



GEF/ME/C.43/Inf. 01
October 17, 2012

GEF Council Meeting
November 13 – 15, 2012
Washington, D.C.

EVALUATION OF THE GEF FOCAL AREA STRATEGIES

(Prepared by the GEF Evaluation Office)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	1
1.1 CONCLUSIONS.....	1
1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	5
2. CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVE.....	8
2.1 CONTEXT.....	8
2.2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE.....	8
2.3 CONTRIBUTION TO OPS5.....	9
3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY.....	11
3.1 THEORY OF CHANGE APPROACH.....	11
<i>General Framework for GEF TOC.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>TOC construction for GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies.....</i>	<i>14</i>
3.2 ANALYSIS OF CONVENTION GUIDANCE.....	14
3.3 REAL-TIME DELPHI APPROACH.....	15
4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOCAL AREA STRATEGIES.....	16
4.1 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF GEF-5 FOCAL AREA STRATEGIES.....	16
<i>Evolution of Focal Area Strategies.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Formulation process of Focal Area Strategies.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Overview of indicative and programmed FA allocations.....</i>	<i>18</i>
4.2 GENERAL STRATEGY DESIGN.....	20
<i>Functions fulfilled by the GEF Focal Area Strategies.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Aspects less emphasized by GEF Focal Area Strategies.....</i>	<i>21</i>
4.3 ELEMENTS AND CAUSAL CHAINS.....	23
<i>The GEF “toolbox”.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Relation between local and global benefits.....</i>	<i>25</i>
4.4 OBSERVATIONS ON CONVENTION GUIDANCE.....	25
<i>Relationship between convention guidance and FA Strategies.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Focal Area Strategies’ approach to Capacity Development.....</i>	<i>30</i>
4.5 RESULTS OF REAL-TIME DELPHI PROCESS.....	31
<i>Quantitative responses.....</i>	<i>32</i>
LIST OF TECHNICAL PAPERS.....	35

1. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1: The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies fulfill an important function for GEF programming by defining areas of GEF activities, providing a general rationale for GEF engagement in these areas and identifying the types of activities to receive GEF support.

1. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies fulfill crucial functions for guiding GEF programming: a) define the general areas of activity the GEF should engage in by breaking down the Focal Areas' overarching goals into objectives; b) establish the reason for GEF engagement in a specific area by describing the corresponding environmental challenges and explaining the GEF's potential to contribute to a solution; and c) identify the types of GEF activities to be supported under a certain GEF objective including illustrative examples of concrete activities to receive GEF financing.

2. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies generally provide a clear picture of what the GEF intends to support during the GEF-5 replenishment period. The strategies thus serve as a guide for the GEF Secretariat on programming as well as an overview of fundable activities to inform recipient countries and GEF Agencies during project conception and development. In addition, the strategies include a Results Framework that defines expected outputs for each Focal Area objective. The Results Frameworks establish what the GEF intends to achieve and thereby serve as the basis for the GEF's Results Based Management system, a benchmark for evaluations, as well as the basis for resource allocation decisions during the GEF replenishment process.

Conclusion 2: The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies are not based on a systematic identification of envisaged causal relationships between the strategies' elements as well as the causal chains between GEF activities and expected results.

3. The GEF-5 Focal Areas in most cases do not explicitly and systematically discuss the causal relationships between different elements of the strategy. This pertains to the causal links between different types of GEF activities like the relationship between mutually reinforcing elements (e.g. enabling policy environment and successful demonstration). It also concerns the more complex chains of several causal links that are envisioned to lead from GEF activities to the achievement of results.

4. This does not mean that the causal links between GEF activities and the chains of causality towards the achievement of expected results are not recognized in de facto GEF programming. On the contrary, the Technical Papers 1-7 highlight a multitude of causal chains towards achievement of results that are implicit in the GEF Focal Area Strategies. Many of these causal links are identified and discussed in other publications of the GEF Secretariat and included in the GEF programming process. In most Focal Areas, they have however not been brought together in a systematic way and not been embedded as an explicit part of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies.

5. Using the system of causal links that is already reflected to a large degree in GEF programming as the basis for the GEF-6 Strategies could strengthen a strategic approach that allows for GEF projects to contribute only certain elements to the chain of causality towards results. This approach could reduce the burden on individual projects to cover a maximum of different elements. Instead, GEF programming could rely on a more modular approach based on an explicit understanding of how elements from different projects are to be linked in order to achieve a complete causal chain towards results. In addition, an explicit “system of causality” that includes causal relationships of elements from different Focal Areas could support and guide the design of Multi-Focal Area activities (see also recommendations 1 and 2).

Conclusion 3: The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies recognize the potential for broader adoption of results but in most cases do not systematically consider the pathways that could maximize the catalytic role of GEF activities.

6. The construction of Focal Area Strategy TOCs highlights that the strategic approaches expressed in the Focal Area Strategies have the potential to catalyze broader adoption of GEF results through replication, scaling-up, inducing market change and other mechanisms for uptake. While this potential is reflected to some degree in GEF programming, considerations on the pathways of action towards maximizing broader adoption through GEF activities is in most cases not an explicit and systematic part of the strategy. This underpins conclusions presented in OPS4, which highlights the catalytic role of the GEF, but points out that the path towards broader adoption has “never been clearly defined.”

7. As in the case of causal links (see conclusion 2), the potential for broader adoption is recognized by the GEF and partially reflected in GEF programming. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies in some instances refer to the influence of GEF activities on the larger national context and on the engagement of other actors. However, the strategies are in most cases not systematically based on considerations on chains of causality from GEF results to broader adoption that could serve a guiding framework for GEF programming that maximizes the GEF’s catalytic potential (see recommendation 3).

8. The level of consideration on pathways to broader adoption differs between Focal Area Strategies (see Technical Papers 1-7). Focal Area Strategies on Climate Change Mitigation and International Waters feature a comparably stronger link to broader adoption. The CCM Strategy emphasizes the facilitation of systemic changes and dedicates a significant part of the strategy to the direct support of broader adoption as an integral part of GEF activities in collaboration with other actors. The IW Strategy characteristically focuses on long-term processes that emphasize broader adoption over time.

Conclusion 4: The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies do not include a comprehensive approach to the creation and utilization of synergies between Focal Areas through Multi-Focal Area activities.

9. Multi-Focal Area (MFA) activities are rapidly gaining importance for the GEF portfolio. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies were formulated before this development. Consequently, the strategies provide limited guidance on how to utilize synergies between Focal Areas in a consistent and strategic way. The Focal Area Strategy on Land Degradation represents a partial

exception as it elaborates on linkages and potential synergies to other Focal Areas. However, none of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies includes a systematic discussion on how elements of different Focal Areas can be strategically combined to create effective Multi-Focal Area projects. During consultations in the context of the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* stakeholders have consistently raised the formulation of a strategic approach to MFA activities as a central challenge for the GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies (see also recommendation 2).

Conclusion 5: GEF activities regardless of Focal Area employ a certain “tool box” of elements and causal links that fulfill different purposes in each Focal Area Strategy, but are similar in their design.

10. The Focal Area Strategy TOCs illustrate that the elements and causal links embodied in the strategies fulfill different purposes in each Focal Area Strategy, but are similar in their design. This confirms the basic assumption of the General Framework for GEF TOC that GEF activities regardless of Focal Area employ a certain “tool box” of comparable elements and causal mechanisms. The basic categories and sub-categories established by the General Framework proved to be suitable for adequately capturing the elements in all Focal Area Strategies.

11. At the same time, each of the Focal Area Strategies retains its own unique character and internal logic. The differentiation between Focal Area Strategies derives from the distinctive selection and combination of common elements and causal links. The specific selection is mainly determined by the nature of environmental challenges a strategy addresses. For example, some objectives require an emphasis on market oriented elements and mechanisms like in the case of the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy; others rely more heavily on legally rooted activities like the Chemicals Strategy. However, all strategies combine market oriented and legal oriented elements. Other dimensions of differentiation include stakeholder composition (the type of stakeholders that the successful achievement of objectives particularly hinges on), and convention guidance to the GEF (see conclusion 7).

Conclusion 6: Many types of GEF activities identified in the GEF Focal Area Strategies build on creating local benefits for achieving Global Environmental Benefits.

12. Many of the elements of the “GEF Tool Box” identified in the Focal Area Strategies (see Conclusion 5) build on the creation of local benefits in order to ultimately achieve Global Environmental Benefits. GEF activities like changing economic incentive structures in favor of sustainable practices, demonstrating benefits of alternative livelihoods, or reducing initial investments through new financing mechanisms are offering local benefits in exchange for behavioral change that ultimately is envisioned to create Global Environmental Benefits.

13. This conclusion drawn from the Focal Area Strategy TOCs closely matches earlier findings presented in the GEF Evaluation Office’s study on the “The Role of Local Benefits in Global Environmental Programs” (2006) which states “that local and global benefits are strongly interlinked in many areas where the GEF is active. Changing human behavior is one of the critical underlying premises of the GEF approach to achieving global environmental gains, and local benefits play a central role in stimulating changes that produce and sustain such gains.”

Conclusion 7: GEF Focal Area Strategies are largely responsive to and shaped by convention guidance. CBD guidance has been detailed and restrictive and this has made it difficult for the GEF to formulate a strategic approach in the biodiversity focal area.

14. The mapping from convention guidance to the corresponding elements of Focal Area Strategies shows that GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies are largely responsive to the guidance of the conventions the GEF serves as financial mechanisms to. Correspondingly, differences in the nature of guidance from different conventions have shaped the corresponding Focal Area Strategies. To illustrate this aspect, the evaluation specifically compared the influence of convention guidance from CBD and UNFCCC on the Focal Area Strategies.

15. The CBD provides frequent, reiterated guidance on a high number of technical matters and prioritization of activities. CBD guidance tends to be concrete, prescriptive and specific, leaving little room for strategic interpretation. UNFCCC guidance is equally frequent with regard to the absolute amount of items of guidance. However, UNFCCC guidance focuses on issues directly relating to national obligations under the convention (national reporting) and largely refrains from concrete elaborations of technical issues or prioritization of areas to be supported by the GEF. UNFCCC guidance also differs from CBD guidance in its formulation which implies a greater degree of flexibility for the GEF to integrate guidance into an overall strategy.

16. The difference in CBD and UNFCCC guidance is reflected in the respective Focal Areas Strategies. The Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy reflects the large amount of distinct, prescriptive and at times fragmented CBD guidance through a number of separate objectives or sub-sections of objectives. A large number of specific issues and priority areas demanded by the CBD are prominently addressed by the BD Strategy following CBD decisions. CBD guidance however does not provide guidance on how it envisions these various aspects to be integrated into an overall strategic approach in a consistent, effective and efficient way. As a result, parts of the Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy appear less connected to the overarching strategic direction that is primarily embodied in Biodiversity objectives 1 and 2.

17. The objectives of the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy, following UNFCCC guidance that allows for flexibility of interpretation and integration of issues, display a high degree of consistency. The objectives are equally weighted, addressing the main areas of GEF activity in a balanced and integrated way.

18. The influence of CBD and UNFCCC guidance on the respective Focal Area Strategies highlights the potential tension between adequately reflecting convention guidance in the strategies on the one hand and the formulation of a balanced, integrated and coherent strategic approach on the other hand (see recommendation 4). In this context, already existing CBD mechanisms and ongoing processes aimed at streamlining and improving the strategic coherence of CBD convention guidance to the GEF need to be highlighted. The effort to reduce redundancies and consolidate guidance through the “Review of the Guidance to the Financial Mechanism”¹ represents a step towards reducing the overall quantity of guidance, albeit not

¹ COP IX (Decision IX/31 C, paragraph 1) requested a review of the guidance to the financial mechanism. The CBD Secretariat prepared the review with the objective to identify obsolete, repetitive and overlapping guidance, and compiled an updated list of the existing guidance to the financial mechanism. The review was submitted as a working document to the Ad Hoc Open-ended

decreasing the number of priority areas identified by the CBD to be supported by the GEF. Furthermore, the “Framework of programme priorities related to utilization of GEF resources” provides additional CBD guidance on the prioritization of GEF support. Most recently, the “Strategic Plan of the CBD for 2011-2020” aims at providing a more coherent and consistent overall framework for GEF support. However, results of these efforts are not visible yet.

Conclusion 8: Based on results of the Real-Time Delphi process, the elements of GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies are with few exceptions in correspondence with current scientific consensus. However, room for improvement from a scientific perspective exists in terms of relative prioritization of specific aspects and the selection of elements.

19. The quantitative responses provided by scientific experts during the Real-Time Delphi consultations on the scientific soundness of Focal Area Strategy objectives and elements converged around a rating of 6 (“fair”). Means and medians fell into the range of 5 (“somewhat”) to 7 (“considerably”) with few outliers in either direction. While these quantitative results imply room for further improvement, the qualitative responses show that the majority of answers do not suggest a lack of scientific soundness of the strategies’ existing elements. Instead, the suggestions for improvements mostly concern the relative prioritization of specific aspects over others as well as the selection of elements to be included in the strategies.

20. A partial exception is the discussion on Protected Areas as a suitable instrument for biodiversity conservation. Some experts voiced fundamental doubts about the contribution of Protected Areas to biodiversity conservation. Most experts deemed the emphasis on Protected Areas as the main component of the Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy as too high. Many responses pointed to the close connection between the effectiveness of Protected Areas and the successful mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into production landscapes, suggesting a stronger relative emphasis on the activities envisioned under objective 2 of the Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy.

1.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1: An explicit discussion of envisaged causal linkages and chains of causality in line with current scientific knowledge should form the basis for the formulation of GEF-6 Strategies.

21. An explicit, systematic and comprehensive “system of causality” that is embedded as an integral part of the GEF-6 strategies could enhance the strategies’ utility as the guiding framework for GEF programming. The already existing knowledge on causal links as reflected in GEF programming should be fully incorporated at the strategy level. An explicit understanding of how elements from different projects, within as well as across Focal Areas, are to be linked in order to create a complete chain of causality towards results could inform and support a more modular approach to GEF programming. The inclusion of causal relationships of elements from different Focal Areas into a comprehensive “system of causality” could facilitate and guide the design of effective Multi-Focal Area activities that maximize the synergies between Focal Areas.

Working Group on Review of Implementation. COP X (Decision X/24) approved the proposed list of obsolete, repetitive and overlapping guidance and the updated compilation of guidance.

In addition, the identification of causal relationships could aid the coordination of activities implemented by different GEF Agencies, allowing GEF Agencies to intensify their focus on respective comparative advantages based on systematic collaboration with activities of other GEF Agencies.

22. The results of the Real-Time Delphi illustrate that close consultations with the scientific community can provide important information on the relative prioritization of existing elements as well as the identification of additional and/or alternative elements to be included in the GEF-6 Strategies. To ensure that up-to-date scientific knowledge is fully taken into account, STAP should assume a strong role in the process of preparing GEF-6 Strategies.

Recommendation 2: GEF-6 Strategies should enable a more flexible and strategic approach to developing Multi-Focal Area projects which would be able to adopt elements from several focal areas in a consistent manner.

23. Given the increasing importance of GEF activities that cut across Focal Areas, approaches to maximize synergies and ensuring the added value of Multi-Focal Area activities should become an integral part of GEF-6 Strategies. An approach to GEF programming that facilitates the combination of elements from different Focal Areas should be considered during the formulation of GEF-6 Strategies. The systematic identification of causal links between elements can support and inform corresponding efforts.

Recommendation 3: GEF-6 Strategies should be based on systematic considerations of potential pathways from GEF activities to the broader adoption of GEF results to further define and strengthen the GEF's catalytic role.

24. The Focal Area Strategy TOCs highlight the potential of GEF activities to trigger broader adoption and induce systemic change. This catalytic role of the GEF should be further defined and strengthened by basing GEF-6 Strategies on systematic consideration on potential chains of causality between GEF activities and broader adoption through replication, scaling-up, change of market structures, or mainstreaming (with or without direct GEF support) in the GEF-6 Strategies. The already existing knowledge on pathways to broader adoption as reflected in GEF programming should be fully incorporated at the strategy level.

Recommendation 4: Given the impact of convention guidance on the Focal Area Strategies the GEF should continue the dialogue with CBD to further define the relationship between guidance and strategies in a way that allows for responsiveness as well as strategic coherence in GEF-6.

25. The FAS Evaluation findings illustrate the strong influence of convention guidance on GEF Focal Area Strategy formulation, highlighting the importance of close coordination between Convention Secretariats and the GEF in the strategy-building process. The potential tension between adequately reflecting convention guidance in the strategies on the one hand and the formulation of a balanced, integrated and coherent strategic approach on the other hand should be addressed during the formulation of GEF-6 Strategies. In cases like the CBD, where conventions choose to issue specific technical guidance to the GEF, guidance should follow a

coherent overall vision in order to ensure that it can be integrated into a consistent strategic approach. The CBD is already taking steps to enhance strategic coherence of convention guidance to the GEF. Ongoing efforts are positive steps towards balancing convention demands and the coherence of GEF support. The formulation of GEF-6 Strategies should be closely connected to these efforts. The GEF should continue and intensify the dialogue at the appropriate level with the CBD to facilitate this process.

Recommendation 5: GEF-6 Strategies should revisit the GEF's overall approach to capacity development in response to concerns voiced by the conventions.

26. Based on interviews with convention secretariats, GEF support to capacity development is perceived to be at odds with convention expectations. The analysis of Focal Area Strategies suggests that this is primarily an issue of implementation rather than a lack of inclusion at the level of the strategies. In terms of implementation, the issue will therefore be further examined during OPS5.

27. On the strategy level, GEF-6 Strategies should revisit the approach taken by GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies that largely address capacity development elements through distinct objectives within the Focal Area Strategies as well as in a separate strategy (Cross-Cutting Strategy on Capacity Development). The integration of capacity development as an integral part of activities under different objectives is in many cases not emphasized in the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies.

2. CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVE

2.1 Context

28. The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* builds on prior evaluative efforts conducted by the GEF Evaluation Office. In particular, past GEF Overall Performance Studies have presented assessments at the GEF Focal Area level. In the context of the Third Overall Performance Study (OPS3) in 2004, the GEF Focal Areas were assessed in a series of program studies. The Fourth Overall Performance Study (OPS4) presented evidence on Focal Area achievements, primarily focusing on their progress toward impact, as well as a comprehensive analysis of convention guidance to the GEF. The aggregation of evaluative evidence at the Focal Area level has proven to be of particular value to inform and provide recommendations for the GEF replenishment process. Accordingly, the Fifth Overall Performance Study (OPS5) will continue to report evaluative findings on Focal Area activities. The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* represents one building-block of this effort and a preparatory step for the broader assessment of Focal Area achievements in the context of OPS5 (see 2.3 Contribution to OPS5).

29. Past OPSs have focused mainly on the bottom-up perspective on GEF Focal Areas, assessing Focal Area achievements with an emphasis on the level of individual projects. Complementing this work, the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* attempts to add a top-down view, providing a closer look at the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies as they have been intended and formulated. The evaluation focuses on the strategic paths envisioned to lead to the achievement of GEF goals and ultimately to create Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs), or Adaptation Benefits (ABs) in the case of LDCF and SCCF.

2.2 Objectives and Scope

30. The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* is designed as a formative² evaluation emphasizing learning as its primary goal. Accordingly, the evaluation's main objective is to collect and assess information related to the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies to gain a systematic understanding of the elements and causal links each strategy envisions. The evaluation encompasses the analysis of the following Focal Area Strategies: Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation, International Waters, Land Degradation, Chemicals, Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+, and Climate Change Adaptation (under LDCF/SCCF). The evaluation focuses on the most recent GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies and LDCF/SCCF Strategy covering the period from 2010 to 2014.

31. The evaluation excludes the strategy on cross-cutting capacity development. The Capacity Development Strategy has recently been partially evaluated in the context of the Evaluation of GEF National Capacity Self-Assessments (NCSA) and an additional assessment will be conducted by the ongoing Evaluation of GEF Enabling Activities.

² The evaluation literature distinguishes between "summative" and "formative" evaluations. Summative evaluations focus on the assessment of performance and progress measured against expected targets and are used to evaluate accountability of a given system. In contrast, formative evaluations analyze evidence in order to learn from past experiences to inform improvements of a given system moving forward. See: Scriven, Michael (1967). "The methodology of evaluation." In Stake, R. E. Curriculum Evaluation. Chicago: Rand McNally.

32. Using a theory-based approach (see section 3 Approach and Methodology, p. 13), the evaluation takes a detailed look at the logic chains of causality that each strategy identifies to achieve its objectives. Based on the “Theory of Change” (TOC) analysis of elements and causal links, the evaluation provides an assessment of the extent to which the causal pathways identified by the strategies reflect guidance provided to the GEF by the international conventions, especially those that the GEF serves as a financial mechanism (UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD and Stockholm Convention) as well as the current state of scientific knowledge on aspects relating to the strategies. Based on the conclusions from these steps, the evaluation provides recommendations for the GEF replenishment process and especially the formulation of the GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies.

33. The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* focuses on the analysis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies as they are formulated, emphasizing the strategies’ intended rational and internal logic. The analysis provides the foundation for a subsequent assessment of the implementation of Focal Area Strategies in GEF projects, which will be conducted in the context of OPS5 (see section 2.3 Contribution to OPS5).

2.3 Contribution to OPS5

34. The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* is closely tied to OPS5 and needs to be understood as a modular contribution within the broader OPS5 context. The evaluation aims to make the following input to the subsequent OPS5 analysis of Focal Area achievements:

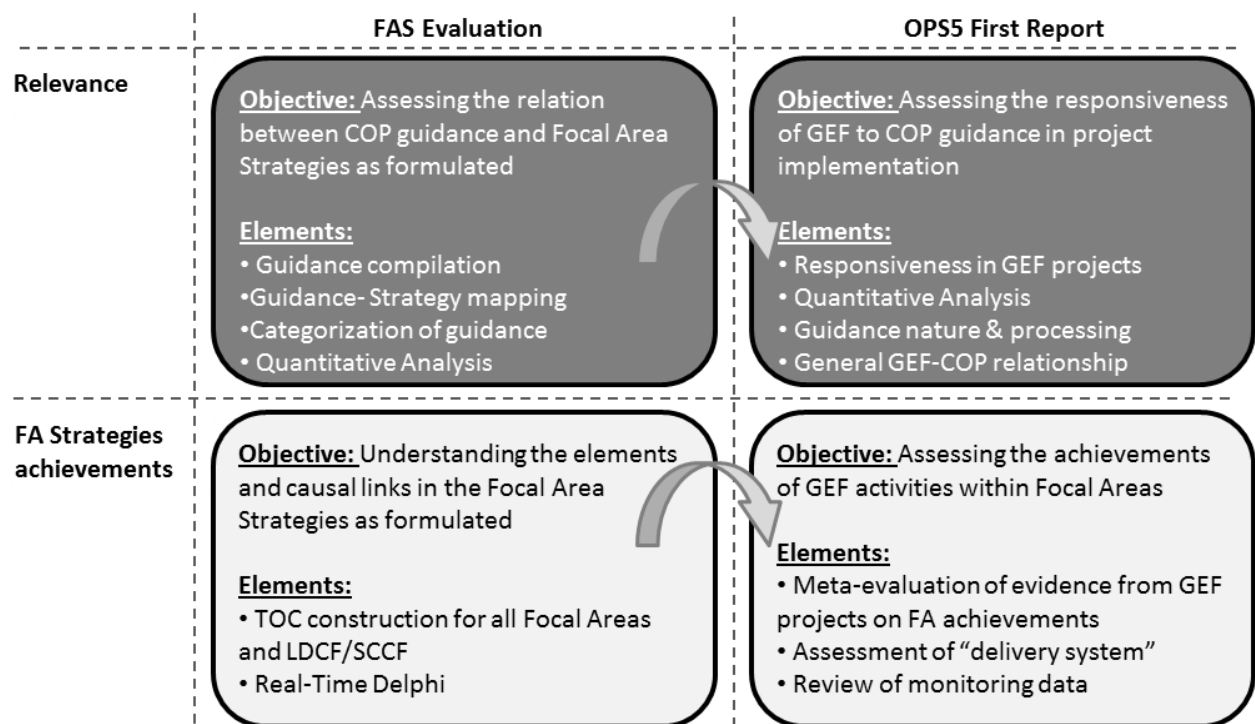
- a) **Framework for analysis:** The Focal Area Theories of Change (TOCs), i.e. the systematic map-ping of the strategies’ elements and causal links, will serve as a framework to guide the sub-sequent OPS5 analysis of strategy implementation in GEF projects. The improved under-standing of the mechanisms that are envisioned to make GEF support successful will provides a starting point for the assessment of the portfolio’s strengths and weaknesses.³
- b) **Identification of issues:** The evaluation provides a catalogue of crucial aspects to include in the OPS5 analysis. The theory-based approach to the Focal Area Strategies highlights aspects that are of particular importance for the success of GEF activities. In addition, the evaluation identifies the strategies’ underlying assumptions that can be directly tested against evidence from GEF activities.
- c) **Assessment of convention guidance:** The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* includes a full assessment of convention guidance as it relates to the Focal Area Strategies. This collection will serve as the basis for the OPS5 assessment of GEF relevance to the conventions.
- d) **Collection of perceptions:** The interactive process used to conduct the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* has served as a vehicle for exchanging views on the Focal Area Strategies across stakeholders groups. This collection of perceptions will inform the OPS5 analysis.

³ The OPS5 analysis of strategy implementation and Focal Area achievements will primarily focus on GEF-5 projects that have been designed under the GEF-5 Strategy. Evaluative evidence from earlier projects will be used as necessary and possible, taking into account that the evidence is not fully reflective of the current Focal Area Strategies as many projects have been formulated under previous strategies.

- e) **Testing of approaches:** The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* employed two methodological approaches that will also be used in the context of OPS5. The evaluation tested and refined the use of the General Framework for GEF Theories of Change as well as the Real-Time Delphi approach (see section 3 Approach and Methodology, p. 13).

35. Based on the findings of the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies*, the next step will be to assess the implementation of Focal Area Strategies, collecting evidence on how the strategic guidelines are realized in GEF projects and how successful the causal chains envisioned by the strategies are in achieving stated objectives. A meta-evaluation of related evidence and corresponding findings will be included in the First Report of OPS5 (see figure 1). Based on the findings of the First Report, the analysis will be developed further for the Final Report of OPS5.

Figure 1: Relationship between Focal Area Strategies Evaluation and the First Report of OPS5



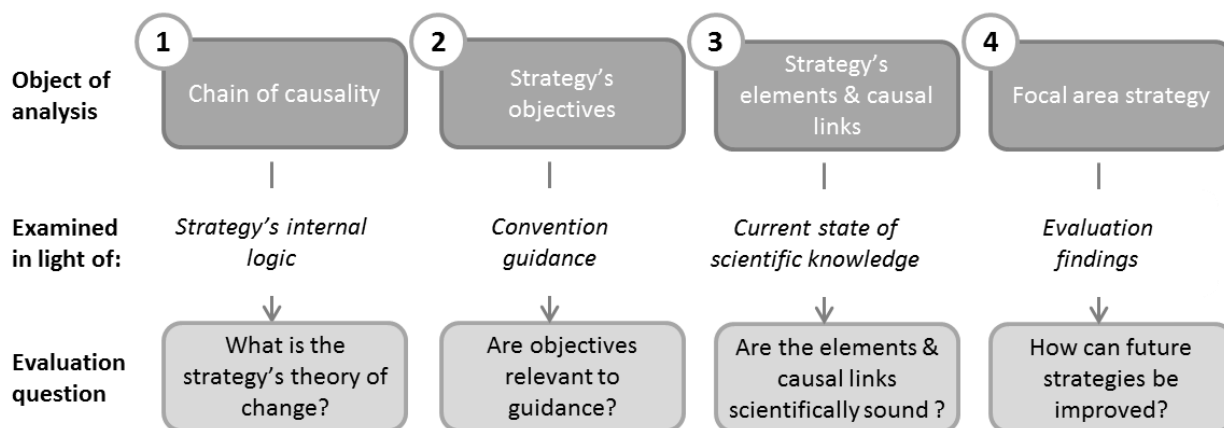
3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

36. Aiming to improve the understanding of elements and causal links reflected in GEF Focal Area Strategies, the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* employs a four step approach:

- a) **Construct the theories of change:** What are the elements, causal links and overall rationale reflected in each Focal Area Strategy? What are the identified causal pathways envisioned to lead to the achievement of the strategy’s objectives?
- b) **Review the relationship with convention guidance:** To what extent and in what way do the objectives formulated in the Focal Area Strategies relate to respective convention guidance?
- c) **Assess the connection with scientific knowledge:** To what extent do the Focal Area Strategies correspond with current scientific knowledge?
- d) **Make recommendations for future strategies:** Based on the findings of steps 1-3, what recommendations for the development of future GEF Strategies can be provided?

37. The four steps can be schematically summarized as follows:

Figure 2: Four evaluation steps



38. The following sections summarize the methodological approach employed in each of the three analytical steps. A more comprehensive description can be found in the Technical Papers 1-7 covering each Focal Area Strategy individually (see p. 35).

3.1 Theory of Change Approach

39. A theory-based evaluation is designed around the “theory of change” (TOC) of an activity or strategy. The TOC systematically examines the elements and causal links that constitute the activity/strategy in order to understand and describe the logic of how the activity/strategy is expected to lead to the desired results (Fitz-Gibbon and Morris 1996, Weiss 1972). A theory of change may have been made explicit when the activity/strategy was designed; sometimes it is implicit, which requires the evaluators to reconstruct it. In the case of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies, the TOCs are mostly implicit and their reconstruction constitutes a major part of the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies*.

General Framework for GEF TOC

40. In preparation for OPS5, the GEF Evaluation Office has developed a General Framework for the GEF TOC drawing on a large amount of evaluative evidence gathered over the years. The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* uses the General Framework to guide the construction of Focal Area Strategy TOCs. The purposes of the General Framework for GEF's TOC framework are to classify GEF activities and locate them within the intended causality chain towards the generation of GEBs; establish links between different elements of GEF support as well as between GEF activities and contributions of other actors; assess GEF contribution to progress towards GEBs, including the GEF's interaction with other actors; and identify constraints on further GEF contributions to progress towards GEBs.

41. The framework classifies GEF support into three categories that are interdependent and in most cases realize their full potential through their interaction with each other. A specific GEF project often features a combination of elements from different categories:

- a) **Knowledge and information**, including activities to support the generation and sharing of pertinent knowledge and information, awareness-raising activities, improvement of technical skills, as well as monitoring and evaluation.
- b) **Governance capacity**, encompassing support for the development and formulation of policy, legal and regulatory frameworks at the appropriate scales of intervention, assistance for the improvement of governmental structures and processes, as well as support for informal mechanisms for trust-building and conflict resolution.
- c) **Implementation strategies**, covering a broad range of activities including investments in physical assets, establishment of financing mechanisms and organizational arrangements, as well as improvements of sustainable management approaches, among many others. This category entails the testing and demonstration of new technologies, instruments and approaches, as well as efforts to support broader deployment of proven strategies.

42. Changes directly linked to GEF activities are referred to as GEF outputs and outcomes. In working towards envisioned outputs and outcomes, the different elements within a GEF project are often designed to complement each other and interact with contributions of other actors. GEF projects are usually conducted within the context of previous and ongoing initiatives carried out in part by non-GEF actors (national governments, international organizations, CSOs, private sector). GEF projects often build on and/or supplement contributions of other actors. In addition, GEF activities are implemented under national circumstances that influence the initiative and are largely outside GEF control. The General Framework helps to assess the interactions of GEF activities with contextual factors.

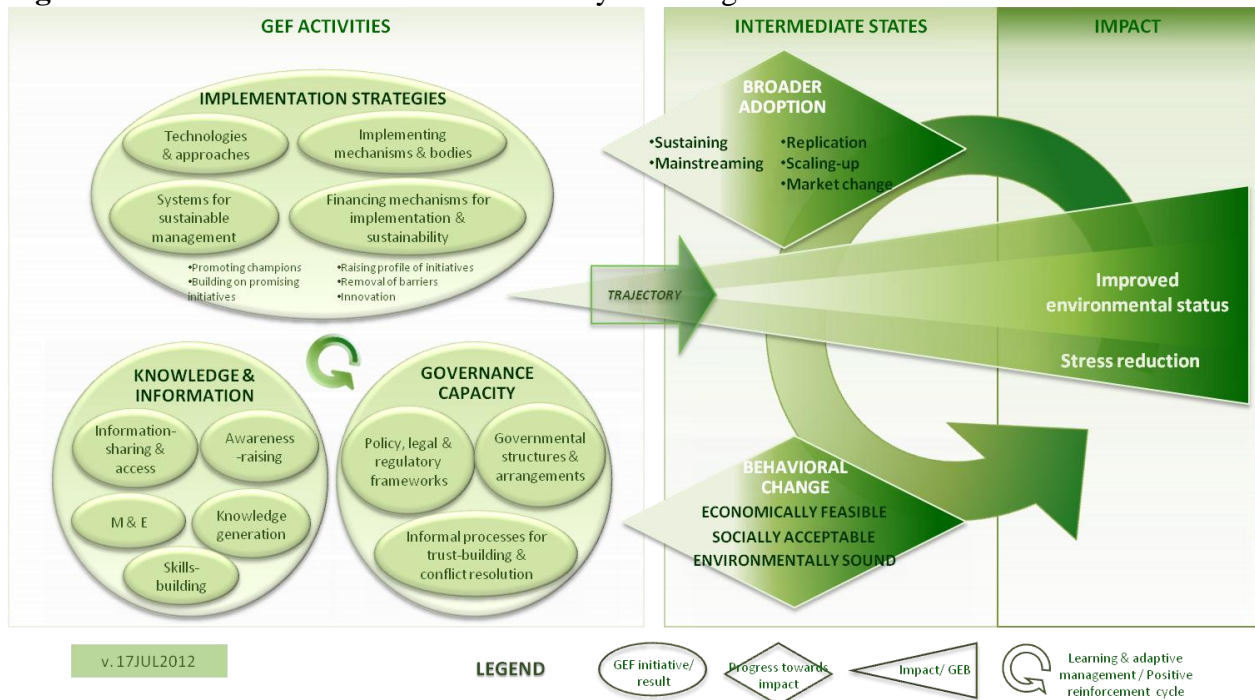
43. GEF support is typically envisioned to catalyze progress towards impact at a broader level including the broader adoption of technologies, approaches and instruments. The nature of GEF involvement in catalyzing broader adoption differs between activities: In a number of cases, GEF activities include direct support for the facilitation of broader adoption in collaboration with other actors. In other cases, broader adoption is following the example of GEF activities, but emerges without direct GEF support.

44. The General Framework identifies five general categories of ways towards broader adoption (within or beyond the limits of direct GEF influence):

- a) **Sustaining:** Technologies/approaches originally supported through the GEF activity continue to be implemented beyond actual project duration through integration into the regular activities and budget of the government and/or other stakeholders.
- b) **Mainstreaming:** Information, lessons, or aspects of a GEF initiative are incorporated into a broader initiative such as policies, institutional reforms, and behavioral transformations.
- c) **Replication:** Results of GEF activities are reproduced at a comparable scale, often in different geographical areas or regions.
- d) **Scaling-up:** Results of GEF activities are expanded to address concerns at larger geographical, ecological or administrative scales.
- e) **Market change:** GEF activity catalyzes market transformation, which might encompass technological changes, policy and regulatory reforms, and financial instruments that increase demand for goods and services likely to contribute to global environmental benefits.

Broader adoption goes hand in hand with behavioral change, meaning sustained and significant changes in stakeholder choices towards more environment-friendly actions. The TOC framework highlights the reinforcing interactions between broader adoption, behavioral change and environmental improvements.

Figure 3: General Framework for GEF Theory of Change



TOC construction for GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies

45. The *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* applies the general framework to each of the GEF-5 Focal Areas as well as the LDCF/SCCF Strategy. The resulting TOCs map out the strategies' elements and causal links, depicting the means-ends linkages envisioned explicitly or implicitly in the strategy and thereby identifying the logical chain of actions that are supposed to lead to the achievement of the strategies' objectives.

46. The construction of the Focal Area Strategies TOCs proceeded in two steps. First, each strategy is disaggregated into its objectives in order to systematically identify different GEF activities articulated by the strategy, to assess the causal links between elements and to recognize the underlying assumptions these causal chains are based on. Second, the elements and causal links identified in step one were consolidated in one overarching TOC for each Focal Area Strategy, identifying the causal pathways the strategy envisions and the underlying assumptions these pathways are based on.

47. Throughout the TOC process, the evaluation team consulted extensively with the respective GEF Secretariat teams for the different Focal Areas to ensure correct interpretation of the strategy documents and establish agreement on the central aspects of the Theories of Change. The full process of TOC construction for each of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies and the LDCF/SCCF Strategy is described in detail in the Technical Papers 1-7 covering each Focal Area Strategy individually (see p. 35).

3.2 Analysis of convention guidance

48. A One factor that influences the characteristics of the GEF Focal Area Strategies is the guidance the GEF receives from the Conference of the Party (COP) of international conventions. Convention guidance plays a particularly important role for Focal Area Strategies that directly reflect the GEF's role as financial mechanism to a convention:

- a) Biodiversity – Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- b) Climate Change Mitigation – UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- c) Land Degradation – UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- d) Chemicals (partially) – Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
- e) Climate Change Adaptation – SCCF/LDCF established directly under the UNFCCC

49. In order to assess the way in which Focal Area Strategies reflect convention guidance the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* conducted a full review of convention guidance issued by the COPs. The review includes the identification of guidance relevant to the GEF, a quantitative analysis of guidance over time, and a qualitative classification of each individual item of COP guidance. The review of COP guidance can be found in Technical Paper 8.

50. Based on the guidance review, the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* conducted a "Guidance-Strategy-Mapping" identifying the links between guidance and Focal Area Strategies. The mapping illustrates how topics raised by the convention are reflected in the strategies and how the strategies in turn are shaped by different kinds of guidance. Stakeholder interviews, especially with the GEF Secretariat and convention secretariats, provided additional information for the analysis of the relationship between Focal Area Strategies and convention guidance.

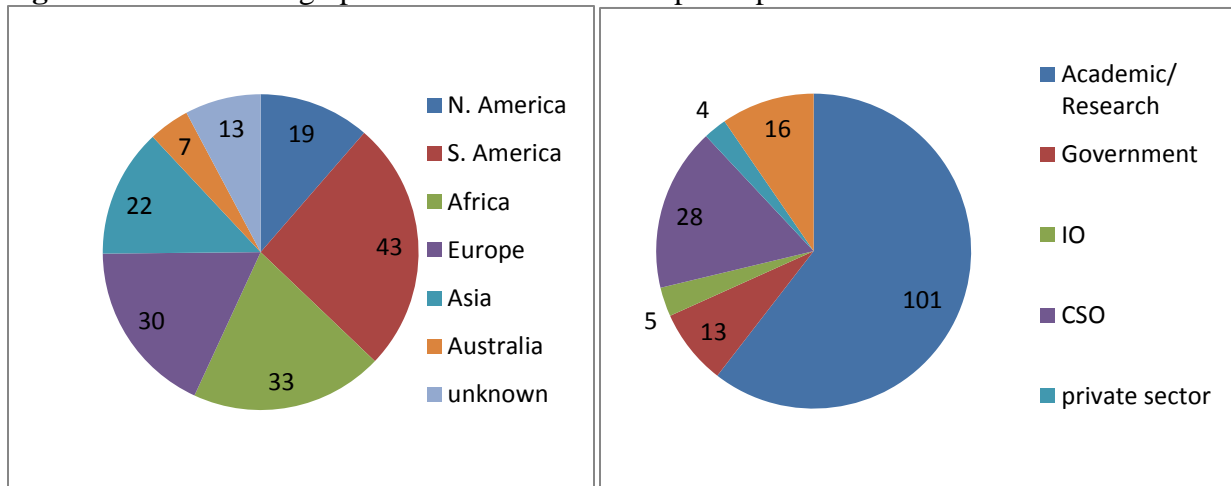
3.3 Real-Time Delphi approach

51. The Delphi method was originally developed at the RAND Corporation in the late 1950's as a method for collecting and synthesizing expert judgments. The Delphi methodology has since become a widely recognized technique of expert consultation. The Delphi methodology requires anonymity of participants to ensure equal weight of each participant's responses and reduce the bias caused by perceived authority of renowned experts. The original Delphi process features repeated rounds of responses from experts on a questionnaire with each expert receiving feedback on her/his peers' responses between rounds. This time-intensive method was further developed into a "round-less", online-based process that allows for asynchronous input and makes expert answers available to the entire group in real time eliminating the need for round-to-round feedback. Thereby communication time is considerably shortened. This form of a Delphi process is called Real-Time Delphi (RTD).

52. Seven online questionnaires, one for each Focal Area Strategy, were formulated by the Evaluation Team with extensive input from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (see annex 6) and embedded into a RTD online platform. Each question required a quantitative as well as qualitative response covering the central aspects of each Focal Area Strategy. The invitation to participate in the RTD process was distributed widely among environmental scientist using the international network of the International Council for Science and other scientific networks. Efforts to mobilize participants were implemented throughout the process. A total of 167 participants signed on to the RTD platform to provide answers to one of the online questionnaires. Figures 4 and 5 provide information about the region of origin as well as professional affiliation of the RTD expert group. Demographic information of participant groups for each Focal Area can be found in Technical Papers 1-7.

53. The analysis of RTD data includes the collection and interpretation of quantitative responses as well as the summary of the text responses and discussions among participating experts, identification of crucial issues raised and interpretation of responses within the broader context of the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies*. Overarching results of the RTD process are presented in the section 4 Comparative analysis of Focal Area Strategies. A more detailed analysis of RTD results for each Focal Area is included in Technical Papers 1-7.

Figure 4 and 5: Demographic information on RTD participants



4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOCAL AREA STRATEGIES

4.1 Background and overview of GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies

Evolution of Focal Area Strategies

54. Prior to 2007, GEF financing was guided by 15 operational programs: four in biodiversity, four in climate change, three in international waters, one addressing persistent organic pollutants, one on sustainable land management and one multifocal program on integrated ecosystem management. The operational programs identified relevant convention guidance, formulated corresponding program objectives and provided a list of expected outcomes, project outputs as well as examples for typical activities to be funded through GEF.

55. In 2007, a year into the GEF-4 replenishment period, the operational programs were replaced by the GEF-4 Focal Area Strategies (see table 1). They included one strategy for each of the six Focal Areas (Biodiversity, Climate Change, Land Degradation, International Waters, Persistent Organic Pollutants, and Ozone Layer Depletion) as well as two cross-cutting strategies (Sustainable Forest Management, Sound Chemicals Management).

56. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies (see table 1) were approved by the GEF Council and the LDCF/SCCF Council in the case of climate change adaptation in May 2010 and went into effect with the beginning of the replenishment period on July 1, 2010. There are seven GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies: Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation, Land Degradation, International Waters, Chemicals, Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+, and Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (not covered by this evaluation). The Strategy on Climate Change Adaptation for LDCF/SCCF covers the same time period 2010-2014.⁴

57. In comparison to operational programs, Focal Area Strategies are aimed at formulating long term strategic objectives to guide the activities under each Focal Area. The Focal Area Strategies established strategic programs with explicitly stated expected outcomes. Indicators allow for monitoring through the GEF Results Based Management (RBM) framework. The GEF-4 and GEF-5 strategies across all Focal Areas comprised the following basic elements:

- a) Long term strategic objectives partly re-adjusted from GEF-4 to GEF-5 in view of past experiences and recent COP guidance;

⁴ The *Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change* will be included in this evaluation and assessed alongside the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies. However, the financing of climate change adaptation is managed separately from the standard GEF Focal Areas and features several particularities that need to be taken into account throughout this document:

- a) Funds for financing climate change adaptation in the GEF context are provided through the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) set up under the UNFCCC and managed by the GEF.
- b) The funds have the LDCF/SCCF Council as a separate governing body. The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy was approved by the LDCF/SCCF Council in May 2010, and went into effect on July 1, 2010.
- c) LDCF/SCCF are not part of the GEF replenishment process, meaning that the Climate Change Adaptation strategy is only arbitrarily linked to the GEF-5 time period.
- d) Since LDCF/SCCF are not part of the GEF replenishment and funding levels are volatile and uncertain, the Climate Change Adaptation strategy does not feature indicative resource allocations per objective, but instead provides different funding scenarios linking expected outputs to potential levels of available funds.
- e) Activities under the LDCF/SCCF are not aimed at creating Global Environmental Benefits, but Adaptation Benefits. This needs to be taken into account throughout this document.

- b) Strategic programs selected according to their importance, urgency and cost-effectiveness from a global environment perspective, as well as to country priorities;
- c) A results framework in line with the development of RBM in the GEF including expected impacts (from strategic objectives) and expected outcomes (from strategic programs);
- d) Measurable indicators for the expected impacts and outcomes, allowing monitoring and evaluation of progress towards achievement;
- e) An indicative provisional allocation of GEF-5 funds and expected co-financing towards the strategic programs.

Table 1: Overview of GEF programming frameworks

Before GEF-4 Operational programs (15 OPs in 6 clusters)	GEF-4 period GEF-4 Focal Area Strategies	GEF-5 period GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies and LDCF/SCCF Strategy
1. Biodiversity (5 OPs)	1. Biodiversity	1. Biodiversity
2. Climate Change (4 OPs)	2. Climate Change (including climate change adaptation through SPA)	2. Climate Change Mitigation LDCF/SCCF 2010-2014 Strategy on Climate Change Adaptation ⁵
3. International Waters (3 OPs)	3. International Waters	3. International Waters
4. Land Degradation (1 OP)	4. Land Degradation	4. Land Degradation
5. Persistent Organic Pollutants (1 OP)	5. Persistent Organic Pollutants 6. Ozone Layer Depletion 7. Sound Chemicals Management	5. Chemicals
	8. Sustainable Forest Management	6. Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+
6. Integrated Ecosystem Management (1 OP)		
		7. Cross-Cutting Capacity Development

Formulation process of Focal Area Strategies

58. The process of formulating the GEF Focal Area Strategies is closely tied to the GEF replenishment process. The Focal Area Strategies reflect the donor countries' preferences of how the funding to be granted to beneficiary countries through the GEF should be used during the respective replenishment period. Consequently, the Focal Area Strategies establish the relationship between the objectives and the resources necessary to achieve these objectives, necessitating a close interrelation of Focal Area Strategies and replenishment process.

59. The drafting of the GEF-4 strategies was conducted through a consultative process involving external advisory groups and contributions from Council Members, convention secretariats, GEF Agencies, STAP, and other GEF partners. For the drafting process of the GEF-5 strategies, the CEO established six Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) and a Strategy

⁵ See footnote 3.

Advisory Group (SAG). TAGs were composed of external experts, a representative from the relevant convention secretariats, a member of STAP, and a member from the GEF Secretariat serving as TAG secretary. Working drafts were posted on the GEF website and comments received from GEF partners throughout the process.

Overview of indicative and programmed FA allocations

60. Table 2 presents an overview of the indicative GEF-5 allocation to each Focal Area objective as approved by the GEF Council as part of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies. The indicative allocations are compared to the resources programmed for GEF activities under the respective objectives as of 30 June 2012. The table does not include the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy because the LDCF/SCCF funds are not part of the GEF replenishment process and the strategy does not include indicative resource allocations per objective.

61. The overview of approved resources illustrates that interest is particularly high for projects in areas that explore new niches of GEF activities (see also paragraphs 73 and 74), namely LULUCF (CCM-5), management of Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (IW-4), and to some degree piloting of sound chemicals management and mercury reduction (CHEM-3).

Table 2: Overview of GEF-5 indicative and programmed resource allocations

Biodiversity Focal Area			
Goal	Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystem goods and services		
Objectives	Indicative allocation	Approved resources (as of 30 June 2012)	
Objective 1: Improve sustainability of protect area systems	\$700m / 65.4%	\$250m / 51.3%	
Objective 2: Mainstream BD conservation and sustainable use into production land/seascapes and sectors	\$250m / 23.4%	\$206m / 42.3%	
Objective 3: Build capacity for the implementation of the CPB	\$40m / 3.7%	\$3m / 0.6%	
Objective 4: Build capacity on ABS	\$40m / 3.7%	\$3m / 0.6%	
Objective 5: Integrate CBD obligations into national planning process through EAs	\$40m / 3.7%	\$25m / 5.1%	
Total	\$1.07b / 100%	\$487m / 100%	
Climate Change Mitigation Focal Area			
Goal	To support developing countries and economies in transition toward a low-carbon development path		
Objectives	Indicative allocation	Approved resources (as of 30 June 2012)	
Objective 1: Promote the demonstration, deployment, and transfer of innovative low-carbon technologies	\$300m / 24.0%	\$62m / 31.1%	
Objective 2: Promote market transformation for energy efficiency in industry and the building sector	\$250m / 20.0%	\$140m / 29.5%	
Objective 3: Promote investment in renewable energy technologies	\$320m / 25.6%	\$104m / 21.9%	
Objective 4: Promote low-carbon transport and urban systems	\$250m / 20.0%	\$58m / 12.2%	
Objective 5: Promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through sustainable management of LULUCF	\$50m / 4.0%	\$75m / 15.8%	

(*\$100 million contribution to the separate SFM/REDD+ incentive mechanism)			
Objective 6: Support EAs and capacity building under the Convention		\$80m / 6.4 %	\$35m / 7.4%
Total		\$1.25b / 100%	\$474m / 100%
International Waters Focal Area			
Goal	Promotion of collective management of transboundary water systems and implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services		
Objectives		Indicative allocation	Approved resources (as of 30 June 2012)
Objective 1: Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change		\$130m / 31.0%	\$15m / 12.7%
Objective 2: Catalyze multistate cooperation to rebuild marine fisheries and reduce pollution of coasts and Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) while considering climatic variability and change		\$180m / 42.9%	\$61m / 51.7%
Objective 3: Support foundational capacity building, portfolio learning, and targeted research needs for joint, ecosystem-based management of trans-boundary water systems		\$90m / 21.4%	\$15m / 12.7%
Objective 4: Promote effective management of Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)		\$20m / 4.8%	\$27m / 22.9%
Total		\$420m / 100%	\$118m / 100%
Land Degradation Focal Area			
Goal	To contribute to arresting and reversing current global trends in land degradation, specifically desertification and deforestation		
Objectives		Indicative allocation	Approved resources (as of 30 June 2012)
Objective 1: Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services sustaining the livelihoods of local communities		\$200m / 50%	\$41m / 30.6%
Objective 2: Generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services in drylands, including sustaining livelihoods of forest dependent people		\$30m / 7.9%	\$6m / 4.5%
Objective 3: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape		\$135m / 35.5%	\$84m / 62.7%
Objective 4: Increase capacity to apply adaptive management tools in SLM/SFM/INRM by GEF and UNCCD Parties		\$15m / 3.9%	\$3m / 2.2%
Total		\$480m / 100%	\$134m / 100%
Chemicals Focal Area			
Goal	To promote the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the global environment		
Objectives		Indicative allocation	Approved resources (as of 30 June 2012)
Objective 1: Phase out POPs and reduce POPs releases		\$340m / 81.0%	\$118m / 83.1%
Objective 2: Phase out ODS and reduce ODS releases		\$25m / 6.0%	\$5m / 3.5%
Objective 3: Pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction		\$20m / 4.8%	\$12m / 8.5%

Objective 4: POPs enabling activities	\$35m / 8.3%	\$7m / 4.9%
Total	\$395m / 100%	\$142m / 100%
SFM/REDD+ Focal Area		
Goal	To achieve multiple environmental benefits from improved management of all types of forests	
Objectives	Indicative allocation	Resources approved (as of 30 June 2012)
Objective 1: Reduce pressures on forest resources and generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services		\$65m / 97%
Objective 2: Strengthen the enabling environment to reduce GHG emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon sinks from LULUCF activities		\$9m / 12.2%
Total allocation for GEF-5 SFM/REDD+ incentive mechanism (Set-asides for BD-5 - \$130m; CC-5 - 100m; and LD-2 - \$20m)	\$250m / 100%	\$67m / 100%

Note: The calculation within the focal area objectives is based on project approvals total amount for FSPs, MSPs, and EAs with the exclusion of project management cost and project fees. Some capacity building objectives are not included here because they were not built into the replenishment scenarios. These objectives collectively account for \$7 million.

Source: Indicative allocations from GEF/C.37/3; Approved resources are estimates from the GEF Secretariat.

4.2 General strategy design

62. The construction of the Theories of Change for GEF Focal Area Strategies (see Technical Papers 1-7) identifies a number of general characteristics that are reflected across strategies. While the general characteristics are not equally pronounced in all strategies and exceptions exist, several general design traits can be established.

Functions fulfilled by the GEF Focal Area Strategies

63. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies fulfill crucial functions for guiding GEF programming: a) define the general areas of activity the GEF should engage in by breaking down the Focal Areas' overarching goals into objectives; b) establish the reason for GEF engagement in a specific area by describing the corresponding environmental challenges and explaining the GEF's potential to contribute to a solution; and c) identify the types of GEF activities to be supported under a certain GEF objective including illustrative examples of concrete activities to receive GEF financing.

64. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies generally provide a clear picture of what the GEF intends to support during the GEF-5 replenishment period. The strategies thus serve as a guide for the GEF Secretariat on programming as well as an overview of fundable activities to inform recipient countries and GEF Agencies during project conception and development. In addition, the strategies include a Results Framework that defines expected outputs for each Focal Area objective. The Results Frameworks establish what the GEF intends to achieve and thereby serve as the basis for the GEF's Results Based Management system, a benchmark for evaluations, as well as the basis for resource allocation decisions during the GEF replenishment process.

Aspects less emphasized by GEF Focal Area Strategies

Causal Links

65. The GEF-5 Focal Areas in most cases do not explicitly and systematically discuss the causal relationships between different elements of the strategy. This pertains to the causal links between different types of GEF activities like the relationship between mutually reinforcing elements (e.g. enabling policy environment and successful demonstration). It also concerns the more complex chains of several causal links that are envisioned to lead from GEF activities to the achievement of results.

66. This does not mean that the causal links between GEF activities and the chains of causality towards the achievement of expected results are not recognized in de facto GEF programming. On the contrary, the Technical Papers 1-7 highlight a multitude of causal chains towards achievement of results that are implicit in the GEF Focal Area Strategies. Many of these causal links are identified and discussed in other publications of the GEF Secretariat and included in the GEF programming process. In most Focal Areas, they have however not been brought together in a systematic way and not been embedded as an explicit basis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies.

67. An explicit, systematic and comprehensive “system of causality” could enhance the strategies’ utility as the guiding framework for GEF programming. Incorporating the already existing knowledge on causal links as reflected in GEF programming at the strategy level could facilitate a more modular approach to GEF programming that allows for GEF projects to contribute only certain elements to the causal chain towards impact. This approach could reduce the burden on individual projects to cover a maximum of different elements. Instead, GEF programming could rely on a clear understanding of how elements from different projects are to be linked in order to achieve a complete causal chain towards impact. The system of causal links would thus also constitute a guiding framework for targeted and effective knowledge management between projects.

68. An approach to GEF programming informed by an explicit system of causality becomes especially relevant in the context of Multi-Focal Area activities and synergies between Focal Areas. A strategic approach for linking elements in a modular way could provide the basis for chains of causality that reach across different Focal Areas and serve as the backbone for Multi-Focal Area activities following a clear strategic path towards results. In the same way, an explicit system of causal links could also strengthen the connection between different objectives within one Focal Area Strategy. Similar to the opportunities of modular GEF programming, explicit systems of causality could also provide a blueprint for coordination between activities implemented by different GEF Agencies, allowing GEF Agencies to intensify their focus on respective comparative advantages relying on systematic collaboration with activities of other GEF Agencies to create chains of causality towards results.

Broader Adoption

69. The construction of Focal Area Strategy TOCs highlights that the strategic approaches expressed in the Focal Area Strategies have the potential to catalyze broader adoption of GEF results through replication, scaling-up, inducing market change and other mechanisms for uptake. While this potential is reflected to some degree in GEF programming, considerations on

the pathways of action towards maximizing broader adoption through GEF activities is in most cases not an explicit and systematic part of the Focal Area Strategies. This underpins conclusions presented in OPS4, which highlights the catalytic role of the GEF, but points out that the path towards broader adoption has “never been clearly defined.”⁶

70. As in the case of causal links, the potential for broader adoption is recognized by the GEF and partially reflected in GEF programming. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies in some instances refer to the influence of GEF activities on the larger national context and on the engagement of other actors. However, the strategies are in most cases not systematically based on considerations on chains of causality from GEF results to broader adoption that could serve a guiding framework for GEF programming that maximizes the GEF’s catalytic potential.

71. The level of consideration on pathways to broader adoption differs between Focal Area Strategies (see Technical Papers 1-7). The Focal Area Strategies on Climate Change Mitigation and International Waters feature a comparably stronger link to broader adoption. The CCM Strategy emphasizes the facilitation of systemic changes and dedicates a significant part of the strategy to the direct support of broader adoption as an integral part of GEF activities in collaboration with other actors. The IW Strategy characteristically focuses on long-term processes that emphasize broader adoption over time.

Multi-Focal Area activities

72. Multi-Focal Area (MFA) activities are rapidly gaining importance for the GEF portfolio. The GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies were formulated before this development. Consequently, the strategies provide limited guidance on how to utilize synergies between Focal Areas in a consistent and strategic way. The Focal Area Strategy on Land Degradation represents a partial exception as it elaborates on linkages and potential synergies to other Focal Areas. However, none of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies includes a systematic discussion on how elements of different Focal Areas can be strategically combined to create effective Multi-Focal Area projects. During consultations in the context of the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies* stakeholders have consistently raised the formulation of a strategic approach to MFA activities as a central challenge for the GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies. As described above, the systematic identification of causal links between elements could support and inform corresponding efforts in the process of formulating the GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies.

Flexibility in programming

73. Integrating flexibility in programming into the GEF Focal Area Strategies has been a continuous challenge given the relatively rigid nature of the strategies for the four-year replenishment period. The flexibility needed for addressing emerging issues, changes of circumstances, new knowledge etc. is limited by the resource allocation linked to the Focal Area Strategies.

74. The Focal Area Strategy TOCs (see respective Technical Papers) identify a number of cases where forward looking formulation of strategies has provided resources for exploring new niches for GEF activities. The most comprehensive effort in this regard is the incentive mechanism for SFM/REDD+ activities guided by its own strategy. Other examples include

⁶ Fourth Overall performance Study of the GEF (2010), page 51.

activities relating to mercury and the emerging convention on this issue in the Chemicals Focal Area Strategy as well as activities on Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction collaboratively addressed by the International Waters and Biodiversity Focal Area Strategies. In sum, GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies demonstrate several ways of creating room for flexible programming that can serve as a source of information for future efforts in this direction.

4.3 Elements and causal chains

The GEF “toolbox”

75. The General Framework for GEF TOC (see figure 3) establishes basic categories and sub-categories for GEF activities, suggesting that GEF activities regardless of Focal Area employ a certain “tool box” of elements (e.g. market-based incentive mechanisms, awareness-raising, etc.) that fulfill different purposes in each Focal Area, but are similar in their design. The Focal Area Strategy TOCs confirms that the elements identified in the Focal Area Strategies are used in multiple Focal Areas, and that the categories established in the General Framework are suitable to capture the elements identified in all Focal Area Strategies. Figure 6 provides examples of Focal Area Strategy elements as they are categorized in the General Framework. In addition, most of the implicit chains of causality can also be detected in multiple Focal Area Strategies. Figure 7 illustrates one of the most common chains of causality present in several of the strategies.

Figure 6: Categories of elements of GEF and examples from GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies

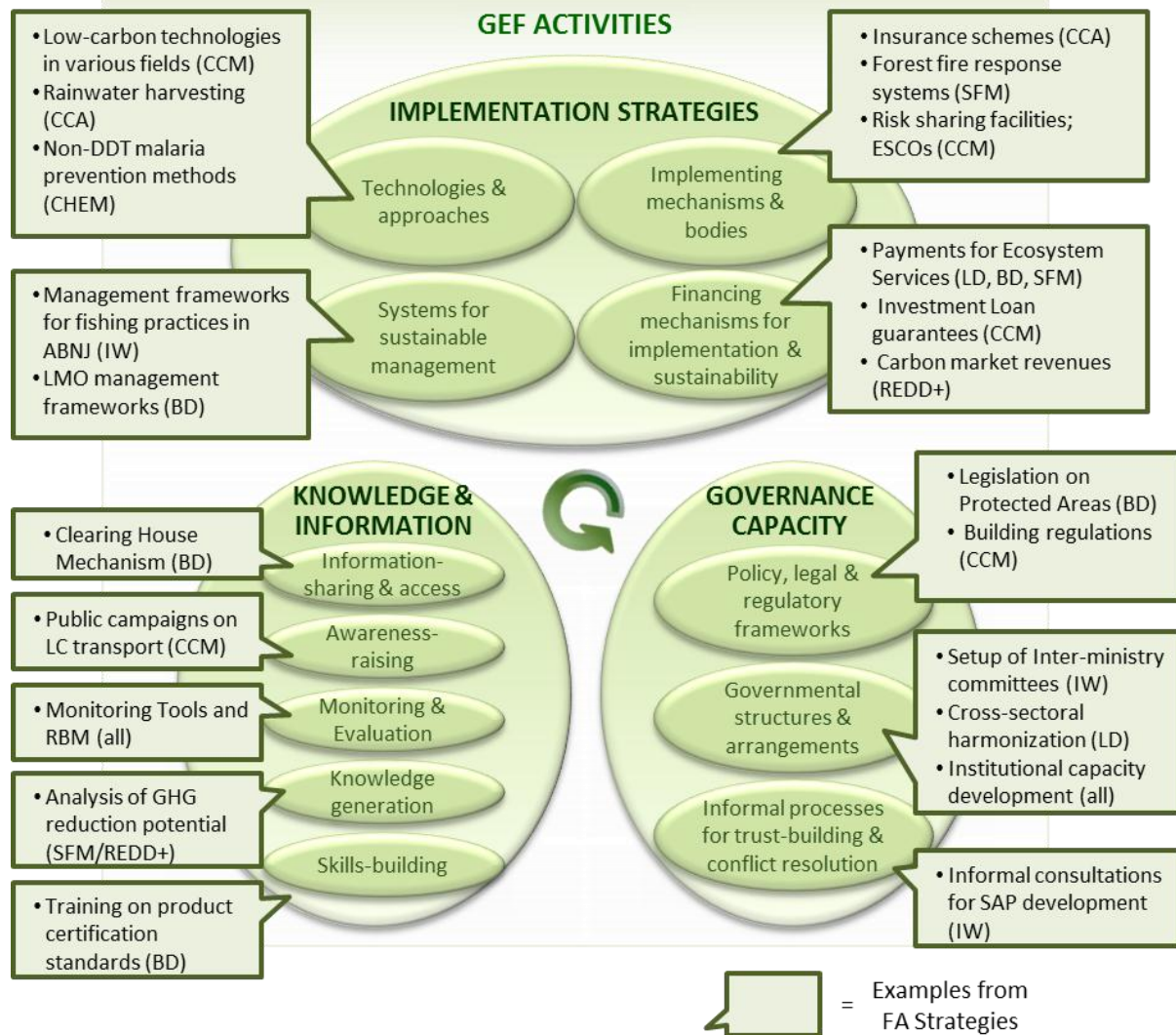
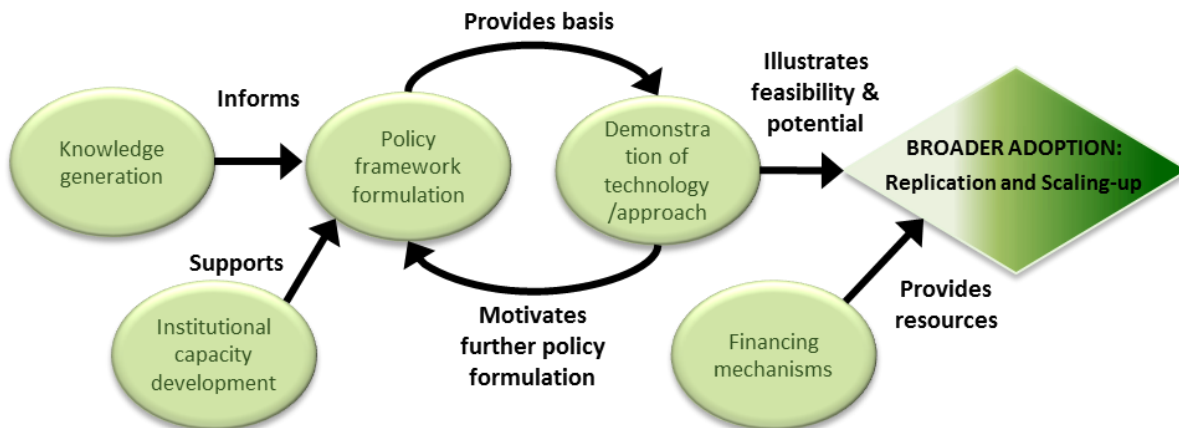


Figure 7: Example for frequent chain of causality implicit in several Focal Area Strategies



76. At the same time, each of the Focal Area Strategies retains its own unique character and internal logic. The differentiation between Focal Area Strategies derives from the distinctive selection and combination of common elements and causal links. The specific selection is mainly determined by the nature of environmental challenges a strategy addresses. For example, some objectives require an emphasis on market oriented elements and mechanisms like in the case of the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy; others rely more heavily on legally rooted activities like the Chemicals Strategy. However, all strategies combine market oriented and legal oriented elements. The technical papers provide a focal area specific analysis of the balance between market orientation and legal orientation.

77. Another dimension of differentiation between Focal Area Strategies is stakeholder composition. In order to achieve their objectives, Focal Area Strategies in most cases have to affect behavioral change of different stakeholder groups. The type of stakeholders that the successful achievement of objectives particularly hinges on (farmers, industrial production, governments, etc.) significantly shapes each strategy's selection and composition of elements. Finally, the difference in guidance that Focal Areas receive from corresponding international conventions differentiates Focal Area Strategies and shape the selection and composition of elements. As is explained in detail in section 4.4 below, conventions differ considerably in the way they influence the formulation of Focal Area Strategies.

Relation between local and global benefits

78. Many of the elements of the "GEF Tool Box" identified in the Focal Area Strategies build on the creation of local benefits in order to ultimately achieve Global Environmental Benefits. GEF activities like changing economic incentive structures in favor of sustainable practices, demonstrating benefits of alternative livelihoods, or reducing initial investments through new financing mechanisms are offering local benefits in exchange for behavioral change that ultimately is envisioned to create Global Environmental Benefits.

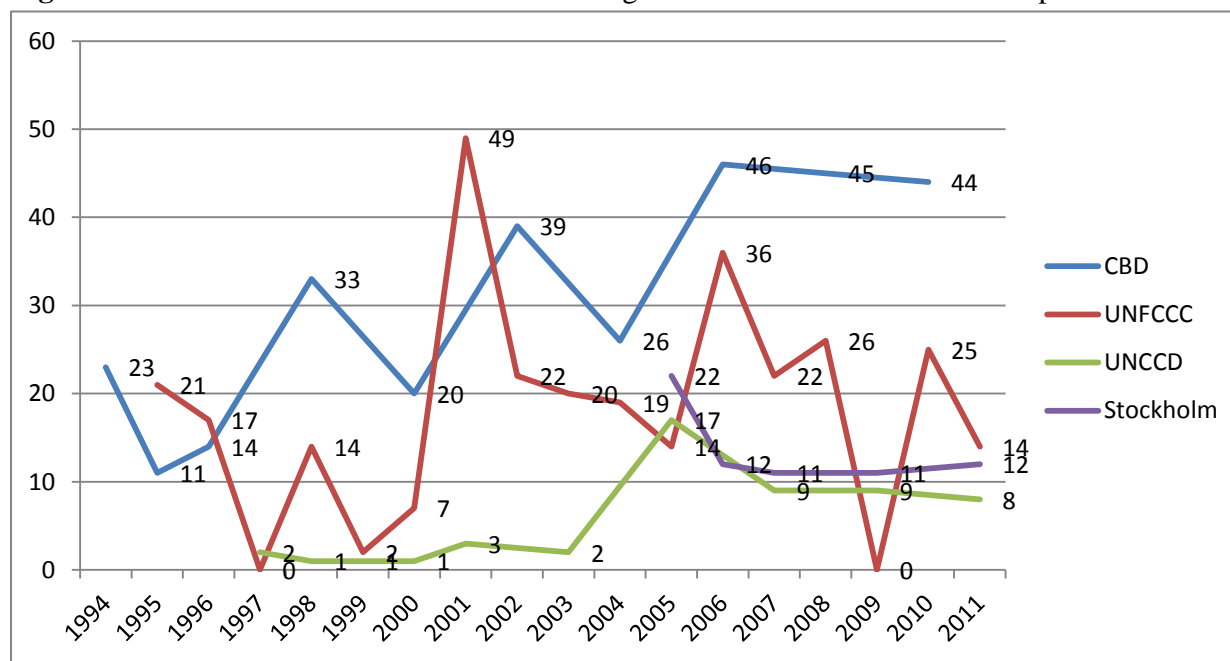
79. This conclusion drawn from the Focal Area Strategy TOCs closely matches earlier findings presented in the GEF Evaluation Office's study on the "The Role of Local Benefits in Global Environmental Programs" (2006) which states "that local and global benefits are strongly interlinked in many areas where the GEF is active. Changing human behavior is one of the critical underlying premises of the GEF approach to achieving global environmental gains, and local benefits play a central role in stimulating changes that produce and sustain such gains."

4.4 Observations on convention guidance

80. The Fourth Overall Performance Study of the GEF included an inventory and analysis of convention guidance to the GEF and the GEF's overall responsiveness (see OPS4, section 2.3). OPS4 pointed to challenges the GEF is facing in responding to convention guidance, in particular the quantity and repetitiveness of guidance (see figure 8). The OPS4 analysis already noted that conventions are in the progress of addressing these issues by moving towards programmatic approaches, streamlining the way guidance to the GEF is presented in COP decisions, and strengthening coordination between convention secretariats and the GEF Secretariat.

81. The analysis of GEF overall responsiveness to convention guidance is not part of the *Evaluation of GEF Focal Area Strategies*, but will be presented in the context of OPS5. However, the review of convention guidance conducted in preparation for the Guidance-to-Strategy mapping (see Technical Paper 8) also yielded findings on the general nature of guidance to the GEF. Especially the streamlined presentation of GEF guidance in COP decision and the efforts to strengthen coordination between convention secretariats and GEF Secretariat facilitate GEF responsiveness to convention guidance. However, the concrete effects of these relatively recent measures on the overall quantity and clarity of convention guidance to the GEF remain to be seen.

Figure 8 and Table 3: Amount of convention guidance to the GEF and development over time⁷



Convention	CBD	UNFCCC	UNCCD	Stockholm
Time period	1994-2010	1995-2011	1997-2011	2005-2011
Cumulative items of Guidance	301	308	53	68

Relationship between convention guidance and FA Strategies

82. The mapping of convention guidance to Focal Area Strategies, which is presented in detail for each Focal Area in the Technical Papers 1-7, finds that the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies are overall responsive to convention guidance. The strategies' approach to capacity development represents a partial exception to this general finding and is discussed below.

⁷ On counting COP guidance: The table summarizing convention guidance to the GEF presented in OPS4 counts the number of Articles in COP Decisions directed to the GEF. The numbers presented in figure 7, which will also be used for OPS5, count all items of guidance defined as a "distinguishable piece of information within a COP decision" (usually a paragraph or subparagraph). Accordingly, the reported number is significantly higher than in OPS4.

83. The general responsiveness to convention guidance implies that convention guidance constitutes one of the “dimensions of distinction” that shape each Focal Area Strategy (see also section 4.3). Differences in the nature of guidance from conventions have shaped the corresponding Focal Area Strategy. This can be illustrated by a comparison of the Focal Area Strategy on Biodiversity shaped by CBD guidance and the Focal Area Strategy on Climate Change Mitigation shaped by UNFCCC guidance. Tables 4 and 5 summarize the quantitative and qualitative approach of both conventions to guidance on technical matters that directly influence the formulation of GEF Focal Area Strategies. As evident from the amount as well as the formulation of relevant guidance, the CBD provides frequent, reiterated guidance on a high number of technical matters and prioritization of activities. CBD guidance tends to be concrete, prescriptive and specific, leaving little room for strategic interpretation. In absolute terms, UNFCCC guidance is equally frequent (see table 3). However, UNFCCC guidance with direct implications for Focal Area Strategies focuses almost exclusively on issues directly relating to national obligations under the convention (national reporting), national planning as well as capacity development (see table 5). UNFCCC guidance largely refrains from concrete elaborations of technical issues or prioritization of areas to be supported by the GEF.⁸ The themes covered by Focal Area Strategy objectives like energy efficiency or LULUCF are usually only mentioned by one item of guidance. UNFCCC guidance also differs from CBD guidance in its formulation which implies a greater degree of flexibility for the GEF to integrate guidance into an overall strategy.

Table 4: Guidance on technical issues from CBD (quantitative and qualitative)

Convention on Biological Diversity – Guidance to the GEF on technical/programming issues											
Theme	COP 1	COP 2	COP 3	CO P4	COP 5	CO P6	COP 7	COP 8	COP 9	COP 10	TOTAL
Biodiversity planning	2			1		1	1	3	1	6	15
Identification, monitoring, indicators and assessments	2		2		1		1	1		2	9
Taxonomy				2	1	1	1	5		2	12
Protected areas							1	5	4	2	12
Species conservation	1					2				2	5
Invasive alien species				2	2	1	1	2	3		11
Article 8(j)	1		1		1	1		1	1	2	8
Sustainable use							1				1
Engagement of business									2		2
Incentive measures	1		1	2	1	1					6
Research and training			1						2		3
Education and awareness			1		1	1	1	2			6
Access and benefit-sharing			2	2	1	2	1			1	9
Technology cooperation	1						1		2	2	7
Scientific cooperation and CHM	1	2	2	3	1	1			3	2	15

⁸ This analysis applies to UNFCCC guidance on climate change mitigation relevant to the CCM Focal Area Strategy. With regard to guidance on adaptation, directed at the SCCF and LDCF that represent funds directly established under the convention, the UNFCCC follows a more assertive and narrow approach.

Biosafety			1		1	1	3	3	1	1	11
National reports		2		2	1	2	1	3	1	2	14
Ecosystem approach					1		1		3		5
Agricultural BD			1		2	4					7
Forest biodiversity				4	1	1					6
BD of inland water systems				3	1	2					6
Marine and coastal BD	1	1			1	2	1			3	9
Island biological diversity								2			2
BD of dry/sub-humid lands	1				1						2
Mountain ecosystems	1										1
Climate change and biodiversity							1		2	4	7
Development activities	1						1			2	4
Sustainability	1								1		2
South-South cooperation										2	2
TOTAL											199

Examples for CBD guidance formulation

Decision IV/7, paragraph 5:

“Urges Parties and countries and international financial institutions, including the Global Environment Facility, to give high priority to the allocation of resources to activities that advance the objectives of the Convention in respect of forest biological diversity”

Decision VII/20, paragraph 7:

“Urges the Parties, other Governments and the Global Environment Facility, in accordance with its mandate, and other relevant funding organizations to provide adequate and timely support to developing countries to assist in the implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative”

Decision VIII/18, paragraph 27:

”Notes the need for the provision of additional funding by the financial mechanism of the Convention to support capacity-building for developing countries, in particular the least developed and small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition, to prevent or minimize the risks of the dispersal and establishment of invasive alien species at the national, subregional, or regional levels”

Decision X/31, B, paragraph 13:

“Urges the Global Environment Facility and its Implementing Agencies to streamline their delivery for expeditious and proportionate disbursement and to align the projects to national action plans for the programme of work on protected areas for appropriate, focused, sufficient and harmonious interventions and continuity of projects”

Table 5: Guidance on technical issues from UNFCCC (quantitative and qualitative)

UNFCCC – Guidance to the GEF on technical/programming issues																			
Theme	COP																	TO TA L	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
Research and observation				1			7		1	1								10	
Education, training and public awareness	2			1			5	2	1	3		1	2				2	19	
National communications		3		2	2		2	1	1	2	2	2	6	6			5	34	
National programs and planning	3			1			2										1	1	8
Capacity Development	1	1		1			3	1	1	6		3		1				1	19
Technology transfer and TNAs				1			1	1					3	5	3			2	16
TOTAL																		106	
Carbon Capture and Storage											1								1
LULUCF												1							1
Energy efficiency												1							1
TOTAL																		3	
Examples for UNFCCC guidance formulation																			
Decision 5/CP.11, paragraph 3:																			
“Requests the Global Environment Facility to consider whether supporting carbon capture and storage technologies, in particular related capacity-building activities, would be consistent with its strategies and objectives, and if so, how they could be incorporated within its operational programmes;”																			
Decision 2/CP.12, paragraph 1 a-d:																			
“Requests the Global Environment Facility																			
[...]																			
(c) to explore options for undertaking land use and land-use change projects within the climate change focal area of the Global Environment Facility, in light of past experience;																			
(d) to continue its promotion of energy efficiency projects;”																			

84. The difference in CBD and UNFCCC guidance is reflected in the respective Focal Areas Strategies (see Technical Papers 1 and 2): The Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy follows the large amount of distinct, prescriptive and at times fragmented CBD guidance through a number of separate objectives or sub-sections of objectives. Specific issues ranging from Access and Benefit Sharing to Biosafety or Invasive Alien Species are prominently addressed by the BD

Strategy following CBD decisions. In the past, CBD guidance however did not provide guidance on how it envisions these various aspects to be integrated into an overall strategic approach in a consistent, effective and efficient way. As a result, parts of the Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy appear less connected to the overarching strategic direction that is primarily embodied in Biodiversity objectives 1 and 2. Current efforts of the CBD to increase strategic coherence of CBD guidance to the GEF (see paragraph 87) are attempting to address this challenge.

85. The objectives of the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy, following UNFCCC guidance that allows for flexibility of interpretation and integration of issues, display a high degree of consistency. The objectives are equally weighted, addressing the main areas of GEF activity in a balanced and integrated way.

86. The example of the influence of CBD and UNFCCC guidance on the respective Focal Area Strategies highlights a general aspect: the potential tension between adequately reflecting convention guidance in the strategies on the one hand and the formulation of a balanced, integrated and coherent strategic approach on the other hand. The way of reconciling the two requirements as displayed in UNFCCC guidance is the formulation of convention guidance that provides general direction while largely leaving the strategic integration of technical issues to the GEF. This approach, however, might not be suitable for all conventions.

87. An alternative approach would be to issue concrete and narrow guidance, but base this guidance on a comprehensive process of strategy definition to ensure that the narrow guidance can still be integrated into a consistent strategic approach. This approach would require a strategy formulation effort on the part of the convention, which could also be implemented with direct participation of the GEF Secretariat. In this context, already existing CBD mechanisms and ongoing processes aimed at streamlining and improving the strategic coherence of CBD convention guidance to the GEF need to be highlighted. The effort to reduce redundancies and consolidate guidance through the “Review of the Guidance to the Financial Mechanism”⁹ represents a step towards reducing the overall quantity of guidance, albeit not decreasing the number of priority areas to be supported by the GEF. Furthermore, the “Framework of programme priorities related to utilization of GEF resources” provides additional CBD guidance on the prioritization of GEF support. Most recently, the “Strategic Plan of the CBD for 2011-2020” aims at providing a more coherent and consistent overall framework for GEF support. However, results of these efforts are not visible yet.

88. Another example for a similar process might be the current efforts of the UNCCD and the GEF Secretariat to achieve consistency between the UNCCD Strategy and the future GEF Focal Area Strategy on Land Degradation. This ongoing process could potentially also yield important lessons for cooperation between convention and GEF at the strategy level.

Focal Area Strategies’ approach to Capacity Development

89. In interviews, convention secretariats consistently raised concerns about the GEF’s overall approach to capacity development addressing two connected aspects: First, the implementation of GEF supported Enabling Activities connected to recipient countries obligations under the conventions (reporting, national policy planning, etc.). Second, GEF

⁹ See footnote 1.

support to capacity development including knowledge, information and awareness-raising activities that go beyond Enabling Activities.

Focal Area Strategies and Enabling Activities

90. In terms of inclusion of Enabling Activities in the strategies, the Focal Area Strategies display high responsiveness to convention guidance. GEF support for Enabling Activities constitutes a separate objective under each of the four relevant Focal Area Strategies. However, the integration of Enabling Activities (e.g. National Communications) as a strategic component within the strategies' other objectives could in most cases be enhanced by making the role of Enabling Activities for the achievement of other Focal Area objectives more explicit. This reiterates an earlier finding presented in OPS4 highlighting the potential benefits of “better integrat[ing] foundational and enabling activities in [Focal Area] strategies in line with relevant convention guidance.” Beyond the relationship between Focal Area Strategies and Enabling Activities, convention secretariats raised a number of concerns on the implementation of Enabling Activities during GEF-5. Related issues will be addressed by the ongoing Evaluation of Enabling Activities as well as OPS5.

Focal Area Strategies and Capacity Development beyond EAs

91. The main concern raised by convention secretariats regards GEF support for institutional and human capacity beyond EAs, in particular in form of stand-alone capacity development activities. Interviewees from different convention secretariats have singled out intensified institutional capacity development as a prerequisite for continuity and sustainability of environmental policies and related activities. The “Ozone Units” under the Montreal Protocol were frequently evoked as a best practice in this context. Corresponding GEF support for capacity development is perceived as insufficient.

92. Capacity development activities beyond EAs including institutional capacity are generally included in the Focal Area Strategies. In addition, the separate Cross-Cutting Capacity Development Strategy defines related objectives, outcomes and outputs for GEF support. Concerns raised on capacity development therefore appear to be largely tied to the actual implementation of corresponding activities as well as the overall priority given to capacity development within the GEF portfolio. An example is activities under the CCM Strategy responding to the UNFCCC Article 6 on education, training, and public awareness. While corresponding activities are explicitly included under CCM objective 6, the UNFCCC COP consistently urges the GEF to follow guidance on Article 6. The OPS5 assessment of the implementation of the Focal Area Strategies will return to the issue of how capacity development activities receive GEF support.

4.5 Results of Real-Time Delphi process

93. The objective of the Real-Time Delphi process, gathering input on the Focal Area Strategies from a group of 167 scientific experts, was to assess to what extent the causal pathways identified by the strategies reflect the current state of scientific knowledge. The quantitative responses provided by scientific experts during the Real-Time Delphi consultations on the scientific soundness of Focal Area Strategy objectives and elements converged around a rating of 6 (“fair”). Means and medians fell into the range of 5 (“somewhat”) to 7

(“considerably”) with few outliers in either direction. While these quantitative results imply room for further improvement, the qualitative responses show that the majority of answers do not suggest a lack of scientific soundness of the strategies’ existing elements. Instead, the suggestions for improvements mostly concern the relative prioritization of specific aspects over others as well as the selection of elements to be included in the strategies. A partial exception is the controversial discussion on the scientific soundness of Protected Areas as a suitable instrument for biodiversity conservation, which is addressed in more detail below.

Quantitative responses

94. One major caveat to the quantitative responses presented in table 6 is the low number of experts that provided input on some of the Focal Area questionnaires. While participation in Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation is sufficient to draw conclusions from the quantitative responses provided, the quantitative data in the other Focal Areas is based on relatively low numbers of responses and therefore needs to be interpreted with caution. The detailed assessment of quantitative information presented in table 6 for each specific Focal Area is presented in the Technical Papers 1-7.

Table 6: Overview of quantitative findings from RTD process

Rating scale: 1 to 10, where 1=not at all; 2=hardly; 3=slightly; 4=partly; 5=somewhat; 6=fairly; 7=considerably; 8=very; 9=highly; 10=fully (use “0” for “no answer”).

Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy – RTD quantitative responses				Participants: 51	
Question #	Mean	Min	Max	Median	Std. Dev.
#1 Overall goal and objectives	6.14	1	10	6.5	0.453
#2 Objective 1: “Protected Areas”	5.7	1	10	6	0.424
#3 Objective 2: “Production land/seascapes”	5.56	1	10	6	0.493
#4 Objective 3: “Biosafety”	5.39	1	10	5	0.531
#5 Objective 4: “Access and Benefit Sharing”	5.04	2	9	5	0.405
#6 Focal Area Set-Aside and ABNJ partnership	4.63	1	10	5	0.537
Climate Change Mitigation Focal Area Strategy – RTD quantitative responses				Participants: 36	
Question #	Mean	Min	Max	Median	Std. Dev.
#1 Overall goal and objectives	6.92	4	9	7	0.413
#2 Objective 1: “Low-carbon technologies”	6.63	4	9	7	0.431
#3 Objective 2: “Energy Efficiency”	5.72	3	10	5	0.643
#4 Objective 3: “Renewable Energy”	6.75	5	9	7	0.426
#5 Objective 4: “Low-carbon transport”	6.18	3	10	5	0.6
#6 Objective 5: “LULUCF and SFM”	6	1	10	6	0.761
International Waters Focal Area Strategy – RTD quantitative responses				Participants: 15	
Question #	Mean	Min	Max	Median	Std. Dev.

#1 Overall goal and objectives	6.28	5	7	7	0.332
#2 Objective 1: “Conflicting water uses”	6	5	7	6	0.349
#3 Objective 2: “Marine fisheries, coasts, LMEs”	5.62	3	8	5.5	0.498
#4 Objective 3: “Foundational capacity”	5.85	5	8	5	0.425
#5 Objective 4: “Marine ABNJ”	5.42	3	8	5	0.566
Land Degradation Focal Area Strategy – RTD quantitative responses					Participants: 17
Question #	Mean	Min	Max	Median	Std. Dev.
#1 Overall goal and objectives	6.14	4	8	6	0.55
#2 Objective 1: “Agro-ecosystems”	5.71	5	9	5	0.523
#3 Objective 2: “Forest ecosystems”	7.14	5	9	7	0.55
#4 Objective 3: “Competing land uses”	5.85	3	9	5	0.867
#5 Objective 4: “SLM Adaptive Management”	6.16	2	10	5.5	1.09
#6 FA partnership on SFM	7.14	5	10	7	0.652
Chemicals Focal Area Strategy – RTD quantitative responses					Participants: 8
Question #	Mean	Min	Max	Median	Std. Dev.
#1 Overall goal and objectives	5.75	5	8	5	0.649
#2 Objective 1: “Persistent Organic Pollutants”	6.5	5	8	6.5	1.06
#3 Objective 2: “Ozone depleting substances”	6	5	7	6	0.707
#4 Objective 3: “SAICM and mercury”	5.5	5	6	5.5	0.353
#5 Objective 4: “CHEM beyond Stockholm/Montreal”	6	5	7	6	0.707
#6 Links with other Fas	6	5	7	6	0.707
SFM/REDD+ Strategy – RTD quantitative responses					Participants: 12
Question #	Mean	Min	Max	Median	Std. Dev.
#1 Overall goal and objectives	6.16	5	8	6	0.435
#2 Objective 1: “Reducing pressure on forests”	7.66	6	9	8	0.72
#3 Objective 2: “Forest ecosystem services”	7.33	6	8	8	0.544
#4 Objective 3: “GHG emissions and carbon markets”	4.66	1	8	5	1.655
#5 FA partnership with BD, CCM, LD	6.66	5	8	7	0.72
Climate Change Adaptation under LDCF/SCCF – RTD quantitative responses					Participants: 28
Question #	Mean	Min	Max	Median	Std. Dev.
#1 Overall goal and objectives	6.4	5	9	6	0.35
#2 Objective 1: “Reduction of vulnerability”	6.45	4	8	7	0.413
#3 Objective 2: “Increase of adaptive capacity”	5.3	2	9	5.5	0.8
#4 Objective 3: “Adaptation technology transfer”	5.8	2	8	6	0.525
#5 Sectorial distribution of activities	5.75	3	8	5.5	0.605
#6 Research on adaptation economics	6.22	5	9	6	0.465

95. The Technical Papers 1-7 provide a comprehensive overview of the RTD discussions for each specific Focal Area Strategy. The examples in the text box give a first impression of some of the issues raised by the RTD. The most intensely discussed issue was the effectiveness of Protected Areas as a suitable instrument for biodiversity conservation. Some experts voiced fundamental doubts about the contribution of Protected Areas to biodiversity conservation. Most experts deemed the emphasis on Protected Areas as the main component of the Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy as too high. Many responses pointed to the close connection between the effectiveness of Protected Areas and the successful mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into production landscapes, suggesting a stronger relative emphasis on the activities envisioned under objective 2 of the Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy. As the summary of allocated resources in table 2 shows, a relative shift from objective 1 to objective 2 is already materializing.

Examples for issues raised by the RTD consultations on BD and CCM

(For Results from RTD on all Focal Areas see Technical Paper 1-7)

Biodiversity:

- Experts frequently raised the problem of Protected Areas as “isolated patches” that become ineffective for biodiversity conservation; need for emphasis on connectivity, buffer zones
- In this context, the connection between BD objectives 1 and 2 was emphasized as one of the crucial factors of success for the BD Strategy
- Discussion on what should be protected in productive landscapes (“ecological triage”)
- Several responses referred to approaches that try to fit biodiversity conservation “into the mainframe of agricultural production” versus new methods to “optimize agricultural production and biodiversity value simultaneously”
- Some experts called for the development of improved indicators that capture the “quality” of BD conservation
- Discussions frequently addressed the trade-offs between BD conservation and socio-economic needs with several experts proposing a more differentiated view on BD protection (“partial protection”)

Climate Change Mitigation:

- Discussions highlighted the need for emphasis on “Green Economic Growth” in the CCM Strategy
- Some experts raised the aspect of local leaders/champions as a key factor for success given the highly contextual circumstances CCM projects operate in
- Management of waste generated by replacement technologies (for example CFL) was identified as an open question
- Discussions underlined the mitigation potential of system level urban planning that should be emphasized more under CCM-4
- Responses stressed the importance of technology transfer as a core component of the CCM Strategy
- Answers pointed to the need for further improvements in GHG reduction monitoring systems

LIST OF TECHNICAL PAPERS

96. The Technical Papers 1-7, available on the GEF Evaluation Office Web site (www.gefeo.org) under ongoing evaluations, includes a more detailed analysis of each Focal Area Strategy separately. They include the full description of the TOC construction for each Focal Area as well as individual assessments of convention guidance and Focal Area specific results of the Real-Time Delphi process. The Technical Papers this evaluation report is based on include:

1. Analysis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategy on Biodiversity
2. Analysis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategy on Climate Change Mitigation
3. Analysis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategy on International Waters
4. Analysis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategy on Land Degradation
5. Analysis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategy on Chemicals
6. Analysis of the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategy on Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+
7. Analysis of the Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and SCCF
8. Compilation and review of convention guidance to the GEF (UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, Stockholm Convention)