



Twentieth SPREP Meeting

Apia, Samoa
17 – 20 November 2009



Agenda Item 9.2.6: GEF Matters and GEF-PAS Developments

Purpose of paper

1. To apprise the Meeting of issues concerning GEF support opportunities, provide a review of and update on developments and matters relating to the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability umbrella programme (GEF-PAS), and seek guidance as necessary. An updated developments of GEF matters is contained as Attachment 1.

Background

2. A number of evaluation reports produced since 2004 found and highlighted that Pacific SIDS lacked well behind other SIDS (for example those of the Caribbean) in their efforts to access and apply GEF funding to national and regional programmes. A report in 2004 on the performance of the GEF in the Pacific sponsored by NZAID confirmed that Pacific Island Countries (PICs) were experiencing this difficulty. The report recommended that the GEF strengthen its coordination and support presence in the region.

3. Pacific SIDS in collaboration with the governments of Australia and New Zealand, GEF Secretariat, PIF Working Group of Ambassadors in New York and the SPREP Secretariat responded by establishing the position of GEF Support Adviser for Pacific Island Countries stationed at SPREP. The GEF Support Adviser position was filled in March 2007, funded by AusAID and NZAID, with its work programme guided by a group representing the five collaborating parties.

4. In May 2007, the GEF CEO announced the US\$100 million GEF-Pacific Alliance for Sustainability umbrella programme which proposed a substantive change in the GEF approach to providing support to the Pacific. The overall objective of the GEF-PAS is:

“to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of GEF support to PICs, thereby enhancing achievement of both global environmental and national sustainable development goals. The goal is to enhance and stimulate economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security for Pacific countries through regionalism. One strategic objective is to contribute to sustainable development through improvements in natural resource and environmental management. In this respect, the programme will facilitate international financing for sustainable development, biodiversity and environmental protection and climate change in the Pacific.”

5. The GEF-PAS programme is funded from the fourth replenishment of the GEF (GEF-4), which ends in the latter half of 2010, and programming for projects to be funded by the next replenishment cycle, GEF-5, commence. The GEF also has “corporate” programmes that benefit PICs such as the Country Support and Country Dialogue programmes, as well as “global programmes” such as the Small Grants Programme, among others, in addition to the GEF-PAS from which PICs receive support.

6. The approved GEF-PAS Programme Framework contained indicative project allocations in the following focal areas:

Focal Area	GEF Financing (US\$)
Biodiversity	37,715,220
Climate Change – Adaptation	30,392,000
Climate Change – Mitigation	14,700,000
International Waters	10,722,950
POPs	5,307,750
Total	98,837,920

Current Status

7. The GEF-PAS Programme Framework, together with some of the programme projects developed at that stage, was approved by the GEF Council at its meeting in April, 2008. As at April, 2009 the total sum for project concepts approved under the umbrella amount to US\$63,188,700 based on the indicative figures contained in the approved GEF-PAS Framework, leaving a balance of US\$35,649,220 yet to be accounted through approved GEF Project Identification Forms (PIFs). PIFs under the umbrella have to be submitted and included at the latest in the November Council work programme or the indicative amounts may be subject to reallocation. Attached is a table summarizing the status of GEF-PAS PIFs.

8. Given the substantive shift in the approach by the GEF to delivering support to Pacific SIDS, developing the GEF-PAS was an experience that provided numerous learning opportunities for recipient countries, the GEF Secretariat, Implementing Agencies and SPREP. And although the GEF had experimented with such a “programmatic” approach in Africa, the Pacific situation was vastly different and required appropriate customizing and retuning. There was also always the sense of urgency because of the timelines programme developments worked to. Many that were involved in that process will agree that some valuable lessons were learnt.

9. Obtaining PIF approval is only one step in the GEF Project Cycle – immediately following is the detailed development of project documents, and afterwards, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Close collaboration with an effective and efficient Implementing Agency is necessary at all levels. And it goes without saying that a good project design that takes account of needed capacities, appropriate ownership and local driven-ness, are essential ingredients for implementation success.

10. Throughout the process, Pacific SIDS GEF Focal Points have met at appropriate intervals to consider related issues, review progress and continuously agree and set needed timelines. Such meetings included: (1) Constituency meeting held in Manila in May 2007; (2) Regional Focal Points workshop in Apia at SPREP Headquarters during September 2007; (3) Meeting of Implementing Agencies and SPREP with the GEF CEO at the margins of the SPREP Meeting in September, 2007; (4) Constituency meeting in Manila November, 2007; (5) Focal Points workshop in Palau, March 2008; (6) Focal Points Workshop in Auckland, September 2008; and (6) Constituency meeting in Jakarta, April 2009.

Some Issues

11. Development of the GEF-PAS raised a number of issues. For example, the application of the RAF during the GEF-4 replenishment had limited application to Pacific SIDS and therefore made it difficult for them to contribute meaningfully to its Midterm Review. Nevertheless, there were some initial and continuing concerns about some aspects of the resource allocation system such as: the 50% rule; terrestrial and marine weighting for biodiversity; transparency in establishing the RAF country indices; and possible extension of the RAF under a re-branding to also include other GEF focal areas. STAR (System for Transparent Allocation of Resources) is being proposed by the GEF Secretariat to replace the RAF for GEF-5, although still very much retaining key characteristics of the RAF formulas.

12. Given the programmatic and regional approach for the GEF-PAS umbrella programme, there is the question whether PICs will again seek a similar, or alternative, approach for GEF-5. Also, because the GEF-PAS emerged out of a common concern that PICs up to then had not in previous replenishments accessed their reasonable share of GEF support, and that GEF-PAS was partly a response to remedy that situation, a framework for GEF support to the Pacific under GEF-5 therefore needs articulation. And there is the need for clarity on the proposed workings of the Adaptation Fund, as well as GEF proposals for Programmatic Trust Funds.

13. An outstanding issue with institutionalizing the GEF-PAS concerns the proposal in the GEF-PAS Programme Framework to establish a Coordination Unit for Monitoring and Evaluation. The Pacific Focal Points Workshop in Palau in March 2008 considered the draft GEF-PAS framework to be submitted to the GEF Council in April and agreed that the Coordination Unit should be housed within SPREP. However, a final decision on the matter is still pending. In the meantime the collaborating parties that guide the work of the GEF Support Adviser with SPREP have agreed to a revision of the position Terms of Reference so that some of the related coordination functions are carried out by the Adviser in the interim.

14. The position of GEF Support Adviser stationed at SPREP is for a specified term of three years from April 2007, with the option of an additional year. Given the range and amount of matters relating to the development and implementation of the GEF-PAS, plus considerations with regard coordinating the development of programme and project priorities that may be addressed by the GEF-5 replenishment, the Meeting may wish to consider whether the position will be needed after its first three years, whether it should be extended for a fourth year, and whether there is a need for it at all thereafter.

Recommendation

15. The meeting is invited to:

- **note** the progress made concerning strengthening GEF coordination within the region through the establishment of the position of GEF Support Adviser within SPREP and establishment of the GEF-PAS umbrella programme;
- **note** the discussion above with regard the current terms of tenure for the position of GEF Support Adviser and advise accordingly; and
- **confirm** support for the agreement by the GEF Focal Points in Palau that the Coordination Unit for the purposes of monitoring, evaluating and coordinating the GEF-PAS, in whatever form its final institutional affiliation adopts, be housed within SPREP offices in Apia.