



Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

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Cooperation with partners

GEF AND THE WATER CONVENTION

Submitted by the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility

Introduction

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) (www.thegef.org) welcomes the opportunity to follow up on the introduction of the GEF to the 6th Meeting of the Parties in November 2012 and its Decision VI/4 seeking greater cooperation between the UNECE Water Convention Secretariat and the GEF. Collaboration between the UNECE Water Convention and the GEF¹ is based on complementarity and synergy of support to riparian countries to catalyze cooperation on the governance and management of transboundary waters as outlined in MOP-6/2012/INF.5.

The UNECE Water Convention and the GEF both foster the establishment of joint bodies to cooperate and manage shared water resources in specified transboundary basins; promote cooperation and exchange of information and their availability to the public; and support the formulation of joint management and concerted action programs. The results of numerous activities and projects implemented with assistance of GEF funds in the ECE region contribute to fulfilling the UNECE Water Convention Parties to meet their obligation under the Convention. On the other hand many activities conducted under the auspices of the Convention support GEF overall goals and specific GEF projects and global initiatives.

The GEF appreciates the opportunity to inform the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties of its ongoing and planned activities with a view of emphasizing those GEF projects and activities with greatest relevance to the Convention. During the past three years the GEF has seen increasing cooperation with the UNECE Secretariat in advancing areas of mutual focus, including for example building capacities in countries; systematic assessments of transboundary basins; addressing the Water, Food, Energy and Ecosystems Nexus and the sharing of benefits in transboundary basins; and addressing climate resilience and flood protection. The UNECE Water Convention Secretariat has also increasingly collaborated with the GEF in contributing to the design and implementation of several GEF-funded projects, namely on the Drin River, Chu-Talas and Dniester Basins². Furthermore, the GEF International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW: LEARN) and the UNECE Water Convention Secretariat together with other

¹ An updated description of the GEF structure is attached as Annex 1.

² UNECE serves as partner in various capacities, including as an executing agency for some cases such as in the Chu-Talas basin.

partners have progressively joined efforts to facilitate the exchange of experiences and lessons from transboundary cooperation across basins and countries.

GEF Programming Directions

GEF was established in the early 1990s to help tackle our planet’s most pressing environmental problems. Since then, the GEF has become an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations, and private sector entities providing approximately \$14.6 billion in grants and mobilizing an additional \$74.3 billion in co-financing for more than 4,000 projects across the globe (see Annex 1). The GEF finance is structured within four-year replenishment cycles. In 2014, GEF entered its sixth replenishment cycle, with its programming direction approved at the GEF General Assembly³.

The 2020 Vision of the GEF is to be a champion of the global environment building on its role as financial mechanism of several multilateral environmental conventions (MEAs), supporting transformational change, and achieving global environmental benefits on a larger scale. The GEF 2020 Vision takes a drivers oriented approach to safeguarding the Global Commons through supporting solutions that embody three “Strategic Axes”: Integration – Innovation – Transformation.

The GEF International Waters Focal Area

Cooperation between the GEF and UNECE Water Convention has been predominantly through the GEF International Waters (IW) Focal Area. The GEF IW Focal Area supports countries to jointly manage their transboundary surface water basins, groundwater basins, and coastal and marine systems to enable the sharing of benefits from their utilization (as outlined in detail in MOP-6/2012/INF.5). The GEF IW Focal Area embraces an ecosystems approach to enhancing cooperation on the governance and management of surface and groundwater basins, Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs), and associated natural resources.

Through the IW Focal Area, the GEF attends to a unique demand in the global water agenda: fostering transboundary cooperation and building trust between states that often find themselves locked in complex and long-lasting water-use conflicts. The goal of the IW Focal Area is to *promote collective management for transboundary water systems and subsequent implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services*. One of the key factors behind the long-term success of the IW Focal Area has been its consistent overall goal and strategic approach, including joint fact-finding, multi-country strategic planning, and implementation of governance reforms and investments. To date, GEF’s IW Focal Area has invested more than \$1.6 billion in grants leveraging \$9.7 billion in co-financing for more than 270 projects in transboundary water bodies.

The GEF-6 International Waters Strategy

Since the first GEF Operational Strategy of 1995, the GEF IW approach has included joint fact-finding, multi-country strategic planning, and implementation of governance reforms and investments. The long-term goal for the GEF IW focal area, as outlined above, remains relevant to the present, including for the present GEF sixth replenishment cycle (July 2014 to June 2018).

³ https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/webpage_attached/GEF6_programming_directions_final_0.pdf

The GEF-6 IW Strategy⁶ consists of three objectives and seven programs, which are in line with the GEF 2020 Vision to facilitate integration, innovation, and transformation (see figure 1). The two objectives most relevant to the UNECE Water Convention are: (1) to catalyze sustainable management of transboundary water systems by supporting multistate cooperation through foundational capacity building, targeted research and portfolio learning, and (2) to catalyze investments to balance competing water-uses in the management of transboundary surface and groundwater and to enhance multi-state cooperation.

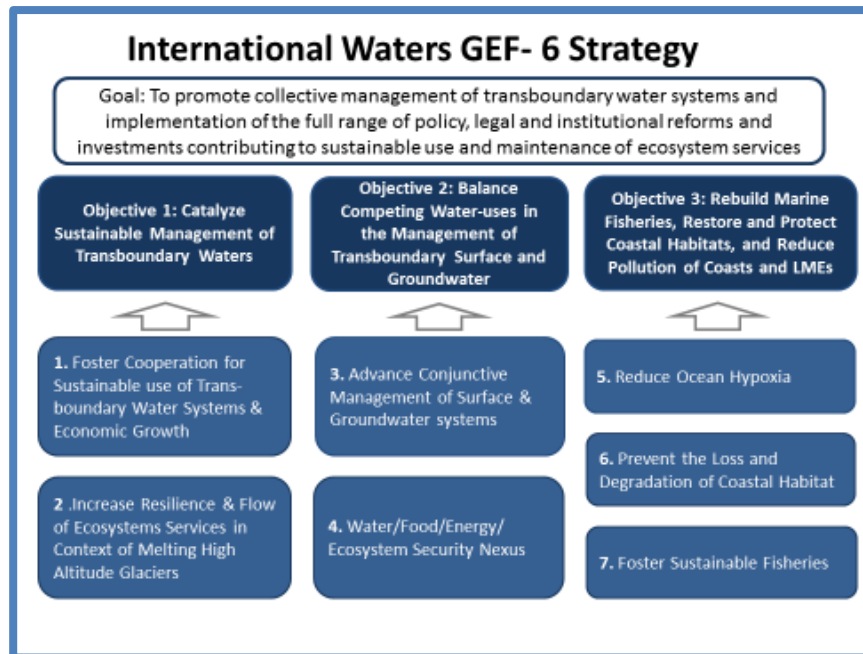


Figure1: Schematic presentation of the GEF 6 International Waters Strategy

The overall GEF IW approach in support of transboundary cooperation aims at a structured, long term process for balancing water needs across sectors and borders. Over the last two decades GEF has supported and demonstrated success and progress in supporting countries in multi-country processes. These foundational processes have often led to cooperative legal and institutional frameworks, increased capacities, and agreed actions. Transboundary cooperation contributes to regional integration, development, and stability and enhances GEF IW global environmental benefits. GEF-6 IW Objective 1 is focusing on these foundational processes while Objective 2 is supporting the implementation of common Strategic Actions Programs (SAPs). GEF-6 IW Programs with specific relevance to cooperation with the UNECE Water Convention are:

- Program 1 provides catalytic support to basin assessments, formulation of SAPs and the support to legal and institutional frameworks for cooperation;
- Program 2 focuses on urgent action needs in melting high altitude glaciers;
- Program 3 supports advancing conjunctive management of surface and groundwater through effective institutional, legal, and policy measures; and
- Program 4 addresses the Water/Food/Energy/ Ecosystem Security Nexus.

These programs are described in more detail below.

Fostering Cooperation for sustainable use of transboundary water systems and economic growth (Program 1) and increasing resilience and flow of ecosystems services in the context of high altitude

melting glaciers (Program 2). Building broad trust and confidence is essential to facilitate lasting commitments for cooperation for sustainable management of transboundary water systems. Where capacity and agreement among states does not exist, the GEF continues to support foundational processes to create an enabling environment for action. These processes include: facilitating a transboundary dialogue process to derive a shared vision for collective action; moving from perceptions to agreed facts on pressures and drivers of environmental degradation within the transboundary water-body through participatory and cross-sectoral Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses (TDAs); facilitating legal and institutional frameworks for coordinated or collaborative action; enhancing stakeholder participation processes; and formulating Strategic Action Programs (SAPs), including agreed reforms and investments. The TDA/SAP process (see figure 2) continues to play a critical role in GEF-6. A critical component of TDAs/SAPs is that they involve a range of stakeholders, including ministries, academia, civil society groups and the private sector (e.g. local business councils, groups of individual entrepreneurs such as farmers unions, SMEs, women’s organizations, and national industry groups).



Figure 2: GEF IW engagement

Advance Conjunctive Management of Surface and Groundwater through Effective Institutional, Legal, and Policy Measures (Program 3). Groundwater is a key resource for drinking water, food, cities, energy and industrial uses and for climate adaptation. Its sustainable use is essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on water, food/food security, and urban development⁴ among others. The neglect of many governments for adequate governance has led to massive groundwater depletion and urgent action is needed. The GEF has partnered with FAO, World Bank, UNESCO, and IAH to analyse and consult across the world on the state of groundwater resources and on solutions to address these through the Project “Groundwater Governance: A Global Framework for Action”⁵. The findings from this work confirm that the world’s groundwater resources are falling victim to a lack of effective governance⁶. Effective governance needs to start with the knowledge of the resource (e.g. where are recharge areas

⁴ SDGs 2 – food; 6 – water; 7 – energy ; 11 – cities

⁵ This project is scheduled to close end of 2015.

⁶ Groundwater governance comprises the promotion of responsible collective action to ensure control, protection and socially-sustainable utilization of groundwater resources and aquifer systems for the benefit of humankind and dependent ecosystems.

and what are recharge rates, what are sustainable yields, what are flows in terms of quantity and direction). The lack of knowledge and awareness of the role of groundwater and the state of the resource in each country often hampers action. Groundwater is a prime example of “we cannot manage what we cannot measure”. The GEF IW Program 3 has stepped up to this challenge by putting in place a designated program and support for countries to address groundwater governance and the conjunctive management of surface and groundwater.

Water/Food/Energy/Ecosystems Security Nexus (Program 4). Within a basin, the need for water, energy, food and environmental services is a common need and concern for well-being and economic development of each nation. Each country needs water for all these nexus dimensions yet it is often not economically viable and not physical possible to attain all these goals by self-reliance, i.e. within a single nation’s own borders. Hence cooperation with neighboring countries is an imperative in many situations to attain water, food, energy and ecosystems security. These resources are interdependent and the opportunities and trade-offs have to be assessed in a basin context, including resulting costs and benefits to individual countries and the basin as a whole.

The GEF-6 strategy puts specific emphasis on supporting countries to consider Nexus dimensions as an entry point for cooperation and reducing potential for conflicts between countries sharing water resources. It will also support considerations of how Nexus dimensions, incl. trade-offs, can best be taken into account in prioritizing investments in transboundary basins and form a basis for sharing of benefits and costs across basin countries. The GEF is stressing the importance to add ‘ecosystems’ explicitly into the Nexus discussions as ecosystems underpin sustainable development (Water/Food/Energy/Ecosystem Nexus).

Exchanging of Experiences, Lessons, and Enhancing Capacity - GEF IW:LEARN

IW:LEARN is the International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network project⁷, implemented by UNDP and UNEP. It provides a critical role in helping to share project experiences, foster learning, and replicate results and enhance project impacts across the entire GEF IW portfolio of projects. IW:LEARN promotes knowledge sharing and information management across GEF agencies, countries, and partners around the world. IW:LEARN supports face-to-face activities (workshops, conferences, regional dialogue processes, project-project twinning) as well as online exchanges, including help-desk functions, the IW:LEARN website, its most visible activity, and its associated developments, the Project Website Toolkit, IW Community Workspace and Portfolio Results Archive. IW:LEARN concluded its third phase in 2014 and UNECE is an active partner in the preparation in its upcoming fourth phase . A unique feature of IW:LEARN 4 will be its expanded role of and number of cooperating partners in the implementation of its activities.

IW:LEARN and UNECE Water Convention examples of cooperation. A number of events have been organized in cooperation between UNECE and IW:LEARN as well as other partners in the last three years, such as on:

- a. **Transboundary Institutions:** Two workshops on joint bodies were held in September 2013 and April 2014: the first concentrated on the creation of joint bodies, their legal and institutional framework and the related challenges; the second focused on selected technical aspects in the work of joint bodies, notably inter-sectoral coordination, infrastructure, groundwater management, environmental protection and selected management issues, including financing and communication.
- b. **Climate Change:** Several workshops on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins were held, including e.g.: the workshop on “Transboundary climate change adaptation serving multiple

⁷For more information on IW:Learn, please see www.iwlearn.net

purposes” (Geneva, Switzerland, 25–26 June 2013); and “Adaptation strategies: Which measures for which outcomes at transboundary level?” (Geneva, Switzerland, 14–15 October 2014).

- c. **Regional Workshops:** Several regional capacity-building events were organized in cooperation between the UNECE Water Convention, IW:LEARN and other partners, for example:
 - i. A workshop on transboundary water cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe (Buenos Aires, Brazil, 11–12 June 2013) <<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=32371>>
 - ii. A workshop for countries in the Mediterranean region organized by GWP-MED in cooperation with UNECE and others (Rome, Italy, 26-27 November 2012) back-to-back with the sixth Meeting of the Parties;
 - iii. A UNECE organized session on the Water Convention at the regional IW:LEARN event for Africa (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, November 2012).
- d. **GEF International Waters Conference.** UNECE contributed to the 7th GEF International Waters Conference in Barbados in October 2013 through presentations in plenary and organization of a side event. <<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=33899>>

While the above activities are the most prominent partnered events, there are a number of other events where IW:LEARN has facilitated the participation of stakeholders as global dialogue participants to UNECE events. Further, UNECE has also been a key partner with IW:LEARN and other partners in the Athens-Petersberg Process on fostering transboundary cooperation over shared water basins in South Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean.

Anticipated collaboration between UNECE and IW:LEARN during its next phase (2016-2020). UNECE will be a partner in IW:LEARN’s fourth phase and expressed its intent through this partnership to consider GEF International Waters lessons learned and best practices within its various guidance material development, its global training agenda (particularly trainings on the Nexus, mainstreaming climate change and quantifying benefits of cooperation) and its activities to strengthen transboundary basin governance. UNECE is committed to contribute to IW:LEARN with the lessons learned from projects and guidance developed in the last 20 years, to contribute to publications produced by IW:LEARN and to the IW:LEARN website. IW:LEARN and its partners, including UNECE, are also expected to continue to cooperate in the design and implementation of thematic and regional workshops.

GEF portfolio overview highlights

The GEF International Waters Focal Area supports country cooperation in international waters around the globe. Full size projects are approved by the GEF Council twice a year at regular Council meetings or through intersessional work program submission by mail, while medium sized projects are approved on a rolling basis. The table below provides a snapshot of the GEF IW and of Multi-focal Area projects financed since the 6th Meeting of the Parties in Nov 2012. These highlighted projects are examples of areas of GEF investments with most relevance to the UNECE Water Convention and hence with a focus on river-, lake- and groundwater basins and land-based sources of pollution to coastal areas.

The following pages provide a short overview of each of the projects mentioned in the table below. More detailed information can be found online https://www.thegef.org/gef/project_list. Furthermore, a detailed portfolio overview of past GEF IW finance can be found in the following GEF publications: “From Ridge to Reef”, “From Community to Cabinet” and “From Coast to Coasts”⁸. In addition, the publication “Water for our Future”⁹, describes experiences based on two decades of IW investments through the lens

⁸ https://www.thegef.org/gef/International_Waters

⁹ https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/GEF_IWSecurity_WaterFutureApril2015_r2.pdf

of the Nexus as driver for cooperation to achieve energy and food security and for the provision of essential ecosystems services and to contribute to regional integration, stability and peace.

Table1: Overview of selected GEF investments since November 2012

	Countries	Project Title
Europe and Central Asia	Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo¹⁰ and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Extended Drin River Basin
	Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan	Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins
	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia	Adriatic Sea Environmental Pollution Control Project
	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia	West Balkans Drina River Basin Management
	Azerbaijan, Georgia	Advancing IWRM Across the Kura River Basin through Implementation of the Transboundary Agreed Actions and National Plans
	Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan	Enabling Country of the Trans-boundary Syr Darya Basin to Make Sustainable Use of their Ground Water Potential and Subsurface Space with Consideration to Climate Variability and Change
Africa	Central African Republic, Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, Chad	Improving Lake Chad Management through Building Climate Change Resilience and Reducing Ecosystem Stress through Implementation of the SAP
	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, South Africa, Zambia, Congo DR, Zimbabwe	Sustainable Groundwater Management in SADC Member States
	Angola, Botswana, Namibia	Support to the Cubango-Okavango River Basin Strategic Action Program Implementation
	Burkina Faso, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Togo	Volta River Basin Strategic Action Program Implementation Project
	Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal	Senegal River Basin Climate Change Resilience Development Project
	Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa	Support to the Orange-Senqu River Strategic Action Program Implementation
	Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico	Integrated Transboundary Ridges-to-Reef Management of the Mesoamerican
Latin America	Ecuador and Peru	Integrated Water Resources Management in the Puyango-Tumbes, Catamayo-Chira and Zarumilla Transboundary Aquifers and River Basins
	Bolivia, Peru	Integrated Water Resources Management in the Titicaca-Desaguadero-Poopo-Salar de Coipasa (TDPS) System
Global	Global	Integrated Solutions for Energy, Water, Food, and Ecosystem Security under Rapid Global Change (medium size project)
	Global	GEF International Waters Learning Exchange and Resources Network (IW:LEARN)

Projects in Europe and Central Asia:

¹⁰ Kosovo finance via additional finance: Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the White Drin and the Extended Drin Basin

Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Extended Drin River Basin (GEF ID: 4483, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$4.5 M, Co-finance: \$222 M)

The project will be instrumental in accelerating the process of compliance with EU legislation, in particular to the Water Framework Directive, for the involved countries in this proposed project. The project countries have pursued the management of the shared water bodies from a predominantly national perspective. The proposed project will build on the previous baseline achievements and support countries in their efforts to put in place cooperative frameworks for the sustainable and integrated management of the shared water resources of the extended Drin River Basin.

Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the White Drin and the Extended Drin Basin (GEF ID: 5510, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$1.0 M, Co-finance: \$7.9 M)

This project will complement the GEF project "Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the extended Drin River Basin" by fully integrating Kosovo, and the White Drin sub-basin, into this large multi-country effort to support the full implementation of the Drin MoU and promote the joint management of the shared water resources of the extended transboundary Drin River Basin, including coordination mechanisms among the various sub-basin commissions and committees (Lakes Prespa, Ohrid and Skadar).

Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins (GEF ID: 5310, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$1.0 M, Co-finance: \$6.2 M)

This project is to address the role of the irrigation sector in water management, to do this it will be essential to increase the understanding of the environmental consequences and to involve environmental authorities and a broader set of stakeholders in the management of water. The project will develop a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and following a Strategic Action Program which will be the foundation for broadened and improved bilateral water cooperation. The Strategic Action Program (SAP) will have a horizon of 5 years and be containing concrete actions (legal, policy, institutional reforms, and investments).

Adriatic Sea Environmental Pollution Control Project (GEF ID: 5269, Agency: World Bank, GEF Grant: \$6.8 M, Co-finance: \$23.2 M)

The proposed Project seeks to accelerate the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategic Action Programs (SAP BIO and SAP MED) adopted under the Barcelona Convention in the Adriatic. The project aims to strengthen synergies between EU investment facilities and the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan. The Project will promote accelerating and scaling up partnership investments of the World Bank and other IFIs that aim to support these two countries to invest for sustainable development and protection of the Adriatic Sea. It will assist both countries to further assess nutrient discharges and facilitate investment from EU funds in nutrient pollution reduction in both countries in dozens of pollution hot spots.

West Balkans Drina River Basin Management (GEF ID: 5556, Agency: World Bank, GEF Grant: \$4.4 M, Co-financing: \$100.0 M)

This GEF foundational project will assist the countries of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro to achieve improved planning and implementation for integrated, cooperative management of the transboundary Drina River basin. It aims to enhance multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary Drina waters through the development of a Drina TDA/SAP; through joint hydro-

meteorological models; and support to strategic investment sectoral investment studies. The project along with relevant baseline investments will promote, climate-resilient and sustainable development in the Drina river basin. The project also captures the synergies between climate change adaptation and the international waters focal area, presenting a viable strategy for ensuring sustainability, and to allow successful adaptation strategies and measures to be scaled up at the regional and national levels.

Advancing IWRM across the Kura River Basin through Implementation of the Transboundary Agreed Actions and National Plans (GEF ID: 6962, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$5.3 M, Co-financing \$187.0 M)

The Project will be driven by the objectives and outcomes developed in the SAP and approved by the two Countries. The SAP and the associated National IWRM Plans present a wide range of actions that require support from National Governments, local communities and international donors. The project will focus on specific issues identified in the SAP and national plans related to assisting with regional and national governance of the Kura Basin, towards cross-sectoral IWRM-based management, including capacity building, policy and institutional reforms, monitoring and data management systems, demonstration projects to illustrate stress reduction practices, and pre-feasibility investment planning.

Enabling Country of the Transboundary Syr Darya Basin to Make Sustainable Use of their Ground Water Potential and Subsurface Space with Consideration to Climate Variability and Change (GEF ID: 5301, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$3.5 M, Co-finance: \$17.5 M)

The project will work towards strengthening the countries' ability to evaluate the quantity and quality of their groundwater resources in the Basin, to assess the opportunities for improved sustainability that groundwater use will present, and to manage surface and groundwater in a conjunctive manner and within a framework of transboundary cooperation. By introducing conjunctive management of the surface and ground water resources, as part of developing and implementing an IWRM strategy for the Syr Darya, this project will be implementing long term sustainable management strategies that will provide a solid framework for future transboundary freshwater management in the region.

Projects in Africa:

Improving Lake Chad Management through Building Climate Change Resilience and Reducing Ecosystem Stress through Implementation of the SAP (GEF ID: 4748, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$5.8 M, Co-finance: \$28.9 M)

The countries of the Lake Chad basin signed the Lake Chad Basin Water Charter in May 2012, signaling their commitment to cooperative action. The project will ensure sustainability of this effort through reforming the national governance framework in alignment with the Water Charter, supporting technical assistance and investments that will lead to more efficient conjunctive management of surface and groundwater. The project is the 2nd of two GEF IW projects that help Lake Chad countries implement their SAP. The other is the AfDB Lake Chad programmatic approach approved by Council November 2011, together, they form the GEF support to the countries and to the Lake Chad Basin Commission for governance and management of their groundwater and surface waters, for participation programs by stakeholders and for investments to address the nexus of food, water, and ecosystem security in the Lake Chad region.

Sustainable Groundwater Management in SADC Member States (GEF ID: 4966, Agency: World Bank, GEF Grant: \$8.2 M, Co-finance: \$ 42.6 M)

The Project will support decision makers, planners, implementers and research communities in southern Africa to manage present and future groundwater complexities and challenges at national, transboundary and regional level. The project is targeting a number of river basin organizations and strengthening the integration of groundwater in shared water course commissions and agreements. The project is building on previous efforts and is anchored within SADC's regional institutional structures, solid technical skills and strong country commitments to groundwater management which will assure overall sustainability.

Support to the Cubango-Okavango River Basin Strategic Action Program Implementation (GEF ID: 5526, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$6.1 M, Co-finance: \$60.7 M)

The requested UNDP-GEF project will support OKACOM and the member states to implement selected key activities prioritized in SAP, with emphasis on the basin-wide planning and decision making framework including strengthening the institutional capacities of OKASEC and integrated water resources planning and implementation capacity; and on-the-ground interventions to pilot environmentally conscious socio-economic development initiatives. Innovative schemes such as a transboundary scheme for payment for ecosystems services are highly innovative and will create incomes to the regional institution. Support to income generation and a whole range of water resources management tools aim to support continued flows and avoid decline of water quality.

Volta River Basin Strategic Action Program Implementation Project (GEF ID: 6964, Agency: World Bank, GEF Grant: \$7.2 M, Co-finance: \$36.1 M)

The Volta is a shared river basin connecting the West African countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo. The project will deliver a Water Charter development for the Volta River Basin; be facilitating dialogue, monitoring and project Development, including facilitating multi-stakeholder alliances; and be supporting implementation of Strategic Action Program (SAP) actions to support projects that lead to improvements in water quality, flows and ecosystem services. The project will increase the sustainability of and the resilience of the Volta Basin Authority in the face of multiple challenges to the institutional landscape of the basin and improve environmental management practices in the basin.

Senegal River Basin Climate Change Resilience Development Project (GEF ID: 5133, Agency: World Bank, GEF Grant: \$16.0 M, Co-finance: \$68.6 M)

The project represents an innovative effort to harness the synergies between climate change adaptation and the sustainable management of trans-boundary water resources. Through strategic investments carried out in the context of the World Bank's larger baseline project, the GEF and the LDCF introduce practical solutions for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability, which may be scaled up already during the lifetime of the project. GEF and LDCF investments will be crucial in addressing the remaining institutional and knowledge gaps that prevent long-term, basin-wide planning for sustainable and resilient water resources development. In particular the project will support updating of the inclusive framework and strengthening the role of Guinea within OMVS; update the existing water resources models including scenarios to assess impacts of floods and droughts on the downstream ecology of the river basin; and address gaps in the areas of irrigation and hydropower.

Support to the Orange-Senqu River Strategic Action Program Implementation (GEF ID: 9054, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$10.8 M, Co-finance: \$121 M)

The project is aimed at implementing key priorities of the SAP and based on the TDA/SAP developed through previous GEF finance, focusing on institutional and policy reform and technical capacity building

towards enhanced transboundary basin planning and joint management; reducing stress on water resources quality, addressing changes to the hydrological regime through the application of the source-to-sea concept; and improved land productivity through community-based ecosystem management. Specifically, this will include activities for determination and implementation of a basin-wide e-flows regime; implementation of a basin-wide water quality monitoring system and targeted pollution reduction activities; groundwater protection and management activities; and support to the rehabilitation of the estuarine areas. The Orange-Senqu project will be addressing the coordination between the inland watershed and the marine space, in this case the Benguela Current LME.

Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean:

Integrated Transboundary Ridges-to-Reef Management of the Mesoamerican (GEF ID: 5765, Agency: WWF, GEF Grant: \$9 M, Co-finance: \$69.5 M)

This project will build integrated management of freshwater and marine ecosystems through regional and national activities in support of the Tulum+8 Regional Action Plan signed by the four nations. The project will address the suite of threats to the Mesoamerican Reef, through activities at the regional and national scales, engaging governments, community and private sectors. The commitment of the four nations to the Tulum+8 Regional Action, the plans for a TDA, which will inform a regional strategic plan, and the national ICM and IWRM plans will ensure the long-term sustainability of this initiative.

Integrated Water Resources Management in the Puyango-Tumbes, Catamayo-Chira and Zarumilla Transboundary Aquifers and River Basins (GEF ID: 5284, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$3.9 M, Co-finance: \$20.5 M)

Taking into account climate variability the project will ensure the conservation, restoration and integrated management of surface and groundwater resources including maintenance of ecological flows, associated with the water cycle in the river basins. The project will follow a three pronged approach consisting of improving the common understanding of these shared water resources and their environmental and socioeconomic status, strengthening the cooperation mechanisms (through the TDA/SAP approach) between the two countries sharing these aquifers and watersheds, and applying and disseminating IWRM demonstrations in targeted site interventions with the aim of replicating them in other areas, which will lay the foundation for implementing the SAP.

Integrated Water Resources Management in the Titicaca-Desaguadero-Poopo-Salar de Coipasa (TDPS) System (GEF ID: 5748, Agency: UNDP, GEF Grant: \$6.6 M, Co-finance: \$33.5 M)

The project will establish the long-term basis to tackle and resolve the main environmental problems that affect the TDPS system in order to ensure the conservation, restoration and integrated and participatory management of water resources and ecosystems, including the maintenance of ecological flows associated with the hydrological cycle in the system. This process will be following the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) - Strategic Action Program (SAP) methodology, proposing an intervention directed at addressing the important structural causes of environmental degradation in the TDPS system, such as policy and institutional problems, and will facilitate the development of, and agreement on, a broad binational instrument of policies based on the principles of Integrated Water Resource Management.

Global Project:

Integrated Solutions for Energy, Water, Food, and Ecosystem Security under Rapid Global Change (GEF ID: 6993, Agency: UNIDO, GEF Grant: \$1.9 M, Co-finance \$1.4 M)

This project will enable the systematic analysis of possible pathways towards achieving multiple normative objectives and nexus targets for energy, water, food, urbanization and ecosystem security, as well as the identification of priority areas for investments and the multiple benefits associated with them. This will involve the development and implementation of integrated solutions for energy, water, food, and ecosystem security in regions characterized by extreme hydro-climatic complexity, multiple energy and land use challenges, and rapid demographic, economic, and climate change. The project will not only develop tools for identifying solutions, but also provide policy guidelines as well as make strategic recommendations to governments and to the GEF partnership. Relevant nexus targets will be examined in the context of proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for tradeoffs and potential synergies in reaching them. A medium term goal is to inform the implementation of GEF 2020 and GEF programming directions over the longer term.

GEF International Waters Learning Exchange and Resources Network IW LEARN (GEF ID: 5729, Agency: UNDP and UNEP, GEF Grant: \$4.9 M, Co-finance: \$12.3 M)

This project will scale up proven IW:LEARN and other portfolio learning project methodologies portfolio-wide, towards enhancing the application of GEF IW experiences to improve portfolio quality and mainstream the capacity to address transboundary concerns and climate change. IW:LEARN will be moving towards becoming a global hub for knowledge management and learning on transboundary waters in cooperation a range of partners. The engagement with existing and new partners in the public, private and NGO sector, will utilize well known, as well as innovative techniques to manage the wealth of transboundary water knowledge for the benefit of the IW community and apply this information to improve quality of existing as well as future GEF funded projects.

Annex 1

The Global Environment Facility

GEF was established in the early 1990s to help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems. Since then, the GEF has become an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations, and private sector entities providing approximately \$14.6 billion in grants and an additional \$74.3 billion in leveraged co-financing for more than 4,000 projects across the globe. The GEF serves as the financial mechanism for the following conventions; Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Further, although not formally linked to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the GEF supports implementation of the Protocol in countries with economies in transition. As the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC, the GEF also finances concrete adaptation actions on the ground, through independent, distinct, yet complementary trust funds, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF).

Structure of Global Environment Facility

The **GEF Assembly** is the governing body of the GEF in which representatives of all member countries participate. It meets every three to four years, and is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the GEF's general policies, the operation of the GEF, and its membership. The Assembly is also responsible for considering and approving proposed amendments to the GEF Instrument, the document that established the GEF and set the rules by which the GEF operates. Ministers and high-level government delegations of all GEF member countries take part in the Assembly meetings.

The **GEF Council** functions as an independent board of directors, with primary responsibility for developing, adopting, and evaluating GEF programs. Council members representing 32 constituencies (16 from developing countries, 14 from developed countries, and two from countries with transitional economies) meet twice a year for three days, while also conducting GEF business via mail. Council meetings are attended regularly by civil society organizations.

The **GEF Secretariat** is based in Washington D.C., USA, and reports directly to the GEF Council and Assembly, ensuring that their decisions are translated into effective actions. The secretariat coordinates the formulation of projects included in the work programs, oversees its implementation, and makes certain that operational strategy and policies are followed. The GEF Secretariat is addressing environmental focus areas through interventions in five focal areas, namely, Climate Change, Biodiversity, International Waters, Land Degradation, Chemicals and Waste and the Sustainable Forestry incentive mechanism. The GEF CEO and Chairperson is Dr. Naoko Ishii.

The **Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP)** is established as an advisory body to the GEF. The STAP provides objective, strategic scientific and technical advice on GEF policies, operational strategies, programs and on projects and programmatic approaches; and, maintain a database of institutions, networks and individual scientists to provide the necessary expertise and advice for the GEF.

The **GEF Independent Evaluation Office** is also located in Washington D.C., and reports directly to the GEF Council. Its goal is to improve accountability of GEF projects and programs and to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing.

The **GEF's 18 implementing partners** are: Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AFDB), Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), Conservation International (CI), Development Bank of

Southern Africa (DBSA), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Foreign Economic Cooperation Office - Ministry of Environmental Protection of China (FECO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Fundo Brasileiro para a Biodiversidade (FUNBIO), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), West African Development Bank (BOAD), World Bank Group (WBG), World Wildlife Fund U.S. (WWF).

GEF Projects are differing in size and scope, but most are implemented within a timeframe of 4-6 years. Generally, there are three types of GEF grants, namely Medium Size Projects (up to \$2 mill in grant size), Full Size Projects (more than \$2 mill) and Programmatic Frameworks (more than \$2 mill). All three types can be both multi-focal area and multi-national. GEF projects generally go through the following main steps:

- Identification of issues to be addressed by potential project
- Formulation of Project Identification Form (PIF)
- Country endorsement of PIF
- GEFSEC technical review of PIF and GEF CEO PIF Approval
- PIF inclusion into Work Programs or possible intercessional Work Programs
- Following GEF Council approval of PIF, development of the full project document is initiated (a Project Preparation Grant (PPG) can be applied for at PIF stage)
- Full Project Document is submitted for GEF CEO Endorsement; upon receipt of the endorsement the project initiates implementation.

