including the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency, from USD 165 million in the seventh replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility to USD 220 million in the eighth cycle, and welcomes that, within the agreed resource allocation framework for the eighth cycle, USD 75 million has been allocated to the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency, a 36 per cent increase on the allocation in the seventh cycle;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 5: <i>Welcomes</i> the reports by the Global Environment Facility on its progress in supporting implementation of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation of the recognition.</p>

COP 28 Decision ³⁰ / CMP 18 Decision ³¹ / CMA 5 Decision ³² / SBI 59 Conclusion ³³	GEF's Response
<p>Paragraph 6: <i>Appreciates</i> the oral report made by the Global Environment Facility at the fifty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation under the agenda items on the provision of financial and technical support for developing country Parties for reporting under the Convention and the Paris Agreement;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 7: <i>Also appreciates</i> the launch of the Climate Transparency Platform, an online tool for facilitating reporting by developing country Parties under the enhanced transparency framework;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 8: <i>Acknowledges</i> the existing financial, technical and capacity-building support for developing country Parties to address challenges in implementing the enhanced transparency framework that is available through bilateral, multilateral and other channels;</p>	Noted.
<p>Paragraph 11: <i>Underscores</i> the importance of the Global Environment Facility continuing its efforts to provide adequate and timely support to developing country Parties for implementing the enhanced transparency framework, to further simplify the existing processes for approving projects under the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies, and exploring alternative programming modalities, procedures and processes for facilitating and expediting access to financial resources for enabling activities for supporting developing country Parties in meeting their requirements under the enhanced transparency framework and for building and enhancing their institutional and technical capacity for reporting under the Paris Agreement on a continuous basis;</p>	<p>Regarding mobilization of finance for reporting and enabling activities under the UNFCCC, the GEF continued to review and approve projects in a timely manner during the reporting period. The GEF Trust Fund continued to support National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), through the programming of medium-sized and full-sized projects.</p> <p>Following the work conducted in the previous reporting periods to define and communicate modalities of support provision for BTRs, the GEF Secretariat continued to work closely with countries requesting support for BTR preparation, with the view to allow sufficient lead time for countries to prepare and submit their first BTR by the due date of no later than December 31, 2024. As of March 31, 2024, the GEF has approved BTR support to 103 countries for 144 BTRs, and three additional countries have submitted requests for GEF financial support for BTR preparation.</p> <p>The GEF also continued to provide funding to support countries through the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). Each CBIT proposal submitted to the GEF</p>

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	<p>Secretariat has received support, upon technical clearance, in line with the Paris Agreement decision to provide support upon request. As of March 31, 2024, the entire CBIT portfolio includes 96 projects covering 88 countries, 88 national projects, one regional project (covering four countries), and seven global projects, totaling \$159.7 million, including GEF project financing, Agency fees, and PPGs. Progress made on the CBIT, including portfolio analysis and outlook, is presented to the 67th Council in an information document.</p> <p>Regarding the simplification of existing processes for approving GEF projects, the GEF continues its efforts to streamline its operational procedures and increase efficiency of access to its funds, in consultation with the other GEF partners, particularly the GEF implementing agencies. The GEF-8 Replenishment Policy Recommendations include a decision to explore areas for streamlining the GEF project cycle, with an objective of reducing transaction costs and facilitating faster access to GEF resources by countries. In response to such decision and to similar guidance received from the COP at different sessions, the GEF continues to pursue efforts to further simplify information requirements for designing and implementing its projects and programmes.</p> <p>As reported in the previous reporting period, in the first half of the GEF8 cycle the GEF has revised and streamlined all its funding application templates, including the forms available for the submission of Project Information Form (PIF) for mid- and full-size projects, the Program Framework Document (PFD) for multi country programs, and the template to request Enabling Activity funding for reporting obligations from the GEF Climate Change Set Aside. From the preliminary observations over the first year of GEF8, the use of the new templates has</p>

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	<p>resulted in substantially shorter project submission documents.</p> <p>In addition, one significant measure that was considered and approved by the GEF Council at its 66th Council Meeting (February 2024) was increasing the cap on the size of Medium-Sized Projects (MSPs) from US\$ 2 to 5 million.¹¹ The financing ceiling for MSPs was initially set at US\$ 1 million and was later raised to US\$2 million in 2012.¹² This most recent increase in the MSP cap is expected to enable a much greater number of projects and value of GEF financing to benefit from the more streamlined one-step approval process.</p> <p>In addition, with the establishment of a simplified project and program cycle for the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), which is managed by the GEF Secretariat, it is expected that experiences with the deployment of these further simplified processes will be assessed and will inform the extent to which further simplification measures can be applied to the GEF Trust Fund project cycle.</p>
<p>Paragraph 14: <i>Requests</i> the secretariat to organize an in-person workshop, to be held at the sixtieth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (June 2024), as well as regional online workshops to be held prior to that session, with the relevant stakeholders, such as the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies, as appropriate, on support available to developing country Parties for preparing their biennial transparency reports and enhancing sustainable institutional capacity and national reporting systems within their Governments for implementing the enhanced transparency framework, and in providing guidance on the application process for transparency-related projects.</p>	<p>The GEF stands ready to participate and provide inputs into the in-person workshop to be organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat at the sixtieth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (June 2024).</p> <p>In addition, the GEF has participated to four regional workshops organized by the UNFCCC in advance of SB60, covering respectively (i) Latin America and the Caribbean and Northern America, (ii) Africa and Europe, (iii) Asia and Pacific and (iv) the Pacific, which were held between April 15 and 18, 2024.</p>
<p>SBI 59 Conclusions</p> <p>Agenda Item 14 of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation: Matters relating to the least developed countries</p>	

COP 28 Decision ³⁰ / CMP 18 Decision ³¹ / CMA 5 Decision ³² / SBI 59 Conclusion ³³	GEF's Response
<i>Expressed</i> appreciation to the entities undertaking activities to support the Least Developed Countries, including in accessing funding for adaptation action, such as the organization by the Global Environment Facility of workshops for African, Asian and Pacific Least Developed Countries, and requested the Least Developed Countries Expert Group to contribute to such activities, as appropriate;	Noted with appreciation for the recognition
<i>Noted</i> that as at 4 December 2023, of the 46 Least Developed Countries, 5 had accessed funding related to the process to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) through the Least Developed Countries Fund during the eighth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility (2022–2026);	Noted.
<i>Requested</i> the Least Developed Countries Expert Group to convene a meeting with the Adaptation Fund, the GCF, the GEF and other relevant organizations, as part of NAP Expo 2024, to identify ways to assist the Least Developed Countries in expeditiously implementing adaptation action based on priorities identified in their NAPs, and to include recommendations in its reports to the SBI with a view to addressing the challenges, gaps and needs that the Least Developed Countries continue to face in accessing funding for implementing NAPs;	The GEF appreciated the opportunity to meet with LEG members at the recent NAP Expo 2024 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, held in April 2024, to discuss ways to assist LDCs in expeditiously implementing climate adaptation action.
<i>Welcomed</i> the support provided by the Least Developed Countries Expert Group to the Least Developed Countries for addressing identified data gaps and other gaps and needs related to the process to formulate and implement NAPs, including through the Open NAPs and NAP Data initiatives, and the continued collaboration of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group with the Adaptation Fund Board, Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility secretariats on enhancing access to funding by the Least Developed Countries for implementing NAPs under the NAP implementation pipeline development initiative and requested the Least Developed Countries Expert Group to scale up these collaborative efforts;	The GEF looks forward for continued collaboration with LEG and other partners for enhancing access to the LDCF.
<i>Noted</i> with appreciation the financial pledges, totaling USD 141.74 million, made by the Governments of Belgium, France, Germany, Norway, Spain and Sweden to the Least Developed Countries Fund at the Global Environment Facility pledging conference held on 4 December 2023, and called for additional contributions to the Fund.	The GEF takes note of the appreciation and looks forward to additional contributions to the LDCF and SCCF in the GEF-8 period.

Table 3: Decision on the Collaboration with the GEF Adopted by UNCCD COP 15 and GEF’s Response

UNCCD COP 15 Decision ³⁵	GEF’s Response
<i>Takes note</i> of the report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session on the activities of the Global Environment Facility as they relate to sustainable land management for the period 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2021, as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(20)/4;	Noted.
<i>Welcomes</i> a (i) strong eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility; (ii) a robust increase to land degradation focal area resources; and calls for (iii) a continuous focus on land-based actions through Global Environment Facility Impact/Integrated Programs; and (iv) opportunities to enhance synergies among all focal areas bearing in mind the importance of the land degradation focal area as integral to those areas; (v) consideration of individuals and communities in situations of vulnerability across all sectors;	Noted with appreciation with regard to points (i) and (ii). Regarding to points (iii) and (iv), the GEF-8 programming directions have an increased focus on land-based actions implemented through Integrated Programs and continue to provide opportunities for enhanced synergies among all focal areas through multifocal area programming. Regarding point (v), the LDFA strategy considers and specifically targets those who are vulnerable to a range of issues such as food insecurity, drought, poverty, climate change impacts on land, including through emphasis on vulnerable groups such as women, children and youth.
<i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to continue its support for countries in programming land degradation focal area resources to combat desertification/land degradation and drought and achieve their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, including in the context of land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes;	The GEF-8 LDFA programming strategy continues to support the UNCCD agenda and is fully aligned with the land degradation neutrality (LDN) concept to support countries to achieve their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets. Furthermore, the GEF encourages countries to apply the UNCCD LDN guidelines for the design and implementation of land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes. A report with details about the achievements and lessons learned from GEF’s LDN project portfolio is available on the GEF website ³⁶ .

³⁵ <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2022-06/cop23add1-advance.pdf>

³⁶ GEF, 2024: [Land Degradation Neutrality Knowledge Management and Learning Initiative: Learning from the GEF Portfolio of Projects](#).

UNCCD COP 15 Decision ³⁵	GEF's Response
<p><i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to support Parties to meet their reporting obligations in a timely manner;</p>	<p>As announced on the GEF website³⁷ on August 15, 2024, GEF Secretariat will make Enabling Activity funding available to countries up to 2 years in advance of the reporting deadline to facilitate preparation and data collection for reporting. The funding level per country is \$120,000, including agency fees. Funding can be accessed through two GEF agencies offering two support options, which are described in detail in the announcement. In addition, GEF secretariat will be supporting parties through a global support project (GSP IV) executed by the Global Mechanism to organize regional workshops and support a helpdesk for the online PRAIS reporting system.</p>
<p><i>Recommends</i> the Global Environment Facility to promote, as appropriate, the use of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification-designated World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies database into the Global Environment Facility projects and programmes to support knowledge-sharing and the dissemination of sustainable land management best practices;</p>	<p>Knowledge management is an important topic and is pursued strategically in all GEF projects including those in the LD portfolio, where there is a requirement to build in mechanisms to utilize existing knowledge on best practices in project design and share lessons learned during and after the project implementation. GEF Secretariat, in close cooperation with World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT), encourages project implementing and executing agencies to use the WOCAT database as appropriate, especially in projects applying SLM practices. A direct link to the WOCAT database has been established on the GEF website.</p>
<p><i>Notes with appreciation</i> the Global Environment Facility's engagement to initiate and support the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, and requests continued Global Environment Facility support and partnership engagement;</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation of recognition. During the reporting period, GEF has invested \$87.00 million in the multi-trust fund program "Transformation Approach to Large Scale Investment in Support of the Implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative - TALSISI-GGWI" (GEF ID 11455), including resources from the GEF trust fund and the LDCF. The program approach is aligned with the vision and key elements of the proposed Great Green Wall (GGW) Accelerator Strategy under the leadership of UNCCD, enabling a coordinated approach with the Green Climate</p>

³⁷ <https://www.thegef.org/documents/gef-announces-support-eligible-country-parties-unccd-reporting-gef-8>

UNCCD COP 15 Decision ³⁵	GEF's Response
	Fund (GCF) and other partners to advancing the GGWI.
<i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility to support the Southern Africa Great Green Wall Initiative;	GEF Secretariat is cooperating with the Global Mechanism and other key partners on upstream engagement with the Southern Africa Development commission (SADC), and in cooperation with the GCF. GEF Secretariat is advocating enhanced political commitment, and alignment of the initiative with the goals of objectives of other relevant conventions, in particular the UNFCCC. At a side event at the margins of the GEF Assembly, the GEF Secretariat announced its readiness to help advancing the Southern Great Wall Initiative through a \$2.25 million medium-sized project, which is currently under development and is expected to be submitted for review in the second half of 2024.
<i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to further align the land degradation focal area strategy implementation with the Convention goals to enable countries to address their desertification/land degradation and drought priorities, in particular through sustainable land management and the restoration of degraded lands;	The GEF-8 LDFA strategy continues to be fully aligned with the UNCCD Strategy and goals. Further the GEF-8 strategy has increased its attention to drought mitigation through including it in the goal statement as well as through a dedicated focal area objective LD-3, to provide countries with enhanced opportunities to address desertification, land degradation, and drought (DLDD) issues, particularly in drylands.
<i>Requests</i> the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support the implementation of the national drought plans and other drought-related policies, especially strengthening early warning, preparedness, mitigation and recovery, rehabilitation and monitoring systems and capacity-building;	The results of an internal analysis indicate that GEF has invested about \$608.84 million in 108 projects and programs related to drought mitigation and adaptation since GEF-1 (1994). The portfolio includes 60 different countries from all UNCCD Annexes and regional and global projects/programs. This portfolio of projects and programs is funded by three trust funds: the GEF Trust Fund, the LDCF, and the SCCF, and multi-trust fund combinations of the three funds. Focal area contributions come from Climate Change, Land Degradation, International Waters, and Biodiversity, making the portfolio truly integrated. The GEF-8 LDFA strategy, within its mandate, continues to give countries the opportunity to implement their national drought plans and other drought-related policies.

UNCCD COP 15 Decision ³⁵	GEF's Response
<p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to assess the feasibility of establishing a focal area for drought in order to increase the visibility and financial resources allocated to drought;</p>	<p>The GEF Secretariat, in consultation with various stakeholders, and based on an assessment of the historical and current support of drought related projects and programs as mentioned above, concluded that the establishment of a focal area for drought is neither feasible nor purposeful to increase the visibility and financial resources allocated to drought. Instead, GEF Secretariat proposes to continue with the integrated approach of funding drought related projects and programs through various GEF funding windows and to increase the visibility and financial resources through enhanced programming options in GEF-9, to be discussed during the replenishment negotiations as part of the GEF-9 programming strategy. Further, any change to the name of the focal area, for example to “Land Degradation, Desertification and Drought”, to increase the visibility of the topic will entail Council deliberations and approval. Such changes would also affect the GEF Instrument and require approval by the next GEF Assembly for the amendment of the GEF instrument, following a Council decision.</p>
<p><i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to further enhance the means to harness opportunities for leveraging synergies among the Rio conventions and other relevant environmental agreements, observing their respective mandates and goals, as well as with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, at the implementation level, including by encouraging collaboration amongst the national focal points to the Global Environment Facility, as well as the different Rio conventions and other relevant environmental agreements;</p>	<p>Noted. GEF continues to provide these opportunities in particular through the GEF-8 Integrated Programs which encourage countries to meet commitments under multiple conventions. GEF-8 programming also encourages policy coherence within countries, including by encouraging cross-sectoral cooperation and collaboration amongst the national focal points. Further, all convention focal points and GEF operational focal points are invited to participate in GEF national dialogues and expanded constituency workshops to facilitate engagement and collaboration to harness opportunities for leveraging synergies among the Rio conventions.</p>
<p><i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to report on the implementation of this decision as part of its next report to the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session.</p>	<p>Noted. GEF will report on the implementation of this decision as part of its next report to the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session. The report has been circulated to GEF Council for approval by mail on September 26, 2024.</p>

Table 4: Guidance Received from COP 10 and GEF’s Response

There are no updates for this reporting period.

Table 5: Additional Minamata COP Guidance and GEF’s Response

Additional Minamata COP Decision	GEF Response
<p>Decision MC-2/10 – Effectiveness Evaluation</p>	
<p>Paragraph 7: <i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to consider, within the guidance given by the Conference of the Parties, supporting eligible parties in the collection of essential data and facilitating the sustainable input of monitoring information at the local, subregional, regional and global levels to contribute towards the effectiveness evaluation, in alignment with the Facility’s guidance.</p>	<p>The GEF in providing funding for the third round of projects under the Stockholm Convention Global Monitoring Plan will fund, as appropriate, activities to contribute to the effectiveness evaluation of the Minamata Convention.</p>
<p>Decision MC-5/2 – Mercury supply sources and trade</p>	
<p>Paragraph 6: <i>Invites</i> parties, the Global Environment Facility, the Global Mercury Partnership and other stakeholders to support the activity set out in paragraph 5 (e) above. (5(e) Develop guidance to assist parties in identifying, managing and reducing mercury trade from primary mercury mining)</p>	<p>The GEF has supported a regional project in Latin America to manage trade in mercury as well as to address primary mercury mining in Mexico.</p>
<p>Decision MC-5/7 – Artisanal and small scale gold mining</p>	
<p>Paragraph 3: <i>Invites</i> the Global Environment Facility to include support to parties undertaking their first such reviews as part of the Facility’s enabling activity support available to parties, and, within that activity, to support the development and piloting of review guidance, supplementing the information in the guidance document on developing a national action plan to reduce and, where feasible, eliminate mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining, and of an online tool for parties to use when undertaking their reviews;</p>	<p>The GEF secretariat has developed guidelines for the review of the implementation of Article 7 in consultation with the Minamata Secretariat and the global mercury partnership and has presented these guidelines for the approval of GEF council in document GEF/C.67/11³⁸. Piloting of review guidance will be done in consultation with the GEF agencies supporting enabling activities for this Convention and will be used to update the guidance document on developing ASGM National Action Plans.</p>

³⁸ Guidelines for the Preparation of the Review of the Implementation of Article 7 of the Minamata Convention

Additional Minamata COP Decision	GEF Response
<p>Paragraph 4: <i>Calls</i> on parties and the Global Environment Facility to make further efforts to seek opportunities to advance implementation of article 7 in the context of projects relating to biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, and trade, and to continue to advance implementation of national action plans through projects and programmes;</p>	<p>The GEF supports parties to implement Article 7 through addressing mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining. This work is ongoing.</p>
<p>Decision MC-5/11 – Review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury</p>	
<p>Paragraph 1: <i>Welcomes</i> the report on the second review of the financial mechanism, on the basis of which the Conference of the Parties has undertaken the review in accordance with paragraph 11 of article 13;</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Paragraph 2: <i>Encourages</i> the Global Environment Facility to take into consideration, in the implementation of the programming directions for the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility trust fund, and in the discussions on the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility trust fund, the recommendations set out in the report on the second review of the financial mechanism;</p>	<p>The programming of resources in GEF-8 will take into consideration the recommendations of the second review and during the ninth replenishment the review will form part of the inputs into the development of the programming strategy for the implementation of the Minamata Convention.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3: <i>Notes</i> the importance of relevant parties working through their operational focal points to make prompt and full use of the programming directions and resource allocation for the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility trust fund, including with respect to undertaking mercury reduction activities in the integrated programmes and within, in particular, the biodiversity and climate change focal areas, and requests the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility to facilitate the exchange of information to enable that use;</p>	<p>The GEF Secretariat will include this information in outreach activities to the GEF OFPs.</p>
<p>Paragraph 4: <i>Provides</i> additional details to supplement the guidance of the Conference of the Parties to the Global Environment Facility, as follows</p>	
<p>a. The Global Environment Facility, in planning for its ninth replenishment period, should promote</p>	<p>Will be taken up during the ninth replenishment negotiations.</p>

Additional Minamata COP Decision	GEF Response
<p>synergies with other focal areas in line with decision MC-1/5, including the biodiversity focal area, as it advances work under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;</p>	
<p>b. In developing its programming directions and resource allocations for the ninth replenishment period, and in further developing projects and programmes under the programming directions for the eighth replenishment, the Global Environment Facility should take into account the time frames that parties must meet for implementation of mandatory obligations;</p>	<p>Will be taken up during the ninth replenishment negotiations.</p>

RELATIONS WITH THE CONVENTIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

ADDENDUM – UPDATE ON MAJOR MULTILATERAL MEETINGS HELD FROM NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER 2024

Introduction

132. This document provides the Council with an update on the activities of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in relation with major multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) related meetings which took place after the posting of Council document GEF/C.68/09 and prior to the 68th GEF Council. In particular, the document provides an overview on the 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 29), which took place from November 11 to 22, 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan, and the fifth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (Plastic INC-5) to Develop a Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the Marine Environment, which was held from November 25 to December 1, 2024, in Busan, Republic of Korea.

133. The 16th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD COP 16) has been taking place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from December 2 to 13, 2024. As the COP has not concluded by the time of the posting of this addendum, a summary of the COP outcomes and GEF engagement will be presented in the 69th GEF Council to be held in June 2025.

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change COP 29

134. UNFCCC COP 29, the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 6), the 19th COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 19), as well as subsidiary bodies meetings were convened from November 11 to 22 in Baku, Azerbaijan. The GEF delegation participated in the COP 29 meetings, headed by the GEF CEO.

135. At COP 29, Parties agreed to the Baku Climate Unity Pact, a package of decisions which most notably included the new collective quantified goal (NCQG) on climate finance.¹ The decision calls on all actors to scale up climate finance for developing countries to at least USD 1.3 trillion per year by 2035 to help developing countries achieve climate goals. It further sets a goal of at least USD 300 billion per year by 2035, with developed countries taking the lead, from a variety of sources.

136. Of particular relevance for the GEF, the outcome text decides that a significant increase of public resources should be provided through the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, the Adaptation Fund (AF), the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Special Climate

Change Fund (SCCF), and also decides to pursue efforts to at least triple annual outflows from those Funds from 2022 levels by 2030 at the latest, with a view to significantly scaling up the share of finance delivered through them in delivering on the goal.

137. The GEF CEO held several ministerial bilaterals at the COP to discuss and build a shared understanding with various countries regarding the role of the GEF, expectations for the GEF-9 replenishment, and need for operational enhancements.

138. The GEF delegation including senior staff members participated in various meetings and supported the negotiation process. During the COP, the GEF submitted an oral statement on GEF initiatives and achievements to update Parties, based on its annual report.

139. The GEF delegation also participated in contact groups and other sessions as requested to provide briefings to Parties and to respond to questions on GEF activities, its support to Parties, and its responses to COP guidance. Key negotiations topics the GEF Secretariat participated in and/or provided input to included, inter alia, finance, technology transfer, guidance to the GEF, matters relating to least developed countries, the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, global goal on adaptation, national adaptation plans, capacity building, transparency, loss and damage, among other topics.

140. The GEF received guidance from COP 29 and CMA 6, which, along with GEF's responses, will be reported on at the next GEF Council meeting. Key elements of the COP 29 and CMA 6 guidance are summarized below:

- (a) The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the COP and the GEF is to be modified, for consideration and approval by the GEF Council before COP 30 (November 2025), for the provision of guidance biennially thereafter, and at sessions held in the year preceding the final year of each replenishment, with a possibility to provide guidance outside of this cycle upon Party request.
- (b) Guidance to GEF further provided a list of considerations in the context of the GEF 9 replenishment cycle negotiations, e.g., consider the incorporation of just transition into national plans, establish nationally determined mechanisms to facilitate coordination of support received, consider ways to increase the contribution of adaptation in the GEF's project portfolio, consulting on technology-related programming.
- (c) On climate adaptation, the LDCF was requested to develop further measures to support recently graduated least developed countries with their smooth transition from LDC status. In addition, the COP in its decision on Guidance to the GEF expressed concern over the absence of the LDCF SCCF pledging session at the COP while acknowledging the largest ever LDCF SCCF work program for Fiscal Year 2024, and urged developed country parties to increase their voluntary contribution to the LDCF and SCCF.

- (d) On complementarity and coherence, the GEF was requested to continue to improve coherence among climate funds, including the Loss and Damage Fund, while ensuring no restrictions on access or reduction in available finance.
- (e) On transparency, the decisions invited the GEF to continue providing technical support for the preparation of national communications and requested the support provided by enabling activities and the Capacity-building for Transparency (CBIT) to be timely, to avoid gaps between project cycles, and to enhance the sustainability of national reporting systems.
- (f) UNFCCC was requested to organize a workshop together with the GEF and its Agencies during the sixty-first session of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB61) related to the preparation of the first Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs).

141. In its report to COP 30, the GEF will elaborate on the steps taken to respond to the guidance received from COP 29 and CMA 6. The report, covering the period from July 1, 2024, until June 30, 2025, is expected to be submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat in August 2025, upon approval by the GEF Council.

142. The four major multilateral climate funds (MCFs), namely the GEF, AF, Climate Investment Funds (CIF), and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) organized a joint pavilion at COP 29, co-hosting several high-level events and organizing meetings addressing joint and respective priorities.

143. The GEF co-organized and participated in one UNFCCC official side event with the COP 29 presidency. At this event, titled “High-Level Event on Empowering a Sustainable Future: Fueling Green Growth through Finance”, the Heads of the MCFs joined forces to discuss progress to date on their efforts in strengthening the complementarity and coherence among the funds and move towards harmonizing their procedures and to improve and streamline modalities of access to finance.

144. The GEF also hosted additional high-level and high-profile events. An event on “Announcing Winners and Progress of Challenge Program for Adaptation Innovation”, was held on November 15, 2024, during which the 13 winners of the third round of the open competition were announced. The Challenge Program, financed by the LDCF/SCCF, aims to pilot and de-risk new approaches to adaptation funding, leveraging donor support to create favorable conditions for private sector engagement and innovation. The 13 winners range from initiatives to enhance the adaptive capacity of women entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector through financial inclusion, to scaling up traditional fire management techniques for resilient ecosystems services through carbon credit generation, crowdfunding climate-smart loans, developing a virtual green bank for adaptation, and kickstarting international markets for resilience-building bonds. A press release was issued.¹

145. The GEF also organized a side event on “Rowing In the Same Direction: How Can Country Platforms Drive Policy Coherence for Climate and Nature?” on November 14, 2024, showcasing insights from the perspectives of representative decision-makers, practitioners, and GEF

programs on initiatives to promote policy coherence, particularly through country platforms, to help close the climate and nature financing gap – at the occasion of which was officially announced the GEF contribution to country platforms in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund and country partners including Madagascar, Benin, Cote d’Ivoire.

146. Senior GEF staff also participated in several other high-level or mandated events at COP 29, such as the Eighth Meeting of Informal coordination group for capacity-building under the Convention and the Paris Agreement on November 11, 2024 and the technical in-session Dialogue on Gender in Transparency, hosted by the UNFCCC Secretariat, on November 21, 2024.

Fifth Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Develop a Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the Marine Environment

147. The fifth and final scheduled session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution took place in Busan, South Korea from November 25 to December 1, 2024.

148. Despite progress in a number of negotiation topics and efforts to bridge differences, member States were unable to finalize a treaty text. The session was adjourned and will resume next year at a date to be determined.

149. The INC Chair released a Chair’s Text¹ on the final day of the INC on December 1, 2024, which was developed building on the outcomes of informal consultations and contributions from the Contact Group Co-Chairs and facilitators of information consultations. Member States agreed to transmit the Chair’s Text to the resumed session.

150. The GEF is one of the options under consideration by member States to serve as financial mechanism for the new instrument. The Chair’s Text includes Article 11 on Financial [Resources and] Mechanisms, with the following presented as paragraph 7:

“The mechanism shall include [a new dedicated independent multilateral fund [and a remediation fund and GEF trust fund]] [an existing fund] [and any other funds or entities] [the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund] operating under [the authority of] the Conference of the Parties. [The Conference of the Parties shall provide guidance on policies, programme priorities [and eligibility criteria for access to] and utilization of financial resources.]”¹

151. The GEF delegation, led by the Manager of Conventions and Funds, attended the session as an observer, and met with several recipient and donor countries as well as other stakeholders. The GEF Secretariat staff shared information on current and previous GEF support to address the plastic pollution in an integrated manner with multiple benefits. The delegation also provided

updates on the GEF family of funds and how the GEF would respond to various financing scenarios discussed among member States, if requested.

152. The GEF Secretariat organized a lunch information session on November 27, 2024 with approximately 100 participants from various member States, including donor and recipient countries. The session was opened by the Elected Co-Chair of the GEF Council. The panelists, including delegates from Cook Islands, Costa Rica, France (Council member), Norway, South Africa, Senegal (operational focal point and former Council member), and the United States shared experiences with the GEF and expectations on the future financial mechanism. The Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions also shared his perspectives on the effective partnership between countries and the financial mechanism.

The GEF will continue to engage in the INC process and provide information to member States and stakeholders to help inform the negotiations.